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# Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

*Our 106th Year*  
*(1909–2015)*

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**FIRST QUARTER, 2015**

**Volume 106**

**Number 1**

## Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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Boldface type was used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. And lightface type was used for words (or parts of words) which were added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text. In addition small symbols and abbreviations were inserted between or attached to words to represent omitted terms, to indicate grammatical features and the sources of emendations to the Hebrew text.

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# Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
FOR GOD AND HIS  
WORD

VOLUME 106

*co-editors:*  
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and  
James R. Coram

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## A HYMN OF PRAISE

In the name of Jesus every knee must bow,  
And His peerless Headship every tongue avow.  
He a name is given over every name.  
For the Father's glory all must Him acclaim.

With unending praises sounding sweet and strong,  
Heaven and earth uniting in spontaneous song,  
Loud will swell the anthem every mouth will sing,  
All extolling Jesus as their Lord and King.

For the holy scriptures speak of God's great love,  
How He sent a Saviour forth from heaven above.  
Yes, God's own Anointed human flesh assumed,  
And for every creature died, and was entombed.

Emptied of the glory which He had before,  
Humbling Himself further with the cross in store,  
Christ, to death obedient, all His soul outpoured.  
Now by God exalted, all must call Him Lord.

Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb once slain  
To receive all honor, and in triumph reign.  
God has made Him Sovereign, mighty King of kings,  
Who alone is sinless, and salvation brings.

Sing in rising chorus all you tribes of earth!  
Join, you hosts of heaven! magnify His worth!  
Thus shall all creation hymns of joy rehearse,  
Till its adoration fills the universe.

John H. Essex

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2015  
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIX

EDITORIAL

ALL of the articles included in this issue herald Christ as “The Glory of Creation.” Indeed, this is the title of the brief devotional writing that closes our current number by William Mealand: “Once again His voice, as many waters, will command, subdue and attract. In realms above, and earth beneath, He will move as sovereign Lord. Illustrious Head over all, He is, as at the first, the glory of creation” (p.48).

The remaining four articles herein are by A. E. Knoch and are concerned with *the secret of Christ*.

The first of these is titled, “Christ’s Universal Headship.” “The secret of Christ is concerned with Christ Himself, not with His people. It was made known to other generations after a fashion, though not as it is now revealed. It was evidently made known to all the apostles and prophets . . .” (pp.10,11).

“The secret of Christ is briefly stated within the compass of two verses, as follows: ‘. . . *making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth*’ (1:9,10)” (p.11).

The second of these is “The Supremacy of Christ.” “The secret of Christ is not confined to earth, and the scope of this epistle is by no means limited to the ecclesia which is His body. We alone were *chosen* in Christ before the disruption, yet even before that, *all* was *created* in the Son, not only that on earth, but in the heavens as well. The august grandeur of this thought will overwhelm all those who have given some attention to the celestial spheres, or even gazed upon the starry host” (p.22).

“From the beginning all rule is His and all owe Him subjection. The authority of darkness is a usurper, and deserves no subjection at our hands. In being transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love we return to the only rightful Suzerain. His realm will one day spread to every corner of the universe and bring every creature to His feet” (p.23).

The third article here centered upon the theme the secret of Christ is, “The Reconciliation of All.” “Within the compass of five verses we read no less than *eight* times that the given glory is all inclusive. He is the firstborn of *every* creature. *All* is created in Him, and *all* is created through and for Him. He is before *all*. *All* has its cohesion in Him. In *all* He is becoming first. The *entire* complement dwells in Him. He reconciles *all* through the blood of His cross (Col.1:15-20). And on two occasions this is amplified and defined as all that is in the heavens or on the earth. It is said to include both visible and invisible. What more could be said to impress us with the universal scope of the Son’s activities?” (p.25).

The final article presented herein concerning the secret of Christ is, “A Prayer for Making the Secret of Christ Manifest.” “Two closely related secrets filled the heart of the apostle in his imprisonment, besides the secret concerning this administration. The secret of the *evangel* (Eph. 6:19) and the secret of *Christ* (Col.4:3) were both pressing for utterance, so he especially urges the saints to pray for him that he may be able to make them known . . .

“The secret of Christ should have a powerful influence on our walk and talk with those outside the family of faith. In measure it should be manifested by our conduct in the world as well as by our witness to the saints. May each one of us pray this prayer and seek to fulfill it in our own words and work!” (pp.35, 45).

J.R.C.

## CHRIST'S UNIVERSAL HEADSHIP

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth. (Eph.1:3,9,10)*

God's Anointed, and His universal sway, was a secret long drawn out. Ray upon ray was added to its luster until He came Himself in human guise and descended into the depths of death.

And when Messiah is finally refused and thrust from the earth most shamefully, then heaven opens to our view and we find the despised Nazarene seated upon the Universal Throne, wearing the diadem that rules the heavenly realms!

## THE SECRET OF GOD'S WILL

To those in the embrace of the glory of His grace, God makes known the secret of His will to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up the universe in the Christ (Eph.1:9,10). He presses Wisdom and Prudence, with all the resources at their command, into the service of this great secret. Christ has many eonian glories. This is the highest of them all. He is the Son of Adam, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David. He is the King of Israel, the Owner of the land, the King of kings. All of these glories are not only confined to the earth, but find fulfillment in the day of the Lord. They do not enter

## 6 The Importance of the Secret of the Christ

the final eon, when, as the Son of God, He administers the whole universe.

### BOTH HEAVENS AND EARTH

The clearest intimations of the eon after the day of the Lord found in the Old Testament may be summed up in the statement that, in that era, Christ will continue to reign over the earth, even after His priestly functions vanish. The secret here revealed also definitely assigns Him the headship over the earth, and consists in enlarging the scope of His reign to include the heavens (Eph.1:10). *Christ is to be the Head of the universe!* That Messiah's rule included all the earth was a secret the initiates have known from early times. To be with Him in this earthly Kingdom was the high hope He put before His own. Even Paul, at first, had looked for this earthly paradise. But now, as we have seen, he longs for blessing in the heavenly spheres. His hope is no longer fixed on earth, but among the celestials.

It is not possible that there can be a blessed place, anywhere, apart from Christ. Our hearts have no heaven but where He is. So it is essential, at this point, to insert this secret of Christ, lest it seem that we are exalted and He is left beneath upon the earth. If our blessings are among the celestials, if we are to reign in regions supernal, it follows that these are beneath His sway, for we have naught without Him. Before this, God's revelation was confined to the earth. There was no necessity for revealing His higher glories, for His saints were not partakers in them. Now that our destiny is celestial, we are entrusted with a secret so staggering, so superb, that few of His saints have ever heard of it, almost none believe it, and these are unable to measure or even imagine its immensity.

Christ will be Head, not on the earth alone, but over the highest heavens. His sway will include the vast universe in its embrace. The heavenly realms, which men are only

## Christ is to be the Head of the Universe 7

beginning to explore, will all be beneath His pierced feet. Look with me, on some dark night, into the starry sky and behold a few of His domains. Come with me to the desert and see them double their number in the clearer air. Join me on yon mountaintop and peer through the greatest glass that man has made to search the star-strewn firmament. A thousand times as many stars swim past our wondering gaze. But mortal eyes are far too weak, even with the greatest of telescopes. Let us allow the stars to set their seal upon a photographic plate. So many millions more appear that our spirit falls upon its face in awe, for we have begun to glimpse the grandeur of His celestial kingdom.

### THE COMPLEMENT OF THE ERAS

The complement of the eras lies between the judgment era of the great white throne and the close of all the eras, for it must be the last.

The word *plêrōma* is somewhat difficult to translate correctly. The usual rendering of the Authorized Version is *fullness*. But it never denotes the state of being full, but rather, as they have translated it in its first occurrence, that *which is put in to fill up* (Matt.9:16). It is *that which fills*, or the *complement*. The eras of human history will some day fulfill their cycle. The final era, which completes their number and rounds out their ministry, is characterized by the rule of one Man over the whole universe. He Who descended into the lowest depths to save, ascends to the highest place in order to rule.

It is worthy of note, in passing, that the Circumcision epistles never mention a *plêrōma*, for their ministry was not final. Paul speaks of the complement of the nations (Rom.11:12,20), of love as the complement of law (Rom. 13:10), of the ecclesia as the complement of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 4:13), of Christ as the complement of God (Col.2:9)

and of all else (Col.1:19). Only in Paul's epistles do we find God's work brought to final fullness. He alone adds the finishing touches. These are indicated by this word *plê-rōma*, or complement.

The only indication of this era we have in the Old Testament is that rule, the reign of Christ and His saints, is to continue *further* than the priestly millennial reign. Priesthood is only for *olam* (Exodus 40:15, *eonian*). Kingship is for *olam va ad* (e.g., Exodus 15:18, *the eon and further*). This is in exact accord with the clearer details given us in Revelation. There we find that the reign of the saints as kings *and* priests is limited to the thousand years (Rev. 20:6). They still continue to reign in the next eon, but there is no temple and no priesthood. This is the complement of the eras. The throne of God and the Lambkin is upon the earth. John has no vision of the celestial allotment. That is a secret reserved for Paul and the celestial saints. Our portion is in the high heavens.

From our present viewpoint we are apt to get a most distorted view of God's dealings in the eonian times. We look back at almost seven and a half thousand years of human history and find it written with tears and blood. We look forward hopefully to a thousand years of bliss for suffering mortals, but even that blessed era will close in revolt and fire. Is this the full cycle of the eras? Has God accomplished all He set out to do? Has man been fully tested? Mankind has fully manifested its sin. We are satisfied on that score. But we are not sure that Christ has done all that He can do. He is a Man, and as a Man we are sure that He can bring humanity to the very summit of perfection. This He does not accomplish in the day of the Lord. Hence this is what is before Him in the day of God, which follows it.

How long will this final era be? There is no definite revelation given to us. We feel sure that the thousand gen-

erations of which the Psalmist speaks must be within the eonian times. This would give the eons a period of at least twenty thousand years. Perhaps it coincides with that great astronomical cycle, the precession of the equinoxes. That would be about twenty-four thousand years. During this period the sun seems to shift its crossing of the ecliptic, through all of its signs. In twenty-four thousand years the polar star seems to make a complete circle. If the eonian times are so long, we have only begun them, and there will still be nearly sixteen thousand years left at the end of the millennium. This leaves a long, long time for the final eon, the era which completes the cycle.

There is no such thing as chance in God's sight. A lottery, in Israel, was not an appeal to blind fate, but to Yahweh. We who believe, in this present era of grace, were taken by lot to share the celestial honors of our Lord. When the yearly meeting of farmers occurred in each community in ancient Israel, they divided into groups, and first of all the allotments were divided among the heads of these groups, who allotted them to the others. We belong to Christ. He is our Head. He has been allotted the heavens: our lot is cast in Him.

#### TWO SECRETS

Later, in Ephesians 3, we find Paul about to be praying. He proposes to indite a petition for power to grasp the *transcendent dimensions of the love of Christ* (Eph. 3:18-19). But he cannot proceed with his prayer until he has given, in breathless, hurried style, the ground on which his prayer is based. Twelve verses of the third chapter of Ephesians—from the second to the thirteenth inclusive—are a parenthetic prelude to the apostle's prayer. In them he gives a *summary of the grace* already set forth. This is, for us, one of the most vital and illuminating paragraphs in all the Word of God. It is a brief epitome of the Ephe-

sian secret, and includes also a concise statement of the secret of Christ, which is the subject of our present meditation (Eph.3:3-5,8).

It is impossible to have a clear conception of the present secret administration without a special knowledge of the secret of Christ. This is why, before the apostle defines the subject which is on his heart, he inserts another parenthesis to acquaint us with this distinct, yet related secret. The secret of Christ is in closest *accord* with the new revelation, but must never be confused with it. Perhaps nothing has done more to hinder the reception of present truth than the application of the phrase “*as it was now revealed*” (3:5) to the present *grace*, which was an absolute secret (3:2,9). How many have been on the verge of receiving the truth of the exclusiveness of Paul’s ministry and then were turned aside by the little word “*as*,” thinking it referred to the secret administration of the grace of God! Some of the best expositors have never been able to explain its apparent contradiction.

Let us first of all quote that part of this passage which presents the secret of Christ, so as to keep it distinct. In the third verse the apostle says that a secret was made known to him by revelation,

*according as I write before, in brief, by which you who are reading are able to apprehend my understanding in the secret of the Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it was now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets.*

Here we have a number of facts which show that he is not referring to the main subject, the secret administration. It is *according to* it, hence distinct from it. It had been referred to *briefly* (1:9,10), while the Ephesian secret had been set forth at length. The secret of Christ is concerned with Christ Himself, not with His people. It was made known to other generations after a fashion, though

not as it is now revealed. It was evidently made known to all the apostles and prophets. The Ephesian secret came only through Paul.

Any one of these five points is sufficient to show that we have two separate secrets in this chapter. The harmony between them, expressed by the words “*according as*” is a proof of their distinctiveness, not their identity. The fact that the secret of Christ had been widened in scope so as to include the heavens as well as the earth, brings it into full accord with the present grace, in which blessing is celestial.

The greater part of the first two chapters of Ephesians is taken up with an elaboration of its secret which is summarized in chapter three, verse 6. In contrast with this the secret of Christ is briefly stated within the compass of two verses, as follows: “. . . *making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth*” (1:9,10). Two verses for the secret of Christ: two chapters for the Ephesian secret. Surely Paul did not write briefly of the secret administration, but he did give a most succinct account of the secret of Christ (. . . to head up all in the Christ).

This secret, so briefly set forth, is concerned with the headship of Christ, not with the blessings of His saints. Among the celestials we will be associated with Him in His administrations. But on earth we have no such place. He alone is Head, yea, He is Head over us also. The secret administration raises us to a place of *equality* with an election out of the Circumcision. But this secret raises Christ to a place *above* all others. It is not the secret of the body of Christ, but of our Lord Himself.

Long before there was any body of Christ God began to give glimpses of Messiah’s headship over the earth. From

the first promise of One Who was to bruise the serpent's head to the glorious visions of the prophets who foresaw the dominion of the King of kings, there was a continued advance in the revelation of this secret. From the mists of early intimations emerges God's promised Messiah, Adam's greater Son, and David's Lord, Who will resume the reins laid down by the father of the race and forfeited by Israel's kings. So was this secret made known to earlier generations. Now God has added the heavens to His realm, and has revealed Christ's heavenly headship to His apostles and prophets, especially to Paul.

Paul is not the exclusive recipient of the celestial side of Messiah's headship. Our Lord did not hide its heavenly character from His earthly disciples. He called them to Olivet to witness His ascension. The Circumcision are informed that He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens (Heb.1:3), and that messengers and authorities and powers were made subject to Him (1 Peter 3:22). Paul does not claim a monopoly of this knowledge or its dispensation. On the contrary, he is careful to inform us that it was made known to apostles and prophets, of which he was only one.

#### THE UNTRACEABLE RICHES

The untraceable riches of Christ refer to His celestial headship. His traceable riches are those recorded in the writings of the prophets, concerning the rule of the earth. No trace is found in these of His reign in the heavens. These riches are not "unsearchable" in an absolute sense. They can be traced now. But they were kept *secret* until God should reveal His plans for the celestials, and make known the universal scope of His purpose. Other apostles made this known to the Jews. Paul was honored with the commission to make it known to the Gentiles.

A. E. Knoch.

## THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

CREATION and reconciliation are the scenes of the supremacy of God's Son. The secret of Christ comprises the *creation* of all *in* Him at the commencement, and the *reconciliation* of all *through* Him at the consummation. Let us approach this theme as the apostle does, through a prayer that the saints will realize what it involves for them, and that they give thanks for their part in His preeminence.

*Therefore we also, from the day on which we hear, do not cease praying for you and requesting that you may be filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the realization of God; being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy; at the same time giving thanks to the Father, Who makes you competent for a part of the allotment of the saints in light . . . (Col.1:9-11)*

This prayer of the apostle is far more needed today than ever before. In the midst of billions of sermons, and millions of books and magazines devoted to theology, how little insight is there into the will of God as revealed in His latest revelation! How small is the appreciation of His wisdom, how feeble the understanding of His purpose! And, as a result, the conduct of believers is lacking in fruit and power, and there is a want of endurance and joy and thanksgiving for the blessings which are not realized or appreciated. Therefore it is our privilege to emulate the apostle and pray for ourselves and for our fellow saints that the

eyes of our hearts may be opened to see, and that it may lead to pleasing and thanking God.

#### THE REALIZATION OF HIS WILL

In the first of Ephesians we read of the *delight* of His will, the *secret* of His will, and the *counsel* of His will (Eph.1:5,9,11). It is His delight to make us sons through Christ. Love has given us the highest and nearest place. It is the secret of His will to head up all in heaven as well as upon earth in Christ. The counsel of His will is that we should be for the laud of His glory. Let us not degrade the apostle's petition to a mere request for individual guidance in each step of our career. If we know His will concerning Christ and ourselves, that will shine upon our path and remove the need of being led like a blind man, every step of our way.

Guidance should not be a matter dependent on external circumstances or inward impulses, but of wisdom and spiritual understanding. The lack of these has left the saints to the mercy of the forces of evil. Many who imagine that the holy spirit has given them a special and definite revelation are the dupes of evil spirits. They do that which is contrary to the will of God because they are not acquainted with it. They imagine that the Scriptures are not sufficient and need to be supplemented by direct revelations of His will as occasion arises, forgetting that, *in the Scriptures*, the man of God is fitted out for every good act (2 Tim.3:17).

Let us pray, then, that the saints may be *filled* with a realization of His will in *all* wisdom and spiritual understanding, for only thus can we walk worthily of the Lord for *all* pleasing, and bear fruit in *every* good work. Here it is not merely a matter of pleasing God or of doing good—we all may do that in some measure even in our ignorance—but of putting quality and flavor into our actions such as will delight God's heart. May our actions never appear to help

Him in His infirmity! Let them rather reveal Him and His power. Too much of Christian activity seems to be lending God a hand as if He needed it, and is thus offensive to the Deity. Only a realization of His will can save us from this false attitude toward God and enable us to walk worthily, so as to please Him in all.

#### THE REALIZATION OF GOD

That God may be All in all is the universal goal. All of His operations during the eons are directed to this end. The latest revelations of His will are especially adapted to display the excellences of the divine wisdom and love, so that all who realize His will will appreciate Him in the measure in which they understand it. As this is unfolded to our hearts we should grow in our appreciation of God, and thus approach the final goal ahead of others of His creatures. May God become All in us in increasing measure as we contemplate the secret of Christ, and see His hand and head and heart engaged in drawing His creatures to Himself through sin and salvation.

#### ENDUED WITH ALL POWER

Power we often associate with great physical manifestations, such as the powers of the coming eon (Heb.6:5), which will bring health, strength, and blessing to the earth and its inhabitants. But we are endued with power for a different purpose. Although it is in accord with the power of His glory, it is not evident in a lightning-like appearance, or irresistible strength. It is not manifest in the conquest and removal of evil, but in *endurance and patience with joy*. The weakness about us is in accord with God's purpose, so it is not to be removed but endured. Let us do it with joy. Though the time seems protracted, there is power, not only for patience, but for joyful expectation.

## THE SAINTS' ALLOTMENT

*... Who rescues us out of the jurisdiction of Darkness and transports us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of sins, Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships, or sovereignties or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him. (Col.1:12-17)*

Along with the joy which His power imparts in the midst of trial and distress, our hearts should overflow with thanksgiving for the lot which has fallen to us. From dupes of darkness we have become saints in light. We were deceived by the Adversary like all the rest, groping in the gloom of this world's illumination. Out of the darkness we came, in it we existed, and into it we expected to go. Death to us was a leap in the dark. But now all is light! All is out of, and through, and to God. We know whence we came, and whither we are bound. We know that every moment of our lives is in His loving care. Light has come into our lives! God does not leave His saints in the dark. Their allotment is in the light. They are sons of the light and sons of the day. They are not of the night nor of the darkness (1 Thess.5:5).

## LIGHT AND DARKNESS

God is light. The powers opposed to Him are darkness (Eph.6:12). We all were once under the authority of darkness, that great spiritual dominion which holds sway over the whole world. Mankind at large is groping in the dark. Men know not whence they come nor whither they go, nor why they are so busy, running around in circles. But it will not be thus always. When this wicked eon ends, and the

Adversary who is deceiving the nations is in the abyss, the sun will rise, and darkness, and its forces, will not again hold sway over mankind. For this world darkness is at an end when the kingdom comes. Then the knowledge of God will cover the earth as the waters cover the floor of the sea.

In our individual experience we have already passed out of this dark eon into the next. We have already been rescued out of the authority of darkness and transported into the kingdom. Not, indeed, in fact, but in figure. The earthly kingdom has not yet come. The Adversary is not yet bound. But, thanks be to our Father, we are no longer subject to his will, nor are we victims of his deception. Our allegiance has been transferred to Another Who is our spiritual Suzerain. So that, in the spirit sphere, the kingdom has already come for us, minus all its physical manifestations. We are in a spiritual kingdom whose Sovereign is the same as the Messiah Who will one day reign over the nations of the earth. But in this kingdom He bears another title, to comport with its spiritual character. He is the Son—the Son of God's love.

Every title of our Lord reflects a glory all its own. As Christ, He will be the King, the Priest, and the Prophet of the coming eon. Yet even there, as the Son of David, He will have a special glory, confined to the chosen nation. As Son of Mankind, He will rule over the whole race which sprang from Adam. In all of these capacities He will be over the political powers on the earth. Not so the present spiritual kingdom. It does not conflict with man's rule. Indeed, we are obliged to be subject to the authorities, as well as to pray for them. Therefore His title in the present kingdom is not Christ. Neither is He the Son of any man, as David or Adam, but of God. God is a Spirit, and His Son is such in spirit, not in flesh.

In anticipation of the coming kingdom of God upon the earth, when the race shall be freed from the thralldom of its

spiritual despotism, the saints, and they alone, are rescued from the realm of darkness, and transported to a different allegiance, that of God's Son. To complete the picture, our sins are pardoned, and we have deliverance, as will be the case in the new earth. Let us not confuse this with other figures, such as justification, or acquittal. That belongs in the court room, and has to do with our relationship to the judgment, which will take place before the new creation. Now it is a question of entrance into a kingdom, and, as it is a figurative kingdom, we can enter it only by means of a figurative pardon.

Much has been made of the figurative terms in Paul's epistles, such as the covenants and the festivals, in order to show that he was writing only for Jews. Yet there is probably no passage so surely and conclusively "Jewish" as this reference to the kingdom and the pardon of sins, both of which, taken literally, are entirely, foreign to Pauline teaching. According to this method of interpretation, this passage should prove clearly that Colossians is a Jewish epistle, not intended for the present administration of God's grace. Yet, as a matter of fact, it, and Ephesians, are utterly devoted to this exposition of the present interval of God's grace. May this example help to show how unwarranted it is to make any of Paul's writings "Jewish" because of his figurative use of "Jewish" things.

Once we realize that much of the blessing which is predicted on the page of prophecy comes to us, in spirit, long before it is fulfilled in fact, such allusions should rather prove the opposite. For example, there is now a new creation. Is it not a marvelous method of transferring to our minds great spiritual realities which otherwise would be most difficult to express? I suppose no one takes this literally, so why take the kingdom, or the covenants so? In *figure*, we have these things now. In no way could we be led to understand our own blessings better than by illustrat-

ing them from Israel's history, by drawing pictures from the pages of prophecy.

So little are the saints familiar with figures of speech that this passage has been the cause of embarrassment to those who saw clearly the vast difference between justification and pardon. No doubt many have been hindered from enjoying the grand grace of justification simply because, in this passage, we are said to have the pardon of sins. Again, the present is so often called "the kingdom," in a vague way confusing it with the future literal reign of Messiah, that one is tempted to avoid further confusion by saying little or nothing about it. But it is a glorious truth, and worthy of our most earnest consideration, that, in spirit, the saints already partake of some of the blessings of the future kingdom, even though its physical wonders are by no means with us yet.

Yes, we are in the kingdom—the kingdom of the Son of His love. Quite a different matter from being a gentile under the iron club of Messiah's rule in the thousand years. Then righteousness will reign, and the nations will be kept at a distance from the God of Israel. They will not even be sons of the kingdom, but subjects, and subordinate. The Sovereign in our kingdom has a title of surpassing dignity and preciousness. "Christ" is official, and fits the functions which He fills during the eons, but not after they have passed away. The "Son" is personal, and describes His dignity in relation to God, even after the eons have come to an end. And the Son of God's love sets Him forth in the supremacy of His nearness and dearness to the Deity, the Peerless One, the Beloved Son. We are in the new creation.

#### IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

God wishes to be known and loved. This is the motive behind creation and reconciliation. Being invisible and

unapproachable, He has made an Image of Himself, and a Complement through Whom He can come into contact with His creation. These mediatorial glories belong to His Beloved Son, and make Him preeminent in all things, for they reach from the very beginning to the consummation, and make Him first in both creation and reconciliation.

To be known, God must be seen. He must be brought within the range of creature sensation. As this is impossible with essential Deity, Who is Spirit, it can only be accomplished by means of a Mediator, an Image which portrays in visible form the invisible essence of the Supreme. This was God's "Creative Original," the beginning, or origin, of all creation, for all else was included in Him. This makes Him the "firstborn" of all creation, not only first in time, but first in dignity and honor, and of itself entitles Him, not only to be the Sovereign of the saints in this administration, but to head up all things, both in the heavens and on the earth, as He will, in the complement of the eras, before the close of the eons.

Earthly rulers base their right to rule either on hereditary claims, or on their own accomplishments. Our Sovereign has a double right to reign. His is the oldest title in the universe, long antedating Adam, and He has entered the lists against the powers of evil and won the fight on Golgotha. Both diadem and wreath are His. His ancient rights entitle Him to universal sovereignty, and He will yet subject all beneath His feet. And, when all was lost, He brought it back to God, and thus has earned its heartfelt homage. In this universal reign of the Son of God we have the blessed privilege of being among the first to own His sway, and will be among the highest in His world-embracing sovereignty.

#### CREATION IN THE SON OF HIS LOVE

The wonders of these words are well worthy of our

admiring contemplation. Creation and love! How seldom are they brought together! We often hear of God's love in connection with redemption, but creation is usually associated with His power or His wisdom, but never with His affection. Few passages of Scripture delve as deeply as this into the origin of things, yet it is in thorough harmony with those basic truths that all is out of God (Rom.11:36) and God is love (1 John 4:8). The philosopher seeks in vain for the *why* of all things. Why is there a creation at all? Here is the answer. *God's love demands response*. Creation is not an end in itself. Although it displays God's wisdom and power, its underlying purpose goes far deeper, for it was created in love.

Had this simple yet profound truth ever penetrated into the hearts of the teachers of God's people, how revolutionary would have been its effect! True, with their lips they have preached the glad message "God so loved the *world*," yet they have been even more zealous to confine His love to those who believe, since they could hardly reconcile eternal torment or annihilation with the operations of love. May He broaden our hearts and widen our understanding! All that God does is done in love. Creation as well as redemption and reconciliation have their roots in the divine affection. And for this very reason it is that all are lost and all will be saved, some indeed by faith, during the eons, yet others by sight, through judgment, all through the deliverance wrought by Him in Whom they were originally created.

We may well suppose that creatures of another sphere, who know little of humanity, would not find it easy to understand that all mankind was once in Adam. To us it is so commonplace that we fail to realize the marvel of it. Science has made futile endeavors to prove that man, as well as other creatures, gradually evolves into forms quite different from their progenitors, but without any prac-

tical success. They have not succeeded in robbing us of the wonder that in each single seed are almost infinite potentialities. These examples should aid us to understand, or at least to believe where we cannot apprehend, that simple yet sublime statement that all was created in the Son of God's love.

The secret of Christ is not confined to earth, and the scope of this epistle is by no means limited to the ecclesia which is His body. We alone were *chosen* in Christ before the disruption, yet even before that, *all was created* in the Son, not only that on earth, but in the heavens as well. The august grandeur of this thought will overwhelm all those who have given some attention to the celestial spheres, or even gazed upon the starry host. Here are marvels, and magnitudes, and measures which make the mind faint with solemn awe. Creation on earth, with all its many marvels, sinks into insignificance, when compared with the celestial realms. Had it not been hallowed by His presence and His sacrifice, we would think it mean beside the mighty majesty of the heavenly hosts. Yet all the creatures in the heavens were created in Him.

We should not think of creation here as so much material, or dead matter. Life itself and living creatures—those which can refuse or respond to the love of God—are before us in this connection. As they are viewed here as beneath His sway, we read of their various governmental forms, thrones or dominions, sovereignties or authorities. The very fact that, in the heavens as well as on earth, in the invisible as well as the visible creation such rule exists, is proof positive of the presence of sin. Government is a restraint which will not be needed when the eons are past. It will become inoperative at the consummation. Now it speaks of insubjection and the need of reconciliation. The presence of rule in the invisible, celestial realms shows that the creatures which were created in Him will

also be reconciled through Him and thus fulfill the object of their creation.

#### ALL THROUGH AND FOR

Since all ruling powers were once in Him, it is not at all strange that all rule should return to Him in the last eon. This is in line with the further truth that all is *through* Him and *for* Him. Creation was not an independent act, without any relation to subsequent developments. On the contrary, it was logically the result of God's purpose, which could not be fulfilled until the far future. Creation is, indeed, the prelude to reconciliation. The Son, in Whom it was effected, had far more in view, and it was only a preparation for the tragedy of the eons, and these, in turn, only the means for effecting the glorious consummation—God All in every one of His creatures.

So, not only was all *in* Him, but, at the same time it was also *through* Him and *for* Him. Without it He could not have accomplished His further work. Due to this relation of all parts of creation to Him it is held together by Him. Whatever differences and distances there may be between the various parts, such as between earth and the heavens, in Him they are welded into one, and, as we shall see, will be united under His headship in the last eon.

Such is the preeminence of the Image of God as the Firstborn of creation. From the beginning all rule is His and all owe Him subjection. The authority of darkness is a usurper, and deserves no subjection at our hands. In being transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love we return to the only rightful Suzerain. His realm will one day spread to every corner of the universe and bring every creature to His feet. All shall be subject to Him. We have the privilege of being among the first to yield to His beneficent sway.

A. E. Knoch

### THE RECONCILIATION OF ALL

*And He is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens. (Col.1:5-20)*

Creation alone cannot reveal the heart of God. It must be supplemented by reconciliation. He Who is the Image of God must become His Complement. The Firstborn of creation must become the Firstborn from among the dead. As such our relation to Him is nearer and dearer. We are not only subjects in a spiritual kingdom, but we also belong to a spiritual body of which He is the Head. God's grace and love must be revealed against the dark background of human hate.

The Head of the body is this Sovereign, in Whom all rule had its origin, and into Whose kingdom we have been transported. Our relation to Him as saints is not based on His power in creation, but on His victory over death. He is the First to emerge a Conqueror from its dark shades, and thus He heads a new creation, a new race of mankind, which is not only given life, but immortality and incorruptibility, beyond the reach of death. This death-defying vitality will be granted to all in Adam in due course, but at present He alone possesses it. This gives Him the exalted dignity of Firstborn from among the dead. Some

of this high honor He will share with us at His presence, for then His saints also will be vivified, while the balance of mankind must wait until the consummation.

### UNIVERSAL DIGNITIES

The supremacy of God's Son depends on the *universality* or *totality* of His many dignities. How extraordinary is the emphasis laid on this vital fact in this short passage! Within the compass of five verses we read no less than *eight* times that the given glory is all inclusive. He is the firstborn of *every* creature. *All* is created in Him, and *all* is created through and for Him. He is before *all*. *All* has its cohesion in Him. In *all* He is becoming first. The *entire* complement dwells in Him. He reconciles *all* through the blood of His cross (Col.1:15-20). And on two occasions this is amplified and defined as all that is in the heavens or on the earth. It is said to include both visible and invisible. What more could be said to impress us with the universal scope of the Son's activities?

THAT IN ALL  
HE  
MAY BE  
BECOMING FIRST

These precious words, as shown herewith, in large blue letters in a golden frame, are the chief ornament of the room in which I write. Long years ago I chose them as my motto, and decided to display them in a prominent place in my abode. When erecting a new house I evolved a plan so that they would become a permanent part of the building. Above the broad entrance into the drawing room was a board with a beautiful grain. On this I outlined these words in old English lettering and varnished them before the wood was stained, so that they stood out plainly when all was done. But, alas! When the home was sold, almost

the first act of the new owner was to remove all traces of my cherished motto!

Here we have a gem of purest ray serene, fit for the diadem of universal majesty! He was first in time and He must become first in all else. How many of mankind have striven for supremacy! Some have drenched the ground with blood in order to attain the highest place for themselves among the rulers of the earth. Many more in other walks of life have sought to reach the top, above their less fortunate fellows. These all exalted themselves, finding a futile and a fleeting eminence. How marvelous the contrast! He Who never sought His own advancement but only God's glory, Who abased Himself beneath all, He will become first in all.

Let us be very jealous for His glory, and allow no one else to filch it from Him. Let us be very zealous for His supremacy, and accord it to no other name but His. And let us guard each glory as we would a treasure trove. And, since His crowning glories as Complement of the Deity and Reconciler of all are so often denied to Him, let us make these the special theme of our meditation, and, if need be, let us maintain them and defend them to the last. In Him, the Firstborn from the dead, through the blood of His cross, God is completely equipped to consummate the purpose of love, and bring every enemy back to His bosom, not only saved, but reconciled.

#### THE ENTIRE COMPLEMENT

It is quite possible to imagine that God would delegate the honor of creation to one mediator and that of reconciliation to another. God needs both to carry out His purpose, so that each, in his measure, would contribute to the fulfillment of His plans. Then the honor of being God's complement would be shared by them. To put it figuratively, one would receive a place at His right hand, the other at

His left. Indeed, some have taught that God's complement consisted of a whole series of beings, independent of His Son, to whom He delegated creation. Not so! The *entire* complement, *all* that is needed by God in order to fulfill His will in connection with His creatures, finds its fit residence in His Son.

