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Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE

FOR GOD AND HIS

WORD

VOLUME LXXXIX

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Hymn

Tis not that I did choose Thee
For Lord that could not be,
This heart would still refuse Thee
Hadst Thou not chosen me.

Thou from the sin that stained me
Hast cleansed and set me free,
Of old Thou hast ordained me
That I should live to Thee.

Twas sovereign mercy called me
And taught my opening mind,
The world had else enthralled me
To heavenly glories blind.

My heart knows none before Thee
For Thy rich grace I thirst,
This knowing, if I love Thee—
Thou must have loved me first.

Josiah Conder—1836

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 1998 BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

WE BEGIN our eighty-ninth year with these words of Paul in our heart: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as *He chooses us in Him* before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight” (Eph.1:3,4). Some may hesitate to give concentrated attention to these thoughts relating our blessings to God’s choice of us rather than to our seeking of Him and our levels of devoutness, as presented by religious tradition. But we find that the more we focus on the deity of God, that all is out of God and through Him and for Him, the greater is our joy and peace.

Consequently, we start the new year with a hymn praising God for choosing us, and we continue this theme in nearly all the articles in this issue. The evangel itself tells of a great work of salvation, justification and reconciliation that is all of God, in and through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not of ourselves, and so there is no room for us to boast in ourselves.

Furthermore, since we are saved in grace through faith, and this is not of ourselves, we can be certain that even those who die in unbelief will ultimately join us in acclaiming in genuine, heartfelt praise, “Jesus Christ is Lord!” This, too, is savored in the following pages.

But what of our present lives? What of the thoughts that occupy our minds, the words that come out of our mouths, and the deeds of our hands? These too are (and this seems very strange at first) not of ourselves. It is because God blesses us by choosing us in Christ that we are to be holy and flawless in His sight. This also is His achievement. The joyful certainty of our spiritual blessings among the celestials is a daily source of new life to the believer. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

D.H.H.

THE SALVATION OF THE UNBELIEVER

AS GOD is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe (1 Tim.4:10), we may confidently rest on one grand and glorious foundation truth—that *all salvation is of God, and neither believer nor unbeliever has any part in it*. On the one hand this assures us of the possibility of saving all men, for God alone is able, and, on the other, it bars out all human schemes for their restoration, whether by works, or suffering, by giving them a second chance, or by any cause whatever which originates in man. Those who believe are saved by His grace (Rom.4:16), those who do not believe are saved through His judgments, but in both it is He alone Who is Saviour.

Faith is but the channel of grace; it does not produce salvation. Judgment is but a means He uses, a process which leads to the opening of the unbeliever's eyes. It does not remove his guilt or cleanse a single sin. *That is done wholly and solely by the blood of Christ*. Every effort to bring about the ultimate salvation of all through the purgatorial or penitential sufferings of the sinner is a denial of this great truth. Judgments do not save, but the God Who judges is also the Saviour, and all His dealings with mankind are governed by the grand goal which He has set before Him—to become All in *all* His creatures.

In setting forth the process by means of which God brings the unbeliever back to Himself we must remember that few believers are able to analyze the method used in their own salvation. Now, if we are not able to explain our own experience, how shall we understand His method

with others? Yet, strange as it may seem, God's dealings with the unbeliever are much more easily apprehended than His way with us. The very simplicity of faith baffles us. Most theological systems seek to base belief on evidence, and speak of "Christian evidences" as the foundation of the believer's salvation. This is, rather, the method He uses in the deliverance of the unbeliever.

FAITH AND EVIDENCES

The case of Thomas is an example of the overpowering force of evidence where faith is wanting (John 20:26-29). No man can long withstand the testimony of his senses, even when (unlike Thomas) his interests may be opposed.

The tangible proofs given to support the proclamation of the kingdom affords a rich field for the study of the effect of evidence on the human heart. The unbeliever will be saved by sight. He will yield to the force of facts. He will be convinced by logic. What evidence is most suited for this purpose? In our Lord's ministry we can see both the helps and the hindrances offered by the senses. The consideration of a few cases will reveal what most moves men and what makes them obstinate.

The rich young man was hindered by his possessions. The Samaritans were helped by the Lord's words. The resurrection of Lazarus led many Jews to rely on His acts. These illustrate God's method in the judgment of the unbeliever. He removes hindrances—no earthly acquisitions interfere with the decisions of the heart, for both heaven and earth flee from the face of Him Who sits on the throne. He works the greatest possible miracle, by raising them from the dead. He reads the inmost secret of their hearts. He appears in their very presence in soul-dismaying splendor. They *cannot* doubt His power or His perfections, and no motive remains to lead them to deceive themselves.

The judgment of unbelievers takes place in the inter-

val between the passing of this present earth and the creation of the new. Every tie which bound them to the earth has been burned up. They are the subjects of the most astounding miracle ever wrought, having been raised from the dead. They are in the presence of the Divine Majesty. Their secrets are bared to His awful gaze. The character of their judgment, being adjusted to their acts, not simply as to severity but so as to correct them, will reveal God's purpose to save and reconcile them to Himself. This, followed by their death in the lake of fire and subsequent vivification at the consummation, is the basis of their reconciliation through the blood of the cross (Col.1:20).

The excuses offered by those who were bidden to the great supper (Luke 14:18) are all removed before the great white throne. No fields or oxen or wives will intrude between the spirit and the great Judge.

In the judgment day God will judge the hidden things of humanity (Rom.2:16). We are prone to consider this a mere exhibition of His omniscience, to facilitate the trial of the sinner and to insure his condemnation. But more than this, it cannot but have a most powerful effect on the unbeliever's attitude toward Christ. What was it that impressed the woman of Samaria (John 4:19,29)? It was His knowledge of her hidden secrets. As a result we read that many of the Samaritans of that city believe in Him because of the woman's word that He told her all that she had done (John 4:39).

The blessed results achieved by His exposure of the woman at Sychar's spring will be multiplied by many millions at the great white throne. There is nothing hidden that shall not be manifested (Matt.10:26). As in Corinth, the hidden things of the unbeliever's heart become apparent, and, falling on his face, he will worship God (1 Cor.14:25).

Perhaps no miracle wrought by our Lord and His apostles created a stronger conviction than that of raising the

dead. When Lazarus was raised many of the rulers believed, and the chief priests were concerned lest all should believe on Him because of this sign (John 11:45,48). When Peter raised Dorcas it also was used to convince many who believed on the Lord. Can we imagine what conviction it must have brought to Lazarus and to Dorcas themselves, if they should have had the slightest tendency to doubt? Could there have been any stronger proof of divine power than that their very life had come back to them at the bidding of One Who is stronger than death? In the process of winning the unbeliever we judge their resurrection and final vivification to be ample to account for salvation and reconciliation entering their lives.

SAUL OF TARSUS

The apostle Paul's case is of surpassing significance in its bearing on the salvation of unbelievers. He was the foremost of sinners, and it cannot be denied that, among men, there was no case quite as desperate as his. All question as to God's ability to save vanishes in the light of his call on the Damascus road. The miraculous means employed in his case surely would suffice for every one of God's enemies. And who will deny, on sober reflection, that the appalling power and glory of the august judgment session into which the unbeliever is ushered by his resurrection will be unutterably more impressive?

The apostle's vision passed. He came back to a scene where all was as before. He alone had changed. But the unbeliever sees the power and presence of God not only in his own deliverance from death, but in all around him. The vision does not vanish. The divine presence abides.

GOD AS JUDGE

The change which eventuates in the ultimate salvation of the unbeliever is wrought, not only by his resurrection,

but by the august judgment session, when he stands in the presence of Christ, with all his unbelief swept away by the awful realization of His power and the justice of His throne. We are asked, Is it possible for them to repent? Rather, we would like to know, Is it possible for them *not* to repent, or change their minds? We cannot conceive an unrepentant sinner before the great white throne.

God's thoughts and man's imaginations are nowhere more at variance than on the subject of judgment, or punishment. God is love; man is hate. David was wise when he was given the choice of fleeing before his enemies or falling into the hand of Yahweh. He uttered a great truth when he exclaimed "Let us fall, I pray, into the hand of Yahweh, for His compassions are abundant; but let me not fall into the hand of humanity." And surely his choice was vindicated, for when the messenger was stretching out his hand in destruction toward Jerusalem, Yahweh showed Himself merciful, and said, "Enough, now hold back your hand" (2 Sam.24:10-16).

NINEVEH

Jonah went through the streets of Nineveh, crying: "Forty days more and Nineveh shall be overturned!" (Jonah 3:4). But God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and He regretted the evil He said He would do unto them. "And He did it not" (Jonah 3:10). And what did Jonah do? Was he not pleased at the success of his mission? Did he not glory in the character of His God? Alas! he was like the many today. Like Jonah, they imagine that God has a streak of hate in His character and that He wanted to destroy Nineveh to give it exercise. But He had an object in threatening its destruction. Now that they repented and the object was attained, why should He belie His character and destroy them from sheer vindictiveness? Jonah's God was a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and

of much benignity, and regretting of the evil which He had threatened (Jonah 4:2).

DESTRUCTION

The thought that the resurrection and judgment of the unbeliever is only a prelude to his final "destruction" in the lake of fire must be judged by its moral effect, for it has no support whatever in the Scriptures. In the first place "destruction" (by which annihilation or extinction of being is intended), is *never used of the lake of fire or of the second death*. It is always used of the sinner before his resurrection at the great white throne. Those who are "destroyed" in Gehenna will be there. Those who "perished" in the wilderness and at the flood will be raised. "Destruction" is never annihilation. It never precludes resurrection and salvation. Indeed, *it is a necessary precursor of salvation*. The Lord came to seek and to save the "destroyed" (lost). So that, even if there were a single passage telling us that the unbeliever is "destroyed" in the second death (which there is not) we would still have every reason to believe God when He assured us that all who are dying in Adam shall be made alive in Christ (1 Cor.15:22).

Let no one suppose that we plead for the repeal of God's word regarding the doom of the unbeliever. Far from it. But we do plead for the removal of those harsh, human perversions of His word, which seek to make Him a man like ourselves, hateful and hating one another, vindictive and vicious in our views of the so-called "penalties" of sin. We plead for a revision of our vocabulary on this important theme.

The terms *destroy* and *destruction* are so often used of irrecoverable ruin that a few examples will be given to show how far this is from the truth. The rendering "lost" is always the translation of the word for destroy. It would be the utmost folly for the Son of Mankind to seek, much

less to save those who are annihilated. The lost sheep and the lost coin and the lost prodigal all had been destroyed, yet all were found and saved. Were the whole world lost or destroyed in the lake of fire, that would be no hindrance to salvation. Rather, it would be the very sphere in which alone salvation can operate. Christ cannot save anyone unless first he is destroyed, or lost.

GOD IS THE SAVIOUR

Such is the salvation of the unbeliever. It is not only in absolute accord with every passage in the word of God, but in utmost harmony with the God Who is revealed through that word. How can anyone who truly loves Him rest satisfied with less than this, the only true, the only scriptural solution?

Let those who are fond of reasoning about the destiny of the universe accept their own premises and follow them out logically and the inevitable conclusion will be a universal reconciliation. Try it and see. All will acknowledge these premises:

God is love		therefore?
God is omnipotent		

God is not love if He will not do all He can for His creatures, neither is He omnipotent if He is unable to save them. Both revelation and reason are arrayed against the false delusion of unending torment for the unbeliever. It degrades the sacrifice of Christ to a mere attempt to remedy an evil which it cannot cure. O, my brethren, why do you limit His love, why do you paralyze His power? Is the Christ Who saved *you* capable of completing His work by saving all like you? Or, if He *can*, why *will* He not?

Confess that this terrible doctrine cannot but lead you to doubt His perfections. It brings you up to a blank wall,

to a pit of dense darkness. But the blessed truth opens up a glorious vista flooded with the love light of God.

THE JUST JUDGMENT OF GOD

But, we are told, God's justice demands judgment. There is truth in this. But if God's justice must be displayed at the expense of His love, the extinction of the unbeliever in the lake of fire, far from forever removing an eyesore from the universe, places a blot upon His character which eternity itself can never erase. If we do not doubt His willingness to save them, then we must acknowledge His inability. If we cannot question His power, then we must limit His love, and then we endanger the very foundation on which all eternal bliss must be established.

But we do not need to rest on reason. At best, it is usually the refuge of unbelief. God has spoken, and real reason rests on His revelation. He is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe. God give us grace to glory in such a God!

In the opening chapters of Romans Paul lays the foundation on which God's just judgment is based. He closes his indictment of mankind with these words: "... God's just statute, that such as are committing them are *deserving of death* . . ." (Rom. 1:32). As the first death cannot be the effect of any judicial procedure on God's part, it is evident that the death penalty awaits all who come into the judgment. Whatever may be the variety and degree of the tribulation and anguish meted out to each, one common end awaits them all—the second death.

VIVIFIED IN CHRIST

But, some will ask, if they were condemned to death, how can they be raised again? What right have they to the grace and life that will be their portion? We answer, *none*. They will have no more claim on the ecstatic bliss

of that unending day than I or you, or any believer! What right have we? None at all. But *in Christ* we have a perfect title to every favor. So it will be with the unbeliever. It is not written that "Even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also shall all be vivified," but "thus also, *in Christ*, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). Adam's death involves all, irrespective of their deserts. Christ's life extends to all, apart from their personal merits.

And here is where the unbeliever learns to love God. The judgment has exposed his own unworthiness. The grace of vivification will illumine his heart with the love of God in Christ. Then shall be fulfilled God's universal goal:

". . . to Me will bow every knee,
And every tongue will be
acclaiming God."

This is the method He will use to bend the stubborn knees. He will not use physical force but moral suasion. Neither will He wring out a *confession of sin* from every tongue. The Greek word as here used means *acclaim*, which involves a complete acknowledgment and acquiescence in the divine will.

The crowning and conclusive exhibition of God's power and love toward the unbeliever awaits the consummation. The eons are past. All sin is banished. Evil is no more. The Son of God has nearly completed His mediatorial work. All the living are in perfect accord with God. Nothing remains but the conquest of death and the reconciliation of its denizens. It is the only enemy left in all God's universe. Then, and not till then will the vast concourse of mankind emerge from the domain of death never to enter it again. Then death will be despoiled, the last enemy laid low. Then shall all awake to live in the light and love of Him Who will have become the Saviour of all mankind.

A. E. Knoch

God is Operating in Us

"DO NOT I CHOOSE YOU?"

DURING the course of our Lord's brief and turbulent ministry there came a time when His challenging words were unacceptable to the throng which had followed Him. He had fed five thousand of the people with mere five cakes of barley bread and two food fishes, but evading their exultation and intention to be making Him a king, He retired alone into the mountain. Later, He crossed over the sea of Galilee, appearing to His disciples, walking on the waters (John 6:1-21; *cp* Matt.14:13-33).

The next day, this multitude also crossed over to Capernaum in boats which had come from Tiberias. They knew that during the previous evening the disciples alone had crossed the sea in the only boat available. "Rabbi," they questioned, utterly perplexed to find Him on the other side of the sea, "When camest Thou to be here?" (John 6:25).

Perceiving the motivation of this throng, Jesus had to declare the distinctive nature of His royal commission. "I am the Bread of life," He taught. "Do not murmur with one another. No one can come to Me if ever the Father Who sends Me should not be drawing him . . . Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the Bread which is descending out of heaven that anyone may be eating of it and may not be dying. I am the living Bread which descends out of heaven. If anyone should be eating of this Bread, he shall be living for the eon. Now the Bread also, which I shall be giving for the sake of the life of the world, is My flesh" (John 6:41-51).

There, in a synagogue of Capernaum, Jesus stressed the

importance of spiritual aspiration and sustenance. Here, we learn that many of His disciples came away, dropping behind, and walked no longer with Him (John 6:66). How sad that they had forgotten the ancient admonition to their ancestors that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord (Deut.8:3).

What caused them to turn away? Was it the final realization that they would not be receiving food? Was it the solemn statement, "The spirit is that which is vivifying. The flesh is not benefiting anything" (John 6:63)? Or, was it the repeated statement, "Therefore have I declared to you that no one can be coming to Me if it should not be given him of the Father" (John 6:65)?

Jesus challenged the twelve, "Not you also are wanting to go away?" Peter protested, "Lord, to whom shall we come away? Declarations of life eonian hast Thou! And we believe and know that Thou art the Holy One of God!" (cf John 6:67-69).

Despite Peter's earnest plea of devotion, our Lord was not persuaded. "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Do not I choose you, the twelve, and one of you is an adversary?' Now He said it of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, for this man was about to give Him up, being one of the twelve" (John 6:70,71).

"Peter and the rest of the apostles probably had the impression that they had chosen Christ, and in this crisis, they seem to be confirming their choice of Him. With this background, how strange to hear Him reverse their thoughts and emphatically affirm His choice of them! On another occasion He asserted that they had not chosen Him. He reserves the right to choose His Own. A realization of this principle gives strength and stability to vacillating mortals, who look within and find no soundness, and look without on turmoil and strife, and fear for the

future of which they know nothing. To be chosen by One Who has power to keep and knows all gives satisfaction and rest. It is infinitely more precious to be His choice than to have the questionable satisfaction of feeling that we were free to choose Him. If we were, we would have chosen another. There is none that seeketh after God"¹

NOT UNTIL GOLGOTHA

In connection with this incident on the shores of Galilee, it would surely be inconsiderate of us not to remark on the physical hunger of the throng. Their needs were real enough. On a later occasion, Jesus fed four thousand men, apart from women and little children. How revealing are His tender words, "I have compassion on the throng, for already three days they are remaining with Me, and they have nothing that they may be eating, and I am not willing to dismiss them fasting, lest at some time they may be fainting on the road" (Matt.15:32).

Starvation will wreak havoc with the reasoning process. It is no easy or simple matter to ignore the dictates of the soul! In many such grim circumstances, matters of spiritual moment might even be considered slight or even trivial. But what acceptance will be given to the words of a preacher today who announces the truth that *none may be coming to Christ except and only if God should be drawing them?* Such a teacher will have a lean time in Christendom.

It should be noted that not *all* but *many* of the disciples came away (John 6:66). While we would not condemn these, neither did our Lord or His Father. Jesus knew that His Father was bent on revealing His love through His great sacrifice. Those who turned away from Him in Capernaum or throughout the land of Israel, indeed, all, across the entire length and breadth of the universe, have

¹ I. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.151.

to be subjected to an experience of evil, sin, and judgment. Not until Golgotha could Israel, and the entire creation, be graced with essential righteous access to God, *through the shed blood of His sacrificial Lamb!* Once more, however, it is emphasized that "... God locks up all in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32).

CORRECTIVE AND PUNISHING JUDGMENTS

There was no independent choice or response due alone to the individual's will among those so chosen by Jesus, and this principle of selection applies equally with all of God's creatures. However, this unequivocal truth, amply attested throughout Scripture, will be vigorously rejected by many who affirm belief in God and His Son. In this present day of apostasy, these, with mock modesty, will concede that while their righteousness is a gift from God, through the sacrifice of His own Son, nevertheless, in their particular experience it could only become reality *through their own belief and acceptance!*

Disabled humanity is completely unable to perceive the absolute distinction between the unique, sublime wisdom and love of omniscient Deity, and inferior yet essential interrelationships of social responsibilities. In consequence, religious leaders have carried over into their beliefs the same uneasy obligations which obtain in human affairs. Disgracefully, in their theology, they degrade the Creator and elevate His creature, impotent man.

Social and political conditions of human society demand a clear recognition of specific rules and regulations. Do this or disobey that, and inevitable consequences will follow. Conformity in behavior to local, national, and even international rules, should, in the main, ensure a degree of peace, sometimes prosperity, and generally, a measure of security. However, because of human inability and disability, many complex judiciary systems have become essen-

tial for preservation, even survival. It is accepted that these are far from perfect, but they are the best plain ineptitude may devise. Alternatives of anarchy culminating in nihilism are too terrible to contemplate.

The judiciary systems have made some provision for minors and the insane, but many religious theorists in Christendom shake their heads in vague confusion when questioned about the innocents. Also they have no clear answers concerning the future of those who have not had the doubtful benefits of orthodox conception of truth. Traditional Christian standards of judgment would be unacceptable, even repugnant, in present courts of justice. With doctrines that border on arrogance, many blithely subscribe to a belief that, while they are *safe*, because of their belief, others, particularly those defined as "Christ Rejectors" must ultimately be consigned for eternity to unceasing, excruciating torment!

What stern retribution is reserved for purveyors of such heinous, grotesque distortions of truth? Once more, blessed to relate, these also have no choice. What sadness though, when they stand at the great white throne, before our gracious Lord and Saviour in all His exalted, worthy glory, and there are judged *according to their acts, but subject to His kind and corrective justice!*

THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER

It is a merciful relief to turn from such folly to sober reflection of God's wisdom. Through the glorious gift of His Own dear Son He clearly demonstrated the overwhelming wonder of His love. This is love beyond our comprehension. This is love which will not rest until every creature shall bow in humble adoration, and every tongue shall be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God the Father.

Shall those whom God designates beforehand—before

the disruption of the world—and whom He calls to be part of that august body known as the ecclesia which is termed the body of Christ be aware of this unique privilege of reflecting God's love? Further, shall they, learning of the splendid grace which is lavished, abuse or become indifferent to so great a love which refuses to be reckoning offenses? Let us be clear on these issues. They are of vital importance.

First, there is nothing which might be considered as proof. No documents of title, no evidence other than the precious Word of God. Clearly, this teaches, "... God's righteousness is being revealed out of faith for faith, according as it is written: 'Now the just one by faith shall be living'" (Rom.1:17). Care with this record is urged. The superior faith referred to is no less than the faith of our own Saviour, Who died that all might live! Answering the second question concerning response, it must be conceded that of course there will be present abuse. Subject to the enervating influence of dying humanity, how could it be otherwise? Yet, as realization of the awesome cost to God and His Son dawns in our lives of corruption and despair, there is gradual, but certain transformation.

And so the great lesson is learned: Love alone must save. Fear can but enslave. "God is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:12,13).

Donald Fielding

CHOSEN IN HIM

Among those chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4), recently put to repose, is **W. Wells Hough** of Almont, Michigan, at the age of 84. A cousin of our editor, Wells rejoiced, through both the pleasant and the painful experiences given him, in the truth that God is working *all* together for our good.

Another friend in the Lord, **Ken Warner** of Vincennes, Indiana, died late in 1997. Ken was a careful student of the Scriptures, a brother who enjoyed much enlightenment in the the evangel of the gratuitous grace of God in Christ Jesus.

He Shall Save His People

THE LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL

JESUS WAS COMMISSIONED to the house of Israel. He was commissioned to them, and He was not commissioned to anyone else. Jesus was commissioned to one people only, and they were a people who were lost (Matt.15:24). Furthermore, most shocking of all, this one, lost people to whom Jesus was commissioned to seek and to save (*cf* Matt.1:21; 2:6; Luke 19:10), remain, as a whole, unsaved!

THIS PEOPLE

To be sure, Jesus prophesied that only a few would be finding the way that led into life (Matt.7:14). Furthermore, He announced privately to His disciples that the prophesy of Isaiah 6:9,10, was filled up in this people whom Jesus was commissioned to seek and save: They heard and observed, but their heart was stoutered, lest they should understand and be healed (Matt.13:14,15).

It was not just Herod (*cf* Matt.14:1,2), who was, after all, an Edomite and extremely superstitious, but it was the most dedicated and disciplined out of Israel itself, who remained stubbornly in their lost state despite the miracles and healings and all the powerful deeds performed by the Lord. Again, Jesus cites Isaiah: "*This people* with their lips is honoring Me, yet their heart is away at a distance from Me. Yet in vain are they revering Me, teaching for teachings the directions of men" (Matt.15:8,9; cit. Isa.29:13).

This is the lost people Jesus came to save! Their heart was far from Him, and that warrants judgment, but it also is indisputable evidence that they were lost. We cannot dis-

miss the fact that Jesus did not save them by saying their behavior as lost sheep shows they did not deserve to be saved or calls for His everlasting rejection of them and condemnation to eternal hell. He did not come to save sheep that were well behaved and obedient, but sheep that were lost. And that was the obvious state of His people, Israel.

Even though many of them, "who have an illness" (Matt. 14:35) were "brought safely through" their physical debilities, they were not brought safely through their more serious debility of being lost in sin. Their leaders were blind, and they were leading the people who also were blind, so that they all would "be falling into a pit" (Matt. 15:14). Yet this danger was not pointed out to the crowds of people, but only to the disciples. To these few, Jesus gave warning, though even here not always in clearest of terms: "For whosoever may be wanting to save his soul shall be destroying it. Yet whoever should be destroying his soul on My account shall be finding it. For what will a man be benefited, if he should ever be gaining the whole world, yet be forfeiting his soul" (Matt. 16:25,26).

The facts are that Jesus came to save a people He did not save; He spoke to the people in such a way that they would not understand; He explained what He was saying to only a few, who themselves had difficulty grasping it and sometimes denied it outright (*cf* Matt. 16:22); God Himself had declared their blindness and stoutened heart centuries before; He alone could reveal the truth to them (*cf* Matt. 16:15), and He was not doing so.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

This does not mean that Jesus does not carry out His commission. Because the sheep were not found during this ministry does not mean they will never be found and saved. Because their hearts were stoutened does not mean they will not be granted mercy and enlightenment (*cf* Rom.

11:32). The truth was hidden from the masses, but the truth is that the entirety of Israel will be saved from its sins, that Israel will be blessed and be a blessing, that Jesus will be known as He is. If Jesus is not realized as Saviour, then it is not true that He saves His people from their sins.

Israel was a people like sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36). Very pointedly Jesus asked those in the synagogue who put their interpretation of the law above the meaning of the law, "What man of you will there be, who will have one sheep, and if ever this should be falling into a pit on the sabbaths, will not take hold of it and raise it?" (Matt. 12:11). Later He used a similar picture of a shepherd and a lost sheep to speak of His own work of seeking and saving "the little ones" of Israel, lest they should be perishing (Matt. 18:12-14). In John's account the analogy is expanded. Jesus' testimony was that He was "the Shepherd ideal" Who lays down His soul for the sake of the sheep (John 10:11-16).

"YOU ARE PETER"

Peter becomes the privileged example of the lost sheep who is found and saved by the Shepherd. He had witnessed the Lord's power over the storm and raging sea recorded in Matthew 8:23-27, crying out "Lord! Save us! We are perishing!" Now in 14:24-33 when they are again threatened by the raging sea, impetuous Peter asks the Lord to order him to walk on the water as the Lord Himself was doing. Yet fear and lack of faith takes over once again, and Peter cries out, "Lord, save me!"

Time after time Peter rushes ahead, wanders in accord with his own way, and gets himself in trouble, needing to be saved. Yet all these experiences are from God and for Peter's good, so that he would learn to recognize Who Jesus is. The great avowal of Matthew 16:16 is not a formula for salvation, but rather it is the consequence of God's

revelation to Peter through his failures and God's salvation granted to him of the truth: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It is not a creed learned by rote in order to become saved. It is a testimony of having been saved, and of knowing it.

This is how the lost sheep of the house of Israel will be saved and how they will come to avow that Jesus is Lord (*cf* Rom.10:9,10). It will not be revealed by other human beings, but by the Father of Him Who saves them from their sins.

REVEALED BY THE FATHER

It was not given to the people as a whole, at this time, to understand the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens (Matt.13:11). They saw the signs that pointed to Jesus as their Saviour from sins, the miracles of healing and authority over powers of evil, but they were not healed of that universally human, inner leprosy of sin and hypocrisy and self-centeredness that was at the root of all their troubles and was of the essence of their lostness.

They, as a people, did not even recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the Anointed Son of the living God. Instead, some were like Herod, and decided He was John the Baptist risen from the dead, or Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets (Matt.16:14). Only a few were like Peter in recognizing the truth and knew the happiness of believing that here was the Saviour Who was the Anointed One and the Son of the living God (16:16).

Revelation and understanding could come only from the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was not anything anyone could boast in. If the revelation of Christ could come only from the Father, no less would the work of the salvation of the lost sheep of Israel be that of God, *His* achievement, and all to *His* glory!

The revelation of Jesus as Saviour from sins, as the

anointed Christ Who would rule and bless, as the Son of the living God Who would manifest the power, wisdom and love of the Father, did not enter the hearts of this people. But that must ultimately be done. Otherwise Jesus is not their Saviour from their sins, their Good Shepherd Who finds the lost sheep, or the true Son of the living God. What His Name says He is, what He is called and designated to be, He will become in full recognition with joy and praise and thanksgiving.

FORFEITING THE SOUL

In making the saving work of the Good Shepherd dependent on the independent willingness of the sheep to be saved, the severity of the condition of being lost has been exaggerated beyond recognition. Since it was left up to Israel whether or not they would let Jesus save them, it is reasoned to be necessary that the results of a wrong choice be exceedingly harsh. Being lost was not enough. The lostness must involve eventual, everlasting, painful lostness. Otherwise, (it is supposed), the sheep might not think it worthwhile to admit their present lostness, or be motivated sufficiently to keep themselves within the confines of salvation and be faithful in following the Shepherd.

But this is not what is being presented in Matthew 16. Those, like Peter, whose will is directed to picking up their cross and following the Lord (Matt.16:24) would do so because of their recognition of Christ as the Son of the living God, *which recognition is given to them by the Father* (16:16,17). Such a happy recognition was not then given to the scribes and Pharisees or to the majority of that nation. The result for them is that they will be forfeiting their soul (16:25,26).

This is severe enough. But it is not a matter of suffering loss for all eternity in hell. *Soul* speaks of the senses and here especially of pleasant sensations. It has to do with the

joys and pleasures of that great *kingdom* which was promised to Israel, and will surely come and be clearly perceived (16:28). These will be forfeited by those of Israel who do not take up their cross (the temporary sufferings that precede the kingdom).

JUDGMENT IS NOT THE END

We say it is unfair for someone to suffer for something they were not given the grace of avoiding. But being lost in sin involves not only present misery but future suffering as well, as God deems best. The problem here is not the existence of future judgment and loss, but in viewing these future losses entirely as ends in themselves and as penalties entirely divorced from divine responsibility and purpose in wisdom.

The forfeiting of the joys of the kingdom is a sad thing in itself, but it must be viewed in light of God's operations. That sin has future repercussions needs to be made clear. But in making this clear we must never lose sight of God's great and triumphant and gracious dealings with sinners. With reference to Israel and the forfeiting of the soul-*ish* pleasures of the kingdom by many lost sheep of that nation, we must always keep in mind that Jesus came to seek and save these lost people of His from their sins. That will help put God's works of choosing some and revealing His truth to them, while still locking up others in stubbornness for awhile and bringing them into judgment as well, in perspective.

So we marvel at God's great grace to us in this day of darkness and human pride. Yet we rejoice that all God's operations, choosing and calling as well as judging and condemning, must finally be related to that great work of the cross and that glorious triumph of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour and Lord of us all.

D.H.H.

His Achievement Are We

INVOKING AND AVOWING

If ever you should be avowing with your mouth the declaration that Jesus is Lord, and should be believing in your heart that God rouses Him from among the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom.10:9)

This verse is probably employed more than any other in today's popular, formularized preaching in which advice is given concerning "how to get saved." Such an interpretation and application, however, is a gross misuse of the Word of God. This important text must not be taken out of its context, divorced from its setting, and assigned an altogether new purpose of our own devising.

In our consideration of this passage, it should first of all be noted that Paul is not speaking here concerning the nations, but Israel. The subject of the context is the salvation of Israel; the pronouns "you" and "your" are in reference to individuals of that nation. Their salvation was the delight of Paul's heart as well as his petition to God (Rom.9:31-10:1).

It should further be noted that the usage of "if ever," does not speak of a salvation that is in doubt, but of a salvation that is certain to occur—for *Israel*.

In the phrase "if ever," "if" is not the if of doubt but of argument. It is the practical equivalent of "whenever," in reference to the salvation which *will* then be occurring. The sense is, Whenever the sons of Israel should finally be avowing with their mouth the declaration that Jesus is Lord, and should be believing in their heart that God rouses Him from among the dead, they *shall* be being saved.

The teaching of practically the entirety of Romans 10 and 11 is that God does *not* thrust away His people whom He foreknew (Rom.11:2), and hence that the day will yet come when "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26a). Israel will then be saved not only out of her stubbornness and unbelief, but out of the great affliction which shall befall her in the conclusion of the eon. In that day, "Arriving out of Zion shall be the Rescuer. He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them, *whenever* I [Yahweh] should be eliminating their sins" (Rom.11:26b,27; cit. Isa.59:20,21; Psa.14:7; Jer.31:34).

Thus it is gloriously true that "if ever" Israel should be avowing with their mouth the declaration that Jesus is Lord, and should be believing in their heart that God rouses Him from among the dead, they *shall* be saved. They will then enter into the particular salvation which God has for them, that of life in the terrestrial kingdom in the coming eon, according to the writings of the prophets.

"Intense zeal, religious fervor, coupled with self-righteousness, does not lead to salvation. God demands subjection to His righteousness in Christ. The law should establish Israel's *un*righteousness and thus reveal God's righteousness, which is manifested in Christ. Israel, as a nation, will be saved when they see Him Whom they stabbed, and recognize Him as their Righteousness.

"The law demanded obedience first, and promised life to those only who continued to keep it. But even in the law there was provision for faith. It taught that Yahweh Himself, *He* was their Life (Deut.30:20). In the day when He gathers them out of the peoples and brings them back into the land He will bring the word of faith very near to them (Deut.30:1-14). In place of their own efforts He will put the humiliation and resurrection of Christ before them. Their salvation, under God, will depend on their avowal of Christ's lordship and resurrection.

"In the words, 'Whoever should be invoking the name of the Lord, shall be saved' (Rom.10:13; cit. Joel 2:32), there is an allusion to the ancient custom, still in vogue in eastern lands, of the right of sanctuary (*cp* Num.35:6-28). One who is in danger of death by the hand of the blood avenger, if he cannot reach a safe place in time, may invoke the name of some great and powerful person, and thus find salvation through his name. If the avengers of blood refuse to listen to his appeal, and take his life, it devolves upon the person on whose name he has called to take swift and summary vengeance. He gathers together all his friends and allies to assist him in punishing the outrage and in defending the honor of his name.

"Thus, 'Whoever should be invoking the name of [Yahweh], shall be saved.' When vengeance visits the earth, the only shelter will be the name of Yahweh. Therefore, it will require not only heart belief, but the avowal of the mouth. Thus it is that Israel will be saved and all others who, in that day, will seek refuge in His name."¹

The full text of Joel 2:32 (from which Paul cites in Romans 10:9 and 10:13) is: "And it comes that everyone who shall call on the name of Yahweh shall escape, *for* in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem *deliverance* shall come to be, just *as* Yahweh says; and among the survivors are those *whom Yahweh is calling*." All such ones will then call on the name of Yahweh and escape, *for* in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, His deliverance shall come to be. Their invocation of His name will be *because* of His deliverance, according to His calling. Hence their invocation should never be conceived as a means controlled by man in order to gain His deliverance.

It is especially wrong, then, to wrench these words from their context and employ them as a "formula" today, set-

1. adapted from A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.240.

ting these words before the listener as “how to” advice as to what requirements he must fulfill in order to “get saved,” or, become spiritual.

It is true, incidentally, whenever anyone today is graciously enabled to recognize and avow that Jesus is Lord and to believe in his heart that God has roused Him from among the dead, that he then enters into a certain salvation of his own. But it is a salvation from ignorance and unbelief, not from being unchosen by God prior to this time. And it is certainly not some sort of qualifying step which then obligates God to include him among His chosen ones in return.

Indeed, we were chosen by God long before we were born, in accord with His purpose and the grace given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian. In the counsels of God, it was actually “*given to us*.” This is what Paul says (2 Tim.1:9); not that it was merely made “available” to all who might one day qualify themselves for its possession. Membership in the body of Christ is by God’s grace, not by human qualification.

As long as we are altogether stubborn toward the things of God, we are “soulish, not having the spirit” (*cf* Jude 19). “Now the soulish man is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God, for they are stupidity to him, and *he is not able to know them*, seeing that they are spiritually examined” (1 Cor.2:14).

One either has the spirit of God or else he does not. If he does not have it, he does not—he cannot—receive those things which are of God’s spirit. Indeed, the truth is, claim what he will, such a person considers them to be so much stupidity. He is unable even to know the things of God, much less to speak of them before others. “No one is able to say ‘Lord is Jesus’ except by [*en*, ‘in’] holy spirit” (1 Cor.12:3).

Those who do not yet have the spirit of God do not

receive Christ at all actually, even if they, in their own flesh, may attempt to do so, having been misled into such a course through false teachings. In such cases, the “faith” is “feigned,” in the sense that it is *simulated* (*eikê*, SIMULATEDLY; 1 Cor.15:2), not genuine. Human efforts toward self-conviction are all in vain; we truly believe only when God *graces* us to do so, in His own time and according to His own powerful operations (*cp* Gal.1:15; 1 Tim.1:16).

Only those who have already been given God’s spirit receive Christ; their receiving of Him is a *fruit* thereof, as natural—and as much the work of God—as the spring blossoms on an apple tree.

INVOKING THE NAME OF THE LORD

On this subject, Dean Hough wrote, “It is ironic that these words of Paul [in Romans 10:9] should have been taken as standardized directions which must be followed if a person wants to be saved. Faith itself is thus given a legalistic twist, contrary to the whole tenor of Paul’s apostleship. Even in addressing Israel, the apostle is not imposing a set of rules for them to follow in gaining their salvation. Rather he is showing the pathway Israel needs to take, and indeed *will* eventually take, for the enjoyment of the salvation God has provided for them. It is a pathway of discovery, not human achievement. The salvation does not arise from either the avowal or the faith, but is *found* through their exercise

“The previous verses [Rom.10:6,7] show what Israel must *not* be saying if they wish to exhibit faith in God’s words and enjoy the blessings of salvation. This verse shows the opposite. Here is what they *will* be saying in response to true faith in the heart. They will acknowledge the lordship of Jesus, the One Who walked among them as a servant and Who was crucified as a criminal. And they will believe that God roused Him from among the dead

“The acclamation of the mouth [Rom.10:10], in the Scriptures, is an open expression of what is honestly believed. It must not be false. The Lord said, ‘Out of the superabundance of the heart the mouth is speaking’ (Matt.12:34). The sacredness of such an avowal can be traced back to the ‘ten words’ of the law, where it is written, ‘You shall not take up the name of Yahweh your Elohim for futility’ (Ex.20:7). What is said concerning God and His operations is to reflect His glory and manifest Israel’s confidence in Him.

“However, . . . even that future expression of Israel’s faith will not actually make them righteous or gain them salvation. What Paul has written concerning us in the earlier chapters of Romans and what he says concerning Israel in chapter 11 will help us supply the ellipses, somewhat along the following lines: ‘For with the heart it is believed for [the manifestation of] righteousness [established by God], yet with the mouth it is avowed for [the continuing display of] salvation [gained through Christ’s descent, death and resurrection].’

“These matters in brackets, though helpful to us in following the overall teaching of Romans, are not of immediate importance in Romans 10. Here Paul is presenting the way to righteousness (by faith) in a manner most calculated to appeal to and be understood by Israel, so as to make the strength of Israel’s resistance all the more evident. He is not concerned here with the basis and purpose of salvation, but with the simple human situation which is the *evidence* of that salvation . . .

“The attractiveness of the evangel, especially to those zealous for righteousness, is so great that we can only marvel at the strength of Israel’s stubbornness. Yet we would be the same apart from the grace of God. Israel remains under the disgrace of disbelieving God, stumbling and tripping, desiring the anathema of rejecting Christ, while

we have the joy and peace of believing on Him Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

“‘For everyone, whoever should be invoking the name of the Lord, shall be saved’ (Rom.10:13). Once more Paul borrows from the Hebrew Scriptures, this time from Joel 2:32. This continued tying in of Old Testament passages with the message Paul was presenting before Israel should logically have made that message more welcome to them. The harmony of salvation through faith with the proclamations and pleas of the prophets is very striking, especially considering the place of the law in the days of such stalwarts as Isaiah and Joel. No wonder Paul testifies that the evangel of God was promised before through His prophets (Rom.1:1,2), and that the righteousness of God was ‘attested by the law and the prophets’ (Rom.3:21)!

“The differences between Paul and Joel are obvious to anyone who considers each passage in its context. But the similarities are what the apostle emphasizes here. The pathway to salvation is not distant, complicated or obscure. It is straightforward and near at hand. All Israel needs to do is believe, proclaim and invoke. But still they are *locked up in stubbornness* and will not heed a message of such bountiful mercy.

“As for us, we are aware that God is operating, and He is operating all, even the affairs of Israel. He is operating all these matters together, in a harmonious and glorious way. And He is operating them all together for good. This is the faith that God has implanted in our hearts and which we rejoice in acclaiming with our mouths, to the glory of God the Father.”²

DECEPTIONS OF SUBJECTIVITY

Spontaneous informal petitions, prayers, pleadings, and

2. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.74, pp.91-96, “Faith in Heart and Mouth.”

thanksgiving to God, as circumstance evokes or occasion inspires, are but the natural outflow of our spirits. As the desire or need arises, such prayer and praise, even if very brief, is often most heartfelt and earnest. If we *are* walking in spirit, in the course of everyday life many occasions arise, or may well be before us continually, in which either petition or praise are regularly in our consciousness if not on our lips, even as they become our intermittent experience, in spirit. Conversely, often, when we are *not* walking in spirit, it is both the painful trials and the special joys of the day that serve to awaken us to reliance upon God even as to thanksgiving and praise unto Him, in the name of Christ.

In order to minimize the intrusion of the flesh, ordinarily, except for brief public blessing or supplication, prayer should be made “in hiding”; that is, either privately or in silence (so to speak, “in your storeroom,” after “locking your door”; Matt.6:6). Indeed, it is the “hypocrites” who are “prolix” (i.e., abundant and extended) in prayer (Luke 20:47), who thus engage themselves that they may be seen of men, making “useless repetitions even as those of the nations” (Matt.6:7). Even though such prayers are directed to the God of Israel, faithfully speaking, they are largely but “useless repetitions,” even so. The Lord Jesus declared of such ones, “They are supposing that they will be heard to in their loquacity. *Do not, then, be like them*, for aware is God, your Father, of what you need before you request Him” (Matt.6:8).

Devoutness in general and communion with God in particular, must be natural and sensible, not contrived, artificial, or sensuous. Yet as a technique by which they suppose they can regulate the flesh and “gain” the spirit, some will repetitively vocalize such phrases as, “O Lord Jesus! O Lord Jesus!” doing so with much zeal and great gusto. Though this mantra-like practice is termed by some,

“Calling on the name of the Lord,” it might more aptly be called, “Calling *out* the name of the Lord,” since, as ordinarily practiced, with much repetition of phrases, it becomes not so much a prayer of dependence upon God as a mood-altering technique, controlled by man.

Doubtlessly, if such procedures are practiced with sufficient frequency and sincerity, certain positive effects will be obtained as a result—especially if one is taught to expect such results. Such essentially pagan practices will often induce a certain ephemeral euphoria, which, in turn, deters those thus distracted from certain overt sins. One’s dependence upon such subjective, self-generated emotionalism, however, hinders if not precludes one’s dependence upon God.

Such exuberant vocalizings and related practices are, in fact, as fleshly and injurious in their way as those more conventional fleshly thoughts and deeds which they are designed to attenuate. Self-regulated experiences of ebullience, albeit in the name of Christ, constitute a spurious spirituality. Irrational, self-generated emotionalism is unhealthy, not to mention unwise. For some, such religiosity may gratify the senses or distract the flesh; but it cannot truly nourish the spirit of any. Nor is any such aura of religious euphoria somehow useful in preparation for the spirit’s presence—as if the Almighty had need of our crude devices in order that His testimony might be heard or His influences rendered effectual.

“INVITATIONS” AND “ALTAR CALLS”

Many have been deceived into conceiving of the evangel in proud and conditional ways through the false teachings of those who have been unfaithful to its message. Ever so many have been put through the paces of taking part in an “acceptance” of Christ which supposedly only brought salvation to them inasmuch as they fulfilled its “terms.” Such

claims and practices have only perpetuated confusion and deception. Wherever God intends, however, the power of the evangel itself still works salvation—in spite of the presence of these errors.

The customary invitation or altar call of today is simply a vain tradition of men (*cp* Mark 7:8). It is used because it “gets results.” Through such means, many become converts to the “Christian religion.” Such popular techniques are based upon the false idea which has well been termed “decisional regeneration.” The number of those from among such throngs whom God Himself has already chosen is known to Him, not to us.

Entrance into the terrestrial kingdom under law is one thing; the apostle Paul’s evangel of grace among the nations is quite another. Yet on the basis of Matthew 10:32,33 (and Luke 12:8,9), many today are warned that they must not only believe but also “confess” Christ before men in order to be saved. The scope of these words, however, is confined to the Circumcision. It is true that it was necessary for those called into Christ *through the evangel of the Circumcision* to heed all such instructions if they would enter into life. God, however, graciously fulfilled in His chosen ones all essential obedience (*cp* Isa.26:12). They would have life eonian only if they obeyed; but their obedience was due solely to His grace.

In the Circumcision calling, personal righteousness and endurance are *essential*, but they are not provided by man. Those in Christ of that calling, whether in the beginning or end of their life of faith, are saved entirely in grace, as much as ourselves. The throngs at large, some of whom had a certain recognition of Christ, must be distinguished from those who were truly chosen of God, “begotten anew” and “in Christ.”

Such matters as these do not concern us; it is a corruption of Paul’s evangel to attempt to incorporate them into

his message, especially when the *grace* which alone can fulfill the essential obedience of that calling is denied.

For ourselves, it is not that we must acclaim Christ, but simply that we gladly do so, according to His grace. We should not speak of “confessing” Christ, but of “acclaiming” Him. When *exomologeō* (OUT-LIKE-LAY [say]) is used in a positive sense, the CV translates it “acclaim” (e.g., Matt.11:25). When it is used concerning sin, it is translated “confess” (e.g., Matt.3:6). If a new believer should wish to share his first joy in Christ with others during a meeting of his fellow believers, this should be encouraged. But such actions must not be psychologically induced, or made into veritable laws or ceremonies.

Many may actually believe for some time before they ever “go forward” at a church service. *If so, they are already in Christ, and complete in Him* (*cf* Col.2:10). But if their faith has lacked commitment and obedience, not yet knowing His grace, they may well suppose that by taking part in this tradition they will somehow motivate God to bless them in return. Indeed, “orthodoxy” teaches this error, and proclaims it as truth.

If any should genuinely believe for the first time during such a meeting, this will be so only because God has decided to grant them faith in the message of “Christ crucified” upon this particular occasion. If so, one should glory in God in it all, in God’s good pleasure to be graciously granting faith, and not taint such a marvelous occasion with an abundance of boastful imaginings about “having done one’s part” by going forward at the altar call.

May our God and Father give us grace not only to be invoking (calling *upon*, or petitioning) the Lord out of a clean heart (2 Tim.2:22), but to be correctly cutting the word of truth (2 Tim.2:15), heralding the evangel of His grace to the honor of His name.

J.R.C.

THEN YAHWEH ANSWERED

THE TEMPEST described by Elihu in Job 37 forms the background for the appearance and address of Yahweh. It parallels the tempest of sorrow and pain that has struck down Job, and so also the words of Yahweh concerning His wisdom and power and constant involvement in the great world of the earth and skies parallel His wisdom and power and constant involvement in Job's little world.

HUMAN DARKNESS AND IGNORANCE

Job had reached the beginning of knowledge with his fear of God. The Word of God which he had heard was, as we have noted, that great account of creation and the patterns for approach and praise and shelter from divine indignation, which we have today in Genesis.

But Job was darkening counsel, and doing so without knowledge (Job 38:2) when he spoke of his own past record of good acts and pointed to the comparative ease of wicked people round about. These points, for all their truth, would not bring Job to an understanding of Deity. It is only when Job focused his thoughts on God and His connection with his sufferings that he was speaking what is rightly so (Job 42:7). We can know this because Yahweh speaks now only of His responsibility for both the physical and animate creation, whether we fear or enjoy it, or are indifferent to it. Yahweh has nothing to say about Job's moral record. The knowledge that sheds light on counsel and wisdom is the knowledge of God as He reveals Himself.

JOB 38:1-38

38 ⁺Then Yahweh ^lanswered ^lJob
from the tempest, ⁺ ^lsaying:

² ^aWho is **this** who **darkens^l** counsel

^lBy declarations without knowledge?

³ **Belt up your loins ^{pr}now like a master;**

⁺ **I shall ask of you, and you inform Me.**

⁴ **Where ^bwere you ⁱwhen I founded⁻ the earth?**

Tell if you know with understanding.

⁵ ^aWho ^{pl}determined its measurements—

for surely you ^lknow!

Or ^awho stretched out a measuring tape upon it?

⁶ **On what were its sockets sunk?**

Or ^awho directed its cornerstone in place,

⁷ **ⁱWhen the stars of the morning**

were jubilant⁻ together,

And all the sons of Elohim ^craised a joyful ^lshout?

⁸ ⁺ Who ^lshut in the sea ⁱwith double doors

ⁱWhen it rushed forth⁻, it came ^lforth from the womb,

⁹ **ⁱWhen I ^{pl}made⁻ the cloud its clothing**

And murkiness its swaddling band,

¹⁰ **⁺When I ^limpressed My statute upon it**

And ^{pl}set bar and double doors,

¹¹ **⁺When I ^lsaid, Unto here shall you come**

⁺but shall not proceed farther,

And here a limit is ^lset ⁱto your swelling billows?

¹² ^f**In all your days have you ever instructed the morning?**

Have you made known to the dawn its ^{ri}place,

EARTH AND SEA AND SKY

Yahweh speaks first of His founding of the earth, but expands on the word given in Genesis 1:1. He informs Job of His exact determining of measurements and laying of foundations (Job 38:5,6). The earth was neither founded without a plan nor without a wise carrying out of the plan. The result was so marvelous that “the stars of the morning” and “the sons of Elohim” exulted with joy.

This exultation of the celestial beings who raised a joyful shout when God founded the earth (Job 38:7) testifies to an expectation of deliverance from the corruption that had entered the universe (compare the language and thought of Romans 8:19-21). There was a feeling that God was doing something especially significant in forming this world. This was a work that was intimately related to the removal of evil from creation, a truly important matter to Job, and to us all.

Hence, Yahweh turns from the glorious, initial act of creation to speak of matters associated with evil, the rushing forth of the sea, of its billows and of murkiness and confusion. These forces were not outside the divine operation, and certainly not beyond His control (38:8-11). They may involve destruction, but by setting bars and limits to their powers, Yahweh makes known His superior power and the direction toward order and beauty of His activity.

This is shown further by the reference in 38:12 to the morning and the dawn. These daily evidences of hope and renewal are also of God. If Job is disheartened by the wickedness around him, the light of each new day should remind him that God will bring all wickedness to an end (13-15).

God knows all about the wickedness of the world, just as He is familiar with all the dark places of the sea and vast expanses of the land, and of death itself (16-18). These are not surprises or mysteries to Him.

- 13 **That** it might take **hold** ⁱof the **wings of the earth,**
And the wicked be ^lshaken ^fout of it?
- 14 **It** ^lturns itself to hues **like sealed clay**
⁺**Till they are** ^lst set like those of **clothing.**
- 15 ⁺**Then from the wicked their light is** ^lwithheld
And the exalted ^larm is **broken.**
- 16 **Have you ever come unto the seepings of the sea**
⁺**Or walked about in the fathoms of the abyss?**
- 17 **Have the gates of death been revealed to you,**
And have you ^lseen the **gates** of the **blackest shadow?**
- 18 **Have you comprehended** the ^fvast width of the **earth?**
Tell if you know all of it.
- 19 **Where is this, the pathway where light** ^ltabernacles,
And where is this, where darkness has its ^{ri}place,
- 20 **That you may take it** ^oto its territory,
And that you may understand the tracks to its home?
- 21 **You know, for you were** ^lborn back then!
And the number of your days is vast!
- 22 **Have you entered into the storehouses of snow,**
And have you ^lseen the **storehouses of hail,**
- 23 **Which I have kept back for the season of distress,**
For the day of attack and war?
- 24 **Where is this, the pathway where light is** ^lapportioned,
 Where the **east wind is** ^lscattered over the **earth?**
- 25 ^a**Who has divided off a trench for overflowing rains**
And set a pathway for the thunderbolts,
- 26 **To** ^cbring rain on a land where **no** ^tman is,
 A **wilderness with no** ^thuman in it,
- 27 **To satisfy areas of ruination and wasteness,**
And to cause verdure to sprout [~]from the **arid place** [~]?
- 28 **Is there a father for the rain?**
Or ^a**who has begotten the globules of dew?**

38:20 it: i.e., either light or darkness.

38:27 ---- from the arid place: Hb place for bringing forth.

SNOW AND WIND AND THUNDER

If Job is going to know God as the One Who is operating all and doing so with power and wisdom, then his mind has to be cleared of any self-centered pride of goodness and achievement, and of blame and independence in control over his destiny as well. He also must view all things in his life, whether good or evil, as of God and under His control. What is relevant in the matter of Job's misery, and alone of purpose and meaning in it all, is centered in God alone.

Therefore, Yahweh speaks of His responsibility for all things. That is the word Yahweh has for Job.

There is divine intelligence and purpose behind the existence of snow and ice in unexplored regions of the earth, and of light and wind in their apportioned pathways and in the movements of the stars. Over all these God has the superintendence (22-32).

These are not accidents or arrangements of arbitrary chance. Wildernesses and deserts are placed by design where God has placed them, no less than the constellations, or the individual stars and galaxies in space that compose them. All of this must put Job's sufferings into perspective. Job is not the master of his fate. If God, in His wisdom, wills to bring pain and loss and sorrow into Job's life, all of Job's human righteousness and noble deeds will not keep it from coming. Satan also is left out of the picture. The creation is under the direction of the Creator, and therefore His purpose for it will be achieved.

God is there laying down laws of physics and superintending over the earth (v.33). He has full control over the clouds and lightning bolts, directing where moisture shall fall and where dry clods of earth shall be opened by the rain, and where they shall still remain (34-38). He is over all things, both good and evil.

D.H.H.

- 29 **From "whose belly has the ice come forth?**
And the hoarfrost of the heavens, "who has generated it,
 30 **When water 'hides itself as stone,**
And the face of the abyss is 'frozen over?
 31 **Can you 'tie up the windings of the Pleiades?**
Or can you 'unloose the draw-cords of Orion?
 32 **Can you 'bring 'forth the constellations of the zodiac**
in their season?
And the Great Bear^{on} with her cubs, can you 'guide them?
 33 **Do you know the statutes of the heavens?**
if Or can you^{pl} establish its superintendence 'over the earth?
 34 **Can you 'raise up your voice to the thick clouds**
+ That the accumulation of water may cover you?
 35 **Can you 'send forth the lightning bolts + that they may go?**
And do they 'say to you, ^{bd} Here we are?
 36 **"Who has set wisdom in the hidden parts?**
Or "who has given understanding to the intuition?
 37 **"Who can 'number the ^{sky} clouds in wisdom?**
And the waterskins of the heavens, "who can 'tip down,
 38 **"When the soil is solidly set⁻ into lumpy casts,**
And the clods are 'clung together?

NOTES AND NOTICES

The *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Hendrickson, 1997) is a recently published English edition of a work of German scholars, providing current thinking on the meaning of Hebrew terms. Concerning the word *olam* which we translate *eon* or *eonian*, we read: "The Eng. translation 'eternity' . . . is inappropriate for a number of OT passages with *olam*, and, even when it seems appropriate, it may not be permitted to introduce a preconceived concept of eternity, burdened with all manner of later philosophical or theological content." It is satisfying to find this admission, but we wonder how the word "eternity" (or "forever," or "everlasting") could ever be used apart from the burden of philosophical or theological content in Bible translations.

By the time our readers receive this issue of our magazine, Volume 89 (1997) of *Unsearchable Riches* should be available for shipping (hardbound, green cloth, 288 pages; \$20, plus \$2.00 s&h).

THE BEST OF THE FLESH

“THE war against the Philistines was unyielding all the days of Saul. When Saul saw any masterful man or any son of valor, he would add him to his host” (1 Sam.14:52). “David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; and when his brothers and all his father’s house heard, they went down there to him. And others convened around him: every man under constraint, every man who had a creditor, every man bitter of soul. He became chief over them” (1 Sam.22:1,2).

Saul was continually conscripting the best of Israel’s men to be added to his fighting force. And yet they were never able to overcome their foes. On the other hand, David did finally see peace. But notice the difference in David’s acquisition of those who became his mighty men. They came to him. They loved him. They needed him. And they were not necessarily “the best.” So is Christ’s acquisition of those who will be His in the oncoming eons and in the complement of the eras when all is headed up in Him.

AMALEK, A TYPE OF THE FLESH

This contrast sets the tone for the fifteenth chapter of 1 Samuel. The first three verses of the chapter are one of those passages which many people consider difficult to understand. God instructed Israel to utterly destroy Amalek, “both man and woman, both infant and suckling, both bull and flockling, both camel and donkey.” History has shown that Israel failed to obey such commands repeatedly, and the ultimate result was always the corruption and failure of the chosen nation.

Amalek was a descendent of Esau and represents the flesh—ever struggling against faith, attacking when defenses were weak, and warring with the chosen perpetually. In their journey through the wilderness the children of Israel were attacked by Amalek at a time of great vulnerability, just after their encounter with thirst and the consequent despair and rebellious thoughts that had taken hold of them (*cf* Exodus 17).

Now again, as recorded in 1 Samuel 14, the forces of Israel spent all their energy in the battle with the Philistines. In their exhaustion the hunger of the flesh overwhelmed them, and they sinned grievously. But Jonathan was refreshed and satisfied because he was depending on God rather than on his own strength. Saul had invoked a curse on anyone who stopped to eat before he was avenged of his enemies.

But chapter 15 is where the curse should have been pronounced. “Cursed be anyone who reaches out his hand to take what God has doomed!” But instead of heeding God’s simple and uncompromising directive, Saul and the soldiers deemed themselves wise enough and with sufficient discretion to save *only the best* (1 Sam.15:15). The king of Amalek was spared, and the stout fatlings, and only the most desirable of the property (15:9).

Saul’s actions betrayed his heart. Saul went to Carmel and raised a signpost to himself. Then he went to Gilgal! (15:12). Saul was glorying in himself and the victory that God had given him, and, in such a frame of mind, he went to the place renowned for the cutting off of the flesh, to sacrifice to God! Gilgal means *rolling*. That is where the reproach of Egypt was rolled off Israel with the reinstitution of circumcision, and the renewal of covenant relationship to God (Josh.5:2-9).

Abraham’s circumcision clearly spoke of the deadness and inability of the flesh to perform God’s will. Yet Saul

was glorying in the flesh, and he was saving the best and most appealing things of the flesh, and he was offering the fruits of the flesh to God.

GOD WILL NOT ALLOW THE FLESH TO RULE

God's response is that this kind of rule will not continue to reign over His chosen ones. As always the flesh has its excuses: "Blessed be you [God's prophet] by Yahweh! I have carried out the command of Yahweh . . . I have brought [the animals] from the Amalekite, because the soldiers spared the best of the flock and the herd in order to sacrifice them to Yahweh *your* Elohim" (1 Sam. 15:13-15). (We are reminded of words in Genesis chapter 3: "The woman that You gave me . . . the serpent beguiled me.") Honesty would have been compelled to say, "We saved what appealed to us because I failed to rule what was under my authority."

What is God's opinion of such service? Samuel asked the question (1 Sam. 15:22). What does God delight in? What is it that brings joy and satisfaction to God? Can we mortals please God by enriching Him with our gifts? Is there anything we can hold in our hand that will win God's heart after our actions have told God that we believe our wisdom is greater than His and our ways are better than His? Can we fail to live as we understand God desires us to live, and then purchase His smile with presents? Will God deny Himself and His truth for the sake of the works of our hands? To reject God's word and direction is rebellion and insubordination (v.23). It is taking guidance from and honoring other sources.

In accord with God's wisdom, the flesh rules our lives for awhile, for our education. But this is not the permanent rule in the life of faith. And so Samuel cut down Agag at Gilgal (15:33). Samuel showed the true meaning of Gilgal to be the cutting off of the flesh. Then he departed from

Saul, never journeying to see his face again. The Nazirite (*cf* Num.6:2), totally dedicated to God, cannot fellowship where the flesh is exalted over the will of God.

CRUCIFIXION OF THE FLESH

Paul called the death of Christ a circumcision—a stripping off of the body of flesh. It is in accord with the evangel of our crucifixion with Christ that the apostle writes, "Now those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

How powerful and solemn it is, coming from God, that this crucifixion of the flesh is so fitly displayed in the command to Saul to utterly destroy man and woman, infant and child and every beast. Nothing the flesh values, no matter how innocent or appealing its appearance is to be carried over into the new life. The cross of Christ says, "Count your life and works as dead and laid in the tomb with Christ, and depend upon God to raise up a new life within you."

J. Philip Scranton



Concordant Version of 1 Samuel 15

15 + Samuel ^lsaid to Saul, It was ^YI whom Yahweh sent to anoint you ^{king} over His people, over Israel. + So now hearken to the voice of the words of Yahweh. ² Thus says Yahweh of hosts, I have noted ^wwhat Amalek did to Israel, ^wwhen he ^{pl}stood ^{against} it ⁱon the way ^{as} it came ^{up} from Egypt. ³ ⁷⁺ So ^snow go, + you must smite ^{Amalek} and ^{doom} him and ^{all} ^wthat is his. + You shall not spare ^{on} him; + but you will ^cput to death ^f both man

^fand woman, ^f both infant and ^{fr} suckling^l, ^f both bull and ^{fr} flockling, ^f both camel and ^{fr} donkey.

⁴ + Saul ^lsummoned ^{the} ^{wi}force and ^mmustered them ⁱat Telaim: 200,000 footmen, and 10,000 ^{men} of Judah. ⁵ + Then Saul ^ladvanced as far as the city of Amalek and ^{7c}lay in ^{ambush} in the wadi. ⁶ + Saul ^lsaid to the Kenite, ^{go}Come, withdraw, go down from ^{mid}among the Amalekite, lest I [~]sweep you off[~] with him. ⁺As for you, you ^dshowed kindness ^{wi}to all the sons of Israel ⁱwhen they came up[~] from Egypt. ⁺So the Kenite ^lwithdrew from ^{mid}among the Amalekite. ⁷ + Then Saul ^lsmote ^{the} Amalekite from Havilah ^{7as} far as^s Shur, which is adjoining Egypt. ⁸ + While he ^lapprehended ^{Agag} king of Amalek alive, ⁺ he doomed all the people to the edge of the sword. ⁹ + But Saul and ^{his} ^{wi}soldiers ^lspared ^{on} Agag and ^{on} the best of the flock and the herd, ⁺ the ^Mstout fatlings^{~s} and ^{on} the butting lambs, and ^{on} all ^{that} was good, and they would not doom[~] them. ⁺As for any ^{property} that was despised and [~]rejected^l~, they doomed ⁱt.

¹⁰ + The word of Yahweh ^{lb}came to Samuel, ⁷ saying[~], ¹¹ I regret that I caused ^{Saul} to reign ^{as} king, for he has turned ^{af}away from following Me and has not carried out ^{My} ^{sp}commands.

⁺Now ⁷ Samuel grew ^{hot}angry and he ^lcried out to Yahweh all ^{that} night. ¹² + When Samuel ^crose ^{early} to meet Saul in the morning, ⁺then ⁷ Samuel was ^ltold, ⁷ saying[~], that Saul had ⁱⁿgone to^d ^{Carmel} + ^{bd}where he ^cerected a monument^l as a signpost to himself. ⁺Then he had turned ^{about} and ^lpassed on and ^ldescended to ^{Gilgal}.

¹³ + Samuel ^lcame to Saul, ⁷⁺just ^{bd}when he^l had ^cof-fered up an ascent approach to Yahweh ^{of} the first of the loot ^wthat he had taken from Amalek. ⁺When Samuel came ^lnear to Saul^o, ⁺then Saul ^lsaid to him, Blessed^l be you ^{by} Yahweh! I have carried out ^{the} command of Yahweh. ¹⁴ + Samuel ^{lsa}replied, What ⁺then is ^{this} bleating of

the flock in my ears, and the lowing of the herd ^wthat I am hearing?¹⁵ + Saul ^{lsa}answered, ^{7I}~ have brought them from the Amalekite, ^wbecause the ^{wi}soldiers spared ^{on} the best of the flock and the herd in order to sacrifice[~] them to Yahweh your Elohim. ⁺Yet we have doomed ^{the} rest^l. ¹⁶ + Samuel ^{lsa}replied to Saul, Hold back and let me ^ltell ⁷ you ^wwhat Yahweh spoke to me ^{last} night. ⁺Then he ^lsaid to him, Speak.

¹⁷ + So Samuel ^{lsa}apprised ^{7Saul}^{cs}: Is it not true that ⁱf though you were small in your own eyes, you became head of the tribes of Israel? ⁺ Yahweh ^lanointed you ^{as} king over Israel, ¹⁸ and Yahweh ^lsent you ⁱon a ^{way}mission, ⁺ say- ing, Go and ^{doom} ^{those} sinners, ^{the} Amalekite; ⁺ ^{fight} ⁱagainst them until ^{7you}^{cs} have ^{all}finished[~] ^{them}. ¹⁹ + Then why did you not hearken ⁱto the voice of Yahweh? ⁺Why did you ^lpounce ^{on} the loot and ^{do} ^{what} was evil in the eyes of Yahweh? ²⁰ + Saul ^{lsa}replied to Samuel, ^wBecause I hearkened ⁱto the voice of ^{7the} ^{wi}soldiers[~]. ⁺When I ^lwent ⁱon the ^{way}mission on which Yahweh sent me, ⁺ I ^lbrought back ^{Agag}, the king of Amalek, and I doomed ^{Amalek}. ²¹ + Yet the ^{wi}soldiers ^ltook from the loot some small cattle and large cattle, the first parts of ^{what} had been doomed, to sacrifice to Yahweh your Elohim ⁱat Gilgal.

²² + But Samuel ^lsaid,

Does Yahweh ⁷have as much delight

in ascent offerings and sacrifices

As in hearkening[~] ⁱto the voice of Yahweh?

Behold, to hearken[~] is better ^fthan sacrifice,

To ^cpay attention ^fthan the fat of rams.

²³ For rebellion is like the sin of divination,

+ Insubordination[~], like the lawlessness ^{of} teraphim.

Because you rejected ^{the} ^{sp}command of Yahweh,

He has ⁺also ^lrejected you from ^{7b}being^{-o} king

⁷over Israel^o.

²⁴ + Saul ^{lsa}replied to Samuel, I have sinned, for I have ^ptransgressed ^tthe bidding of Yahweh and ^yyour ^{sp}instructions, ^tbecause I feared ^tthe ^{wi}soldiers and I ^lhearkened ^tto their voice. ²⁵ + Now I pray, bear ^twith my sin and return with me, so ⁺that I may prostrate myself ^ybefore Yahweh ⁷your Elohim^s. ²⁶ + But Samuel ^lsaid to Saul, I shall not return with you, for you rejected ^tthe ^{sp}command of Yahweh, ⁺so Yahweh has ^lrejected you from ^bbeing- king over Israel.

²⁷ + As Samuel turned ^laround to ^{go}leave, ⁺ ⁷Saul^Q ^cheld ^lfast ^tto the hem of his robe, and it was ^ltorn. ²⁸ + Samuel ^lsaid to him, Yahweh has torn ^tthe kingship over Israel ^{on}away from you today and has given it to an associate of yours ^twho is better ^fthan you. ²⁹ + Moreover, the Permanent One of Israel does not ^mdeal ^lfalsely and ⁷the Holy One of Israel⁰ does not ^lrepent, for He is not like a human ^ythat He should ^lrepent.

³⁰ + But ⁷Saul⁰ ^{lsa}pleaded, I have sinned, ⁷yet^s now, I pray, ^mbring glory to me in front of the elders of my people and in front of Israel. ⁺ Return with me, so ⁺that I may prostrate myself ^ybefore Yahweh your Elohim. ³¹ + So Samuel ^lturned back, following after Saul, and Saul ^lprostrated himself ^ybefore Yahweh. ³² + Then Samuel ^lsaid, ^cBring close to me ^tAgag king of Amalek. ⁺ Agag ^lwent to him haltingly. And Agag ^lsaid, ^{so}Surely the bitterness of death has withdrawn. ³³ + Samuel ^{lsa}replied, Just as your sword has bereaved other women, so shall your mother be bereaved ^famong women. And Samuel ^lcut down ^tAgag before Yahweh ⁱat Gilgal.

³⁴ + Then Samuel ^lwent to^d ^tRamah; ⁺as for Saul, he went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. ³⁵ + Samuel did not come again to see ^tSaul until the day of his death, though Samuel mourned for Saul, ⁺because Yahweh regretted that He had ^cmade ^tSaul king over Israel.

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**UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 1998
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE**

EDITORIAL

GOD does the unexpected. He creates the heavens and earth, and He also creates evil (Gen.1:1; Isa.45:7). He allows Satan to bring great suffering to His servant Job, and when He finally speaks to Job about this, without referring to Satan, He tells him of *His own* responsibility in similar cases among animals. He is in charge of all things, including the groaning and travailing of the creation.

It is God Who directs Samuel to anoint Saul as king, then rejects Saul and transfers His spirit to David. He locks up all in stubbornness that He might be merciful to all.

Who would have predicted that God would choose Jacob to be the father of His special, twelve-tribed people? Who would have supposed that in instructing Israel of His *will*, it was God's *intention* that the nation would fail to do His will? Who would have guessed that in sending His Son to save sinners it would be His counsel that the Son be crucified and that this death should be the basis of the promised salvation?

Furthermore, who would have foreseen that just when all God's promises of blessing for His chosen people seemed about to be fulfilled following the death and resurrection of His Son, God would commission a blaspheming enemy of His Son to bring an evangel of grace and peace, on the basis of the Son's death and resurrection, to the nations? Who would have thought He would have designated beforehand and begin calling out from Israel and the nations, a motley group of people like us, wholly and obviously undeserving, and grant us transcendent blessings of grace and peace and glory?

Earlier this month I stood at the bedside of a young man,

Damon Klinger, as he fought for breath while his body struggled vainly to rid itself of the leukemia cells that filled his bloodstream. It had seemed to me in recent years that God would deliver this talented youth from his sickness and grant the mercy given to Paul and the Philippians regarding Epaphroditus (Phil.2:27). Damon felt so, too. Consequently, it was with great perplexity (*cf* 2 Cor.4:8) that Damon cried out on his deathbed, "I did not think it would come to this!"

While death is everywhere and in us all, it seemed especially untimely for Damon that day. Yet it came to him a few hours later.

All is out of God.

Here unbelievers (and some of our brethren as well) will exclaim that if we think this is of God, and is included in His intention, then they will have no part with us in such faith. But Job, who never imagined that God would bring him into such severe afflictions and losses, only turned the more intensely to God and clung the more tenaciously to His words. So also Damon's perplexity never deflected him from his reliance on the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

Consequently, we thanked God together for the gift of His Son, Whose death, alone of all deaths, speaks of good news as the means for the abolishing of death and the assuring of immortal and incorruptible life.

It is not that God's ways are different from our ways for no reason or purpose other than to prove He is God. He acts unexpectedly from our standpoint. But He does not act arbitrarily. God created evil and brought affliction to God-fearing Job and counseled the crucifixion of His Son for the gaining of good that could not have come by any other means. This carrying out of His intention for the achievement of His will does prove that He is God. But it also brings countless blessing finally to everyone.

All is out of God, but all is through Him and for Him as well. To Him be the glory!

D.H.H.

Concordant Studies

GOD'S WILL AND INTENTION

IN translating the ninth of Romans, verse nineteen, I felt almost as if the text before me was faulty. It should surely read, "who hath resisted His will?" Yet the word is not *will*, but *intention*. There seemed so little difference, at the time, that I did not appreciate the concordant rendering myself. Since then I have been most thankful for it. It helps to solve one of the deepest difficulties and contradictions connected with the place and problem of evil. To the question, Who hath resisted His will? we may answer, *Many*, if not all. But to the query, Has anyone withstood His intention? the reply is the opposite, for *no one* can thwart Him. Even when withstanding His will we are fulfilling His intention.

ROMANS NINE

There are not many passages in God's Word like the ninth of Romans. Seldom are we taken behind the scenes into the realm of the absolute. Much in this chapter *seems* to contradict other portions of the Scriptures, because they deal with processes, as seen by man, while this is concerned with causes, known only to God. God has a goal. In order to reach it He must have had absolute control from the beginning. All the intervening process, no matter what it may appear to be to men, must be the working out of His original intention. He is the great Potter. His creatures are clay. This is true only in regard to God's intention. Viewed in relation to His will they are not at all the passive material suggested by the clay. "Ye will *not*" (*cf*

Matt.23:37) describes man's antagonistic attitude toward God's revealed will.

The case of Pharaoh is the classic example of the chasm between God's will and His intention. His revealed will was very plain. "Let My people go!" It seemed to be fulfilled in the liberation of Israel. But no one who reads the account and believes it can escape the conviction that God's intention included more than His revealed will, and that it involved opposition to that will. This much might be easily inferred if Pharaoh had been hard-hearted enough to play his part. It is put beyond doubt by the action of God in hardening his heart.

God's revealed will was limited to the release of Israel. His intention was to display His own power and glorify His Name in all the earth. This is given us as a specimen of His complete purpose and of the process by which He will attain it. Mankind does not comply with His will; His saints do not comprehend His intention. Yet He uses both the opposition and the ignorance to effect His object. No doubt many in Israel were fervently praying that Pharaoh's heart would soon soften, and he would let them go. God's answer to their prayer was to harden his heart. They sighed for salvation. He wrought with a view to His own glory.

It takes little imagination to picture this scene. Its continuous repetition during the first three eons makes it most important to our spiritual welfare. The same conflicting forces are at work today. It is quite conceivable how the saints would have managed the affair. They would have implored Yahweh to compel Pharaoh to let them go. Perhaps they would call a grand prayer meeting for this purpose. Perhaps they would set aside a week of intercession. "We know not what to pray for" was as true of them as of us. Perhaps they would be "definite" in their petitions, and insist that He melt the heart of the king, and so remove his opposition.

How much there is of this today! Many brethren unite in great "world movements," seeking to soften the heart of mankind, trying to do away with sin, seeking to abolish the many evils that harass us, uniting against war and vice and corruption, for all of these are against the revealed will of God. These efforts, we are told, are *practical*. They are not mere theory, words without works. Of what use is such an article as this, for example, to stem the tide of iniquity? Using the same figure, I would advise all that the tide will become the highest in all history, and that no human effort will be able to stop it, for it is necessary to fulfill God's intention.

The Israelites hoped Yahweh would soften Pharaoh's heart. What they wished was to quietly slip out of Goshen into the promised land. They wanted none of the terrible signs. They did not ask for the passover. Surely they would not have entered the trap which threatened to destroy them. They did not ask for the miraculous passage through the Sea. The forty years in the wilderness was not of their choosing. The most illustrious epoch in their history was forced upon them. It was a continuous exhibition of disobedience to God's will. Yet who doubts for a moment that it was in line with His purpose?

GOD'S WISDOM AND POWER

Now that all is past and we can get a true perspective of these events, who would prefer to have Israel's prayer answered? It was not necessary to soften Pharaoh's heart. It was too soft already. If it had not been hardened the exodus would have been a flat, uninteresting story, with no outward manifestations of Yahweh's power of love. Its glory would be gone. Its God would be unknown. The wisdom and power of Egypt must be exposed by conflict with the wisdom and power of God. His attributes must be revealed by contrast with the mightiest and wisest of humankind.

The antitype of this marvelous period of Israel's history lies just before us, only the miraculous manifestations will be far more wonderful than of old. God is today hardening the world's heart in preparation for that epoch. Men are approaching the wisdom of ancient Egypt in their knowledge of nature, and are far surpassing it in power. Shall Yahweh weaken them before using them as a foil to display His might? Rather it is His wisdom to harden their hearts, so that, in opposing His will, they may fulfill His ultimate intention.

MAN'S WILL, AND GOD'S

Too often we are told that, if man has no free will, he is a mere automaton. This is a mistake. The so-called "freedom" consists merely in the lack of *conscious* coercion. Being ignorant of the constraining or restraining influences which determine his conduct, and altogether unaware of ulterior forces, he subconsciously *yields* at the very time that he imagines he is most independent. His freedom of will is simply ignorant unconsciousness or submission to environment or heredity.

In relation to the will of God, men are consciously independent. They can accept it or reject it, and imagine that no other force but the divinity enthroned within them has anything to do with their decision. But when we find the niche assigned them in God's intention they are (thank God!) the most utterly dependent slaves of circumstance it is possible to imagine. It will be found that, throughout their lives, they were not more masters of their fate than they were of the date and details of their birth.

The doctrine of man's free will peoples the earth with a race of puny gods. We object to the dual gods of Persia or the many deities of the Greek and Roman pantheon, yet these ancient pagans never rose to the absurdity of making every man a god. The possession of a free, untrammelled,

unconquerable will is the exclusive attribute of deity. Only One God can possess it. Our blessed Lord Himself did not claim it. He came, not to do His own will, but the will of Him Who had sent Him.

ILLUMINATION OF DEITY

The failure to recognize both the divine will and the divine intention has led to incalculable confusion and misunderstanding. Those who reject God's intention rob Him of His godhood and deify man. Those who confuse His intention with His revealed will make of Him a love-lacking tyrant, a hard-hearted monster. Others, who wish to believe all the Scriptures have to say, are not clear how to harmonize His character, with the presence of sin, especially when it becomes evident that sin has a place in the attainment of His ultimate purpose.

All evil and every sin reverses its character completely when we take it from the limited light of God's revealed will to the universal illumination of His intention. This is the reason that we do not hesitate to believe the Scriptures that all is of God. No sin remains such when completely illumined by His intention. It is a failure, a sin, and subject to dire penalties when man commits it, but it is no longer a mistake when it finds its place in God's purpose. The same act which brings shame and dishonor on the creature, when subjected to the divine alchemy, is transmuted into a source of glory and peace to God.

Such general observations are apt to be dismissed as bordering on blasphemy. But let anyone take the great sins in the Scriptures and ponder all their aspects. Each one is essential to God's plan. But it is better to be specific. Pharaoh is the great sinner in this scene. He is the one who opposes God's expressed desire. Make him willing or compliant with God's command, and what is left? In that case God would have failed in His object. To avoid this He

finds it necessary to stiffen the opposition. *Yahweh hardens Pharaoh's heart in order that he may sin against Him!* Some insist that God cannot have such a close connection with sin. They would prefer to fix the blame on Pharaoh, or on Satan. But, while Yahweh directly causes Pharaoh to sin, *by doing so He Himself avoids failure of sin.*

NEED FOR CAREFUL DISCRIMINATION

Any lack of discrimination when speaking on these themes is likely to cause confusion. The same statement may be both true and false. Two directly contradictory assertions may both be true or both be false, according as they are related to God's will or to His intention. A beloved brother, who had been meditating on these things, made the statement that Adam's "fall" was really a fall upward. I would strenuously object to such a suggestion, apart from explanation. Adam's sin and transgression and offense were very bad and degrading when viewed as disobedience to God's will. When associated with the work of Christ and God's ultimate purpose it was the very best he could have done. Even its immediate effects were not all evil, for he obtained a knowledge of good, impossible in his previous condition.

So with sin as a whole. We almost dread to speak of it in relation to God's ultimate, for few, even of His beloved saints, have seen behind the scenes, and almost any assertion would be false if related to His revealed will. Is sin good? *No!* It is the worst thing in the world. No words can express our horror and detestation of it. Is sin good? *Yes!* Not, indeed, in itself, but its effect will be beneficent beyond anything else this world can give, when combined with the mediatorial work of Christ and the reconciliation of which it is the occasion.

Perhaps this is why some beloved brethren insist that I teach that God sins, or is the Author of sin. I have never said this or even thought it, so far as I am aware. If I have

unwittingly done so, I humbly retract and recant. But I am informed that various passages in my writings on this subject imply it, though they do not express it in so many words. When I review these passages, I do not see the implication. I did not intend such a thought. I did not express it. To my own consciousness, I did not even imply it. Some inferred from the apostle Paul's teaching that they should do evil that good may come. If *he* could be misunderstood, I count it an honor to be in the same condemnation.

But what is an implication? Is it not the result of combining what we think with another's statement? It is reasoning from two premises, one our own and one supplied by another. In its crudest form the argument may be stated thus: I believe that all is of God. My inquirers insist that sin is part of the "all." Therefore, I believe that God sins. It seems very logical *to them*. I may object and say that I do not concur in their conclusions. I may even say that my premise is not mine, but God's. But no. My scheme is simply an attempt to exonerate Satan and prepare people for the homage which he will demand at the time of the end! Away with such a fellow from the earth!

This places me in a strange position. I cannot but consider their deduction a mistake in logic, a transgression of morals, and even an offense. In short, it is a full-orbed sin. I am eager to acknowledge, however, that it is of God. But even my small mind, weakened by overwork, and dulled by distress, has not the slightest difficulty in discriminating between the human and the divine aspect of these acts. God is making no mistakes. His servants are. He will justify their injustice, not because they are in line with His will, but because they are carrying out His intention. I have no hesitation in thanking God for this distressing antagonism, for I know that in His hands it is no error. Truth as this needs opposition for its development and dissemination. It takes friction to rub off the rust of centuries.

The difficulty seems to be that we cannot easily view an act from its moral character. We do not readily see that no act is sinful in itself, but in its relations. The act of plucking and eating fruit is not necessarily a sin. Yet it was humanity's primal error. The mistake lay in its relation to the God Who had forbidden it. If He had commanded it, it would have been commendable. Now that we know that it was essential to His intention, that He had provided for it before it occurred, that He arranged everything so that it should occur, we see that, though it was a sin in relation to His will, it was no mistake in view of His benevolent intention.

THE LAW

Perhaps the greatest example of the distinction between God's will and His intention is found in the law promulgated from Sinai. Yahweh made known His will in a complete code of laws, besides the condensed commandments which were carved in stone. The Jew, who was resting on law, is said to "know the will" (Rom.2:18). But if it was God's intention that the nation should keep the law, it certainly was a dismal failure on His part. They broke its greatest precept before it reached them.

But, though the failure of the law seems to be contrary to the will of God, it actually was a fulfillment of His intention. It was really given that "every mouth may be barred, and the entire world may become subject to the just verdict of God, because by works of law, no flesh shall be justified in His sight, for through law is the recognition of sin" (Rom.3:19,20). The law which, ostensibly, was to deter from sinning, actually was given for the detection of sin. It was given to prove that no one could keep it. Beneath the revelation of God's will in it was His intention that it should not be kept, but should accomplish its object through its infraction.

"Law crept in that the offense should be increasing" (Rom.5:20). How differently did Israel, at Sinai, feel about it! They were quite sure that they would greatly lessen the distance between themselves and Yahweh by their obedience to His precepts. Why had He told them what He wanted them to do and to avoid unless it was His will to carry out His instructions? The *will* of Yahweh was clear. But His *intention* was quite concealed. He could not make known His intention at that time without frustrating it.

SIN

This should help us in considering the larger question of sin. Sin is always against the revealed will of God. No one can possibly find any excuse for sinning so far as His expressed precepts are concerned. Both conscience and nature add their voice to restrain us from wrong. But we do sin. How can we be *justified* unless the sin is, in some sense, justifiable? We know that it is God's intention to draw His creatures into loving intimacy with Himself through sin and a Saviour. We know that the temporary term of sin will leave the world infinitely richer in the knowledge and appreciation of God. It will bring God immeasurable treasures of love and adoration. As a whole, its results vindicate its presence for a time. What is true of all sin must be true of every sin.

This truth is the foundation of the doctrine of justification. Because it has been lost, justification has also disappeared, or has been degraded to a pardon or an "imputed" fiction. Few believe that God actually justifies believers. They imagine He only alters the court records, so that no one can legally prove their guilt. It is of the utmost comfort and satisfaction to know that all that we have done is vindicated by the part it plays in carrying out His intention. Do not let anyone sell you an imitation justification! God's is the actual, the genuine, the precious reality.

THE CONSUMMATION

All that the usual theology has to offer us at the consummation, even in the saved, is a partial, patched, repaired and repainted universe. The song of the saints will be in a minor key, "I was a *guilty* sinner." Their joy will be clouded by eternal regret and shame for their part in the tragedy of the eons. The eonian times will be the eyesore of eternity. Oh! if they only had not been! And so will God's wisdom and power be questioned, and His glory dimmed, for He Himself must be the chief culprit in the collapse of His creation.

But away with such unworthy thoughts! The consummation will not reveal a patched, but a perfected universe. We will not be worrying about our past sins, but overwhelmed with God's wisdom and love in their vindication. Much as they distress us now, much as we fear them and avoid them and dread the very possibility of further sin, God will see to it that they will leave no stain, no blot to mar the bliss eternal, but will blend into His benign designs, and discover to a delighted universe the delicious depths of love which could not be displayed by any others device, or appreciated by any other plan.

This teaching is also the substructure for a mature experience in the things of God. It gives stability, a calm confidence in the face of the chaotic conditions which surround and engulf us. We are not worried, as once we were, by the awful opposition to God's will, nor do we fear for the fulfillment of His purpose. The flood tide of evil and sin, however contrary to His will it may be at present, is essential and indispensable to His intention and the ultimate realization of His will.

He is the great Alchemist Who will transmute everything into glorious gold by contact with the accursed tree.

A. E. Knoch

That Now May be Made Known

"TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST"

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

The apostle Paul bowed his knees to God that we be made staunch and strong, through His spirit, to grasp the marvelous wonder of so great a revelation. A secret is not a mystery as the King James version translates the Greek word *musterion*, but what is mysterious to each one of the ecclesia is why God chose us for so high an honor and privilege. We marvel that He should graciously answer the further prayer that we grasp, ". . . together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ as well which transcends knowledge—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God" (Eph.3:17-19).

Our service has already commenced! Sovereignties and authorities among the celestials who perceive and resent our future displacement of their privilege and powers, are in present conflict with the body of Christ. Working through flesh and blood, these are our real adversaries.

This was a matter of such grave concern to the apostle that he went to great lengths to urge: "Take up the panoply of God that you may be enabled to withstand in the wicked day" (Eph.6:13). This present time in which we live is, for us, that "wicked day"!

All the armament, described by the apostle as being vital during our severe conflict with these mighty beings, is defensive, for in this eon we wrestle "... with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials" (Eph.6:12). In a distinctly honored way, very similar to the privilege accorded the apostle Paul, "... God demonstrates with us "... as death-doomed, for we became a theater to the world and to messengers and to men" (1 Cor.4:9). This is not our time to reign, but we all "... with uncovered face, mirroring the Lord's glory, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory" (2 Cor.3:18).

A SPECIAL ACT

The concept of us, "... conformed to the body of His glory" (Phil.3:21) must seem, to our finite minds, to be beyond belief. "Yet we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). Moreover, although there is a becoming modesty in such incredulity, it should always be remembered that when God created man, it was a very special act: For God said "Let us make humanity in Our image, and according to Our likeness" (Gen.1:26).

"It is hard to express in human words all that it must have meant to God when He created this wonderful creature in His own image. Man had to be god-like to such an extent that the Christ could become Man without sacrificing His real status Once we grasp that we were made in order that Christ could, in our form and likeness, reveal to the universe what God is, what He Himself is,

and what Satan is, we can only bow our heads in adoration. Such a vision, once it dawns upon us, is overwhelming. It is an answer to the question of our existence that surpasses in its marvellous grandeur all human explanations, as God's wisdom surpasses ours. But there it is, hidden in the Scriptures."¹

CHANGE AND DECAY

Reflecting on such wonder, I recalled an incident which occurred many years ago in the land of Egypt. For well over an hour I had stood before the great pyramid of Cheops (original name, "Khufu") at El Giza, on the west bank of the river Nile, opposite the city of Cairo. I was contrasting the countless centuries which had elapsed since God's choice of us in Christ, with the comparative brief span of years for all such monuments. Passing through my mind were the words, "Change and decay in all around I see." This tomb was built with over six million tons of stone, 4,500 years ago, and has excited the interest of King Cyrus of Persia; Alexander, king of Macedon, Gaius Julius Caesar, Napoleon, and millions of tourists. Try as I would, I just could not grasp the sheer immensity of such an amazing construction, and I was about to ease the increasing ache in my neck, when a little Egyptian boy requested a few piasters for climbing to the top of the pyramid, where, he solemnly promised he would wave to me. This little gesture seemed to put everything in proper perspective.

I watched his rapid progress for some time, but eventually, when he had climbed over 450 feet, it was not possible to discern his happy smile and his cheerful, waving hand. When he arrived at the summit however, he danced about, waving both arms to me, far below. Acknowledging his salute, I observed him begin the descent and then I

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.35, p.233.

turned away, awaiting his return. Nearby, I was intrigued with a huge hole which had been painstakingly hacked out of the bedrock. There was no mistaking the shape of a boat, but imagine my surprise to note not only the impression of the length and wide beam of the hull, but the clear evidence of the shape of wheels! Of course, the vessel was long gone, but I wonder if this vessel was used to convey huge slabs of marble, which I am given to understand once encased the whole of this impressive heap of stone? Imagine this vast mausoleum thus blindingly reflecting rays of the midday sun. Further, was this same lovely covering and spectacle in place when our Lord was taken as a little Boy to this land?

ON A MANTELPIECE

I was thinking about that amphibious vehicle used in the second world war and known by the code name DUKW, when my attention was distracted by a curious clinking sound. There were tourists nearby, and the activity of one lady was quite incredible. Wielding a small, metal, toffee hammer, once used by many confectioners, she was surreptitiously chipping away at one of the enormous base stones of the pyramid! My immediate reaction was one of horror, but then, as I heard my young friend call, "Effendi!, Effendi!," I shook my head, smiled, and handed the lad the promised reward. Once more, through this incident of vandalism, my thoughts were brought to earth with a dull thud as I reflected that in this present generation, a small portion of the former glories of great and mighty Egypt now has pride of place on some humble mantelpiece.