In Him the complement *delights* to dwell. It is not alone that He has the ability, the fitness, the competence to cope with all that is involved in this most marvelous function in the universe. All this He has, and far more. At His baptism, when the heavens were opened to Him, the voice declared, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I *delight*" (Matt.3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). So again, when He was transformed on the high mountain, a voice came out of the cloud and testified to the delight of the Father in His Beloved (Matt.17:5; Mark 9:7). Peter reminds us of this in his epistle, and tells us that it brought Him honor and glory from God the Father (2 Peter 1:17). Long before, Isaiah records the same fact (Matt.12:18; Isa.42:1): "My Beloved, in Whom My soul delights."

Is it not striking that this recognition of the Son is one of the very few statements directly spoken by the Deity in the later Scriptures? This should give it the prominence which is its due in our hearts. What a contrast to His testimony concerning the rest of mankind! When the Lord stooped down to see how they are, He found nothing in which to *delight*. Not one was even just or kind (Rom. 3:10-18; *cp* Psa.14:2,3). Certainly there has never been one among Adam's descendants, apart from His grace, in whom He could find pleasure. In none of them could the complement find any place whatever.

The complement *plêrōma* is here personified (Col.1:19). It is represented as seeking a suitable dwelling place from which to carry out the purposes of God. In Him it has found a delightful abode, for He is not merely a means

of bringing back creation to what it was, but of bringing it on to fulfill its purpose. All too many of us imagine that we would be satisfied with a universe brought back to its pristine perfection, a world without sin, a sorrow-free existence. No such result would satisfy the heart of God. That would never justify the travail of the eons. That would never win the admiring approval of the universe. That would be vanity, a feeding on wind, a reaping of less than was sown, a losing venture.

And such would creation be, had it not been begun in the Son of His *love*, and should it not be finished by the same One through the blood of His cross. Love cannot be revealed without a background. Every blessing imaginable poured into the lap of a sinless creature is merely a matter of course, which evokes no thankful feelings, and provokes no response of love. I feel certain that Adam never thought of thanking his Maker for his superb health and strength. Yet I am profoundly grateful for the very little vigor needed to pen these lines. And when we, who have suffered much from illness and weakness, once attain our body of glory, how deep and lasting will be our thankful love to Him for all His superabundant grace!

In this passage nothing is said directly of the entrance and course of evil and sin, because this is no part of the work of the Son. But the introduction of estrangement is clearly implied by His death and His cross and the necessity of the reconciliation of all. It is no glory or honor to destroy God's work. This must, indeed, be done, but woe to him who does it! His course must be down and not up. The glory of the Son lies in this, that He undoes the work of the Adversary. Great as were His glories in creation, now that all have been estranged by sin He gains far greater glory by His suffering for all, so that all will be saved and reconciled, and so attain the original object of their creation.

God pity us if we see our salvation from our own side

only! The object of all is God, rather than His creatures. And the glory of God demands the exaltation of His Son. These are the chief considerations in the reconciliation of all. If a single one of those whom He created in love should fail to find the final goal which His love has set, then it is His wisdom and power which are brought into question, and His love which is open to doubt. Likewise, if one who was created in the Son of God's love should fail to be reconciled by the blood of His cross, would that not drag the Son down from the high place which God has given Him? Let us not darken the splendor of His achievement by our own dismal unbelief.

#### PEACE THROUGH THE CROSS

Enmity has come in through the entrance of death and sin. All of mankind, without exception, are estranged from God. It is more than likely that this discord has affected the whole creation, in varying degrees. To make peace between God and His unfriendly creatures is the greatest of all achievements. In this world of strife and contention the role of peacemaker is a difficult and discouraging one. For the most trivial causes enmity arises between man and man, section and section, country and country. Not long since a large part of the world was involved in a bloody war, and no stable peace has resulted from all of the strenuous endeavors to put an end to war. We talk of peace, yet there is unrest and misunderstanding almost everywhere, and the din of arms has never fully ceased.

By pride comes contention. Notwithstanding the shameful record of mankind since the dawn of history, men are proud of what they are and what they have accomplished and what they possess. Evil has been given them to humble them, they fail often and suffer much, the world is getting worse in almost every way, except material comfort, man's inhumanity to man cries to high heaven for redress,

and man's offensive attitude to the Deity is unpardonable, and yet man is haughty and stubborn and implacable. He refuses the overtures of peace which come to him in the evangel and is hastening on to the era of God's indignation, when man's doings will be destroyed, his power broken, and his pride leveled with the dust.

But even after a thousand years of peace his heart remains the same. Satan, loosed out of his jail, will find the same enmity, the same readiness to rise against God and His people as before. The experience of good does not bring permanent peace. It is through evil that peace must come. Though Christ Himself, the Prince of Peace, has ruled man for a millennium, that has not tuned his heart in unison with God. He does not make peace by His power or by His glorious government. Peace comes to the nations in this way in the eons of the eons, but heart peace with God comes only through His sufferings and shameful, ignominious death.

The cross, the inglorious, the disgraceful, the infamous, the opprobrious, the outrageous stake, the most disreputable death that man can devise, where weakness and shame combine to dishonor the High and Holy Son of God—here is where peace was made for all who are estranged, where the world was conciliated to God. With this as a basis, the Son will reconcile all God's enemies with him when the eons have run their course. In the cross we see the utter worthlessness of man as well as the supreme exhibition of the love of God. Reconciliation is effected by the revelation of God's love in the deepest display of human hate.

The cross, like a lightning flash, reveals the heart of man. He Who hung upon it was the Touchstone by which all things may be tested. When He appeared among His people humanity manifested itself as it really is. He should have been welcomed and honored and adored. By the condemnation of the only One Who deserved to live, mankind

has condemned itself, and sealed its own death warrant. By the shameful crucifixion of the Lord of glory men made it manifest that they, not He, deserve the death detestable. O that we all may learn what we really are in the light of the cross! This will burn out all our pride and prepare the way for peace. And thus it is that reconciliation comes. The cross will abase all into the dust, and humble their hearts before the Deity, and prepare them for the revelation of His love.

But if the cross only revealed what is in man it could not reconcile the race but would rather destroy it. Thanks be to God that it also reveals what is in God! It is the fullest revelation of His love. In it He seemed to side with man. Instead of rescuing His Beloved from their hate, He sends fire from above into His bones. He makes Him to be sin, Who knew no sin. He forsakes Him instead of the ones who deserved His displeasure.

The divine alchemy which transformed the Victim of human hate into the Sacrifice for their sins is almost too wonderful for human apprehension.

#### THE BLOOD OF THE CROSS

The cross was the supreme crisis in universal history, an event unique, unparalleled in the annals of time. Nothing has ever occurred which has such a profound effect upon the world. It will transform an alienated universe into adoring worshipers. It is a permanent, an abiding power which will never lose its potency. Today the cross avails to conciliate the world, and to reconcile those who receive the conciliation. But this will by no means exhaust its power. It will be the basis of all blessing in the eons to come, and will bring immortality and peace to all at the consummation. Death cannot stop its course, for Christ arose, the Firstborn, and all for whom He died (and He died for all!) will share His life when death is abolished.

The blood of *Christ* is a most expressive figure of the permanent power of His sufferings. The soul, sensation, feeling (not the life) of the flesh is in the blood. In the days of old this was sprinkled in the holy of holies once a year on the day of propitiation, and for a twelve-month period preserved the potency of the sacrifice. So it is with the suffering of Christ. Thank God it is past, but its potency is permanent. It avails today, and will never lose its power. The blood remains, as it were, within the holiest in heaven, to witness to His offering.

But the blood of His cross—this goes far deeper still. Only here do we have this notable expression. It is not a mere literary variant, but a deliberate endeavor to distinguish between the death of God's Son and the *manner* of it. This is done because here we have not merely the salvation or the justification of all, but the *reconciliation* of the universe. It is not a question of sin so much as of offense and enmity. In fact this passage is concerned with salvation only insofar as it is included in reconciliation. *Peace* is made by the blood of His cross. The blood is a reminder of its permanence.

This blood does not merely remind us of His death and suffering, but of the shame and enmity of man, and the *darkness* and *distance* from God endured by Him because of the *crucifixion*. Stoning would have brought death, but would have avoided much of the suffering and the curse of the Deity which rested upon the One Who was hanged upon a tree. The marvelous truth that all will be reconciled to God is based, not only on the suffering and death of Christ, but especially on the abject abasement involved in the manner of His death, coupled with the curse which it drew down from above.

#### RECONCILIATION BASED ON THE CROSS

The cry of the august Sufferer, "My God, My God, why

didst Thou forsake Me?" finds its answer in the cross. With any other form of death God would not have forsaken Him. He would rather have turned against His murderers. It would have increased the distance and estrangement between God and His creatures. It would have made enmity, not peace. But because He voluntarily placed Himself beneath the curse of God for the sake of His enemies, the result was reconciliation.

But let us note that the cross is brought in here parenthetically. It is the basis of reconciliation, indeed, but by no means includes all that He will do in order to bring back the universe to God. On this basis He will carry on all of His future work of ruling and judging, of rousing and vivifying the dead. All of His coming acts will have this grand goal in view, and we will have our share in His work of reconciling God's creatures among the celestials, for we are His complement. As living exemplifications of the power of the cross, we will have our part in the final and effectual peace propaganda. For this reason we read here of the *blood* of the cross, for its abiding power will be the means at our disposal in bringing about perpetual peace.

One of the most helpful contrasts between Ephesians and Colossians is on the subject of peace. In Colossians, as we have seen, it is universal in its scope, including not only earth's sinners, but His enemies in the heavens as well. But in Ephesians it is limited to believers, and has to do with the enmity between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision (Eph.2:11-18). This estrangement inhered in their flesh, and in the physical relation of Christ to the Circumcision. It found expression in the central wall in the sanctuary, which kept the Uncircumcision at a distance from God's dwelling place, and in the decrees issued by the apostles from Jerusalem. That fruit of peace was a new humanity, so that both the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision have access, in one spirit, to the Father. Though

based upon the cross, there is nothing there for those outside the household of faith.

The peace of Ephesians, in accord with the secret of the epistle, will continue during this administration of grace, but will retire in the following economies, when Israel once more comes to the front on the basis of physical preeminence. But the peace in Colossians, in accord with the secret of Christ, will not only continue throughout the eons, but will embrace all at the consummation. In Ephesians it is limited in both time and scope. It applies only to the Circumcision and Uncircumcision in this present era. But in Colossians it is extended to include those in the heavens as well as those on the earth. All are embraced by it, so that no enmity remains in God's universe.

To even list all of the passages which have been brought forward to blot out the great truth of the reconciliation of all would lead us too far afield at this time. They have been fully considered and discussed in separate essays. Correct concordant renderings automatically dispose of them, and, at the same time, confirm the great truth that God will become All in all at the consummation (1 Cor.15:28).

May God graciously give us faith to believe it! May our love for His Beloved constrain us to receive it! May mistaken translations of other passages not bar our way into this holy of holies, beyond the veil of His eonian dealings with His creatures! May not the false philosophical terms "everlasting" and "eternal," or "eternity," blind our eyes to the eons, the scene of the Sons's glories, their commencement in love, and their consummation in reconciliation! Here we stand on the summit of divine revelation. Here we can see all else below us, and see its place in God's purpose. May we not take some lower stand and deny this glorious consummation because it is hid from our gaze by the fogs of lower levels!

A. E. Knoch

A PRAYER FOR MAKING  
THE SECRET OF CHRIST MANIFEST

*In prayer be persevering, watching in it with thanksgiving, praying at the same time concerning us also, that God should be opening for us a door of the word, to speak the secret of Christ, because of which I am bound also, that I should be making it manifest, as I must speak. In wisdom be walking toward those outside, reclaiming the era, your word being always with grace, seasoned with salt, perceiving how you must answer each one. (Col.4:2-6)*

Two closely related secrets filled the heart of the apostle in his imprisonment, besides the secret concerning this administration. The secret of the *evangel* (Eph.6:19) and the secret of *Christ* (Col.4:3) were both pressing for utterance, so he especially urges the saints to pray for him that he may be able to make them known. He is not merely bound with metal chains. He is also “bound” to act by spiritual forces. As the literal Greek has it, he speaks, “as it is *binding*” for him to speak.

O that there were men today who knew these secrets, and not only could but would reveal them to the saints! O that all saints would unite in these prayers, no longer for the apostle Paul, but for pastors and teachers and evangelists everywhere! Is it not all too true that these secrets have been lost? Where are they made known? And do we not see the wisdom of God in this, that Paul, in urging the saints to pray for him, has left a permanent exhortation, a prayer which we all should pray, and which should awaken in our hearts a desire to enjoy these precious secrets our-

selves and to make them known to others? What other truths in God's Word are so burdened with prayer for their utterance? Does this not intimate that these truths are as desirable as rare?

The bulk of Paul's epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians is largely composed of *his* prayers for the saints, that *they* may realize the grace and truth which he reveals to them. But at the close of each epistle we have these two gems, each perfect in its own setting, in which the *saints* are exhorted to pray for *him* that he may be able to make this message known. It is a delight to study these brief requests and especially to compare them with each other. Their messages are very similar. The chief difference lies in the secret to be expressed or manifested. In Ephesians it is the secret of the *evangel*, which is barely mentioned in the body of the epistle. In Colossians, however, it is the message of the epistle itself which is pressing for expression.

#### PERSEVERING IN PRAYER

It is the precious privilege of all who are His to be concerned with everything which pertains to God and His purpose in both creation and reconciliation. And this includes everything, since all is serving His grand design. Our prayers may include all, in heaven as well as on earth, but, of course, may concentrate on the world about us, and especially on the saints, and on those who are actively engaged in carrying out God's purpose in making Him known, particularly those to whom His secrets have been confided, and who, like Paul, are held and hindered from heralding what is on their heart. For now, far more than then, these secrets find little utterance or entrance among the people of God.

Most of us have heard many prayers concerning many things. We ourselves, perhaps, have prayed much and often. But, as we look back upon them, are we not reminded of

the words of the apostle, that "we are not aware what we should pray for" (Rom.8:26)? Have not the most of our petitions been out of line with God's will? Do we not feel more and more that we desire to leave all details in God's hands because of our own ignorance of what should be? Yet, on the other hand, the definite instructions and exhortations which are given us, especially in the perfection epistles, as to the scope and subject of our prayers, are almost totally ignored. Should we hear them in public they would appear strange and mark the petitioner as peculiar, as, indeed, he would be.

#### WATCHING WITH THANKSGIVING

Perhaps most of us are inclined to wait until our prayers are answered to our satisfaction before we add our thanks. But that is because we have not yet fully found our All in God. We should learn to be especially thankful when matters do *not* turn out according to our wishes, for this is evidence enough that we were in the wrong, and harm would have resulted if our will had been carried out. We should thank as we watch. It is not our duty, in prayer, to instruct God what to do, or how or when to do it, but to recognize our utter incapacity to dictate these details, and to rejoice that they are in His skillful hands, so that we may thankfully acquiesce in every particular, even if it is contrary to our own will.

A practical instance is at hand. It is now many, many years since our own heart was overflowing in prayer and petition that expression might be granted to us to make known the secret of the evangel. Indeed, it seemed at the time that this should be our life work. There was much liberty in prayer, for there was no question of the Lord's will, seeing that He Himself had put the petition into our mouths. Yet it is clear from this secret itself that it has a temporary term, and that the faith is fading from the

earth, so that great things could not be expected, especially as the close of this administration seemed so very near. Nevertheless there has been much watching to see if some would not accept and appreciate the marvelous message of God's special grace, and much thanksgiving, not only for those who received it, but also for those who did not, for both fulfill God's purpose.

Of course it is a special joy to hear of those who not only receive this precious truth, but strive to make it known. And God has graciously stirred some hearts, who have given written or oral testimony to the truth, at various times and in various countries. May our prayers result in a blessed awakening to this great truth! And, at the same time, may He open hearts to explore and enjoy the secret of Christ, the subject of our present meditation.

#### CLOSELY RELATED SECRETS

These two secrets, that of the evangel, which involves the conciliation of the nations during the period of Israel's callousness, and that of Christ, which results in the reconciliation of all at the consummation, are very closely related in their present expression. Peace is the keynote of both. Even as conciliation is a precursor of reconciliation, so Christ's present attitude toward the nations may be looked upon as an anticipation of His attitude toward all in the last eon, when the secret of Christ will be fully unfolded. The secret of the evangel is, in part, but one aspect of the secret of Christ in its present expression. Therefore, in Ephesians, the apostle wishes us to pray for one, yet, in Colossians, for the other.

The secret of Christ is best set forth today by the expression "Christ among you, the expectation of glory" (Col. 1:27). Christ did not leave the land of Israel when He came in flesh. He was never among the nations. His presence in Israel was the assurance of future glory for all who received

Him, which will be fulfilled in the thousand years, on the earth. His figurative presence now, among the nations, is also the assurance of future glory, for all who believe, among the celestials. At the same time it involves the setting aside of the enmity which existed in the days of His presence, and this is the conciliation. It is *God* Who is conciliated, yet it is *Christ* Who acts accordingly, and *Who* visits the nations, in spirit, just as He had come to Israel in the days of old.

#### MAKING IT MANIFEST

The secret of Christ must be manifested. Why not simply tell it out to eager crowds and herald it forth in overflowing halls? Why not let the daily press put it on the front page, with gigantic headlines, in colored ink? Or at least the religious press should give it the publicity it deserves. Pamphlets and books could be written and exhibited everywhere. It seems quite simple. But Paul did not urge the saints in his day to use every avenue of publicity, but to pray to God to *open a door*. The fact is that all doors are shut and locked against the entrance of this truth. No human effort is able to open them. We are entirely cast upon God for the manifestation of the secret of Christ.

Indeed, among the saints themselves there are few hearts that are open to these grand verities. And here we find not merely closed doors but open opposition. These transcendent truths, which complete the Word of God, which round out revelation, which draw aside the enigmatic veil which hangs before God's previous unfoldings—these are rejected as heretical and false, although their simple terms cannot be misunderstood. It is a question of giving Christ the highest place, and the opposing powers will not accord Him this. So doors are closed, and arguments are brought forth to show that these words cannot mean what they say. It may be well to consider a few of these.

## “THINGS”

Strange as it may seem, one of the first reasons given for rejecting the reconciliation of all when we began to make it known was that the word “all” in this passage refers to *things*, not to persons; to creation, not to creatures. So it is in the popular versions, especially in the Revised, which is exceptionally particular on such points. Yet stranger still is the fact that this is according to current scholarship, which confounds the indefinite forms of the Greek with the English neuter gender.

To what this leads may be seen in Galatians 3:22, where the Revisers changed the Authorized Version “the scripture hath concluded *all* under sin” to “the scripture hath shut up *all things* under sin.” And this is “that the promise...might be given them that believe.”

The mere fact that there is no estrangement between “things” and God, and therefore there can be no reconciliation, should suffice to show how groundless it is. In fact, the argument from “things” has little weight with intelligent searchers for truth, for, if we confine the preeminence of God’s Son to His relation to the insensate matter of the universe, as, indeed, we must if *pan* is limited to *things*, the whole passage becomes absurd and intolerable. When it becomes evident, in the next paragraph, that the Colossians themselves were among these “things,” few will care to limit the glories of the Son to the physical material of the universe, no matter how much Greek scholarship may stand back of the assertion. But the indefinite includes all genders as well as things.

Indeed, what other form than the indefinite could be used in this passage? Creation and reconciliation in Him were not confined to males or females, for, at his creation, even Adam was both, and this distinction would not apply to the creatures in the heavens. The universal-

ity of this passage cannot be confined to earthly conditions. In order to include all it *must* be expressed in terms that apply to all. To one who revels in this marvelous galaxy of glories, which exalts our beloved Lord as no other in God’s precious Word, the continuous addition of the misleading word “things” in our popular versions seems as deplorable as it is unnecessary. It brings discord into this highest of harmonies. It seeks to dull His dignities, by making Him the Creator of lifeless substance, and not of living creatures.

You who use versions with “things” in Colossians 1:15-20, cross them out! Only by so doing may you be initiated into the secret of Christ. He is not merely the Creator of the dust beneath your feet, but He is *your* Creator! He is not the Reconciler of the soulless stone on which you stand, but He is *your* Reconciler! The simple fact that He appears here as the Son should show that He has to do with spirit and with *life*. He is not the Firstborn of dead substance but of living creatures.

## SCOPE

Another bolt which has been used in order to keep the door from opening to allow the secret of Christ to enter is the plea that Colossians is concerned only with the church which is Christ’s body, hence reconciliation can refer only to them. It is well to keep each statement in God’s Word well within the scope of its context. But where, in all the sacred scrolls, is the range of the context any greater than in this passage? “Every creature” cannot be confined to the church which is Christ’s body. “All in the heavens and on the earth” is as wide a scope as can well be imagined. With such a context, reconciliation *cannot* be limited to any body of God’s creatures. It applies to all, sinners as well as saints, high and low, without any limitation whatever except previous estrangement.

## UNIVERSALITY

Any attempt to subtract in the smallest degree from any one of the eight asseverations of universality in the first of Colossians I cannot help but feel is nothing less than *treason!* If He is the Firstborn of every creature *but one*, then He is not first in all! If a single creature was not created in Him, then His glory has suffered a severe eclipse! If another is before Him, then He is not first! If He is second in all, why not tell us of the one who is first? If only a part of the complement dwells in Him, then, of course, only a part will be reconciled through Him. Again I say, *Treason!*

The fact that almost all doors are closed to the secret of Christ today, especially among instructed saints, is a most illuminating commentary on this request for prayer. If Christendom had gone on in the truth, and the light had increased, then we might expect to find open doors. But the contrary has occurred. Apostasy from Paul is not confined to one province, as of old, but is well-nigh universal. And, as a consequence, the secret of Christ is not only unknown but shut out, debarred, yes, in some cases, detested. There is more need for prayer now than ever before that God will open doors for its manifestation.

## WALKING IN WISDOM

"Be walking in wisdom toward those outside" (Col.4:5). These words follow immediately upon the reference to the secret of Christ. In Ephesians (5:15) we have a similar exhortation, but nothing is said of those outside. This is another of those delicate touches which distinguish the two epistles, for the secret of Christ brings us into much closer relation to unbelievers, by creation and reconciliation, in which they share, than the secret of Ephesians, in which they have no part. And how is it possible to walk in wisdom toward our fellow saints or toward the world

without a grasp of the great secrets which affect each so vitally? These alone will revolutionize the attitude of our hearts toward them and enable us to act in accord with God's purpose for them.

It is wisdom to deal with men in accord with God's will and purpose concerning them. If we imagine that those outside are doomed to destruction or eternal torment, it is practically impossible to avoid a hardening of the heart in regard to them, which will lead us to think and act contrary to the basic truths of their creation and reconciliation in love. Thinking of them as so much waste in God's operations in turn reflects upon His wisdom and love. These false conceptions of God's creation and goal, outside the Son of His love, make a wise walk toward those outside well-nigh impossible. But when we see the place of everyone in God's plans, it will soften our hearts and steady our heads, and we will be enabled to recognize His handiwork in the most worthless and most antagonistic of His creatures.

Looked at apart from God's purpose, the present era, like those before it, is vanity, and a feeding on wind. There is much talk of evolution and there is much real revolution, but the world as a whole seems to be slipping down into an abyss instead of climbing up into a paradise. Of what use is all the work and woe with which we are surrounded? We know that God will yet make excellent use of it. Man's day will reveal man's failure and futility. This is of no value in itself, but of surpassing worth in humbling man and in bringing him to accept and appreciate God's grace. In this way this wicked era will be reclaimed in due time. Yet wisdom will anticipate, and use the background of human incapacity and hate in order to display the fullness of God's competency and love.

Not only are we to deal graciously among ourselves (Eph.4: 32), but our conduct with those outside should

also be governed by this precious quality. Once we know that even they were created in love and will be reconciled by the blood of Christ's cross, we will recognize in their present state only a temporary estrangement from God, in which evil and sin play a painful yet salutary part. Far from harsh condemnation, we will sympathize with them in their condition, and speak and act in faith, knowing that they will yet fulfill the object of their creation, when God becomes All in them. What if they are the vessels of God's indignation now? In due time He will use them for His glory. *We*, the vessels of His grace, have no more right to His favor than those without. May this thought humble us before them.

Our Lord called His disciples the salt of the earth (Matt.5:13). They alone could stay its corruption. Perhaps nowhere is the rottenness of the world more evident than in its utterances. Not only should our speech with them be gracious, but free from the decadent foulness which characterizes much of human intercourse. More than that, it should be a seasoning and a preservative, counteracting the decay all around us. And what is more effective for this than an exultant knowledge of God's grand goal, when all that is corruptible will have given place to that which is incorruptible and glorious?

A heart overflowing with expectation in the future which is in store for all of God's creatures is the best preparation for meeting and answering the questions of those outside. Apart from this knowledge the world has many queries to which even the saint cannot give a satisfactory reply. "Why does God, allow such terrible things to occur?" Such questions come from the lips of those who know nothing about God. And how few are able to show that God does not "allow" them to happen, but brings them about for His glory and our blessing? As a result the deity of most real believers is only a second or third rate god, who needs

to be excused for his dereliction of duty and defended for His impotence.

We should never be at a loss to answer the questions of the godless in regard to God's present operations and His prospective goal. This is seen fully only in the secret of Christ, which it is our privilege and duty to manifest. So that, unlike Ephesian truth, which is only for the saints and can only be grasped by these under circumstances which are all too rare in these days, the secret of Christ should have a powerful influence on our walk and talk with those outside the family of faith. In measure it should be manifested by our conduct in the world as well as by our witness to the saints. May each one of us pray this prayer and seek to fulfill it in our own words and work!

A. E. Knoch.

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#### KENNETH LESTER BOUGHTON

Our brother, Ken Boughton, of Caldwell, Idaho, was put to repose February 2, 2015, at age 87. He formerly lived in the Los Angeles area where he became acquainted with the Concordant Publishing Concern and was an enthusiastic participant in our fellowship gatherings as well as frequent volunteer helper for all sorts of chores at our headquarters during the 1970's. He and his wife, Lucy (who died in 2008), raised their family and cared for dozens of foster children, setting a grand example of love within an environment of appreciation for God's love.

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#### UR SEARCH

*Unsearchable Riches* magazine has been published continuously from 1909 to the present. *URsearch* is a browse and search Windows application, which comprises the entire contents of all *Unsearchable Riches* issues published from 1909 through 1999 (volumes 1-90). The contents is searchable, viewable, and selected pages may be printed. *URsearch* is available without charge, and may be downloaded from our website: [WWW.CONCORDANT.ORG](http://WWW.CONCORDANT.ORG).

*Unsearchable Riches* issues from volume 87 (1996) to the present are available in *typeset* form (PDF format), and may be obtained from our website as well.

### CHRIST, THE GLORY OF CREATION

THE scriptures of truth take on a deeper meaning when we perceive the profound disclosure of Christ as the glory of creation. For when we see Him, who is the power and wisdom of God, creating and then fashioning anew this world of ours, we comprehend His majesty as never before.

Time was, when, maybe, we thought of Him only as the Saviour born at Bethlehem, and dying at Golgotha. And, even though we believed He rose again and would be returning, yet little did we think He was the august Firstborn, as Paul reveals Him in his enthralling Colossian passage (Col.1:16-20).

When, however, we read that all has been created *in* Him and *through* Him and *for* Him, it was borne in upon us that here were words to exult in. Words that so wondrously set forth the Christ of God as to compel and hold attention. The exalted estimate they give of Him is of such an unimagined grace and glory, as to create in the mind an indelible impression of His power.

Moreover, since He is the Firstborn of every creature and is before all, a perfect precedence, a noble priority is His. He is the great Antecedent, with an inherent right to commit Himself to His Father's purpose of the ages. Unaffected by and impervious to that sin and death which so spoiled the fair cosmos fashioned through Him, He rises triumphant above it all. The march of time, the trail of decay, affects Him not. Son of the Father's love, spotless Lamb of God, death masters Him not. He comes gloriously through, the all-conquering Firstborn from among the dead.

Great and marvelous indeed, are the achievements of God's illustrious Son, and just and true His ways. The glory of creation at first, He is the effulgence of an even fairer creation at last. For in the new heavens and earth, in which righteousness is dwelling, there will be an ever-increasing advance in the knowledge and love of God, the Father. The Christ of God will point the way so gloriously, in the wisdom and majesty of His ruling power, that the habitants of every realm will be happy and content.

And, greater still, they will see that the pathway of obedience to the will of God secures the highest quality of life. It is so now, as every saint can prove. And it is far better than being at the mercy of our own powers, ideas and self-sufficiency.

To see as God sees is to be enlightened indeed. And, with Paul as guide and interpreter, we are conducted to the heights of rare vision. The triumph and sway of Christ, as God sees it, is immeasurably greater than even some of His people conceive it to be. There are many who place limitations on the extent of His triumph. That the whole universe is *for* Him in as grand a sense as it was *through* Him, they cannot see. They counter the splendid truth by interposing man's perversity. There are, it is said, "incorrigibles," who, impervious to all appeals, must assuredly be lost, and that forever.

It cannot be too eloquently announced that Christ's sacrifice was *for all*. There is nothing to take its place, however it may cut across the pride of man. He, therefore, as the glory of creation, and its worthy Redeemer, draws *all* to Himself. Only thus can creation be *for* Him. Introduce a segment that is not for Him by dint of an opposing will, and to that extent creation is marred.

Reconciliation is divine, full and complete. Half measures do not go with God. With Him, the crowning issue will accord with the character and worth of the Sacrifice.

Therefore, the triumph of Christ must needs be complete. The blood of His cross bespeaks this, for realms on high and for earth below. A dignity attaches to the power of the blood which only His loved ones know. And some of these fail to realize the magnitude of its power.

There will come a time when the whole of creation will rise in full acknowledgment of His Lordship. Then, in a splendor words fail to describe, the entire universe, won to God, acclaims Christ as Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. No beings are untouched, their needs unmet. He is the Desire of every heart. This world, even as other realms, awaits the coming of the Lord of life and glory. He alone can draw all to Himself, and thus to God.

Would that now, in the interlude of God's grace, the Son of His love was more fittingly extolled! It is not enough that His earthly life and walk be stressed and praised. For, to the minds of many, thus presented, He is only the ideal Teacher to be copied and followed.

It may be we are even brought to the point of His wondrous death, and risen life. But we are left there. It is not enthrallingly shown that He died for all, the Just for the unjust, *to bring us to God*. And, that He not only lives, but is returning for His own believing people.

In the meanwhile we are thankful for all good that comes through human hands. Yet, we would fain acknowledge God in the understanding way which sees Him as moving and controlling all, both good and evil. At the same time the anointed eye can perceive, in the Word of truth, the exalted character of the Christ of God.

Once again His voice, as many waters, will command, subdue and attract. In realms above, and earth beneath, He will move as sovereign Lord. Illustrious Head over all, He is, as at the first, the glory of creation.

William L. Mealand

# Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

*Our 106th Year*  
*(1909–2015)*

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**SECOND QUARTER, 2015**

**Volume 106**

**Number 2**

## Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a “concordant version” of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or “New Testament,” was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures (“Old Testament”). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

By analyzing the contextual usages of each Hebrew and Aramaic word, a single English word was first selected as its most suitable equivalent. Then, to achieve readability, some words were given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, were not used for other Hebrew words.

Boldface type was used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. And lightface type was used for words (or parts of words) which were added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text. In addition small symbols and abbreviations were inserted between or attached to words to represent omitted terms, to indicate grammatical features and the sources of emendations to the Hebrew text.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, SECOND QUARTER 2015  
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIX

## EDITORIAL

OUR theme in this issue is that of the *sacrifice* of Christ, which was *fulfilled* by God. God saves because He loves. And the way He saves is through sacrifice—*His own sacrifice of His own Son*—which sacrifice alone reveals the depth of His love.

To sacrifice is to incur a loss, to *give up* something valuable or desirable for the sake of something or someone else. Thus God gives up His Son to the death of the cross on behalf of needy sinners, who cannot save themselves. This is in light of their need and is according to the dictate of His own righteousness, in correspondence to His love.

In the sacrifice of Christ, in the crucifixion event, Jesus was “given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23). Indeed, it was God Himself, albeit through human agency, Who *fulfilled* the suffering of His Christ (Acts 3:18). Thus “Yahweh desires to crush Him, and He causes Him to be wounded” (Isa.53:10). “For of a truth, in this city [Jerusalem] were gathered against Thy holy Boy Jesus, Whom Thou dost anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the nations and the peoples of Israel, *to do whatever Thy hand and Thy counsel designates beforehand to occur*” (Act 4:27,28). God spares not His own Son but rather *gives Him up* for the sake of us all (Rom.8:32).

Special emphasis herein is placed upon *how* the sacrifice of Christ saves. Did Christ die *instead* of the sinner, or *for the sake* of the sinner who was created in Him?

In A. E. Knoch’s two articles, “Substitution or Inclusion?” (pp.51-75) and “For or Instead?” (pp.76-86), the theme is that of our “inclusion” in Christ, in creation: “*All was created in the Son of God’s love* (Col.1:13-16) . . . Creation should never be divorced from that substratum of divine affection

which brought it forth. This is the unbreakable tie which binds God to His creation, and the Son to every creature in the universe . . . .

“If anyone was not in Adam he is not a sinner and needs no salvation. If anyone was not in the Son of His love he will not be saved. But, since *all were* created in the Beloved, so long as my mind retains its sanity I shall assert that God Himself will lose His deity if He cannot satisfy His own affections by delivering those on whom His heart has been fixed since the very dawn of creation” (pp.51,52; 75).

To perceive more clearly our inclusion in Christ, however, it may be necessary for us to see that He died *for* us, *for* our sins, not as our Substitute, but as “the One giving Himself a *correspondent* Ransom [*antilitron*] *for* [*huper*] all” (1 Tim.2:6), acting thus *on our behalf*.

It is not just that the theory of substitution is untenable; it is, first of all, that it is not according to Scripture. It is true that the Greek word *anti* signifies “against”; however, it does so not in the sense commonly supposed. Scripturally, in its essence, that which is *anti* something else is that which stands “against” something else not in the sense of “opposition thereunto,” nor in any sense of “as a substitute for.” Rather, *anti* speaks of that which is “against” something in the sense that it is, in some respect, *adjacent*, and thus “correspondent” thereunto. Correspondency, is the essential notion of *anti*, and is the significative thread common to all its occurrences.

In his article, “Consequently Now” (pp.87-96), Dean Hough explains that it is “by means of God’s spirit [that] we have been united with Christ in His death and life, and thus, in spirit, we stand before God, freed from the law of sin and death. This is our position in spirit, and our sinfulness and mortality in the flesh cannot separate us from it” (p.88).

Thus it is that, for our sakes: “Christ died for our sins *according to the scriptures*, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day *according to the scriptures*” (1 Cor.15:3,4).  
J.R.C.

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*Christ Died for our Sins*

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SUBSTITUTION OR INCLUSION?

SIN and suffering and death came through the single offense of one man because all humanity was generated by him; so salvation comes through the solitary sacrifice of our Saviour since all were created in Him. God's method of salvation is *inclusion*, not *substitution*. Christ does not take the place of each sinner of the race, as though He were a mere man. He displaces Adam, and His work affects all, even as Adam's has done. He is the second Man, as though none had intervened between Him and the first. He is the last Adam, in Whom there is a new humanity, which will be blessed by His one sacrifice, even as the old humanity was doomed by Adam's single transgression.

The *why* of salvation may be answered by a single word—*love*. God saves because He loves. The *how* may also be explained by one word—*sacrifice*. But thoughtful saints are not satisfied with so summary an explanation. The further question arises, *How does sacrifice save?* Many are the philosophies, and more are the illustrations used to show how Christ can save the sinner. These have come between us and the simple truth so effectually that it is almost impossible to brush them aside and get through to the facts. The only encouraging sign is that few who really investigate are fully satisfied with any "theory of the atonement" propounded hitherto.

THE WHY OF SALVATION

*All was created in the Son of God's love* (Col.1:13-16). God loved His Son. Creation should never be divorced from that substratum of divine affection which brought it

forth. This is the unbreakable tie which binds God to His creation, and the Son to every creature in the universe. Whatever occurs, this underlying love abides, even though it be eclipsed temporarily and assume the garb of hate. Like the foundation of the temple of Solomon, this solid substructure is seldom seen during the eonian times. It is covered by the debris due to the destructiveness of sin.

The immanent love residing in God and in His Son, which occasioned creation, craved a response from His creatures which they were not qualified to give. Like Adam, they had not the knowledge of good, hence could not appreciate or give thanks for it, or adore the Giver. As we are constituted, such a knowledge can come only through an experience of evil. That is why God planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden.

In considering Adam's transgression, almost everyone focuses his eye on the word "evil," as though the tree did not give the knowledge of *good*. This, coupled with the expressed warning of God, gives the impression that it was not His intention that Adam should get the knowledge of this tree. It would have been far simpler to cut it down if that were His object. God did wish Adam and his race to appreciate the good He gave them, even though it involved the knowledge of evil. The very act which brought sin into the race, while it was a direct transgression of His word, was in line with His underlying purpose, for it gave the knowledge of good.

Though God's love demanded the presence of evil and sin in order to make itself known, it also required that this process should be limited in time. Endless evil and sin would defeat the very purpose for which these were introduced. Hence a definite duration is devoted to this process, called the eonian times. These eons were made in God's Son (Heb.1:2). Sin and evil are strictly confined to them. The first three eons are devoted to the develop-

ment of sin, the last two to its retirement. As a result, all creatures will revel in a knowledge of God's goodness and grace, and He will become All in all, thus accomplishing the object for which they were formed.

#### THE INCLUSION OF ALL

The *method* of salvation has proved a standing puzzle to expositors as well as to the inquiring student of the Scriptures. Why did Christ die, and how can that sacrifice effect the reconciliation of all? The solution lies in a closer acquaintance with Christ and His relations to God and to creation before He undertook the work of redemption and deliverance. As the Son of God's love, all was created in Him and through Him and for Him. Hence He is closely related to creation apart from and prior to His sufferings for sin.

It seems difficult for us to associate Christ with aught else than redemption. The great truth that He is the First-born of *creation* seems to have vanished from the consciousness of Christendom. Yet it is vital to an understanding of redemption. It corrects all those false ideas that He was an unwilling Sufferer, a third party upon Whom the role of scapegoat was forced, which led rationalists to the conclusion that the cross was an exhibition of injustice to One and partiality to others.

The relation of the Son to creation is expressed by the title *Firstborn*. This is elaborated by a series of prepositions, *in, through, into, or for, and before* (Col.1:16,17). These express the various aspects of His connection with creation, apart from sin or sacrifice. We are accustomed to think of this as God's universe. We should include Christ, for it is created in, through, and for Him. This is the basic truth which explains the manner of its deliverance. Its method cannot be understood until first we see that the Saviour is not a distant, disinterested Victim, but as close

of kin as could possibly be, apart from sin. A father toils and suffers for his family with no thought of injustice. Relationship calls for more than justice demands.

It is desirable to have a name for Christ as the One in Whom all was created. English has two words for *progenitor*, seeing that *procreator* has the same sense. We suggest that progenitor be applied to Adam as the generator of the race, and Procreator be reserved for God's Son as the One in and through Whom creation was effected. Then we can state our case clearly and succinctly thus:

*As Adam, the progenitor of humanity, by one selfish act, involved it in unutterable woe, so God's Son, the Procreator of all, by one sacrifice, involves all in ineffable blessing.*

During the eons this is reserved for the chosen, who are redeemed through faith. All are not made alive *in* Christ until death is abolished at the consummation (1 Cor.15: 22-26).

#### GOD'S WAY OF SALVATION

Today, in evangelical circles, the doctrine of "substitution" is not only deemed scriptural but fundamental. The phrase "in our room and stead" is so widely used and accepted that it may seem blasphemy even to suggest that it is not satisfactory in describing God's way of salvation. Yet the dignities and prerogatives of Christ must not be eclipsed. He is more than a "means" of salvation.

The great fact that all was created in the Son of God's love is the only firm foundation for God's evangel. That the universe was in Him, as mankind later came to be in Adam, is the key to God's method of salvation. In God's thoughts, salvation is first. Sin is merely the necessary preliminary to make it possible. To reveal His love, God must be a Saviour. To reveal His salvation He must see that

all are lost. The method by which they are lost, through their inclusion in one offender, Adam, is a shadow of the method of their salvation, by inclusion in One, our Lord Jesus Christ. All were potentially saved before they were lost. God is not experimenting. He is not a gambler. He knows the outcome from the beginning. He is a great and glorious and gracious God.

#### INCLUSION

A good English word is sorely needed to express the idea conveyed by the preposition *in*. "Inness" is awkward and obsolete. "Immanence" is misleading. The best word available seems to be *inclusion*. It adds nothing to the word *in*. If we say that all humanity was *included* in Adam we have added nothing to the sense, but we have found a word which can be turned into a noun. We are practically compelled to say "the *inclusion* of all in Adam." We suggest this word as a special theological term to indicate the "inness" of the universe in Christ when it was created, as revealed in the first chapter of Colossians (v.16): "For in Him is all created."

There are a number of terms which may be used to express the "inness" of mankind in Adam and its consequences. Among these may be mentioned *relationship*, *headship*, *federal headship*, *representation*, *identification*, *unification*, and *solidarity*. But a close study of each one will show that it has no clear Scriptural basis, and is not fully satisfactory, yielding no definite explanation of the method of salvation.

#### RELATIONSHIP

The broad word *relationship* has much to commend it. The method of salvation is to be explained on the ground of our Lord's relation to the race rather than individual substitution. Its defect lies in its indefiniteness. It does not

specify the nature of the relation which He sustains to those He saves. Conversely, we are related to Him. But that does not give us the power and privileges which belong to Him. Relationship is right, but has no definite scriptural equivalent, and does little more than point out the direction of the truth. It is helpful in illustrating the fact that Christ had the privilege of doing far more than what is just for those to whom He was related by creation and generation. A father does not expect to be repaid for his sacrifices for his children. A Creator must care for His creatures.

#### HEADSHIP

Hitherto we have used the word *headship*, for lack of a scriptural noun. But headship is only one of the results of inclusion, and does not express the central idea. Humanity was included in Adam at a time when there was as yet no race, so that he was not its head, except in a potential sense. Sin did not affect all his progeny because of his *authority over* them, but because of his *inclusion* of them. "Inness" involves headship, for the father of a family is its head because of his priority and position. But his headship does not necessarily denote the fact that his offspring were in him and are involved in his activities for them. The *rule* of Adam over the earth and its creatures is best expressed by the term headship.

#### FEDERAL HEADSHIP

"*Federal*" *headship* brings before us a theological system which is quite unscriptural and inadequate. "Federal" theology is based on the theory that, before the "fall" man was under a "covenant of works," God having promised mankind, through Adam, the "federal head" of the race, eternal blessedness if he kept His law, but since the "fall" humanity is under a "covenant of grace," and God gratuitously promises the same blessing to all who believe in

Christ, the "Federal Head" of the church, whether by faith in a coming Messiah, in times past, or in the revealed Saviour, since His incarnation. This merely needs to be stated to show how unscriptural it is. These covenants are pure inventions, and are quite unknown to the divine records.

#### REPRESENTATION

*Representation* also possesses some elements of truth not found in *substitution*. All for whom a representative stands may be said to be in him. His acts are theirs. He is engaged *for* them. The difference between the two terms may be readily seen if applied to a delegate to a legislative assembly. If he is ill, another may act as his substitute in some of his work. That is one person taking the place of another. As a representative, however, he is supposed to be chosen to act *for* his constituency, not simply as a substitute for each of them. But representation fails to indicate any vital relationship. We did not choose a stranger to save us.

#### IDENTIFICATION

*Identification* seems to come still closer to the truth, for mankind and Adam were the same when it was in him. It does not, however, show how this identity came about. We cannot use it freely and say that we are all identical with Adam. There is always the possibility that it will be abused because it has implications which are not in *inclusion*. We were all included in Adam, and consequently are identified with him within certain limits, but we can hardly make the absolute assertion that each human is identical with him. The great diversities which have entered, such as sex and race and idiosyncrasy, make it difficult to apply to the individual. One who has been in Adam may be a part of him, but not necessarily wholly the same.

## UNIFICATION

*Unification* is a good word to express one aspect of our relation to Adam and to Christ. Being in Adam, we were one with him, and the race has been treated as though it were Adam in some respects. God speaks of only two men when dealing with life and with making all alive. Unification may express the fact that humanity and Adam are one and humanity and Christ will be one. But it does not explain how. A man and woman may be united and become one in an entirely different way. And the pressing need is to point out how mankind is united to Adam.

## SOLIDARITY

*Solidarity*, a term sometimes used in this connection, is not very acceptable. It denotes a compact, rigid unity, which might well have characterized humanity if sin had not come in. It is true that all men are brothers beneath the skin, but they do not coalesce or combine. There is nothing in this term to indicate the source of their solidarity. It merely expresses a result, which is by no means as evident as it should be. It will be far more apt when used of the new humanity of the future. In Christ the present lack of solidarity will no longer obtain.

God's method of salvation has been much dimmed by terminology which does not reflect the language of the Scriptures. We should trace the details of God's design starting with the revelation that all was created in Christ.

## ADAM A TYPE OF CHRIST

The truth that all creatures were in the Son of God's love is difficult to entertain or explain. It is much easier if we bring it down to our level, and see it illustrated in humanity. When Adam sinned we were *in* him. All that we are has come to us from him, so it must have been at

least latent in him first. The investigations prompted by the theory of evolution have shown that no living thing transmits anything permanent from its environment or experiences. All comes to it through heredity, so that all we see is the development of potentialities which were given to the first member of each species at its beginning. The whole human race was created in the first Adam. In a very real sense all mankind sinned in him. It is impossible to be of his race and not partake of the penalty of his act. *In Adam all are dying. Not through, but in.*

In order to realize and appreciate what Christ is to creation, we will use Adam as an illustration. The weakness of this parallel lies in Adam's failure. To strengthen it we propose to relieve Adam temporarily of the disabilities brought about by sin, so that we can see more clearly what Christ would be, in his place, and what Christ is, in His higher and earlier position.

Let us suppose that sin had not come in and that Adam were alive today, the firstborn of humanity, the head of the human race. The fact that he was not *born*, but *created*, would not bar him from the title "firstborn," for that is a faded figure, indicating rank and dignity, even when literally untrue. He would not only be the one in whom the race had its rise, the one *through* whom it came into being, but, in a very real sense, the one *for* whom it exists. All humanity would belong to Adam. All would be members of his family. His honors as head of the race would depend on them. If there were no race he would have no headship. There would be no vital relation between him and his progeny.

Furthermore, let us suppose that, in our day, some spirit being from outside our world should entice a pair to sin and disobedience and death. What would be Adam's attitude toward this incursion into his race? Could he refrain from exerting all his power to recover his lost progeny,

even at the risk of suffering to himself? If he were sinless and powerful (as Christ), would he not take upon himself some of the consequences if he could recover his sons? Even if he found it necessary to judge the culprits, had he the power, would he not bring them back from death?

Now let us change our supposition slightly, so as to accord more fully with the facts. Leaving Adam alone untouched, let us suppose that sin is contagious, that it spreads from one to another until all humanity is inoculated with its deadly virus. What then would be Adam's proper reaction? Immune himself, would it not be torment for him to behold the plight of his progeny? Could he be inhuman enough to stand aside in his holiness and allow his race to go to wreck and ruin? If he were the least bit like Christ he would go far beyond the bounds of justice in his efforts to serve and to succor. Christ is not some cynical spirit from another sphere, unmoved by the plight of humanity. They are His. They are for Him.

Long before humanity was in Adam, all creation was in Christ. He is vitally related to every creature in God's universe. He included creation in a higher sense than Adam incorporated humanity. There is a unity among the genus *Homo* which declares their relationship to Adam. There is a oneness in all creation which proclaims its connection with Christ. Its cohesion is in Him. The scientific theory that the unity of creation points to a single origin finds its answer, not in a primordial germ, but in Christ. All its potentialities were in Him before they became manifest in the creatures of His hand.

#### SON OF MANKIND

Our Lord continually insisted on His close relation to mankind, as such, apart from redemption. This is concentrated in His title Son of Man, or, better, Son of Mankind, or of Humanity. That this title means far more than the

fact that He was a human being is evident wherever it is used. In Hebrew it could be rendered Son of Adam. This gives the key to its significance. He inherits the headship of the race. All that belonged to Adam, apart from sin, is His. Indeed, seeing that He is sinless and superior to Adam, He claims more authority than we would accord to Adam. Since Adam cannot fulfill his functions in regard to the race it devolves on the Son of Mankind to shoulder them.

The sabbath was made because of mankind, and for this reason the Son of Mankind claims lordship over it (Matt. 12:8). He has authority on earth to pardon sins (Matt.9:6). He came to seek and to save that which Adam lost (Luke 19:10). It is as the Son of Mankind that He suffered and died and rose and will come again in glory to rule the earth. As such all judgment is committed to Him (John 5:27). Every member of the race must stand before Him to give an account of himself. None of this is based on His redemptive work. It is His by creation. Adam, the subordinate source, has failed. Now Adam's Source descends to undo the work that Adam did, and do the work that Adam should have done.

#### THE NEW HUMANITY

The mode of application of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice is evident from the fact that He heads a new humanity (Eph.2:15; 4:24). He does not start, as Adam did, by wrecking His race. Nor does He commence by preserving a negative innocence. He transmits to each one of the new humanity the positive benefits and infinite values of His great sacrifice. Adam transmitted death, and through death sin. The channel is flesh. Christ transmits life, and through life righteousness and holiness. The channel is spirit.

Not all the saints will die. Not all will be made alive from death. Some will be living when Christ comes. How will they be rid of the presence and practice of sin? They will

be vivified, that is, become deathless. Mortal, they will become immortal. Death will cease to operate in them. They will have superabundant life, so that it will be impossible for them to sin. There is no such thing as the "eradication of the sinful nature." It will not be necessary to take out the propensity to sin. All that is needed is the reversal of the process started by Adam. He doomed us with the process and crisis of death. Vivification is the impartation of superabundant life.

#### NUMBER AND QUANTITY

To minds accustomed to the idea of substitution, there are two principal points that need explanation, in treatment of the method of salvation. They may be expressed by the commercial terms *number* and *quantity*. How can one Man take the place of so many? We have all heard stories of men giving their lives as substitutes for others. But they could save only one. Then, how can one sacrifice be sufficiently severe to outweigh the weight of all the sins which have ever been committed? In these regards, the theory of substitution is quite inadequate. Instead of explaining, it calls for explanation, and none can be given.

#### ONE FOR MANY

How can *One Man* settle for the sins of so many? This is, perhaps, the chief problem in the minds of many who stop to think about the matter. It is evident that no mere man can die for another's sins, for he is doomed to death for his own. Nor could a sinless man (if such there were) take the place of the race simply because he had no sin of his own. That would keep him from perdition on his own account, but would not save anyone else. It is evident that Christ's sinlessness was not sufficient to make Him a sacrifice for all. He must be more than spotless to be adequate.

Let us consider our inclusion in Adam in connection

with sin. We know that his transgression brought in death. He became mortal. His life became a slow death process. This he passed on to us. Hence we also sin. It is evident that we were involved in Adam's judgment. If that had been different it would have affected us. If the question of sin had been settled while we were still in Adam we would have profited by it. Let us suppose that, through Christ, Sin had been completely repudiated while we were still in Adam. Then we would all have been saved in him. Here we have a clear illustration of how one can involve all. Adam did not act as a substitute for each of us in sin, nor could he have done so if he had brought salvation. It is because we were and are included in him that his fortunes affect ours.

It is a mistake to suppose that Adam transmits sin. In his case death came through sin. In the case of his descendants, sin comes through the operation of death. The process of dying, due to a lack of vitality, is transmitted by generation, and this leads to sin. Romans 5:12 should read "*death* passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned." Men do not sin because of the presence of some esoteric "principle" within them, but because they are deficient in vitality, because they are mortal, undergoing a process of corruption. Human nature, or instinct, and conscience, are not sinful. They may be stifled by sin, but they are arrayed against it (cf Rom.1:26; 2:14,15,27). This is the key to the cure of sin.

Adam cannot save, for he became a sinner. However, to help us realize the place of Christ, we will suppose that he was sinless, and that sin came in some other way. Can we imagine how Adam would feel if he saw his progeny suffering and sorrowing in sin while he himself is exempt? Is it possible that he would not make some effort to deliver his offspring? The question is, would he have the right to stand for all? Could he alone shoulder the responsibility

and deal with sin for the whole human race? He surely could. If, while the whole human family was in him, he affected all for woe, it is evident that he may also effect its weal if he is able. This is the key to our difficulty. The fact that sin entered humanity by one man shows that its exit also may be through One. The first man contained the race. The second Man also, at one time, contained creation in Himself.

Because creation was once in Him, as mankind was in Adam, the Son of God has the right and the responsibility to stand for all. The apostle reasons that the death of Christ affects all. "If One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). Certain it is that Adam's one act has affected us all. If Another, Who included the race within Himself, acts so as to countervail and overwhelm Adam's sin, that must also eventually affect all.

There is nothing immoral in a Sinless One suffering for the sake of a sinner. It is utterly contrary to all righteousness for Him to suffer as a substitute or instead of a sinner. Adam did not sin as our substitute, but he sinned for us, on our behalf. So Christ suffered for all. As all were in Him in the beginning so they are all seen in Him on Golgotha.

#### CHRIST MADE SIN

As Adam is entirely unable to save those whom he generated, it devolves on his Creator, Who, not being weakened by sin, is able to cope with it, to conquer it for all. Thus it is that the Son of Mankind came down from heaven to involve Himself in the sin of the race in order to save them from it. Until the cross, He was sinless, but there He was made to be sin itself, with a view to its repudiation at the end of the eons (2 Cor.5:21; Heb.9:26).

We are all suffering as a result of Adam's sin. We realize this through sad experience. It is not necessary to reason it out in order to prove it true. It should not be impossible,

then, to conceive of the opposite. If Adam had achieved some great deed for Yahweh, not merely just or neutral, but excessively meritorious, more so than his transgression was bad, and God had rewarded him for it by multiplying the abundance of his vitality, would he not have transmitted this to us, his posterity? Life may be imparted as well as death. Life may be transmitted, even as death has been.

Moreover, if Adam should do this deed long afterward, let us say at the time that Christ suffered, then all of his posterity from that point would benefit. Would that be just to his previous progeny? Seeing that his future offspring are blessed merely because he is their progenitor, it would be necessary to make it retroactive, for he is progenitor of all. Superabundant life would come to all of his race, merely because they were once in him.

In a figure we have transferred all of this to Adam. It is not at all true of him, but it is of Christ. If sin and death and corruption can come through one man, then righteousness and life and incorruption can come through Another, provided that He also included the race in Himself. If we endure sin's penalties because of one sin we may also enjoy the awards of one act that exceeds the demands of righteousness. If the act that brought in sin was in no way the equal, in duration or quantity, of the results which flowed from it, there is no reason why the act which brings in righteousness and blessing should be commensurate, in duration or quantity, with the infinite fruitage which follows it.

As an aid in comprehending the difference in magnitude between Adam's act and Christ's sacrifice, let us consider the rivers of blood which flowed from the veins of innocent animals, merely to set forth His supreme sacrifice. There is nothing trivial here. Millions of animals were deprived of their lives simply to recall to mind the act that saves. Each one of these sacrifices was a far more serious affair than that which took place in the garden. Adam destroyed

insensate fruit by eating it. The priests destroyed a sentient animal of much greater value and higher organization, simply to suggest a picture of Christ's sacrifice.

I do not think we have a right to expatiate upon the sufferings of these animals. I do not believe that it is God's purpose that they should suffer, even to portray His passion. A special method of killing was provided, so that they should not suffer. This consisted in draining out the blood at once. There is no sensation where there is no blood. Soul, or sensation (not life), is in the blood (Lev.17:11). Animals properly sacrificed do not suffer much. But the blood was not drained from the great Victim until after His sufferings were over. He suffered beyond our power to comprehend.

The true formula of God's method of salvation is given us in the fifth chapter of Romans. It may be arranged in a variety of ways, thus:

Adam's act *is to* Christ's act *as* Adam's effects *are to* Christ's effects.

Adam's act *is to* Adam's effects *as* Christ's act *is to* Christ's effects.

Christ's effects *are to* Christ's act *as* Adam's effects *are to* Adam's act.

This formula, for it is really only one, is worthy of our most earnest meditation. Our minds are unable to compute the staggering total of human woe. The fruit of Christ's travail is the unknown quantity which we wish to apprehend. How shall we attain a true estimate of the effects of the sufferings of Christ? *By comparing them with the pleasure of Adam.* The eating of the forbidden fruit gave Adam a micrometric measure of agreeable sensations. Compare this with the sufferings of the cross, physical torment for those long hours, spiritual agony due to God's withdrawal,

all raised to the highest degree by the exquisite sensibilities of the Victim and His previous experience of divine glory and pleasure.

*As much more* as Christ's sacrifice surpasses Adam's act in its quantitative values, so *much more* will be the measure of its effects over those of Adam's sin. As a result human sin dwindles down into a trivial affair *compared to* the blessings which are due from the cross of Christ. Let no one misunderstand me. I have suffered agonies in the last few years. As I write I am in pain. I do not minimize human sin or the suffering which it entails. But I do magnify the work of our Saviour. There is not much danger that my readers would believe me if I should say that, in the absolute sense, sin's effects are trivial. Not many are really deluded as to that. But, great as sin's havoc is, the happiness to come will dwarf it into insignificance.

This is best realized when we try to expatiate on the delight which came to Adam while he ate the offending fruit. Hardly anyone has ever thought of that. It seems of so little consequence. Yet it is the only pleasure which came to him in introducing sin. It is the only act which we can logically compare with the sufferings of Christ. It must sustain the same relation to it as the sufferings of humanity sustain to the bliss brought by His sacrifice. The quantitative difference between Adam's act and that of Christ is enormous. One is almost the least of pleasures, the other the greatest of agonies. So the ravages of sin will appear to us in the future bliss. They will be but light afflictions compared with the tremendous weight of blessedness which will come from the accursed cross (*cp* Rom.8:18; 2 Cor.4:17).

Ultimate reconciliation was first in the heart of God. There never would have been any estrangement without it. Therefore *enmity was introduced in a manner closely corresponding with the way it is overcome.* Because sal-

vation was planned to be the great achievement of the Son of God's love, the One in Whom creation first came into being, therefore sin was planned to reach the race through the failure of the one in whom it was secondarily created. Adam's offense is an inverted silhouette, a shadowgraph reversed, of the sacrifice of Christ. In their main outlines, their outstanding features, they are alike, though as far apart as the poles in moral values.

We may suppose that sin could have been introduced in a different way. It might have been limited to Adam, and each of his progeny might have been tested as he was, so that it would have been an individual failure. Adam might have had a considerable progeny before his transgression, who would have been freed from the effects of his offense. So the race might have been broken up into groups or units. But God did not arrange it so. Sin must enter through one man because it was to be settled through One. The relationship between Adam and his descendants must correspond to that which existed between God's Son and creation. Both could act on behalf of all who had been in them.

How can *One Man* settle the sins of so many? And how can one sacrifice be sufficiently severe to outweigh all the sins which have ever been committed? In these regards, the theory of substitution is quite inadequate.

#### THE DURATION OF SUFFERING

The theory of substitution demands that Christ should suffer, in time and extent, as much as the sum of all the suffering which it saves. An explanation of this has seldom been attempted. The usual suggestion is that the capacity of the Sufferer was so great that it was possible to concentrate it upon a single Victim, and compress it into the short period of His agony. This is most unsatisfactory, especially as to time. We cannot imagine that the anguish due to billions of beings for considerable periods (let alone for

eternity), could be so condensed. It is beyond all comprehension. It appears to be both illogical and immoral.

If substitution is true, and eternal torment the destiny of all who do not believe on Him, He must, at the very least, suffer eternal torment to redeem a single soul. To save more, He should suffer this much multiplied by the number of the lost, not only in amount but in duration. If we see that eternal torment is not true, but that each sinner suffers only for the limited time between his resurrection and the second death, being *judged* according to his acts, the matter comes nearer the sphere of rational inquiry. We cannot comprehend even a single eternity, much less billions of them, but we can compute billions of periods not more than a hundred years in duration. Yet this is not much relief. Our Saviour did not and will not suffer many hundreds of billions of years in order to save His people or the race.

The quantity of His suffering is beyond computation, but the duration is well within our ken. His spiritual agony due to God's forsaking Him on the cross did not exceed three hours. If, for the multitudes who are saved by Him, each ought to have endured it for their fraction of the time, it would be so short that not one of them would feel it. Human functions are not quick enough to sense a hundredth of a second. If we divide three hours, or one hundred eighty minutes, or only about ten thousand seconds, by the billions who will be saved, each period would be practically imperceptible. There is no possible parallel between the time periods.

#### THE QUANTITY OF SUFFERING

The eating of fruit is not an uncommon or important action. In Adam's case its fearfully destructive power lay wholly in its relation to God. Apart from His prohibition it was a trivial incident. After God had spoken, it became

a sin, a transgression, an offense, a channel of unutterable woe to humankind. So with its counterpart. Many men have been executed. Some have been crucified, but they were already enemies of God. When Christ was crucified, it was the word of God that intervened and made Him accursed (Gal.3:13,14). Its relation to God changed it from a death to a sacrifice, charged with infinite power for good, with a scope unutterably wider and higher than Adam's sin.

It is evident that any attempt to show that our Saviour suffered the commercial equivalent of that which His creatures were doomed to endure is absolutely hopeless. It is illogical and unnatural. The true equation should read like this: As Adam's act is to the sum total of its effects, so Christ's suffering is to that which it accomplishes. We must compare Christ's act with Adam's offense, not with its effects on mankind. Mathematically speaking, the formula for substitution has ignored the main members of the equation, so that the formula is insoluble. It may be expressed thus:

*Christ's act equals Adam's effects minus that endured by unbelievers.*

His accomplishment is thus shown to be *much less* than Adam's, contrary to the truth.

God gives us the basic principles of His judgment of mankind in the second chapter of Romans. He will pay each one according to his acts. Those who endure in good acts, seeking glory and honor and incorruption, will get eonian life just as surely as others will get fury, affliction and distress, if they effect evil. The fact that no one qualifies for eonian life does not destroy the principle that God's judgments are just. He rewards as well as condemns with an even hand. If Adam's sin produces such a fearful crop of distress, the sacrifice of Christ must reap a harvest of untold happiness.

If we wish to understand sin's exit we should consider

its entrance. Adam enjoyed the pleasure of eating the forbidden fruit for a few moments, and it resulted in all the misery and woe which torments humanity. He did not experience an hour's pleasure to compensate for each hour of our pain. There is no comparison between the duration and extent of his indulgence and the length and amount of human suffering which it has occasioned. He was in no sense our substitute on the debit side of the account. Neither is Christ our substitute on the credit side.

It is a poor rule which does not work both ways. If Adam's momentary indulgence was effective in producing such stupendous suffering and loss because the race was in him, why should not the prolonged anguish of Christ operate to insure much greater happiness and gain, since He is the Son of God, in Whom all was created? His work avails for all, not because of its bulk or duration, but because of the potentiality of His relation to those for whom His sacrifice was offered.

If any comparison is to be instituted, we should note how very mild was Adam's enjoyment of the pleasure of sin. Christ's sufferings were immeasurably greater. No one would endure them for a billion such experiences as Adam had. Then, if Adam's mild act brought disaster to the race, shall not the awful sorrows of Golgotha retrieve the loss and immeasurably more? The Scriptures testify that this is true, hence we may assume that the comparison and reasoning are right. Christ's sacrifice brings us infinitely more blessing than we lost through Adam's sin.

#### BEYOND THE DEMANDS OF JUSTICE

If the sacrifice of Christ had risen above the strict standard of right just as much as Adam's offense had sunk below it, it would have sufficed for the recovery of the race. It would have eventually cancelled the effects of sin. But there would have been no gain. All of the pro-

cess would have been in vain. But Christ's work soared gloriously high above the demands of justice, far further than Adam's offense was beneath it. Hence there is no mere recovery, no return to innocence, no new probation on Adamic ground. On the basis of the knowledge of evil there is the appreciation of good and of the superexcess of grace which was made possible by the ravages of sin.

This point is of surpassing importance. The act which afflicts us was below the standard of justice. The act which graces us was immeasurably above the demands of righteousness. Christ's sacrifice was not merely just. Right cannot neutralize wrong. It was infinitely more than that. If Adam had never sinned again, if he had done many signal acts of justice, none of these would counteract his transgression. It brought him into a condition where he could not do anything of sufficient virtue to cancel his offense.

An act which so far transcends justice must appear unjust to those out of sympathy with it. The rationalist, who knows nothing of the love of Christ, is right in claiming that substitution is immoral. Yet even he will go far beyond the bounds of strict justice to save his own child from harm, and never think of that as aught but the very highest phase of morality. It is because saints have lost the sense of their relationship to God and His Son that they have floundered so feebly when they unfold the work of our Saviour. They fail to accord Him His place in creation, hence cannot understand the manner of His salvation.

Every time we transfer something to another without compensation it is, strictly speaking, a departure from justice. Whether it is injustice or kindness depends on our attitude toward the recipient. If we give unwillingly, moved by coercion, it is wrong. If we give freely, motivated by love, it is more than just, but not unjust. If Christ was dragged to death, an innocent and unwilling substitute, to expiate our guilt, it was the greatest wrong that has ever

been perpetrated. It is only the love of Christ for us and His devotion to God which redeems the cross from being the greatest crime that was ever committed. He had done nothing to deserve it. On the contrary, He was worthy of blessing and glory. He loved much, therefore He gave His soul and Himself for the objects of His affection.

#### THE TIME OF SACRIFICE

If he could have borne it, the suffering due to sin might have been laid upon Adam while we were still in him. Then we would have escaped, but we would not have learned the lesson which it is sent to teach. That was neither the right time nor the right person, but it would have affected all. Similarly sin could have been counteracted long before, when creation was still in the Son, even though it was unknown. He was the right Person and it would have affected all, but there would have been no beneficial results. It was only after sin had operated sufficiently to provide a contrast for good that the time was ripe for the sacrifice of Christ.

God could have repudiated sin and saved all immediately after the great Sacrifice had been accepted. What more is needed? Is anything still to be added to Christ's sacrificial work? He could do this at the commencement of the millennium, or of the new creation. Why does He not do so? Is it not clear that God deliberately delays the disposal of sin in order that it may accomplish the work assigned to it in His intention? He even leaves it to afflict the lives of His saints until their vivification.

#### THE DEATH OF THE CROSS

Christ emptied Himself of the form of God for the express purpose of becoming the Sacrifice for sin. Sin involves suffering and death, hence He took a mortal form, in which alone these could be endured. During His life and

ministry He suffered from contact with the sins of others. But it is evident that men could not make Him to be sin without the aid and consent of God. In all their hatred He retained the smile and confidence of His Father, until He deliberately allowed Himself to be placed under the curse of the cross.

The key to the sacrifice of Christ lies in the *manner* of His death. Had He been stoned, according to Jewish custom, He would not have borne the sin of the world. God could not have made Him to be sin. But, because He was gibbeted, in Roman style, He came under the curse of Deity. "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" is God's own mandate, made to fit this very case. This is what changes the whole scene from a martyrdom, to a Sacrifice. It is *God's* act in forsaking Him on the cross, which constitutes the basis of our salvation.

#### THE SON OF GOD'S LOVE

In conclusion, let us look at God's salvation from the divine standpoint, ere sin entered the scene. Since He is Supreme, sin could not insinuate itself apart from His purpose. Since sin is to be introduced to form a background for the revelation of His grace and love, He would surely provide for its control and conquest before it is allowed to play its part. This was done when *all was created in the Son of His love*. If men were logical, this statement alone would absolutely guarantee a universal reconciliation. Given a *God* worthy of the name, and a creation conceived in His *love*, and eternal torment is a noxious nightmare. Even annihilation is utterly subversive of His deity or a direct denial of His love. Both death and suffering must be temporary and serve His purpose, or else He is a hateful and impotent fiend, a fool who cannot satisfy his own affections.