To show his gratitude, little Metwali; for that was his name, duly escorted me from the "boat grave," explaining that this had been prepared for the sacred *dhow* which had been used in transportation on the surface of the river Nile and across the remaining ground. With my limited

grasp of the Arabic language and his impressive command of English words, he explained where the ancient queens had been buried, and thence we arrived at the huge statue of a sphinx. The head of this is reputed to be a carved portrait of the fourth-dynasty Pharaoh, Chephren. During our progress, Metwali evidently indicated that he would brook no nonsense from the many vociferous would-be escorts, and we were left in peace. Sadly, the time came for us to part, but not before he had taught me the sound of our Lord's name—in his language: "Eesa!" At least, that is what it sounded like. I often wonder what became of this sincere and happy boy, who reflected the mind of his Creator there in that scene of splendid decay that so well reflected the transitoriness of human glory.

"HOT IN YOUR EYES"

Earlier that same day I had spent the dawn hours in quiet meditation. I had read the denouement of that heart-breaking scene when Joseph made himself known to his brothers:

"At this, Joseph was no longer able to check himself before all who were stationed by him, and he called out: 'Have every man go out from me.' So no one stayed with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. He raised his voice in lamentation, and the Egyptians heard it; and Pharaoh's house heard about it.

"Joseph said to his brothers: 'I am Joseph. Is my father still living?' But his brothers were not able to answer him, for they were flustered at his presence. Then Joseph said to his brothers: 'Now come closer to me.' When they came close, he said, 'I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold to Egypt. And now do not be grieved nor let it be hot in your eyes that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you for the preservation of life'" (Gen.45:1-5).

Thus Joseph, son of Jacob by Rachel, discloses his under-

standing of the grim suffering which he had endured. All at the hand of Elohim!

“The treatment of Joseph by his brothers is a precious type of the death and resurrection of the Son of God. Joseph’s brothers did not actually kill him, even as Abraham did not slay Isaac, but in both cases, there was the intent of the heart, which is what counts with God. The brothers typify the nation which brought Christ’s blood upon their heads. Jacob represents the Father, and Joseph the Son.

“It must be noted that the only ones who suffered unjustly because of this sin are the ones who did not commit it. Jacob had no hand in the crime, yet he suffered from its effects. The loss of his son caused anguish of heart which but feebly reminds us of the awful gulf which separated the Father and His beloved at Golgotha.”²

DELIGHT AND SORROW

What possible significance will the above phrase and condition of “hot in your eyes” have for denizens of the celestial realms whom we shall instruct? How curious they now must be to observe and trace the many causes of tears which overflow! Judging from their present conflict with believers, we will need to administer severe measures to change their present course.

“Oh, all-embracing mercy, how could I ask for more?
What shall I do without Thee, when heart and eyes run o’er?
When all things seem against me, to drive me to despair
I know Thy heart is open, and Thou shall hear my prayer.”

But how shall we make known the multifarious wisdom and love of God to these “morning stars and sons of God,” who, when the foundations of the earth were laid, were capable of singing and shouting for joy at every new creation, yet who lacked the capacity to perceive God not only

2. A. E. Knoch, *THE PROBLEM OF EVIL*, p.164.

as the embodiment of might, but also as the embodiment of love? Not all of these celestial beings rebelled against God and His Son, for when the birth of our Saviour was proclaimed at Bethlehem, the loyal element perceived the divine solution to their problems, and were unable to contain their joyous acclamation of praise.

Is there any kind of relationship among the celestials that thus they might comprehend our praise and wonder of the sacred filial tie between Father and Son? How shall we even attempt to describe our own delight with God’s grace, manifested against the deep sorrow of bereavement which we suffer? How explain the crippling pains which wrack these mortal, human, decaying frames? There is only one way. Love’s gracious example! Paul declared: “Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God’s calling above in Christ Jesus” (Phil.3:13,14). Shall the observers of such devotion have learned nothing at all through the manifestation of love in our Lord’s life and the corresponding complete commitment in the apostle’s adoration?

Whenever we think of the sacrifice and suffering of our Lord at Golgotha, our thoughts are now no longer restricted to our salvation which was thus secured; but rather do we rejoice in the reconciliation which embraces us in our Father’s wonderful love. Through the most searching disqualification of all and any human righteousness, we have obtained a righteousness apart from law. “. . . a righteousness of God *through Jesus Christ’s faith*, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God” (Rom.3:21-23).

Through this experience we have learned to concentrate on God’s complete and wonderful purpose to be All in all! Rather than remaining preoccupied with our mis-

erable selves, we are now vitally concerned with the glorious evangel which we will rejoice to bring to the monarchs and rulers among the celestials. Our earnest instruction will certainly carry the unmistakable ring of authority. We shall teach that which we have learned in the stern yet loving school of suffering and endurance.

“No trial has taken you except what is human. Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving you to be tried above what you are able, but, together with the trial, will be making the sequel also, to enable you to undergo it” (1 Cor.10:13). Our rule over these sovereignties and principalities among these same celestials, will not be eternal. Our rule is eonian. All sovereignty, as well as authority and power will be abrogated at the consummation.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

Our loving God and Father will ensure that we shall not require either armament or shield in that day. With Satan effectively prevented from any future interference, we shall as lovingly as possible, enforce obedience, but our primary task will be to disclose—even as our Lord during the full course of His faithful ministry on earth—the multifarious wisdom and love of His blessed Father.

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

Donald Fielding

Our sister, **Marion Tenniswood**, of Melvin, Michigan, was put to repose on March 5 at age 81. She was a motherly woman who considered the traits of Titus 2:4,5 perfectly logical and harmonious in view of Christ’s death on her behalf. We join with her husband and our brother, Clint, and their six children and their families in sorrow over her death and in the joyful expectation promised in God’s Word.

Questions and Answers

FOREKNOWLEDGE AND SALVATION

For, not as yet being born, nor putting into practice anything good or bad, that the purpose of God may be remaining as a choice, not out of acts, but of Him Who is calling . . . (Rom.9:11)

Question:

“WHEN I was in Bible school at Bethany Fellowship, Minneapolis, they taught us that to be chosen before the ‘foundation of the world’ (AV) referred only to the service that God would have us serve in and not to our salvation at all.

“Bethany teachers taught us that God chose for salvation only those that He knew beforehand would choose Jesus, and only in that sense did He choose anyone for salvation. They maintained that any reference to God choosing us first refers only to how He wants us to serve Him after we choose Him.

“They insist that the only way God can truly be glorified in our salvation, is if we choose Him of our own ‘free will.’ Hence they further claim that grace is something that God gives us to use, or not use, to get ourselves saved. We are responsible for how (or even if) we use grace; hence, we are responsible for whether or not we are saved.

“Can you help me better answer their argument? Surely the idea of ‘free will’ does not glorify *God* at all; in fact, it does just the opposite. Still, it often bothers me that I don’t know how to respond to such claims, other than to say that grace wouldn’t be grace if our salvation depended on our choice.”

Answer:

YOUR REPLY in stating that “grace wouldn’t be grace if our salvation depended on our choice,” is certainly correct, and is an excellent start in responding to such mistaken claims as those advocated by Bethany Fellowship and indeed by the vast majority of Christian teachers.

In order to gain a true understanding of such issues we must first of all define our terms according to their scriptural usage. The terms in question are “reward” and “grace.” This is vital, for it is from the day on which we hear and realize “the *grace* of God *in truth*,” that the word of *the truth* of the evangel begins bearing fruit and growing in us (Col.1:5,6).

A reward (or a wage) is a provision granted in return for obedience or service. A Rewarder acts in *reciprocity*, on a *quid pro quo* (this *for* that) basis. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the Rewarder declares to the one to whom he gives a reward, “Because you *did* what I *required* in order to *qualify* for my reward, I now give it to you” (cf Rom.4:4).

Conversely, a gracious gift is a provision that is *not* granted in return for obedience or service, but simply in order to bring joy to the one thus blessed. Considerations of fulfillment of requirement or achievement of qualification, are foreign to the concept of a gracious gift. The basis of a gracious gift is found in the will and purpose of the Giver, not in any consideration of the acts of the one to whom the gracious gift is given. Hence, a gracious gift is *not* granted in reciprocity, out of obligation, on a *quid pro quo* basis. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the gracious Giver declares to the one to whom he gives a gracious gift, “I give it to you apart from any consideration of your acts, simply because it pleases me to do so, according to my own will and purpose” (cf Rom.11:2b-6; cp Luke 6:32-35).

It is far from the truth to affirm that God, in choosing us before the “disruption of the world” (CV; i.e., before sin

entered the scene), did not choose *us*, much less choose us for salvation, but simply chose the service in which He would have us serve, leaving this, of course, to our “free wills” as to whether we should ever do so.

Further, the grace in view here given to us does not consist of some means to be used or not used by ourselves in order to qualify us for salvation, but of the very blessings of salvation themselves which God has appointed for us.

The facts are these: The apostle Paul writes, “To all the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus [lit., ‘(to all the saints,) the ones being and believing in Christ Jesus’]: . . . Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . *He chooses us* . . .” (Eph.1:1-4a).

“[God] chooses us in [Christ] . . . *to be* holy and flawless in His sight, in love *designating us beforehand for the place of a son* for Him through Christ Jesus” (Eph.1:4,5). He does so, “in accord with [*kata*, DOWN, i.e., on a basis of] the delight of *His will*, for the laud of the glory of *His grace*” (Eph.1:6).

We “are called according to the *purpose* that, whom He *foreknew*, He *designates beforehand*, also, *to be conformed to the image of His Son*, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He designates beforehand, these He *calls* also, and whom He calls, these He *justifies* also; now whom He justifies, these He *glorifies* also” (Rom.8:29,30).

This is the “salvation” for which we are chosen and unto which we are called. Having now called us, He justifies us and will yet glorify us also, as sons of God, holy and flawless in His sight.

It is not that God “foreknew” something *about* us, but that He foreknew *us*. Even as we *are* “known” by Him *now* (1 Cor.8:3), we already *were* foreknown by Him *then*, when He designated us beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Even if it were so that the revelation here had in view “knowledge *about* us,” and this was in reference to a divine prior knowledge of our future acts, this would not make such acts “free,” but rather inevitable. This is because foreknowledge of events, entails the inevitable occurrence of those very events which are foreknown. It cannot be *known* that an event *will* occur, if perhaps it will not occur. Yet events said to be events of free will, by the very nature claimed for them, are events which may or may not occur, concerning which knowledge of their future existence is therefore impossible, even by one who has a perfect knowledge of all that is a proper object of knowledge.

When “knowledge” is used concerning a fact, it is literal; but when, as here in Romans 8:29, it is used concerning a person, it is figurative. To “know” a person is to have a relationship with that person, even as Adam knew Eve, or God knew Israel alone, of all the nations of the earth.

In the counsels of God, we were already chosen and so “known” of Him before the disruption of the world. Thus, in a proleptic sense, God’s “foreknowing” us, is the practical equivalent of His fore-blessing us. In His determinate counsels, we, whom He designated beforehand for glory, already had a “relationship” with Him, when He then pre-designated us to be called, justified, and glorified. Now, being *justified* in Christ’s blood, we shall be *saved* from indignation through Him (Rom.5:9). Likewise, having been conciliated to God through the death of His Son, we shall be *saved* in His life (Rom.5:10).

Accordingly, God has graciously granted a measure of faith to all whom He calls (Rom.12:3; Phil.1:29), overwhelming¹ their unbelief with faith and love in Christ Jesus (1 Tim.1:14). The essence of the faith of God’s cho-

1. It is idle to say that if this be so, God is guilty of violating our rights—as if perpetual rejection of God’s truth were a matter of

sen ones, whom He calls and justifies, is that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor.1:24). Those who can truly say from the heart that, to them, Christ is indeed thus, therein find assurance of their calling. Their faith does not qualify them for their place in Christ; it rather affords them assurance that they themselves are included among God’s chosen ones.

Therefore, whatever the nature of the human will and of any sense in which we may be “responsible” to God for our deeds, such questions simply have no place in the matter of our election, of our having been *chosen* of God unto the end of the glorious salvation which He has appointed for us. It is contradictory to the evangel of grace to hold a position which entails it being so that we are somehow “free” to choose contrary to the blessings of that very evangel. Since it is God Who “*graciously* grants us all” of these blessings (Rom.8:32), namely, the blessings of being foreknown, designated beforehand, called, justified, and glorified, *He alone is responsible for our possession of them.*

If this were not so, and instead it was because of some obedience of our own for which we ourselves were finally responsible that we enjoyed these blessings, then these blessings would not be a gracious gift, but a reward for obedience. Yet since they are not a reward for obedience

“human rights”! Whatever God does is right, and so is apart from all guilt. Likewise, the only just claims we truly have are those which God actually gives to us. *A priori* (i.e., presuppositionally), and especially, merely according to our own wishes, we have no rights. The Almighty is no more “guilty” of “violating our freedom” by instilling faith in our hearts than in endowing our minds with a sense of conscience. If it should be true that He overwhelms our unbelief with faith, then it is *right* that He should do so. Since it is true that He *does* overwhelm our unbelief with faith, it is beyond all question that it is right for Him to do so. And, accordingly, it is beyond all question that we have no “rights” in the matter.

but are instead a gracious gift, it follows that we are *not* responsible for having been endowed with them.

The issue, then, is not the nature of human freedom, but of divine grace. Whether the popular notion of free will is true or false is beside the point. That is, whether or not man is truly independent of God and *could* refuse a mere conditional offer of salvation were such an offer made to him, the point is that the evangel is not the announcement of a conditional offer but of a gracious gift. Therefore, insofar as salvation in Christ is concerned, the nature of man's will makes no difference, since that question has no bearing on the evangel of our salvation.

Our faith does not "qualify" us for salvation. Indeed, the evangel is true apart from our acceptance of it. The believer's faith simply affords him knowledge of salvation, not salvation itself. Christ died for our sins whether or not we believe that Christ died for our sins. Similarly, God chose us before the disruption of the world, having preferred us from the beginning for salvation (2 Thess.2:13), quite apart from any consideration of our present acceptance of these glorious facts.

It is as foolish and unseemly for us to seek to take the credit for the success of our own salvation as it would be for us to seek to take the credit for the creation of the universe. For us there is no part in either matter. Hence, we wish to repudiate all our proud boastings, and instead simply joyously declare: "Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be *graciously* granting us all?" (Rom.8:32).



Question: re. *Drawing All to Himself*

"In John 12:32, in signifying by what death He was

about to be dying (v.33), Jesus said, 'And I, if I should be exalted out of the earth, shall be drawing all to Myself.' I have been told that the Greek word for 'draw,' actually means 'drag.' Is this correct?"

Answer:

The word in question, in John 12:32, is *helkuō*. It is best rendered by the English "draw," not "drag." The idea is simply "to cause to move in a given direction" (e.g., John 18:10); idiomatically, in certain instances, we might say, "to reel in" (*cp* John 21:6,11). Another illustration would be that of drawing water from a well.

When applied to voluntary behavior, the idea is that of "bringing forth through incentive"; to attract (Acts 16:19; *cp* Acts 21:30; James 2:6). Whether one is drawn into sin, or drawn to virtue, one is still caused to move in the direction of, and eventually brought into, the behavioral sphere thus delineated.

The point is that "draw" speaks of effective, causative agency. Hence, this is as true of cases in which it is applied to acts of human behavior as of incidents in which it is concerned with the movements of inanimate objects. Therefore, "draw" is by no means a "weak" term, but a powerful expression.

It is not that "draw" means "drag"; it is rather that an agency which *draws*, is equally as *effective* as an agency which *drags*. When a man is *dragged*, he is moved contrary to his will; when a man is *drawn*, he is moved in correspondence to his will, according to the influences which cause him to choose as he does. Agencies which drag, determine the body; agencies which draw, determine the heart, from which spring the outflowings of life (Prov.4:23).

When one is "*drawn* in" to doing something, he is still *caused* to act as he does; he *must* still do what he, even if gently, is "drawn" to do—as much so as if he were "dragged"

(“kicking and screaming”) into so doing. It is simply that an agency which “draws,” *engages* the will and *instills* the voluntary behavior which follows, in contradistinction to a power that merely *compels* outward acts—“dragging” them forth—without gaining the acquiescence of the will.

To “drag” (*surō*), means to “pull along by force.” As applied to human behavior, such force has in view not simply the power of causative agency, but that of a causative agency which compels outward acts, ones to which the will, considered in the abstract, remains opposed (e.g., Luke 12:58). Unlike causal influence which acts upon the heart and *changes* the will—which *draws* forth corresponding, resultant behavior—causative agency which merely *drags* its objects, has in view either the *burden* which attends the pulling of inanimate objects (John 21:8), or the *unwillingness* as well which attends the compelling of outward acts (Acts 8:3; 14:19; 17:6; cf KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.82).

Thus we rejoice to know that while no one can come to Christ if ever the Father Who sends Him should not be drawing him (John 6:44), in due time, under God, Christ “shall be drawing all to [Him]self” (John 12:32).



Question: re. *The New Earth*

“Do both Revelation 21 and 22 concern the new earth? Will righteousness be present only in the new Jerusalem, or throughout the new earth? Also, if there will be no illness, why is there a need for the cure of the nations (Rev.22:2)?”

Answer:

Yes, both Revelation 21 and 22 record John’s vision of the *new* earth; the time in view is the final epochal eon

of Scripture, following the thousand years. Peter speaks of the new earth itself (not solely of the new Jerusalem) as the sphere in which righteousness is dwelling (2 Peter 3:13). As kings of the earth, it will be Israel’s glory to serve the other nations in God’s illumination of them, through His chosen people, which will foster righteousness among all.

The *knowledge* of God, indeed, will greatly increase among humanity during the coming eon (cf Isa.11:9). As excellent as this will be, it will be far grander still, in the eon of the eons, when not only knowledge but *righteousness* itself will be “dwelling” in (i.e., will be an abiding characteristic of) the new earth.

The attenuation of sin coupled with the amplification of virtue will radically change the character of the world, or SYSTEM, which will obtain in that glorious eon. The “cure of the nations” by the leaves of the log, will not only bring healing agency to the body, but liberation to the spirit. That which will most significantly determine the character of that eon, however, will be the fact that God Himself will then be *with* humanity. In that day, the tabernacle of God will be with mankind; He will be tabernacling with them, and they will become His own. In perfect correspondence to God’s own presence, death will be no more, nor mourning, nor clamor, nor misery (Rev.21:4). These radical blessings will constitute a vast and saving grace among all the peoples of the new earth.

Such considerations call to mind the hymn, “I Need Thee Every Hour . . . temptations lose their power when Thou art *near*.” Surely the sentiments of that hymn will come into their own in that day.

Isaiah 33:24 (the passage to which you refer, re. lack of illness) speaks of Messianic blessings for Israel in the coming eon; it does not contemplate the nations, nor God’s provision to them of Revelation 22:2, in the final eon.

J.R.C.

“DO YOU OBSERVE THE TRAVAILING?”

THE FOCUS of Yahweh's words to Job is on forces and creatures that are, for the most part, beyond human control. In Job 38:4-38 Yahweh spoke of physical phenomena, and now in 38:39-39:30 He directs attention to wild animals and birds that bring questioning and dismay to the human heart. All of these are of God's making, and none of them are left outside His operations and responsibility.

Yahweh says nothing here about His power delivering Job from his afflictions or about His wisdom bringing good out of the evil that has enveloped him. Instead He speaks of present operations that parallel Job's own experience. He directs attention to the groaning and traving of His creation, where His power and wisdom do not yet lead to deliverance and glory.

Yahweh does not speak of the sheep and dove in 38:39-41 but of the lion and the raven. The former might convey thoughts of peace and prosperity, but the latter definitely suggest different ideas entirely. The lion speaks of a ferocious and deadly hunting of prey by ambush, and the raven of neglect and noisy imploring. Yet they both struggle for food apart from human supervision and appreciation.

The pangs of birth as well as unfeeling habits of wild animals must ultimately be traced to God Who created them as they are, and placed them where they are (Job 39:1-6). He observes, without altering the fact, the traving in birth of the hinds (39:1). Yahweh is the One Who unlooses the bonds of the onager and other kinds of wild donkey, so that they face constant dangers and depravations (v.5).

JOB 38:39–39:30

- 39 Can **you** ¹hunt the **prey** for the **lioness**?
And can **you** ¹fill the **life** needs of the **sheltered** lions,
40 ¹When they crouch ¹prostrate in their **habitations**,
¹Sit for ambush in their **covert**?
41 ¹Who ¹prepares its provision for the **raven**,
¹When its young ¹implore to El,
Which ¹stray ¹from lack of food?
39 **Are you acquainted**^o
with the **bearing**[~] of the **ibexes** of the **crag**?
Do **you** ¹observe the **travailing**[~] in birth of the **hinds**?
2 Do **you** ¹number the **months** they must ¹fulfill,
And do **you** ¹know the **time** of their **bearing**[~]?
3 They ¹crouch; they [~]deliver[~] their young;
They ¹put forth the cause of their **cramps**.
4 Their young ones ¹thrive; they ^{lmm}grow up in the **open**;
They go forth and return **no**^t more to them.
5 ¹Who has sent forth the **onager** free,
And ¹who has unloosed the **bonds** of the **wild donkey**,
6 Whose home I have ^{pl}constituted the **steppe**,
And the **salty wastes** as his **habitat**?
7 He makes ¹sport of the **clamor** of the **town**;
He does **not** ¹hear the **tumults** of the **taskmaster**¹.
8 He ¹explores the **mountains** as his **pasture**
And ¹seeks after ^{af}every **green** thing.
9 Is the **wild bull** ¹willing to **serve**[~] you?
^{if} Would he ¹lodge all night ^{on}at your **crib**?

39:1 **acquainted**: Hb repeats the last two letters of this word, meaning "time of" as in v.2b.
39:3 --- **deliver**: Hb ¹slice.

Such creatures prefer to search the salty wastes and barren mountains for food rather than serve taskmasters who would provide their forage (39:6-8). The wild bull also is not willing to give its strength to harrow and threshing even though this would bring safety and grain to it as well as those it would serve (9-12).

This also is of God. Job has nothing to do with it and no say in it.

Yahweh is not telling Job of His blessed goals of glory and peace but of His place in the present struggle where self-interest and pain abound. Neither is Yahweh pointing to human failures in subjecting the animals and overseeing their affairs. He draws attention to the way things are and reminds Job that He is the One Who has brought this about.

How different this is from Eden! There Elohim had instructed the human, "... fill the earth and subdue it. Hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, ... and over every animal that is moving on the earth" (Gen.1:28). But without speaking of Adversary or human disobedience, God continues to speak of these situations as "constituted" and caused by Him (39:6,17).

The ostrich is both stupid and uncontrolled (39:13-18). Why should Yahweh bring this up? This is not the sort of thing we would expect to build up Job's confidence in God and the wisdom of His ways.

Even the horse which can be trained is never fully submissive, manifesting mastery in the power of its neck, the dreadful splendor of its snorting and its eagerness in battle (19-25). And of all its uses, why should Yahweh speak of its intense and insane delight in the destructive and deadly actions of war? What is this supposed to say to Job pierced by the arrows of Him Who-Suffices (Job 6:4)?

The hawk and the vulture, for all their soaring and nesting on high, are nevertheless creatures feeding on the blood of prey and on the carrion of animals previously

- 10 Can you ¹tie the wild bull ¹with ~curb and rope~?
^{if} Would he ¹harrow the vales after you?
- 11 Would you put ¹trust in him ¹because his vigor is ^{mm}great,
 And would you ¹entrust your labor to him?
- 12 Would you ^cput ¹reliance ⁱon him that he would ¹return
 And ¹gather your seed^o to your threshing site?
- 13 The wing of the ~ostrich~ flaps ¹joyously,
 But is ^{if}not the pinion of the stork ⁺with its feathers.
- 14 ¹When she ¹entrusts her eggs to the land
 And ¹warms them on the soil,
- 15 + She ¹forgets that a foot may press down on it,
⁺Or a wild animal of the field may stomp on it.
- 16 She is ^cmade indurate to her young ^{as}though not hers,
 Without alarm that her labor be for nought.
- 17 For Eloah caused her to be oblivious to wisdom
 And did not apportion ⁱunderstanding to her.
- 18 Yet ^{as}any time she ¹springs up ⁱon high,
 She makes ¹sport ^of the horse and ⁺his rider¹.
- 19 Do you ¹give to the horse its mastery?
 Do you ¹clothe its neck with thunder?
- 20 Do you ^cmake him ¹quake like the locust?
 The splendor of his snorting strikes dread.
- 21 ⁷He^c ¹paws in the vale and is ¹elated in his vigor;
 He goes ¹forth to meet the weapons of battle.
- 22 He makes ¹sport ^of alarm and is not ¹dismayed;
 Neither does he ¹turn back ^fbecause of the sword.
- 23 On him the quiver is ¹jubilant,
 The blaze of spear and scimitar.
- 24 ¹With quaking and thunderous sound,
 he ¹gulps up the earth,
 And he cannot ^cstand ¹restfully
⁺at the sound of the trumpet.

39:10 --- curb and rope: Hb furrow of his rope.

39:12 seed: transposition from v.12a.

39:13 --- ostrich: Hb jubulations.

39:21 7-c He: Hb They.

slain. This is within Yahweh's *understanding* and of His *bidding* (39:26-30).

In speaking of these things, of the stubbornness of the animals, of the lack of orderly contribution of each animal to the good of all, of ambush and war, of lack of food and shelter, and of a great deal of lack of sense, Yahweh is underlining the reality of evil everywhere in His creation. This is deliberate, and it is Yahweh's point. In claiming responsibility as Creator and Sustainer, He is speaking what is most relevant and meaningful to Job in his private experience of severe evil. This is a powerful endorsement of Job's own original position: "Yahweh, He gives, and Yahweh, He takes away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh" (Job 1:21).

Why this is so may not be fully revealed in the book of Job, but the fact that this is so is made indisputable.

These are not at all ordinary revelations of divine wisdom and power. Yahweh speaks of the fearful and foolish creatures of *His hand*. Unlike Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, Yahweh does not point to His fearful judgments on the wicked, or, as we might expect, to the schemes of Satan. But with bold clarity He points to things as they are under His authority and within His full understanding.

What is so must never be kept in a separate compartment from a consideration of Deity. If God is to be known He must be known with respect to Job's afflictions and the lion's roaring and the incessant cries of hungry raven chicks. Job's recognition of this will lead him to see better than ever before that God operates in accord with wisdom and purpose, even though he cannot see that purpose. Then Job will describe Yahweh's revelations here as "things too marvelous for me, that I did not know" (42:3), and exclaim, "With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, but now my eye sees You" (42:5).

Many years later, Paul will speak of God's work of creation in fuller light. In subjecting creation to vanity, God has

- ²⁵ **As soon as the trumpet sounds, he ^{isa}shouts, Aha!**
And from afar he 'smells the battle,
The thunder of the chiefs and the shouting!
²⁶ Is it ^f **by your understanding** that the hawk 'glides,
 That it 'spreads its wings > southward?
²⁷ ^{if} **Or is it ^{on}by your bidding** that the vulture soars 'aloft,
And that he ^cmakes his nest so 'high?
²⁸ **He roosts on a crag and 'lodges himself**
On the tooth of a crag and a fastness;
²⁹ **From there he reconnoiters for food;**
His eyes 'scrutinize > far off;
³⁰ + **His brood 'imbibe the blood,**
And where there are the slain, there he is.



a determined purpose for good, a purpose which involves His own expectation of the deliverance into glorious freedom of the *entire* creation, including lion, raven and bull, ostrich, horse and vulture, and Job, and all of us. Groaning and travailing are not eternal, and are only for awhile, from Eden "until now" and still a little beyond, to be sure, but not forever (Rom.8:18-22).

The experience of evil is not a mistake in light of the goal. Yahweh cannot be blessed for giving if the giving is not appreciated, and He cannot be blessed for taking away if the taking away does not have a purpose for good. It is not necessary at this point for Job to know what good will come out of all his sufferings. It is enough for him to believe that God, as the Creator of all, remains in control, according to His designs, in every situation of every creature of His hand. That is the message Job is now hearing.

D.H.H.

THE SPIRIT OF YAHWEH TRANSFERRED

IN the opening verses of the sixteenth chapter,¹ Samuel reminds us of his forefathers. Abraham, at the announcement of Isaac's birth cried, "O that Ishmael should live before You!" (Gen.17:18). The flesh was exhausted. Abraham had no more energy for schemes. Here God reprimands Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go! I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected among his sons a king for Myself" (1 Sam.16:1).

But Samuel replied, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me" (1 Sam.16:2). Is this the same fiery Samuel who rebuked the entire nation of requesting a king? Or is it a shadow of limping Jacob, who trembles, "... he will kill me," (*cf* Gen.32:11)?

Samuel had worked long with Saul through his victories and shortcomings. Perhaps he felt that the burden for success was on himself. Perhaps he thought that anointing a new king would mean starting over with another Saul. Samuel was getting old. How many times could he start over? In common with Abraham, Jacob and Samuel, we come to the day when we fear the flesh and feel there is nothing more we can do with it.

But when the flesh is exhausted, the eyes are cleared to see the power of the grace of God. "Fill your horn with

1. The Concordant Version of 1 Samuel 16 appears in *Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 88, pp.136-138 (May 1997).

oil . . ." The horn is the symbol of power. Saul's anointing was with oil from a vial. But now when the flesh is rejected, the power of God will be seen. And the power of God is known where His Spirit moves.

A CHANGE OF DIRECTION

Verses 13 and 14 are the fulcrum of this pivotal chapter: "So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the spirit of Yahweh prospered on David from that day onward. Then Samuel rose and went to Ramah. As for the spirit of Yahweh, it had withdrawn from Saul, and a evil spirit from Yahweh frightened him."

The following outline shows the progression of events surrounding this part of the book.

Jonathan's victory soured by Saul's oath (chap.14)

Saul's disobedience with Amalek (chap.15)

Samuel in fear comes to trembling Bethlehem (16:1-4)

The spirit of Yahweh prospers on David from his anointing onward (16:13)

The spirit of Yahweh withdraws from Saul and the evil spirit from Yahweh frightens him (16:14)

Saul having depression and fear (16:15-23)

David's great victory over Goliath (chap.17)

Jonathan's covenant of loyalty to David (chap.18)

THE SPIRIT OF YAHWEH DEPARTS

The spirit of Yahweh had prospered on Saul to enable him to govern and lead the people. But Saul's heart was set on himself, his dynasty and the elusive glory of popular opinion. Leaning upon himself, Saul had nothing to shore up his unsteadiness and unpredictability. Saul was seeking his own glory instead of God's, and there can be no peace

for any who follow that path. So he needed the soothing comfort of fellowship with one who rested on the Rock.

Paul cites Scripture concerning Israel: “. . . God gives them a spirit of stupor, eyes not to be observing, and ears not to be hearing, till this very day.’ And David is saying, ‘Let their table become a trap and a mesh, and a snare and a repayment to them: Darkened be their eyes, not to be observing, and their backs bow together continually” (Rom.11:8-10). Just as God sent an evil spirit to trouble Saul when he was rejected from ruling Israel, so also He sent a spirit of stupor to trouble the generation of Israel that was rejected from taking the place of rule over the nations of the world.

We can rejoice in such events, though they may seem abstruse or even unjust, knowing that these are the working of the wonderful God Who “. . . locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all” (Rom. 11:33). It is such events as these that prepare the way for the display of God’s powerful grace.

J. Philip Scranton

REPOSING

Brother **Damon Klinger**, of Eaton Rapids, Michigan died, March 7, 1998, after a struggle of more than seven years with cancer. He was 27 and is survived by his grandparents, Leonard and June Bowerman, his parents, Lou and Diane Klinger and his sister, Michele.

In recent months Damon had served as pastor and teacher at the Truth and Grace Chapel in Lansing. He had a keen interest in God’s Word, concordantly translated, and rejoiced in the gratuitous justification that comes in God’s grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.

At the funeral service, among several speakers, Brother John Krauss shared many of Damon’s favorite passages of Scripture, mainly from Paul’s prison epistles, and Brother Jeff Priddy spoke of God’s “sequel” to our trials. Like Paul, we are aware Whom we have believed, and are persuaded that *He* is able to guard what is committed to us all in the evangel of His grace.

He Shall Save His People

WHO, CONSEQUENTLY, CAN BE SAVED?

GOD’S GOAL of saving the people of Israel from their sins (*cf* Matt.1:21; 2:6) receives steadfast support in the ministry of Jesus, as recorded in the book of Matthew. The healing of the infirm, the feeding of the hungry, the stilling of the storms, and above all else the heralding the nearness of the kingdom—all of these testify to the truth that Jesus is the promised Saviour, the Anointed One and Son of the living God.

A NATION NEEDING SALVATION

Yet this message was not being received. In hearing the words of Jesus, the people were not understanding it; in observing the works of Jesus, the crowds who flocked to Him for physical blessings were by no means perceiving Who He was (Matt.13:14). And beyond the human failure lies the remarkable fact (at first both surprising and even shocking to us) that Jesus did not tell the people the healings and powers were harbingers of the deeper and more essential cleansing from sin that was promised. Rather, the Lord came to the point where He deliberately spoke obscurely to the people, and plainly only to the inner circle of disciples (who still did not fully grasp the import of His words). Indeed, just after Peter made his great avowal of Matthew 16:16 (a revelation that he had *received* from the Father), Jesus “cautions the disciples that they may be saying to no one that He is the Christ” (Matt.16:20).

None of these realities, neither Israel’s failures nor the divine operation (most mystifying at first) of locking them

up in stubbornness, should allow us to forget and neglect the promise that Jesus would save His people from their sins. The nation's failures make it all the more obvious that they needed to be saved from their sins. And God's operations of blinding eyes and hardening hearts make it evident that He is the living God, the active and "hands-on" Deity, Whose knowledge is unparalleled and Whose power is unlimited. Such a God will surely fulfill His promises. The stoutening of the hearts of the people of Israel, far from being fatal to their salvation, is for a purpose of good. It is a step toward the goal of salvation, for the manifestation of God's mercy, as made clear in Romans 11:32.

THE RICH YOUNG MAN

The account of the young man who came to Jesus asking about good works, (along with further developments stemming from this event) is of special interest (Matt. 19:16-30; *cp* Luke 18:18-30 where the rich man is identified as a chief). We note that the youth addresses Jesus as Teacher, not as the Saviour. To him, life eonian is something that is achieved by the doing of good by good people. All that is needed is that they be taught what to do so that they might do it. He has no suspicion that Jesus will save him from his sins, nor even that his need was great. "Teacher, what good shall I be doing that I should be having life eonian?" (19:16).

What an opportunity for Jesus to evangelize! What an ideal time for Him to reveal that He is the Son of the living God Who has come into the world to save sinners! Or so it would seem.

As a matter of fact Jesus does proclaim the very heart of every evangel of Scripture. Yet this is hardly noticed, and Jesus does not follow up on the message until the great revelation of the latter half of verse 26. The words, "One is good" (v.17) compose an evangel of great joy. If any-

one wants to know about the doing of good and the having of eonian life, that person need only look to God Who is good. He alone is the One doing the good work of gaining eonian life for sinners, through the gift of His Son.

The young man, however, does not grasp the grand and God-glorifying implications of the Lord's words.

Consequently, Jesus accepts the position of Teacher, which has been His position throughout His ministry, notably in the teaching of Matthew 5-7 (*cf* Matt.5:2, "... He taught them"). Since the youth wants to know about the good he himself is required to do, and is not particularly concerned with good in association with God, Jesus instructs, "... if you are wanting to be entering into life, keep the precepts" (v.17).

GOOD WORKS

To be sure, this means that all the precepts had to be kept in accord with their full meaning. "For anyone who should be keeping the whole law, yet should be tripping in one thing, has become liable for all" (James 2:10). But taking up the viewpoint of the young man, Jesus refers to certain precepts that He knows the man will feel fairly comfortable with. If he wants to know what good he must do to get eonian life, this is the place to start, with precepts five through nine of the ten given in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5: "You shall not be murdering. You shall not be committing adultery. You shall not be stealing. You shall not be testifying falsely. Be honoring father and mother" (Matt.19:18,19; Exodus 20:12-16). And then, Jesus points to the words of Leviticus 19:18, summing up the five precepts already mentioned with the words, "You shall be loving your associate as yourself" (v.19).

It may have been that the young man had never heard the sermon of Matthew 5-7, or, more likely, since Jesus taught this message on more than one occasion, that hav-

ing heard it, the youth did not understand it. In any case, Jesus had drawn from this same group of precepts, including that of Leviticus 19:18, and showed how demanding they were, how high their real meaning was (Matt.5:17-48). This call to perfection, however, was not grasped by the young man, and he boldly, and foolishly boasts, "These all I maintain. In what am I still deficient?" (v.20).

Jesus could very well have replied: "You are deficient in truly maintaining all of the precepts I have mentioned. Murder, adultery, stealing, lying and dishonoring of your parents have all lurked in your heart in the form of anger and lust, in the swearing of oaths and the hating of your enemies."¹ Instead Jesus adds two instructions showing how the precepts mentioned can be expressed right here in this critical time: "If you are wanting to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and be giving to the poor, and you will be having treasure in the heavens. And hither! Follow Me" (Matt.19:21). This is what obeying the precepts means right now in the demands of this moment as Jesus travels southward to Jerusalem.

FACING TOWARD JERUSALEM

What were the particular circumstances of this time which called for this particular behavior of selling possessions, giving to the poor and following the Lord? These were days of great moment, days of crisis, calling for keen and undistracted attention.

Jesus had just told the disciples that "He must be coming away into Jerusalem and to be suffering much from the

1. Since Jesus also mentioned the precept enjoining the honoring of one's parents, it may well have been that this young man was guilty of the hypocrisy exposed in Matthew 15:3-6, claiming that the presenting of sacrificial gifts in the temple worship was sufficient in fulfilling Exodus 20:12.

elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and the third day to be roused" (Matt.16:21; *cp* 17:12,22,23; 20:18,19,28). His face was set steadfastly toward Jerusalem, in obedience to His Father and with love for mankind. If one is to be avoiding evil and doing good in this dark hour, there must be complete devotion to the Lord.

The young man went away sorrowing (19:22). He had been very confident that he could handle every precept that the Lord gave, but he could not handle poverty and the dependency and reliance associated with following another. He wanted a Teacher Who would challenge him in accord with his abilities, but he had no longing for a Saviour Who would save him from his sins.

If ever one needed salvation from his sins, this man did. He was actually a failure at maintaining the precepts. He had unknowingly testified falsely, and, without being aware of it, he possessed very little love for his associate. But his sorrow was evidence, not of one doomed to everlasting hellfire, but of one in whom some learning was already developing, stirred up by the Teacher, in accord with the purpose of the good God.

Here was a sinner who clearly needed to be saved from his sins. And in this, he was not unique.

WITH THE HUMAN IT IS IMPOSSIBLE

Then, after he had gone, Jesus comments on this incident for the enlightenment of His disciples. He does so at first with apparent exaggeration but with actual understatement: "Verily, I am saying to you that the rich squeamishly will be entering into the kingdom of the heavens. Yet again, I am saying to you that it is easier for a camel to be entering through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to be entering into the kingdom of God" (Matt.19:23,24).

This does not mean that a rich man, or for that matter even a poor man, might occasionally be able to squeeze

his way through into the kingdom. Apart from God's provision, no one is able to keep the precepts perfectly and carry them out exactly in the right way appropriate to every hour and under every circumstance that arises.

Jesus has led the disciples into an impasse. The highest perfection is required for salvation into the kingdom. Yet even an Israelite like this rich youth had failed. As a youth he was vigorous and confident. As a rich man he had all the material means to support a life of disciplined adherence to the precepts. As a chief he enjoyed authority and power and the respect of others which kept him focused on his responsibilities. He had everything a human being seemed to need. And it still was not enough.

Whether or not the disciples comprehended all the implications of this impasse, they ask one of the most important questions of their schooling: "*Who, consequently, can be saved?*" (Matt.19:25).

They were not rich. They were following Jesus. But in light of the demands of the precepts as clarified by the Lord, how can any Israelite, rich or poor, willing or unwilling, be saved? If this man who, from the standpoint of the traditional understanding of the law, was maintaining the precepts, is apparently not to be saved for the kingdom, how can they themselves be saved?

It cannot be by their perfect maintaining of the law. "With [human beings] this is impossible."

There is a solution of good news to this impasse, however, for Jesus shall be saving His people from their sins.

WITH GOD ALL IS POSSIBLE

The solution lies in the revelation here that "with God all is possible" which is the complement of the earlier declaration, "One is good" (Matt.19:17,26).

The word "possible" is not in any sense used here to suggest doubt or obscurity concerning the salvation of human

beings. Jesus is not coyly saying that as to the salvation of sinners, God may do so, or He may not. It is a positive, glorifying truth that God, Who is able to do all things, is the One to look to for salvation.

To those who want to make the word "possible" an opening for the claim that God will actually not save certain individuals (such as the rich man here, or Judas), we can only insist it suggests no such thing. There is power and ability in God for the salvation of Peter and John, and the rich young man and Judas as well, even as there is no power and ability for saving themselves in the young man and Judas, and in Peter and John as well. All their sins, and all the lamentation and gnashing of teeth stemming from their sins, even the fires of Gehenna, cannot stop God from saving sinners such as Peter, the rich man and Judas. The sorrow and losses are necessary lessons being taught by the Teacher. But they do not cancel the salvation gained by the Saviour, in which the lessons learned may bear good fruit.

PETER'S BOAST

The young man was unable to give up his possessions and follow the Lord in this time of great trial. But Peter points out, "Lo! we leave all and follow Thee" (Matt.19:27). In saying this, Peter boasts in what he and the others were doing in contrast to the rich man who found it impossible to do these things. Yet Peter's confidence in his own and his fellow disciples' obedience to the precepts proves premature. This is most obvious in the case of Judas, but the others also, one by one, fail in following Jesus. This will finally include Peter himself.

Nevertheless, with God all is possible. God not only enables the disciples (not yet with the perfection of the new covenant) to give up all their acquisitions and to be following Jesus as He heads toward Jerusalem, but He

enables eleven of them to follow Him somewhat farther than the betrayer, even to Gethsamane. Of themselves, they could not have done this any more than the rich man could do it. In addition, besides enabling them to go as far as they went, God will add to their salvation, granting even greater blessings than other Israelites will enjoy. For Jesus replies, "Verily, I am saying to you, that you who follow Me, in the renascence whenever the Son of Mankind should be seated on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt.19:28).

Apart from God's merciful provision, it was as impossible for Peter as it was for the rich young man to obey the precept, "Follow Me," laid down at the end of Matthew 19:21. However, God enabled Peter to go some distance in obeying this precept. And under the new covenant Peter will be saved even more completely, with the law written on his heart, and God's spirit invigorating him within as he judges among the people of Israel.

Nevertheless, for the time being, Peter still has much to learn from the operations of the One Who is good. He will be saved with exalted blessings, but this will not be because he fully followed the Lord. He will soon come to the point where he denies acquaintance with Jesus. Then the cock will crow, and Peter will be reminded of the Lord's words. "And coming outside," he will lament bitterly (Matt.26:73-75). Like the rich young man Peter will learn through sorrow. They both will learn of the human impossibility in gaining eonian life and salvation by way of their strength in obeying the precepts.

Yet as for Peter, so also for His people Israel, God will place His spirit in their hearts. Then, in God's own timing, they will not murder or be angry, they will not commit adultery or carry lust in their hearts, they will not steal or lie or neglect their duties, and they will love their asso-

ciates as themselves. Then they shall be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (Matt.5:48). That, however, will not be the basis of their salvation. With Israel, obeying the precepts is essential, but it is the provision of the One Who is good, Who gives His only-begotten Son as their Saviour unto life eonian (*cf* John 3:16). It is not a human achievement, but the work of the One Who does the impossible.

We are not to assume, therefore, that these revelations have no significance for the rich young man, or even for Judas. On the contrary, the teaching of the great Teacher here clearly focuses on the certainty of God's good work. The truth that God is good and that all is possible for Him certainly cannot *mean* that the rich young man and Judas will actually end up in hell for all eternity! Nor could these teachings be taken to *imply* such a thing; nor even to *allow* for it. What God did not enable the rich young man to do, and what He did not enable Judas to do, and what He did not enable Peter to do, will not keep God from achieving the good end of salvation.

GOD'S GOOD WORK

Even as the rich young man goes away sorrowing, and as the disciples remain following Jesus, poor in possessions but rich in joyful anticipation of future exaltation, the Lord is making His way toward Jerusalem where the firm basis of the salvation of His people Israel will be laid. Every indication is that "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26).

To this we may add the testimony of John: "For God does not dispatch His Son into the world that He should be judging the world, but that the world may be saved through Him" (John 3:17). And an enlightened Peter wrote as well, that "not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, were you ransomed from your vain behavior, handed down by tradition from the fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:19). Beyond this we have the exult-

ing words of Paul, the former Pharisee, who was “becoming blameless” as to the law: “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 . . .” (Phil.3:6; Rom.8:3).

Whenever all of Israel are brought fully under the new covenant they will be knowing the Lord, from the least to the greatest. The law will be placed in their hearts, and they will be obeying the precepts, not as they were defined by their traditions, but as expanded by Jesus in Matthew 5 and throughout His ministry.