God's method of salvation was inaugurated long before men were lost. The precious blood of Christ was foreknown

before the disruption of the world (1 Peter 1:20). Later on, when sin was introduced, the process was copied from the earlier mode of salvation. In effect God provided the manner and means of salvation before there was any need for a Saviour. He operated through only two, His Son and the head of the human race (*cf* Rom.5:12-18). First He created all in His Beloved—which assures their ultimate weal—and later He puts all mankind in Adam—which involves their temporary woe. Their inclusion in Adam made them partakers of the effects of his offense. Their earlier inclusion in the Son involves them in the benefits of His sacrifice. The details of the application of His salvation during the eons should not obscure the universal ultimate, when the eons are over. All were in Adam, and are lost. All were in the Son of His love and shall be saved.

"Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers" (1 Tim.4:9,10).

The key word is *in*, or *inclusion*. If anyone was not in Adam he is not a sinner and needs no salvation. If anyone was not in the Son of His love he will not be saved. But, since *all were* created in the Beloved, so long as my mind retains its sanity I shall assert that God Himself will lose His deity if He cannot satisfy His own affections by delivering those on whom His heart has been fixed since the very dawn of creation. May God Himself saturate our very being with the triumphant truth that *He is love, in creation* as well as in redemption. Creation was not the act of a neutral, insensible Power, without aim or object, but the achievement of a heart-hungry Father, seeking to satisfy the longings of latent love, Who first assures the salvation of His creatures ere He lost them for a time, that they might discern the depths of His affection and learn the lesson of His love.

A. E. Knoch

### FOR OR INSTEAD?

IT is a striking fact that God never speaks of Christ as dying “in our room and stead,” or that He endured the cross as our “substitute.” The mere statement of this fact is deemed by some as a thrust at “evangelical” truth. But in truth, the deepest spirituality and most evangelical doctrine sees in these unsound words a distinct menace to the glorious evangel of the happy God.

There is a great difference between acting *for* or acting *instead of* another. *Instead* implies two parties on the same level and of similar qualifications. A mother does many things *for* her child which the infant cannot do for itself. When it advances in years and has duties of its own the mother may, at times, take one of its tasks and do it in its place. Yet even then the very fact of her relationship involves the thought of favor shown by the greater to the lesser.

To reverse the situation, we may all speak *on behalf of* God and His Word, but woe be to us if we speak *instead of* it! Job’s friends displaced the divine philosophy by their own, but Elihu spoke on His behalf. Only God’s prophets, like Moses, may speak in His stead, for he was made a god to Pharaoh.

#### THE PREPOSITION *hyper*

The following are most of the passages in which the precious preposition *for<sup>s</sup>* (*hyper*) is used of the work of Christ on our behalf. It will be readily seen that it is used far more freely than any other connective to indicate the relation of His work to us. It is of prime importance that we appreciate the full import of this preposition. We use *hyper* freely

in English in its literal meaning of OVER (in the genitive) and *above* (in the accusative). Morally, it means, *in behalf of, for the sake of, for<sup>s</sup>*. Read over the list and see it never means *instead of*.

*hyper*, OVER, above, for the sake of, for<sup>s</sup>

- Rom. 5: 6 For Christ . . . died *for the sake of* the irreverent  
7 For hardly *for the sake of* a just man will anyone be dying: for, *for the sake of* a good man, perhaps, someone may even be daring to die  
8 while we are still sinners, Christ died *for our sakes*.  
8:32 He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up *for* us all  
14:15 Do not, by your food, destroy that one *for whose sake* Christ died.
- 1 Cor. 5: 7 For our Passover also, Christ, was sacrificed *for our sakes*.  
11:24 This is My body, which is broken *for your sakes*.  
15: 3 Christ died *for our sins* according to the scriptures
- 2 Cor. 5:14 if One died *for the sake of* all, consequently all died  
15 And He died *for the sake of* all to the One dying and being roused *for their sakes*
- 2 Cor. 5:21 For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering *for our sakes*
- Gal. 1: 4 Who gives Himself *for our sins*  
2:20 the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up *for me*.  
3:13 Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse *for our sakes*
- Eph. 5: 2 Christ also loves you, and gives Himself up *for us*  
25 Christ also loves the ecclesia, and gives Himself up *for its sake*
- 1 Thess. 5:10 Who died *for our sakes* that, whether we are watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him.
- 1 Tim. 2: 6 Who is giving Himself a correspondent ransom *for all*

- Titus 2:14 Who gives Himself *for us*, that He should be redeeming us  
 Heb. 2: 9 so that . . . He should be tasting death *for the sake of everyone*  
 1 Peter 2:21 Christ also suffered *for your sakes*  
 4: 1 Christ, then, having suffered *for our sakes*

On two occasions our translators have rendered it in *one's stead*. Both are glaringly faulty, even on the surface. In Philemon (13) Paul recognizes the inferior station of Onesimus. Philemon never would have served Paul as a slave. Onesimus did not take his place, but acted on his behalf. We do not pray *in Christ's stead*: Be conciliated to God (2 Cor.5:20). We are not taking His place, but speaking on His behalf. We are not equals. We cannot do His work. We are His slaves. He is our Lord. The very thought of doing aught in His stead is abhorrent to all who know themselves and a little of His supremacy.

Should we be unable to fix the meaning of *huper*, there are a few passages in which we could lower the sense to *instead of* and not detect our error. But there are many instances where such a meaning is absolutely impossible. Christ did not give Himself *instead of* our sins (Gal.1:4). How could we claim to suffer in Christ's stead? (Phil.1:29).

#### THE PREPOSITION *anti*

It is well known that the word *anti*, INSTEAD, has gradually changed so that it now means *against* in English. Even in the Scriptures, it does not cling to the literal *instead* at all times, but broadens into secondary meanings, just as *huper*, OVER, is used for *in behalf of*, *for the sake of*.

As a limited number of connectives must do duty for the whole field of thought and link all kinds of relations, it is obvious that, in some cases, where there is no exact link available, the one nearest in sense must be used. So that the connectives expand their meaning to include adjacent spheres of thought. They also have the tendency to become

fixed to certain ideas, so that, in English, the connective is practically determined by the word with which it stands, even when another seems more logical.

Literally, the law said "an eye *instead of* an eye" (Matt. 5:38). But this suggests that the aggressor's eye was *substituted* for his victim's, so that the eye of the victim was spared, and only the aggressor's eye was destroyed. This was not true. Both eyes perished. One eye did not replace the other. The law demanded an equivalent, not a substitute.

The sense of substitution clings to *anti* in some of its usages, as "*instead of* a fish will he be handing him a serpent?" (Luke 11:11), but far more frequently it loses the idea of replacing or replanting. From the fact that that which substitutes for another is usually of the same kind or measure or value, it is used of any equivalent or corresponding entity, that which will tip the opposite side of the scales.

The common phrase "evil *for (anti) evil*" (Rom.12:17; 1 Thess.5:15; 1 Peter 3:9) cannot be rendered "evil *instead of evil*," in the sense of substitution. An evil return is the same in kind. It corresponds to the original evil, but does not take its place. So also "grace *for grace*" (John 1:16). The grace which the disciples received was of like quality and measure as that bestowed on Christ, but it was, in no sense a substitute for it.

*Anti* is usually used in denoting the price of a thing, the money equivalent. If we should pay ten dollars for a Bible we do not give the money *because* we should give the Bible, but because it is its equivalent in value. The same is true of a ransom. When our Lord and Peter paid the half shekel as a ransom for (*anti*) them (Matt.17:27), it was not a substitute for their souls. The Septuagint denotes the relationship by the genitive case (Exodus 30:12) and by the preposition *peri*, which means *about, concerning* (Exodus 30:16).

There is a most striking passage, in which both *anti* and *huper* are used, which will help us. The Man, Christ Jesus,

is giving Himself a correspondent ransom (*antilutron*) for (*huper*) all (1 Tim.2:6). The price paid for all is much greater than for many. His soul was given for many. He gives *Himself* for all. The figure is taken from the atonement money. What He was to the saints in Israel He will become to all mankind.

The force of *anti* in connection with a ransom is fixed for us by the compound word *antilutron*, INSTEAD-LOOSENER, correspondent ransom. A study of all the compounds with *anti* will convince us that it seldom keeps its literal sense of substitution. For instance, *antilegō* INSTEAD-say, does not mean to say something in place of another, but to *contradict* him; *antimisthia*, INSTEAD-HIRE, is not what is given in place of wages, but the equivalent, the *recompense*. So *antilutron* is not what is given in place of a ransom, but an equivalent or *correspondent* ransom.

This is confirmed by the fact that it is followed by *huper*, *in behalf of*. It is inconceivable how Christ should be Himself a substitute in the place of all. We can entertain such a thought when confined to the sacrifices under the law but that He Himself should take the place of His creatures is not only unscriptural but irrational. He is unspeakably greater than men. He gives Himself on their behalf but not in their place, as their substitute.

#### A RANSOM FOR MANY

There are two passages which, on their face, seem to teach that Christ, as a sacrifice for sin, suffered instead of (*anti*) those He saves. These are Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45, which read, "the Son of Mankind came to give His soul a ransom for (*anti*) many." We have purposely stated the matter as it *seems* to those accustomed to credal evangelism, for they do not realize that their whole case lies in taking these texts out of their contexts and changing the wording to suit their ideas. Indeed, we cannot

blame them, for the Authorized Version translators have drastically altered the sense by substituting *life* for *soul*, as though our Lord was not aware of what He was saying, and they find it necessary to correct Him. It is absolutely necessary that we read the context of this passage, so we reproduce it herewith:

"Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, worshiping and requesting something from Him. Now He said to her, 'What are you wanting?' She is saying to Him, 'Say that these, my two sons, should be sitting, one at Thy right and one at Thy left, in Thy kingdom.'

"Now Jesus, answering, said, 'You are not aware what you are requesting. Are you able to be drinking the cup which I am about to be drinking?' They are saying to Him, 'We are able.' He is saying to them, 'Of My cup, indeed, you shall be drinking. Yet to be seated at My right and at the left is not Mine to give, but is for whom it has been made ready by My Father.'

"And when the ten hear, they resent about the two brothers. Now Jesus, calling them to Him, said, 'You are aware that the chiefs of the nations are lording it over them, and the great men are coercing them. Not thus is it among you. But whoever should be wanting to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever may be wanting to be foremost among you, let him be your slave, even as the Son of Mankind came, not to be served, but to serve and to give His soul a ransom for many'" (Matt.20:20-28, CV).

Let us then provisionally point out what these passages do *not* teach. They do *not* speak of the *death* of Christ. He gives His *soul*, not His *life*. There is nothing said about *salvation*. *Service*, not salvation, is in view. *Sin* is not at all before us, but lordship and subservience. *Sacrifice* is not here, though our tendency to insert the thought everywhere is hard to be controlled. When we see what is *not* there, these passages no longer intrude into the great doc-

trine concerning the method of God's salvation, and we are free to get a clear conception of the truth as set forth by the apostle Paul.

The context, which alone can guide us to the contents of these passages, is always ignored. Very few intelligent believers associate these words with the preceding exhortation. Instead, this saying is given a new setting, in the midst of evangelical teaching which was not due until after our Lord's sacrifice. At that time the disciples did not and would not consider His impending death, and they could not have associated these words with it. We, of course, cannot do otherwise, if we corrupt the translation to read *life* in place of *soul*.

This is a tragic illustration of the effect of scholarly translations. Any scholar will tell you that *soul* means *life* sometimes, for the Greek lexicons say so! In each case this word throws a false color over the whole passage, divorces it from its context, and injects it into a sphere of truth to which it does not belong, and then finally, so controls and distorts the so-called doctrine of "atonement" (to which the passages do not refer) that the plainest statements on that subject are denied, the special connective which is used is laboriously altered to agree with that in these passages, and any statement of the truth is made to seem unscriptural and false, so that honest seekers decry it and denounce those who offer them just what they are seeking.

The subject of the paragraph is twofold, *service* and *slavery*. It is *not* service and *sacrifice*, as we usually assume. The chiefs of the nations lord it over their inferiors, and their great men use coercion. Greatness, in Christ's kingdom, consists in serving. Superiority consists in slaving. He would have His apostles, all of whom desired to be great, and wanted the highest place like James and John, make this their own by humble service. Then He gives Himself as their Example, so that they could follow in His

footprints. He came to serve, not to be served. He came in the form of a slave, giving His soul as a ransom to free those who were in bondage to the law and the beggarly elements of the world. This is not their salvation from sin. That is presupposed. We are freed from law (if we were under it) by death to it. The *Circumcision* find freedom in following in His steps.

Our principal objection to the doctrine of substitution lies in the fact that it degrades our Lord to the level of those whom He saves. That objection cannot hold here, however, for He assumes the lowest place, being seen as a slave. As such He *serves* others, He does not save *them*. The ransom here brought before us is that of slaves. "Many," even His disciples, were held in involuntary servitude. Instead of being sons of God, they were in bondage under the ceremonial observances. The law made them slaves. He gave up His glory and entered into their place (*anti*) that this might be their ransom, so that they could go free until the jubilee.

It is very difficult for us, sinners of the gentiles, basing all on Christ's death and tracing all to His resurrection, to realize the status of His disciples before His sufferings on Golgotha. That they did not realize the necessity of His sacrifice is quite evident, for they did everything possible to prevent it. Indeed, the early proclamation of the kingdom had no sacrificial note in it. He did not speak of His suffering until the nation had rejected the proffered King. We look upon Christ entirely from the standpoint of His death. To us He is a personal Saviour first. To them this came last. At this juncture they were occupied with *reigning*, and He tells them that He is not only serving them but ransoming them from slavery to the law by taking the form of a slave.

I well remember the shock I received when I first

noticed the word “coming out” in John 10:9. I had been thoroughly indoctrinated with the idea that, if we entered in through Christ, we could never come out *and be lost*. Then the whole chapter distressed me. Finally, I saw that I was forcing into it ideas entirely foreign to the theme. It is beautiful as a figure of Israel, but it is most incongruous if we seek to distort it to fit the phraseology of some of our evangelicals today.

It was not until I had learned the true meaning of *soul* that I had any idea of the true force of *giving* the soul. Even after I found out that the word was *soul*, and not *life*, the thought persisted that the Lord was speaking of His death to ransom sinners. When I saw that I had no right to inject the idea of death it dawned on my mind that the giving of His soul consisted in taking the place of a slave. He was entitled to enjoy all the sensations which come with honor, wealth, and power. Instead of this He experiences the deprivations which accompany weakness, poverty and degradation. This *sentient experience* (such is the force of *soul*), in which He *correspondingly takes the place* (*anti*) of many, is the ransom which liberates them from slavery, *not redeems them from sin*.

I realize the tremendous power of theological tradition, so that the preceding explanation will appeal to very few, at first. I beg of them to read and reread the connection, time and again, in order to remove some of the false associations which cling to the passages. It is well to study them in their larger contexts. Note that they occur only in the first two synoptics with their narrow outlook. *They have no bearing on the bulk of mankind*. The “many” are not all. The Circumcision, under law, could not fulfill it. He *takes their place* under law and fulfills it for them. Here is the force of *anti*. This is not what He does for sinners in regard to their sin.

## SUBSTITUTION

The idea of substitution was forced on my attention soon after I believed. What especially impressed my mind was the statement, by one presumably an adept in Greek, that the preposition *huper*, which is so often used to express the relation of Christ’s work to His people, meant *in place of*. Since then I have examined every occurrence of every connective in the Greek Scriptures, some of them many times, and I have found that few facts are more evident than that *huper*, literally OVER, does *not* mean *for* in the sense of *in stead of*, but *on behalf of, for the sake of*. Applied to so great a theme and so exalted a Person, the distinction is of the utmost importance. God does much *for* His creatures, but He never acts in their stead. Christ, also, is so high above us that He cannot take our place, but must suffer on our behalf.

An instructive passage which gives us a clue to the usage of *huper* is found in Luke 9:50: “Who is not against you is *for* you.” Another is John 10:11 “The ideal shepherd is laying down his soul *for the sake of* the sheep.” Another, Romans 8:26: “the spirit itself is pleading *for* us.” Another, Romans 8:31: “If God is *for* us, who is against us?” 2 Corinthians 13:8: “For we are not able for anything against the truth but *for the sake of* the truth.” Ephesians 3:1: “Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus *for* you, the nations . . .” Philippians 1:29: “. . . not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering *for* His *sake* also . . .” First Timothy 2:1: “I am entreating . . . that petitions . . . be made *for* all mankind, for kings . . .” These, and many others, show that *huper* cannot mean “in the room and stead,” but *for the sake of, on behalf of*, without any idea of substitution or equivalence whatever.

The fact that “substitution” has such a large place in evangelical theology is in keeping with its poverty and lack of appreciation of the overwhelming value of Christ’s sac-

rifice. It is in keeping with such terms as “atonement.” It rises no higher in its conception of His glorious offering than a *remedy* for sin. Indeed, a “substitutionary atonement” is supposed by many to be the highest description of His work, when it is fitted only for the temporary results of animal sacrifice under the law.

Let us revel in the truth that Christ’s death was *for our sakes*, not “in our room and stead.” Endless reasoning will never satisfy the difficulties of His so-called “substitution.” All these mental objections flee once we give Him His true place, so high above us that He could not take our place, but, in amazing condescension, suffered for our sakes. The language of theology drags Him down to equality with us. Let us seek to restore Him to it is true supremacy.

A. E. Knoch

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#### OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST

In the preceding articles, A. E. Knoch takes up the important issue of *how* Christ’s sacrifice saves. How does the death of Christ on the cross become the means of the justification of the sinner and the reconciliation of the enemy of God? Is it because, as many have said, He thus became our Substitute, dying in our stead? Or is it because, as the One in Whom humanity was created, He becomes the One in Whom we are delivered (Eph.1:7)? Is His love for us deeply rooted as a matter of relationship by creation? Is it that even as Adam’s one act of sin affects all humanity because we are his descendants by generation, thus also Christ’s one act of righteousness in His death on the cross, affects all humanity because all were in Christ, by creation, before we were in Adam? The subject of our inclusion in Christ is pivotal to our understanding of the evangel. In that Christ died for all, all died (2 Cor.5:14). So also, in that He was roused from among the dead, no longer dying, but living to God, all shall be vivified *in Him* (Rom.6:10; 1 Cor.15:22).

But that glorious consummation, made certain by the death and rousing of Christ, is still far in the future. Nevertheless, already, in spirit, God has united us, who are believing, together with Christ in His death and life. That is the theme of the next article on the opening verses of Romans 8.

## CONSEQUENTLY NOW

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER of Romans brings the evangel of God concerning His Son to a climax of grace and peace. The believer will turn to it often in the midst of the groaning and travailing of the present eon and the infirmity of the flesh. For we need constant reminding of God's giving of His Son for us and the assurance that He is working all together for good. In this there is spiritual strength for our daily walk, for joy and peace and endurance.

### CONSEQUENTLY

But what is said here does not stand alone. It is solidly built on the first seven chapters. The immediate connection is made by the word "consequently" in the first verse, which continues the "consequently" of 7:25 where Paul enslaves His mind to what he calls "God's law." This, in turn, is in consequence of God's rescue of grace for which Paul is thanking God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

By the words, "God's law," Paul does not mean "the law of God" given to Israel at Sinai, referred to in Romans 7:22 and 8:7. His enslavement of mind is to the message of the obedience of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.5:19; 6:16), and of the righteousness of God now made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.3:21,22; 6:18). It is the type of teaching to which we are given over (Rom.6:17). "God's law" is the evangel of God concerning His Son.

Paul's devotion, as a loving slave, to the evangel is the outworking of His thanksgiving to God for His grace which rescues us from sin and death through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

With this in view we exult with Paul that nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. For by means of God's spirit we have been united with Christ in His death and life, and thus, in spirit, we stand before God, freed from the law of sin and death. This is our position in spirit, and our sinfulness and mortality in the flesh cannot separate us from it.

For what was impossible to the law given at Sinai (because of the infirmity of our flesh), God did in sending His own Son for the condemnation of sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law shall indeed be fulfilled in us.

As we focus on this evangel, our disposition is moved from fear and wretchedness in the direction of God's spirit of love and life, and Christ's spirit of humble submission to God's will and confidence in His Father's goodness, in which we cry, "Abba, Father!"

For we are taking account of the expectation God has prepared for us, that of the glorious freedom of the children of God (which will ultimately embrace all), and we are awaiting our part in it all with endurance.

We do groan and travail in our present infirmity, but as we do we pray to God with an awareness that He is working all together toward the end of good.

#### JUSTIFICATION AND INCLUSION

Paul has not moved away from the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Even as he writes about our walk and disposition he continues to evangelize the evangel for which God has severed him from the former apostles. For that is the foundation of our faith and the source of spiritual power for our walk. It is a message of pure grace, apart from any law imposed on us to carry out. But it is centered on God's law of love which *He* has carried out in the giving of His Son. This is the essential basis of our life today as well as of that to come.

Consequently, Paul writes:

*Nothing, **consequently**, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. (Not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit.)<sup>1</sup> For the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus frees you from the law of sin and death. For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit. (Rom.8:1-4)*

Here, in the first verse, are two profound and power-packed graces which now have been secured and which vibrate with spirit in our lives: (1) Nothing is now condemnation to us as we stand before the all-righteous and all-powerful and all-knowing God. This takes us back to Romans 3:21-5:21; it is *justification*, joined with *conciliation*. And (2) this grace is granted to us who, in spirit, have been placed before God *in Christ Jesus*. This takes us back to Romans 6:3-7:6; it is our "baptism into Christ," into His death and life, in which we are, in spirit, "dead indeed to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." A fitting term for this grace is "Inclusion."<sup>2</sup>

These two aspects of the evangel are reworded in verse 2 in inverted order: In spirit we have been given life in Christ Jesus (Inclusion) which frees us from the law of sin and death (Justification). In the center of his heralding of these astounding gratuities concerning our position in Christ Jesus, it appears that Paul inserted, by anticipa-

1. This line is absent at this point in the earliest manuscripts and references to this section of Romans, but is found in many later ones. If Paul originally included it here as well as at the end of verse 4, I believe it should be treated as a parenthesis.

2. cf. the article entitled, "Substitution or Inclusion," pp.51-75.

tion, the line concerning our walk, which concludes verse 4. We must always relate our walk to God's grace in justifying us through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and to our inclusion in Christ Jesus in His death and life, in which He is no longer dying, but living to God. What is said about walk here is placed securely within the evangel that nothing is condemnation to us, who are freed from the law of sin and death, in that we are in Christ Jesus and are given life in Him. That is where the matter of our present conduct must be kept, lest it slip away and become attached to the law of Moses as it is with the Circumcision evangel.

The evangel reveals that we stand before God justified and conciliated, and united with Christ Jesus in His death and resurrection. This is grace. That nothing is condemnation to us is grace. That we are spiritually positioned in Christ Jesus and have life in Him is grace. That we are thus freed from the law of sin and death is grace. That we shall be fulfilling the righteous requirement of the law is grace. And it is this grace (not the law given at Sinai) which is standing over us even in our present lives with powerful effect on our walk.

The basis of all these operations of grace is delineated in verse 3. It is the evangel that God sent His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh for the condemnation of sin in the flesh, that is, for its final elimination from humanity. Christ was made to be sin (the Antitype of the sin offering), that we might become God's righteousness in Him (2 Cor.5:21).

#### NOTHING IS NOW CONDEMNATION

We are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. By means of God's spirit we are baptized into Christ Jesus, into His death and into His life, in which He is no longer dying, but liv-

ing to God. Nothing is now condemnation to us, for we are in Christ Jesus. In spirit, we stand before God as Christ stands, roused from among the dead (*cf* Rom.6:9,10).

Let us, like Paul, enslave our minds to this word and achievement of God.

The "nothing" at the beginning of Romans 8 is an absolute negative. We see this again at the end of this chapter. It is in view of God's law of grace, in that God spares *not* His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, that we become persuaded that absolutely *neither* death *nor* life, *nor* messengers, *nor* sovereignties, *nor* the present, *nor* what is impending, *nor* powers, *nor* height, *nor* depth, *nor* any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:31-39).

Condemnation comes about because of sin. But we have been put to death in the death of Christ, so that sin is not reckoned to us. "For one who dies has been justified from sin" (Rom.6:7).

Hence, "Condemnation is utterly out of the question for all in Christ Jesus. This is infinitely more than the atonement or shelter provided for sin by the sacrifices offered under the law. It is far beyond the pardon, or forgiveness, contained in the proclamation of the kingdom. The atonement needed to be renewed year by year, the pardon might be recalled, but the justification we have in Christ Jesus is nothing less than God's righteousness, which is absolutely inviolable. It was not secured by any act of ours and cannot be marred by aught that we can do. Sin only enhances the graciousness of it, but cannot sully or impair it."<sup>3</sup>

Again, "The saint is not under condemnation because that which would bring him into condemnation has itself been condemned . . . *Nothing* either of sins committed or of sin transmitted can ever bring saints into condemna-

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

tion. Whatever further discoveries I may make of the persistence and enormity of indwelling sin I fear no sentence of banishment and doom, for God has not only acquitted me from all charges, but has invested me with His own righteousness.”<sup>4</sup>

#### NOW

It is the consequence of God’s rescue of us in grace that nothing is *now* condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. By works of law no flesh at all shall be justified in God’s sight, *yet now*, a righteousness of God has been made manifest *through Jesus Christ’s faith* for all, and on all who are believing (Rom.3:20-22).

Where once no flesh at all could be justified in God’s sight, *now* God Himself has manifested His own righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ. God’s righteousness is not simply that He has a right to do what He does, but that He does what is actually the right thing to do, ultimately to be enjoyed and applauded by all. God condemns sin and puts an end to sin and death through the death of His Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord. The consequence of this is that all mankind shall be constituted righteous (Rom. 5:18,19), yet already, for us who are believing, nothing is *now* condemnation, for we stand before God in Christ Jesus and are seen by God as He sees His Son (*cf* Eph.1:4).

#### IN CHRIST JESUS

We are in Christ Jesus because we have been baptized *in spirit into* Him; this means we have become united with Him in His death and life (Rom.6:3-11; Col.2:12). This baptism “into” Christ is, like our baptism “into” the body of Christ, a baptism “in spirit” (*cf* 1 Cor.12:13), carried out by God (*cf* 1 Cor.12:28).

Let us, like Paul, enslave our minds to this.

4. George L. Rogers, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.25, pp.35,36.

Regarding 1 Corinthians 12:13, A. E. Knoch wrote: “A most instructive and helpful distinction exists in the original text between baptism *in* a place or element, and *into* a condition or result. This is clearly seen in the declaration that, *in* one spirit, we all were baptized *into* one body. The spirit is the element *in* which we were baptized: the body is the resultant condition. We have thus become identified with the body of Christ.”<sup>5</sup>

The resulting condition of our baptism into Christ is that nothing is condemnation to us, neither sin, nor death, nor the demands of the holy law given to Israel. For we are freed from the law of sin and death.

In being rescued from their wretchedness in Egypt, Israel was baptized *into* Moses *in* the cloud and *in* the sea (1 Cor.10:2). We, in being rescued from the wretchedness of captivity to the law of sin because of our body of death, are baptized *into* Christ *in* spirit. This evangel is the power of God to us who are believing it, and, continuing Paul’s figure in 1 Corinthians 10, we “eat” and “drink” of this as we walk through the wilderness of our present lives (1 Cor.10:3).

The verbs used in Romans 6 and 7 have not been *eat* and *drink*, however, but the more literal terms of *declare*, *get to know*, *believe*, *perceive*, *take account of* (“reckon”), *present*, *submissively listen to* (UNDER-HEAR, i.e., “obey”), and *enslave* (in the sense of giving devoted attention to). But the point is certainly much the same. The evangel is vital to the living of our lives today.

#### THE SPIRIT’S LAW

The law of God given at Sinai was a law of instructions placed over Israel for them to carry out. We can understand this literal sense of the word, for we are under the law of our land. We also are gratified for such restraints

5. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.13, p.134.

on human behavior despite their many flaws and failures. But we also speak of the law of gravity, the laws of motion and similar laws of physics which do not refer to instructions we are to carry out, but to operations outside of ourselves which affect us.

What Paul calls “faith’s law” in Romans 3:28 is such a law, that is, the law of Christ’s faith, through which God’s righteousness is made manifest in our justification (Rom. 3:22,24). So also is “God’s law” (Rom.7.:25), which is God’s way of dealing with sin, His giving of His Son for sinners. Now we learn of “the spirit’s law,” which is the operation of God’s spirit in identifying believers with the death and life of Christ.

These three laws are the same. They all refer to the evangel, to the message of God’s grace in Christ Jesus, rather than to something we must do. This is what condemns sin and death and brings their hideous partnership to an end.

#### LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

It is only by the death of Christ and God’s rousing of Him from among the dead that we can have life in Christ Jesus. But because of God’s grace in baptizing us, in spirit, into Christ and thus into His death and life, we already have this glorious gratuity. This is the grace in which we stand (Rom.5:2). It is not something we earn or achieve, but it is something we most certainly *have* in spirit, for it is given to us by God by means of our inclusion in the death and life of Christ Jesus.

Our inclusion in Christ is a truth and blessing that is not well known and appreciated. To recognize and glory in it is a matter of maturity, as Brother Knoch pointed out:

“*In Christ* we are complete. Not only are we mature but righteous and holy, strong and glorious—everything that God’s heart could wish. Let us not discount this because our actions or the consciousness of our own vileness and

weakness and lack of holiness and righteousness and immaturity seem to deny it. Naught that we are or do affects our place in Him, for that is ours by grace, through faith, and depends on Him and not upon ourselves in any way. At the same time there is probably no more effective force to produce these graces in us than the consciousness and confidence that naught can disturb our completeness in Him, not even our own unbelief and failure and disgrace. I have emphasized and will continue to stress this great truth because it is the power apart from which exhortation degenerates into mere law keeping.”<sup>6</sup>

Paul does not speak of us as living victoriously over the reign of sin and death, but of being *freed* from it. By this he surely refers to our position in Christ. We died together with Christ. We shall be roused together with Him, and now hold these positions of death and life in Him by the operation of God’s spirit. Our need is to enslave our minds and hearts to this evangel of God, His “law,” concerning His Son, for in this is spiritual power for the bearing of the fruit of the spirit.

#### FREED FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

“The law of sin and death” is “the law of sin” (Rom. 7:23) and that of death as these two primal evils are introduced through Adam. “Through one man *sin* entered into the world, and through *sin death*, and thus *death* passed through into all mankind, on which all *sinned*” (Rom.5:12).

This clearly is a law which affects us, most insidiously. We have death operating in us; we are dying. And because of this we sin and eventually die. Paul exclaimed, “What will rescue me out of this body of death?” (Rom.7:24). And now because of God’s grace through the death of Christ for sinners, and because we who believe have been united

6. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.25, p.66.

with Him in His death and given life in Him, we are freed from this law traced back to Adam, not from its present operation in our bodies, but from it in our position before God, due to the spirit's law of *life in Christ Jesus*. This is very real, not because we feel it and see it, but because God has said it is so, and we believe what He says.

But also there is nothing more powerfully good in its effect on us than the believing of God's word to us, which in our case is His evangel, not the law He spoke to Israel, but the "law" He speaks to us in saying that while we are still sinners, "Christ died for our sakes." God sent His own Son, sparing Him not, but made Him to be the Sin-Condemner Who takes away all sin.

#### ENTREATIES IN GRACE

Later in Romans Paul will repeat certain of the precepts of the law, adding many other guidelines, but not as precepts, but rather *entreaties* in view of the "pities of God" (Rom.12:1). These pities compose God's loving consciousness of human need, which He translates into the action of sending His Son for the condemnation of sin by means of the cross and the tomb. In accord with this, in a special way today, He expresses the love of His heart by identifying us already, in spirit, with Christ, and in this way freeing us from the law of sin and death. Here indeed is a message of saving power for our walk in the Lord and confidence in our God!

D.H.H.

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#### REPOSING

We have lost for awhile the following friends of our work and fellow believers in Christ: **Christina Hough Lamkin**, of McBain, Michigan, who died December 29, 2014 at age 98, **Frank Portillo**, of Phoenix, Oregon, who died March 5, 2015, and **Douglas Cox** of Kitchener, Ontario, who died in early April. Again and again and again we turn in the face of death to the certainty of life ahead because of the death and life of Christ.

# Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

*Our 106th Year*  
*(1909–2015)*

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**THIRD QUARTER, 2015**

**Volume 106**

**Number 3**

## Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a “concordant version” of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or “New Testament,” was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures (“Old Testament”). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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Boldface type was used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. And lightface type was used for words (or parts of words) which were added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text. In addition small symbols and abbreviations were inserted between or attached to words to represent omitted terms, to indicate grammatical features and the sources of emendations to the Hebrew text.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2015  
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIX

## EDITORIAL

WE PERCEIVE in the Genesis account of God's devisings concerning Joseph and his brothers, a type of His devisings concerning Christ and all mankind. To his brothers, Joseph declared: "You devised evil against me, yet Elohim, He devised it for good in order to accomplish, as at this day, to preserve many people alive" (Gen.50:20; *cp* Rom.15:4).

Even as God devised for good the same sin and evil that Joseph's brother's devised against Joseph, thus also God devises for good the same sin and evil that humanity devise against God and His Christ (*cf* "Standing by are the kings of the land, and the chancellors gathered in the same place, against the Lord and against His Christ" Acts 4:26; *cp* Acts 4:27,28; Gen.39:9; Psa.51:4).

The likeness here consists in God's having devised evil for good—good not only for the sacrificial victim, but good as well for those who, in the devisings of God, devised the very evil through which the good would result and be enjoyed.

In accord with this testimony of Genesis 50:20 as rehearsed above, the articles in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* are centered upon the power and wisdom of God in the cross of Christ.

Dean Hough's article, "God, Sending His Own Son," begins by asking the questions, "What is that *grace* of Romans 7:24 which will rescue us out of our bodies of flesh? [and] What is *God's law* to which we, like Paul, enslave our minds while we remain under Sin's law in our flesh (Rom.7:25)?" The answer, immediately given, is: "It is the evangel of God concerning His Son, which Paul has continually been evangelizing in this epistle, and which he now places before us explicitly in Romans 8:3. He sets it

forth here in contrast to the law of God placed upon Israel at Sinai, and in opposition to the law of sin and death established over humanity in Eden” (p.133).

A. E. Knoch’s article, “Sin for Sin,” explains how “God settles sin by sin. Every sin is transmuted by the sin of sins into an act essential to God’s highest glory and the creatures’ greatest good. All the righteousness and glory and honor which are Christ’s, either before His incarnation or after His glorification do not offset sin. His undeserved humiliation and distress and shame and death are sufficient to transform all sin into righteousness and holiness and bliss” (p.144).

The devotional study by William Mealand, “Together with Christ,” considers “how [both] death and life are associated in blessing for the believer” (p.119).

My article, “Growth in Realization of God,” concerns “that which is imperative to our service if God would be pleased and we would be benefited” (p.123).

The remaining articles included herein, also by Brother Knoch, are “Crucified with Christ,” and “Buried, Ascended, Seated.”

In the former of these expositions, emphasis is placed upon our identification with Christ in His death: “*This is not applicable to God’s earthly people.* You will not find it in the epistles to the Circumcision, for the simple reason that God is not through with them yet, but is still dealing with them in the flesh, and will deal with them so in the eons to come. Those with Paul skip all that, and have already attained to the consummations of the eons (1 Cor.10:11)” (p.99).

In the latter writing, we are encouraged by the words, “Our blessing will reveal the depths of God’s love to an amazed universe, who will see through us what His grace can achieve, and so the worship and the acclaim and the glory will be His” (p.118).

J.R.C.

## CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

WE HAVE DIED with Christ. *This is not applicable to God's earthly people.* You will not find it in the epistles to the Circumcision, for the simple reason that God is not through with them yet, but is still dealing with them in the flesh, and will deal with them so in the eons to come. Those with Paul skip all that, and have already attained to the consummations of the eons (1 Cor.10:11). We are far ahead of the Circumcision, in spirit. O, if our religious leaders could only see this! It is hard for them to see that Israel in the thousand years will have sacrifices and a priesthood. Why, all that is done away with, they imagine. How can it be revived again? They do not distinguish between God's dealings with the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision. They do not see that, in spirit, *we are beyond the millennium*, so that our blessings are not yet due even in that eon of physical marvels.

We have gone beyond those things, and when Christ comes, there will be in a sense, retreat, and the flesh will again have a place. *Death with Christ refers only to us.* I want to emphasize particularly that it is not death *in Christ*. A little later we have that fine figure of speech regarding what we are in Him. Our death is not the same as His death. He died *for* us and we died *with* Him. When we look to Him crucified we cannot picture ourselves as being *in* Him, because He was there on our behalf. Rather, we can see our place in those that were actually crucified with Him. It is remarkable that the Scriptures should give us any account of these executed criminals. Their crucifixion does not affect our salvation, nevertheless much is

said concerning them, so that we may recognize ourselves in these doomed men.

A marvelous passage in Galatians sets forth these great dividing truths. It reads as follows: With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ (Gal.2:20). Notice that this reads somewhat differently from the AV. It is a beautiful example of emphasis. *Christ* has the emphatic position. It begins with Christ and ends with Christ. We are given the least emphatic place, together with a negative. The very form of this passage teaches us the truth which it sets forth.

We are not overly much concerned about the personalities of the two thieves and two malefactors. The whole point lies in the fact that they were crucified *with Christ*, at the same time and place with Him. That is the great point we ought to press today—crucifixion *with Him*. In them we see what we were in God's sight. He would put us there if we had our deserts. The point here is that we also deserve, not simply death, but a *shameful* death, and that ignominious end is pictured for us by these four who were crucified together with Him.

What kind of characters were they? Most of us would not like to be associated with them. But, thank God, we are! Because, unless we can see ourselves in their place, suffering the same shameful death that He suffered, until we can see that, we can never enter fully into the great truths that are for the Uncircumcision. As I said before, before God even commences with us, there is no need of further demonstrations. He had already proven just what we are, and that we cannot sink any lower. Later, the apostle shows the practical side: Now those of *Christ Jesus crucify* the flesh together with its passions and lusts (Gal.5:24). Notice that! God is demonstrating what men amount to in the flesh, so, at the very beginning of the truth for the Uncircumcision, Paul shows the foundation of it, the cru-

cifixion of the flesh. Then again, in Galatians 6:12, "Whoever are wanting to put on a fair face in the flesh, these are compelling you to circumcise, only, that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ Jesus." Ever so many of the Lord's people are included in this category. Where are those who do not try to put on a fair face in the flesh? Christianity is largely an attempt to make something out of the flesh. But Paul says: "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world" (Gal.6:14). You see, it is not the *death* of Christ merely, for salvation, but the cross of Christ for humiliation. So few make the distinction, but there is a tremendous difference. It is the *shameful* death. *The end of the flesh is in view here*. All the attempts to be spiritual Israel, to associate ourselves with the physical features of the evangel of the Circumcision, all that is in connection with the flesh and is finished in our case. Alas, how few indeed see the truth that we have been crucified with Christ.

Crucifixion applies not only to us, but also to the whole world. If that truth were owned today, it would change the entire face of this earth. If the so-called Christian nations acknowledged that the world has been crucified, practically everything they are doing today would be stopped and they would do the opposite. If we realized what is written here concerning the world, it would change everything for us and give us peace.

If I did not have these truths and looked out on the world today, I would have to be exceedingly callous to endure what I see. There are all kinds of movements to make man better. They have been at it for four or five thousand years, and behold, where we are! And some folks seem to think they are really going to accomplish something! Those of us who went through the first world war are a bit skeptical, altogether apart from what the Scriptures have to

say. And those of us who know man and the flesh, as we have them in the Scriptures, don't expect any more from human efforts now than in the past, for the simple reason that God has already crucified the world.

Even in the accounts of our Lord's life, if we look beneath the surface, we can see intimations of this truth. There we have these four who were crucified with Him. There is a good deal of truth in connection with numbers in Scripture, and it may be that the figure *four* brings before us the *world* number. Years ago, when we were taught that there were only two crucified with Him, I could not understand why there were just two. But later I found out there were four, two robbers and two malefactors. They give us a picture of what we have in the world today. There are all sorts of pretense, but, if you will boil it down, this is what it amounts to. You can take your choice whether you are a malefactor or a robber, but we are all worthy of crucifixion. Indeed, we are both, for we not only wrong God, but rob Him every day. It may be very difficult to believe it, yet there is exactly where peace lies. We talk about peace, but there will be no real peace until we and the whole universe come to the conclusion that, not *Christ* should have been crucified, but *we*. When we get to that point, the rest will be comparatively easy.

The two malefactors were crucified with Him right at the beginning (Luke 23:32). Afterwards, when the soldiers had cast lots for Christ's garments and placed the inscription above His head, the two robbers were crucified (Matt.27:38). Doesn't it seem remarkable that here are four men and one of them, although he is a malefactor, is saved? He believed. Does it not seem that he is a picture of those who believe, who take their place by faith? We can add *amen* to what he has to say: "We are getting back the deserts of what we commit, yet this One commits nothing amiss" (Luke 23:41).

This man was crucified, not *in* Christ, but *with* Him. The others were also crucified with Him. At Golgotha we have the world and ourselves crucified, and on the other hand we have Christ crucified unjustly. And when we once see that, it seems to me it ought to be clear that the demonstration, which God began when He took up Abraham and Israel, is no longer needed in connection with the nations. If they were crucified with Christ, they are through with the flesh. We, having been crucified with Christ, have found the answer to the demonstration. *There is absolutely nothing in the flesh for God.* Those that are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom.8:8). The only thing we can do with it is to crucify it. Not a decent death, but a dreadful execution. Only thus can we recognize its ignominious character, its utter shamefulness. We acknowledge that we are not only worthy of death, but the disgraceful death of a criminal. This goes to the root of the matter.

God has gradually been working out through the history of Israel a demonstration that there is nothing good in the flesh. One trial follows another, and so it will be in the future, for it will continue to be necessary so long as the flesh is given any place. But it is no longer needed for us. God uses Israel in order to demonstrate what the flesh is, not only to themselves but to the whole creation. But with us He has another purpose, so the lesson is shortened. Here we have one of the great distinctions between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision. A main reason why so-called Christianity and the so-called church, even believers, fail to understand God's purpose, is that they are still along the old line. They still give the flesh a place. They do not realize the place that God has given it—*crucifixion*. Neither do they realize the place God has given the world—*crucifixion*.

Saints sometimes come to me and are discouraged about the way things are going in the world. Things are going all

right because they are going all wrong. God's intention, His ultimate purpose, is being fulfilled in it by that very fact. I do not expect things to go right, because this is the world that has been crucified with relation to us. We should not expect anything good from it. We should expect robbery from robbers. And that is what the world is in relation to God, a gang of robbers and malefactors. It is because of this that God will be able to glorify His grace. So you see that this great truth must first be laid down as a foundation before you can understand this favor.

Much good teaching concerning grace has failed to be fruitful because those who heard did not realize their need of it. They cannot consider themselves so utterly degraded, so grace is wasted on them. My prayer is that God may in some way or another make the reader of these lines realize the death to which God has put them by crucifixion. Then it will not be difficult to reveal His grace to them. As a matter of fact, the reason why we have been crucified with Christ is that God may reveal His grace, not only to us, but through us to others. Grace is not very easily apprehended by many of God's creatures. It is not His purpose to put them all through the mill that the Circumcision are going through. God is going to use us to display His wisdom and power, but particularly and especially His *grace* (Eph.2:7). In order to do that, He must treat us distinct from the Circumcision. They had certain privileges. They were near to God, and, logically speaking, God should give them the highest place. But God will do something very much greater than that. If He gave them the highest place in the universe, He would not be able to display that greater grace which makes us the highest. O, that we could see ourselves as crucified! Then God would reveal to us our glorious place in Christ, and we, would revel in the grace that make us the highest trophies of His love.

#### JUSTIFICATION AT THE CROSS

Perhaps the best way to get a grasp of these things is to go to the cross and see just how those who were associated with that great tragedy acted, and what they said. When we see justification actually in the experience of an individual, then it is much easier to understand. We will try if possible to give an example of how it works. In Germany I went to Witttenberg where Luther lived a great part of his life. It was an interesting place and contained many engaging objects. Not only that, but while I was there, attending a conference, I met about two hundred editors of religious papers, and I was always on the watch to see if any of them knew about justification. But they could not see any difference between it and forgiveness or pardon. All was put into one pot. But to me the distinction between the two things is tremendous. If the creation of God at the end will only be patched up, what kind of an achievement will that be? That would be very trying, not only for me, but for God. But if we get a grip of justification there will not be any patching, but, on the contrary, a vast display of the wisdom and grace of God. Evil will not only be absent, but it will be transformed into good, and only God can do that. And do not make a mistake as to my meaning. Somebody said that I taught that we should do evil that good may come. God can make good come out of evil, but we are not, by any means equal to God. He can do it, we cannot.

This may help us to distinguish between the two evangels.

Let us consider the case of the soldier that pierced Christ's side. In him the Scriptures give us an illuminating example of the possibility of justification, and, on the side, how God can use evil. The passage reads (John 19:31): "The Jews, then, since it was the preparation, lest the bodies should be remaining on the cross on the sabbath (for it was the great day of that sabbath), ask Pilate

that they might be fracturing their legs and they may be taken away. The soldiers, then, came and fracture indeed the legs of the first and of the other who is crucified together with Him.” (Let us note, in passing, that they came to one, then to *another* and *then to the Lord*, Who was in the center. This is only one proof that the pictures which you see of the crucifixion are not complete. There were *two robbers* crucified with Him besides *two malefactors-five* altogether. Not merely three). “Yet, on coming to Jesus, as they perceived He had already died, they do not fracture His legs. But one of the soldiers pierces His side with a lance head, and straightway out came blood and water. And he who has seen has testified, and true is his testimony. And he is aware that he is telling the truth, that you, also, should be believing. For these things occurred that the scripture may be fulfilled, “A bone of it shall not be crushed.” And again, a different scripture is saying, “they shall see Him Whom they stab.”

Let us see if we can justify one of the soldiers who stabbed Him. I think we can do it very easily. He has done something that you and I would never think of doing. We would think it a very, very terrible thing. Nevertheless what about him? It seems to me that God intended he should be more or less a representative of the Uncircumcision there at the cross. Now the first thing we should allow is that this man was there doing his duty. He was not there alone, but a centurion was standing by to see that he played his part. So you see, from the human standpoint, we cannot condemn the man for doing what he did. Yet this man did a grievous sin, he actually thrust a lance into the side of the Lord. Nevertheless, it was his duty to do it. If he had not done it, he might have been court-martialed. The centurion was right there to see that he did it.

Now in Matthew 27:54 we read: “Now the centurion and those with him who are keeping Jesus, perceiving the

quake and the occurrences, were tremendously afraid, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God!””

And contrast these men with the Circumcision. Were *they* saying that? The Jews, because they were so holy, or thought they were, did not want the bodies left on the cross during that great sabbath day. So they asked Pilate that His legs should be fractured. Pilate and the soldiers did not know it, but the Circumcision knew that, according to the Scriptures, a sacrifice should not have its bones crushed. Yet here they were, actually demanding that the bones of the greatest Sacrifice of all should be broken! That was the kind of holiness they had! It was all superficial and hypocritical.

Here we have an exposure of the *hearts* of these Pharisees and of the Jewish nation. They were not allowed to break His bones or to crucify Him. But you will find all through the Word of God that *they* were the ones that did it. It was the attitude of the *heart* that counted. So here we have a great contrast between those present at the cross. It was *Israel* that was called upon to repent, not so much the centurion or the soldier. Repentance is in reference to the *heart*. It was not in reference to the fact of their crucifying Him with their *hands*, but with their *hearts*. And so it was, also, with reference to the lance head that went into His side. A little further along John quotes: “They shall see Him Whom *they* stab” (John 19:37; *cf* Zech.12:10). *They*, Israel, not the soldier. And in Revelation the same apostle says: “Every eye shall be seeing Him—those also who stab Him—and all the tribes of the land [of Israel] shall be grieving over Him.”

John does not blame that centurion. He blames his own people. And he is right. They were doing their best to keep God’s Word from being fulfilled. God had said that the bones of the sacrifice should not be broken and they wanted the Romans to do it.

But the soldier with the lance *fulfilled* the Word of God, inasmuch as it prevented the breaking of Christ's bones. And not only did his act uphold the law, but he fulfilled one of the prophecies by thrusting the lance into Christ's side. We certainly cannot blame him for fulfilling the prophecy. It seems to me that, if we were the judges, we would acquit him. We are not going to acknowledge that he did anything wrong. He did right. The things that he did were in fulfillment of God's Word. It had to be fulfilled. We are all agreed that he was justified in acting as he did. Now that is justification. The evil that took place there is connected with the greatest good to God's creation, and I am sure all of us are very, very glad this man committed this deed, even though we would rather not have anything to do with it ourselves.

The fact is that, at the cross, we have God actually using the nations to fulfill His will. Israel went counter to His will, though to fulfill His intention. And the nation of Israel, His own people, we find doing their worst to keep the nations from fulfilling His will. There we have more or less of a ground work for seeing why it is that God deals with the nations differently than with Israel.

The offense of Israel here was exceedingly great. I do not see how it could have been greater at that time. No worse conduct could be imagined than the conduct of Israel at the crucifixion.

The nations were not entirely guiltless. They derided Christ and plaited the crown of thorns, but it was a small thing compared with what Israel did. We must look at the heart. Yet Israel *did* nothing to speak of. They did not *act*, but they *spoke*, and it is by their words that we find where their heart is. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." But the nations—very little of what they did would be called an offense. They were not bitter against the Son of God. I suppose they would have treated

any prisoner in the same way as they did Him. But there was some offense on their part. Today God has removed that. Now there is conciliation. If that soldier had heard and accepted the evangel, he would have been justified. God meets with the whole of mankind on the ground of what they did at the cross.

I hope you can keep these thoughts clear—the difference between sin and offense. We are all sinning most of the time. Some people think they are not sinning, but I doubt that we can take many steps without destroying one of God's creatures, which might be considered a very serious crime. We take wrong steps frequently even as believers, but I hope none of us who do that would actually hurt the feelings of God. A child can take your watch and give it a good scrubbing, but if the child did not know any better, you could not very well feel hurt about it.

And so it is today. God is conciliated to the whole world, just as if they were like this soldier whom we have been considering. Whatever he did was in line with God's expressed will. Israel was not in line with His *will*, but with His *intention*, hence they also will be justified at the consummation. I am satisfied that this soldier had no idea of what a good thing he was doing, and as I said before, I would not advise him to do it again. But God can take all acts, even those as bad as that, and transform them into good. That is the basic truth that we have in Romans, in the present administration of God's grace. Not forgiveness, not pardon, that is for Israel temporarily in the eons. What we have is infinitely better, acquittal, not guilty, justification.

Don't think for a moment I am justifying myself. I cannot do that. This is all on God's side. The day is coming when all of us will see one of the most wonderful things it is possible to see—the wisdom of God in dealing with evil and sin.

A. E. Knoch.

## BURIED, ASCENDED, SEATED

THE CROWNING CONTRAST between the glorious gospel of God's grace and the Circumcision may be expressed in the words *buried, ascended, and seated*. God has reached down deeper for us and has raised us higher to a more glorious and permanent position than even the twelve apostles who will share Christ's throne in the millennium. Peter will not even be the porter at heaven's gate, as is usually assumed. He will not ascend to heaven at all, for he will sit on his throne on earth, judging one of the tribes of Israel (Matt.19:28) during the thousand years. And his is a very special privilege which only the twelve apostles will share. In contrast, we, in spirit, have all been buried and have ascended and are seated together in Christ among the celestials. Only a few of the Circumcision attain to a high place in His earthly kingdom, for it is based on reward, while all who believe now ascend and sit with Him among the celestials, for it is the gift of *grace*.

### BURIED WITH CHRIST

Those who have been crucified with Christ have also been buried or entombed with Him (Rom.6:4; Col.2:12,). Figuratively, in spirit and in truth, their flesh has been consigned to the grave, where sin and the law can have no further power over them. This is directly opposed to the evangel of the Circumcision, for it is Israel *according to the flesh* who are to rule over the nations as kings and priests in the day of Yahweh. They do not die to the law, for it is written on their hearts of flesh (Ezek.36:26,27). They do not die to sin, but are sustained by eating the fruit of the tree of life and drinking the water of life (Rev.22:1,2).

## Our Burial with Christ

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God is not through with His demonstration of the futility of the flesh in their case. Not only Israel must be further tested under a perfect government, but the nations also must be put under ideal conditions to show the weakness of the flesh. Today mankind might say that it has had no chance. Everything, within and without, is against it. Then this will be reversed, especially in Israel. It is only as we see that, even under the best environment, mankind is a failure apart from God, that we realize that burial is the only fate that fits the race that sprung from Adam.

In the Circumcision evangel the Uncircumcision are given a low place indeed, altogether subordinate to the favored nation. *But this is not nearly so low as that assigned to them in our gospel of grace*. Then we were aliens, afar off, unclean curs in the eyes of a Jew. Even in the millennium the nations will continue to rank far below Israel. But now God deals with us as dead and buried, put beneath the soil lest we pollute the atmosphere. If a live cur is better than a dead lion, what is our worth as a *dead* cur? In ourselves, in God's estimate, we have sunk far below the Circumcision. If we were to reason about the matter logically, then the proper place of the believer among the nations today should be far beneath that of any other era. Let us not miss this or refuse its humiliating message, for it is the essential foundation for grace. If the evangel Paul preached were for people so much better than the Jews that they will be rewarded with heaven for their goodness, then grace is gone. Then there is no evangel at all. Our burial makes it a superlatively *gracious* evangel, just as our ascent to the celestials and seat in Him makes it the most *glorious* of all the gospels God has given.

When Christ was entombed it was the first step in His exaltation to the highest place in the universe. His crucifixion had brought Him to the deepest depth. As His mediatorial, sacrificial work was finished, nothing more was

needed to justify mankind and reconcile the universe, so far as His suffering was concerned.

Indeed, in death no suffering was possible. Hence He was not hurried away into a criminal's grave, to go to corruption among the desecrated dead. Instead, a rich man gave Him his tomb, and His body was given tender care by His loving disciples. Is it not a marvel that His descent to the deepest depth on earth should fit Him for the highest heights of heaven? The same marvel is seen in our evangel. This tremendous contrast should enable us to grasp the fullness of God's grace. We miss this overwhelming favor if we confuse the two evangels. In one, a chosen nation is exalted to a promised place of supremacy on the earth. In the other, the dregs of humanity are exalted to super-nal glory in the heavens, quite the reverse of what they expect or deserve.

No stranger, no uncircumcised alien, could be accorded a place in the tomb of an Israelite. Having been with Him in His crucifixion, we would be hustled off to the pot-ter's field, and left to go to corruption among the dishonored dead, unless, indeed, our carcasses were burned in Gehenna, along with the rubbish and offal of the city. I once wondered why the priests bought a *potter's* field as a burial ground with the ill-gotten gain of Judas' betrayal. After living in Palestine, I have thought it likely that the field was something like the tombs of that day, or the cat-combs, due to the removal of the clay deposits, and thus would provide an easy method of disposing of the carcasses of those who had no tomb of their own, and who did not belong to the favored nation.

The Field of the Potter, the cemetery for strangers, is the only proper burial place for the Uncircumcision, who could have no share in the tombs of Israel (Matt.27:7). When I explored some of the tombs near Jerusalem I marvelled at the vast amount of toil needed to hew them out of the

solid stone. It was a great disgrace for a man to be denied burial in the tombs of his fathers (1 Kings 13:22). Some of the kings were not entombed in the royal sepulchers (2 Chron.21:20; 24:25; 24:27). This is in line with the future of Israel, whose bodies will not be changed like ours, and fitted for a new sphere altogether. Like the new birth, in contrast with the new creation, theirs will be more of a renewal than a complete reconstruction. This is suggested in the mode of burial. Is that why the figure changes from entombment to *planting* (Rom.6:4,5)?

#### ASCENDED WITH CHRIST

Christ ascended to His Father soon after His rousing from the dead (John 20:17). About forty days later, He again ascended from the midst of the apostles, on the Mount of Olives. The latter event is the one usually referred to as *the* ascension. The former has been almost forgotten, and is usually ignored. Yet this *first* ascension, before He was touched by human hands, should be of overwhelming interest to us in this administration of grace. The one from Olivet is altogether concerned with the coming kingdom. Is it not strange that our Lord would not allow Miriam to touch Him at that time? A week or so later He invited doubting Thomas to thrust his hand into His side. Israel is the nation that knew Him according to the flesh. He was physically of the same stock. But Paul, even though he also was related to Him by fleshly ties, repudiates them (2 Cor.5:16). Would not our Lord's refusal to allow anyone to touch Him indicate that He could not concern himself with Israel until after He had gone on high and had been crowned with His celestial honors, and invested with those greater glories which His sacrifice deserved? Among these was the Headship of the universe and of that figurative body which would be composed of all who had, in spirit, been crucified with Him, and buried with Him, and now ascended with Him *before* His public ascension on Olivet.

The advent of Christ's presence when He comes to set up His kingdom will take place where He ascended. As we read in the prophets, His feet stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is adjoining Jerusalem on the east (Zech.14:4), the very spot from which He ascended. I have spent much time on this sacred ridge, meditating on the marvelous scene which it has already witnessed at His ascension, and the far more glorious spectacle when He returns in the future. How fitting it is that the great King should reappear at the very point of His departure! It is a magnificent location, which can be seen from almost every part of Jerusalem, and even from beyond the Jordan on the east. Views of the whole city are usually taken from this site, as it is considerably higher and gives an unobstructed view of every part.

For many years, before I fully realized that Paul had given us a prior expectation, I used the words, "this Jesus Who is being taken up from you into heaven shall come in the same manner as you gaze upon Him going into heaven," in order to prove that Christ would return *personally* and *visibly*. But I failed to note that His coming to Olivet is to His earthly people. For us He does not come to the earth at all, but to the air. The truth for us is found in Paul's letters to the Thessalonians, not in Peter's address to the Jews. Unless we had Paul's epistles to the nations, we would never have known the great truths involved in His crucifixion, His burial and His ascension. For us Christ did not ascend publicly from the midst of His followers gathered on Olivet. He ascended as He will come, quite unknown to the world, unseen and unsuspected. At His return for us He will come back to within hail of the graves of those who, in spirit, had been buried with Him, and calls them to ascend to Him in the air, not to return and rule on earth, but to rise to heights supernal to reign with Him in realms celestial.

The uppermost thought in the mind of the disciples was the establishment of the terrestrial kingdom. They asked Him, "Lord, art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" And, indeed, why was it not brought in at that time? The foundation had been laid. The great Sacrifice had been offered. The time was fulfilled. The King had been raised from the dead. But God's great demonstration of the infirmity and futility of the flesh would not be complete until this kingdom has been heralded, both in and out of the land, and *rejected* by the nation as a whole, under conditions such as cannot obtain in the Kingdom itself. The story of the book of Acts, like the account of the forty years in the wilderness, is a record of the failure of the flesh. Like the history of the kings of Israel, it shows how far the flesh is from the goal of God. To have restored the kingdom at that time would have made the experiment impossible. Nevertheless they are led out to the actual spot and shown the very manner in which He will return to set up the Kingdom for which they longed.

The context, the setting, everything connected with the Olivet ascension, shows that it has to do with Israel and the return of the Messiah in glory to the earth. Then it is that He will come on the clouds of heaven (Matt.24:30). True, *we* shall be caught up in *clouds* to meet Him when He comes for us, but *He* will not come on the clouds at that time (1 Thess.4:17). Our meeting will be in the *air*, not on the Mount of Olives. The greatest difference of all is found in the fact that *the disciples did not ascend*. The Circumcision evangel is utterly at variance with any such action. At this previous ascension from the garden of the tomb, in spirit, *He took us with Him*. If we were crucified with Him and buried with Him, then we also ascended with Him *before He made any physical contact with His Circumcision saints*. And, in contrast to the little group of disciples gazing at Him being taken from them, He left

none of us behind upon the earth, but brought us all into His heavenly haven above.

#### SEATED TOGETHER IN CHRIST

The *union* of Circumcision with Uncircumcision is one of the prime points of contrast between the two evangels. Proselytes were joined to Israel by a lengthy physical process. But the Circumcision who believe in this gracious era were made one with us in Christ when He was vivified, and are seated together with us in Him among the celestials (Eph.2:5,6). The great grace shown to the Circumcision under the evangel of the Uncircumcision is in striking contrast to the rejection, or tardy acceptance of the Uncircumcision who wished to join Yahweh's fleshly people.

Union, or incorporation into the nation of Israel, is primarily a matter of the flesh. Even those born into it are excluded if they have certain physical defects (Deut.23:1,2). An Ammonite or a Moabite was not allowed to enter the congregation of Yahweh until the tenth generation, because they were hostile to Israel at the exodus from Egypt, and tried to get Balaam to curse God's people. Yet an Edomite or an Egyptian and their children are shut out only to the third generation (Deut.23:3-8). The stranger who sojourns among them cannot keep the Passover with them unless he is first circumcised in flesh (Exodus 12:48).

Many seem to think that "gentiles" were not excluded from Israel when they believed the Kingdom evangel, and that the heralding of the Kingdom did away with all such barriers. On the contrary, our Lord Himself made it plain that He was not commissioned except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt.15:24). When the Canaanitish woman sought to have the demons driven out of her daughter, she actually worshiped Him, and pleaded with Him to help her. Yet He said, "It is not ideal to be taking the children's bread and be casting it to the puppies." All that

He gave her were the scraps that Israel let fall under the table. Only her great faith brought the blessing she desired, despite the hindrance of the flesh. Even then she was not united to Israel, and could not enter the sanctuary in which Yahweh had His dwelling place.

But was not Cornelius admitted into the sacred circle of the Circumcision? He was a devout man, who feared God with his entire house, giving many alms and beseeching God continually. Peter, by means of a vision, was assured that he was not common or unclean. God Himself had cleansed him. Let us suppose that such a man were among us today, only, instead of a gentile, he is a Jew. Would we receive him into fellowship? Of course we would! But it is very evident that he was *not* accepted by the Jews, for they opposed Peter, and even after they knew that the holy spirit had been poured out upon him and his friends, after they had been baptized, and after they manifested the gift of tongues, they are *not* joined to the nation of Israel. The Jews concluded from his case that God gives repentance unto life to the other nations also. And why is he excluded? *He was uncircumcised!* He had spiritual blessings bestowed upon him, but these were not the link in the evangel of the Circumcision. He is an example of the place given to the other nations in the Kingdom. They are blessed *through* Israel, but are *not joined* to the holy nation.

So persistent is the feeling of exclusiveness among the Circumcision that it is quite prominent even today among Jewish believers. The great church organizations almost all welcome Israelites to their communion, and there is no thought of keeping them by themselves. In fact, they are often accorded an honored place, because of their physical relationship with our Lord. I have never heard of a "gentile" Christian church. But wherever numbers of Jews believe there seems to be a tendency to form a distinct organization, a "Jewish" Christian communion, with

a distinct task. I am quite sure that they do not realize that such separation is *based on the flesh*, and does not accord with the spiritual union which characterizes all saints in this day of transcendent grace.

Much of the grace which characterizes God's present work, in contrast to that connected with the Kingdom to Israel is conveyed to us by the connectives TOGETHER and IN. Instead of being related to Messiah by ties of flesh, we are united to Christ by that which we have in common with Him, or by being figuratively in Him. Because these are *spiritual* realities, they are not hampered by the limitations of time or space. We had much in Him and with Him long before our birth. Yet the actual enjoyment of our blessings will be in a sphere for which we are not fitted as we are. He does not only act *for* us as our Saviour, but unites us *with* Him and counts us *in* Him in His official place and glory. These utterly transcend His physical contacts with saints in Israel.

The transcendent riches of God's grace will be displayed in the oncoming eons in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. This is not yet apparent except to the eye of faith. Physically, believers among the nations have not been seated together with believing Israelites among the celestials. We are all too conscious of our lowly and corruptible carcasses on the earth. Only by faith can we see ourselves in anticipation with immortal powerful, glorious, spiritual bodies, like that of Christ, our Saviour and Lord, seated among the celestials. There will be no real rest for us down here. Up there it would be ineffable even to *stand* in the presence of His majesty. Yet we shall *sit* at perfect ease, being conscious that not we alone are immeasurably blessed, but that our blessing will reveal the depths of God's love to an amazed universe, who will see through us what His grace can achieve, and so the worship and the acclaim and the glory will be His.

A. E. Knoch.

## TOGETHER WITH CHRIST

IN AN IMPRESSIVE PASSAGE Paul makes threefold mention of the lovely, intimate thought—“together with Christ.” And in the thought we see how death and life are associated in blessing for the believer.

“If, then, you were roused *together with Christ*, be seeking that which is above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Be disposed to that which is above, not to that on the earth, for you died and your life is hid *together with Christ* in God. Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then you also shall be manifested *together with Him* in glory” (Col.3:1-4).

The expression lies in a setting of rare contrasts. That *which is above* and that *on the earth*. Death and life are in contrast, too, as linked up with Christ, our Life. For Christ identifies Himself with us that we might be identified with Him. This is an ever present truth and reality, and there is yet to be an open manifestation of its blessedness.

*Together with Christ*. In an earlier epistle Paul brings out a kindred thought, and also contrasts death with life, in words of vivid certainty. It will be good to quote the paragraph in full.

“Now if we *died together with Christ*, we believe that we shall *be living together with Him* also, having perceived that Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying. Death is lording it over Him no longer, for in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God. Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord” (Rom.6:8-11).

There is a striking similarity of thought with the Colossian passage. The two are finely supplementary. The dying together ensures the living together with the ascended Christ. And since, unmastered by death, He Who is living is living to God, so reckoning ourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, we are living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

What a bond between ourselves and God's Beloved! We cannot remember too well, nor too often, the blessed fact that we died, and that, as the glorious outcome, our life has been hid *together with Christ in God*.

By all means should we be seeking that which is above, and be disposed thereto. For the moving impulse is not of command or demand. It is the urge of love and of life, the life celestial, "where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God." And where Christ is, harmonizes so well with who and what He is. It so takes our mind off and away from self to study the glorious place and position which is His. Then to think that, wondrous as it is, we are identified with Him, and in a superlative degree. Our citizenship is in the heavens *where He is*.

This rare thought should be the actuating impulse of the faith which relates to us in Him, in Whom our lot is cast. And it would be for all the saints, did they perceive the prospect of His call, and the greatness of His power for the enlightened and believing heart.

Yet, so few appear to see and to realize the grace and glory of such a faith. How, then, may we be seeking that which is above, with disposition that way? We must indeed first be extricated, rescued out of the authority of darkness, ere we can know true light and liberty. Above all else, we must fully perceive the vital associations which are ours as members of the body of Christ. Then, and then only, do we enter our lofty heritage, to be disposed to that which is above, *not to that on the earth*. And the negative is certainly emphatic.

Now, as the writer most gratefully found, the letters of Paul alone proved to be the way to such spiritual status and blessing. In them only lie the clearly marked lines of our position as believers in this era of grace. And for good reason. Paul was appointed a herald, apostle and teacher of the nations. Not one of the twelve so write, and with that distinctiveness of utterance which so altogether lifts the grace and glory of Christ above the earth.

Christ is exalted, it is true, but always in association with Israel and the earth. And this is as it should be, since Israel is to be the medium of rule in the earth when their Rescuer and Messiah shall arrive. The entire language of the writings outside Paul's is thus concerned, either with this present earth, or the new earth. And to this end their character displays a distinctive trend.

Moreover, we do not find elsewhere that nearness and intimacy of spiritual relationship between ourselves and Christ. And Paul alone speaks of the body of Christ, using as he does that exquisite expression which so befits the riches of the grace which the Father glorious lavishes on us. Only in Paul's letters, too, do we learn of that celestial destiny—our true bourne, and which is so far above the new earth, and the new Jerusalem when it has come down.

Do we not therefore see that, to enjoy our privilege and position as believers, we must of necessity delve into Paul's letters for our real sustenance and patient expectancy? Thus, except as they are read for their points of interest, we may rightly leave other letters to those who can more truly claim them as specially theirs.

Where, but in Paul's epistles, shall we note for our heart enrichment, the variety of spiritual utterance? Often paradoxical, it is true, but so blessedly and sublimely. How the heart is warmed and the spirit raised by the reading and study of the prison epistles! Words stand out with a light and power not found elsewhere.