Nevertheless, the Lord’s warnings are to be taken seriously. His words concerning “fire eonian” and “the Gehenna of fire” (Matt.18:7-9) are sobering even when it is understood that the fire is not eternal. But these refer to temporary conditions, involving instruction for Israel and the nations (*cf* Isa.66:23,24), and must not be taken in opposition to the saving work performed by the Saviour. Even those who are executed and whose bodies are cast into Gehenna must, in God’s own time, be drawn in joyful subjection to their Saviour and Lord (*cf* John 12:32; Phil.2:10,11).

The principle of Matthew 19:30 seems to point especially to those in Israel who are wealthy and powerful and strong in this life, like the rich young chief. “Many of the first shall be last, and the last first.” For one who was among the first in Israel, to become among the last in the kingdom will surely involve instructive disappointment and sorrow. But what joy will be his when he finds that this Teacher Who spoke of the One Who is good, has saved him from his sins!

The final word is not Gehenna or sorrow. These are no more final than the word “poor” is for the disciples. These are part of the process but not the goal. The final word focuses on God, Who is good, and it speaks of salvation and of life and of glory.

D.H.H.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 1998
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

IF GOD IS FOR US, who is against us? (Rom.8:31b). As Paul boldly affirms, since God spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all, *surely* He will be *graciously* granting us “all these,” namely, the transcendent blessings of being fore-known, designated beforehand, called, justified, and glorified (*cf* Rom.8:32; *cp* vs.28-31a).

In the midst of the struggles and sorrows of life, especially in times of deepest hurt or discouragement, it is vital for us to cling to such glorious revelations of God's grace and good providence, on our behalf.

Certain, indeed many, of our struggles and sorrows are due to evils from without. Many others of our struggles and sorrows, however, are due to evils from within, due to the weakness of our flesh even as the corruption of our heart. This is true of us all, not only of those who may be especially defiled. Even though as believers we enjoy an earnest of the spirit, a surety and foretaste of the purity and glory to come, in ourselves, we remain members of the old humanity, “which is *corrupted* in accord with its seductive desires” (Eph.4:22b).

At times, especially, we observe a law operating in our members, warring with the law of our mind, and leading us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members (Rom.7:23). We find that the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh, one opposing the other, *lest* we should be doing whatever *we* may want (Gal.5:17). And, in cases where the flesh prevails, we must often experience shame and sorrow, as the consequence of our unworthy deeds.

Now while these *awful* considerations are true, I would especially draw our attention to the *awe-full* fact that it is our very experiences of sin and shame that afford God the occasion, indeed the opportunity, to be our Saviour.

Only those who are subject to a law of sin and death, have any need of a Saviour, whether for deliverance or preservation. It is only as *sinner*s—during times in which we *know* that we are sinners—that we may, in the measure of God's grace afforded us through the reawakening of our faith, be led forth both from sin and suffering. And, it is the discipline (lit., **HITTING**) of God, our Saviour, in His *saving grace*, that results in our “living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon” (Titus 2:12). Such words of Paul are in accord with those of the Lord Jesus Himself where He declared: “The Spirit is that which is vivifying. The flesh is not benefiting anything” (John 6:63a).

Accordingly, then, even as our Lord went on to say, “*The declarations which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life,*” (John 6:63b), Paul, in Romans 12:1 declares, “I am entreating you, then, brethren, *through these¹ pities of God*, to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service” (Rom.12:1).

“Pity” is “a feeling for those in distress” (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.225), and is often connected with compassion, consolation, and grace (e.g., 2 Cor.1:2-5; Col.3:12). The phrase “the pities of God,” is a metonymy for the activities of God, according to His pitifulness (*cf* James 5:11). It is an expression of God's deliverance of us from our sins and from condemnation. “The pities of God” are His operations of justification, conciliation, glorification, and mercy which were recounted in Romans 1–11.²

Such revelations of God's grace—these pities of God—are spirit and are life to us, for they are God's means of grace unto us. It is through their influence that we find ourselves having no confidence in ourselves, but in God, in the One Who is not only our Saviour, but the Saviour of all mankind.

J.R.C.

1. In Romans 12:2, in the phrase “by the pities of God,” “by,” in the main CV text, is literally “through,” and the definite article, “the,” has the force of the near demonstrative pronoun, “these.”

2. *cf Unsearchable Riches*, vol.76, p.226.

THE WILL IN GOD'S WORD

GOD'S WILL consists of the activity of His spirit in deciding the details planned by His love for His own glory and the blessing of His creatures. As He is love, He seeks to win our will into perfect harmony with His own by the operation of His spirit and the mediacy of His Christ. His heart does not hunt for slaves whom He can force to do His will in opposition to their own, but longs for sons who delight to carry out His will because they are in hearty accord with it.

GOD'S PURPOSE AND COUNSEL

God's *purpose* is the goal of His will and His intention. This is well illustrated by Paul's journey to Rome (Acts 27). As “Ideal Harbors” was not fit for wintering, the majority *counseled* to go to Phoenix (Acts 27:12). When the south wind blew gently they supposed this *purpose* to hold. This *purpose* of the navigator and charterer of the ship and the majority of the passengers was defeated. They never arrived at Phoenix. So it is with human wisdom. They knew nothing about the northeaster and the shipwreck, or they would have altered their *purpose*. On the contrary, however, Paul had often *purposed* to go to Rome (Rom.1:13), and, as this was in God's *will*, nothing, not even the hurricane and the shipwreck could prevent it. He came to Rome. *God's purpose will be fulfilled.*

Intention or resolution is the effect of *counsel*, as shown by the sublinear, which is COUNSEL-effect. Like *will*, it is a determination, but it differs from *will* in that it is not the

direct expression of the divine essence, which is love and light, but arises from the accompanying circumstances in carrying out His will, in which wisdom advises a temporary change of course. This is clearly illustrated for us by the soldiers who brought Paul to Rome. Their *will* was to take him to the city, for that was commanded, but, as they thought he would escape when the ship was wrecked, they held a *counsel* and *intended* to kill him. Their *intention* was prevented by the centurion, who *intended* otherwise. The *will* of all was temporarily set aside, and the *intention* of the centurion prevailed (Acts 27:39-44). So, also, no one can withstand God's *intention*, and, eventually His *will* will prevail. Meanwhile He operates all in accord with the *counsel* of His will, that is, His *intention*.

As it is not easy for most of us to comprehend such an abstraction as the human will, it may help us to see it in action in this incident. At first all were agreed. God had made known His will. He said to Paul, "you *must* testify in Rome also" (Acts 23:11). Paul had said, "I *must* see Rome also" (Acts 19:21). Agrippa and Festus sent him to Caesar, and Julius, the centurion, had orders to take him there (Acts 26:32, 27:1). Although it was God's *will* that he should eventually arrive in Rome, it was *not* His *will* that he should go immediately, or without incidents which would reveal His hand. So He sends evil. He alone controls the weather. He sent contrary winds (27:7,41). Paul, being in the mind of God, warns the men to seek shelter (10), but *they do not believe*. They still *will* to go to Rome, but they make a mistake, or sin, for lack of faith.

So God sends more evil, not merely a wind, but a hurricane, so that they gave up all hope of getting to Rome, and expected to be lost. Their *will* was not changed, but they realize that they are not able to carry it out. Paul tells them plainly that they should have heeded him. Their sin, their mistake, will cost them dearly. Then, however, he gives

them good news, a little cameo of his evangel. God had graciously granted salvation to all who sailed with him (Acts 27:24). Paul *believed* this, but the mariners were unbelievers, so they sought to save themselves and leave the rest to their fate. If it hadn't been a *gracious* salvation, they certainly deserved to die!

Not only the sailors, but the soldiers also, although they still *will* to bring the prisoners to Rome, are influenced by the circumstances to go against God's will. They fear personal punishment if they allow the prisoners to escape. This is a good example of how men are not controlled by their basic will, but by their soulish emotions. But, in this case, the centurion is actuated by higher motives, for he wishes to fulfill his duty in bringing Paul to Rome. Thus we see the *will* of all happily *united* and *fulfilled* at the close, but the intermediate *counsel of their wills*, or *intention*, causing a *continual clash*. This is a miniature of God's eonian operation of the universe (Eph. 1:11). At present God's *intention* prevails, but man's fails. Eventually the will of all will agree with God's.

WORDS OF SIMILAR SENSE

The significance of the word *will* is of supreme importance to believers, as it deals with an attribute vital to our knowledge of the Deity. One helpful method in attaining an accurate knowledge of God's Word, which is basic in the concordant method, is to distinguish it from other expressions with a similar sense. It is axiomatic that it does *not* convey exactly the same significance as its synonyms, such as *desire*, *wish*, *long for*, *resolve* or *intend*.

Desire enters into the realm of *feeling*. In fact, the original is ON-FEEL (*epithumēō*). This is very intense in the stem, which is rendered *fury*. God's fury will be manifested in dealing with the worshipers of the wild beast (Rev. 14:9). *Desire* is also rendered by its close synonym

yearning, and, when evil, by *coveting*, *lust*. It is connected closely with the flesh, and is often opposed to the *will* of God. It belongs to the realm of the *soul*, while *will* is in the domain of the spirit.

Wish, in the Scriptures, is a higher thought than *desire*, as its elements (WELL-HAVE) indicate. Paul *wished* for the adjustment of the saints (2 Cor.13:9), and John *wished* that Gaius be prospered (3 John 2). We can never substitute *will* for *wish*, and should never water down the meaning of *will* to a mere *wish*, as is so often done. Neither of the apostles would think of using *will* on these occasions.

Long for is an even stronger *feeling* than *desire*, and is usually so rendered in the AV, with an adjective as *great*, *earnest*, *vehement*.

STAND FIRM

That we are to exercise our determination is evident from other expressions also, which are used as exhortations in Paul's epistles. We are encouraged to stand firm (1 Cor.16:13, Gal.5:7, Phil.1:27, 4:1). We are not irresolute minors, carried about by every wind of teaching (Eph. 4:14). Figuratively, our Lord described a man with a weak will as having no root in himself, unable to stand affliction or persecution (Matt.13:21, etc.) It is difficult to see how the panoplied warrior of Ephesians six could stand his ground against the spiritual forces of wickedness if he were supinely passive, and let the sword of the spirit hang idle by his side (Eph.6:10-17).

It should be evident from these synonyms that God's *will* is not the fruit of His *counsel* or the effect of circumstances, but the expression of His inherent light and love. It arises from what He *is*, rather than any outward influence, and will accomplish His *purpose*, notwithstanding the failures and opposition of His creatures. As circumstances do affect human intentions, as all of us are contin-

ually learning, God is using them to expose the futility of man's will when opposed to God's, and also to bring their wills into harmony with His own. Eventually, soldiers, sailors, and all were saved and in full accord with God's will in regard to Paul, in his journey to Rome.

CHRIST WILLED TO DO GOD'S WILL

When Christ entered the world, He said, "Lo! I am arriving . . . to do *Thy* will, O God" (Heb.10:7). He taught His disciples to pray, "*Thy* will be done" (Matt.6:10). His spiritual food was to do the will of Him Who had sent Him (John 4:34). Nevertheless, again and again, He speaks of His *own* will. When a leper came to Him saying, "Lord, if Thou shouldst be *willing*, Thou canst cleanse me," then He said, "I am *willing*! Be cleansed!" (Matt.8:3). He fed the throng with the seven cakes and fishes because He was not *willing* to dismiss them fasting (Matt.15:31-39). When He prayed concerning His disciples He did not hesitate to appeal to His Father to carry out His *will* that they should be with Him (John 17:24). Only on one occasion did He so much as suggest that His *will* was not in perfect harmony with His Father's. He did not *will* to drink the cup of suffering set before Him (Luke 22:42). But this only emphasizes the fact that He did not do God's will out of compulsion. At all other times it was *His* will, as well as His Father's.

GOD'S IMMUTABLE WILL

God's will is sourced in Himself, and is determined by what He is. As He is essentially Light and Love, it is His will to reveal Himself, especially His affection. As no other motives can change this, His will is constant and His purpose immutable. As He has all power, nothing is able to thwart His will. But, as He has all wisdom, and revelation is best accomplished by the use of opposites, He uses dark-

ness to reveal the light, evil to give the knowledge of good, and hate to impart a comprehension of His love. These temporary intentions seem to oppose His will, but must eventually serve in fulfilling it. Then there will be no night and no more doom, and all will be reconciled to God.

Since Christ has such power over the raging elements, why did He not subdue His enemies with a word? Many legions of messengers were at His command. Why did He not coerce His enemies to become loyal subjects of His kingdom? Many times He *willed* to gather the children of Jerusalem under His wings, but they *willed* not (Matt. 23:37). Even one of His chosen apostles obeyed Satan, the Adversary, rather than His word (John 13:2; Luke 22:3). His disciples were not won by force, but by the constraint of love. Their *wills* were won to work in harmony with His own. *It is not God's will to reveal His power at the expense of His love.* His worship must be voluntary, not forced. His greatest power lies in the weakness and suffering of the cross. Through that He will gain the adoring allegiance of men's hearts.

Man's will is modified by circumstance. He is influenced by his ancestors, his environment, his associates, his health and his wealth. Unlike God, he does not commence life with a definite determination or a permanent purpose. In many men the will is very weak. They drift with the tide. In all mankind the will of the flesh, due to their dying, as inherited from Adam, inclines them to sin. Besides, as in the beginning, when Eve hearkened to the serpent, so, still, the sinister spirit of the air is operating in mankind to persuade them to go contrary to the expressed will of God (Eph.2:2). As these influences are far stronger than man's will, it is enslaved until God's spirit displaces the evil spirit, and operates in us to will and to work for the sake of His delight.

There is nothing in the Scriptures to show that man's will

is evil in itself, but only when in conflict with God's will. Indeed, our Lord told the people that, if anyone should *will* to be doing God's will *he shall know* concerning the teaching, whether it is of God (John 7:17). Evidently those who do *not will* will *not know*. When our Lord went to Jericho, and two blind men begged for mercy, He asked them, "What do you *will* that I should do to you?" He it was Who put the word into their mouths. And immediately they received sight and follow Him (Matt.20:32). Indeed, among the last words He spoke from the glory were these, "Let him who *will* take the water of life gratuitously" (Rev.22:17).

WILLING AND WORKING

Willing is *not working*. This should be abundantly clear to the humblest saint, not only from the seventh of Romans where the wretched man *wills* to do the ideal, yet *cannot do* what he wills, but from his own experience. What a gulf there is between the two! Those in whom God's spirit dwells are most willing to please Him, but, until they are energized by His grace they are *unwilling* captives of the law of sin. Will is in contrast to work. They are by no means the same. That is why Paul, in his perfection epistles keeps them separate, and, after exhorting the saints to carry their own salvation into effect, assures them that God is operating in them *both* to will and to work.

Even though all power is out of God, and nothing can be accomplished without Him, nevertheless He works *through* others. In fact *all* is *through* His beloved Son. And He also delights to use His lower creatures, even the worst of them, even persecutors like Saul of Tarsus, the foremost of sinners, to accomplish His work, in fact all to whom he has imparted a special measure of His spirit. He does not do this by compulsion or coercion, but by winning their will through the revelation of His love, so that they *want*

to work with Him even when they have not grasped sufficient grace to work together with Him.

Give the human will no place in God's great exposition of Himself, and there will be little left. To begin with, we could never apprehend what God's will is unless we had one of our own. Even the *stubborn* will is essential. If God had not locked all up in stubbornness, He could not be merciful to all (Rom.11:32). God could have made a world of automatons, which would obey the slightest impulse, but without a soul, and incapable of affection. The evangel does not alter us into robots, which respond mechanically to His commands. It engages our hearts with His love, and wins our will so that we are determined, not only to *do* His will, but *delight* in it with all our being.

The consummation of all at the close of the eons calls for *subjection*, which has conquered stubbornness. But it does not, therefore, denote apathy. What a world that would be, filled with indifferent, impassive, callous, will-lacking automatons! That is a sign of serious disease even in mortals today. Surely the Son will not take such a supine and abject place! He will also be subject, but, at the same time the center of universal acclamation (Phil.2:11). We also will be *voluntary* subjects, who have such a regard for God's will that our own will will be completely attuned to His.

Could God not bring about the consummation, when all will be subject to Him, without the terrible tragedy of the eons, apart from sin and suffering, judgment and wrath? By no means! The vital and essential element of love would be lacking. The response would be mechanical, without feeling or affection. His *grace* would be unknown. The creation would be bound with hands of iron, rather than held to His heart by the golden links of love. Our wills must be melted together in the crucible of love before He can be our All.

A. E. Knoch

This Love of God's

CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SAKES

OUR EVANGEL is a joyful, glorious proclamation. We present God's conciliatory love to all and sundry with complete confidence in His consummation. "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes, Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him. For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life" (Rom.5:8-10). "Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

In our privileged role of ambassadors, proclaiming the grace of conciliation, we encounter, with depressing regularity, the grudging opposition of "Yes, but . . ." On a matter like this which unfolds the depths of God's love and peace, we might reasonably expect that more care would be taken. Certainly, many wasted years of fruitless and often bitter disagreement could have been avoided if, with reverent regard, our Father's loving purpose had been accurately understood, and then had been faithfully preserved and presented. Yet, like the happy man of Romans (Rom.4:4-12), we are neither pessimistic or sad. Who can be with such a message?

Our expectation of glory is not based on our response to God's love, but is founded on His love itself while we

are still infirm, having not the least merit or virtue. Further, God's spirit leads us into the blessed relief of justification, conciliation and glorious reconciliation.

Christ died *for our sakes*. What He did in manifesting God's love was not "in our stead," but for our sakes, ("over us" as the Greek literally expresses it). This exalts God's glory and grace! There is a deadliness in the use of "in our stead" in the context of the evangel of Romans 5:6-8. Christ's death is then seen as a substitution for punishment instead of a blessedly beneficial operation of God for us.

That Christ Jesus should submit to being emptied of all His glories, coming in the likeness of humanity, and being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:8) is an overwhelming truth. We do well to meditate on this, prostrating ourselves in adoration.

The glory is neglected. "Not one is just—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God" (Rom.3:9-11). We speak glibly of the love of God, but are not able to comprehend. But what matchless love is this which demands nothing less than the death of His beloved Son!

Thus we read, "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God *through Jesus Christ's faith*, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:21-23).

To continually have the thoughts and words of our God and Father, and His Son Christ Jesus, in our hearts and minds, is a veritable store of peace and love. "My song is love unknown; my Saviour's love to me; love to the loveless shown that they may lovely be. O Who am I, that for my sake, my Lord should take frail flesh and die?"

Donald Fielding

Questions and Answers

SOUL, SPIRIT, AND RESURRECTION

*Yet God is giving it a body according as He wills
[Concerning] the resurrection of the dead: It is sown in corruption; it is roused in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is roused in glory. It is sown in infirmity; it is roused in power. It is sown a soulish body; it is roused a spiritual body. If there is a soulish body, there is a spiritual also.
(1 Cor.15:38; 42-44)*

Question:

"To the best of my knowledge, a human being is made up of a physical body, a spirit, and by the combining of these two, has a soul. Again, if I am correct, at death there is a separation of the body and the spirit.

"When the body and the spirit separate, I am aware that the soul goes to hades, the unseen. Does this mean that the soul is temporarily dissolved or non-existent, or is the 'unseen' a reference to some definite place where the souls are kept?

"I also know that at death, the spirit goes back to God. In what state, however, is the spirit when it is with God? Is the spirit 'drowsing' or is it conscious? And, how does vivification come into play?

"At our resurrection, when we are caught up to meet the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes for us, our body will be changed to an incorruptible body. Does this happen to our physical body? How is this possible under the following scenario: A sailor has died at sea and is buried at sea. Some time later, sharks and other fish have totally eaten his body. Fishermen have caught some of the sharks and other fish and sold

them at market, where, in turn, the meat is purchased and then eaten by several other people. How does the body get resurrected when its molecules are in fact in many other living people (obviously, many other similar scenarios exist)?”

Answer:

YOU ASKED whether in death the *soul*, in returning to the unseen, “is temporarily dissolved or non-existent,” or is instead sent “to some definite place where . . . souls are kept.” To simply state my answer, it is that death entails the dissolution of the soul. Hence, until resurrection, it no longer exists. Since soul is a phenomenon of life, not an immaterial entity which somehow survives death, it follows that, at death, the soul is not sent to some place where it is “kept,” whether dead or alive.

In mentioning that in death the *spirit* returns to God, you asked, “In what state is the spirit when it is with God? Is the spirit ‘drowsing’ or is it conscious, and how does vivification come into play?” My reply to this question is that since spirit is the *imperceptible power of* life, and “power” refers not to some sort of discrete object, but to “the ability or capacity to act,” it follows that our *spirit* (i.e., the spirit which pertains to us, as individual persons) is neither conscious nor drowsing even in life; much less do either of these two conditions attend our spirit in death.

In death, spirit, the human’s ability or capacity while living to act, “returns” to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7). This is to say that, in death, the *power of* life dissipates and returns to its Source. The return in death of our spirit to God, is analogous to the return of the current to the electrical line or cable, when a lamp is turned off. Even as the flow of electrical charge is no longer operative within the lamp, similarly, the spirit which sustained a man in life during his lifetime, is no longer operative in death.

Vivification, which entails rousing and resurrection but is not confined to these, is that glorious and indissoluble *life* of which Christ is the Firstfruit (1 Cor.15:23).

Vivification is effected by the transcendently mighty operations of God’s spirit. It occurs in “classes” or divisions (1 Cor.15:23a), and is granted to all mankind (1 Cor. 15:22b): the Firstfruit, Christ, has already been vivified; those who are Christ’s, shall be vivified in His presence, in the seasons respectively appointed unto them (1 Cor. 15:23b; *cp* John 5:21; 5:29; Dan.12:2; 1 Thess.4:15-17; 1 Cor.15:51,52).

Finally, the consummation of vivification, when the remaining portion of mankind is also vivified (1 Cor.15: 24a), will occur whenever Christ may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power (1 Cor.15:24b). Then it is that “the last enemy is being abolished: death,” unto the end that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:26,28).

The thrust of your last question was whether our resurrection body shall be formed from the remaining extant matter, if any, of which our present bodies are composed. Your example is in point in which a body buried at sea is then eaten by sharks and other fish, which are themselves eaten by still other fish, which when harvested, are eaten by people.

Not only in the case of this striking example, but in that of the vast majority of the corpses of men buried in the ground and long dead, the bodies themselves have decomposed and returned to dust, having been amalgamated into the soil. With the exception of bones or teeth (which, depending upon conditions, may have dissolved as well, which, in any case, will eventually dissolve), few if any bodily particles remain.

As such, in most cases, the corpses no longer exist, and

even their original molecules no longer exist. How, then, many have asked, can such “bodies” be resurrected?

We are not told that “our [present] *body*” will be changed to an incorruptible *body*, but that *we* shall be changed from mortal and corruptible, to immortal and incorruptible. It does not follow from the fact that both of these respective conditions are especially concerned with our bodies (bodies which, timelessly, are “ours”), that this change which shall occur for *us* will be effected by a means which shall entail the employment of the particles of our old bodies in the constitution of our new bodies.

Again, even in the case of the living, not to mention that of the dead, Paul does not say that our existing *bodies* shall be changed. Instead, the apostle teaches that *we* shall be changed, and that *we* shall become incorruptible and immortal, which, it is true, entails our having a new body, as is elsewhere explicitly stated.

The essence of your question is whether this marvelous “change” of which Paul speaks, appertains to our “physical body.” The phrase, “a physical body,” like the phrase, “wet rain,” is a tautology, a needless repetition of an idea. Even as all rain is wet, all bodies, including *spiritual* bodies (see below), are physical, that is, material. Your question, then, simply becomes, Shall this change be implemented, in the case of the living, through the use of the particles which comprise our present bodies, and, in the case of the dead, is the resurrection body formed from any existing remains of their corpses.

My reply to the first part of this question is as follows: It is important to recognize that man is not a body, but a living creature who has a body. The living creature himself who formerly was a member of the old humanity, through this glorious “change” of which Paul speaks, will then become a member of the new humanity. There is nothing in this that indicates what molecules will be employed in the for-

mation of the new humanity; nor are we told what will become of the particles which comprised the old body. In the case of the living, should it please God to change the molecules of the old body itself into the molecules of the new body, doubtlessly He will do so. But if not, I would presume that the molecules of the old body will simply be reconstituted in accord with the laws of physics.

In the case of the dead, however, the question remains, Is the resurrection body formed from any existing remains of their corpses. My reply to this specific question is this: The unscriptural expression, “the resurrection of the body,” which is then interpreted as, “the quickening of the corpse,” is at the root of this problem.¹ “Resurrection” (*anastasis*, UP-STAND-ing) does not refer to a reconstituted and awakened corpse, but instead, speaks of the human himself, who, when returned to life, “stands up” accordingly. Dead persons, *figuratively*, will be “roused.” That is, those *persons* who, in death, have figuratively “fallen asleep” and are “reposing,” will be “awakened” or “roused” figuratively, in resurrection. Literally, those *persons* who are dead and buried, will be *returned to life*.

The apostle Paul contemplated those of the Corinthians who denied the resurrection, responding to his affirmation thereof with the protest: “*How* are the dead being roused? Now with *what body* are they coming?” Paul’s reply to such ones is: “Imprudent one! What you are sowing is

1. The common phrase, “the resurrected body,” is a tautologous misnomer masquerading as scriptural truth. This is because (1) bodiliness is implicit in the adjective “resurrected,” and (2) in the Scriptures, resurrection refers only to persons, not to bodies. Such an English usage, formally, would refer to a renewal of life within the same body which had had a previous life and consequent dissolution. To “resurrect” such a body, would entail its resuscitation, even as, first, in most cases, its reconstitution, using the residual elements of its corpse. Since resurrection, however, refers to the return to life of dead persons, not dead bodies, such a usage is improper.

not being vivified if it should not be dying. And, what you are sowing, *you are not sowing the body which shall come to be*, but a naked kernel, perchance of wheat or some of the rest. *Yet God is giving it a body according as He wills, and to each of the seeds its own body*" (1 Cor.15:35-38).

"The resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor.15:42), does not refer to a reinstitution of functioning existence within *corpses*, but of the return to *life of persons*, ones who formerly were dead. In resurrection, we will be granted *new* bodies, not revitalized corpses. In the case of those who are reposing, there is no reason to suppose that the molecules of which their new bodies will be composed, will be formed from any extant matter which may yet remain, whether in the soil or the sea, which was once a part of their old bodies.

It is not a question whether God could do such a thing, in the case of any particles which may remain. It is instead simply that there is no reason to suppose that He will do so. Likewise, it is fallacious to reason that since the dead will be resurrected (which entails having a body), and once had a mortal body, that their vivified, resurrection body, therefore, will be composed of recovered molecules from their corpse.

Issues of body, soul, and spirit, complex in themselves, have been confused and made inextricable by a false theology which denies death and confounds soul and spirit. Except for complementary comments which are added herein, the material which follows within this present writing, is taken from the exposition, "The Soul and the Unseen," which is the first article in our booklet, "The Soul and the Unseen, and The Gehenna of Fire."

CONFUSION OF TERMINOLOGY

Among the orthodox, while the soul's *pre*-existence is repudiated, its *post*-existence is insisted upon, its survival after death, prior to resurrection. Yet since death is a "return" (Gen.3:19), whatever the lot of the human

soul *after* this life (prior to resurrection), it is that which obtained unto it as well *prior to* this life. Therefore the orthodox view cannot be correct in both of its claims.

Orthodoxy is mistaken as well in conceiving the human soul to be not the human experience itself, but to be instead, an intangible, immortal entity, a spirit (or "ghost") which, while possessing personal traits and partaking of personal experience, is nonetheless not a person or corporeal being at all.

Wherever the Scriptures declare that a certain man "died," or wherever they speak of his "death," the orthodox insist that we are not to understand that that *man* died, but only that his present lifetime ended and that his *body* died. It is not that these traditionalists do not know what death is, but that they insist that it does not appertain to man. Indeed, like the spiritualists, they assure us that they are correct in their claim that, in death, man *does not* die because he *cannot* die.

In order to get a clear grasp of these questions of body, soul, and spirit, we must adhere to a strict and scriptural definition of terms, while logically and consistently expressing ourselves according to a pattern of sound words (2 Tim. 1:13). Since most are unaccustomed to such precision of speech and do not realize its vital necessity in scriptural investigation, they may, at first, find such explanations difficult, or perhaps tendentious as well, notwithstanding such explanations' own inherent objectivity.

THE "SOUL" AND THE "HUMAN"

A "body," or corporeal entity, is physical, morphological, material, tangible, organic (i.e., possessed of a structure or organization). A body is "the organic substance which composes [i.e., constitutes the constituent elements of] a human being or animal" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.35).

A man's body is organic substance, and he is composed

of organic substance, but this is not to say that man himself is simply organic substance. The man himself—that is, the “human” (*anthrōpos*), is the living, sentient being, the creature himself, thus designated. A “human” is, “a *living* sentient *being* of the genus *Homo* (as distinct from the lower animals and from spirits; including all ages and both sexes, men, women, and children)” (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.149; entry “human”).

That which makes the organic substance of which a man is composed into the man himself, is the *spirit* of (i.e., pertaining to) humanity (*cp* 1 Cor.2:14; Gen.2:7). Even as it is the spirit which vivifies (i.e., gives life beyond the reach of death; *cf* John 5:21; 6:63; 1 Cor.15:36; 2 Cor.3:6), it is God’s spirit as well which gives all life to all (Psa.104:29,30; Acts 17:25).

Bios, the Greek word for life which speaks of the processes or physiology of life, does not occur in the Scripture. *Zoê* (as in the English “zoo”) is the scriptural term for life. It speaks of, “the activity of the spirit, especially as manifest in the organic creation. All things have existence; plants and animals have life; [humans and] animals have sensation, or soul” (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.178; entry “life”).

“Spirit” (*pneuma*, BLOW-effect) is, “the imperceptible, intangible *power* of action, life, and intelligence. [By extension, it is often used of] the divine *power* as manifested in His invisible, intangible operations.”

A spiritual body (1 Cor.15:44) is not an immaterial existence, but a body *characterized by* spirit, or imperceptible power (*cp* “it is roused in *power* . . . it is roused a *spiritual* body”; 1 Cor.15:43b,44b).

It is not that man is, as according to traditional theology, “a tri-partite being composed of a body, soul, and spirit” but that man is a living, sentient being composed of organic substance. Man is not *composed* of either a spirit or a soul; instead, he *possesses* both a spirit and a soul.

“Soul” is “the *sensation* resulting from the combination of an organic body with breath or spirit (Gen.1:21; 2:7; [1:21 AV, ‘creature’]. [Soul] is connected with the blood (Lev.17:14; [AV, ‘life’], [and] is possessed by all living creatures that move [or ‘roam’] (Lev.11:46). By metonymy, [a soul is] a human being considered from the standpoint of its sensations or experiences (Rev.6:9)” (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.279).

In Scripture, man, who is said both to be a soul and to have a soul, returns in death to the “unseen,” which is *sheol* or *hadês*.

Since man is a corporeal being which, both by association with and as the representation thereof, is a living “soul,” it is evident that when he returns to the unseen, his soul returns there as well. Since in death, man, who “is” a “soul,” does indeed return to the unseen (e.g., Psa. 9:17), it is correct to say of any certain man who dies, not only that *that* “soul” has returned to the unseen, with reference to the man himself, but that *his* soul has returned there as well, with respect to his sensations or experiences.

Scripturally speaking, the human “soul” is simply the human *experience* . . . The expression “living souls,” speaks of the entire animate creation generally, “every animal of the field and every flyer of the heavens” (Gen.2:19; *cp* 2:24,30), even “the great sea monsters and all the moving living souls with which the waters swarm” (Gen.1:20,21).

Soul is a *phenomenon*; it is the perception of the senses. It encompasses all sensation, all that is experienced by means of the sentient faculties. By association, soul is the capacity for seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling. In itself, soul consists in the sensation of these things themselves.

Man, like the animals, is a “living soul” (Gen.1:21; 2:7). While both are living creatures, they are termed (by metonymy) living “souls.” This is because they are not only *living*

creatures but are living creatures which possess *soul*, that is, sentient capacity. Both man and beast are termed living souls because they are living creatures which, through sentient faculties, are capable of experience.

“Soul” (Hebrew, *nephesh*, Greek, *psuchê*) does not mean “life,” though it is often incorrectly translated “life” in the Authorized Version. Soul is not life itself, though it is intimately connected with it. A man’s “soul,” speaks of a man’s sensations or experiences of life. A man who is termed a “soul,” speaks of a man from the standpoint of his sensations or tangible experiences.

SOUL AND THE USAGE OF “UNSEEN”

In Scripture, it is common to speak of men as “souls.” Through this means man comes before us not simply as an organic entity such as a tree, but as a sentient creature partaking of experience. Literally, soul is not something that man is, but something that he partakes of.

When a man is spoken of as a “soul,” the word is a figure of speech (*metaphor* [representation] and *metonymy* [association]). And, even when man is spoken of as possessing a soul, technically, this too is a figure of speech (*ellipsis* [omission]).

When man is spoken of as *being* a soul, he thus becomes *representative* of that with which he is closely *associated*. Yet when man is spoken of as *possessing* a soul, the evident thought in view, while understood, is not expressed. This is because it would be both tedious and needless to do so.

The inherent idea which is present though not expressed when man is spoken of as possessing “a” soul is, capacity of or means of experiencing. The full thought is that man has “a [capacity of] soul,” or sensation. Strictly speaking, man does not have “a” soul but a capacity of soul, a means by which he engages in sentient activity, a facility by which he *experiences* life.

Having established the meaning of soul, that it is the perception of the senses, we must emphasize that, in death, the human soul undergoes a *return*. It returns to that concerning which, apart from revelation, we can only inquire. Yet we do so because we are interested in the whence and whither of things, especially the whence and whither of man. *From* where did he come, and *to* where does he go?

Now if we should ask, *What* are we, *where* did we come from and *where* are we going? the answer is, From the ground you were taken, For soil you are, And to the soil you shall *return* (cf Gen.3:19). But if we should ask, Yet what of the human *soul*; what becomes of it? the answer is, The soul *returns* to the unseen.

That is, the human soul, man’s *experience*, has the same status *subsequent* to this life that it had *prior* to this life. If it had life before this present, corporeal lifetime, then, when that which we term “death” ensues, it *returns* to its previous life. Alternatively, if it did *not* have life prior to this present, corporeal lifetime, then, when that which we term “death” ensues, human experience *returns* to its previous status, that of non-existence.

It hardly follows from the fact that the Greek word *hadês* signifies “unseen,” that, when speaking of the human soul in death, *hadês* therefore speaks of an unseen *place*, much less that it speaks of an unseen place where “disembodied spirits” abide. An “abode” is the place where one remains or dwells; it is the place where one lives or resides. Our inquiry is that of the nature of the unseen. It will not do simply to make the bald claim that *hadês* is “the abode of disembodied spirits.”

“Unseen” is an adjective; functionally, however, it is a substantive, a word used as a noun. In some cases, as in Matthew 16:18, “unseen” (i.e., *hadês*, which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *sheol*) is used in reference to the unseen *domain* of the Adversary. Yet in Matthew 11:23, in

speaking of the city of Capernaum, it is used in reference to the unseen *state* (as a consequence of its destruction and desolation) to which that city would one day subside. Since “soul” is a phenomenon, or sensation, and soul in *death* returns to the “unseen,” it is evident in the nature of the case that in death the soul returns to the unseen state, not to some mysterious, unseen place.

Essentially, death itself is a return. Man is soil and *returns* to the soil (Gen.3:19). The spirit—the imperceptible *power of* life, action, and intelligence—in death, *returns* to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7). “Death,” then, is simply the specialized term signifying the absence of life which follows mortality as contrasted with the absence of life which precedes it.

We may speak of *our* soul even as we speak of *our* body. Even as the compounds, however, which compose our body are decomposed in death, the experiences which comprise our soul are terminated in death. This is because “soul” is that which is produced when an organic body is endowed with spirit or breath, that is, with life-giving, soul-enabling power (Gen.2:7).

In death, the status of the human soul is that of post-existence. Except for the fact that it follows rather than precedes the time of the soul’s existence, the post-death status of a man’s soul is the same as that of its pre-generative status, namely, that of non-existence. Therefore, we may be certain that any and all who claim otherwise—be they ancient Jews or Greeks or modern scholars—are mistaken in their beliefs.

Let us rejoice that after all other enemies have been subjected, that even the very last of all Christ’s enemies will also be subjected. But while we await that day, let us recognize what that last enemy is. “The last enemy is being abolished: *death*” (1 Cor.15:26).

J.R.C.

Notes on the Book of Job

THE ARM AND VOICE OF EL

JOB IS HEARING words from Yahweh Himself. That is what he desired above all else. It does not matter that the words are severe and fearful; they are true, and they clear the air of all pretension and hypocrisy. The knowledge and sufficiency and righteousness of God is all encompassing.

In chapter 40 Yahweh reveals in no uncertain terms that He exercises His power and authority in accord with His ways. What His ways are can be traced by the things that happen, movements of light and stars and water, habits and placings of animals, and indeed afflictions of the individual Job. What is so has become so because of God and Who He is. The human is not consulted and is indisputably unable to attempt the tasks undertaken by God. When it comes to “augustness” and “loftiness” (v.10), God stands alone. When it comes to judgment and discernment for submission and crushing of wickedness (8,11) God alone is responsible. There is no other.

The arm and the voice of El (Job 40:9) are unique. The arm of El speaks of His powerful activities, and the voice of El speaks of His authoritative directings. He knows what He is doing, and He is doing it ably and effectively.

HE WHO-SUFFICES

When Bildad asked, “Does El distort judgment?” (Job 8:3), Job replied, “Truly I know that this [divine righteousness in judgment] is so . . . how can a mortal be righteous before El? If he desires to contend with Him, he could not answer Him one time out of a thousand” (9:2,3). All of

Job's associates accused him of wanting to justify himself at God's expense. Zophar asked in exasperation, "Should this man of glib lips be justified?" (11:2), and Eliphaz wondered with sarcasm, "Is it delight to Him Who-Suffices that you should be righteous? And should it be His gain that your ways become flawless?" (22:3). Elihu was more direct in expressing his impressions of Job's defense: "For Job has said: I am just, yet El, He has taken away my due" (34:5).

Job had not said he was just, and had actually avowed he was a sinner. But Job continually traced his afflictions to the Deity and loudly denied they could be justly related to any secret wickedness in his life. This silenced his three associates; and Elihu, for all his focusing on the wisdom and power of God, could not sort out all ramifications of Job's sufferings, Job's record of uprightness and God's operations in Job's life.

It is left to God Himself to set out the facts before us all. The One Who-Suffices is the One responsible for every creation, both animate and inanimate. He is the One Who is in charge of all things. Yahweh Himself, Who knows the inner thoughts of the heart, proceeds, without directly accusing Job and without anger or rancor, to set the record straight.

We are brought in Job 40 to the level of recognition of our relationship to God that we find in Psalm 51. There David prays to Yahweh with trust: "So that You may be justified when You speak, and be cleared when You judge" (Psa. 51:4). So also we are brought to Paul's avowal of Romans 3:4, which concludes with the words of David: "Now let God be true, yet every man a liar, even as it is written: 'That so Thou shouldst be justified in Thy sayings, and shalt be conquering when Thou art being judged.'"

First of all, was Job correct in 9:3 when he spoke of the uselessness of contending with El? Could such contending lead to an admonishing or reproving of Him Who-

Suffices (40:3)? No, just as Job had previously avowed, anyone wishing to contend with Deity could not answer Him, so now Job replies, "Behold, I am slight; how can I reply to You?" (40:4).

God has created all things. God places all things as they are. God is God. And no one can contend or plead¹ against Him for the correcting of His ways. He is righteous, and He knows what He is doing. Despite what may *seem* to be so, the wisdom, power and righteousness of God *are* so.

SO YAHWEH ANSWERED

Yahweh's words from the tempest are strong and call for manly attention. "Belt up your loins then like a master; I shall ask of you, and you inform Me" (Job 40:7).

We might suppose that Job, of all people, does not need this harsh tone, uncompromising and severe. But it is exactly what soothes and comforts Job because it clears away the debris of wrangling and confusion associated with sinners trying to deal with sins and judgment of sins. It focuses on the only judgment and righteousness that really matters, that of God Himself. Job's companions had refused to associate his afflictions with God beyond the simplistic and unsatisfactory confining of that association with judgment. And in correctly seeing this was not the case, Job kept getting caught up in self defense, which only compounded the mystery of his troubles. It was only as Job petitioned to hear from Eloah, Who, he insisted, was behind it all, that the ray of hope for the truth was kept glowing from chapter 3 through chapter 37.

1. The English word "plead" as in Job 13:3 and the word "reproving" in 40:2b are translations of the same Hebrew word; the difference is that in chapter 13 Job speaks of pleading *with*, or *before* God, while here in chapter 40 there is no preposition as demanded by English idiom; it is simply "pleading God," which, by the parallel with "contending with" would indicate "pleading against" or "reproving."

Praise to Him, Yahweh's judgment upon Job cannot be annulled, and His righteousness in dealing with Job cannot be condemned (v.8). The *arm of El* and *His thunderous voice* (v.9) in Job's life lie behind Job's afflictions, are involved in Job's sufferings, and are responsible for all of Job's experiences both good and evil. This is what God has judged to be needed for the shaping of Job. This is what God knows is right for Job's greatest good, and for the good of all his associates, and for the glory of God.

Can Job or any human take on God's responsibilities? If so, Yahweh advises that we ornament ourselves in divine splendor (v.10) and ourselves put an end to human pride and wickedness wherever they may be found (11-13). If we don't like the way God is doing things, through the experience of evil, with greed and hate and travail and pain continuing age after age, then we should save ourselves, and God will acclaim us (v.14)!

No one speaks.

Job is silent with his hand upon his mouth.

Eliphaz and Bildad and Zophar have nothing to say.

Elihu is once again hidden from view and unheard.

We also, who sometimes suppose we are our own saviours, or at least are required to contribute somehow to getting ourselves out of the mess into which we have strayed—we also would be wise to listen to what the voice of God has to say about His judgments and His righteousness and about what His arm is doing.

BEHOLD NOW

What does the behemoth have to do with Job's afflictions? What does it have to do with God's righteous judgments? It has everything to do with these because, like Job, it is one of the things God's arm is involved with. He made it (v.15), and it represents one of God's ways of doing things (v.19).

The name "behemoth" is the plural form of the Hebrew word for "beast." When a plural word is used as a singular in Hebrew it often means *grand* or *great* or *high*. One commentator aptly identifies the behemoth as the "brute beast *par excellence*."² It may be the hippopotamus, but whatever it is, it is a most powerful animal, and the important thing is that God has made it, and He has made it as it is.

IS GOD'S MIGHT RIGHT?

We say, "Might is not always right." But does this apply to God? Is God just in the powerful works of His arm and the effectual declarations of His voice?

Yahweh Himself offers a test case, boldly placing before Job certain facts concerning this puzzling beast which Yahweh has made. This is not simply to show the greatness of the divine ability but to confront the human with the issue of the relationship between divine power and divine righteousness. The question is not to be avoided (as Job's associates wished to do).

Here is a brute that eats grass like an ox (v.15) and that is greater in vigor and virility than any domestic beast (v.16), yet it offers no service to humanity. Its stiff tail, its sinews, its bones like bronze and ribs like iron produce nothing for us except our awe (17,18). What is going on here with this creature of God's hand and this use of His power?

There is fodder for the behemoth in the hills where other animals gambol (v.20), but the behemoth prefers concealment among the reeds and marshes and under the lush growth about the wadis, so much so that it remains there even in the flood seasons (21-23). Its finds safety and provisions wholly apart from the rest, especially from humanity, lest we try to trap it (v.24).

2. Edouard Dhorme: A COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF JOB (Nelson, 1984), p.619.

The words of Job 40:19 are of great significance. Yahweh reminds Job that in the order of God's ways in creation, the beast comes first before the human. This leads our thoughts to Genesis 1:24-26 which reveals that beasts were created before humanity, so that they would be on hand for subjection. Humanity, in the image and likeness of Elohim, was to sway over the animals. Humanity was to subject all beasts, including the behemoth, so that it would not be wild and separated away from others, but would be serving some function for the good of all. The "sword" (its horns?) which God gave to the behemoth, will then no longer be used for harmful purposes, but for purposes designed by God in accord with the goal that the whole of creation be "very good" (Gen.1:31).

The ways of God employed at present do not represent the goal of His creation. His power and authority are being exercised, but the behemoth of Job 40:15-24 is not yet the beast envisioned in Genesis 1:24-26. So also with Job. The ways of God with Job do not yet represent the consummation, but they still are God's ways, fully under His power and authority.

Job was familiar with this ancient declaration of God, and he would follow the steps of Yahweh's argument here: God is just. God is all powerful. God has declared that humanity will sway over the beasts. These are all facts that are unseen and unprovable by perception. Consequently, we must rest on God's voice concerning His arm, on what He has said in relation to what He is doing. The human will sway over the behemoth. And both will be blessed, and know their blessings because of the experiences of evil that had intervened between creation and consummation. If it is so with respect to the behemoth, it is certainly so with respect to Job that the arm of God has not slackened and the voice of God has not become false because of present afflictions and losses.

D.H.H.

Concordant Version of Job

JOB 40:1-24

40 ⁺So Yahweh [']answered Job, ⁺ [']saying:

² **Will one contending[~] with Him Who-Suffices
~admonish Him~?**

The one **reproving Eloah, let him answer it.**

³ ⁺Then Job [']answered [']Yahweh, ⁺ [']saying,

⁴ **Behold, I am slight; ^{wt}how can I [']reply to You?
I place my hand upon my mouth.**

⁵ **I spoke once ⁺but shall not answer further,
⁺ Twice, ⁺but I shall not continue.**

⁶ ⁺So Yahweh [']answered Job from the tempest, ⁺ [']saying:

⁷ **Belt up your loins ^{pr}then like a master;
I shall ask of you, and you inform Me.**

⁸ **Indeed, would you ever [']annul My judgment?**

Would you [']condemn Me that you might be [']justified?

⁹ ⁺ ^{if} **Do you [']have an arm like El's?**

And can you [']thunder ⁱwith a voice like His?

¹⁰ **Ornament yourself ^{pr}then**

with **augustness and loftiness,**

And with **splendor and honor you shall clothe yourself.**

¹¹ **Scatter forth the ragings of your anger;**

⁺ ^{see} **Discern every proud one and abase him.**

¹² ^{see} **Discern every proud one**

and ^e**bring him into submission;**

⁺ **Crush the wicked ["]where they are.**

¹³ **Bury them in the soil together;**

Bind up their faces in the burial^l crypt.

40:2 ~~~ admonish Him: MT be an admonisher.

- 14 **+Then even I Myself shall acclaim you,**
'Because your right hand has 'brought
'salvation to you.
- 15 **Behold ^{pr}now, the behemoth[◇]**
^wthat I ^dmade ^{wi}as I did you;
He 'eats grass like the ox.
- 16 **Behold ^{pr}now his vigor in his waist,**
+ His virility in the muscles of his belly;
- 17 **He makes his tail 'taut like a cedar;**
The sinews of his awesome thighs are 'intertwined.
- 18 **His bones are tubings of bronze,**
His ribs like bars of iron.
- 19 **He is the first of the ways of El;[◇]**
The One Who ^dmade^l him,
He 'brought 'close to him his sword.
- 20 **'Indeed the hills 'bear fodder for him,**
And all the wild animals of the field 'gambol there.
- 21 **Under the lotuses he 'lies**
In the concealment of reeds and marsh.
- 22 **The lotuses 'overshadow him for his shade;**
The oleanders of the wadi 'surround him.
- 23 **^{bd}If the stream 'threatens he does not 'hurry away;**
He is trusting even 'if Jordan 'rushes forth
up to his mouth.
- 24 **Can anyone 'take him 'by his eyes**
Or 'pierce his nose 'with a trap?

40:15 behemoth: lit., **beasts** (possibly the hippopotamus).
 40:19 He ... El: cf Gn 1:24.

THE WILL OF GOD

A. E. Knoch's article, "The Will in God's Word," is adapted from a longer study by that title which appeared in the September 1950 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.41, p.209). We hope our readers will find it a helpful complement to Brother Knoch's study of "God's Will and Intention," reprinted in our March number. We plan to publish the two articles together as a booklet.

Notes on 1 Samuel

DAVID AND GOLIATH

1 Samuel 17

THE seventeenth chapter of 1 Samuel readily divides itself into segments. Each segment is a necessary part of the story of David and Goliath, and each segment plays a necessary part in depicting the typical significance of these events which look forward to the cross of Christ.

THE SETTING

17 + The Philistines 'gathered `their armed forces together for battle; +when they were 'gathered at Socoh ^wof Judah, + they 'encamped between Socoh and ^{bt} Azekah ⁱat Ephes-dammim. ² + Saul and the men of Israel were gathered and 'encamped in the vale of Elah; +there they 'arrayed themselves in battle order to meet the Philistines. ³ +Now the Philistines were standing ^fon this side ^on 'a hill, +while Israel was standing ^fon that side ^on 'a hill, +with 'a ravine between them.

Israel's forces and those of the Philistines were encamped on opposite hills overlooking a ravine. The name of the place, "Ephes-dammim," is a compound of the Hebrew word meaning a *limit* (in the sense of *boundary*), and the Hebrew word for *bloods* (the plural is often used in the sense of *bloodshedding*). Typically it represents death, the boundary which flesh and blood cannot pass.

The name of the valley in which the forces of Judah encamped is also suggestive. It was named "Elah," which

is the Hebrew word for *execration* (or “curse”), as well as being used for the name of a certain tree (rendered “oak” in the A.V. and “terebinth” in the C.V.). This becomes particularly meaningful in light of Galatians 3:13 (*cf* Deut. 21:22,23): “Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes, for it is written, Accursed is everyone hanging on a pole.”

THE FOE
(1 Samuel 17:4-7)

⁴ + ‘A champion marched ¹forth from the ²array~ of the Philistines; his name was Goliath ³of Gath, a man of ⁴his lofty six cubits and a span. ⁵ + A bronze helmet was on his head, and he had put on¹ a scale body-armor, ⁶with the weight of the body-armor being 5,000 bronze shekels. ⁶ + He had bronze greaves ^{on}above his feet, and a bronze scimitar between his shoulders. ⁷ + The shaft of his spear was like a heddle-rod of the weavers¹, and the cutting-blade of his spear was 600 iron shekels. ⁸ + The bearer¹ of his large shield went¹ before him.

Next the narrative introduces the foe with dread description. Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the description is the number six, which the Bible attaches to man and the wild beast (Rev.13:18). Six cubits and a span, over nine feet, was Goliath's height. Six hundred iron shekels was the weight of his spearhead. Six different pieces of armor are mentioned, counting the shield borne by its bearer. Six pieces of armor and weaponry are mentioned as worn or carried by Goliath (one bronze greave for each leg). Goliath's name is mentioned six times in the Bible (1 Sam.17: 4,23; 21:9; 22:10; 2 Sam.21:19; and 1 Chron.20:5).

For ages humanity has stood in fear looking into the valley of the shadow of death. There is a giant in the valley! He holds in his hand the sword of death! (*cf* Heb.2:

14-15). We are petrified with fear! Oh, that there were a Hero who could enter that valley and slay the giant!

THE CHALLENGE
(1 Samuel 17:8-11)

⁸ + He ¹stood and ²called out to the arrays of Israel; ³ + he ⁴said to them, Why should you march forth ⁵in array~ for battle? Am I not ⁶a Philistine? And you are servants ⁷of Saul. ⁸Choose~ for yourselves a man and let him come down ⁹against me. ⁹ If he should ^{all}prevail ¹⁰in fighting~ ¹¹with me and ¹²smite me, ¹³then we will become ¹⁴servants to you. ¹⁴Yet if I' should ^{all}prevail ¹⁵over him and ¹⁶smite him, ¹⁷then you will become ¹⁸servants to us, and you must serve ¹⁹us. ¹⁰ + Then the Philistine ^{1st}vaunted, I' challenge ²⁰the arrays of Israel ²¹this ²²day! Give ²³me such a man and let us ²⁴fight together. ¹¹ + When Saul and all Israel ²⁵heard ²⁶these words of the Philistine, ²⁷ + they were ²⁸dismayed and exceedingly ²⁹fearful.

“Send *one* to fight on your behalf!” What a challenge this is! Immediately it calls for us to examine ourselves. Is there one among us who can meet the challenge with victory? Is there one in all of humanity who can walk into the valley of death and come back out unscathed? Is there one who can destroy the power of death and lead humanity through it like Moses leading Israel through the parted sea? No, no one is qualified, “not one is just—not even one” (Rom.3:10).

“Choose for yourselves a man . . . Give me such a man . . .” (verses 8 & 10). It is interesting that the concept of headship presented here is so in line with the purpose of God and with much of Paul's exposition of the evangel. Paul repeatedly contrasted Christ and Adam, and designated Christ as “the last Adam *Who became* a vivifying Spirit” (1 Cor.15:45). The importance of Christ becom-

ing flesh was vital so that He might truly be the Head of humanity. There is One “Man, Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a *correspondent Ransom* for all” (1 Tim.2:5,6).

David came, an unlikely candidate for the job in Saul's estimation, but he won the victory, and eventually became king, and all of Israel came under his leadership and authority. Christ came as the Lamb of God, the flesh could see nothing in Him to desire as King, yet He won the victory, and all humanity will come under His Headship.

DAVID'S BACKGROUND AND COMING (1 Samuel 17:12-22)

¹² + David was the son of this Ephrathite man from Bethlehem of Judah; + his name was Jesse, and he ⁷had eight sons. + In the days of Saul, the man was old, ⁻ⁱⁿadvanced in ⁷years~. ¹³ + Yet the three elder sons of Jesse had ¹⁶left and gone following Saul to the war. + The names of his three sons who had gone ¹to the war were Eliab the first-born, + his second, Abinadab, and the third Shammah; ¹⁴ + as for David, he was the youngest. + The three elder sons had gone following Saul, ¹⁵ + yet David would go¹ and return¹ from attendance on Saul to graze ⁷the flock of his father at Bethlehem.

¹⁶ + The Philistine came ¹close early~ in the morning and in the evening~ and ¹stationed himself ⁷in front of Israel⁰ for forty days.

¹⁷ + Jesse ¹said to his son David, Take ⁷now for your brothers an ephah of this ⁷toasted grain and ⁷these ten loaves of bread, and ¹bring them rapidly to the camp to your brothers. ¹⁸ And ¹bring ⁷these ten ⁷fresh ⁷milk cheeses~ to the chief officer of their contingent. + Also you should check ⁷about the well-being ⁷of your brothers and ¹procure ⁷a surety of them. ¹⁹ + Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the vale of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

²⁰ + So David ¹rose ¹early in the morning and ¹let ⁷the flock go ^{on}with a keeper¹; + he ¹took up the supplies and ¹went just as Jesse had instructed him. + When he ¹came to the round camp, + the army was ¹marching forth to the array, and they shouted ¹for war. ²¹ + Now Israel and the Philistines were arranging in array to meet array. ²² + David ¹let ⁷the ^{all}supplies go from ^{on} him ^{on}to the hand of the keeper¹ of supplies; + he ¹ran to the array and ¹came and ¹asked ⁷his brothers ⁷about their well-being.

Considerable space is given to background information on David at this time. The designation of Jesse as an Ephrathite from Bethlehem echoes Micah 5:2. “And you, Bethlehem Ephratah, inferior to be among the mentors of Judah, from you shall One fare forth for Me to become Ruler in Israel.”

David was the *eighth* son (verses 12-14), and is thus a new beginning, typical of the new creation. The eighth day was for circumcision—the cutting off of the flesh. Noah was an *eighth* (2 Pet.2:5), the eighth in genealogy after Adam (Gen.5), and there were eight people in the ark from whom humanity populated the earth. These eighths are one step beyond the perfection or completeness of seven, and represent Christ. He was not only “Firstborn of every creature” (Col.1:15), but also the “Firstborn from among the dead” (Col.1:18), and thereby the beginning of the new creation.

THE TIMING OF DAVID'S COMING

Upon first notice, verse 16 seems misplaced. It is as if the section giving us the background on David was split apart and this verse slid in between. “The Philistine came close early in the morning and in the evening and stationed himself in front of Israel for forty days” (1 Sam.17:16). Except for the mention of the time elements, this information has

already been given. It is inserted here because of the timing of David's arrival on the scene.

Notice first that the challenge comes both in the morning and in the evening. This reminds us of the *shema*, the famous passage from Deuteronomy 6:4-9, which has been considered a Jewish statement of faith: "Hear Israel! Yahweh is our Elohim; Yahweh the only One. So you will love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your intensity. These words which I am instructing you today will come to be in your heart. Repeat them . . . when you lie down and when you arise . . ."

The words were to be repeated throughout the daily events of life. Two of the times singled out for mention are morning and evening. They were to begin their day and end their day with these thoughts. But how can the day begin or end with anything but fear, when the giant is strutting and mocking and challenging from the valley? This is the question asked by the flesh.

THE TESTING OF THE FLESH

"The Philistine . . . stationed himself in front of Israel for forty days" (1 Sam.17:16). Forty is a number associated with testing, probation, or chastisement. Israel wandered forty years. Christ fasted forty days. Moses' life is divided into forty year periods. The spies searched out the promised land for forty days. Forty days and nights of rain launched Noah into a new world, and many more examples could be given.

But the point of this forty days is about to be made in the following verse. We have said that Israel on the hill represents humanity overlooking the valley of the shadow of death, and that Goliath represents Satan, who holds the sword of death. Humanity is subject to fear and despair. In addition, Israel on the hill, led by Saul, represents service in the flesh. Israel's fear and inability to meet such a foe

represents the flesh's inability to fulfill the just requirements of the law. Death and unrighteousness are inseparably linked.

Immediately upon informing us that Goliath was stationed against Israel for forty days, Jesse sends David to the camp to take supplies to his brothers and to be sure of their well-being. The narrative makes the completion of the period of testing or probation the key factor for the commissioning of David. Saul, and all the array of devoted flesh were defeated by the mere presence of Goliath. They shouted to bolster each other's courage, yet the entire array cowered in fear from the boast of the one foe. Saul stood head and shoulders above all the others of Israel, and this should probably have been his battle, but even he was defeated by fear. The flesh could present no one to meet the foe.

"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.8:3-4). "The time purposed by the Father" had come, and "when the full time came, God delegates His Son, come of a woman, come under law, that He should be reclaiming those under law" (Gal.4:2-4). We will return to this Galatian passage soon, because its context is the heart of the issue typified by David's coming.

THE PROVISIONS

David (the name is based on the Hebrew root meaning "Fond," or "Beloved," *cp* Matt.3:17 etc.) comes from Bethlehem (meaning "house of bread") bearing grain, loaves of bread and cheeses. His coming delivers Saul's army. To them his coming is typically the *bread of life*. The ephah of grain brought by David is the same amount that was gleaned by

Ruth the day the kinsman redeemer instructed the reapers to leave *handfuls on purpose* for her. That was the day she labored with the reapers and was satisfied with their meal of bread and wine (Ruth 2:11-17).

The *number ten* is indelibly stamped on the provisions that David brought. It is the number of commandments on the tables of stone which summarize the totality of the law. Much more could be said about the number ten, but suffice it to say that this number occurs three times in David's provision. The word itself appears twice, in reference to the ten loaves and the ten cheeses, and once it appears indirectly, in the measurement called an ephah. An ephah is equal to ten omers (Ex.16:36). An omer is the usual amount for a meal offering, especially for those who were too poor to bring anything more (Lev.5:7,11; 6:20; Num.5:15; 28:5). And the omer, one tenth of an ephah, is the amount of manna that each Israelite was to gather each day (Num.16:14-36). So all this provision brought by David represents the provision of the cross of Christ, and its completeness in satisfying our need. As with the brim-filled water pots at Cana's wedding, there is no lack in the supply of Christ.

THE CHARACTER OF THE COMMISSIONED ONE

Jesse's confidence in David to carry out his bidding is seen to be well placed. David rises early to do his father's bidding. David is a good shepherd. He does not leave his sheep unguarded, but leaves them under the protection of a keeper (v.20). "... he took up the supplies and went *just as Jesse had instructed him.*" He left the supplies in the charge of the keeper of supplies and ran to the array to see his brothers, even though they were heading to battle (v.21). These are the actions of one who delights to do his father's will (*cf* Psalms 40:8).

J. Philip Scranton

He Shall Save His People

BY NO MEANS, TILL

THE CLOSER the ministry of Jesus came to the cross, the more it became evident that the people of Israel were not yet being saved from their sins. This was necessary during that period, for the Lord *must* go away into Jerusalem and suffer much from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and the third day be roused (Matt.16:21) before He could appear as Zion's Redeemer Who eliminates their sins (*cf* Isa.59:20; Psalms 14:7; Romans 11:26,27). But this did not stop Jesus from exposing the hypocrisy and stubbornness of the people, especially their leaders. It only increased His sorrow and deep compassion in reference to the present, and His fervent anticipation for the future when all Israel shall be saved.

JERUSALEM! JERUSALEM!

Our Lord's lament over Jerusalem is often cited as evidence supporting the theory of human free will and the idea that despite the gift of His Son for sinners, God must acquiesce in the rejection of the "offer" of salvation. No! His cry indicates nothing of the kind. To suggest this is to make a mockery of the exultant revelation that God locks up all in stubbornness *that* He may be merciful to all (Romans 11:32). And it makes a failure of the One Who came to save His people from their sins.

The sorrow of our Lord over Jerusalem is not made less genuine by His awareness that this people would be willing to be assembled in the day of His potent power (Psalms 110:3). Because the sorrow is not everlasting it is no

less real in the heart of the compassionate Saviour for the moment, or for the forty years ahead, or still today nearly two thousand years beyond those terrible hours. Nevertheless, we need to realize that the sorrow is not one of hopeless despair. It is not the horror of hopelessness. Like our own sorrow today over the loss of those who have been put to repose, our Lord's grief is not a disconsolate heart-break divorced from expectation (*cp* 1 Thess.4:13).

"Jerusalem! Jerusalem! who art killing the prophets and pelting with stones those who have been dispatched to her! How many times do I want to assemble your children in the manner a hen is assembling her brood under her wings—and you will not! Lo! left is your house to you desolate" (Matt.23:37,38).

It is real and heavy sorrow. But it will end, as Jesus avows: "For I am saying to you: You may by no means be perceiving Me henceforth, *till* you should be saying 'Blessed is He Who is coming in the name of the Lord!'" (Matt. 23:39). There is sorrow in the definite and strong negative, "by no means," but there is sure and certain hope in the little word "*till*."

TILL YOU SHOULD BE SAYING

Jesus is emphasizing the certainty of woes in Matthew 23. No less than seven times he cries out, "Woe to you!" (23:13,15,16,23,25,27,29). So it is not surprising that, when God's promise concerning Jesus is ignored, Matthew 23:37-39 is seen as a message of bleak and hopeless sorrow. But believers ought to be always ready to search for and hold fast to those revelations of expectation and trust, giving the divine rather than the human aspect.

We find Jesus doing two things here: First He faces the present reality of Jerusalem's blindness leading soon to destruction and desolation; and then He grasps hold of a word of God concerning the future enlightenment and

happiness of this same people. The reality of the present sorrow prepares the way for the future reality of exultant joy. The first must be true so that the second will also come about.

The 118th Psalm is the passage of Scripture seized by the Lord as He laments over Jerusalem. "Acclaim Yahweh, for He is good! [*cf* Matt.19:17] for His benignity is eonian. Let Israel surely say, His benignity is eonian . . . From my constriction [*cf* Matt.26:38,39], I called on Yah; Yah answered me with a wide place. Yahweh is for me; I shall not fear what a human may do to me . . . I am acclaiming You, for You have answered me, and You became mine for salvation. The stone which the builders rejected, it came to be for the head of the corner. From Yahweh came this; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day Yahweh has made; let us exult and rejoice in it. Oh Yahweh, do save us! Oh Yahweh, do prosper us! *Blessed in the name of Yahweh is he who is coming*; we bless you from the house of Yahweh . . ." (Psa.118:1,2,5,6,21-26).

Do we suppose the constriction and rejection is more certain than the willing acclamation and prosperity? Jerusalem represents the people of Israel. It was the very center of Israel in leadership and worship teeming with the scribes and Pharisees, blind guides, hypocrites, who were whitewashed sepulchers. Like David two thousand years before, and like Jesus in the present hour, they were about to know what constriction was all about. By no means would they perceive Jesus as their Saviour *till* He returns in power and glory.

The traits of stubbornness are necessary. They do not signify evidence of irredeemableness but of the need of a great and true Redeemer. The task is great, but that only makes the glory of God all the greater when He undertakes and carries out His operation of deliverance. It is our lack of faith in God's declarations and our lack of reliance

on His wisdom, power and righteousness when we suggest the desolation is final and everlasting. What a tragedy to think that the sorrows of the week to come, faced by the Lord in Matthew 23, would never bring an end to His cry over Jerusalem or His wider sorrow over the stubbornness and groanings of humanity!

AFTER THE DESOLATION

The word and operations of God do not end with desolation:

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Mankind in heaven, and then *all the tribes of the land* shall grieve, and they shall see the Son of Mankind coming on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory” (Matt. 24:30). *They* will grieve, but, unlike their Lord’s cry over Jerusalem, their lament will be a weeping in the joy of realization. For they will know Him as the One Who is loving them and looses them from their sins (Rev.1:5). “Lo! He is coming with clouds, and every eye shall be seeing Him—those, also, who stab Him—and all the tribes of the land shall be grieving over Him. Yea! Amen!” (Rev.1:7).

The scene includes specific people. It includes the Lord coming in the Name of Yahweh-Saviour. It includes those who stab Him, that is those like the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:13-36, against whom Jesus pronounced the sevenfold woe. It includes all the tribes of the land, the twelve-tribed nation of Israel, whom Jesus came to save from their sins.

These people cannot be facing an everlasting hell. These have experienced desolation, but in the scene of Revelation 1:5-8 the desolation has passed. And yet they have shown themselves no better, and surely much worse, than the scribes and Pharisees of some nineteen hundred years ago. The words of expectation are no less certain of fulfillment than the words of woe.

WHEN WILL THESE THINGS BE?

Unlike Israel as a whole, the disciples heard these promises with some measure of understanding. Hence they asked “When will these things be?” (Matt.24:3). This was not only in reference to the destruction of the temple (24:2), but also in reference to the time when all Israel will raise their voices in exalting the blessedness of the One Who will come in the name of the Lord, that is, the name Jesus, which means Saviour. Not only the sorrow, but even more the joy that follows! When will these *things* be?

Some have felt that this promise was fulfilled in Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem, when the people shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be He Who is coming in the name of the Lord! Hosanna among the highest!” (Matt. 21:9). But although this event appears after the record of the Lord’s cry over Jerusalem in Luke’s account (*cf* Luke 13:34; 19:38), the sequence in Matthew seems to reflect the historical order of events better. In any case Jesus was not then recognized or appreciated as the triumphant Saviour and exalted Lord, nor could He have been prior to His death and resurrection. That entry into Jerusalem was, at best, a foretaste of the glory to come, and even at that it was loaded with irony. It was not that glory foreseen in Psalm 118:26 and promised by Jesus in Matthew 23:39.

It will begin to occur when the Lord *does assemble* all the children of Israel in the manner a hen is assembling her brood under her wings. It will come about in a time of great distress, when the Son of Mankind “shall be dispatching His messengers with a loud sounding trumpet, and they shall be assembling His chosen from the four winds, from the extremities of the heavens to their extremities” (Matt.24:31). But it will expand even more in significance and realization when the words of Isaiah 45:20-25 are fulfilled: “Convene yourselves and come; come close together, delivered ones of the nations . . . Turn toward

Me and be saved, all the limits of the earth, for I am El, and there is no other. By Myself have I sworn; from My mouth has gone forth righteousness, a word that shall not turn back; for to Me shall bow every knee, and every tongue shall swear fealty; only in Yahweh—one will say to Me—are righteousness and strength. Unto Him shall each one come, and all who were heated against Him shall be ashamed. In Yahweh shall they be justified, and shall all the seed of Israel boast.”

Nothing that has yet occurred has manifested the glory of that declaration. The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. represented much of what our Lord said about the desolation ahead, and there is still much constriction and sorrow to come. But the boasting of the seed of Israel in their Saviour as Justifier and Lord, and the acclaiming of His great Name by the nations, these glorious events are still to come.

But they will come! They will come, perceived by every eye. And they will come as God's accomplishment, not due to human repentance and faithfulness, but with the display of His own “power and glory” (Matt.24:30).

THE SAVIOUR'S NAME

The great name of the Lord is Yahweh-Saviour. In the Hebrew Scriptures this name is transliterated as “Joshua.” In the later Scriptures, translated from the Greek, it appears, in English translations, as “Jesus.” This is the name given by God, through His messenger speaking to Joseph, “Now [Miriam] shall be bringing forth a Son, and you shall be calling His name *Jesus*, for He shall be *saving* His people from their sins” (Matt.1:21). This name must not be left unrecognized and unappreciated in blindness and woe.

Now in Matthew 23:39 Jesus says of Himself that He will come in the name of the Lord, which surely will focus on His identification as Saviour. He will come as Jesus, the

Saviour Who is Lord, not as He held that name in humiliation at that time, not as the Saviour in promise, not as the Saviour in establishing the basis of salvation through His death, entombment and resurrection, but as the Saviour in realization.

When Jesus returns to Jerusalem in that day, He will come, as we have noted, with power and glory. The full revelation of His saving operations will not arrive all at once, but the process of revelation will begin, and with each step of revelation, the people will avow, “Blessed is He Who is coming in the name of the Lord!” The desolation and blindness of Israel will be swept away with the words of Revelation 1:5,6, “To Him Who is loving us and looses us from our sins by His blood and makes us a kingdom and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and might for the eons of the eons! Amen!”

WOE TO YOU, TILL

The glory of the Saviour's power is that He saves the stubborn, He saves the sinner, He saves the hypocrite, the stupid and the blind! The woes pronounced on the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:13-36 are epitomized in verse 38. “Lo! left is your house to you desolate.” They are the ones who, by no means, will perceive the Saviour in realization and blessing, *till* He comes in power and glory and they say, “Blessed is He!”

Those cursed by the woes of the judging of Gehenna (Matt.23:33) are specifically in view here. All of Israel suffers from the desolation upon Jerusalem, but this clearly involves their leaders. It is Jerusalem including all its sinners, its poor and oppressed and those called to discipleship, but also its leaders, the scribes and Pharisees, that will rejoice in Him in that day. It is Jerusalem, and it is the entire nation of Israel that will be saved. Their joy will not be satisfaction that they have done well in preparing them-

selves for His coming, but the joy of those who have justly experienced woe but have been saved out of all woe and every curse and entrenched stubbornness by their Lord.

This means there is no such thing as everlasting woe. There is real woe to come, even as the Lord suffered real sorrow and affliction. By no means can it be avoided. But it lasts only till the Lord comes and makes Himself known as the Saviour.

This revelation will increase so that eventually, beyond the thousand year kingdom itself, “. . . death will be no more, nor mourning, nor clamor, nor misery; they will be no more, for the former things passed away” (Rev.21:4). The Saviour will save from sin, and this means He also saves from woe and lamentation and gnashing of teeth. Finally, in the name of Jesus, every knee shall be bowing, and every tongue will be avowing “that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father” (Phil.2:10,11).

D.H.H.

CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Since the death of Herman Rocke two years ago, my work on the Concordant Version of the Old Testament has admittedly slowed. But I have been able to complete the typewritten translation of 2 Samuel and the two books of Kings, besides the revision of the Minor Prophets which Brother Rocke and I were preparing together at that time. This left revision work only for Genesis through Deuteronomy, and I have completed this for Exodus and Leviticus.

In the meantime all of the “poetry” and much of the historical and prophetic portions have been entered into the computer for typesetting. A great deal of final checking and proofreading lies ahead before the entire CVOT can be published. But we are hopeful that limited editions of some of the previously unprinted portions can be prepared in “notebook” form for those interested. Our plans are to issue the first of these this summer with an edition of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs.

D.H.H.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 1998
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

THERE is a measure of irony in Paul's comments to Timothy concerning those who wanted to be teachers of the law (*cf* 1 Tim.1:3-11). In teaching differently from Paul by bringing in the law, they did not know what they were getting themselves into. Those who insist on adding the precepts of the law to the evangel must recognize that they are putting themselves under the authority of the law. If they fail in keeping one of its instructions, they fail in all.

But to teach differently from the evangel is to oppose the sound teaching God entrusted to Paul, and this is against the law. The law clearly states that nothing is to be added or taken away from what God has said (Deut.4:2). To add the law to the evangel is just as much disobedience to the law as (using some of Paul's examples here) to malign or murder or lie! Teachers of the law need to recognize that it is against the law to take away from or add to the evangel of the glory of the happy God, because this evangel is God's word to us.

But, thankfully, we are not under the law. We are under grace (Rom.6:14). It is grace, not the law, that encourages and directs us not to add to or subtract from the evangel, though it is a struggle (*cf* Col.2:1; 1 Thess.2:2) in the face of current philosophy, empty seduction and human tradition (Col.2:8).

Those who oppose the evangel by teaching the law are also under grace, and, by their sin of adding to God's word, they cannot lose what Christ has gained for them. But they certainly lose a great deal of present joy, as well as reward at the dais. And their errors are harmful to fellow believers, especially to those who are not well grounded in the faith.

There are many other teachings, supposedly based on scripture, which oppose the evangel of the happy God. Revelations concerning God's indignation and judgments (added to certain mistranslations), and especially passages from the Lord's ministry to Israel, are often used to support the idea of eternal punishment, despite the fact that Christ came to save sinners (see the articles starting on pages 147, 170 and 185). But do those who teach this terrible doctrine apprehend what they are insisting? In being "stubborn to the truth" of Romans 5:12-19, Colossians 1:16-20 and 1 Timothy 4:9-11, for instance, they stand on shaky ground if their view of God's indignation is correct (Rom.2:8,9).

We have all heard teachers use Job 38:2 as a basis for dismissing Job's faithful confidence in God's deity (e.g., 1:20; 2:10). They have taken the position of Job's associates (despite Yahweh's reproof in 42:7), claiming that Job's sufferings represented God's just judgment against his sins stemming from his wrong choices. This is just the opposite of what we have been finding in the book of Job (see p.162), and it is wholly opposed to the evangel of gratuitous grace (*cf* Rom.3:23,24) and divine glory (*cf* Rom.11:32-36).

On the other hand, teachers will invariably commend David and criticize Saul for their responses to the challenge of Goliath (see p.181). But the view of the evangel, voiced by many, as a message calling for human cooperation with God in the achievement of salvation is not the way of faith. It is purely the way of Saul, founded on confidence in the flesh.

Here again such teachers do not apprehend what they are saying. If they are right, then Job's consummation and David's future, and *theirs* as well, is bleak and hopeless. No wonder Paul kept fighting for the evangel of the glory of the happy God!

D.H.H.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

NATIONS have a destiny as well as individuals. Israel is an eonian nation (2 Sam.7:24). Other nations will endure eonian chastening, or receive eonian life, according to their treatment of our Lord's brethren (Matt.25:46). We miss much if we confound nations with individuals, and confuse the time of their judgment and reward with that of the persons who compose them. The fact that Israel *as a nation* is to live and rule until the consummation does not by any means imply that every individual in it possesses eonian life, and will share in the kingdom when it comes. Far from it. Only those who died in *faith* will receive their allotment in the kingdom at the resurrection of the just.

There are many parables in the Scriptures which deal with the individuals, such as the harvest, the darnel, the fishing, etc. But these are not specifically referred to *nations* as we have in Matthew 25:31-46. Individuals in Israel will also be judged at the commencement of the kingdom.

The mere fact that this parable occurs in *Matthew* should settle the matter, for this account is devoted especially to the King, and contains the kingdom charter (Matt.5-7). Here Christ quotes Isaiah (42:1-3) to the effect that *judging* shall He be reporting to the *nations* (Matt.12:18). In this Matthew differs from the other accounts, for in them our Lord appears in different characters. The Servant of Mark, the Man of Luke, and the divine Son of John dealt with individuals, as a rule.

Matthew is the *kingdom* account. It is intensely *national*. In it Christ forbade His apostles even to go on a road of

the *nations* (10:5). The testimony is not merely to men, but to *governors* and *kings* and the *nations* (10:18). At the time of the end *nation* shall rise against *nation* (24:7), and they will be hated by *all* of the *nations*. The evangel of the *kingdom* shall be heralded in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the *nations* (24:14). Therefore there is also a judgment at the inauguration of the kingdom, not of individuals, but of *nations*, as such, under the figure of sheep and kids. It is further illustrated by personifying the nations, comparing them to individuals. This has generally been taken literally, and so has led to much confusion, and to the idea that this is the “general judgment,” in which those who do well receive eternal life, and others everlasting punishment (Matt.25:31-46).

THE PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND KIDS

The account as a whole is a *parable*, in which a shepherd's dealings with his sheep and kids are compared with the King's dealings with the nations. Each sheep or kid represents one nation, the former those favorable to Israel and the latter those who did not treat them well. Within the parable are several other figures. First, the *severing* is as that of a shepherd, a plain *simile* (25:32). Then, by the figure of *personification*, or *impersonation*, the animals, or the nations, are transformed into human beings. Each one of the sheep at His right hand is given a *kingdom* allotment made ready for them from the disruption. All this is only a graphic illustration of our Lord's dealings with the *nations*, not the individuals.

At the present time God is dealing with the nations *as a whole* (as well as with individuals in them) in contrast to Israel. This also is explained to us by means of a figure, the olive tree, hence has often been misunderstood. We are so selfishly preoccupied with our own personal salvation and destiny that we fail to see God's wider sphere of

operations, which are national in their scope. God deals with Israel as a nation as well as with the saints and sinners in it. He has functions for the other nations, either singly or as a whole, besides calling His own out of them. At the present time the *nations* are enriched through the discomfiture of Israel, quite apart from the few believers in them (Rom.11:12). The whole world is conciliated, not only those who receive this conciliation and are reconciled. The nations, in the olive tree, God's means of world illumination, will be hewn out without affecting the destiny of a single believer in them (Rom.11:16-24).

When the stone from heaven falls from on high upon the great image (Dan.2:45) it smashes all the great political organizations set up by man. On a smaller scale this has often happened to the nations of the earth. In fact it is happening oftener than ever in our own days. Yet practically always, especially when the people are distinct, with their own language and customs and history, the nation arises afresh, even after long periods of non-existence. The Polish nation is a well-known example. It goes far back in history, and has varied much in power and size, from a first-class domination to extinction. When Israel is restored from being no nation in the political sense to the leading world state, then the other nations must be given entirely new forms and proper places in the new alignment. The prophets deal with the place of the nations in that day, but enough is said at the end of the Unveiling to give us an outline. Satan is bound so that he cannot deceive the nations (Rev.20:3). They shall all come and worship Yahweh (Rev.15:4). Later, on the new earth, the nations shall walk in the light of the New Jerusalem and carry their honor and glory into it, and shall partake of the healing of the tree of life (Rev.21:24-26; 22:1-2).

If God deals with the nations, as such, at the present time, when no special nation is singled out to execute His

purpose in the earth, how much more should we expect Him to deal with nations, as such, when the chosen nation takes its place as Christ's complement in ruling the earth? At the commencement of the kingdom there must be a readjustment among the political powers of the earth to conform to the new regime. The King of Israel is also the Son of Mankind. He has all the rights and dignities which inhere in Adam as the head of the race. He is the Suzerain of all the kings of earth, and the Arbiter of the destiny of nations. He will assign to each nation its proper and preordained place in the kingdom.

Under *these* conditions we can readily understand and fully acquiesce in the principles of this judgment. Israel, as a nation, has been variously treated by the different nations of the earth during her long dispersion among them. They have suffered literal hunger and thirst and strangerhood and nakedness and imprisonment, as well as all that these suggest. By governmental action they have been deprived of the means of livelihood, denied the right to own land or become citizens, and have been exposed to the mercies of the populace without legal protection, and have been herded together in ghettos and otherwise robbed of their liberty. On the other hand, they have been so well treated in some lands that they have felt at home and have adapted the language of their hosts to their own use, and attained to wealth and influence far beyond the average.

The nations in the kingdom, during the millennium and in the new earth, will be allotted a place corresponding to their previous political treatment of Israel. Some will receive special blessing because they were kind to them. Others will be most severely disciplined because they had made no efforts to alleviate their lot. "These shall be coming away into chastening eonian, yet the just into life eonian." Such is the only possible import of these much-abused words, when they are kept connected with their context,

and viewed within the scope of the account which contains them. Matthew continues and completes the *kingdom* testimony of the prophets, and is in perfect agreement with it. As Son of Mankind our Lord will adjudicate among the nations. All wrong must be recompensed. It will not be revenge, such as the unregenerate Jew would like to have, but righteous adjudication, leading to the subjection of all to God at the consummation.

THE PROPHETS

Ezekiel is given the same title, "Son of Mankind," when he is told to announce God's judgment on the sons of Ammon: "Thus says my Lord Yahweh: Because you clap your hand, and you stamp your foot, and you are rejoicing with all your disdain from the soul over the ground of Israel, therefore, behold Me! I will stretch out My hand against you and give you as plunder to the nations, and I will cut you off from the peoples and destroy you from the countries; I shall exterminate you. Then you will know that I am Yahweh" (Ezek.25:6,7). So did God deal with the nations while Israel was still before Him. But now He is conciliated, and Israel is not avenged. All waits the day of their restoration. But then the accounts of the nations with Israel must be settled.

The prophet Amos records a series of retributive judgments on the nations round about because they harmed his people Israel. We will quote a few keywords of each, to show their drift. "... Because they threshed the pregnant women of Gilead with iron spikes. I will send fire upon the house of Hazael" (Amos 1:3-4). "... Because they carried away into exile a total deportation, to surrender it to Edom. I will send fire upon the wall of Gaza" (1:6-7). Tyre remembered not the covenant of brothers, so fire devours her citadel (1:9-10). Edom pursued his brother with the sword, so a fire is sent into Teman. Ammon does evil in

Gilead in order to widen their boundary, so a fire ravages the wall of Rabbah (1:11-14). Vengeance is Yahweh's, and He watched over His people and judged their enemies.

Obadiah actually gives us an example of the judgment recorded in Matthew. Speaking of Edom, he says: "Because of wrong done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off for the eon" (1:10). The basis of the judgment is found in these words (Obad.1:15,18):

For near is the day of Yahweh over all the nations.

Just as you do, it shall be done to you.

Your dealing shall return on your own head.

And the house of Jacob will become a fire,

And the house of Joseph a blaze,

And the house of Esau will be straw;

They will flare up among them and devour them.

And there shall not be a survivor for the house of Esau,

For Yahweh speaks.

FIRE EONIAN

The incongruity of putting those who fail to succor the Lord's brethren into a fire not prepared for them (Matt. 25:41) has doubtless caused many a questioning thought. This is further intensified when we find that the Slanderer, or Adversary, for whom it seems to have been prepared, is not cast into it at all at that time, but into the abyss (Rev. 20:3). There is no record that his messengers are ever cast into the lake of fire. Is the failure to help a Jew quite as culpable as the career of the arch enemy of God and man? Does it deserve the same punishment? To punish an individual who is guilty of neglecting the Lord's brethren in the same way as the Adversary himself will raise doubts in every heart that knows God's justice. The words "the adversary" may just as well refer to a class of persons as well as to Satan. All who have been adversaries of Israel belong

to this class.¹ And the nations who have been used by God to afflict them may well be represented under this name, for many of their trials came as the result of false accusations, such as the use of Christian blood in their ritual.

Israel was afflicted in Egypt nearly half a millennium (Gen.15:13,17). This is figured beforehand to Abraham by a smoking stove, and afterward, to Moses, by a burning thorn bush. These figures are worthy of our closest attention. Let us believe the Bible literally, as it stands, whenever this conforms to the facts. But when this is not the case, let us look at it with the eyes of an oriental, and seek the facts behind the figure. No one can take these pictures of Israel's oppression in Egypt as facts. They were not in a literal stove. They did not literally burn. The fire was a figure of affliction, and a most vivid and impressive one. Nevertheless, not only were they *not consumed*, but they *increased* greatly while undergoing it.

Not only nationally, but generally, the inauguration of the day of Yahweh is compared with fire. Malachi (4:1-3) foretells the fate of the wicked at the time under this figure. "For behold, the day is coming, consuming like a stove, and all the arrogant and all doing wickedness become stubble. And the coming day will set them aflame, says Yahweh of hosts, which shall not leave to them root or bough. Yet the Sun of Righteousness will radiate for you who fear My Name, and healing will be in Its wings. And you will come forth and frolic like calves of the stall. And you will tread down the wicked, for they shall become ashes under the soles of your feet in the day which I am making, says Yahweh of hosts." Is it not evident that, in the same era in

1. *Editor's note:* Although the present CV uses "Adversary" with a capital "A" in Matthew 25:41, A. E. Knoch's suggestion that the passage refers to the "adversary [class of nations]" and its messengers has much merit and should be considered in future editions of the Version.

which the *nations* are judged according to their treatment of our Lord's brethren, other evils will be cleared out of the kingdom? All wicked persons, whatever their nationality, will also find affliction, which is figured by fire.

The figure of fire is used freely of our Lord's ministry in Matthew's account. John the Baptist not only warned them that the ax was already lying at the root of the trees, and those which did not produce fine fruit would be hewn down and cast into the fire, but he characterized our Lord's ministry as two kinds of baptism, one in holy spirit and one in fire. He would winnow out the grain in the nation, yet He would also burn up the chaff with fire unextinguished (Matt.3:10-12). So that, even in Israel itself, the kingdom judgments are figured by fire. Our Lord repeats the Baptist's warning with special reference to false prophets (Matt.7:15-20).

This is still more clearly connected with the conclusion of the eon in the parable of the darnel. Even as they culled out the darnel at harvest time, so shall the Son of Mankind cull out of His kingdom all the snares and those doing lawlessness, and they shall be casting them into a furnace of fire (Matt.13:40-42). Should we apply this figure literally, these offenders would be actually burned in a furnace. Then the millennial kingdom would consist only of good, and there would be no need of an iron scepter. Since the darnel is a figure, so must the furnace and the fire be figurative. To carry the figure still further, as in the prophets, the wicked will be as ashes under the feet of those who fear Yahweh (Mal.4:3).

What is indicated by the eonian fire for the nations who do not succor the Lord's brethren in their distress may be apprehended best by considering the sufferings of the chosen nation themselves at the present time, before our very eyes, for this also is characterized as *torment in a flame*.

Antisemitism is called a "flame" in the Scriptures. Is

it not most appropriate to characterize its judgment as "fire"? *In this flame* the chosen nation suffers as it once did in Egypt. But *it is not burned up*. Notwithstanding its painful lot, its numbers have *increased*. And such is quite possible in the kingdom, for at its end Satan mobilizes a tremendous host that threatens to destroy the capital. This revolt could easily be accounted for if these nations, at a distance from Jerusalem, had been reduced to political slavery, and forced to submit by the iron rule. Otherwise why should they object to the fullness of physical blessing with which the earth will be filled at that time? Satan wishes to *rule*. His aim is political. He deceives the *nations*. It is a national uprising.

The unbeliever is usually allowed to monopolize the fire of the future. For them we reserve the flaming judgments of Yahweh's day, the unextinguished fires of Hinnom's vale, and the fiery lake which is the second death. But the believer also has his testing time, not indeed to determine his fate but his reward (*cf* 1 Cor.3:15). No one, perhaps, thinks of literal fire in this connection, for our works are not, as a rule, such as can be tested by actual flames. Yet the figure of fire is there, and we may as well prepare ourselves for a most searching investigation of the character of our deeds. Much of our service, we fear, will feed the flames and disappear.

GOSPEL PREACHING

An equally impossible pass is reached if we take the judgment of the nations as that of individuals. How many who have quoted the last verse of the chapter in preaching the gospel have made it clear to themselves or to their audience that "these" who "go away into everlasting punishment" (AV), do so, *not* because they are *sinners*, but *because they did not succor Christ's brethren according to the flesh*? And how many set forth the only road to

eonian life as the context demands? There is no repentance here, no faith in God, not even good *works*, except those done to suffering Israel. We may be sure that Paul would not tolerate such an evangel for this administration for a moment. Now it is *not* of works, but in *grace* through *faith* in God's word concerning Christ and His *sacrifice*. Physical relationship, which is paramount here, is entirely ruled out (2 Cor.5:16).

It is very little relief to shift this strange evangel (which is no evangel at all) to the time of the end, immediately before the Son of Man comes. No doubt this will be the crucial period, but there is no limitation in the passage. It would be most unjust to punish a nation for their attitude in this short period *alone* if their previous history had been favorable.

Indeed, at that time, *all* nations will hate those of them who are disciples of Christ (Matt.24:9). The time is not limited, and justice demands that the whole history of a nation be taken into account, just as in individual judgment, all the acts of each come under review, not only those in the hours of death.

What sort of an evangel have we here, that promises eonian life to the individuals who succor the Lord's brethren, and eonian chastening to those who do not! It is a message of works, pure and simple, done accidentally, as it were, by those who realize nothing of the gravity or significance of their acts. Now we know that Israel is scattered among *all nations*, so all governments will make contact with them. But will all individuals even find an opportunity to show their benevolence? Perhaps one in a thousand of earth's inhabitants belongs to this favored race. They live in large groups. How little opportunity there would be for most people to avail themselves of the means of obtaining eonian life, even if it seems so simple to perform the necessary duties!

IMPLICATIONS

But that which should make us hesitate is the fact that these works are done without faith in God, and in utter ignorance of His Christ, and without the aid of His sacrifice, without the least reference to His precious blood. Life apart from the death of Christ, and for the eons, sounds suspicious to everyone who knows the value of His work. We read that, apart from faith, it is impossible to be well pleasing to God (Heb.11:6). Even these brethren of His, who are succored, have no title to eonian life unless they believe. Yet, according to this passage if applied to individuals, one who feeds a Jew, whether he is a believer or not, thereby earns eonian life!

None of Israel will get into the kingdom on any such terms. Peter makes this very clear. Jesus Christ is the only one Who can save them. "There is no salvation in any other one, for neither is there any other name, given under heaven among men, in which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Many a Gentile today has fulfilled the conditions here laid down, but I am sure that he will not receive eonian life as his wages, for now God's righteousness comes to him who is *not* working but believing (Rom.4:4). Nationally, this message of succoring Israel no doubt has its place today, but individually it is impossible.