Indeed, anyone who has been steeped in the Ephesian phraseology, who has realized its message, and has lived with it, knows full well the appeal of passage after passage like to our quoted texts. So, in conclusion, would we stress again the wonder of the words, *together with Christ*. As in Ephesians, “God . . . vivifies together in Christ, rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus.” Words to live with in present blessedness, and an intimation of future glory.

In Colossians there is a climax of real grandeur. “For you died, and your life is hid *together with Christ in God*.” Do we accept this statement, cheerfully and contentedly? A life hidden, one of detachment, at least in thought, from the world. Then comes the final expression of glad assurance. “Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then you also will be manifested *together with Him in glory*.”

What a life that will be! No longer hidden, and shared, maybe, with but few. But open, free and joyous, with full acknowledgment. And still, and always—*together with Him*.

William Mealand

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#### GOD’S WORDS ENERGIZE US

Our Lord told His disciples that the *declarations* which He spoke to them are spirit and are life (John 6:63). This introduces us to the most vital of all the usages of the word *spirit* for us who are members of Christ. There is a sense in which God’s words energize us, vitalize us. These words have no direct effect on our physical frames, but they put new life into our spirits. Hence “the body indeed, is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness” (Rom.8:10). This is due to the operation of the spirit of God through the Word of God, so that the part played by our own spirits is subordinate, and not always easily distinguished.

A. E. Knoch

## GROWTH IN REALIZATION OF GOD

WE ARE ACQUAINTED with the entreaty, “Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus” (Phil.4:7).

In the presence of such high entreaties, it is vital to our realization of truth to recognize that the apostle Paul does not come to us as a “second Moses.” That is, Paul does not “command” us to do what is right on the grounds that if we fail to do so we will suffer the curses of the law, or, if we should continue to disobey, that we will “lose our salvation” and find ourselves among the vessels of wrath.

Paul comes to us, instead, as a wise counselor, as the Lord’s apostle, encouraging us and building us up in faith. He entreats us concerning that which is imperative to our service if God would be pleased and we would be benefited. The fear and trembling that is to attend our walk as we carry our salvation into effect (*cf* Phil.2:13), is not a fear of divine wrath or a trembling born out of a contemplation of eternal punishment. Instead, it is a fear to offend our God and Father Whom we love; it is a trembling produced by an awareness of the fact that the spirit of the One Who rouses Jesus from among the dead condescends to make its home in us.

Insofar as the curses of the law are concerned, “Christ

reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes" (Gal.3:13). We "were put to death to the law through the body of Christ" (Rom.7:4); hence "we were *exempted* from the law" (Rom.7:6). Consequently, we "are *not under law*" (Rom.6:14). These things are related to us by Paul with reference to the fact that Grace *reigns* for life eonian (Rom.5:21); eonian life is a *gracious gift* (Rom.6:23).

#### DIVINE INDIGNATION

As to the question of divine wrath in the future "day of indignation," how thankful we are to affirm that, "being *now* justified in [Christ's] blood, we shall be saved from indignation through Him" (Rom.5:9). We are also mindful that, according to God's purpose, there are many who will be "vessels of indignation" (Rom.9:22), yet only unto the end that, in due time, they themselves should also be obtaining mercy (*cp* Rom.9:16; 11:32).

Those, however, who are "God's *chosen ones*" (Rom.8:33; *cp* 2 Tim.2:10), having been *graciously* granted to be believing (Phil.1:29), have had the blessing of justification conferred upon them even now (Rom.3:22). In His kindness and grace to us, God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ Who died for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him (1 Thess.5:9,10).

If some will not, as it literally is, "*tenant* the reign of God" (i.e., have an allotment or "place" in His reign; Gal.5:21; *cp* 2 Tim.2:12), it is not to say that they will not live under its jurisdiction. All who are members of the body of Christ will live under the jurisdiction of God's reign, whether or not they have a place in its governance.

Vivification and eonian life are a display of God's *grace*; they are not a display of a divine reward in response to man's faithfulness (Eph.2:5,7). They are not a matter of

qualification, but of favor. The fact that, relatively speaking, the reverse is true concerning the selection of those who will have a governing position within the kingdom is beside the point. The believer's eonian life depends solely upon the grace of God.

Concerning the oncoming eons: whether or not we take part in the reign *of* that day, we will, in any case, *in* that day, be roused, vivified and seated together among the celestials (Eph.2:5,6). Our "seat" among the celestials, speaks of a settled place of useful service. Every one of us will be pleasing to God and faithful in His service. "Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, *then you also* shall be manifested together with Him in glory" (Col.3:4).

#### JUSTIFIED FROM SIN

In the grace of God, Christ tasted death for the sake of *everyone* (Heb.2:9). "Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for the sake of *all* . . ." (1 Tim.2:6).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently *all died*" (2 Cor.5:14). And, "one who dies *has been* justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7; i.e., "freed from Sin," *cp* Rom.6:18).

This justification *from* Sin which is now the portion of all, is wholly the achievement of the cross. "What was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3). Thus in Christ we behold "the Lamb of God Which is taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Sin in the flesh does not *await* condemnation; it has already *found* condemnation. Sin in the flesh is not *to be* condemned in a future judgment (such as in the second death); it *has been* condemned in a past judgment, the judgment of the cross. The sin of the world has been *taken away* through the sacrificial offering of the Lamb of God,

Christ Jesus our Lord. God made Christ (“the One not knowing sin”) to be a sin offering (2 Cor.5:21). Indeed, in literal terms, “He makes Him [to be] *sin*”—that thus sin might be *condemned* and *taken away*.

Consequently, God has not only conciliated *us* to Himself through Christ, but has, in Christ, conciliated *the world* to Himself as well. Accordingly, He is not only dealing graciously with all *our* offenses (Col.2:13), but, concerning the world as well, He is “not reckoning *their* offenses to them” (2 Cor.5:18,19).

Sin speaks of *failure*; it speaks of that which “misses the mark,” the mark or target of that which is inherently good, well pleasing and perfect (*cp* Rom.12:2). Sin in the flesh, “the sin of the world,” has met its judgment through the One Who is the Sin Offering. Now, through the work of Christ, man is justified *from* the evil slaveowner, Sin (2 Cor. 5:14; Rom.6:7b). Man is declared to be in the only right relationship to Sin, which is to be freed from its jurisdiction. Sin personified (literally, man’s sinful deeds), no longer has the prerogative concerning man’s judgment. Instead, God through Christ has gained the prerogative!

Therefore, *God*—not Sin—will now determine each man’s judgment and final destiny. And, He will do so according to His own purpose, not according to individual merit. Indeed many who will be subjected to God’s indignation are far less deserving of it than others who will be saved from it. The vessels of mercy enjoy mercy solely because of God’s gracious purpose, not because of any deservedness of their own (1 Tim.1:12-16; Rom.9:15,16).

#### WHAT THE HUMAN DESERVES

Insofar as “just deserts” are concerned, *all* are deserving of death (Rom.1:32). Considered in themselves, in their own sinfulness, apart from the divine purpose, humanity is well suited and worthy only of death. If this were the only

consideration, it would be altogether fitting not only to put man to death, but to leave him there on a permanent basis.

This is true of the entirety of humanity, not merely of some. Remember, all sinned; *and* all are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). The glory of God represents the only ideal standard of righteousness. It is not merely that man *comes short* of the glory of God that is significant. It is that he is found *wanting* of the glory of God. Not only have all mankind sinned, but all mankind—including those who are least offensive—are members of the old humanity which is *corrupted* in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22).

#### WHAT GOD WILLS

Howbeit, in the end, God, Who loves all (John 3:16), and wills to save all (1 Tim.2:4), will become All in all (1 Cor. 15:28). In that day, God will fully manifest Himself as the One Who indeed is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim. 4:10). Until then, with respect to all interim judging, it is only a question of whether one best serves the divine purpose as a vessel of mercy or as a vessel of indignation.

#### OFFENSES NO LONGER RECKONED

The fact that God has conciliated the world to Himself and is not reckoning offenses to the all who have sinned, affirms the fact that man’s sinfulness continues to be offensive to God. It is not that man’s sinful ways are no longer offensive to the Deity. That is far from the case. It is that now that the Sin Offering has been made, God is no longer *reckoning* man’s offenses to him.

It must be emphasized that the conciliation does not exempt man from his close and often painful connection with the generally attenuated yet sometimes full-toned indignation of God which, even now, is being revealed from heaven upon the irreverence and injustice of men

(Rom.1:18). We become acquainted firsthand with God's appraisal of sin whenever we ourselves experience the practical retribution which attends our own failures (*cf* Rom. 1:18-32; *cp* 1 Tim.6:9).

It does not follow from the fact that, as a timeless truth, *sin* has been taken away, nor from the companion fact that, personally speaking, *offense* is not being reckoned, that God will therefore do nothing at all insofar as personal adjudication is concerned with respect to the dreadful deeds of His beloved creatures. God will still bring every *act* into judgment (Ecc.12:14), both in the case of the believer (at the dais of Christ; 2 Cor.5:10) and of the unbeliever (before the great white throne; Rev.20:11,12).

#### GOD'S WORK OF JUDGMENT

Divine *judgment*, however, simply speaks of divine *decision*. For the sake of the accomplishment of the divine purpose, it remains *expedient* that the various judgments in which God would engage in response to man's wickedness still be carried out. Through these means, God will further make known the awfulness and injuriousness of sin.

Yet it must be recognized that the indignation in the day of the indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (Rom.2:5), will itself proceed "according to" (or, "in accord with") that glorious body of divine revelation which Paul terms "my evangel" (Rom.2:16)! Paul's evangel is the evangel which reveals the eventual "life's justifying" and reconciliation of all mankind through the saving work of Christ (Rom.5:18,19; Col.1:20). How we rejoice to know that the events of the day of judging will proceed on the basis of and in the light of the glorious consummation when God becomes All in all.

In all future, adversative judgments, then, God will be mindful that the "sin in the flesh" of those undergoing judging has already been condemned and taken away through

the sacrifice of Christ. He will be mindful as well that, through Christ's sacrifice, every sinner—even the most wicked—is already joined to Himself. That is, this is so in fact, all human unbelief notwithstanding.

It is true that, in the current era, God *acts* in conciliation toward mankind. It is true as well that, in coming times of indignation, it will *appear* that God surely is reckoning the offenses of humanity against them. Yet in fact, in the depth of His heart, this will not be so. This is because, at the cross, God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself. The recognition that, practically, this is a truth applied in a special way in the present, must not be misused so as to obscure the realization that, factually, it is a timeless and abiding truth.

In His work of judgment, through Christ, what is seen on the surface covers what is in the depths of God, made known in the One revealed in Paul's evangel (*cf* 1 Cor.2:6-10). Let no one imagine that Christ, the Righteous One, departs from virtue in assuming the role of Divine Indignation. He does so for the sake of the glory of God and the benefit of all concerned, being motivated by love, wisdom and perfect righteousness. His motives are of the highest order, and His purpose for the greatest good.

#### FOR GOD AND HIS GLORY

It is vital to realize that the divine indignation of the day of indignation will be the manifestation of an assumed character, not the reflection of what, deeply and ultimately speaking, is actually so.

Furthermore, the indignation of that day will be just the right amount, neither too much nor too little. It will soon be past, and, even as all else, will prove to be for the glory of God and the benefit of man. How glorious it is to know that God does not afflict "from His heart" (Lam. 3:33). How we rejoice in the realization that, "... though

He afflicts, *yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His benignities*" (Lam.3:32).

The Son of God, then, to Whom all judging has been given (John 5:22), will yet, as the Emblem of God's *assumption* (Heb.1:3), *assume* the role of One Who is indignant. For the sake of the fulfillment of the divine purpose, even as for the benefit of the creature, it is wise and expedient that Christ should be manifested thus. This theophany will occur principally in the conclusion of the current eon, and then in the day of judging following the thousand years. This assumed, indignant Character, while true to form, is not at all reflective of the heart of the One Who is love (1 John 4:8)—love, which is not incensed, neither is it taking account of evil (1 Cor.13:5), evil itself being the outworking of the divine intention (*cf* Rom.9:19).

God has a purpose in all that occurs (*cf* Rom.11:36). Man's injustice commends God's righteousness (Rom.3:5). "The truth of God," by virtue of its being afforded an entity of contrast through the vehicle of "my lie" (i.e., through the innumerable lies in which men so frequently engage), indeed, "superabounds." That is, God's truthfulness, in the face of man's untruthfulness, thus becomes much more apparent and precious "for His glory" (Rom.3:7).

God wants to display His indignation and make His powerful doings known (Rom.9:22). Accordingly, He has made the world and all that is in it (Acts 17:24), doing so in such a way that the world will surely contain both creatures and creaturely deeds well-suited to the visitation not only of His indignation but as well of all His concomitant, powerful deeds. "Yahweh has made *everything* for its own pertinent end, *yea even the wicked* for the day of evil" (Prov.16:4; *cp* Eph.6:13). All is not only *out of* God, and *through* God, but all is *for* God as well: *to Him be the glory* for the eons! Amen! (Rom.11:36).

According to Paul, everything that exists and every-

thing that occurs is "for" God. That is, everything is for His purpose; it exists unto the end that the purpose which requires its ephemeral presence might be achieved. It follows, then, that all that is "not of God," faithfully speaking, is nonetheless out of Him, ultimately speaking.

#### WE RELY ON THE LIVING GOD

All will yet redound to God's glory. Thus we say, "to Him be the glory," in anticipation of and with a view toward the good that God will surely bring into existence out of the evil upon which the corresponding good is dependent.

God cannot be glorified as the Saviour He intends to become, unless His creatures are the kind of sinners they need to be unto this end. Nor can God bless each one with salvation from sin in the way and to the degree that He intends, unless each one's particular kind and degree of sin is fixed. Therefore, that all might accord with God's purpose, all accords with what must be (*cf* Rom.8:26). All, indeed, accords with what must be, since all is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36), Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11).

Nonetheless, human behavior still occurs voluntarily, according to one's own choice. It is not true that since all is out of God (and, therefore, that human choice is out of God), that it makes no difference what we do, or that future events will come about in spite of what we do. To the contrary, future events will come about *because* of what we do. Accordingly, since we cannot know what we will do before we actually do it, the matter of decision making, even as self-discipline and self-control, remains vital.

We are awaiting the realized achievement of the full Saviourhood of God. Unto this end, we *rely* on the living God (1 Tim.4:10). Accordingly, we give thanks to Him *in* everything (1 Thess.5:18) and *for* everything (Eph.5:20). We do so, in word and deed, in the form of our unfeigned

assurance and trust in His goodness and wisdom in the face of all the evil extant in the world, replete with such an abundance of horror and misery. God is *our Saviour*; and He is *the Saviour of all mankind*.

The existence of sin and evil is a harsh and unchanging reality. Whatever *we* may do, whatever our own course may consist of, in any case, the current eon itself will continue to be a wicked eon (Gal.1:4). We are all being afflicted. The entire creation—involuntarily—has been *subjected* to vanity, the slavery of corruption (Rom.8:20,21). It is on account of *God* that “we are being put to death the whole day,” that “we are being reckoned as sheep for slaughter” (Rom.8:36). We are all dying; we are all sorrowing and groaning in our bodies of humiliation.

In his present state of corruption, man has become characterized by pride, bitterness and wrath. Yet a proud heart can only be changed by the transforming power of a thankful spirit. A spirit of thankfulness affirms that any virtue we may enjoy is ultimately God’s gift to us, including the virtue that makes good use of the gifts which He grants.

A bitter and wrathful spirit can only be subdued by a spirit of kindness and love. God alone can grant us such a spirit. Yet the means of grace unto the possession of such an endowment may well be acceptance of and growth in recognition of God as God.

How helpful, then, it is truly to realize that the same awful deeds that man devises against us for evil, God designs for us for good (*cf* Gen.50:20; *cp* Rom.15:4). How beneficial it is to know that all is out of, through and for God.

It is in an awareness of this glorious truth that we say, “Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word” (2 Thess.2:16,17).

J.R.C.

## GOD, SENDING HIS OWN SON

WHAT is that *grace* of Romans 7:24 which will rescue us out of our bodies of flesh? What is *God's law* to which we, like Paul, enslave our minds while we remain under Sin's law in our flesh (Rom.7:25)?

It is the evangel of God concerning His Son, which Paul has continually been evangelizing in this epistle, and which he now places before us explicitly in Romans 8:3. He sets it forth here in contrast to the law of God placed upon Israel at Sinai, and in opposition to the law of sin and death established over humanity in Eden:

*For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh . . .*

It is because God sent His own Son concerning sin, for the condemnation of sin in the flesh that nothing is now condemnation to us. It is on the basis of this grace that God has given us life in Christ Jesus by means of His spirit. It is because of this that we stand in grace before God, freed from the law of sin and death, not because of works of law that we may have done, but because God spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all.

## THE HUMAN SITUATION

The word "impossible" in Romans 8:3 sums up the human situation under the law given through Moses. The word "infirm" sums up the human situation in the flesh

as corrupted by sin and death because of Adam. With these two terms, Paul sums up all he has said concerning humanity and its desperate situation (*cf* Rom.1:18-3:20; 3:23; 5:12-14; 7:14-23).

By the human experience of sin and death, we are brought to the recognition that we cannot stop their operation. We all say with Paul, "I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not" (Rom.7:18). *Yet now*, because of God's righteousness, power and love in the giving of His own Son, this captivating, dominating, double-edged evil of sin and death is condemned to extinction.

For us who are believing this evangel, despite the fact that we remain sinners who are dying in the flesh, there is already a deliverance *in spirit* which seals our position in Christ until the day of whole deliverance (Eph.1:13,14). This earnest of the enjoyment of our future allotment is a spiritual blessing of highest value.

#### THE SENDING

All of Scripture directs us to this central event of the eons. Where there is chaos and emptiness and darkness God speaks in His evangel, and in His speaking He gives light and order and life (*cf* Gen.1:2-31).

It was not a sending to immediate and exalted rule, but to rejection and humiliation and most fearfully and vitally of all, to *death*. Christ's rule will come, and the glory of God will cover the earth and the transcendent riches of His grace will be displayed among the celestials. But all of this rests on the foundation of God's sending of His own Son, Who was obedient to His Father's will, even to the death of the cross.

In the meantime, you and I continue to live in this wicked eon, groaning and travailing in bodies made captive to sin. But thanks be to the Sending-His-Own-Son

God, we have received His evangel concerning His Son, and we have His own word for it that nothing is condemnation to us, and we stand before Him, in His sight, freed from the law of sin and death.

#### GOD'S OWN SON

Here in Romans 8:3 we are pointed to our Lord, Jesus Christ, as unique beyond all humanity. In appreciating our inclusion in Him and crucifixion together with Him, we also see He stands alone in many ways. He is God's Son in a special way, as the Son of His love, Firstborn of creation in Whom all was created and through Whom all shall be reconciled (Col.1:13-20). But He is God's own Son in His coming in flesh as well. He came of a woman, but not of a human father. For it is the man who is the transmitter of death, "on which, all sin." What is said in Romans 5:12-14 does not apply to our Lord. He was not born a sinner; He had to be *made* to be sin as the Antitype of the sin offerings (2 Cor.5:21). He had to lay down His life by His own act (John 10:17,18), by the giving up His spirit into His Father's hands (Luke 23:46; John 19:30).

So it was that Christ Jesus came in flesh (though apart from sin), and in this way He was identified with us, who were created in Him. He by-passed what we are in flesh because of Adam. But, since we all were created in Him, we who do not by-pass the infirmity transmitted by Adam, shall not by-pass the effects of Christ's death and (in God's own time) His vivified life. In that Christ died, all died, and in Him all shall be vivified. Consequently, the sin of His death was the most Awe-full of all deaths, the most Singular of all sins and the most Blessed in its results of all acts of all the eons. For us who are believing, this identification with our Lord, Who died for us and was roused, no longer dying, but living to God, is already ours in spirit.

## CONCERNING SIN

God's sending of His own Son was "concerning sin." These two words were often used in the Septuagint Version of the "Old Testament" for what we call the "sin offering" and what the Hebrew simply called the "sin." This tells of a process of "sin for sin," just as the law demanded "eye for eye" and "tooth for tooth."<sup>1</sup>

In Romans 8:3 Paul brings to us the evangel of God concerning His Son just as surely as he does in Romans 3:21-28; in 4:23-5:11; in 5:15-19; and throughout the epistle in basing all that he says to this central message from God for which he was severed. In a remarkable way our text, extending into verse 4, parallels 2 Corinthians 5:21 in directing attention to God's part in the evangel and the place of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and its effect on us. We can see this in the following arrangement:

- A. *God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh,*
- B. *and concerning sin,*
- C. *He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us . . . .*
- A. *For the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be*
- B. *a sin offering*
- C. *for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him.*

So it is that we are hearing the evangel of God's righteousness and grace, and of Christ's faith and obedience, and of the end of sin and death and coming about of righteousness as it presently applies to believers. This is how Paul introduces us to the themes of walk and disposition, God's spirit in us and Christ's spirit in us, and the blessing of expectation and of awareness of the goodness and love of God, which fill this eighth chapter of Romans.

D.H.H.

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1. *cf* the article entitled, "Sin for Sin," which follows.

## SIN FOR SIN

NOWHERE, perhaps, are man's theories and God's thoughts further apart than on the means of dealing with sin. This divergence is limited to theology, however, for in other walks of life man finds his ideas will not work, so reverts to the true and practical solution.

Man "atones" for misdeeds by good conduct. God demands another wrong to make a matter right. Let us admit that this seems so far wrong that few will even consider it. We have the proverb: "Two wrongs never make a right." Indeed, in man's moral ethics, uncontrolled by God, it *would* be a dangerous doctrine. For it is only when two wrongs are properly related to each other that they are mutually corrective.

Not long since I had a striking experience of how two mistakes may combine with a very happy effect. We were building an evangelistic van. Some one, unknown to me, jacked up one of the rear wheels. After the hardwood framework had been carefully set so as to be square and the posts perpendicular, the jack was found and taken away. Then the whole rear end leaned over to one side an inch or two. I tried hard to force the frame into position, but it had been securely bolted, and would not budge. After losing nearly a night's sleep over it, it suddenly occurred to me that the large swinging door would have a tendency to throw the posts out of perpendicular. On testing it out it was found that the weight of the door exactly counterbalanced the slant of the posts and made them perfectly plumb!

Here we have a practical example of a mistake and its

justification. I acknowledge freely that it was my mistake to get the door post out of plumb, but I insist that I was justified by the outcome. Any carpenter or builder can appreciate the possibility of making such a mistake, but they do not issue instructions to make them, for their happy outcome is beyond human control.

In other spheres, however, the principle is recognized and applied. In all commercial transactions and in book-keeping it would be exceedingly silly to try to correct a mistake by doing right. If a man is overcharged, he is not satisfied to be charged what is right on other items, but wants a rebate. This, of course, is essentially wrong, for it is a payment for nothing. A friend recently forgot to deduct ten dollars from the bill for printing the magazine. How is he going to make it right? By not doing it again? No, but by wrongly deducting it from the next bill.

God's earliest lesson in "atonement" or covering is full of significance. Adam had sinned. He tried to cover himself with fig leaves. He did not do another wrong to cover his first offense. But God is not satisfied. He sacrifices an innocent lamb to provide a covering. On what ground could we have justified Adam if he had taken the life of a lamb to clothe himself? But are we not doing this very thing every day? Creatures against whom no charge can be laid are slaughtered for peltries to provide our covering. The sin that brought the need of covering demands another wrong to provide it.

Sin and sacrifice are constant associates—far closer in the vocabulary of the original than any English version. In the fifth of second Corinthians many margins make "He made Him to be *sin*," "He made Him a *sin offering*," on the ground that, in the Hebrew the phrase *sin offering* is simply *sin*. Our translators have not always been clear in their own minds how to render it. Thus, when they had always translated "for a sin offering," in the fourteenth verse of

the fourth of Leviticus they suddenly change to "for the sin." Whether it is rendered "a young bullock for the sin," or "for a sin offering" may not seem to matter much until we see that it applies to the sacrifice of the bullock, not to the sin of the congregation.

But, some will say, how can a sacrifice to cover sin be itself a sin? The point we wish to press at present is that, in the inspired language of scripture, there is no other term for it, and were we speaking Hebrew, we must always refer to the sin offering as the "sin." Nor can we convince ourselves that this is merely accidental, a curious circumstance, without reason or significance. On the contrary, it points to the path of truth. Let us consider carefully just what the offering of a sacrifice involves. Is there any aspect in which it too partakes of the nature of a sin, or mistake?

Since the flood it has become necessary for mankind to slay animals for food. Occasionally it is right to kill some unfortunate animal to put it out of its misery. But what would we think of the farmer who deliberately chose a young bullock, a perfect specimen of its kind, and killed it for no other purpose than to burn it up? He would be called a fool, or worse, a criminal. It was wrong to take the bullock's life. It did not deserve death, and its death served no useful purpose. Such an act would surely be a mistake, a sin. Yet this is precisely what the sacrifice for sin was, viewed apart from its sacred associations. Do we then wonder that it was called a sin by God Himself?

Let us consider the real nature of the sin offering, quite apart from those religious prejudices (which have no place in the Scriptures), which hamper our thought and chain our reason. The hunter who slays wantonly, for no other incentive than the lust to kill, justly forfeits the respect of mankind. Some may justify it as a sport, but who would consider the sacrifice of a young bullock in that light? Were the flesh or the skin needed or used for the support

of human life, it might be condoned. But no. The only reason for its death is that its owner has done wrong!

Can the slaying of a perfect, inoffensive, useful creature be regarded in any sense as right? Does it compensate for the sin for which it is offered? Does it alleviate the loss of the one who suffers from the sin? From the human standpoint, apart from the illumination afforded by divine revelation, it was a huge mistake.

Atonement, the covering of sin, was by means of a sin [offering]. One mistake, contrary to the Divine precepts, was temporarily met and covered by another, which was in accord with His ritual. Does not this account for the fact that the bullock was not burned on the altar, in the sacred courts, but at a distance far from the divine dwelling, outside the camp? Being a "sin," it was brought far from the holy dwelling place of God and consumed with fire.

It was thus that Elisha healed the waters of Jericho. Being so near the salt sea leads us to suppose the waters alkaline and thus unfit for use. What is the remedy? Elisha cast salt into the water. This should have made it worse, but, by the divine alchemy, it cleared the waters. God's ways and man's are not the same. We would not commend salt as a purifier of water unless the Divine Chemist prescribed it. Neither would we advise anyone to sin, in order to cover a previous sin. Only God's will and wisdom can correct sin by sin.

The cross of Christ is the touchstone of truth. If we find that it confirms our faith we need have no fear of its falsity. But if it fails to confirm it, we may well view our theology with suspicion and distrust.

We now desire to consider the great crisis in the career of Christ entirely apart from all else but His dealings with God. Man's attitude and acts, and Satan's persecution we reserve for another time.

It is evident on the surface that the latter part of our

Lord's ministry was weighted with His impending doom, which even caused a clash between Himself and one of His disciples. But it is not till we reach Gethsemane that the veil is torn aside and we get a glimpse of the awfulness of the cross as it affected His fellowship with God. Hitherto the will of Christ was in perfect parallel with that of His Father. True, He did not do His own will, but He acquiesced in the divine will cheerfully and with His whole heart. But now He begs that the cup pass from Him. His will was not at all in line with the will of God. But the will is not the final arbiter. The heart may furnish motives deeper and more powerful. So He adds "Not My will, but Thine, be done!"

We need not even ask the question whether He had a right to refuse to drink the cup which God had put to His lips. God Himself had opened the heavens and testified that He was delighted in His beloved Son. Christ had challenged any one to convict Him of sin and no one even dared to try. Pilate washed his hands of His case. Heaven and earth and the very demons declared His righteousness. There were no flaws in Him. Was it right, then, that He should suffer so severely that the very anticipation drew clots of blood from His agonized brow?

We are not now concerned with the physical pain and shame inflicted by men. How undeserved that was we shall see again. Men are ignorant, as He Himself declared when He prayed "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Men are unjust and hateful, so we have no difficulty in understanding their attitude toward the holy One of God.

We are now concerned only with those most mysterious and terrible of all His sufferings, the loss of fellowship, the averted face, the active hostility of God Himself, which wrung from Him the orphan cry "My God, My God, why didst *Thou* abandon Me?" The terror of those three hours of darkness, when the Sun of His life was hid from His

soul, surpass the power of the pen, yet the psalmist compares it with the force of fire and water and the sword.

This was God's dealing with His Son. Our present question is, Was it right? Did Christ deserve such suffering? Was there any ground, in His relation with God, for the distance and despair which He endured? All will agree, even an infidel will concede, that, if any one ever deserved the opposite it was that lowly, holy Man. We are face to face, then, with this great truth, that God did visit with direst evil the dearest object in His universe. God does inflict evil even where no direct cause exists.

The fact that sin had invaded the universe is no reason why Christ should suffer. The penalty of sin applies to the sinner, not to the only One Who was not corrupted by its contact. We are now confining ourselves to a consideration of the justice of His case, and exclude all higher thoughts.

It will not destroy this truth to say that His case was exceptional and that the apparent wrong was justified by the results to mankind and the whole creation. This is most true. It is the very truth for which we contend. God uses evil to attain a higher good. It is the means He employs in turning His creatures from neutral indifference to an active and affectionate response to His love.

The attitude of God toward Christ on the cross is, in reality, a much deeper "problem" than the entrance of evil or sin. When evil came into the creation, creation was neutral—neither good nor bad. If it did not deserve evil, neither did it deserve good. Not so with our Lord. The glories He had before He emptied Himself to become a man entitled Him to respect and honor. The life He lived, the service He performed in His humiliation called forth praise and demanded a suitable reward. There was not the slightest cause in Him for divine condemnation.

If we are backward in acknowledging that evil came into the world in accord with God's purpose, what shall

we say of His treatment of Christ? Christ did not want to drink the cup set before Him, yet this was God's will. The shame and indignity heaped upon Him during His ministry were not deserved. We acknowledge that men were awfully wrong in their treatment of Him. What then, shall we say of God Who forsook Him in His deepest need, Who sent fire from above into His bones, and more than this, *desired to crush Him!* (Isa.53:10). There was only one greater wrong in all the universe than that He should be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and that was that His sorest affliction should come from the heart of His God and Father.

Let every one who imagines that God has no connection with evil listen to that lonely forlorn cry of the forsaken Son, "My God, My God, why didst *Thou* abandon Me?" In vindication we point to the infinitely blessed results flowing from it. We find that even the Sufferer Himself shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. And this is the answer which suffices for the first entrance of evil as well as for its foremost example.

Murder is an evil of the first degree. To take the life of an enemy is usually punishable with death. To take the life of a friend is far worse, and one who slays his own beloved ones is usually adjudged insane, for it is a crime too terrible for a rational being to commit. It is this thought which intrudes itself upon us when we read of the faith of Abraham, when he offered up his son Isaac. He doubtless felt the same as we do about it, for we know that he consoled himself with the thought that God, Who was in reality responsible for the apparent crime, could take care of its consequences, for He could rouse Isaac from the dead.

The chief interest for us lies, not in Abraham's deed, for he did not actually slay his son, but in the great anti-type, when God and His Son came to Calvary. Then there was no substitute, but the Father's knife found its sheath

in the Son Whom He loved, and in Whom all His hopes were centered. Our purpose in referring to it is to point out that, from every human standard, Abraham's intended act was insanely criminal. It was absolutely without justification apart from the revealed will of God. What had Isaac done to deserve death? And, infinitely more deserving as was the Son Whom he represented, why should He be slain? If we confine our inquiry to Christ and God, in their past relationships, and exclude the sin of man and creation and the benefits to come to all through His sacrifice, we must confess that it was a temporary wrong to the Victim. Is not this the thought underlying the statement that "He was made sin?" And this was for our sakes, that we might become God's righteousness in Him. No man made Him sin, and certainly Satan had no such laudable object in view. It was *God* Who did it, and to such purpose that it rectified and justified all other sins.

The prevalent conception of the perfected universe is one scarred and marred by sin. God's thought is infinitely higher. The cross of Christ has transmitted sin into righteousness, transgression into obedience, offense into reconciliation, hate into love.

Temporarily, during the earthly kingdom, sin is pardoned, offenses are forgiven. But eventually sin is justified, or vindicated. In itself it is criminal; in combination with the crime of the cross, it is an essential factor in the revelation of God's heart.

To capitulate: God settles sin by sin. Every sin is transmuted by the sin of sins into an act essential to God's highest glory and the creatures' greatest good. All the righteousness and glory and honor which are Christ's, either before His incarnation or after His glorification do not offset sin. His undeserved humiliation and distress and shame and death are sufficient to transform all sin into righteousness and holiness and bliss.

A. E. Knoch.

# Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

*Our 106th Year*  
*(1909–2015)*

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**FOURTH QUARTER, 2015**

**Volume 106**

**Number 4**

## Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a “concordant version” of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or “New Testament,” was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures (“Old Testament”). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

By analyzing the contextual usages of each Hebrew and Aramaic word, a single English word was first selected as its most suitable equivalent. Then, to achieve readability, some words were given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, were not used for other Hebrew words.

Boldface type was used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. And lightface type was used for words (or parts of words) which were added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text. In addition small symbols and abbreviations were inserted between or attached to words to represent omitted terms, to indicate grammatical features and the sources of emendations to the Hebrew text.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, Fourth Quarter 2015  
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIX

## EDITORIAL

IT has been eighty-nine years since the CONCORDANT VERSION of the “New Testament” was first published in one volume. It came to be referred to as the “Complete Edition,” for it included the Greek Text with sublinear and superlinear on facing pages with the English translation (and the translator’s notes). Later, what was first called the “Keyword Edition,” but came to be known as the “International Edition,” was published (1944). In this edition, much of the information provided by the Greek Text and its sub-linear was indicated by signs and symbols inserted into the translation, as in our current edition, called the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT (first published in 1966 as the “Memorial Edition,” then slightly revised and published anew in 1976, reprinted in 1984).

Now that we have published the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (CVOT, first edition, 2014), we have begun the task of preparing a new edition of the Concordant Version New Testament (CVNT), to match in form and style with the CVOT. At first we thought this would require only re-setting the CLNT in type and inserting a few changes and corrections as noted since 1976. But it has become clear that a more thorough re-examination of the translation, if not required, would be wise and most beneficial. This is underway, with about a fourth of the whole already set in type in a *tentative* form. But hardly anything is finished in what we can be satisfied is a final form.