We implore all who use the threat of "everlasting punishment," and the promise of "eternal life" here given, to carefully consider the conditions which are set forth in each case, and fearlessly face the facts. If this is individual, it is eonian life awarded for a few good deeds, or eonian chastening for negligence within a very confined sphere of life, quite apart from God's grace based on Christ's blood, or faith of any kind, or the commission of any positive sin. Then the whole life is overlooked, and will not come into judgment at the great white throne, as this is only for the dead. I feel sure that, the more we inquire into the actual

words here given, the more we will be convinced that a personal application is not only contrary to the words themselves, but to all the rest of revelation.

Contrariwise, the more we investigate the details of this passage, the more we will be convinced of its national application, not only because of the express word to that effect, but because it will harmonize with the words of the prophets, and agree with all other passages on the same theme.

Perhaps no other passage has been so freely used to prove the endlessness of punishment. And now we see that it is an excellent passage to prove the opposite! The life of nations cannot be endless. The nullification or abrogation of every sovereignty and every authority and power at the consummation (1 Cor.15:24) makes nations obsolete. What kind of a nation is it which has no government? The time is coming when the Son, having subjected all, will Himself be subject, and God the Father be the only Suzerain, and His family the only government. The eonian life of nations has its limits, and so, of course, has eonian chastening. Because the life is *limited*, the “everlasting punishment” will end.

ADVANCES IN UNDERSTANDING

One of the greatest advances in truth in modern times was the placing of this passage in its proper time, at the beginning of the reign of Christ, and limiting its scope to the living, thus rescuing it from the “general judgment,” with which it is so often confounded. Now we propose another advance, limiting it still further to the *nations* (as such) at that time, according to its own declaration. We have already insisted on this at various times but further study has clarified the details and led to the entire rejection of the thought that it might be applicable to individuals at the time of the end.

This leads to the interesting conclusion that *nations* may

have eonian life, or may be subjected to eonian chastening. That there will be nations in the thousand years and in the new earth is abundantly clear from the various references to them in the Unveiling. It is the essence of Christ’s reign that He shall have authority over the nations and that He shall share this with the overcomers in Israel (Rev.2:26, 12:5). Even in the last eon, when priesthood is no more, the glory and honor of the nations will be carried into the holy city, new Jerusalem (Rev.21:26). As they will not war among themselves and will be under the iron club of the great King, there is no reason why the nations which exist when the kingdom is set up should not continue throughout its course, and thus have eonian life or chastening until the consummation.

HEEDING THE CONTEXT

The judgment of the nations as set forth by our Lord in Matthew has long been recognized as such by some, especially in contrast to the judgment of the individual at the great white throne. But even here there have been details which were not satisfactory. Gradually the light has been increasing. The final flash which illuminated the whole to full satisfaction came through the study of figures of speech. The literal interpretation grew more and more untenable. Once it became apparent that the *nations* are intended, not only by the sheep and the kids, but also by those who take part in the judgment, and not individuals, all of the difficulties vanished except that of making it clear to others.

Those who have grown up with the thought that this passage is the general judgment and gives us the destiny of the two classes into which all mankind is divided—the wicked and the just—have evidently never taken the context to heart, for only a small fraction of them have ever visited anyone in jail, or base their hopes upon the giving of

food, drink or clothing. Most of my readers will know how utterly contrary this is to the true evangel of God's grace. We therefore urge them with all kindness to *consider the context*. See how impossible it is to base eonian life for individuals on the action here spoken of. It is in conflict with the kingdom evangel, which demands repentance. It militates against the evangel for today, which excludes works. It is diametrically opposed to God's dealings with His creatures to give eonian life to anyone apart from Christ and His sacrifice.

Those who have already recognized that this judgment is not concerned with sinners as a whole, or with the general conduct of mankind, but is based only on contacts with the Lord's brethren, will find that this gives only partial relief. Even if this is confined to the time of the end, for which there is no adequate evidence, there still remains the impossibility of setting the eonian destiny of anyone on such grounds.

There was a time when I limited the action here to the time of the end. Destiny in the kingdom for each *nation*, it seemed to me, depended upon their attitude to Israel *at that time*. But this has its difficulties. The *judgment* is at that time, indeed, but the action being judged is not thus limited. It seems better to include the whole "times of the Gentiles" or eras of the nations, for at the time of the end the nations are angered, without exception (Rev.11:18) and *all* of them are in the toils of Babylon (Rev.14:8), and *all nations* will hate the disciples of Christ (Matt.24:9). There would be few sheep to stand at His right hand in that case. It seems far more just to deal with the nations according to *all* of their contacts with Israel, for this has varied greatly from time to time.

Now, however, that I see in this judgment the complete squaring of accounts between the nations and Israel, introductory to the setting up of the kingdom, all seems

supremely satisfactory. This is just what we should expect at the end of Matthew's account. It agrees with all the facts, for the Lord's brethren have been scattered among all nations and have been *politically* in distress most of the time, even when they managed to gain a good livelihood or amass wealth. And when the Son of Mankind sits on the *throne* of His glory, with *nations* before Him, what else can it be but the long delayed adjudication between Israel and the nations? Each must be assigned its place according to some standard, and the one given here is in full accord with the righteousness on which the kingdom is founded.

We submit this interpretation to the earnest and prayerful consideration of the saints, well aware that it may not immediately commend itself to all at first glance. As God has been patient with our tardy advance in this matter, so we hope to bear with all who cannot quickly loose themselves from conceptions long held dear. It is startling, at first, and seems incredible, that those well worn phrases, "eternal life" and "everlasting punishment" should have been so universally misapplied to saint and sinner, when the context so clearly contradicts it. But how much added light is thrown upon the page of prophecy when we see that the *nations* will be judged according as they have treated God's nation, and they, not individuals, will receive eonian chastening and eonian life.

A. E. Knoch

"THE OUTCOME OF INFINITE GRACE"

We have prepared a new edition of "The Outcome of Infinite Grace," by Loyal Hurley. This publication, written in a popular style, with Scripture quotations from the Authorized Version, serves as a helpful introduction to the great truth that God is the Saviour of all mankind. "In the end, God will be 'All in all,' 'for out of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things.'" Included as well are two writings by Joseph E. Kirk, "The *Good News Gospel*," and "The Eons of the Bible with Concordance" (72 pages, plus cover; \$3.50; \$1.50 shipping; CA residents add sales tax).

IT IS YAHWEH'S

THE PLACE given to Satan in the book of Job is intensely interesting. The Hebrew word "satan" means "adversary" as rendered in the Concordant Version. He is the one who is adverse to God, who opposes that which would glorify God. However, if we carefully follow the revelations of this book it becomes obvious to us that this work of opposition is by no means a threat to either divine authority or responsibility.

The direct references to this personage in the first two chapters show us his subordinate position before Yahweh. He comes in the midst of "the sons of Elohim" on a certain day, presumably set by God. Yahweh Himself initiates the procedure by asking the Adversary to make a report of his activities (Job 1:7). It is Yahweh as well Who brings up the subject of Job's service and upright standing before Him. The power to afflict Job lies in Yahweh's hands alone; it would never have happened apart from His permission (1:11). He sets a certain limit on the Adversary (1:12), and though He reverses it later, it is reversed by His authority alone, as is the imposing of a new limitation in 2:6.

The only question that could remain is whether or not Satan manipulated Yahweh by the cunning way in which he sought this permission and its expansion. Few would want to claim that the Adversary gained the upper hand here. But if not, we must be ready to find what the book of Job says about God's overall purpose for His glory, against the background of Satan's adversity toward Him. Why did Yahweh agree to the Adversary's requests?

We must be prepared to face the possibility that God wanted this testing of Job, that He had His own purpose for Job's sorrows and pains, that this purpose was for Job's eventual good, and that it was ultimately for the glory of God. We must face this possibility boldly and honestly, so that we see that it is more than a possibility. It is a fact.

Throughout the long debate between Job and his associates, and in the speeches of Elihu, there is no direct reference to the Adversary. Job himself centers on Eloah as the cause of his sufferings, and the others seek to redirect the focus away from God and bring it squarely upon Job as a sinner. Satan is mostly ignored.

The most significant *indirect* reference to him occurs in 26:13 where Job says of God: "His hand travailed with the fugitive serpent." And this clearly brings praise to God as a passionate Creator and only disdain for the Adversary.

It is not until chapter 41 that attention is drawn again to Satan, and even here it is indirect. We see him only as he is pictured by a powerful and fearful animal called in Hebrew, *leviathan*, and in Greek, *dragon*. Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu mostly ignore the Adversary, but Yahweh concludes his words to Job with a lengthy discourse that, as a reference to the Adversary, puts this opposer in his proper place.

LEVIATHAN, DRAGON

The Hebrew word transliterated *leviathan* and rendered *dragon* in the Septuagint is associated with "fugitive serpent" and sea-monster in Isaiah 27:1, where all these terms speak of the Adversary: "In that day, Yahweh shall visit with His sword, hard, great and steadfast, upon the *dragon*, the fugitive serpent, even upon the *dragon*, the tortuous serpent, and He will kill the monster which is in the sea." This, in turn, points us to Revelation 12:3-13:4 and 20:1,2.

Here in Job 41 Yahweh refers to a crocodile-like creature with which Job must have been familiar. But it is not only its name that suggests there is an allusion to the Adversary in Yahweh's words. The character and characteristics of this creature parallel those of Satan.

The behemoth avoids contact with humanity, but as for the leviathan, the human is wise to avoid it. Yahweh questions Job about fishing for it (41:1,2). It is not simply that Job is not able¹ to capture the dragon, but that it would also be foolish to attempt it.

Something more than a common beast of the land and sea is indicated by Yahweh's words. It is an uncompromising creature that successfully refuses any submission with tender words in covenant with humanity (3,4). It will contribute nothing to human pleasure or profit (5,6). Job could not deal with it or have any hope of getting the better of it (7-9). Its cruelty debars approach and blocks any thought of bringing it under human control (10a).

In any confrontation between it and a human, the human is helpless. On the other hand, the dragon cannot station himself before Yahweh in confrontation for his gain (41:10b,11a). The Adversary did station himself in Yahweh's presence (1:6), but he only appeared to confront Him with a devious challenge. The consummation of Job's experiences will make it manifest that nothing occurred apart from God's purpose and intention.

Whatever is under the heavens, whether Job or Elihu or you or me, whether reptile or Adversary, *it is God's!* (Job 41:11b.)

This is that climax in the book of Job which leads to Job's exclamation of praise to God, "I know that You can

1. The word "can" is in lightface type, indicating that it is added for English idiom; it is agreeable with the context, but a lightface "do" or "would" might serve as well.

Concordant Version of Job

JOB 41:1-34

- 41 Can you 'draw out the dragon[◇] 'with a fishhook,
+Or 'hold down his tongue 'with a line?
- 2 Can you 'place a rush rope in his nose,
+Or 'pierce his jawbone 'with a gaff?
- 3 Would he 'make 'many supplications to you,
#Or 'speak to you with tender words?
- 4 Would he 'contract a covenant with you
That you may take him 'as a servant for the eon?
- 5 Can you 'sport 'with him as with a bird,
+Or 'tie him up for your maidens?
- 6 Would partners 'bargain over him
That they may divide him up ^{bi}among traffickers?
- 7 Can you 'fill his skin 'with barbs
+Or his head 'with the fishing spear?
- 8 Place your palm on him;
Remember the battle;
you would certainly not 'do it 'again!
- 9 Behold, one's[◇] hope is proved a lie;
Even[◇] 'at the sight of him one is 'hurled down.
- 10 Is[◇] he not too cruel that one may rouse him?
#Who +then is he who can 'station himself before Me?
- 11 #Who can confront Me and 'would 'fare well~?
Whatever is under the entire heavens, it is Mine.
- 12 I shall not 'keep silence about his 'constitution
+Or the matter of his grand mastery
that is ~without~ appraisal.

41:1 dragon: or, leviathan, cf Jb 3:8; Is 27:1.

41:9 one's: lit., his.

41:9,10 Even . . . Is: Hb interrogative sign transposed from v.9b to v.10a.

41:11 7-- would 'fare well: Hb I would repay.

41:12 --- without: Hb and grace of his.

do all things, and no plan of Yours can be thwarted With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, but now my eye sees You” (Job 42:2,5).

All that is said here reflects on God. In speaking of leviathan Yahweh directs attention to Himself as the Creator of this fierce power of adversity, and to His responsibility for such a creature. The words concern the dragon, but Job comes to *see* Yahweh.

THE DRAGON’S CONSTITUTION

Yahweh, Who travailed in making the fugitive serpent, knows all about his constitution and the greatness of his mastery (41:12). God has made him in such a way that he is impervious to human control or even influence (13-17). One after another Yahweh lists features of this reptile that picture those of Satan. Its closed eyes (“doors of his face”) and its dreadful teeth (v.14) imply that we cannot know what he perceives or hope to approach him unscathed. But God, Who is over the Adversary both knows and controls him.

Like the coverings of the dragon’s body (15-17), the Adversary is strongly shielded from us. The metaphors of the irradiating light of dawn (18), torches and fire (19), smoke and steam (20), and flaming embers and blaze (21) express the dangers of intense pain that the leviathan, whether reptile or spirit being, represents. In neck and body flaps and heart the dragon is immovable (22-24).

As human subjectors shrink back before the reptile, so also invisible subjectors recede when the Adversary breaks forth (25). This occurred in his operations toward Job, where no power or authority interfered. But Job does not need to despair because *whatever* is under the heavens, it belongs to God. Job 41:11 continues to dominate and shape every thought of this chapter.

Yet Yahweh still presses His point, more and more directed concerning the Adversary, less and less concerning a

- 13 **“Who has rolled back his surface garment?**
“Who can ‘enter ‘through his double ~coat-of-armor~?
 14 **“Who has opened the doors^o of his face?**
All around his teeth is dread.
 15 His ~body~ is made of **channels of shields,**
Closed^l by a constricting seal.
 16 **One ‘to the other, they are so ‘close**
+That the wind cannot ‘enter between them.
 17 **They are ‘clung together each ‘to its fellow;**
They ‘seize each other and cannot be ‘parted.
 18 **His sneezings ‘make the light ‘irradiate,**
And his eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn.
 19 **Flaming torches ‘go out from his mouth;**
Darts of fire ‘escape forth.
 20 **Out from his snorting nostrils smoke goes ‘forth**
As from a steaming cauldron ‘or burning rushes.
 21 **His soul ^msets embers ‘aflake,**
And a blaze goes ‘forth from his mouth.
 22 **In his neck ‘lodges strength,**
And shock ‘romps before him.
 23 **The flaps of his flesh cling together,**
Solidly^l set upon him; it is ‘immovable.
 24 **His heart is solidly^l set like stone,**
+Even solidly^l set like the “lower grindstone.
 25 **/At his lifting up, the subjectors ‘shrink back;**
/At his breaking forth, they ‘recede.
 26 **Though the sword overtakes^l him, it does not ‘avail,**
As also the spear, the dagger and the short arrow.
 27 **He ‘reckons iron ‘as crushed straw,**
Bronze ‘as rotten wood.
 28 **The son of the bow^o cannot ‘make him run ‘away;**
Sling stones are turned to stubble for him.

41:13 --- coat-of-armor: Hb bridle.

41:14 doors: dual in Hb.

41:15 --- body: Hb pride.

41:28 son of the bow: i.e., the arrow.

reptilian beast. No human weapon can faze him (26-29). His own weapons explode with destruction (30-32).

“There is no one on the soil comparable to him who was made to be without dismay. He stares down on every haughty creature; he is king over every strutting beast” (Job 41:33,34). Such is the dragon. And with this, Yahweh concludes His speech.

WHO IS OVER WHOM?

What shall we say of this conclusion? Yahweh has not been delivering a lesson in zoology, or before that in physics and astronomy. He has been speaking of His wisdom and power, not simply as objective facts but as subjective realities that are involved in Job’s world and experience, and so reflected in every human life.

What Yahweh has been saying has critical application to Job’s sufferings and sorrows. God knows all things. God has made all things. The dragon may be greater than all creatures on the soil, but whatever is under the heavens, it is Yahweh’s. To say that the dragon is incomparable to any other creature, operating without dismay, intimidating the haughty, and exercising authority over every strutting beast is dreadful praise, if that is all Yahweh has been declaring. But to conclude with this blunt description of entrenched power and authority *under the light of God’s own wisdom and power* is masterful. By directing attention to the most daunting and dangerous of creatures, and showing that it belongs to Him and is under Him, Yahweh gives Job assurance and endurance in his woes.

The dragon is great, even as Job’s afflictions are great. But the greatness of these evil things is as nothing compared to the greatness of the Supreme Subjector, Who owns all things and can do all things and Whose plans cannot be thwarted.

D.H.H.

- ²⁹ The **bludgeon** ~is reckoned **’by him~ as stubble,**
And he ’ridicules [’]the **whizzing of the dart.**
³⁰ **His underparts** are **sharp** pieces of **shard;**
He ’strews spike marks **on** the **mud.**
³¹ **He** [’]makes the **shadowy** deep **’boil like a pot;**
He [’]makes the **sea** appear **like** foaming **ointment.**
³² ^{af}**Behind him he** [’]makes his **track** **’resplendent;**
One would **’reckon** the **abyss** to be **greyhaired.**
³³ There **is no** one **on** the **soil** **comparable** to **him,**
’Who was [’]made[’] to be [’]**without dismay.**
³⁴ **He** **’stares** down **’on** **every** **haughty** creature;
He is king over **every** **strutting** **beast.**

41:29 ---- is reckoned ’by him: Hb they are reckoned.

LEVIATHAN

The term *leviathan* is a transliteration of the Hebrew word. There are six occurrences of the word in the Hebrew Scriptures (Job 3:8; 41:1; Psa.74:14; 104:26; Isa.27:1 [two times]). Much uncertainty exists as to the meaning and identity of the indicated animal. The Septuagint translates by the word *dragon*, and we suggest this rendering has sufficient value to warrant our use of it in the CV. The term, besides being used in the Greek translation, has also come in our language to signify an animal monster.

In Isaiah 27:1 we have the dragon explained as a serpent and a monster of the sea. The details of Isaiah, when carefully considered, do not imply a denial of the redoubtable character of the dragon. Rather, Isaiah, while using the term to figure one who is most formidable, indicates a time when Yahweh is to withdraw the dominance He has afforded hitherto to the dragon. To this end He brings His sword near to him who has so far spurned anything that threatened the loss of the mastery of his office.

E. H. Clayton

EON, AS INDEFINITE DURATION

(Part Three)

God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all. (Rom.11:32)

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

God is love. (1 John 4:8)

Question:

RECENTLY I purchased a copy of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT, which you publish. Since I had soon become deeply troubled through reading your version, I asked my pastor concerning it, especially in regard to your renderings “eon” and “eonian,” instead of “[for] ever,” “everlasting,” and “eternal,” as in nearly all other translations.

My pastor was somewhat familiar with your translation; however, he said that it was designed and prepared in order to support universalism, which you teach, and to deny eternal punishment, which is the doctrine of all orthodox Christians. He also stated that all scholars worthy of the name repudiate universalism, as well as the translation “eonian,” instead of “everlasting.” I want you to become aware of some of the things he shared with me, in the hope that it might cause you to reconsider your mistranslations and false teachings.

In support of his claims, my pastor read several passages to me from various books in his library; later on, he furnished me with photocopies as well of the pages of these books from which he had made his citations.

The principal work from which he quoted was FOUR

VIEWS OF HELL, from chapter one, “The Literal View,” by the famous and acclaimed theologian, Dr. John F. Walvoord, of Dallas Theological Seminary. Professor Walvoord states: “The Old Testament revelation . . . clearly suggests that the sufferings of the wicked continue forever While the term ‘forever’ may sometimes be curtailed in duration by its context, such termination is never once mentioned in either the Old or New Testament as relating to the punishment of the wicked. Accordingly, the term continues to mean ‘everlasting’ or ‘unending in its duration’ As Buis points out, the Greek word *aiōnios* in every instance refers to eternity. He writes: ‘*Aiōnios* [eonian, CV] is used in the New Testament sixty-six times: [in fifty-nine of these occurrences] there is no doubt as to its meaning being endless, and seven times of the punishment of the wicked’¹

“In support of the idea that *aiōnios* means ‘endless’ is its consistent placement alongside the duration of the life of the godly [i.e., in Matthew 25:46] in eternity. If the state of the blessed is eternal, as expressed by this word, there is no logical reason for giving limited duration to punishment. As W. R. Inge states, ‘No sound Greek scholar can pretend that *aiōnios* means anything less than eternal’² A confirmation of eternal punishment is found in the use of the Greek word *aiōnios*. A most convincing evidence that eternity usually means ‘without beginning or end’ is found in the definition of this word in Arndt and Gingrich.³ This word is used normally in the New Testament to mean

1. Harry Buis, THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT, p.49 (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1957).

2. W. R. Inge, WHAT IS HELL? p.6 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930).

3. William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, A GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT and Other Early Christian Literature, pp.27,28 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

either 'without beginning or end' or at least 'without end.' None of the passages uses the word in a sense other than infinity in time . . . [Therefore,] if exegesis is the final factor, eternal punishment is the only proper conclusion; taken at its face value, the Bible teaches eternal punishment . . .

"Eternal punishment is partly mental, partly physical, and partly emotional. The fact that confinement in hell is pictured also as a place of total darkness is no doubt contributory to mental anguish . . . The emotional problems of facing eternal punishment are beyond human computation and are certainly a major portion of the judgment that is inflicted on the wicked . . . The frequent mention of fire in connection with eternal punishment supports the conclusion that this is what the Scriptures mean . . . There is sufficient evidence that the fire is literal . . . Punishment is eternal and . . . is painful, both mentally and physically. Scripture never challenges the concept that eternal punishment is by literal fire."⁴

My pastor then read me the graphic illustration of hell contained in one of the sermons of the great eighteenth century theologian Jonathan Edwards: "The wrath of God will be poured out upon the wicked without mixture. Imagine yourself to be cast into a fiery oven . . . and imagine also that your body were to lie there for a quarter of an hour, full of fire, as full within and without as a bright coal fire, all the while full of quick sense: what horror would you feel at the entrance of such a furnace? Oh! then how would your heart sink if you knew that after millions and millions of ages your torment would be no nearer to an end than ever it was. But your torment in hell will be immensely greater than this illustration represents . . .

4. FOUR VIEWS OF HELL, pp.17,18,23,24,26-28; edited by William Crockett (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992).

"You cannot stand before an infuriated tiger even; what then will you do when God rushes against you in all His wrath? It is *everlasting* wrath . . . There will be no end to this exquisite, horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you . . . you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all . . . Your punishment will indeed be infinite."⁵

By publishing and using a Bible which denies the truth of eternal punishment in literal fire, you may deceive yourself for now about the reality of this subject. But, unless you repent, you will spend eternity in the very hellfire which, at present, you audaciously deny. My only question to you is, What will you do with this information, now that I have presented it to you?

Answer:

YOU ASK what I now will do with this information which you have set forth. Earlier you had said that you wanted us to "become aware" of some of these things which your pastor first shared with you, in the hope that it might cause us to reconsider our "mistranslations" and "false teachings."

We have long been familiar with such claims as those found in these works which you cite. We have nearly all these books in our library, besides many more such titles. For many years we have spent much time conscientiously considering the "orthodox" claims concerning both *olam* and *aiōn*, not to mention innumerable arguments of every sort in favor of eternal torment.

So in response to your "only question," which is what will I do with this information which you have presented

5. Sermon II, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," THE WORKS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS, vol. ii, pp.7-12 (London: Ball, Arnold, and Co., 1840).

to me, my answer is that I will critique certain points of it, briefly, in the text which follows.

WELL-VERSED OBJECTIVITY

I would like to suggest at the outset that the arbiter of truth is not Christian “orthodoxy,” which only speaks of the commonly accepted view, or customary, prevalent opinion. The majority is often wrong, even among those of similar conservative views of Scripture. Indeed, especially in a day of widespread apostasy such as the present, to appeal to majority opinion is not a sign of strength but of weakness.

Similarly, the fact that certain professors or preachers may be “famous” and “acclaimed,” or, in some respect, “great,” is no indication of the correctness of their opinions. Similar commendations may be made concerning certain of their opponents—with no more benefit to be gained by so doing. The apostle Paul says ideally, “Let *no one* be deluding himself. If anyone among you is presuming to be wise in this eon, let him become stupid, that he may be becoming wise, for the wisdom of this world is stupidity with God. For it is written, ‘He is clutching the wise in their craftiness.’ And again, The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. So that, let *no one* be boasting in men . . .” (1 Cor.3:18-21a).

We should not act prematurely, much less rashly, in forming our opinions. Ideally the proverb declares, “He who replies with speech ere he has heard, it is folly to him and confounding” (Prov.18:13). And, “The first pleader seems right in his contention, until his associate comes and investigates him” (Prov.18:17). To apply these aphorisms, then, to our subject at hand, my advice to you is for you to learn a great deal more about this disputed subject than you presently know, before claiming which side is correct. It is important that you become familiar not only

with the arguments of the proponents of the side which, at first, appears to be correct, but for you to become well-versed as well in the arguments of the proponents of the side which initially seems to be mistaken.

You state that unless I repent (of my “universalism”), I will spend eternity in the very hellfire which, at present, I “audaciously” deny. I must confess that according to the first definition of “audacity,” which is, “fearlessly daring; bold,” I have not always been thus, having sometimes failed to speak out when I should. However, I hope I have not often been guilty of walking according to the second definition of this word, which is, “arrogantly insolent; impudent.” Even if I do not always succeed, I seek to write in an irenic spirit and in a gracious manner. In any case, it is not necessarily wrong to reject any opinion, including a majority opinion, simply because any certain man or group of men hold that opinion to be true.

I am confident that in time you will see for yourself that it would be quite impossible for me to “spend eternity” in “hellfire.” I say this because Christ died for my sins (1 Cor. 15:3), and because I was conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10). Furthermore, before the disruption of the world, God chose me in Christ to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating me beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus. This was all in accord with the delight of His will for the laud of the glory of His grace (*cf* Eph.1:3-6).

In due time, God called me through His *grace*, to unveil His Son in me (*cp* Gal.1:15,16). After the pattern of Saul of Tarsus, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ overwhelmed my calumny, outrage, and unbelief (*cf* 1 Tim.1:12-16). As Saul, who is also Paul, declares of God, “Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also” (Rom.8:30).

I am assured that whenever Christ, my Life, should be manifested, then I also shall be manifested together with Him in glory (Col.3:4). This is because, even though I still sometimes sin quite badly, according to the blessings of the evangel, “where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Rom.5:20b,21).

PORTENTOUS CLAIMS

The arguments which you have conveyed against the Concordant Version and the teaching of the Concordant ministry together with those in favor of eternal burnings, may be summed up thus, under five headings:

(1.) A pastor declares that the Concordant Version “was designed and prepared in order to support universalism . . . and to deny eternal punishment.” This same pastor also states that all scholars worthy of the name repudiate universalism, even as the translation “eonian,” instead of “everlasting.” Similarly, a theologian claims that “No sound Greek scholar can pretend that *aiōnios* means anything less than eternal.”

It simply is not true that the Concordant Version was designed and prepared in order to support universalism and to deny eternal punishment. Such a charge is as false and unjust as it would be for us to claim that the Authorized Version and its many imitators were designed and prepared in order to support eternal torment and to deny the salvation of all mankind. All honorable translators seek to be faithful to the Word of God according to the light given to them, and do not willfully seek to support any certain disputed teaching.

Likewise, it is far from the truth to say that none who are worthy scholars and learned in Oriental languages “can pretend that *aiōnios* means anything less than eter-

nal.” Nor do all such ones, by any means, repudiate either universalism or the translation “eonian,” instead of “everlasting.” The simple fact is that universalism, though likely always a minority view, has at times been a sizable minority view. Many accomplished scholars and recognized theologians have affirmed the teaching.⁶

(2.) A lurid phantasm of the supposed nature of hell is presented, from the pen of Jonathan Edwards.

This fanciful piece of speculation is no proof whatever of the position taken. Such terror-inspiring sensationalism has no place in a sober consideration of revealed truth.

(3.) After appeal to Buis, then Inge, and to a lexicon, Arndt and Gingrich, Walvoord then claims that Scripture always uses *aiōnios* in the sense of “infinity in time,” from which he concludes that “if exegesis [i.e., objective, scientific interpretation] is the final factor, eternal punishment is the only proper conclusion.”

In reply to this we need only say that Buis and Inge simply make claims, and that the Arndt and Gingrich lexicon (1974; after Thayer, 1886) merely gives the three definitions which it perceives for *aiōnios*, that of (1) without beginning; (2) without end; and (3) without beginning or end. None of this constitutes proof of the position affirmed. Further, Walvoord’s claim that valid exegesis requires the conclusion that eternal punishment is the teaching of Scripture, is merely asserted, not proved.

6. See such works as our reprints: RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS (Andrew Jukes, 1891); CHRIST TRIUMPHANT (Thomas Allin, 1890); EON—EONIAN (John Wesley Hanson, 1875); SALVATOR MUNDI (Samuel Cox, 1879); THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF UNIVERSALISM (Hosea Ballou, 2nd, 1829); THE MODERN HISTORY OF UNIVERSALISM (Thomas Whittemore, 1830); also see: Thomas B. Thayer, THEOLOGY OF UNIVERSALISM (Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1891); F. W. Farrar, ETERNAL HOPE (London: Macmillan & Co., 1892); F. W. Farrar, MERCY AND JUDGMENT (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1881).

(4.) Walvoord appeals to Matthew 25:46 (“And these shall be coming away into chastening eonian, yet the just into life eonian,” CV), declaring that if the state of the blessed is eternal, as expressed by this word, there is no logical reason for giving limited duration to punishment.

This specious argument goes back at least to Augustine. As has long ago been said, however, due to its unreasonableness, it ought never be heard again. From the fact that the life of the just nations and the chastening of the unjust nations are herein described by the same adjective, descriptive of duration, it does not follow that the latter group of nations, therefore, will be subjected to endless punishment. The argument assumes what is at issue by presuming that the life of the just, here, is termed an endless life. Simply because, on certain grounds, the life of those persons comprising the just nations will prove to be endless, it does not follow that the blessing of life afforded *here* to any such nations is therefore that of endless duration. It is as unreasonable to assume that *eonian* life doubtlessly signifies endless life as it would be to claim that youthful life actually signifies aged life, simply because our presuppositions and predilections may dictate such a conclusion.

Professor Tayler Lewis (who was not a universalist) in commenting on what he calls the *Olamic* or *Æonian* words of the Scripture, affirms that “they denote . . . the world [i.e., in the sense of duration] in *time*, or as a time-existence” (i.e., the “life” of the object thus described or delineated). He insists that these words are, in themselves, wholly indefinite (even though he conceives that, in Matthew 25:46, the scene is one of “finality”). Hence, concerning *aiōnios*, he states: “It would be more in accordance with the plainest etymological usage to give it simply the sense of *olamic* or *æonic*, or to regard it as denoting, like the Jewish *olam habba*, the world [i.e., duration] to come.

“These shall go away into the punishment [the restraint, imprisonment] of the world to come, and these into the life of the world to come.’ *That is all we can etymologically or exegetically make of the word in this passage.* And so is it ever in the Old Syriac Version [i.e., the Peshito], where the one [i.e., uniform] rendering is still more unmistakably clear: ‘These shall go away to the pain of the *olam*, and these to the life of the *olam*’—the world to come.’”⁷

(5.) Walvoord intimates that the ordinary meaning of *olam* and *aiōn* is that of endlessness (though this “may sometimes be curtailed in duration by its context”; otherwise, these words continue to mean “unending in its duration”).

It is simply contrary to historical fact to suggest that the essence of these time expressions is that of endless duration. As Thomas De Quincey, the nineteenth century essayist and literary critic states: “All this speculation, first and last, is pure nonsense. *Aiōnios* does not mean ‘eternal,’ neither does it mean of limited duration . . . What is an *aiōn*? The *duration or cycle of existence* which belongs to any object, not individually of itself, but universally, in right of its genius [i.e., inherent nature] . . . The *exact amount of the duration expressed by an aiōn* depends altogether upon the particular subject which yields the *aiōn*.”⁸

The British Congregational minister and preacher, G. Campbell Morgan, makes the following remarkable declaration concerning *olam/aiōn*: “Let me say to Bible students that we must be very careful how we use the word ‘eternity.’ We have fallen into great error in our constant use of that word. *There is no word in the whole Book of*

7. Tayler Lewis, *LANGE’S COMMENTARY*, vol.5, Ecclesiastes, pp.45,48 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, reprint 1969).

8. Thomas De Quincey, *THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS*, pp.143-165; cited in *EON-EONIAN* (John Wesley Hanson, 1875).

God corresponding with our ‘eternal,’ which, as commonly used among us, means absolutely without end”⁹

Likewise, the Presbyterian Bible scholar, M. R. Vincent, in his extensive note on *aiōn/aiōnios* states: “Neither the noun nor the adjective, in themselves, carry the sense of *endless* or *everlasting*.”¹⁰

Walvoord’s mistaken notion on this very issue, however, comes to the heart of the question whether the Concordant Version is justified in its rendering “eon.” After all, not only Walvoord, Buis, and Inge, but all intelligent students acknowledge that *olam* and *aiōn* sometimes refer to limited duration. Here is my point: The supposed special reference or usage of a word is not the province of the translator but of the interpreter. Since these authors themselves plainly indicate that the usage of a word is a matter of interpretation, it follows (1) that it is not a matter of translation, and (2) that it is wrong for any *translation* effectually to decide that which must necessarily remain a matter of interpretation concerning these words in question. Therefore, *olam* and *aiōn* should never be *translated* by the thought of “endlessness,” but only by that of indefinite duration (as in the anglicized *transliteration* “eon” which appears in the Concordant Version).

In this response to your “deeply troubled” encounter with the Concordant Version, I have principally sought not to prove my position, but to open a door to its consideration; a door of further inquiry, with a view toward your attaining an awareness of the grace of God in truth, even as of the purpose of the *eons*, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Eph.3:11). May our God and Father be pleased to use this writing unto such an end. J.R.C.

9. G. Campbell Morgan, *GOD’S METHODS WITH MAN*, p.185; (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1898).

10. M. R. Vincent, *WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT*, vol.2, pp.950-952 (Mc Lean Virginia: MacDonald Publishing Co., n.d.).

Notes on 1 Samuel

THE UNACHIEVABLE REWARD

(1 Samuel 17:23-30)

AT his father’s request David came to the vale of Elah where Israel gathered against the Philistines for battle. He brought provision for his brothers and asked about their welfare.

WHAT SHALL BE DONE?

²³ + **While he** was speaking with them, + behold, the champion was coming up from the arrays of the Philistines; his name was Goliath the Philistine of Gath. + He spoke those ^{as}usual words, and David heard them. ²⁴ + All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, + fled before him and were exceedingly fearful.

²⁵ + The men of Israel said to themselves, Have you seen that man coming up? Surely to challenge Israel is he coming up. And it will occur to the man who smites him that the king shall enrich him with great riches; + he shall give to him his daughter, and he shall make his father’s house free in Israel. ²⁶ + Now David asked the men who stood near him, saying, What shall be done for the man who smites this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he challenges the arrays of the living Elohim? ²⁷ + Then the soldiers told him in accord with this promise, declaring, Thus shall it be done for the man who shall smite him.

While speaking with his brothers, David heard Goliath’s challenge and saw the great fear of the men of Israel, who also said:

“And it shall occur to the man that smites him [Goliath] that the king will enrich him with great riches; he shall give to him his daughter, and he shall make his father’s house free in Israel” (vv.25,26). This *promise* (v.27), is of undesignated origin. But the following events are suggestive that Saul may have made a formal announcement that a deliverer rising from the ranks would be rewarded in this manner. Probably such an announcement included that the hero for Israel should be brought to the king, and that he would wear the king’s armor and use the king’s sword, as mentioned later in verse 39. Notice that when the men speak of this great reward, it is only in relation to overcoming a great foe, and it suggests that the deliverer would be worthy of wealth, position and privilege. Any thought of God’s glory is absent from the soldiers’ discussion.

But when David asks the same question, the focus is on God. “What shall be done for the man who . . . *takes away the reproach from Israel*? For who is this *uncircumcised* Philistine that *he challenges the arrays of the living Elohim*?” (vv.26,27). Here again with the words *reproach* and *uncircumcised* we are taken back to Gilgal and reminded of the inability of the flesh. Saul and the arrays of Israel could not achieve the victory. The flesh can never achieve the works of God, and so the thought of obtaining life by obeying the law is just an illusive pipe dream for the flesh.

David, through faith and the enablement of God, accomplished the great feat of slaying Goliath, but, as he owned, “Yahweh’s is the battle” (v.47). But did David receive the promise as the men said? The king did not enrich him with great riches. Instead he hunted and pursued him throughout the country, forcing David to live in caves and hideouts in the wilderness, where he even had difficulty finding his daily food. Saul promised David the hand of his daughter Merab in marriage, yet he gave her to Adriel instead (18:19). Then later he did give Michal to David,

but only with the intent that she would be David’s downfall (18:20,21). Did Saul make the house of Jesse free in Israel? David moved his family out of Israel into the land of Moab so that they would be safe from Saul (1 Sam. 22:3,4). The flesh offers no reward to faith. It struggles against it, knowing that the presence of faith is the harbinger of the end of the flesh.

But what does God give to the one who conquers this great foe? In time, David became king. He was not just an *in-law* of the royal family. He was not second to Jonathan and Saul’s other sons. He was king. The wealth of Israel was at his disposal. His family was not just free from national taxes, they were part of the royal family. God’s gracious workings far surpass even that of which the flesh dreams (*cf* Eph.3:20).

REJECTION

²⁸ +When his ‘eldest brother, Eliab, ‘heard ⁱ him speaking- to the men, + Eliab’s anger grew ‘hot ‘against David, and he ‘said, Why is this that you have come down? And ^{on}with ^awhom did you let the little flock go, ‘those sheep in the wilderness? I know ‘your arrogance and ‘the evil of your heart, for you have come down that you may ^{see}watch- the battle. ²⁹ + David ^{lsa}replied, What have I done now? Was it not just a ^{sp}question? ³⁰ +Then he turned ‘around from beside him > toward another and ^{lsa}asked ^{as}this ^{sp}question. +When the ^{wi}soldiers ‘replied to him, their word was like the first word.

Eliab becomes the voice of Israel. Hearing David speak with the men, he explodes with anger. We can suppose that Eliab wanted to deliver Israel, but, like everyone else, he was frozen with fear. And so, feeling that he could not accomplish what needed to be done, he transferred his feelings of inadequacy and guilt to David. “And with whom [literally, “*on any?*”] did you let the little flock go, those sheep in

the wilderness?" (v.28). "Did you even tell anyone to take care of your responsibilities before you ran off to watch the battle? You arrogant and evil-hearted delinquent!"

Poor Eliab. He was so frustrated by his inability to do what needed to be done, and he was so pre-occupied with his need to justify himself, that the thought seems never to have entered his head—"my brother is here. It must be my father's love for me that has sent him." The Jews of Christ's day were the same. They were frustrated trying to keep a law that none could keep. They were pre-occupied with self-justification. Their response to the possibility that the Messiah had finally come was not to praise God for sending Him, but to criticize Him, and, finally, in their jealousy, kill Him. Their only perception of God was derived from the requirements of the letter of the law. They were ignorant of God's love for them. Such an attitude still, today, plagues those concerned to please God by fulfilling some law; they do not grasp the magnitude of His love.

J. Philip Scranton

NEW CVOT PUBLICATION:
PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES, SONG OF SONGS

The publication of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) is an ongoing project endeavoring to provide, in a consistent English translation, a closer reflection of the grammar, syntax and wording of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts than can be found in other current versions.

Boldface type is used for words or parts of words having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. Lightface type is used for words or parts of words which have been added to clarify the meaning of the respective Hebrew term. Superior signs and letters give information concerning grammar, more literal distinctions of the Hebrew terminology, and readings based on manuscripts other than the Masoretic Text. These are identified in the Abbreviation Key.

This new CVOT fascicle, consisting of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs, is printed in 8½" x 11" format; 101 pages, perfect bound, heavy cover (\$7.00; add \$1.50 shipping).

He Shall Save His People

COMING WITH POWER AND MUCH GLORY

ALL ALONG in this study of Matthew we have tried to keep in mind the defining presentation of Jesus given in 1:21. He will save His people from their sins. It has not been easy to see this work of salvation in process. From the very beginning of His ministry, we find Jesus warning of fearful judgment ahead; and we find the nation itself moving farther and farther away from salvation.

We come now to the Lord's discourse on the Mount of Olives recorded in Matthew 24 and 25. And here the theme of future judgment and loss seems to dominate so strongly that special effort is needed to avoid losing sight of the significance of Jesus as the Saviour. The fundamental issue of final glory is easily neglected or relegated to secondary and highly qualified positions, as it has indeed been in the minds of many.

POWER AND GLORY

The Son of Mankind will come with power and much glory (Matt.24:30; 25:31). Because of the emphasis on divine anger and judgment in Matthew 24 and 25, we are apt to overlook the fact that these works of power are also and unreservedly operations of "much glory" and are fully consistent with the promise of Matthew 1:21. The cutting asunder of the "evil slave" from the "faithful and prudent slave" and the lamentation and gnashing of teeth that result (Matt.24:45-51) are not operations of power that block salvation and glory. Likewise, the throne on which the Son of Mankind sits in judging the nations is termed "the throne

of His glory" (Matt.25:31). This means that every manifestation of divine power coming with the presence of the Lord at the conclusion of this eon (Matt.24:3) will bring honor and praise to God.

Glory is that which impresses a highly favorable opinion or evaluation on us (*cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.124). In powerfully gathering His scattered people together and wisely judging both them and the nations, the Lord will be revealing that which favorably impresses them all concerning Himself. The power is not a display that brings abject terror or futile despair but that, sooner or later, creates approval and appreciation in the hearts of *all* involved.

GRIEVING AND LAMENTATION

The coming of the Lord in power and glory follows times of severe suffering, many battles (24:6,7), pangs (24:8), afflictions, snares, deception, lawlessness (24:9-12), abomination and woe (24:15,19). It is *immediately after* the affliction of those days that the sun is darkened and stars fall from heaven and the *powers of the heavens* are shaken (24:29). "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Mankind in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land shall grieve" (Matt.24:30).

Grief is not contrary to glory when it arises from a sense of deeply felt relief. The grieving of the twelve tribes of Israel is over their past unfaithfulness, but it comes with the overwhelming and joyful recognition of the Saviour. It is the weeping of those rescued out of great danger and insecurity. Here we readily see that the divine power being displayed truly glorifies the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. What an achievement, to end affliction with the joy and peace of willing subjection! (*cf* Psa.110:3).

But Jesus explains that there will be a separation between those out of Israel who have been "faithful and prudent" and those who have not. Concerning the latter, as with the

evil slaves of the parable of Matthew 24:43-51, "There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth" (24:51). The glory of the Son of Mankind involves powerful works that produce not only the weeping of joyful deliverance, but also the lamentation of loss and separation.

The problem is not with the grief of Israel when their Rescuer comes out of Zion. We all rejoice in such an operation of salvation to the praise of God, knowing that it is only in His mercy that these chosen people are faithful and prudent. The problem comes with the lamentation of those who are separated from the joys and privileges of the kingdom. In what way does this work of separation bring glory to the Son of Mankind in the hearts of those who are condemned? We can see how the blessing of the "faithful and prudent" instills a highly favorable opinion of the Lord among the blessed. But the cutting off from these blessings can bring Him glory only insofar as it is just and beneficial. Even then, this glory is dimmed if it is absent in the mind and heart of those who are cut asunder.

If this separation is eternal, and if it is merely an expression of divine vengeance, and has no further purpose for good, then it does not bring God much glory. The use of power for the endless crushing of sinners, or for their extinction, does not instill a highly favorable opinion. In light of the facts that God created them and willed to save them and gave His Son to save them and is fully able to bring them into the realization and enjoyment of these blessings, justly and effectively, there is no way God can be glorified for such a hopeless state of woe.

MATTHEW 25:46

In speaking of these things to come, the Lord directed attention not only to the separation within Israel of the faithful slaves from the evil slaves, but to the separation of the nations in accord with their treatment of Israel during

its times of hardship. This also involves the grief of loss for many. Yet like the lamentation of Matthew 24:51, the condemnation of 25:41 and 46 is subservient to the glory of God. It also must accord with impressing a highly favorable opinion of God on the hearts of all the nations.

If it is true that Jesus spoke in Matthew 25:46 of "everlasting punishment" for certain people, then His coming as the Son of Mankind will not be with that display of divine power that is welded to divine glory. It is as simple as that. When God's glory is manifested there will be no dark spots of mystery in God's use of His power. It is impossible that woe and weeping and chastening be everlasting. Revelations of the power of God's discipline and of His righteous anger against sin, as they surely are, His operations of condemnation cannot last forever or serve as a vain and purposeless retribution. Everything we learn about God in His Word, especially as He is manifested in His Son, contradicts any concept of eternal hell.

When we stop to think about it seriously, we realize that no one can fully escape the charge of being wicked and slothful. It will be the same for the nations at the conclusion of the eon. No nation will have shown perfect kindness and concern toward Israel in their times of trouble. Some are called "the just," but this is a relative term, in comparison with those nations that are placed on the left. Any group of people or any individual who is rewarded by the Lord for faithful service will find this a humbling experience. Their exultation will be in God Who opened up their hearts to compassion, not in themselves, with self-congratulation. How can such a nation be blessed in the face of everlasting woe for those who were judged to be more wicked than themselves?

EVANGEL

When the disciples asked Jesus, "Tell us, when will these

things be? And what is the sign of Thy presence and of the conclusion of the eon?" (Matt.24:3), they were not thinking only of the destruction of the sanctuary spoken of in 24:1. No stone would be left on a stone, but that would also mean that the Lord will be with them once more as the Blessed One (*cf* 23:39). The words Jesus spoke concerning destruction, lamentation and separation are steadfastly connected with words of glory.

The message will not be simply a word of condemnation, but it will be an *evangel* (Matt.24:14). It is good news. Affliction and hate and snares and deception and lawlessness will be in the past. The kingdom will be joyfully welcome, although indeed it involves the necessary separation, for awhile, of the afflictors from the afflicted.

Those who were afflicted and now are to be blessed are "the chosen" (24:22), whose joy in the kingdom could not be sustained in view of hopelessness for those not chosen, as wicked as they may have been. In every way the kingdom will be good news for these delivered people who have suffered so much.

It is a strange twisting of the word *evangel* to bring in a sense of blessing for the chosen in the face of eternal, incapable woe for those not chosen. It is more than twisting! At best it is dark confusion, puffing us up with pride and hardening us with hypocrisy. At worst it robs God of all He claims to be.

DANGEROUS CONTRADICTION

This passage does not speak of anything close to "everlasting punishment." The Greek word *aiōnios* does not mean "everlasting." And the Greek word *kolasis* does not mean "punishment." This translation and its defense by countless believers through the centuries is disgraceful enough. But the dishonor to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ and the confusion introduced into God's written revelation by this

concept is of such shameful proportions that it can only be described as profane, reflecting perfectly that corruption and mortality and sinfulness which we all share.

Nothing in the context of our Lord's discourse to His disciples on the Mount of Olives (Matt.24 and 25) could prepare us for such a conclusion. The severity of divine judgment, made clear throughout the ministry of Jesus, is always purposeful, always with an end of glory in view, always a message of the One Who came to save His people from their sins.

Thankfully, many have seen the utter contradiction of Matthew 25:46, as it is generally rendered in translation, with the spirit and message of the Saviour. Different arguments are used, sometimes with misdirected motives, often with wrong and confusing thinking. But at least there is a recognition that something is drastically wrong with the traditional idea.

We do not endorse every argument presented against the traditional translation of Matthew 25:46, but we commend the spirit that recognizes how dangerous and misleading the common translation is. Countless believers must feel this danger even while accepting and defending the usual rendering. It is wise to be cautious. It is fitting to honor those who have brought truth to us. But we all must judge what is taught in light of the revelation of God given in His Word, and in light of that message of power and glory and love and righteousness concerning His Son which we have accepted, in which we stand, and through which we are being saved (1 Cor.15:1,2).

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

Over and above the issues of translation and word meaning stands the central issue of the evangel itself. Our Lord's message to His disciples on the Mount of Olives was delivered soon before He was given up to crucifixion. What He

said about woe and fire and chastening is firmly associated with His death and resurrection.

Quite apart from the fact that an examination of the Greek word *aionios* in all its occurrences proves it does not mean *everlasting*, stands the fact that Jesus died for sinners. In speaking of their eonian chastening He was steadfastly set on the pathway which would bring life and deliverance to them in God's own time. In His warnings of eonian fire, of sorrows and loss, for individuals and for nations, the Lord had one clear end in view, the glory of His God and Father. God's declarations of good news are themselves the foremost and final argument against the doctrine of everlasting hell.

Those who insist that the Saviour spoke of everlasting fire and everlasting punishment face the task of reconciling this with His agony and sorrow at Golgotha, on the sinner's behalf. They need to show how the power of His resurrection has any significance to those condemned, or even to those who are saved into life while pain and sorrow and death rage on and on and on, without end. When, then, is the victory, and where, then, is the powerful glory of God?

GIVEN UP TO CRUCIFIXION

Matthew 25:46 is followed by these words: "And it occurred, when Jesus finishes all these sayings, He said to His disciples, 'You are aware that after two days the Pass-over is coming, and the Son of Mankind is being given up to be crucified'" (Matt.26:1,2).

The disciples did not seem to grasp this message. Perhaps their minds were concentrating on the twelve thrones Jesus had promised them, and on the glories they would enjoy in the kingdom. Perhaps, as well, their thoughts were centered on the vengeance the Lord would bring on the nations for their mistreatment of Israel. But Jesus, the

Saviour, Who had just told them of joys and judgments to come, was focused on the cross, which would make those joys certain and the judgments beneficial and finally matters of the revelation of God's glory.

Today also, we do not often hear much of the cross when the subject of divine judgment comes up. Like the disciples, we do not seem to grasp the significance, or even the need, of this astounding sacrifice, not for the chosen alone, but for all mankind, and for all creation. For those of Israel who suffer through affliction, the cross brings a blessed ransom (1 Peter 1:18,19). Because of the cross, our sufferings today do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us (Rom.8:18). And even for those who are condemned in judgment, the cross makes that judgment a manifestation of the power and glory of God, so that both the fruit of His righteous judgment may be manifested and the achievements of the Saviour may be realized and enjoyed. Truly He comes with power and much glory.

D.H.H.

FOR FURTHER READING

The following articles from former issues of *Unsearchable Riches* will help supplement the preceding thoughts regarding Matthew 25:41 and 46:

The Economics of Eternal Torment, by A. E. Knoch, vol.38, p.279.

The Adjective Eonian, by A. E. Knoch, vol.57, p.105.

Is Punishment Everlasting? by A. E. Knoch, vol.66, pp.92,137.

The Glory Throne Judgment, by Adlai Loudy, vol.21, p.255.

The Associates of Israel in the Millennium, by A. E. Knoch, vol.33, p.221.

The Judgment of the Nations, by A. E. Knoch, vol.35, p.263 (reprinted in a slightly abridged form in this issue, p.147).

The Divine Judgments of the Nations, by M. Jaegle, vol.52, p.21.

The Judgment of the Nations, by James R. Coram, vol.84, p.29.

Eonian Fire and Judging, by James R. Coram, vol.84, p.79.

"Punishment" or "Chastening"? by A. E. Knoch, vol.22, p.47.

Contradictions, by A. E. Knoch, vol.44, p.18.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 1998
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES are able to make us wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3:15). In saying this, Paul was reminding Timothy of the training he had received from his youth in that portion of God's Word commonly called "The Old Testament." We can learn much from these writings concerning God and His operations. In particular we learn about the need of, and find promises and types of, God's work of salvation. They make us wise for, or prepare us for, the understanding of that evangel concerning God's Son, Christ Jesus.

After His resurrection Jesus appeared to two of His followers who were confused about the crucifixion of their Lord. "And, beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interprets to them, in all the scriptures, that which concerns Himself" (Luke 24:27).

We would like to have heard that grand exposition of the Sacred Scriptures. But perhaps it is just as well that we should search the Scriptures ourselves. What an exciting occupation! To look for what the Scriptures, from Genesis through Malachi say about the ways and character of God, and to relate them to the evangel of our salvation—this is something of consequence!

We are doing a little of this in our magazine. In 1 Samuel 17, for instance, we find a type of Christ and His victory over sin and death in His faithful humbling of Himself to the death of the cross (see p.209). It was a victory, not of the flesh, but of faith in and reliance on God. That reaches its highest expression in Christ Who was faithful even to the death of the cross.

In Job we find much to make us wise for a growing

appreciation, not so much of Christ's victory, but of His *endurance* (cf Heb.12:2). This is considered in the study beginning on page 215.

In the question and answer concerning the name Jesus, we come to see that Joshua who led Israel into the land, becomes a type of Jesus the *Saviour* (p.223).

Noah in the ark, Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah, the sacrifices—it is not difficult to see the parallels with the cross, though the lessons these parallels hold for us are pretty much inexhaustible. The more explicit revelations given in the prophets (e.g., Isaiah 53) and psalms (e.g., Psa.22) open up many important details concerning God's purpose for Israel (see the study on Matthew, starting on page 231), and His love for the world in the giving of His Son (John 3:16).

But what shall we say about such scriptures as Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs, which were recently published in a concordant version? What they have to say about Christ is less obvious than the psalms and prophets. Yet what Proverbs 8 has to say about wisdom offers important insight for an appreciation of Christ Who has become to us "wisdom from God" (1 Cor.1:30). So also the transitoriness of present conditions, described in Ecclesiastes, sharpens our appreciation of the headship of Christ. And in the Song of Songs there are poetic pictures of some of the glories of Christ's love for His people and their love for Him in the kingdom ahead.

To be sure, there are *untraceable riches of Christ* made known in Paul's epistles (see particularly the articles beginning on pages 195 and 203). Nevertheless, an acquaintance with the Sacred Scriptures of old will greatly enhance our appreciation of the transcendent riches of God's grace. We especially would heed the words of Paul, but whenever God speaks, we would eagerly listen and thankfully learn.

D.H.H.

Theological Theories

SATISFACTION, GOVERNMENT, OR CONCILIATION?

THEORIES concerning the value of Christ's death have a special interest for the saints. In glancing through an exchange, I noticed that the theory of *Satisfaction* is taken as the true one, and the *Government* theory is said to be false. I doubt whether the leading exponents of either theory could give an exact definition of their view. In fact, the latter seems to be a reaction due to logical contradictions in the former. I have no doubt that there are elements of truth in both, but the large amount which has been written indicates the impossibility of discovering the truth by using these words, and suggests that there is something amiss in this method of searching God's Word. "Satisfaction," in theology, does not mean that God is satisfied with the sacrifice of Christ, with which we would fully concur, but that it *settles the claims of God against the sinner*. At least so it seems to be used.

To the man of God the question arises, why should there be any "theory" on this subject at all? In science, theories are put forth and tested by the facts of nature. But there is no need for this in revelation, for it is itself the answer to, and explanation of, the questions that arise. However, if any investigation is desirable, we should heed the apostle's admonition, and *cling to the pattern of sound words* which Paul has used in dealing with the subject in hand (2 Tim.1:13). The word "satisfaction" may do to represent a human theory, but *God has not used it to express the divine truth* as to this matter, although it may accord with

some aspects of it. The same is true of the term “governmental.” These are unsound words, which not only fail to lead us fully aright, but actually introduce ideas which are contrary to the truth.

Many years ago, when I heralded what I had been taught was the gospel, I told my listeners that Christ had died in their *room and stead* and “satisfied” the claims of God against them, and exhorted them to believe and accept God’s grace. But when I walked away, my conscience bothered me, for I was not at all sure that I had told the truth. I could not help thinking that, if Christ had died as their *Substitute*, a righteous God must save them even if they did not believe. If the *price* had been *paid*, how could God refuse to deliver the goods? This troubled me so much that I made a prolonged study of all the words involved, in the original Greek. This led me to discard such terms as “room and stead,” “satisfied,” “substitute,” etc., and form a vocabulary of sound words, patterned after Paul.

Such terms are not even applied to this matter in the popular versions, let alone the inspired Original. Since then I have never felt the need of them, although I have written much concerning the value of Christ’s death, in relation to God as well as to man. By means of a concordant vocabulary, and such distinctions as that expressed by *conciliation* and *reconciliation*, the problems that arise from the use of *Satisfaction* and *Government* are avoided, and the truth emerges clearly and conclusively. I now have the fullest liberty in heralding that *God* has conciliated the world to Himself by the death of Christ, whether they believe it or not. And I can go on and pray *them* to be conciliated to Him. If they believe, then there is reconciliation along with salvation and justification. This needs no theory or explanation, and does not demand that the evangelist preach a palpable falsehood.

This should be a lesson to us, for there is a strong ten-

dency to use unscriptural key-words, or to use the inspired terms outside their proper sphere. This was brought to my mind lately by an effort to prove that God *controls* everything, but *predestinates* only the *essentials*. There are only a few passages which deal with God’s activities in relation to *all* things. It is revealed that all is *out of* and *through* and *for* Him (Rom.11:36), and that He is *operating* all (Eph.1:11), and that He is able to *subject* all (Phil.3:21), and that all has its *cohesion* in Him (Col.1:17) and that the Son is *carrying* all (Heb.1:3), but not that God *controls* all. I do not doubt this in the least, but I can find no context to which I can anchor the thought, or test its scope, or fix its limitations. For me it is enough that God is *operating* all according to the counsel of His will. I fear, the term “control” will lead me into theories and theology.

On the other hand, *pre-determination*, or rather, *designating beforehand* is a scriptural thought, which should be considered in its contexts to determine its scope. That it is applied to the *saints* is not in question (Rom.8:29,30; Eph.1:5,11). But it is also applied to the *acts* of evil men, especially at the crucifixion of Christ (Acts 4:28). Paul, in Ephesians, puts us on the right track when he calls attention to the fact that we were designated beforehand according to the *purpose* of the One Who is operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). Pre-determination is only one aspect of God’s larger *purpose*. There is a double harmony in this verse. The pre-determination agrees with the *purpose*, and that agrees with the *counsel of His will*. The latter two are concerned with *all* which is headed up in the Christ, both that in the heavens and that on the earth (v.10).

The same agreement is seen in connection with pre-designation in the conclusion of the first part of Paul’s epistle to the Romans. We are aware that God is working *all* together for the good of those who are loving Him, accord-

ing to the *purpose* that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand . . . (Rom.8:28,29). God cannot confine Himself in His working to the saints alone because they are vitally affected by their environment, sinners as well as saints, things as well as persons. Consequently, while only those who love God are spoken of as designated beforehand for special blessing, this involves a previous *purpose* in regard to all as well as them. And the purpose must have been formed in God's mind before its execution or it would lack the essential sense conveyed by BEFORE-PLACING in the Original.

The divine process, expressed in human terms, but refined by divine usage, is this: God *will*s to reveal Himself. He *takes counsel* with Himself, as there was none other. As a result, He forms a *purpose* or *plans all* to the consummation. *Some* are *chosen* or selected and *designated beforehand* to be associated with Him in the execution of His purpose, and have a special place in His plan. What is true of them is not said of all, and should not be attributed to them. All will be saved, but only those chosen have *eonian* salvation. Only the members of the government in the United States are *elected*. The rest of us are not elected to be private citizens. Neither are the bulk of mankind chosen not to be saints. Saints alone are selected according to His purpose.

God is not a man, so we cannot reason from our standpoint to His. Yet a *wise* man will act more like God than a fool. As I did much of the work myself on the first house I built, I made no detailed plans, thinking I could save myself that effort. But experience taught me the folly of this. So, when I built my last house, I had an architect make detailed drawings from my full sketches. Alterations, while building, are vexatious and expensive. That is doubtless why God's plans show so much detail. Of course it could not all be revealed to us because of our limitations. But some

prophecies of the future are most minute in their descriptions, and these are only samples of God's foreknowledge.

What a marvelous revelation it was for our hearts when we first saw that God had a purpose, or plan! He knows all beforehand because He created all and operates all according to the counsel of His will. This word, *purpose*, is the one which tells us of God's activity in respect to *all* things before they enter the sphere of His *operations*. Nothing is left to chance. And the purpose is based upon *counsel*, not guesswork, and conformed to His *will*. He has a definite object in view, and has planned all beforehand, so that He will be All in all at the consummation. Let us keep this order. God's will leads to counsel, and counsel presents a plan or purpose which is for *all*, and not till then are election and pre-designation introduced for *some*.

Can we be sure that anything is not *essential* (another unscriptural term!) in His plan? In itself, apart from its consequences, which were not apparent at the time, how insignificant was the eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! What a small thing was the cry of the infant Moses! A sleepless night on the part of a king led to the deliverance of Israel and the feast of Purim, which they observe to this day. And so, throughout the record of God's dealings with mankind. God chooses the weak things and that which is not, in order to exclude man's boasting (1 Cor.1:27-29).

To be sure, if we walk in a circle, with no destination, no purpose, *no* step is essential, for we always arrive where we began. But if we have a goal and wish to get somewhere, *every* step is necessary. If we leave one out, we fail to fulfill our destiny. God has a purpose, and every step is essential, if He is to accomplish His will.

And in our daily lives, how delightful to leave *everything* in His hands! Often it is the trivial matter that threatens to disturb our peace and mar our ministry. Just now,

when I wished to write this article, the electricity failed, and I had to do some of it by candlelight. Such a thing is apt to be very upsetting when one is in the throes of composition. But if we take everything from God's hand with thankful hearts, it transforms our lives and encourages our hearts. Then faithless friends, false brethren, subtle opposition, slander, even the fiery arrows that undoubtedly come from the spiritual powers of darkness, though they arrive through some unwary saint, and most of them are concerned with non-essentials, all these may be borne with endurance, nay, with thankful appreciation, when we realize that they ultimately and actually come from His loving hand and heart.

He who knows the number of the stars has also counted the hairs of our heads. No sparrow falls to the ground without His notice. Not only the mighty sun in its magnificent course is guided by His arm, but the tiny glowworm is dependent on Him for its light. When He willed and counselled and purposed to save mankind, He did not send mighty Michael to execute the stupendous task, but sent One Who emptied Himself and came as a tiny Babe, a poor Palestinian Artisan, Who was done to death as a criminal. He is not only the God of the vast universe, but of the various parts of the atom. There also He reveals His power. What says the law? Our Lord taught His disciples "Whosoever should be annulling one of the *least* of these precepts . . ." And again, "till heaven and earth should be passing by, one *iota* or one *serif* may by no means be passing by from the law till all should be occurring" (Matt. 5:18,19). Nothing could be smaller than this. *In God's ways there are no non-essentials*. Such is the God Who speaks to us in His revelation, and such is His way with us in our experience.

Such an experience is the very opposite of fatalism. For the greater part of a year I lived among a people who attrib-

uted everything to *kismet* or Fate. Its effect is quite the reverse of a joyous submission to a God Who is operating all for our welfare. They had not the least idea *why* things were as they are, or that they were co-operating for their benefit. Many were submissive, but depressed, hopeless and despondent, and some were quite sure that fate was against them and always would be. I object to the word *fatalism* on philological grounds. It ought to be fate-ism. But I would not change it, for its effect is *fatal* and deadening. The result of seeing God's hand and heart in even the most trivial of our experiences, in contrast, is a continual solace for the bitterness of our existence and fills the heart with the continual joy and rejoicing, even in the severest strokes of apparent misfortune. It is an elixir of life and happiness.

What a puzzling task it would be to sort things out into essential and otherwise! Theologians could make this an eternal battle-ground, such as the age of responsibility, or just how much must the sinner hear in order to become a Christ-rejector, etc., etc. When I lose something, I almost subconsciously leave it in the hands of God lest it disturb my work, and manage without it meanwhile, if possible. In almost every case it turns up of itself, and I am thankful that its loss did not disturb my spirit, as it ordinarily would have done. Essential! I would say that every step is essential, and if taken out of fellowship with God, it could easily transform my ministry from one of edification to destruction, from one of gracious forbearance, to reviling, or even from close adherence to the form of sound words to the darkening of counsel by abandoning the patterns presented to us in Paul's epistles. *Are any of us essential?*

OUT OF, THROUGH, FOR

Is it not a sorrowful sight to see how the saints, who have believed for their own salvation, refuse to believe in

His glorification? Almost all reject some phase of it. Some refuse to believe that all is *for* Him and denounce the reconciliation of all. Others will not give Him His place as the One *through* Whom all is being operated today. Still others, such as we have been considering, have difficulty in accepting the basic truth of the beginning, that *all* is *out* of Him. May He be gracious to us in our feeble efforts to grasp His glories, and grant that we give to Him the praise that is His throughout the times eonian!

A. E. Knoch

ECCLESIASTES AND PAUL

Undertaking an investigation with a view of finding out what is good for Adam's sons, [the Assembler arrives], by various processes and successive stages, at some positive conclusions, doctrinal and practical. The characteristic doctrinal feature is insistence on the absolute supremacy of God, Who is Creator of both good and evil, and, as the Highest, watches over His creation and leads it through blood and strife to a golden age of peace. The unraveling of the universal plan is not complete; for the totality of things is pronounced incomprehensible.

But the sovereignty of God in nature and human events is the bedrock on which his faith is anchored. The fact that the unfolding of the plan is imperfect casts no reflection on Ecclesiastes. He is shut up within the circle of God's economy of self-unveiling. In the very nature of things his field of expansion and range of vision is confined within the limits of Old Testament revelation, which is restricted to earth, in point of sphere, and to the close of the Messianic age, in point of time. It was reserved for the apostle to the Gentiles to complete the word of God and unravel the length and breadth and height and depth of the Divine purpose. In [Paul's] epistles the vista widens to embrace the heavens, and we are borne onward on the stream of time to the very conclusion of the ages.

V. Gelesnoff

Grace Granted to Paul

“WHEN IT DELIGHTS GOD”

EXULTING in his unique commission for the ecclesia, members of the body of God's dear Son, the apostle Paul joyously relayed the most wonderful revelations confided to mortal man. The call and commission of Paul was, in fact, the delight of God revealing His delight to believers' hearts. Often Paul spoke of this grand occasion on the road to Damascus “when it delights God, Who severs me from my mother's womb and calls me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me . . .” (Gal.1:15).

SEVERED

Following the miraculous restoration of his sight in Damascus, the apostle could not wait to be in the synagogues, heralding Jesus as the Son of God. But here he found himself in a serious predicament. On the one hand he was regarded with deep suspicion by the “Christians” whom he had previously persecuted, but on the other hand, he was now thoroughly detested by those with whom he had waged pitiless eradication of a sect which he had judged to be both sinister and disruptive.

Escaping from the clutches of these who sought his assassination, Paul left the city, being lowered, ignominiously, down the wall in a hamper. In Jerusalem, Caesarea, and also in Tarsus, his presence and his heralding caused utter confusion.

What economy of detail there is in those brief words, “Thereupon, after three years, I came up to Jerusalem to relate my story to Cephas, and I stay with him fifteen

days" (Gal.1:18). Oh! To have been there and listened to their blessed conversations!

"ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED"

Because of their mutual concern for Israel, the two apostles must have given special attention together to God's delight for that nation. Paul would surely have spoken many things that he later recorded in his epistles.

"Yet even if we have known Christ according to the flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer" (2 Cor.5:16). This impression of distance from these matters may seem cold or indifferent, but it is imperative that, within the important context of Paul's words, we should understand that the apostle is stressing the tremendous spiritual transformation of one who is in the new creation—not as of a new birth (regeneration of Israel into the kingdom)—but rather, astoundingly, complete *recreation*! Members of the body of Christ!

Yet the strength of devotion and loyalty to the apostle's nation is clearly demonstrated in Paul's words: "The truth am I telling in Christ, I am not lying, my conscious testifying together with me in holy spirit, that my sorrow is great, and unintermittent pain is in my heart—for I myself wished to be anathema from Christ—for my brethren, my relatives according to the flesh, who are Israelites, whose is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the divine service and the promises; whose are the fathers, and out of whom is the Christ according to the flesh, Who is over all, God be blessed for the eons. Amen" (Rom.9:1-5).

Here we begin to see what it is that delights God in calling out His chosen instruments through His grace. What unbounded love is here! Not anguish or despair! No one could possibly know, better than Paul, the depth of callousness and blindness that had come upon Israel. But also no

one could have appreciated the certainty of God's mercy to Israel more clearly than this one who was severed from his relationship to that nation. "And thus all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26).

With these and all similar compassions, God consoles. Thus the apostle comforts, "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing!" (Phil.4:4). Not a single one of God's creatures will be absent from the reconciled, complete, universal assembly, which Christ Jesus shall present in wonderful adoration, to His God and Father! (1 Cor.15:28).

BE CONCILIATED TO GOD

In 2 Corinthians 5:18-6:2 Paul begins by presenting God's assurance of conciliation, through the sacrifice of His Son, and follows this by beseeching a response of grateful deportment. It becomes a source of pure delight for all who rejoice in the wonder of such grace to thankfully present, in meekness or humility and in all our varying circumstances, lives of resulting, happy transformation.

"So that we, from now on, are acquainted with no one according to the flesh. Yet even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer. So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new! Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation. For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God!' For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:20,21).

A PRISONER OF CHRIST

Imprisonment in Rome was not irksome for the apostle Paul. To the contrary, he recognized that nothing in the whole wide universe could confine, or suppress disclosure of God's purpose for creation, "in accord with His delight."

In fact, he cheerfully perceived that the restriction of his chains enriched the communication and grace of such purpose. When creature participation becomes absolutely impossible, then the illuminating omnipotence of God and the certainty of His glorious consummation imparts serene optimism!

"To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord, in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, through His faith. Wherefore I am requesting you not to be despondent at those of my afflictions for your sake which are your glory" (Eph.3:8-13).

Heed the apostle's recognition of this: "Now I am intending you to know, brethren, that my affairs have come to be for the progress of the evangel, so that my bonds in Christ become apparent in the whole pretorium and to all the rest, and the majority of the brethren, having confidence in the Lord as to my bonds, are more exceedingly daring to speak the word of God fearlessly. Some, indeed, are even heralding Christ because of envy and strife, yet some because of delight, also; these, indeed, of love, having perceived that I am located for the defense of the evangel, yet those

are announcing Christ out of faction, not purely, surmising to arouse affliction in my bonds. What then?—Moreover, seeing that, by every method, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being announced, I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing nevertheless" (Phil.1:12-18).

Thus in Paul's prison letters, which have become known as the Perfection epistles, there are in the first—*addressed to all the saints who are believers in Christ Jesus*—revelations of glorious secrets for the chosen members of His body, and a corresponding urging of appropriate doctrines which clearly exhibit these truths.

Following on this, *a loving communication to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi*, he then beseeches full and happy recognition to be reflected in loving deportment.

In the third—*for the saints and believing brethren in Colosse*—there is confirmation of the wonderful revelations, and also a delicate anxiety that all be on guard against enervating dangers of vain philosophy, human traditions, and empty, repetitive ritual.

SEALED

How can there still be apathetic insouciance when the evangel is most lovingly presented? It remains a frequent source of complete amazement that there could still be indifference, even when the grace of such loving conciliation is presented, and God's "approach present" (Eph.5:2), is stressed through earnest, competent ambassadors.

What mysterious, almost incredible transformation occurs when first we become aware of God's calling? Is it instantaneous? Or is it the culmination of many years of searching and questions? In either case, we may be sure that when it finally happens, *it is at the precise time and in the exact place or circumstance of God's ordering.*

The explanation of this transformation is very simple,

but profound. It rests on the gift of God's spirit. We do not choose it. We certainly cannot lose it. But we might abuse it.

"For is any of humanity acquainted with that which is human except the spirit of humanity which is in it? Thus also, that which is of God no one knows, except the spirit of God. Now we obtained, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may be perceiving that which is being graciously given to us by God, which we are speaking also, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, matching spiritual blessing with spiritual words" (1 Cor.2:11-13). "... you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise . . ." (Eph.1:14).

It is God's delight to save through the stupidity of the heralding those who are believing (1 Cor.1:21). "Now if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace. Now, if it is out of works it is no longer grace, else the work is no longer work" (Rom. 11:6). Those from Israel and the Nations who are chosen of God are the ecclesia, distinguished members of the body of His Son, Christ Jesus! Joint enjoyers! A joint body! Joint partakers! The complex details of how, when, and where we first became aware of God's choice and calling are so diverse, but, together with the apostle, we bow in humble adoration before the wisdom and love of our God and Father, lauding the grace which is lavished on us through His dear Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Economy of expression in God's precious Word is stated above. This must not be misinterpreted as criticism. Indeed, it is the brief, simple word which conveys the mightiest revelation! The most wonderful revelation of God's purpose is expressed in just three simple words, eight letters! Three words! Could anything be more compressed and yet break through and beyond the furthest reaches of this universe! "*All in all!*"

Donald Fielding

Notes on 1 Samuel

THE COMING OF FAITH

(1 Samuel 17:31-40)

SAUL's initial work in leading Israel was the deliverance of Jabesh-gilead from the hands of Nahash, king of Ammon. At stake was the servitude of Jabesh-gilead to Ammon, and the right eyes of all the men. Saul slaughtered a team of oxen and sent the pieces throughout Israel with the threat that any who did not follow him in delivering Jabesh-gilead would have their oxen slaughtered also (1 Sam.11). This is the service of the flesh, responding to threats of loss and physical pain. David's initial work after his anointing was the slaying of Goliath. He also came to those stricken with fear and despair. He came bringing comfort, speaking of God's glory and exuding faith in everything he said and did.

David's arrival and Israel's cowering before Goliath occasioned the delineation of the promised reward to the deliverer (1 Sam.17:25). Then twice more David asked the question, "What shall be done for the man who smites this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel?" (17:26,30). Both times he received the same answer (17:27,30).

David was astonished that no one had stepped forward. Primary in the heart of David was his jealousy for Yahweh. How could everyone sit idly by when the glory of God was being scorned? And if jealousy for God was not enough, was there nothing to be gained for Israel and for the deliverer who would step forward? And perhaps there was also an unasked question in the back of David's mind: "How can the entire arrays of the living God be void of the confidence that their God will deliver them?"

YAHWEH SHALL RESCUE

³¹ + The things which David spoke were ^hheard and ^ttold before Saul; and ⁷they~ ^ttook him ⁷and brought him to Saul^o. ³² + Then David ^ssaid to Saul, The heart of ⁷my lord~ must not ^ffall ^{on}because of him. Your servant, he shall go, and he will fight with ^tthis Philistine. ³³ + Yet Saul ^{sa}replied to David, You are not ^aable to go ^aagainst ^tthis Philistine to fight with him, for you are a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth. ³⁴ + David ^{sa}replied to Saul, Your servant became a shepherdⁱ for his father's ⁱflock. ⁺When ^aa lion ^{or} ^aa bear came and he carried off a flockling from the drove, ³⁵ + then I would go forth after him and smite him and rescue ^{Mit}it^c from his mouth. ⁺If he ^{rose} ^{on}against me, ⁺ I would ^hhold him fast ⁱby his beard and smite him and ⁺put him to death. ³⁶ Your servant has smitten ^{mr}both ^{mr}lion ^{mr}and ⁺bear; ⁺ ^tthis ^{uncircumcised} Philistine will become like one ^fof them, for he has reproached the arrays of the living Elohim. ³⁷ + Then David ^{sa}declared, Yahweh Who rescued me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He^c shall rescue me from the hand of ^tthis Philistine.

⁺ Saul ^{sa}replied to David, Go! And Yahweh, He may ^bbe with you! ³⁸ + Then Saul ^tclothed David in his coats, ⁺ ^gplaced a helmet of bronze on his head and ^tput on ^thim a body armor. ³⁹ + Then David ^tgirded ^this sword ^fon to his coats; ⁺yet he ⁷tired himself~ ⁷while walking~ ^{7du}once ^{or} ^{du}twice^o, for he had not tried them out. ⁺So David ^ssaid to Saul, I am ^uunable to walk in these, for I have not tried them out; and David ^ttook them off. ⁴⁰ + Then he ^ttook his stave in his hand, ⁺ ⁺chose for himself five smooth stones from the wadi and ^tplaced ^tthem in the shepherds' wallet ^wthat he ⁷had ⁺ ⁱfor a pocket. ⁺With his sling in his hand, ⁺ he came ^cclose to the Philistine.

A ROCK OF FAITH

David's questioning soon draws enough attention that he is brought before Saul. David comes before Saul with confidence. He whose heart was set on God (1 Sam.13:14; 16:7) is accused of having an evil heart (17:28), but he comes, and his presence is the comfort that strengthens man's heart (17:32). David is a lone rock of faith towering above a sea of doubt. He offers his service to Saul, but Saul's response is quick, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth" (v.33). Saul can see nothing but flesh. God, His power, His working, His desire for His people, all these things are absent from the thoughts of Saul. Faith is the backbone of courage and of a positive outlook. David possesses faith. Saul does not.

THE FAITH OF CHRIST

Faith is one of the key elements of the coming of Christ. The magnitude of this truth is so great that Paul even speaks of the coming of Christ as "the coming of faith" (Gal.3:23). The faith of Abraham and all those of Hebrews chapter eleven notwithstanding, the faith of Jesus Christ is so overwhelmingly superior and more significant, that His coming may be designated *the coming of faith*. And so the coming of David, with his faith in God, is a type of the coming of Christ "when the full time came," to deliver those whom "the scripture locks up . . . together under sin . . . garrisoned under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed" (Gal.3:19-4:5).

David recounted his experiences as a shepherd to Saul (vv.34-37). The mundane events of daily life are the finger of God, forming our character and teaching us truth. David had learned well as a shepherd the things that Saul failed to learn in searching for the lost donkeys. The rescuing of sheep from lions and bears may have shaken David with

fear at the time, but bolstered him with courage before the giant. He accredited his safety and the saving of sheep to his God, and he was confident now that his God would deliver from the giant also. "Affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation" (Rom.5:3-4).

THE ARMOR

"Saul replied to David, Go! And Yahweh, He may be with you! Then Saul clothed David with his coats, placed a helmet of bronze on his head . . ." (vv.37,38). The spirit of Yahweh had departed from Saul, and his exhortation to David and for Yahweh's presence to be with him seems empty. Then he puts his armor on David. It's hard not to be suspicious that Saul may have been thinking, "If by some outside chance this boy does kill the giant, at least I can say he was wearing *my* armor and using *my* sword." The flesh will claim any shred of merit it can find.

But faith does not march into battle wearing the armor of the flesh. Faith runs into battle (v.48,51) looking confidently to God. And so David's armor is the trappings of a shepherd or pilgrim—the stave, the shepherd's wallet, the sling and the stones. This is how Christ came. He was a Pilgrim, having neither a nest like the birds nor a den like the foxes. The soldiers gambled for His only possession—His cloak. He came armed with the self-sacrificing love of a shepherd. His heart was set on pleasing His Father.

What does God consider armor? Shamgar had an oxgoad (Judges 2:31). Gideon had 300 people with torches and pitchers who could shout (Judges 7). Joshua had trumpets to bring down the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6). Jehoshaphat placed the choir out in front to meet the armies of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir (2 Chron.20). An orphan Jewess had prayer and fasting (Esther 4:3). A shepherd boy with a sling slew the heavily armed veteran warrior Goliath. And,

in the weakness of human flesh, Jesus Christ stripped off the sovereignties and authorities of the spiritual administration which had been ruling since the sin of Eden. The flesh does not need armor. The flesh needs to be stripped off (Col.2:11). "But the stupidity of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise, and the weakness of the world and the ignoble and the contemptible things of the world God chooses, and that which is not, that He should be discarding that which is, so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight" (1 Cor.1:27-29).

J. Philip Scranton

CVOT NOTES

As we publish added portions of the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, we hope to provide, in the magazine, both studies on these sections of the Scriptures and brief notes on various translation features. The following concerns two unusual renderings in Job 42 (see page 214).

Originally we worded the first line of Job 42:2 and the last line of 42:3 much as found in other English translations: "I know that You can do all things," and "Things too marvelous for me, that I did not know." But the verb in 42:2a, "can" or "be able," puts the emphasis on God's ability or power to do what He does. The thought is not concerned with a theory about what God can do. Job is not speculating concerning God's ability, but is speaking of His ability as shown in what He actually does.

As for the last line of verse 3, we had earlier rendered the Hebrew preposition "from" by the preposition "for," adding a superior "f" to show what the term literally meant. This is quite proper, for the idiomatic sense of prepositions varies from one language to another. But in this case, the literal Hebrew phrase, *marvelous-ing from-me* parallels the phrase at the beginning of the previous line, *I-have-professed*. Job is referring to the thoughts he has been voicing, to what has been coming *from* his mouth. It was not so much that they were too marvelous for him to understand, but they were marvelous things that he believed but did not yet *know* on the basis of God's own word, and which he had obscured by his self-defense.

JOB 42:1-9

42 ⁺Then Job ¹answered ¹Yahweh, ⁺ ¹saying:

² I know that You are ¹able in all things,
And no^t plan ¹of Yours can be ¹thwarted.

³ “Who is this who ¹obscures¹ counsel
without knowledge?”^o

Wherefore I have professed ideas
⁺when I was not understanding,

Marvelous¹ thoughts from me, ⁺that I did not ¹know.

⁴ “Hearken ^onow, and I Myself shall speak;^o

I shall ask of you, and you inform Me.”^o

⁵ ¹With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You,
⁺But now my eye sees You.

⁶ Therefore I ¹recant and repent
On soil and ashes.

⁷ ⁺ It ¹came to pass after Yahweh had spoken ¹these
¹words to Job ⁺that Yahweh ¹said to Eliphaz the Temanite:
My anger is hot ¹against you and ¹your two associates
¹because you did not speak ¹concerning Me what is rightly
so¹ as My servant Job has done. ⁸ ⁺ Now take for yourselves
seven young bulls and seven rams. ⁺ Go to My servant Job,
and ^ooffer ¹up an ascent offering ¹on ¹behalf of yourselves.
And Job, My servant, he shall pray ^{on}for you. For ^{if} then
I shall lift up his face ¹by not ¹inflicting¹ ^{on} you any dis-
grace. For you did not speak ¹concerning Me what is rightly
so¹ as My servant Job has done. ⁹ ⁺ So they ¹went, Eliphaz
the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite ⁷and^{cs} Zophar the
Naamathite, and they ¹did just as Yahweh had spoken to
them. And Yahweh ¹lifted up ¹Job’s face.

42:3 ^oWho . . . knowledge: cf 38:2 [Job quotes Yahweh’s words].

42:4 Hearken . . . speak: cf 33:31; I . . . Me: cf 38:3 and 40:7.

BUT NOW MY EYE SEES YOU

YAHWEH has spoken, and Job is quick and brief in agree-
ment. There is no desire for delay; indeed what Yahweh
has said is what Job had longed to hear. God is, by the
authority of His own word, responsible for the creation of
the earth and sea and air and has established their move-
ments and boundaries (Job 38:4-11). He has authority over
light and darkness, wind and weather, the gates of death,
the stars and lightning bolts and rain (38:12-38). He knows
all about the travailing and stupidity and ferocity of beasts
and birds, for He has constituted and caused their situa-
tions and traits (38:39-39:30). The arm and the voice of El
are powerful, determinative in all things, in judgment and
justification, in humbling and saving (Job 40). Not only the
independence of the behemoth (40:15-24), but the fearful
dangers of the dragon (Job 41) belong to God (41:11).

GOD’S ABILITY AND PLAN

In the light of the divine word just given, Job avows, “I
know that You are able in all things, and no plan of Yours
can be thwarted” (Job 42:2). From the beginning of his
experience of suffering Job has held firmly to his convic-
tion that “Yahweh, He gives, and Yahweh, He takes away.
Blessed be the Name of Yahweh” (1:21), and “Indeed
should we receive good from the One, Elohim, and should
we not receive evil?” (2:10). Now he *knows* that this is true
because God Himself has said so. And not only that, but
Job *knows* from Yahweh’s own declarations that all things
that occur are evidence of the *ability* of God in carrying

out His plan. This speaks of both the power and wisdom of God, His divine power in carrying out what He has purposed in His wisdom. Behind all the seeming confusion and apparent setbacks to peace and happiness is the powerful God Who is operating steadfastly and successfully in accord with His plan.

The testimony of Job 42:2 fully supports and clearly adds to the avowal of 1:21 and 2:10. Job has come to recognize that in giving and taking away, and in bringing both good and evil into our lives, God is operating in accord with a blueprint, a *plan* that cannot be frustrated or altered. Job's experience of affliction and loss has appeared chaotic and meaningless. From a human standpoint it has no explanation. But if it is true, as Job has insisted all along, that God is responsible for this experience of evil, and it is part of God's plan, and God is able to carry out His plan, then all is well.

The "all things" of Job's life included, first of all, that he "was fearing Elohim and keeping away from evil" (Job 1:2). His concern that his children may have displeased God indicated that Job believed God could bring evil into people's lives in response to their sin. Like his associates and most God-fearing people today, Job appreciated the righteousness of such judgments, and he was careful to avoid them.

But that was not the whole truth concerning the experience of evil and God's doing of all things. As soon as Job lost his wealth and authority and family he related that evil to the blessed God's operations, and as soon as his own health was gone he declared that both good *and evil* come from God's hand. This was the great test. The test was not the experience of evil itself, but the experience of evil that cannot be explained in relation to human sin, but solely must be related to God and His operations.

In the days when Job's "goings were washed in clotted cream," and he "became eyes to the blind, and feet to the

lame" (29:6,15), it would have been fairly easy to say "Yahweh gives, and He takes away." But it would not have had the personal impact to Job that it now holds. It was when the affliction came that the truth that both good and evil are received from God became not only personally meaningful but essential to Job. It was sanity in an insane world. It was the source of the endurance and hope; it was this principle concerning God's deity, a principle that Job had heard and accepted, that sustained Job.

It had sustained Job to believe (and God had given Job strong faith) that "The hand of Eloah, it has done this" (Job 12:9). But it was not until Yahweh Himself traced storms and darkness and dreadful beasts to His powerful operations and plan that Job came to know, by God's own word, that the evil he was experiencing was not only to be traced to the hand of God but to God's plan being carried out powerfully and ably by God Himself.

When God speaks we know it is true.

JOB'S IGNORANCE

In commending Job for his reliance on God, however, we must not suppose that all Job's words have been commendable. He has obscured counsel, as Yahweh had charged (38:2). Job's many words of self-defense have distracted from the truth of the right things he has said concerning God. "Who is this who obscures counsel without knowledge?" It is Job in trying to defend himself.

The more we talk about ourselves, rushing to point out our critics' errors, defending ourselves by setting forth the truth about ourselves, the more we obscure the truth about God. Job faced deep problems, losses of wealth and position, sufferings of extreme pain and weakness, followed closely by condescending advice and self-serving strictures from his associates. But the only wise counsel for endurance is to focus wholly on God. Let what others say go in

one ear and out the other. Turn to God's word as Job kept doing in recalling words and phrases from Genesis.

Job had professed much truth right from the start, but not until Yahweh Himself spoke of His power and wisdom in relation to both good and evil, did the bold words of Job's professings reach to Job's understanding. Job finds now that he had spoken *marvelous thoughts* which came from him but which he did not truly *know*. In chapters 38-41 Yahweh did not allow obscurity to enter into His speech. Job's record of good works and godly fear is beside the point. The marvelous truth is indeed that God gives us what we receive. To this truth is added the marvel, verified by God's word, that He knows what He is doing, and He cannot fail to reach His goal.

YAHWEH'S CHALLENGE

Job continues to focus his thoughts on God's words. In 42:3 he recalled Yahweh's question "Who is this who darkens counsel by declarations without knowledge?" recorded in 38:2. Now in 42:4 Job cites Yahweh's repeated challenge of 38:3 and 40:7, "Belt up your loins now like a master; *I shall ask of you, and you inform Me.*" The citation is not a direct quotation. Job leaves out Yahweh's instruction that he act like a man, which shows Job has learned a good lesson. He will not get sidetracked into talk about himself and the way he acts. For this line, he substitutes some words of Elihu (33:31) that reflect the implications of Yahweh's address. "Hearken now, and *I Myself* shall speak."

It is what God says that counts. The words of chapters 38 through 41 are the climax of the book. Here the daring thoughts Job had professed at the beginning and had struggled to hold on to in debate with his associates are opened up by Yahweh Himself in the grandest and most far reaching of ways. That God gives and takes away, giving both good and evil, is not simply a hope of one indi-

vidual sinner, but it is a reality for all of creation and all that goes on.

At this point, therefore, Job avows (42:5):

With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You,

But now my eye sees You.

The meaning is clear. Job has clung to the truth that he had heard. But now the experience of evil joined together with the vivid revelations from God Himself has opened Job's eyes to *see*.

RECANTATION AND REPENTANCE

"Therefore," Job avows, "I recant and repent on soil and ashes" (42:6).

Yahweh is about to declare before Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar that Job had spoken what was so. Yahweh's own testimony in Job 38-41 shows clearly that Job spoke rightly concerning God's responsibility to His creation and involvement in what occurs. What Yahweh claims for Himself is what Job had held to without understanding or seeing its marvelous reality. It is not concerning his words in 1:21 and 2:10, continually upheld during his speeches, that Job is recanting or repenting.

It is the obscurity that Job introduced into the true counsel he had professed that he now turns away from and now regrets. His words concerning his own righteous works and diligent reverence only served to distract from and cover up the truth about God. As far as Job's afflictions were concerned, his defense of himself only made them more pressing and puzzling. But when he was given grace to turn his thoughts toward God, then his hope revived and his endurance was strengthened. Now Yahweh has multiplied that grace by granting Job the firm foundation of His own word.

Concerning his self-indulgence, Job recants and repents on soil and ashes.

THE THREE ASSOCIATES

Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar had indeed spoken about God. But what they had to say concerning the Deity was mostly intended to chastise and instruct Job. It did not magnify God but rather magnified the sinfulness and responsibility of the suffering human. There was great caution in their words lest they speak disrespectfully of God. They seemed to want to keep Him at a distance as One to be feared only and wholly, but not bothered by human complaints. In this they spoke what was religiously so, but it was not rightly so with respect to the situation of suffering in front of their eyes; it was not relevant to Job's miserable condition and was not directed toward a growing appreciation of God in light of that misery.