It is with this in view that we present in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, two landmark articles by A. E. Knoch

regarding the translation. The first, entitled “What is a Version?” (p.147) appears in full as originally published (except for a few typographical corrections) in the May 1939 issue of our magazine. It was written in anticipation of the “Keyword” Edition, when the only available CV was the Complete Edition. Consequently, some statements may be difficult to follow now unless the reader has both a copy of the CLNT and the separately published CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT before him or her. Yet the many concerns mentioned in it remain concerns for us now as we prepare a revised version. Matters of idiom, vocabulary, grammar, even spelling and diction, which Brother Knoch discusses, are still very relevant. The study is a long one, demanding careful attention, and perhaps it should be read in short sections at different intervals. Yet it should be of interest to all who wish to grow in appreciation and understanding of God’s Word. To us in our present review of the Version, what Brother Knoch wrote here is of real and continuing help.

The second study (starting on page 173) is abridged and edited from its original appearance in the June 1922 issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, before even the Complete Edition was available. It deals entirely with a question of grammar: How should the Greek aorist verb be treated in English? The decision to render aorist verbs by English simple present verbs was likely more radical in 1922 than it is today, but even now probably only a few would consider it a wise and practical solution even when applied to a limited number of cases. Nevertheless, I believe it is one of the most helpful features of the CV. And, as suggested in my brief article starting on page 187, we are going beyond its application to the so-called “first aorist” verbs, and rendering even forms traditionally classified as aorists, but rejected by Brother Knoch as “true aorists,” this way.

D.H.H.

## WHAT IS A VERSION?

THE TURNING of the Sacred Scriptures into languages other than those in which they were written has been done in a variety of ways, which we may designate, according to their literal adherence to the text, *sublinears* or *interlinears*, *literal translations*, *translations*, and *versions*. Each one has its advantages and shortcomings. The CONCORDANT VERSION seeks to be of the greatest service by giving both extremes, a detailed *sublinear* and an idiomatic *version*, supplemented by a concordance. In the proposed Keyword edition the sublinear will be partly replaced by signs in the text and by explanations in the concordance.

The complete version, with the companion volume, gives the reason for most of the facts in the sublinear and the version, but, as idiomatic changes are not usually concordant, they have been ignored as not pertaining to the plan, as well as being self-evident in most cases. This no-man's land between the sublinear and the version is of special interest to many. A few find the apparent lack of uniformity inconsistent with the aim of the *version*, forgetting that they would not even have known this if they did not have the sublinear, which alone can be *uniform*. For all such as desire further information in these things we have jotted down a paragraph occasionally, and now combine these into an article, to show the need for *non-uniformity* in a *version*, and also reveal the effort made to make even this irregularity consistent within its limits.

As it will be necessary to use grammatical and other terms with which some of our readers may not be fully familiar, we will define them as occasion arises. Thus even

the unlearned student will find it easy to follow our explanations if he has a version at hand and consults the Greek, sublinear and version of each passage, as it is discussed.

As we have often been asked why the version varies from the sublinear, and why it differs from such works as Young's Literal Translation and Rotherham's Emphasized Version, as well as others, we will seek to make clear that the object before the translator was different in each case, and this affects their renderings. This may be understood better when I say that the Keyword CONCORDANT VERSION will differ slightly from the present text, because it is not accompanied by a sublinear. With a sublinear, a word in the Greek could be omitted if the English did not need it, because the reader had the sublinear at hand. But in the Keyword every word must be accounted for, even if it can only be indicated by a sign. The article will be represented in several thousand instances, when it cannot appear in English, by a dot.

One of the first translations which interested me, other than the Authorized and Revised Versions, was Rotherham's Emphasized. As a zealous seeker after truth, I was delighted with some of his passages, as quoted to me by a friend. Others could not bear the queer English, so I did not obtain a copy for myself until much later, when I wished to study the subject of emphasis. Here, also, I was disappointed, for, in reading it aloud with the stress as indicated, it did not seem to suit the context as a rule. Some things seemed over-emphasized, others not enough. I also hoped to get help with his vocabulary, but here also I found nothing because our plans were so different in practice. Although much more uniform than others, it was not sufficiently so to aid me. Yet I am very fond of Rotherham, though he convinced me that a combined "Version-Sublinear" was not practicable. A version must be idiomatic, like English, and a literal sublinear must be like Greek;

a mixture of the two makes an incompatible hybrid. So I chose rather to separate these two into a sublinear like Greek, and a version like English.

Yet even versions differ in their aim. There are traditional versions, which cling to the past, in which the language cleaves quite closely to the original, and "modern" versions, which not only use up-to-date phraseology, but are to a large extent "running commentaries," as Weymouth himself characterized his work. We seek to avoid both of these extremes, to use such language as Tyndale would have used *were he living today*, and to be as accurate as Weymouth would have been if he had lived in Tyndale's day.

In revising the version we have been impressed with the thought that all versions, from their very nature, must be full of minor deviations. So we would like to distinguish between a *translation* and a *version*, using the former term, in a special sense, for something between a version and a sublinear, in which the order of the words, the grammar and the rendering are close to the *Greek*, while, in a *version*, these things *vary* from the Greek and conform to *English* usage. A literal translation can be made quite uniform, and gives rise to little difference of opinion, but a version may vary in various directions, so that, of different renderings, several may be "Correct," according to the viewpoint of the one who makes it.

Some, including ourselves, would like to see all the *words* rendered uniformly or consistently, even at the expense of other things. Others lay more stress on *grammatical* uniformity, and would use a variety of words to attain this. Again, it is a question whether the *order* of the words is as important, or more so, than identical grammar. One of our associates wishes to preserve the participle wherever possible. Others think that this is not idiomatic. All of this shows that, in fact, a *version* is a continual deviation from the exact facts of the original, and demands, not merely

knowledge, but judgment, in its compilation. It calls for a continual weighing of the evidence, and often it is necessary to give one decision where it would be much easier to give two or three alternatives.

Faithfulness or “exactitude” is a very different thing in a version, and in a sublinear. The latter must be literal, and calls for comparatively little judgment in its determination. A version, however, though it may be literal so long as Greek and English run parallel, is especially valuable and faithful when it *departs* from literality in case this is misleading. Hence, even when based on a sublinear, *it consists of deviations from it*, mostly to give the language fluency, but also to express the proper sense. In the sublinear it is a question of the *meaning of words*, in the version of their *usage*. Hence they are not always the same. In a sublinear, the *remote* contexts, the other occurrences of the same forms, are the determining factor, while a version is concerned with the *immediate context*. There is a continual conflict between these two. A contentious translator will only stir up strife. A conciliating hand alone can bring satisfaction and repose.

#### NEAR AND FAR CONTEXT

To show how the two systems—concord with the near and with the remote contexts—clash, let us consider Hebrews 13:3, “Be mindful of those bound, as bound together; of those maltreated, as being yourselves also in the body.” The remote contexts require that we change *those, bound to prisoners*, as this word is always so rendered elsewhere. It seems a pity to break the uniformity by rendering it *bound* in this single passage. But the meaning is the same, and the near context practically forces us to change, in order to conform to, and help the connection with “as *bound* together,” as well as maintaining a harmony with *those maltreated*. The remote contexts call for *prisoner*; the near context demands *bound*.

Since the essence of a version consists in varying from the Greek to fit English diction or idiom, anyone should be able to find “departures from the original,” “distortions,” “perversions,” etc., in almost every line. For instance, the first line of the CONCORDANT VERSION (the scroll of the lineage), contains two glaring blunders, for the Greek has no article before either the word “scroll” or the word “lineage.” Some will insist that these are unwarranted and unpardonable additions to the Word of God, yet others are horrified at the English when the article is omitted. So do not be disturbed if the version is criticized because of its additions or omissions, its changes or contradictions, for all these must be there, or it would not be a *version* at all. From this it is clear that a translator must be a confirmed criminal, for he is forced to “change the word of God” in nearly every sentence. He must pass the death sentence upon himself to avoid the eternal torment to which the critics consign him for his uncounted crimes.

To one who seeks to do justice to the vocabulary, the grammar, and the emphasis of the Greek, and seeks to put all on as broad a basis as possible, the making of a version is a continual conciliation of clashing forces, and a constant exercise of judgment so as to use his knowledge wisely, and avoid the worst of two or more evils, while compelled to introduce into his work the lesser one. Here we have a good word, but the grammar will need to be violated if we employ it. There the emphasis seems so important that the grammar is once more desecrated. Yet in other cases it is the reverse. Usually the vocabulary is given first place, then the grammar, followed by the emphasis. But this order may vary according to the context. In Hebrew poetry, for instance, the order of the words may be deemed more essential than the grammar if it does not vitally change the sense, for it is essential to the diction.

Since this is so, do not be unduly distressed if someone

points out a place in the CONCORDANT VERSION where it has “departed from the Greek.” The best course probably would be to show the critic several more in the same sentence, when this can be done. If anyone specializes on vocabulary, he can find quite a few idiomatic variations, thousands of cases where the connective differs from the sublinear and other occurrences, and such “errors.” If he specializes in grammar, he can probably find many more. Few specialize in emphasis, but I have spent many months at it, and I regret that the grammar often hinders the proper placing of the words. I have been trying to “specialize” on a combination of all the features and do constructive work, that is, find a rendering which gives the proper emphasis with the correct vocabulary and grammar. The greatest lack in the present CONCORDANT VERSION is in the emphasis, and this we are specially seeking to improve.

To illustrate what is meant let us consider a suggested rendering of Acts 14:1. The Greek is: BECAME YET IN ICONIUM according-to THE SAME. The CONCORDANT VERSION reads: “Now in Iconium the same thing occurred.” I am asked to change this to “Now in Iconium it occurred in accord with the same thing.” I freely acknowledge that the idiomatic rendering leaves out a Greek word entirely. It will be indicated by (*ac*) in the Keyword edition. I may be greatly mistaken, but I cannot recognize the change as English. I have never seen any like it. If some great truth were at stake I would gladly adopt it and trust to time to make it idiomatic. But we say “the same thing” with “occurred” when we mean another of like nature. Without further evidence I am not inclined to make the change. It is neither Greek nor English, for the words are one and the idiom the other—a mongrel mixture.

In our attempts to make a version we should seek to avoid compromise, so that we produce a hybrid thing, which is neither fish nor fowl, neither literal nor idiom-

atic. A version, like a sublinear, should be *extreme*. Just as a sublinear should be impossible English, so a version should be impossible Greek. Those who criticize the sublinear because it is poor English are no more lacking than those who object to the version because it is poor Greek. There are *and must be*, disagreements and divergences.

Let us further illustrate these abstract ideas by a longer example. At the same time we will be able to explain some features of the proposed Keyword edition, which seeks to combine advantages of both version and translation by means of a concordance and special signs in the text. We will take the words spoken by the woman of Samaria to the men of her city, “Come hither! *Lo!* there is a Man Who told me all whatever I do. Is not *this* the Christ?” (John 4:29).<sup>1</sup> The sublinear reads:

HITHER BE-PERCEIVING human WHO said to-ME ALL as-much-as I-DO NO-ANY this is THE ANOINTED.

It will be seen, in this simple speech, that we have added and altered and omitted words which are in the original. The first question is, Why? The second one is, Can it be improved? That it is open to criticism we soon will see, but we shall also see that *all* versions are liable to this, for they are obliged to deviate from absolute uniformity with the pattern.

#### HITHER, OR COME HITHER

The Greek *adverb*, *deuro*, is usually used in a figurative

1. This current article was originally published in *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 30 (1939). The reading of John 4:29 cited here is from the 1930 edition of the Concordant Version which differs slightly from our current edition (sixth edition, third printing, 1983) which reads, “Hither! Perceive a Man Who told me all whatever I do. Is not this the Christ?” (John 4:29). Yet it still serves well, to illustrate important considerations involved in making a concordant *version* of the Scripture Original.

sense for the *verb*, *come* hither, just as in English. Usually they correspond perfectly. But there are passages where the English demands that we add the verb *come*. When our Lord called Lazarus from the tomb, He simply said “Hither! Out!” (John 11:43). That is how I would like to render it. But I have never seen an English version without the verb. It is too abrupt for us. So I have rendered it “[Come] out hither!” So also in the narrative of Acts 7:3. It was said to Abraham, “and [come] hither into the land . . .” The *come* seems necessary to us. So it seemed to me in John 4:29. But, in time, especially in case we are conversant with the Greek, the force of such a necessity may weaken. Now, it seems to me that we can manage without the verb in this passage. So I have canceled it.

It will be seen that this is not a question of “right” or “wrong,” but of delicate nuances and various viewpoints. *Hither!* as a *passionate command* needs no verb. The heat of the moment drops all words not absolutely essential. But the quiet statement, “you shall [come] hither” demands a verb. Two practical considerations would eliminate the “come” in connection with this word. As a separate word it may be confused with the Greek word *erchomai*, COME. It is needed very seldom to reinforce *hither*. Hence, in the Keyword edition *come*, when used to help *hither*, will be printed in lightface type, to show that it is not in the Greek, in the few instances where it seems needed. Perhaps, in time, it may be dispensed with altogether. The use of this device may hasten this process, for many who use the Keyword version will omit the words not in the Greek.

Let me repeat, the two renderings, “Hither!” and “[Come] hither!” may both be justified, for the action of this verb lies in the adverb. In changing to “Hither!” I am aware that some may say it is too harsh, too commanding. The woman would hardly *order* the men of Samaria to go out. She would soften it, had she spoken English, by the word

“come.” But this, again, is a question of habit. As the other occurrences of the word, without *come*, in the Scriptures, are not harsh, they will help to soften this passage. Let us not overemphasize such distinctions. The sense of the passage remains the same in either case.

#### PERCEIVE, OR LO, OR SEE

Western languages, as a rule, do not possess a good verb which includes knowledge gained by the use of all of the organs of sensation, such as the Greek *eidō*, PERCEIVE. This has cost me much labor and is largely responsible for making the CONCORDANT VERSION “peculiar.” In English we overdo the use of the word “see,” and employ it as a near metonymy for the exercise of all our organs of sensation. When we go to *see* anyone, we go to make his acquaintance through the medium of other senses as well as sight. Even a blind man can “see” his friends. It is a good figure, and well understood, but, in making, a *concordant version*, where we wish to distinguish *seeing* and *hearing* from *perceiving* with all the senses, it creates a difficult situation.

Were it not for English usage or “idiom” we would simply transcribe our sublinear, “Be perceiving [a] human.” That would give the sense very closely, and amount to this: Use all your senses in making the acquaintance of this [not *male man*, but] human being. As a matter of fact the narrative lays all the stress on what they *heard*, not on what they *saw*. The woman was not impressed with the effect on her *eyes* but on her *ears*. She tells the men what He had *said* to her. She does not describe His appearance at all. And, when all was done, they declared that “we have *heard* Him, and we are *aware*” (4:42). Even in English, a better figure would be *hear*, rather than *see*.

In seeking to keep *see* separate from *perceive*, I found an agreeable substitute in our exclamatory particle *lo*, in the imperative. Although it is usually given as the equiv-

alent of *see*, it seems to have a wider usage, more like the word *attention!* So it seems quite a suitable rendering for *perceive* in the imperative. In the complete state, and in a few other cases, the verbs *be aware*, and *be acquainted* seem to be especially good renderings of this difficult verb. In fact the word *acquaint* seems the best when used of persons. So that, if we cannot well say “*Perceive a Man*” we can say “*Lo*, [a] Man,” or “*Acquaint* [yourselves with a] Man.” The latter brings out the sense most clearly, but the former seems far more fitting under the circumstances.

I was under the impression that “*Lo!* [a] man . . .” is too abrupt for English, so I inserted the words [there is]. Ordinarily we do not say *lo!* something, but use it only as an independent exclamation. This, however, jars when the grammar of the Greek, as *anthrōpon* (human) is the object of the verb PERCEIVE (*lo!*). Putting in *there is* makes it the subject of another verb. The sense is changed from “*Perceive a Man*” to “*a Man there is.*” Of course it comes to the same thing, nevertheless we seek to avoid such changes when it can be done. Yet we must face the fact that in thousands of cases the grammar of English and Greek stubbornly disagree. The simplest things, such as singular and plural, cannot always be carried over. The gender is often different. These things *must* be “wrong” in a version to some extent, or it would not be a *version* at all. All will agree that the addition of *there is* does not really use *is* as a separate verb, but as an auxiliary to *lo*, making it transitive. It is an idiomatic phrase, in which *there* does not denote the place where, or *is* existence, both together as a phrase make it possible to add an object to the intransitive verb *lo*. Try it out with the verb *look!*

I find, however, that the exclamation *Lo!* can be used in English without *there is*, and with an object following. Indeed, I have so rendered it myself in 1 John 3:1: “*Lo!* what manner of love . . .” It has the sense of *per-*

*ceive* in these cases. That it is exclamatory in this passage seems obvious from the context. The woman was very strongly moved. That is why she did not merely say “*Come*” but “*Hither!*” And “*Acquaint yourselves with,*” in English, seems too labored for the occasion, when the same thought can be more forcefully indicated by the wondering and arresting *lo!*

There may be times when it seems that we are compelled to use *see* for *perceive*, as in John 1:39, “*Come and see.*” We will go through the whole list again and seek to reduce these to a minimum. Moreover, in such cases, we may put a small italic superior *p<sup>p</sup>* in front of the word, thus *<sup>p</sup>see*, and list these as idiomatic in the Keyword concordance. It does not seem wise to change to *see* in the passage before us, (*See* [a] Man) simply to preserve the supposed grammar of the word Man, in a case where this is not at all vital.

To distinguish the word PERCEIVE from the verbs SEE, BEHOLD, etc., is one of the difficult problems which the CONCORDANT VERSION seeks to solve. One who has not faced it in its entirety has no conception of the labor involved, or the many unimportant yet vexing variations which this makes in the grammar. To get the correct conception of the meaning of this word is far more profitable than preserving superficial grammatical uniformity, regardless of difficulties.

#### HUMAN OR MAN

As we have often spoken of the lack in our language, which forces us to use the same word “man” of a human being as well as of a mature male, we will not enlarge on it again in this connection. Years of work on a German version has deepened the desire to introduce the word *human*, as a noun, into English. I am thankful that we were bold enough to put it in the sublinear. I hoped that we could

transfer it to the Version some day. There has been a faint response, but by far too feeble to warrant its use in the Version yet. Here also, the truth lover will say the version is “wrong,” yet the unsympathetic would say that *human* is “impossible,” “peculiar,” “freakish,” etc. In either case we will be condemned for the word we retain.

#### TOLD OR SAID

The word “said” has a peculiar weakness in English, as compared with the Greek, as shown in this passage. There is no good *reason* why we cannot say “Who *said* to me all . . .” It simply is not done. So here again the right is wrong and the wrong right, according as we look at it from the Greek or English standpoint. I would say that “said” is wrong in a *version* but right in a sublinear or *translation*. The distinction, however, is not usually vital, as the impression conveyed is the same in English, so we will not pursue a point of no practical import.

#### WHICH-WHICH OR WHATEVER

For our *whatever* the Greek has a very expressive term, *which-which*. Perhaps we can understand it better if we change one *which* to *that*, and render it “all *that-which* I do.” We certainly cannot transcribe the *Greek* and say, “all *which-which* I do.” Our word *whatever* fits almost all cases, so it must be a close equivalent of the Greek. But we cannot claim absolute conformity in our renderings.

#### NOT OR NO-ANY

The transference of the Greek negatives into English is an intricate problem. That is why, in the proposed Keyword edition, we have recourse to special devices in order to keep them distinct. In the sublinear of the complete edition we have made the relative negative *mê* No, and the absolute negative *ouk* NOT, but their difference is not

very clearly registered by these English words. Yet they at least indicate the fact of a distinction, which the student can supply from a consideration of the contexts. In the Keyword edition we hope to transfer this to the version by making it no[t] (with a weak t) when it should be *no*, and no' (with a small t added) when it should be *not*.

The many combinations which contain these negatives make the matter still more complicated. Here, for instance, we have NO-ANY, and the only possible English rendering seems to be *not*. The meaning seems to be “Is no[t] this by] any [chance] . . .” In the Keyword this will appear as no[t]<sup>a</sup>, with a weak t and a small high italic a, to indicate *any*. In German we can express it by *nicht etwa*. Here again, all English versions are “wrong,” or at least they fall short. The only way to remedy the matter is by a sublinear or by artificial indications such as those used in the Keyword. At least I have never seen a very successful rendering of the syllable ANY.

#### THE ORDER OF THE WORDS

Once we get the sense fairly well fixed, the emphasis will claim our attention, and the order of the words demands recognition. Most of the changes in the Keyword edition are concerned with this matter. The first sentence in the passage before us follows the order of the Greek exactly so that in this particular it is quite correct. But in the second we encounter a difficulty which often confronts us in this work. English does not, as a rule, allow the negative at the beginning of a sentence, though, quite often, it is the most emphatic thing in it.

We have purposely chosen a passage which we can all consider dispassionately, and which some would not deem of any particular importance, even if it has been translated with much variety in various versions. The general sense is sufficiently clear in all of them so that no serious misun-

derstanding can result. The Revisers have placed the word “Can” in the question in place of the negative, thus: “Can this be the Christ?” Aside from our principle of cleaving as closely as possible to the words of the original, even in a version, may not this suggest a lingering doubt on the part of the woman rather than challenging any contradiction on the part of the men? In this case the spirit of the Revised Version does not appeal to me.

Disregarding English usage, we might render this thus: “No[t by] ANY [chance] THIS [One] is the Anointed!” It seems to be an exclamation as well as a question, and to challenge contradictions by putting the negative at the very commencement of the sentence. But in English it seems practically impossible to give it the proper emphasis, either by position or in reading, especially as the following word demands even more stress, being a purely emphatic addition to the sentence. So that, in fact, all English versions are forced to fail in this regard. We hope to put one or two heavier letters to show the emphasis. As this is impracticable here we will use italics. We have indicated the emphasis thus, for the Keyword. Try it out by reading it forcefully aloud: *Hither! Lo! a Man Who told Me all whatever I do. Is not<sup>a</sup> this the Christ?*

Those who use the sublinear in their studies are usually strongly inclined to a literal rendering, regardless of the English, and some carry this so far as to look askance at any rendering which is otherwise. No one can object to this, for the sublinear was made in order to enable them to get the facts as they are in the Greek apart from English idiom. Yet I fear the most ardent students, including ourselves, are apt to carry this to extremes in our attitude toward the version. If this is simply to be a repetition of the sublinear it is of no use, and should not have been made. As we have a literal rendering, there is no such need of literality in our version as in the case of those renderings

which seek to combine a literal with an idiomatic version. We are free to be idiomatic, so long as the sense is clearly preserved, and the principles of consistency and exclusiveness are not violated, for these must be kept, if it is to remain a *concordant* version.

#### DICTION

In all of our writing we seek to use only such words and constructions as will be understood by all English readers, in any part of the world. We avoid peculiar or provincial language. But even this course has its weakness, for we are all inclined to think the best of English odd if it is otherwise than the speech of those about us. We speak of the King’s English. I well remember the first time that the King of England spoke over the radio so that he could be heard in far off California. My son was anxious to listen in, and hear what the King’s English is like. But he was taught a salutary lesson, for he could hardly understand it, seeing that the enunciation and pronunciation differed so from what he had been taught in school. What is the King’s English? In the United States the unchallenged standard for words is Webster’s Dictionary. In England I take it that the Oxford Dictionary is recognized as a rule, among the several works of this nature.

But when we go beyond words to constructions the confusion grows. An experience I have just had may help to illustrate and confirm this. To be safe, I have added three works on English to my tools, “The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English,” “The King’s English,” and “A Dictionary of Modern English Usage.” They are all from the Clarendon Press, Oxford, and one of the authors of each is the same person. I have dipped into “The King’s English” a bit and have had several shocks. The first paragraph of the Preface ends thus: “. . . it merely shows that they have been among the necessarily limited number

chosen to collect instances from.” The sentence ends with *from*, a “preposition” or connective. I still remember one of the rules intended to keep us from using bad English, given us in the lower grades in school: “Never use a preposition to end a sentence *with*.” We thought it a witty way of putting it, for the rule disobeyed its own command. Therefore it remained in my memory, and I have seldom committed this literary crime.

But now, what shall I think? In the very beginning of a book on “The King’s English,” which I am bound to recognize as the highest authority, I find this construction. As an editor, I would have changed this sentence to read “it merely shows that they *are* among the *few* chosen *from which* to collect instances.” Now I am glad to have the consciousness that I have never condemned or ridiculed anyone for this fault. But I still feel that a connective is more naturally placed *between* the words it joins, rather than at the end of a sentence, where it stretches its hand out to vacuity.

Now, turning to the first chapter, I find that it begins, “ANY one who . . .” Again I am perplexed. So I turn up the point in the “Dictionary of Usage,” which is intended to settle such matters, and, to my astonishment I find that it recommends “ANYONE,” not “ANY one,” one word, not two. One book, in practice, uses what the other volume disapproves! I suppose that the printer of one did not use the other! My rule is simple. When the *one* is a *numeral*, meaning *single*, it should be a separate word, but when it simply fills out a word it ought to be joined to it. The one exception seems to be the negative *no one*. Even here, the old word *none* might be extended in its usage, except that, in many instances, the emphasis would suffer.

Is it not evident, from these examples, that many a usage which we would condemn may be sanctioned by the highest authorities, and therefore it is more a matter of *disposi-*

*tion* than of knowledge? One who is well disposed can find evidence in favor of *any one* or *anyone*, but, if he is otherwise inclined, he can prove that either or both are wrong. And if it is a work which seeks to bring God’s truth nearer to the people, the Adversary, who is a counterworker, will see to it that men take his point of view. I have used these examples because they occur in works of the very highest character, in order to show that the very best of scholars have need of sympathetic kindness, and hope that each one of us, however high our attainments may be, may learn to look graciously on the failings of others, lest, at some time, they may prove to be our own.

Lest I should be judging the work unjustly, or according to my ignorance, or even by American standards, I sought for further light in the proper place, under prepositions. At the very end of the chapter is a bracketed note acknowledging that the “*Superstition* against ending clause or sentence with a preposition” is a “widespread *belief*.” It refers readers to an article in *Modern English Usage* on the subject. As a *superstition* consists in “credulity regarding the supernatural,” and a *belief* is the “acceptance as true or existing (of any fact or statement)” according to the *Oxford Dictionary*, these words cannot be intended literally, but figuratively. They are a product of *feeling* rather than of fact. It seems that a reviewer had condemned *The King’s English* out of hand on the ground that the first paragraph of the preface ended in a preposition. But the non-use of late prepositions is not supernatural, nor is it a fact, so I do not feel that I am guilty of superstition or of misguided faith.

Turning to the article in *Modern English Usage* on “Preposition at End,” we find this offensive language repeated. It is called a “cherished superstition,” yet “a very general belief.” Dryden, it seems, an acknowledged English master, actually went through all his prefaces “contriving away

the final prepositions." A number of examples are given from leading English authors. One acquainted with the formation of Greek verbs will be struck with the fact that in English we also combine the so-called "preposition" with the verb in sense, though not in form. For instance "shine upon" is really the same as ON-SHINE. So it is usually a part of the verb which comes at the end of these sentences. *They are connectives, but do not connect*, for the next member either has been or is not expressed. They modify the sense of the verb. In such cases they should not be judged as "prepositions," but rather as "postpositions," according to Webster's Dictionary.

The final advice is based on the feelings of the writer. If the construction *sounds comfortable* at the end or has *compensating vigour*, use it. I imagine that the expert himself was far from comfortable when he found that his whole work had been condemned because he had ended its first paragraph with "to collect instances from." Would it not be more comfortable to use another verb for *collect-from*? Why not say "to *supply* [furnish, provide] instances." If we wish to keep the word *collect*, it would be terse, vigorous, understandable English to simply say, "to collect instances," leaving the *from* to the imagination. I have the feeling that the *from* is uncomfortable by itself, stretching out its hand in the dark, as it were, like a brave connective, but finding nothing to grasp [or take hold of!].

Pardon another personal experience! As a young typesetter I took the liberty once of using the "Commercial" *and* (&) because there was not room enough in the line, for the word itself. Though a half century has intervened, I have not forgotten the utter disgust on the part of the foreman, that such a gross stylistic error should be committed in our chapel. Yet he patiently explained to me that this character must not be used in anything except firm names. And ever since I have looked upon all printing which broke

this rule as of the lowest grade. Yet here is a volume which assumes to be the authority in such matters, yet the word "and" seems to be replaced by & throughout! I know that it is of no consequence, yet it makes uncomfortable reading, and leaves a poor impression. I would not care to use it even in the sublinear of the version, though perhaps I would if it were of any practical advantage.

#### BRITISH AND AMERICAN SPELLING

Occasionally I have seriously considered the advisability of inserting the *u* in such words as *favour* and *honour*, especially in the version, so as to avoid the prejudice which rejects everything American. With this in view I turned up the article on -OUR & -OR, and was agreeably impressed by the following:

"Our first notification that the book we are reading is not English but American is often, nowadays, the sight of an -or: "Yankee" we say, & congratulate ourselves on spelling like gentlemen, we wisely decline to regard it as a matter for argument; the English way cannot but be better than the American way; that is enough. Most of us, therefore, do not come to the question with an open mind. Those who are willing to put national prejudice aside & examine the facts quickly realize, first, that the British -our words are much fewer in proportion to the -or words than they supposed, &, secondly, that there seems to be no discoverable line between the two sets so based on principle as to serve any useful purpose. By the side of our *favour* is *horror*, beside *ardour pallor*, beside *odour tremor*, & so forth . . . when some general reform of spelling is consented to, reduction of -our to -or will be one of the least disputed items, or, failing general reform, we shall see word after word in -our go the way of *governour*. It is not worth while to resist such a gradual change . . ."

In view of these admissions, it does not seem wise to

insert the *u*, though I am sure that our American friends would not object, and would gladly accommodate themselves to the desires of others in such a trivial matter. To carry it out consistently, especially in matter already in type, would cost a considerable sum, besides much labo[u]r, and this may all be fruitless if a change is made. The American idea of adapting the language to the purpose of communicating ideas with as little useless ballast as possible, rather than keeping it fit for display in a museum of antiquities, is the natural outcome of the strenuous life which some of them were forced to live. When engaged in an argument with Indians they needed the lead for bullets, so cast out these idle mutes. As they are now falling into disrepute in English also, we will anticipate their exit from the British spellers, asking the indulgence of all who find our manners in this matter uncouth and ungentlemanly.

It seems as if the story is true which represents an Englishman in America asking for the name which is given to those who pursue no gainful vocation for a living. "We call them the *gentry*," said he. "We call them *tramps*," said the American, whose knowledge of the literary language was somewhat limited. It seems that people and letters which serve some utilitarian purpose do so at the risk of their social standing. Yet even after they have attained it they may revert to their former states. The well-known instance of *pig* being confined to the animal when in the care of Saxon herdsmen but *pork* when on the table of their French lords, is an example. *Pig* is too low to fall further, but *pork* has reverted to its low origin in the derivatives *porker* and *porkling*.

I confess to a certain amount of impatience, if not repugnance, in regard to *mere*, elegance, or euphony of style, not only in a version but also in other writings intended to open up the Word of God. But a version cannot ride rough shod over the feelings of its readers without repel-

ling them. A well worded phrase may often be, an *artful aid* to the memory. The foregoing sentence is intended to be an example and a test of this fact. After reading it over a few times, emphasizing the italicized letters, almost anyone will be able to repeat it if given one word or phrase as a reminder. It has rhythm and rhyme. It is not true poetry, for it lacks elevation of thought. But it should not be despised on that account, and condemned as futile jingle, for it fulfills an important function if it assists the memory and smooths the way in reading. But such aids have a very limited sphere in a version, and consist largely in the insertion of weak syllables between two emphatic ones in order to aid in reading.

#### CEMETERY ENGLISH

I find fossils interesting, but I do not care to be one, or to make a fossil version. Fossils are dead, though unburied, like the religion of Christendom. It craves a fossil version, to accord with its own condition. What we need is a *living* version, pulsing with words that breathe, and move, and work, which are our companions in our week-day life, not our Sunday death. Yet this should not be carried to unnecessary extremes. If the past contains an expression which has no modern equivalent, and is really needed to complete our vocabulary, we should not hesitate to bring it back to life by contact with the living oracles.

A translator must peer ahead, not look behind. He will be read in the future, not in the past. The inscriptions on gravestones are doubtless interesting, but the inhabitants of a cemetery will not buy the Bible. Our most ambitious dictionaries are largely useless for translation, as they record what has been, not what will be. Tyndale, in his day, did not use the language of Wycliffe, nor would he use his own ancient vocabulary were he in the twentieth century. Let us seek to sense the trend of the language, especially

among those who are less bound by tradition, and anticipate the standard diction of tomorrow. But let us make it our special endeavor to mo[u]ld the language where necessary so as to be a better receptacle for God's revelation. We have more right to do this than those who express the thoughts of men. In fact it is our duty to do it, in order to reveal the heart of God.

Some forms that are in common use today are not yet archaic, but are rapidly becoming so. We should try to anticipate this, when possible. The word WITNESS, as a verb, especially in the combination, *bear witness*, is being displaced by *testify*. The word *witness* itself is being confined to the passive sense conveyed by *eye-witness*. Therefore the few passages where the older form was still used in the CONCORDANT VERSION, though they may sound unusual for a while, are better changed to the *uniform* rendering *testify*, with *attest* for the middle.

#### REGULAR IDIOMS

In order to deal consistently even with the aberrations of English idiom an effort will be made in the Keyword edition to note some of the variations due to English usage, especially those which occur frequently, in the lexical part of the concordance. Some words demand that they be followed by certain connectives. These may be noted with the words. Sometimes they refuse a connective in English, even though there may be one in Greek.

The differences by which a version varies from a sub-linear should not degenerate into arbitrary interpretation, hence it is well to reduce these to rule as much as possible. This will also save many unnecessary special decisions. For instance, in such frequent phrases as THE esteem OF-Him, we leave out the THE always, OF-Him is changed to His and placed before the word, and esteem is regularly glory, thus: "His glory" in place of THE esteem OF-Him.

#### IDIOMS

The word *idiom* has been used as a cloak for false doctrine and unwarranted renderings. In fact anything that the church needs to hide her departure from God's Word can be supplied to her by a subservient scholarship under this pretense. And it can be used with great effect against real truth seekers, because they are supposed to be ignorant of ancient idiom, even if they reject it as absurd. Some even use the false logic that the church and its scholars, being in the majority, must be right. Real reasoning, based on revelation, would say that the Scriptures teach that the church will be apostate, hence the majority most probably will be wrong, and our attitude toward the popular teaching should be one of skepticism, and we should be open to any corrections based on the real facts of revelation. We hope that this discussion will make it clear that the CONCORDANT VERSION recognizes idiom in almost every sentence, even if it does not accept every attempt to justify the false teachings of the day by an appeal to this figure.

We should seek to distinguish between real idioms and merely *unusual* expressions and language. Thus, in German, the participle form of the verb, as "I am writing," is not used, hence it does not appear in the German version, but we distinguish it from the indefinite "I write" by a sign (<sup>1</sup>). But in our English, though it is sometimes unusual to do so, we seek to retain this form (which should not be allowed to leave the language) because it expresses an important distinction in the Greek and Hebrew verbs. It seems to us that it is only in some cases that it is no longer English idiom to use it. In commands, we would not say "Be going!" but "Go!" on account of its brevity. In the infinitive we do not often say "to be going" but "to go." And we do not care for too many —ing's at one time. In these cases the CONCORDANT VERSION drops the —ing,

but will indicate it by an upright stroke (!) in the Keyword edition, in case it is lacking.

#### THE DOUBLE NEGATIVE

“We don’t know nothing” is generally rated as poor English, as used by those who are ignorant. But it has also been used by those well acquainted with its character, as a vivid and powerful figure of speech, with telling effect, and, as it is perfectly understandable and uniquely impressive, it will probably make a place for itself in the language in time. But, at present, it is still too strange and striking to be used to represent the Greek double negative.

#### TERSE PHRASES

English, especially as used in the colonies and the United States, has a strong tendency toward terseness of expression. A shorter form is favored, and much is abbreviated, and the longer forms have often taken on a special significance. Thus a Pharisee asked our Lord *so that He should be lurching with him* (Luke 11:37). We make this much shorter and ask others to *lunch* with us. If we use *so*, it would indicate the manner in which we did the asking. The *to lunch* is shortened from *in order to get Him to lunch*, which has much in common with the Greek. The future is taken for granted. The subjunctive is involved. The action is understood. So the Revision has *to dine*, even though they are somewhat inclined to give the Greek grammar where English idiom does not agree. In Luke 9:16 we have another such expression for “to place before.”

#### THE GENDER

Due to the fact that Greek words which really have no trace of gender in their significance may be masculine or feminine, it is necessary, at times, to translate quite contrary to the Greek. Thus the word *word* is masculine, so

pronouns referring to it must also be of this gender. A Greek always calls a word “he.” This caused much confusion for some in the first chapter of John’s evangel, where it seems to support the customary interpretation that the “Word” is a Person, not a thing. Again, in John 12:48 we usually read that “He who is repudiating Me and not getting My declarations, has *One that* judges him: the word that I speak, that will be judging Him in the last day.” Yet the context seems to clearly indicate that the *masculine, ton krinonta* (THE *one-JUDGING*) refers to the word *word*, which is also masculine, and therefore should be rendered *that which*.

#### WHAT A VERSION IS

The main object of this discussion is to help my friends to see what a *version* really is, and how, in many minute particulars, it is forced to differ from the original. These divergences cannot all be removed. The problem is not merely to reduce their number, but to eliminate those which affect the sense adversely, leaving those which affect the sense the least. Thus, in English, we are forced to ignore the gender as a rule, but without any appreciable loss, as the gender is mostly artificial. In the pronouns, indeed, we must alter the gender or give quite a false impression.

We sympathize most sincerely with all who are distressed at any deviation from the grammar of the Greek. For instance, very seldom can we carry over the middle signification, however much we would like to do so. An interesting case was brought to our attention recently. In Mark 4:14-20, in which the word *sow* is used in the *middle* for those sown beside the road, on rocky places, and into the thorns, but changes to the *passive* when referring to those sown on ideal earth. In German we can make a verb like this middle by adding *sich* as a rule, but *sich saen* would mean that a *plant* scatters its own seed, and would

eliminate the Sower entirely, just as if we said “sow *itself*” in English, which we cannot very well do, as the word for *self* is lacking in the Greek. English has no word for the middle, like German.

Anyone who will compare any version with the CONCORDANT VERSION sublinear will see how often, in English, we must substitute a verb of fact for one of action, especially in the imperative. In giving a command we make it as short as possible. Where the Greek has *be repenting* (Matt.3:2) we shorten it to *Repent!* In German *all* of the verbs of action *must* be rendered “wrong,” simply because the language will no longer bear the longer forms, even if they still exist. English is tending in the same direction. That is why it is hardly ever necessary to change a verb of fact to one of action, but the incomplete is often rendered as an indefinite. That is why, in the proposed Keyword edition, all the “wrong” verbs will be marked. In this regard we do not anticipate the future, but seek to stop the tendency, because it will mean a distinct loss to the English language.

A version, then, is a matter of judgment, rather than exactitude. In this it is in contrast to a sublinear, in which the order of the words, their form, and their composition are kept as closely as possible to the Greek. This should be retained in a version only to a degree compatible with intelligible, fluent English. But there is much room here for differences of opinion, and mutual forbearance. We feel sure that the CONCORDANT VERSION, with its friends, still leans too much in the direction of the sublinear, notwithstanding the fact that it, having such a complement, might well go to the opposite extreme. So far we have held too closely to the Greek idiom for fear of departing from the strict mode of expression in the Greek, and thus introducing our thoughts into God's Word. May He forgive our delinquencies in view of the motive that prompted them!

A. E. Knoch

## THE GREEK AND ENGLISH INDEFINITE

THE entire scheme of the CONCORDANT VERSION finds itself upon a desire for unvarying consistency in setting forth the mind of God. The Greek language is capable of expressing with precision the finest and most delicate shades of meaning. With proper care it is possible to set over into English most (if not all) of the excellences of the God-given original.

In effecting a faithful reproduction of God's thoughts it was found necessary to consider each Greek word in all of its contexts in order to determine its scope and its most satisfactory English equivalent.

A similar process, though more arduous, was called for and diligently performed, to arrange these words in a proper grammatical setting to accord with the language of inspiration. The consideration of the nouns and adjectives did not present many serious difficulties. However, the Greek verb, which tradition had invested with almost insuperable difficulties, required a great deal of preliminary analysis and dissection.

At the first attempt to apply the prime principle of consistency to the rendering of the Greek verb, according to accepted grammatical doctrines, we soon found ourselves in clouds and chaos. This was especially true of the so-called Voices and Tenses. There seemed to be no correspondence between form and force.

This condition of affairs is recognized by the greatest scholars in this field, as the following facts and extracts from their writings show.

IN A GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH Professor A. T. Robertson has this to say regarding the translation of the aorist into English: "The Greek aorist indicative, as can be readily seen, is not the exact equivalent of any tense in any other language. It has *nuances* all its own, many of them difficult, or well nigh impossible to reproduce in English. We merely do the best we can in English to translate in one way or another the total result of a word, context and tense. Certainly one cannot say that the English translations have been successful with the Greek aorist . . . (Page 847). The English past will translate the Greek aorist in many cases where we prefer 'have' . . . (Page 848). The Greek aorist and the English past do not exactly correspond . . . The Greek aorist covers much more ground than the English past . . . The aorist in Greek is so rich in meaning that the English labors and groans to express it. As a matter of fact the Greek aorist is translatable into almost every English tense except the imperfect . . ." Again, "The aorist is, strictly speaking, timeless."

Dr. Weymouth, in his pamphlet *On the Rendering into English of the Greek Aorist and Perfect*, criticizes the Revised Version for its treatment of the aorist. Falling in with the prevailing tendency, they had changed many renderings which are in the "perfect" (using HAVE) to the past tense. In fact they, generally speaking, regarded the aorist as referring to the past. Dr. Weymouth noted how often it makes poor English, and felt, in an indefinite way, that the aorist must not be confined to the past. He would have it rendered by the "perfect," as it often is in the Authorized Version, at the same time translating the perfect in this way as well. But if the aorist is I-HAVE-LOVED and the perfect also is I-HAVE-LOVED, what is the difference between them? After all, the chief function of a translation is to preserve the distinctions of the original.

Weymouth pleads for the perfect, as a rendering of the Greek aorist because it has a bearing on the present, which the past has not. He protests that "it is too commonly believed and taught that the Greek aorist indicative . . . is equivalent to the simple past tense in English (*I wrote, I loved, I brought . . .*)." He affirms that "the English past, used according to the *true English idiom*, will largely fail to coincide with the aorist . . ." He makes the startling discovery that we sometimes give the English present the force of a future, giving the following examples: "We *start* tomorrow," "The king *comes* here tonight." He might have added the fact that this same "present" is used of the past also, as in "The king *comes* here since he was crowned."

He was on the verge of discovering that the English "present" is often used as a true indefinite. He even gives examples of such usage: "The Chronicle *states—*," "Clarendon *records—*," "Gibbon *informs us—*."

To prove that the aorist is not a simple past he gives the following instances in which both the AV and the Revisers render it by the perfect: We add the CV rendering to show that it can usually be still better rendered by the so-called English "present."

Mark	10:20	All these things I <i>have observed</i>
	CV	I <i>maintain</i> all these things from
Rev.	14:8	Babylon is fallen, is fallen
	CV	It falls! It falls! Babylon

Weymouth then makes the welcome admission that "*aorist* means *indefinite*, and we must bow to the authority of the Greek grammarians who held that name to be a suitable one . . ." This is precisely the point for which we contend.

He then gives examples where he thinks the aorist should be rendered by the pluperfect and the translators have so given it.

Matt.	1:24	As the angel <i>had bidden</i> him
	CV	As the messenger <i>bids</i> him
Matt.	11:1	When <i>he had made</i> an end
	CV	When Jesus <i>finishes</i>
Matt.	27:31	When they <i>had mocked</i> Him
	CV	And when they <i>deride</i> Him
Matt.	26:19	As Jesus <i>had appointed</i> them
	CV	As Jesus <i>instructs</i> them
Mark	1:32	When the sun <i>had set</i>
	CV	When the sun <i>sets</i>

The following statement by Dr. Weymouth is a step in the right direction: “*The aorist is often used where our idiom demands the present . . . but this gnomic aorist (as in James 1:11, “for the sun rises,” etc.) and the epistolary aorist (2 Cor.8:18, we send with him the brother) need not here be enlarged upon.*” Weymouth touches the true sense of the aorist here, but, alas, he did not enlarge upon it! He recognizes its use in the statement of general truths or proverbs (the gnomic aorist). The very fact that it can be used of things which are true at all times and that English uses the “present” for this purpose is sufficient to identify them.

#### THE CONCORDANT VERSION

In planning a consistent version it is manifest that one of the most vital elements is the rendition of each verbal form by a fixed English equivalent. To investigate the possibility of such a course the verb was analyzed into all its forms and each was given its nearest English equivalent. In assigning the English equivalents, the first form dealt with was the incomplete present. The tendency at first was to assign to it the so-called English “present,” the simplest form of the verb, as I-LOVE. But repeated experiments showed the inadequacy of this form to express the fact that the action was actually *in progress*. For this English has the special form, I-AM-LOVING. Exhaustive tests showed

that *this* was the true equivalent of the so-called Greek “present,” though the strenuous tendency of our idiom to shorten all forms often demands the indefinite I-LOVE.

After all the other forms had been assigned and tested, the indefinite, or aorist, remained. What could be used for it? Nothing was left but the so-called English “present,” as, I-LOVE, and it dawned upon the mind of the investigator Greek “aorist.” We have named it the English aorist. Exhaustive tests proved the correctness of this conclusion, and years of use in compiling the version have confirmed the fact that the English “present” is a very close equivalent of the Greek “aorist.” True, there are, passages where it seems odd at first, but, close investigation shows it to be correct, and when the initial strangeness vanishes, it leaves a delightful sense of clearer vision into the realms of truth.

#### THE INDEFINITE DEFINED

*The indefinite changes an act into a fact. It transforms deeds into truth.* “John *baptized* in water” is a bald statement of an historical occurrence. “John *baptizes* in water” indicates the essential character of his ministry. It locates his action, not in the course of time, but in the wider sphere of truth. When Peter charges the house of Israel with the crucifixion of Christ, it is not simply the act but the attitude which he condemns. “You *crucified*” was true; “you *crucify*” is truth (Acts 2:36).

Here we have a hitherto secret combination for unlocking the door to the great depository of divine truth. We do not need to guess to distinguish what is *true*, but transient, from that which is *truth* and permanent. God has deposited the *truth* in the indefinite. If we but glance at such high unfoldings as are found in the first chapter of Ephesians, this fact will force itself upon us. Like a string of

pearls we read (Eph.1) of the One Who *blesses* us (verse 3), Who *chooses* us (4) and *designates* us (5) and *graces* us (6) and *lavishes* on us (8), Who *makes known* to us (9) the secret of His will. Read the passage in the CONCORDANT VERSION at least a dozen times, to wear off the strangeness; meditate on its unlimited scope in time, the aptness of its present application as well as its past and future place; then suddenly change the tense to the past and see what a chill falls upon the whole. Then change the verbs to the present incomplete, Who *is blessing*, Who *is choosing*, etc., and see how the thought shrinks.

The translators of the Authorized Version *felt* this and tried to express it by the perfect or complete tense, *hath* blessed, *hath* chosen, etc. This, however, confines all *action* to the *past*, and denotes the condition consequent on that action. It is, as though a father gives his son all that was coming to him and left him to make what he could of it. It puts God's active efforts for us into the past and leaves but a passive interest for the present and future. This is the very opposite of the truth and contrary to God's purpose, which is to draw us nearer to Himself by a constant flow of blessing. He does not start us off to go on alone. It is true, that He *has* blessed us. But it is truth that He *blesses* us now and in the future as well.

To one whose eyes have been opened to see it, there is an exquisite beauty in this. God fills the whole horizon. His immanence is everywhere. He is not behind or before, but both. His care for us can be traced in His purpose and its accomplishment.

True, some of the expressions seem strange to those accustomed to stereotyped English phraseology. We would say He *chose* us, in the past. At first we miss the precious fullness of the fact that His choice of us is not affected by time or circumstance. He chooses us today and will choose us in all the eons to come. It is not a mere act in the past

which may be repudiated should His attitude toward us change. It is a fact for all time. It is a guarantee that His gracious dealings with us do not alter. Time cannot modify or state impair His settled beneficence toward the objects of His affection.

#### AORIST

The name "aorist" was given to this verb form by the ancients, who used it continually in their conversation and literature, and who ought to have known what to call it. It comes from two Greek elements A-(UN-) and -OR-(SEE). As -OR-was usually preceded by the *h* sound, the verb *horizō* is almost the same as our word "horizon." This gives us the true thought—*without a horizon, indefinite*. As the aorist is indefinite as to time as well as to state it is doubly indefinite. So we will call it simply the INDEFINITE.

Consider the scope of the simple statement, I-LOVE. *It may include any or all the other states and tenses!* If I-WAS-LOVING, I-AM-LOVING, I-SHALL-BE-LOVING, I-LOVED, I-SHALL-LOVE, I-HAD-LOVED, I-HAVE-LOVED, or I-SHALL-HAVE-LOVED, then I-LOVE. It is at home in any condition at any date. It ignores both time and state.

#### TEST PASSAGES

We have considered the opening sentence of Ephesians and noted the marvelous richness imparted to its transcendent doctrines by the unbounded scope of the indefinite. Now we will consider a few more texts, and for our first test we will take a text in which there is action, past, present and future. In the AV, Romans 8:30 reads as follows: "Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This verse is full of difficulties to the careful student. The "did predestinate" cannot be questioned, but how can Paul say that these were *called*

(in the past) when Romans was penned? If this is strictly true, then we have no place in this Scripture, for we were not called until the far *future* from that time.

The same difficulty applies to justification, but with far more force to glorification. If it was an error for some to teach that the resurrection was past already, why is the apostle allowed to teach that glorification, which is far more than resurrection, and includes it, is past? Of course no one takes this as it stands, and thus this translation breeds that miserable habit of slovenly interpretation, in which all idea of accuracy and definiteness is decried. If *glorified* here means *will glorify*, then we have the best of reasons for suiting *any* tense of Scripture to our own interpretation.

Now see how simply and grandly the whole passage responds to a true translation. "Now whom He *designates* beforehand, these He also *calls*, and whom He *calls*, these He also *justifies*: now whom He justifies, these He also *glorifies*." The whole transaction is taken out of time and circumstance into the higher realm of truth. There is now no confusion created by the time when the epistle was written. He justified some before that, He was justifying them then, He has been since and will be in the future. All this is concisely and elegantly embraced in the indefinite form, *justifies*.

And glorification, though future, is itself glorified when we receive it as a great truth, rather than as a future act. This rendering blends beautifully with the great thought of the chapter, and imparts permanence and majesty to God's method of drawing us to Himself.

Our next example has proven a puzzle to the greatest Bible scholars. They have written reams of "Explanations" but the real difficulty remained. In 2 Timothy 1:10 the old version reads "Who *hath abolished death . . .*" With all due respect to the Bible, we may safely conclude, from the sad evidences so abundant on every side, that death hath *not*

been abolished. It has been in the case of Christ. It will be for His own at His presence, and it will be for all at the consummation. The abolition of death is partly past but mostly future. How can we express this in English? By the very form by which we have chosen to render the Greek indefinite. All incongruity vanishes when we translate "Who, indeed, *abolishes* death . . ." *Hath abolished* will not be true until after death has been done away with as the last enemy.

There is a negative test which supports our position as to the aorist, which supplies an interesting example. The statement "in Adam all *die*" (1 Cor.15:22) was quite perturbing to the writer at one time, as he clings hopefully to the expectation of being alive at the Lord's presence and being *changed* without passing through death, as set forth in this very chapter (verse 52). It was a welcome relief for him when he noticed that *die* is *not* indefinite, but incomplete. It should be rendered *are dying*. This is strictly, literally, actually true, even of those who will not die before He comes. We surely may be pardoned if we are very fond of the correct rendering. The translation we once preferred has become most distasteful to us. Let us not be fascinated by the face, but edited by the heart of a translation.

The verbal adjective or "participle" has no indefinite form in English, hence is especially difficult to translate. When preceded by the article, in the Greek, we can preserve the distinction thus: *the [one] -calling* may be rendered *he who is calling*, but, when indefinite, we may change it to *he who calls*. This effectually conveys the difference between them.

But when there is no article the case is not so readily solved. The nearest solution seems to be the addition of the indefinite *when*. There are times when the translator cannot ignore the distinct force of these forms. In Hebrews 6:10 the sense of the final clause depends solely on drawing

an accurate boundary between them. We cannot ignore the shade of difference and render this "*servicing the saints and servicing*." The old version attempts to define the difference thus: "*in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister*." This rendering follows the interpretation instead of guiding it. They *supposed* that the past and present acts of the Hebrews are before us and thus they produced a version which seemed to correspond closely with its context.

Its grave defect is that it has no bearing on the *future*. And this, of course, was especially on the writer's heart, for this is an exhortation. The true rendering broadens out the statement to its necessary extent. God will not forget *when you serve*—at any time in the past or future—and *you are servicing*.

Let us put our position to a different test. We will take the word "love" and discover, if we can, the distinction between the indefinite and other forms. Our first passage will be John 3:16. The usual rendering is "God *loved*," which we change to "God *loves*." Which is best? Is God's love a thing of the past? Is God not loving the world now? Will He not love it in the future? Surely His love is timeless! He *loved*, He *is loving*, and He *will be loving*; in brief, He *loves*. Does not this appeal to our hearts as well as our heads? However precious the old text may be, is it not a thousand times more precious in the new form? Suppose it does jar our ears at first, is not the great spiritual gain worth some temporary pain?

Christ's love is like the Father's love. It is timeless. Hence we read (John 15:9): "According as the Father *loves* Me, I, also, *love* you." In contrast to this is the love of the saints for God, which is put in the present. *We are loving* God, seeing that He first loves us" (John 4:19). But, we hear our readers object, "The sentence does not balance. Either make it 'We love . . . He . . . loves . . . ' or 'We are loving . . . He . . . is loving.' The former is far preferable."

As the lack of "balance" is in the inspired original, the question is really not one of translation but of revelation. God did not "balance" the sentence. Shall we "improve" on His work? Or shall we let the "defect" appear in the English rendering? Shall we not rather break our jaws over the most cacophonous wilderness of words in the world, rather than disturb the very shading of truth? The sentence does not balance because *it should not balance*. God's love and man's are different in their quality. It is not a natural instinct but a divine compulsion which urges us to love Him.

Can we not see the beauty of His love in this contrast? Shall we not revel in the distinction drawn by our Lord when He charges His disciples: "A new precept am I giving to you, that you *be loving* one another, according as I love you, that you too, *be loving* one another" (John 13:34)? This distinction "cumbers" all of John's writings. We would always use the indefinite forms. But the very love which burns within us bids us tear off the veneer that hides the surpassing excellence of His affection, and raises it above the feeble flicker of our own.

This thought is further unfolded when the indefinite form is used of men. Though men do not *love* God, they *love* darkness rather than light (John 3:19); they *love* the praise of other men (John 12:43), they *love* the wages of unrighteousness (2 Peter 2:15), they *love* their own souls (Rev.12:11). In contrast to this the Son of God *loves* righteousness (Heb.1:9). The only time it is used of our love toward God it is in the negative: "*Not that we love* God, but that He *loves* us" (1 John 4:10).

Further examples and contrasts are found in the following passages: "If you should *love* those who *are loving* you" (Matt.5:46). First we have the settled disposition, next the actual experience. Again (1 John 4:11): "Beloved, if God *loves* us thus, we, too, ought to *be loving* one another."

And again (John 15:12) “This is My precept, that you *be loving* one another, according as I *love* you.” And (Eph. 5:25): “Husbands, *be loving* your own wives according as Christ, also, *loves* the ecclesia . . .”

At first sight, the case of the woman who anointed our Lord’s feet seems to be out of line with the indefiniteness of the aorist (Luke 7:47), for the Lord says, “She *loves* much.” Yet the following context shows that He does not refer specifically to her act, but to her character. Hence it should be in the aorist.

The following references are given that those who wish it may have all the evidence. *I love* occurs in John 13:34; 15:9,12; Rom.9:13; Rev.3:9. *We love*: 1 John 4:10. *You love*: John 17: 23; 23:24,26; Heb.1:9. *He loves*: Mark 10:21; Luke 7:47; John 3: 16; 13:1; 15:9; Eph.2:4; 5:2,25; 2 Peter 2:15; 1 John 4:10,11,19. *They love*: John 3:19; 12:43; Rev.12:11.

The same great truth vibrates in the participle, where we translate it *who loves* and the present *who is loving*, when they are preceded by the article. Is it not infinitely better to say “Him who *loves* us,” in Romans 8:37? And Galatians 2:20 is robbed of much of its sweetness in the old rendering, “Who *loved* me.” The apostle’s theme is not the past so much as the present and the future. “Who *loves* me” is full of solid satisfaction, entirely absent from the Authorized rendering. So in 2 Thessalonians 2:16, is not “Who *loves* us” more comforting than “which *hath loved* us?” The participle is found without the article in John 13:1. Its indefiniteness is quite apparent, though it cannot be expressed in English.

The vivid and lifelike changes of the verb in Greek offend our dull perceptions. Our minds are sluggish and do not respond to quick variations. We have a tendency to put everything in the past if it has already occurred, even if, for any reason, the *fact* rather than the act is in view. We would say (1 Peter 1:21) “God Who *raised* Him

from the dead and *gave* Him glory,” instead of “God Who *rouses* Him from the dead and *is giving* Him glory,” as it is in the Greek. But Peter is not calling attention to past acts but present conditions. God’s character, as the God of resurrection, is in point, not merely the past act. And it is especially appropriate that Peter should call attention to the One Who, indeed, *suffered* in the past, but Who is now actually obtaining the glory which follows. He is not reciting history but inculcating faith.

The value of this orderly disposition of the forms of the Greek verb cannot be overestimated. The earnest searcher after truth will find a haze removed from his eyes, and he will be able to follow God’s thoughts clearly and precisely, if he distinguishes where God has been pleased to put a difference.

“If the shoe fits, put it on.” This is the common sense method of distributing the English verbal forms among the Greek. Traditional grammatical tenets must fall before the fact that this plan *works*. The shoe may pinch at times, but that is because it is new, or some malformation is in the foot.

The little epistle of Jude furnishes a few interesting illustrations of the indefinite and the failure of the Revisers to recognize its force. They change the archaic *are crept in* of the AV to *crept in*—putting it all in the past. It should be *creep in* (verse 4). So also, where both have *prophesied*, it should read *prophesies*, for it is a fact for the future, rather than a past event (14). Was it not a calamity to change “the Lord *cometh*” of the AV to *came*? Surely that was not past in Enoch’s day! It is not past yet! It should be “the Lord *comes*” as in the AV. The Lord has indeed come, but not in judgment. It is evident that the aorist is *not* a past tense.

An undoubted difficulty remains for discussion. Our mode of thinking offers no facilities for considering a past act as a fact. Let us take the most notable act in history, the crucifixion of Christ. Surely that was a past act and cannot

be repeated. Yet this is the very point the apostle presses in the sixth of Hebrews. There were some who were crucifying Him for themselves again. English may wince under the statement of Peter (Acts 2:36): "Jesus Whom *ye crucify*." Peter was pressing on them, not merely the past act, but the present fact of their attitude toward Him. Perhaps few of them had taken an active part in the *act* of crucifixion. All who refuse Him are guilty in *fact*. This distinction is a very practical one. In Galatians 5:24 the AV tells us that "they that are Christ's *have crucified* the flesh." This has led to the logical deduction that this is a definite past experience, as was the case with Christ. It supports the doctrine of sinlessness in this life. The correct reading may grate on the English ear, but it conveys the truth. They *crucify* the flesh. It is a fact for the past, the present and the future. A knowledge of this distinction would have saved the saints from many a tremendous blunder and false step.

It would make this treatise too long and laborious to multiply examples. Few are without point. Many are most precious. Even as this is being written Ephesians 4:32 comes up in our hearts. ". . . and become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, *dealing graciously* among yourselves, even as God, in Christ, *deals graciously* with you." The contrast between *dealing* and *deals* fills our hearts to overflowing with thankfulness. His gracious dealings with us are timeless facts.

To conclude, try this experiment, if you have not already done so. Read the first chapter of Ephesians (which has many aorists) daily for a month. The initial strangeness will gradually vanish. The words will soon become quite familiar, the phrases friendly. The concord of words will, however, soon be overlooked in that higher accord which attunes us with the infinite grace and glory of God, which can be adequately seen only by means of the English indefinite.

A. E. Knoch

## THE FACT VERB

ONE of the distinctive features of the English *Concordant Version* of the New Testament is its use of the simple present as a standard form for those Greek aorist verbs which A. E. Knoch considered “true aorists.” This was introduced and defended in the June 1922 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* in an article entitled “The Greek and English Indefinite,” which was reprinted in the introductions to the early editions of the CV. Portions of this study are now reprinted in this present issue of our magazine.

The Greek aorist is generally divided into “first” aorists and “second” aorists. But A. E. Knoch came to the conclusion that second aorists and certain other aorist forms were not true aorists at all, and should be classified under various other headings. Now, however, as we prepare a new printing of the CV “New Testament,” we are treating all verbs traditionally classified as aorists as true indefinites in relation to time and state.

The aorist verb as Brother Knoch explains, is concerned with the *truth*, or the *fact* of the act. The time, whether past, present or future, and the state of the action, whether complete or incomplete, are left *indefinite*, and must be determined by the context. But the action itself is set forth as *definitely* so.

In accord with this we read the following in a grammar of the Greek New Testament, prepared for college students:

“We approach now the most prevalent and most important of the Greek tenses. It is also the most peculiar to Greek idiom. The fundamental significance of the aorist is

to denote action simply as occurring, without reference to its progress. It is the indefinite tense . . . . It states the *fact* of the action or event without regard to its *duration* . . . .”<sup>1</sup>

#### CHRIST GIVES HIMSELF

The use of the English “simple present” for Greek “first aorist indicatives” frequently requires some getting used to, and sometimes it may even introduce some initial confusion. For instance, when the CV reads, in Ephesians 5:2 (*cp* 5:25), that “Christ . . . *gives* Himself an approach present and a sacrifice to God” it does not mean to suggest He is presently giving Himself in this way. But, as with the accompanying clause, “Christ . . . loves you,” the wording is intended to reflect the special sense of the Greek aorist in which the emphasis is wholly on the fact of the action. In this case, the time of the action is made clear by the reference to Christ’s sacrifice. The verbs, *gives* and *loves*, draw attention fully to the truth of these actions.

Although we do not generally express ourselves this way in recounting an historical event, we still may say in English, for example, “On Christmas night in 1776 Washington *crosses* the Delaware River with his small army and *defeats* the opposing forces in Trenton, New Jersey.” Such a use of simple present verbs may have the effect of bringing the reader into the historical event, as though present, and thus make it more vivid. It is this last effect, that of making the action more vivid, which especially parallels the use of the verbs in Ephesians 5:2. By using the indefinite verbs which focus on the fact of Christ’s acts of giving Himself and of His loving of us in that giving, the acts are made more vivid than if they were expressed by verbs which draw attention to the element of time along with the particular action in view.

1. Dana, H.E, and Julius R. Mantey: A MANUAL GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, 26th printing, Macmillan, 1957, p.193.

As for myself I have come to appreciate the CV renderings of the verbs in Romans 8:30 and Ephesians 1:3-9a, which Brother Knoch discusses in his study. Referring to Romans 8:30, he points out that Paul treats God’s action of designating us beforehand as a blessed fact for our awareness. It clearly occurred in the past. But we know that because of the term “beforehand” and not because of the form of the verb. As an aorist the verb impresses on us that God’s prior designating of us is a gracious and gratuitous truth which we had nothing to do with, and which God Himself is fully responsible for. As such, it rejoices and strengthens us in the present while we live in the current era full of sufferings and groanings and corruption (*cf* Rom.8:18-23). And, as such, it gives us expectation for the future (*cf* Rom.8:24,25). So also it is a fact that God *calls* us, an act of God that occurred, in spirit, apart from sound and sensation, some time in our present life, but having its root long before this. But Paul speaks of it here solely as a truth which we hold close in our hearts; and here he does not even supply a word like “beforehand” or a phrase like, “on believing,” as in Ephesians 1:13 to establish the time of the call. Yet as we give attention to the fact that God calls us, this most happy and blessed fact affects our *present* lives, bringing great spiritual strength day by day. Nevertheless we begin with the fact.

Again, God’s act of justifying us has its roots in the shedding of Christ’s blood (Rom.5:9) and then God’s identification of us with Christ in His death (Rom.6:3-7), but it will not be fully realized until we are living to God together with Christ Jesus in the oncoming eons. The particular relationship of this work of God to time is made clear, if not in the immediate context, in other passages where regular “timed” verbs are used or further detail is given. But here in Romans 8:30 Paul would have us concentrate our

minds and hearts on the sure and certain truth of God's work of justification as it applies to us.

Finally, for our present endurance and joy Paul reminds us of the fact that God *glorifies* us, an act of God which will not be experienced until the future (*cf* Rom.5:2), but (and this is Paul's focus here) which is secured as an unalterable truth.

The same holds true for Ephesians 1:3-9a where the verbs, *blesse*s, *chooses*, and *lavishes*, and the participles, *designating beforehand* and *making known* form a "string of pearls" (*cf* p.177) made up of facts of blessings which God gives us in Christ.

#### STRINGS OF PEARLS

But should not God's act of *foreknowing* us, announced in Romans 8:29 and His deed of *purposing* that which brings Him delight, brought out in Ephesians 1:9b, be included among the pearls set before us in these passages? These two verbs are traditionally identified as "second aorists," which the CV presently treats as past tense verbs ("fore-knew" and "purposed"). But it is most likely that Paul used them as simple, fact verbs just as the "first aorists" in their contexts.

God's foreknowledge of us is understood as a fact whether or not Paul uses a past tense or an indefinite in Romans 8:29. But when we see that this act of divine foreknowing is the first of a series of blessings completed in verse 30, each one expressed with full emphasis on its vivid truthfulness, our appreciation for the passage will surely increase. God foreknows me exactly as I am, and yet He designates me and calls me and justifies me and glorifies me! Yet indeed (perhaps more in accord with Paul's thought), before sin and death entered into the world, God foreknows me as I shall be when I am glorified together with Christ. "What, then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us (in ways such as these), who is against us?"

#### GOD'S PURPOSE

Our acquaintance with God and growth in the realization of Him includes the happy fact that He has a purpose which He carries out through times eonian. Paul makes mention of this specifically in Romans 8:29 in relation to God's acts of foreknowing us, designating us beforehand, calling us, justifying us and glorifying us. So also in Ephesians 1, we read of God's purpose as "the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11).

Furthermore, in Ephesians 1:9b the word "purpose" is used as a verb with God as the Subject. This verb is commonly classified as a "second aorist" which we will now translate as we have previously done with "first aorists." God *purposes* that which brings Him *delight*, and He does so *in Christ*. The present CV reading, using the English past tense, "He purposed," is not in any sense misleading. It is absolutely true that God purposed to head up all in the Christ before He began to carry it out. The question is, however, in using this form of the verb "purpose" in this particular context does Paul wish simply and solely to lay stress on the fact of God's purposing, or does he want us to give attention also to its determination in the past? It seems likely to me that the apostle speaks here of God's act of purposing in the same way he has been speaking of God's acts of blessing us. He wishes to focus our full attention on the transcendent truth that God operates in accord with the purpose of His delight.

D.H.H.

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#### PETER FEDDEMA

It is with great sorrow that we announce the death of Peter Feddema of Kitchener, Ontario, on October 10, 2015. He was ever a keen student of God's Word and a staunch defender of the truth as he saw it, yet comforted and strengthened by the Scriptures' own testimony.