Eliphaz: "Just as I have seen, those who plow lawlessness and sow misery are reaping it. By the hand of Eloah are they perishing, and by the spirit of His nostrils are they being consumed" (4:8,9). "If you return unto Him Who-Suffices and you submit . . . then He Who-Suffices will become your gold ore" (22:23,25).

Bildad: "Behold, El Himself does not reject the flawless man, and He does not hold fast on the hand of evil-doers" (8:20). "Dominion and awesome might are with Him, Who is establishing peace in His heights . . . How then can a mortal be justified before El?" (25:2,4).

Zophar: "Hence know this: that Eloah is granting you oblivion of some of your depravity" (11:6). "Dread shall come over him. Total darkness lies buried for his secluded riches . . . This is the portion from Elohim for the wicked person" (20:25,26,29).

YAHWEH'S SERVANT JOB

On the other hand Job has spoken very personally toward God in his pleadings, and bluntly in his pain. He has not uttered pieties that were inadequate under the circum-

stances, concerning punishment and rewards. Instead he expressed his hope for a Redeemer out of his great need of deliverance. He has held to what he knew of God from the limited revelation available in his day, and he has longed for further enlightenment. Job has not been able to divorce his experiences of evil from his thoughts about God, and consequently he has asked relevant questions and spoken what was rightly so concerning God.

"Why is He giving light to the miserable and life to the bitter of soul?" (3:20).

"For the arrows of Him Who-Suffices are in me" (6:4).

"Let me say to Eloah, O do not condemn me! Let me know why You contend with me!" (10:2).

"Why should You conceal Your face and reckon me as Your enemy?" (13:24).

"El surrenders me over to iniquitous men, and He precipitates me into the hands of the wicked" (16:11).

"Know indeed that Eloah Himself has overturned me, and His weir trap has encompassed me" (19:6).

"El Himself has made my heart timorous, and He Who-Suffices has flustered me" (23:10).

". . . the thunder of His masterful deed, who shall understand it?" (26:14).

"He has shot me down into the clay, so that I am made comparable to dirt and ashes" (30:19).

A TYPE OF CHRIST

In many of Job's words we find a solemn foreshadowing of our Lord's cries on the cross. In his sufferings and endurance of these sufferings Job is a type of Christ. We are directed to the endurance of Job (James 5:11), and this points the way to the perfect endurance of "the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, Who, for the joy lying before Him, endures a cross" (Heb.12:2). Jesus prayed that the cup would pass by from Him (Matt.26:39,42). On the

cursed tree He asked the question, haunting because it was so honestly appropriate to the event, “My God! Why didst Thou forsake Me?” (Matt.27:46). Far from being indications of distrust, they are expressions of greatest reliance and trust. “Not as I will, but as Thou!” (Matt.26:39) is fuel for endurance, an endurance that remains and continues without knowing the answer to *Why?* when it reaches its most pressing significance.

In his humiliation and in God’s silence toward him for awhile, Job pictures that greater humiliation and forsakenness of Christ.

Similarly, it is in Job’s presence that the three associates are to offer up an ascent offering on their behalf (Job 42:8). His prayers for them also point forward to Christ Who pleads for our sakes (Rom.8:34). Finally, it is recorded of Job that it would “lift up his face” when Yahweh responds to his prayers by not inflicting disgrace on Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. It was God’s special favor to Job that those who were so anxious to indict him would be blessed by his advocacy of them. So also, in that highest fulfillment of this picture in Job 42, is Christ graced with the Name that is a blessing to all to the glory of God (Phil.2:9-11).

If we fail to see, in the book of Job, a type of God’s plan centered in the sufferings of Christ on behalf of sinners, we will miss the bulk of Job’s significance for us today. The “why” of Job’s afflictions is partly answered in the lessons for endurance and faith which the book supplies. Even more so the book of Job instructs us on the deity and ways of God and His responsibility for all that occurs. But highest of all is what is contained here (and what we have hardly begun to search out) concerning that greatest work of God on behalf of His creation, the giving of His Son to the sufferings and loss of Golgotha and the tomb.

D.H.H.

Questions and Answers

“JESUS”: YAHWEH-SAVIOUR REVEALED

Now the soulish man is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God, for they are stupidity to him, and he is not able to know them, seeing that they are spiritually examined. (1 Cor.2:14)

Question:

“WHY do you use the word “Yahweh,” instead of “Jesus” in your translation? Don’t you know that Jesus’ own name can be found in the Hebrew Bible more than 100 times? See for yourself in the enclosed tract. Since I am an active soul-winner, I think this is wonderful information, and I want to help get the word out. Years ago, when I first made my decision for Christ, it would have been easier for me to do so, had I known about this back then. By using “Yahweh” instead of “Jesus”—besides using a strange-sounding word—you are hiding the testimony which the Old Testament itself contains concerning Jesus.

Answer:

YOU ASKED why we use the word “Yahweh” instead of “Jesus” in the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. I have considered the tract you enclosed as well, “Yeshua in the Tenach (the name Jesus in the Old Testament).”¹ As you know, the tract claims that “the very name Jesus [is] found in the Old Testament about 100 times, all the way from Genesis to Habakkuk!”

1. Arthur E. Class (Osterhus Publishing House, 4500 W. Broadway, Minneapolis, MN 55422).

“Yahweh” is the divine *Name*. It is composed of the elements of the verb “to become.” (Depending on varied customs of transliteration, this Hebrew word is alternatively rendered, “Jehovah,” “Ieue,” or “Yahveh.”) As explained in our booklet, “The Incommunicable Name,” it means, “Him Who was and Who is and Who is coming”; or, strictly, “WILL-BE-ING-WAS.”

To assist us in remembering this, it is helpful to keep in mind the words of Hebrews 11:6: “He who is coming to God must believe that He *is*.” Similarly, John seems to point his Greek readers to the meaning of the Name, when saying that the Lord God, the Almighty, is He “Who *is* and Who *was* and Who *is coming*” (Rev.1:8).

“Yahweh,” however, is only a part of the name, “Jesus.” Since the name Jesus (Greek: *Iêsous*; Hebrew: *Ieushuo* [or, “Yashua” or “Yeshua”]) is *not* the equivalent of the Hebrew “Yahweh,” it would be incorrect to use “Jesus” to represent the divine Name (or “Tetragrammaton,” the group of four Hebrew letters which constitute the Name) in English.

Instead, “Jesus” is the equivalent of the Hebrew for “Joshua.” That is, the Greek word for “Jesus” corresponds to the Hebrew word for “Joshua” (*cf* Acts 7:45; Heb.4:8).

“Joshua” or “Yeshua” (to use the spelling given in the tract which you shared with me), signifies WILL-BE-ING-SAVIOUR or “(Yahweh)-SAVIOUR.” Joshua, Moses’ assistant, was called “Yahweh-SAVIOUR,” because he was the *saviour* provided by Yahweh (Numbers 13:16). The *-shuo* portion of *Ieushuo* (or “Yeshua”) adds the thought of *saviourhood* to the stem (or basic portion) of the divine Name.

“Yeshua” appears in many places in the Old Testament as a personal name, and was the name of a number of different men, most notably, the “Joshua” who was the assistant and successor to Moses. A very similar Hebrew term, *Ishuoe* [or as sometimes transliterated: “Yeshuah”], is often

used in reference to the One Who will be Israel’s Saviour. It is doubtful that this term is the exact Hebrew equivalent of “Joshua” (or “Jesus”), but putting that consideration aside, the usage of this term is as a title not a name.

This is the case in Isaiah 62:11,² one of the passages mentioned in the tract, as in many places in Scripture. Consequently, the Concordant Version translates accordingly into idiomatic English, “[your] *Saviour* is coming” (the AV is similar, “[thy] salvation cometh”).

The fact is that this word is simply not used as a personal name in either Isaiah 62:11 or in the many other Old Testament texts in which the tract claims that the “very name, Jesus” appears. Since, when reading the Original, it would be absurd to read such texts as speaking of a personal name, it would be wrong to render them in such a way in a translation.

Perhaps an example would help to illustrate this. Even in English, if we should read in a magazine account concerning an athletic competition that a certain man was said to have been the *victor*; and, should we, in the course of our life subsequent to reading this report, be introduced to a man *named* Victor, we would be foolish indeed to imagine that this gave us any reason to believe that this man was the “victor” mentioned in the athletic contest. Likewise, if the account of the athletic competition were to appear in the magazine’s Spanish edition and the Spanish word *vencedor* (which is Spanish for “victor”) be used in the text, how foolish it would be to claim that *vencedor* should be removed from the translation and replaced with “victor.” Worst of all, imagine what we would think of the family of my new acquaintance should they seek to prove

2. “Behold, Yahweh announces it to the outmost part of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your Saviour is coming! Behold, His hire is with Him, and His wage is before Him!’”

to the people of Mexico that their relative is undoubtedly the renowned and victorious athlete of the magazine article—since, after all, his name *is* Victor.

It is true that YESHUA signifies “saviour” (actually, WILL-BE-ING-SAVIOUR). It is also true that, *in Hebrew*, this is the equivalent word for the Greek “*Iêsous*” which appears in Matthew 1:21 in reference to a baby who was to be given this name. This, however, proves nothing. That is, it proves nothing if one’s goal is to show that the account in Matthew is true, and worthy of our acceptance and trust.

Though I heartily concur in this tract’s *intent*—and sympathize with its author, a brother who seeks to identify our Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour Who is prophesied in the Old Testament—nonetheless, the tract itself is less than clear and will be misleading to most of its readers. This is because—quite understandably—they will conclude (even though the author does not explicitly make this claim) that the tract somehow presents proof to the effect that our Lord Himself is actually spoken of in the various Old Testament passages mentioned, in which the word YESHUA [or YESHUAH] appears. *This is simply not true.*

Some, in reading this tract, as in your own case, will even be led to wonder why the word “Jesus” does not appear in translations of the Old Testament, whether in the Concordant Version, Authorized Version, or others. As a result, since these Old Testament translations have not incorporated the word “Jesus” into their texts where the Hebrew reads YESHUA [or YESHUAH], no doubt some will suppose that these versions are in serious error, due to this “omission.”

The fact that certain writings *exist*, namely, those writings commonly known as the New Testament which boldly affirm that the coming glorious Saviour (or YESHUA) of the Old Testament is none other than a certain lowly, despised and crucified, first-century Nazarene—a man, like various others before him, who was simply *named*

Yeshua (Jesus)—is hardly any reason to believe that *he* is the Saviour to Whom such passages as Isaiah 62:11 refer. Nor is it any reason to believe that this account of his life and ministry is true, whether concerning his purported saviourhood, or lesser matters.

Indeed, in Mexico the name “Jesus” (which is actually an English word) is quite a common name. Another such name is “Salvador,” which is Spanish for “saviour.” If the fact that a man today happens to be named Joshua, Jesus, or Salvador is no proof that *he* is the prophesied Saviour of the Old Testament, then surely neither is the mere fact that a story exists in a book called the New Testament, a story which claims that a certain first-century couple had a son whom they named “Yeshua” (or “Jesus”), any reason whatever to believe that this baby is the coming Messiah, even the Saviour.

Any clear-thinking, albeit unenlightened, Jew or other unbeliever would realize that this is the case and would hardly find any reason to believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the prophesied Saviour of the Old Testament simply because the book of Matthew, for example, speaks of a baby who was named Jesus (or “Yeshua”).

Most likely, such unbelievers would be stumbled by this tract, considering it, at best, only circular reasoning. Consequently, they would be hindered still further from accepting the very message which the tract’s author seeks to make known.

Such testimonies may appear “convincing” to many who already believe that Jesus is the Messiah. Too often, however, they also serve as a means through which many of these same believers find grounds to scorn the unbeliever for his rejection of Christ (since, after all, “the very name Jesus,” *so we are told*, appears over 100 times in the Old Testament). In any case, such writings do not afford any additional real evidence at all for the sake of those whom

they aim to reach. It is to be regretted that many dear believers will nonetheless be convinced that such tracts somehow supply special evidence for our faith. Yet far more regrettable is it that the intelligent unbeliever, upon considering such presentations, will likely be bolstered in his opinion that, in matters related to their faith, Christians are simply illogical.

I would stress, however, that for myself, overall, I enjoyed the tract and found blessing through the experience of considering it, even as in sharing these thoughts with you. And I expect that some will be led to Christ through its goodhearted message. May it be so. So in seeking to answer your question and share a few thoughts concerning the tract's subject matter, I want to emphasize that my criticisms must not be understood in any harsh sense at all, even toward the tract, much less toward its author.

Faith, however—true God-given faith—comes by *tidings* (what is heard), yet the tidings *through a declaration of Christ* (Rom.10:17). Faith results from that which is *believed*, not from that which is *proved*. Even valid proof, significant and pertinent, presented for the sake of leading others to a valid conclusion, must still be received. Yet the most basic propositions upon which we depend to prove something else, cannot themselves be proved; they can only be *accepted* or *rejected*. That is why, ultimately, we either have to witness an event for ourselves or take someone else's word for it.

A man may be able to *prove* that his affirmation is true; but the ultimate principles upon which his proof depends cannot themselves be proved. If they could, they would not constitute the true foundations of his proof. There is no way around this; it is a simple consequence of the fact that every argument has a finite number of steps.

Consequently, to those of us who *believe* it is so, to us, both the Greek Scriptures and the Hebrew Scriptures are

God's own Word; and, accordingly, are inspired by Him (2 Tim.3:16). As the apostle Paul declares, "In accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God, which is *operating* also in you who are *believing*" (1 Thess. 2:13). Faith, however, is neither evidence nor proof; instead it is *conviction* and *acceptance*, which lead to *trust*.

The New Testament record teaches us that Jesus Christ is indeed the prophesied, coming Saviour. It alone makes evident that Christ, representatively speaking as the Image of the invisible God (2 Cor.4:4), is indeed Yahweh Elohim—the One Who is the very God and Saviour revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures.

We believe this because we believe God, in Whom we trust. We can only do this, however, because God has made Himself known to us and convinced us that He actually speaks through these writings and is truthful in all that He says and recounts. We can hardly expect others, however, ones whom He has not yet called and convinced, to accept the proposition that a mere book called the Bible—one among many which claim to reveal divine truth—is actually what it claims to be.

Even so, to those of us who are *called*, Christ is the very wisdom and power of God. Thus it becomes evident that God's call is an effectual call. Hence there is no such thing as being called of God and yet remaining fundamentally disbelieving concerning Christ (*cp* 1 Cor.1:23-25).

But it is the burden of the New Testament writings themselves to make Christ known to us, and, by God's holy spirit, to bring us conviction. Therefore, unto this end, we by no means need to make *appeals*—which in themselves are weak and vain—to the fact that the Man of Nazareth was named Yeshua (Jesus) and that a form of this word, which signifies -SAVIOUR, appears in such passages as Isaiah 62:11.

It is well for us *as believers* to know what "Jesus" means,

that we might be growing in a knowledge of our *Saviour*; and it is certainly fine to mention this meaning to the unbeliever as well when sharing the gospel with him. But to suggest that the meaning of the word “Jesus” itself somehow gives credence to our *belief* that Jesus of Nazareth is the Saviour and Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament, will be viewed by the sensible unbeliever as absurd, for so it is.

We believe *because God gives us faith*. We do not believe that the Lord Jesus is our Saviour because of some sort of illogical notion derived from the Hebrew word for “saviour.”

May we not be among those who boast in their fancied “decision for Christ.” No one *can* truly choose *Christ*, to whom Christ is not *choice*. We are not believers because we are somehow better than others, and so, in our acceptance of Christ, have acted accordingly. Instead of our being superior to others, the opposite appraisal may well be closer to the mark (*cp* 1 Cor.1:26-31).

To the contrary, like the wicked Saul of Tarsus, we ourselves only truly “decide for Christ,” when God, through His *grace*, *calls* us and *unveils* His Son in us (*cf* Gal.1:16; 1 Tim.1:12-16; *cp* Acts 13:48; Matt.16:15-17). Since God gives us eyes to see, we merely see Christ as He already is. He *is* Choice (*cp* Luke 23:35).

Accordingly, in seeing Him as He is, we therein *find ourselves* choosing Him. It then becomes too late to add any legalism to this glorious event with respect to something that we ourselves supposedly “must do” (or, more accurately, that we ourselves supposedly must *contribute*).

Those who genuinely believe, only do so because God *overwhelms* their unbelief and wickedness with sufficient power to bring them into a measure of faith (*cf* 1 Tim.1:12-16). It is not that they are forced against their wills, but that God gives them a renewed will, as the product of His own powerful operations.

What a joy it is to be graciously granted to be believing (Phil.1:29)!

J.R.C.

He Shall Save His People

“OTHERS HE SAVES”

WHEN JESUS HAD FINISHED the glorious promises and solemn warnings of Matthew 24 and 25 He turned to His disciples and said, “You are aware that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Mankind is being given up to be crucified” (Matt.26:1,2).

It had come to this. The One Who was to save His people from their sins (Matt.1:21) was to be given over by His people to death. And the One Who came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15) was to be delivered into the hands of sinners to be crucified.

Yet this is not a message of despair but one which becomes the basis of good news. The crucifixion of the Saviour is the solid foundation and effectual channel of salvation.

YOU ARE AWARE

The disciples were aware that the Passover was near. Until this point that festival had been a ritualistic reminder of deliverance from Egypt (*cf* Ex.12:1-17). But it was also a type of a solemn Passover to come, when a greater deliverance would be established. This Passover again would come in association with blood being shed on behalf of the people.

Moreover, the disciples were aware of Jesus’ own words concerning His death and resurrection, though they did not seem to be able to penetrate the implications of this prophecy (*cf* Matt.16:21-23; 20:20-28; 26:8,9). It was to be the most important Passover of the ages, the great Antitype Passover, when the Saviour from enslavement to sin would

die, and in His death and resurrection it would open the way to the fulfillment of all God's promises of blessing.

The Passover in Egypt had not been the first type of this most crucial event of all time. The coverings of skins which God made for Adam and Eve came by way of an animal's death (Gen.3:21). Abel's sacrifice from his flock was accepted by God (Gen.4:4,5) because it pictured the death of His Son Who would save sinners, including both Abel and Cain in the appointed time. Abraham, in obedience to God's instructions, raising his hand to slay Isaac (Gen.22:10), foreshadowed God's own approach present (Eph.2:8) when He spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32).

The types are multitudinous. Year after year, countless animals were slain and burned on the altar, which in themselves gave no pleasure to God, but which pointed ahead to this fateful day when the Son of Mankind would be crucified. None among Israel had asked Jesus to save them from their sins. But He was about to do so. Few of mankind since that day have comprehended the need and the achievements of His death for sinners. There is much of which we are still not aware concerning that day and what it means for us and all humanity and all of God's creation. But like the disciples, we are aware that it was to be, and we are more and more coming to perceive and appreciate its vital importance.

THE SON OF MANKIND CRUCIFIED

If Jesus had spoken, in Matthew 25:46, of everlasting life for a portion of humanity based on their acts, and everlasting punishment (whether unceasing torment or hopeless destruction) for the rest based on their failures, what would be the purpose and need of His crucifixion? The closing verses of Matthew 25 are presented, over and over again, as the principal proof-texts for the traditional doc-

trine of eternal damnation. Repeatedly, we are told that here our Lord Himself declared there will be final separation of mankind into two states of heaven and hell, continuing without end.

Yet has the Lord no thoughts about such a tragic outcome? If He actually had just spoken of life for some of humanity continuing forever while countless others of the race exist in conscious torment without hope, or even eternally annihilated, then how do His present words in Matthew 26, concerning His death, relate to this view of human destiny?

It might be said that the crucifixion was needed in order for the "life eternal" to be gained. But Jesus had spoken of this judgment of blessing for those who took Him in and clothed and fed Him by doing these acts of kindness for His brethren. "Well then," we hear, "it must be understood that the good works are but our contributions to the process of salvation that is centered in and finally dependent upon the work of Christ."

If this is to say that "life eternal" could never be given to anyone unless Christ had been crucified, we find some ground for agreement, though the relative value of Christ's death to human works is seldom made clear. But, even then, that would still fail to relate the judgment of "everlasting punishment" to the crucifixion. It is unconvincing, at the very least, to bring in the work of Christ for only one part of the judgment (and that vaguely presented), but leave it out of the other. Our question remains: How does Matthew 25:46 lead forward to Matthew 26:2?

All of the preceding chapters of Matthew anticipate chapters 26 and 27. The word of salvation from sins in 1:21 and pardon of sins in 9:6, and teachings concerning the kingdom, as well as warnings about Gehenna and judgment, and the mounting evidence of Israel's stubbornness and human wickedness, all of this prepares the way to the cru-

cifixion. Neither salvation nor condemnation can be carried out to God's glory apart from Golgotha.

It is for mankind that the Son of Mankind was crucified. In Psalm 8 (verses 4 and 5) David asks Yahweh, "What is a mortal that You are mindful of him, or a son of mankind that You are visiting him? You make him lack a little of the messengers, and with glory and honor You crown him." Many years later these words were explained in reference to Jesus, "Who has been made some bit inferior to messengers (because of the suffering of death, wreathed with glory and honor), so that, in the grace of God, *He should be tasting death for the sake of everyone*" (Heb.2:5-9).

If Jesus, as the Son of Mankind, tasted death for the sake of everyone, He tasted death for those who will be cast out in outer darkness and those who are members of the chastised nations in the kingdom, as well as those who are rewarded with superfluity and those belonging to nations rewarded with privileges and joys described by the expression "eonian life" (*cf* Matt.25:26-30; 41-46). Such judgments do not speak of final and everlasting destinies, though they do speak of future conditions far better in every way from the present.

The connection between Matthew 25 and Matthew 26 is that the future of mankind, both Israel and the nations, with all the various rewards and losses described, is fully dependent on the work of the Son of Mankind. The Saviour suffered as the Son of Mankind (Matt.12:40; 17:12; 26:2), and He will be seated on the throne of His glory as the Son of Mankind (Matt.19:28; 25:31; 26:24). But the judgments to come (which we have tended to distort into dreadful acts of misjudgment) and the blessings of righteous rule ahead do not extend in an eternal division of "sheep and goats." Salvation fully based on the work of the Saviour will have the final word. "For the Son of Mankind came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke19:10).

THIS EVANGEL

The woman who poured attar on our Lord's head "in the house of Simon the leper" (Matt.26:6,7) indicated faith in His words concerning His death. Jesus explained, "For she, spraying this attar on My body, does it for My burial" (26:12). But this was not all: "Verily, I am saying to you, Whosoever *this evangel* may be heralded in the whole world, that also which she does shall be spoken of for a memorial of her" (v.13).

Her faith, expressed by her actions, was centered in Jesus' words that "the Son of Mankind is being given up to be crucified" (Matt.26:2). The crucifixion of Christ lies at the heart of *this evangel* which will be heralded in the whole world. The "well message" or good news that will be heralded is not "You must believe," but "Christ crucified, entombed and roused." What is heralded is to be believed, and this woman's believing is a grand testimony to be remembered. The evangel is not the believing, but the message to be believed. It is not fundamentally about the woman or any of us, or what we must do, but it is about Christ, and what He has done.

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus heralded the evangel of the kingdom to Israel (*cf* Matt.4:23; 9:35). This evangel was then restricted to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt.10:5,6; 15:24). But the kingdom could not come apart from the death of the One Who came to save His people from their sins. The coming of the kingdom is good news only if it actually comes, and that is dependent on the death of Christ. Hence the very *foundation* of "this evangel" is not the announcement of the kingdom itself, but the announcement of the finished work upon which the kingdom and all God's promises of blessing are based.

After Christ's resurrection, this most essential evangel centered on the crucifixion of our Lord, will be made known, not to Israel alone, but throughout the world.

"And heralded shall be this evangel of the kingdom [based on the crucifixion] in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations" (Matt.24:14). Then the promise given to Abram in Genesis 12:3 will finally begin its fulfillment: "In you all the families of the ground will be blessed."

In the book of Acts we have a record of this great work of evangelizing commencing. Peter, who could not accept and had strenuously opposed the very idea of the Lord's death, was first and foremost in its proclamation. "Let all the house of Israel know certainly, then, that God makes Him Lord as well as Christ—this Jesus Whom you crucify!" (Acts 2:36). "This is the Stone that is being scorned by you builders, which is becoming the head of the corner. And there is no salvation in any other one, for neither is there any other name, given under heaven among men, in which we must be saved" (Acts 4:11,12).

Nevertheless, Israel has not yet been blessed with this kingdom, nor have they become a channel of blessing to all the nations. Yet the evangel of the kingdom still speaks of a certainty because it is based on the crucifixion of our Lord, and that has occurred. Because the Saviour was crucified, all Israel will be saved, and all the nations of the earth, even those which experience eonian chastening, will be blessed.

In the meantime, an evangel was given to the apostle Paul to bring to the nations (*cf* Gal.2:7), concerning justification apart from law (Rom.3:21,11), the conciliation of the world (Rom.11:15) and a celestial kingdom (2 Tim.4:18). Furthermore, the salvation was for all mankind (1 Tim.4:9,10). This also was based on the crucifixion of Christ (see, for example, Rom.5:6-19; 1 Cor.1:18-31; 15:3,4; 15:20-28; Eph.1:7-11; 2:8), which clearly becomes the solid foundation of all blessings, the focus of all good news, the center of all our faith.

THE HANDS OF SINNERS

The Son of Mankind was to be given into the hands of sinners (Matt.26:45). These are the people Jesus came to save. They included, first of all, those who were most devoted and loyal to the sacred scriptures and traditions, the chief priests and elders (26:3-5; 26:57-68; 27:1-10). From the very ranks of the twelve disciples, it included Judas (26:14-16; 26:23-25; 26:46-50; 27:3-5). But "lest any man should be boasting," the denials of Peter involved him, as the representative of the best of human loyalty and sincerity, in the giving up of his Lord (Matt.26:69-75).

Pilate, representing the highest form of human government, was deeply involved (Matt.27:11-26). The Saviour of sinners was also given into the hands of sinful soldiers, the very enforcers of law and order (Matt.27:27-31).

Finally, we read that He was rejected by "the entire people," who cried, "His blood be on us and on our children!" (Matt.27:25). There is no doubt that they and their children have suffered much because of this sin, and have much yet to face. Nevertheless, once again, there is marvelous irony in their words before Pilate, for the blood of Christ *will* be applied to them and their children.

Although he does not speak of its fullest realization, Peter himself well expresses the evangel of God's fulfillment of these words concerning Christ's blood: "... not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, were you ransomed from your vain behavior, handed down by tradition from the fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world, yet manifested in the last times because of you, who through Him are believing in God, Who rouses Him from among the dead and is giving Him glory, so that your faith and expectation is to be in God" (1 Peter 1:18-21). No longer is Peter an adver-

sary to the message of the Lord's death and resurrection (*cf* Matt.16:21-23).

“SAVE YOURSELF”

At no time did Matthew 1:21 seem so preposterous. The One Who was to save His people from their sins was being crucified, and “those going by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, ‘You who are demolishing the temple and building it in three days, save yourself!’” (Matt.27:39,40). These were certainly Israelites, for they mocked Him for His parables concerning the temple of His body which they had taken in reference to their boasted building (*cp* John 2:18-22; Matt.26:61). But the cruel, deriding advice, “Save yourself!” are the words of sinful and foolish humanity as a whole. Our strongest and fondest conviction is that reliance on God is expressed solely by reliance on ourselves.

Jesus had already testified that He was able to entreat His Father, and He would station by His side more than twelve legions of messengers (Matt.26:53). From the standpoint of personal ability and authority He was able to save Himself, but it was not His Father's will (26:39,42).

Christ could not do what He would not do. From the standpoint of faith and trust He could not do what He had the power to do. Consequently, the charge of the mob was true from the standpoint of Who He was and what He was like, when they shouted, “Himself he can not save!” But the other half of their charge was also true, though they spoke in mocking unbelief: “*Others He¹ saves!*” (Matt.27:41).

Never has a mob spoken greater truth in their mindless and hateful exultation. This One dying on a cursed tree

1. The CV uses a lower case “h” here to indicate the people's frame of mind, but we use the capital letter “H” now to indicate the viewpoint of God's spirit which they had not yet received.

was their Saviour. He was Jesus, now in His role as the Son of Mankind (*or*: Son of Humanity), undoing what Adam (whose name means “human”) did, and opening the way to their enlightenment and blessing in the Father's love. They could not have known. They were all like the chiefs of this eon, of whom Paul writes, “if they know, they would not crucify the Lord of glory” (1 Cor.2:8).

But we as believers are aware that “while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes” (Rom.5:8). If He died for us, how can we think that He did not die for all sinners? And if He saves sinners such as us, how can we think He does not ultimately save all, and do this on the same basis of Christ's finished work?

THE KING OF ISRAEL

But this is to get ahead of the story. The book of Matthew focuses on God's operations concerning the nation of Israel (and other nations in relation to Israel). Jesus was to save that people from their sins, and by dying, He was doing that which had to be done to this end of national deliverance and blessing.

Above His head was the declaration, intended as a charge against Him, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews” (Matt. 27:36). Here also was a statement, made in derision, that was faithful and true. Similarly, the mob mocked, “If he is king of Israel, let him descend now from the cross, and we will believe on him!” (Matt.27:42).

Before He takes His place as their King, He must become Israel's Saviour from their sins. He will be their King, but first they must and will believe that He is their Saviour precisely because He died for them and did not descend from the cross on that Passover day.

In accordance with this pattern of blindness, many believers today are not able to appreciate the full and glorious irony of these words shouted at our Lord as He hung

on the cross. They may see themselves happily included among the “others” whom Jesus saves, but they often limit the graciousness of this salvation as a finished work of the Saviour, and the extent of the sinners included under the term “others” whom Jesus saves. But also they are unwilling to see the truth in the words “King of the Jews” and the truth behind the mob’s words, intended by them as ridicule, and stated in unbelief, “. . . king of Israel.”

Many who have seen that the Bible teaches universal reconciliation have failed to see that it is not immediately ahead, but a consummation of a process occurring in the oncoming eons. We long for the time when God becomes All in all, but this does not occur until the work of Christ’s kingdom, both on the earth and in the heavens is carried out (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22-28).

WE WILL BELIEVE ON HIM

Hence we can see there is further irony in the words of the unbelieving mob. Speaking with confidence that Jesus could not save Himself, the mob claimed that they would believe on Him if He did descend from the cross. Nevertheless, they will believe on Him indeed when He comes, not in His humiliation, but in His power and glory. Like Saul of Tarsus, who exceeded them all in blasphemy against the Lord (*cf* 1 Tim.1:13,16), all those who mocked Him on that fateful day, and all those who have joined in that calumny since, they will come to believe on Him.

The account of the amazing happenings during the three days of Matthew 26 and 27 thoroughly destroys any basis for the doctrine of everlasting hell. The sufferings of Christ leads to the evangel of Israel’s salvation from their sins. It also leads to the evangel of our salvation announced by Paul, and ultimately to the realization of the salvation of all mankind.

D.H.H.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 1998
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

THE TWO scripture references given on our front cover, Ephesians 3:8,9 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 indicate the stress our magazine lays on the ministry of the apostle Paul. He was granted the grace of bringing “the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations” which leads us “from glory to glory.” The treasures of grace and peace in Paul’s evangel contain revelations that cannot be traced through the sacred scriptures of old, from Genesis through Malachi, or even in our Lord’s ministry recorded in Matthew through John, and the writings of His followers of the Circumcision. Hence the magazine has given special attention through the years to the secrets Paul made known concerning the transcendent grace in our calling today as members of the body of Christ, our blessings among the celestials, and the glories of Christ in relation to all of creation.

In accord with this, A. E. Knoch’s article on the human terms of growth applied to the believer and to Christ (see p.243) points us toward an appreciation of Christ’s highest designations of *Son* and *Firstborn* as presented in Ephesians and Colossians. On a more practical plain, James Coram discusses the way in which Paul’s evangel, “apart from law,” guides us in matters that were regulated by the law of Moses formerly (see p.253).

However, the rest of this issue is taken up with studies from the books of Job and 1 Samuel as well as the ministry of Jesus to the nation of Israel as it is presented in Matthew. Obviously such portions of God’s Word cannot deal directly with riches of revelation that cannot be traced in them! But as Paul wrote Timothy, the sacred

scriptures with which Timothy had been acquainted from his youth, are able to make us “wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim.3:15). They are *beneficial* for teaching, exposure, correction and discipline in righteousness (v.16). We cannot trace in them the distinctive features of Christ’s glories revealed by Paul, but we will find much for paving the way and indeed establishing the patterns of these revelations. This is shown in the articles by Brothers Knoch and Coram as well as in those by Brother Scranton and myself and the brief comments by others on the book of Job.

Now, especially because of our work on the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, we anticipate more and more space being given in our magazine to those portions originally written in Hebrew, termed by Paul, “the sacred scriptures.” Not exclusively, of course, but in giving more attention than usual to these ancient scriptures, we are trying to focus on the ways in which they aid us in making us wise for understanding and appreciating the evangel of the glory of Christ found in all of Paul’s epistles, and the untraceable riches of Christ found in his prison epistles as well.

We do not want to give the wrong impression, as though to say there are no distinctions, or that if one is clever enough one can trace what is untraceable. But we do not want to neglect the benefits of all of God’s Word, from the book of beginnings (Genesis), through the writings of the twelve and their associates, unto Paul’s own completion of the Word of God in his letters from the Roman prison (Col.1:25). Neither do we forget that beyond acquaintance with the sacred scriptures, we all need to be praying that great prayer of Ephesians 1:15-23 to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, for “a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him.”

D.H.H.

Concordant Studies

BABE, CHILD, SONSHIP AND FIRSTBORN

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD are common to all the descendants of Adam. *Sonship* is reserved for the adult males. Only some of these enjoy the high privileges of the *first-born*. These distinctions among humanity have been instituted in order to reveal to us the place and portion of Christ, the Firstborn Son of God by creation (Col.1:15), and the Firstborn of Miriam by birth (Luke 2:7), besides being the legal son of her husband Joseph (Luke 3:23), as well as the Firstborn from among the dead (Col.1:18).

A human being, in its succeeding stages of growth, is given various descriptive designations to indicate its physical age or sex, or its spiritual stature, such as *babe*, *little boy* or *girl*, *child*, *minor*, and *son*. Each of these has a lesson, not only as applied to the sinner and the saint, but as revealing the place and portion of Christ, and, indirectly, the fashion of God’s affection. Men, by instinct or nature, care for their offspring or their successors, and this should teach them the greatest of all lessons, the love of God for His creatures, for He relates them to Himself, in a series of figures, by calling them His children, His sons or His firstborn.

BABE

Even before He was born, John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Saviour, was called a “babe” (Luke 1:41,44). Our Lord Himself first appeared as a “Babe,” when the messenger announced His advent. Although He was the Sav-

our, Who is Christ, the Lord, come to the city of David, He came as a new-born Babe, swaddled, and lying in a manger (Luke 2:12,16). Of the saints, only Timothy's literal babyhood is mentioned, for he had a good start, being acquainted with the sacred Scriptures from his infancy. Figuratively, however, Peter wanted the Circumcision saints to be like recently born babes, longing for the unadulterated milk of the Word, that by it they might be growing into salvation (1 Peter 2:2). This figure fits perfectly into that of regeneration (1 Peter 1:3,23). The AV mistakenly uses it of Paul (1 Cor.13:11) and of the Corinthians (1 Cor.3:1). In these cases it should be "minors."

LITTLE CHILDREN, BOY OR GIRL

Some time after His birth, when He was no longer a Babe, or in reference to this time, Jesus is called a little Boy (Matt.2:8,9,11,13,14,20,21). Matthew presents Him as the Son of David, the King of Israel, and, as a consequence, he emphasizes the fact that He was born in Bethlehem, the city of David. We know that His mother, although a native of Bethlehem, did not live there at that time, but in Nazareth. Yet Matthew makes no mention of this, and says nothing of the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem or the census which caused it, for these are foreign to his theme: He simply says, "Jesus being born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod, the King, lo! magi from the East came along into Jerusalem . . ." (Matt.2:1). I do not blame anyone thinking that all this occurred in Bethlehem.

Luke, however, who is concerned with His humanity, tells us that, after the days of their cleansing were fulfilled, according to the law of Moses (that is, seven days and thirty-three days, with His circumcision on the eighth day), His parents left Bethlehem to take Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, and to give a sacrifice, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. Evidently they were not able

to bring a lamb for an ascent offering (Lev.12:8,12). Then they left Jerusalem for Galilee, and returned to their own city, Nazareth, and probably remained there until the visit of the magi, about two years later (Luke 2:21-40).

The fact that He is now consistently called a "little Boy," not a "Babe," should arrest our attention. Herod, informed by the chief priests and scribes that Christ would be born in Bethlehem, sends the magi there, after inquiring accurately as to the time of the star's appearing. Judging by Herod's later actions, Jesus, our Saviour, was not over two years old, for Herod had all the boys in Bethlehem massacred, who were two years old and below, "according to the time which he ascertains exactly from the magi" (Matt.2:7,16). So it seems certain that the magi were wise enough not to heed Herod's directions, but to follow the star, which led them to Nazareth. There they found the little *Boy* with His mother. And thence His parents took Him to Egypt, and so fulfilled all the Scriptures concerning Him, for He was not only born in Bethlehem according to the prophet Micah (5:2), but was a Nazarean (Matt.2:23) and was called out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1).

When the magi found the King of the Jews, He was not in a stable, lying in a manger, as the shepherds had found Him, but in a *house* (Matt.2:11), so it could not have been at the same time, as the popular pictures present it. To be sure, there were no real stables then, for the ordinary houses were divided into two parts, a raised platform, where the people lived, and a lower division, which housed the usual domestic animals, which were a part of the household. The manger was between these two. But the manger of a *caravansary* was a different matter. It is most remarkable that this term occurs only at the entrance and exit of His career! It is translated as "guest-chamber" in the AV, and described as "a large upper room" (Mark 14:14, Luke 22:11). This could not very well contain a stable. The ani-

mals would be kept in the court, with a very scant shelter over their manger.

It is most marvelous to see how God fulfilled His own Word in this case. The predictions, loosely considered, seemed to be contradictory, for one distinctly said that the Messiah should come from the city of David, *Bethlehem*, concerning which we will have much to say at another time. But another declared that He would be a *Nazarean*, while still another insisted that He would be called out of *Egypt*. Yet the most remarkable thing was that God used the highest dignitaries in order to carry out His predictions. He caused *Caesar Augustus* to time and condition his census so that Mary had to go to Bethlehem at a most unlikely juncture. He brought the *wise men* to Nazareth by means of a star, and the child was compelled to go to Egypt by the murderous malice of *Herod*.

BOY, GIRL, OR PAGE

In the Scriptures we see divisions of a man's life that differ from those to which we are accustomed. The "little boy" period seems to have lasted until the age of twelve. We read of Jesus that the "little Boy grows up," and then, "when He came to be twelve years," the "Boy" (not *little*) remained behind in Jerusalem (Luke 2:40,43). His conduct corresponds to this, for He would not have acted so independently before, when He was a "little Boy." Here He began His *service* for His heavenly Father. The word for boy is also applied to Herod's *pages* (Matt.14:2), so reaches beyond mere generation into the sphere of service. In fact, it is rendered *servant* eleven times in the venerable Authorized Version, which translates seven distinct words with "servant." A concordant version cannot do this, so is compelled to fall back on the fact that, in English, *boy* is also used of a male servant, with even more latitude as to age than in the Scriptures.

This word (*pais*) is a good example of the need of a consistent translation, and of the strong prejudices which it must encounter among those who use a popular but inaccurate version. The revered Authorized Version makes a mad mixture by rendering it *child*, *maid*, *maiden*, *servant*, *manservant*, *son* and *young man*.

As we shall see, it certainly should never be rendered *son*. Herod evidently did not slay all the *children* in Bethlehem and its boundaries (Matt.2:16), for only the males were massacred. Neither did *children*, including *girls*, cry in the sanctuary (Matt.21:15). Girls would not be permitted there. "Child," also, as we shall see, should not be confounded with this term. I have always shrunk from the expression "child Jesus" (Acts 4:27,30, AV), when used in connection with His *service*. A child is not old enough to serve. But a boy between twelve and thirty can do many things to help his parents. I assisted my father in his work long before that.

CHILD

This term is used as in English, with a very wide range. In Greek it denotes BROUGHT-FORTH, so literally applies to all who are *born*, and is the complement of *parent*. This is usually literal, but may be figurative, as children of Rachel (Matt.2:18), of Abraham (Matt.3:9), etc. Our Lord uses it of His disciples (Mark 10:24). It implies more than mere birth and includes the bonds and obligations that spring from it, such as affection and care. yet is also implies a considerable chasm in some regards, between the parent and child, due to inexperience and immaturity. Children usually have traits similar to their parents, but in an undeveloped state. Those who *believe* are children of Abraham as far as faith is concerned, for that is the trait which distinguished him, and this would lead to conduct conformable to it. A child is more trusting than an adult.

MINORITY AND MATURITY

In the Scriptures those who are too young to have a voice in affairs, who need a guardian, are *minors* or, literally, YOUNG-sayers. The AV renders this *babe*, *child*, and *childish*, but none of these carry over the central idea of *immaturity*. It is in contrast to the wise and intelligent, yet such are able to *believe* God's revelation (Matt.11:25), and to become a *mature* man (1 Cor.13:10,11). In modern times the age at which a person becomes legally competent seems to be about twenty-one years. But our Lord did not begin His ministry until He was thirty.

The thought of *maturity* is almost absent in the Authorized Version. It is dimly seen in such a rendering as "*full age*" (Heb.5:14), and "*men*" (1 Cor.14:20). It uses the word "*perfect*," as does the CV, but this has the sense of flawlessness rather than FINISHED, which is the meaning of the Greek standard. Physically humans attain their full development somewhere between twenty and thirty years, but they may remain minors in spiritual things all their lives.

In Israel a male was mature physically when he arrived at the age of twenty (Lev.27:3,5). Then he was drafted into the host, or army, and was liable to military service, being considered a mature member of the nation. But mentally a man is not mature at that age. Spiritually men need another ten years to develop. Is not this the reason why our Lord did not commence His ministry until He was thirty years old? Men are, indeed, not ready to *rule* as an elder even at that age, for they lack the wisdom that comes only from long experience, but their faculties are fully developed, and at their peak about three decades after birth.

SONSHIP OR ADOPTION

Jesus, our Saviour, was a legal *son* of Joseph but not his *child* (Luke 3:23). He was physically descended from Adam and Abraham and David through Miriam, His mother, but

He was also the *Son* of Adam, in relation to mankind as a whole, and the *Son* of Abraham in relation to the land of Israel, and the *Son* of David in relation to the kingdom. This implies far more than mere descent. A son must be a male. He must be mature, in the case of our Lord, about thirty years of age. He must be spiritually able to enter into and take over all the rights and privileges and dignities of his father, or forefathers.

A son need not be a man's literal offspring. Not long after I believed, I came under the tutelage of those who laid great stress on being "born again." They had difficulties with the AV rendering *adoption* (Rom.8:15,23; 9:4; Gal.4:5; Eph.1:5), and rejected it, rightly contending that it should be *sonship*, for the Greek literally means SON-PLACING. The rendering in Ephesians, the "adoption of *children*" was most misleading, for it refers only to *maturity* (Eph.1:5). But there was a custom prevalent in ancient times by which a man who had no offspring, or at least no male heir, could *adopt* one. In some respects this was an advantage. A child by birth may turn out to be utterly unworthy of his father's station and responsibilities. A father would be much safer if he could choose a mature man whose character was established and known to him. This was often done, and the place or position of a literal son or heir became the portion of the one adopted. The term was also applied to the time when this occurred (Rom. 8:23). To us it comes with the deliverance of our bodies.

In the past the term "sonship" was used of the special privileges of the *nation* of Israel, as Yahweh's representative on earth (Rom.9:4). It had no reference to their origin, but to their preponderant position, their divine prerogatives. At the same time, *individually*, they were under law, minors, under guardians and administrators. At present the saints are no longer in this position, but have the place of a son because we have received the *spirit* of son-

ship (Gal.4:1-5). One of the special blessings accompanying the present superlative grace is this, that God, in love, has designated us to have the place of a son through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:5). This is unutterably more than the “new birth” for the nation of Israel.

SONSHIP OR SON-STATION

Sonship, literally son-*placing*, the station in life accorded a son, lacks a satisfactory English designation, so we suggest, with some trepidation, the equivalent of the German *Sohnesstand*, which fits perfectly. The word *son-station* occurs only in Paul’s epistles, and is only for saints who are no longer minors, but mature, who have been reclaimed from under the law (Gal.4:1-7). The Authorized Version has the special rendering here “adoption of sons.” This is far preferable to “adoption of *children*,” which it uses in Ephesians 1:5. It does *not* refer to childhood at all, but is in contrast to it. We were not adopted as babes or little children, so that we must wait until we are mature in order to claim that place of a son. We need no guardians or administrators to look after us because, by faith, we are adopted into God’s family as full grown sons.

FIRSTBORN

The Son of God is the Firstborn in relation to creation, in the beginning, to the other children of Miriam, his mother, and to the dead, in resurrection. His headship of humanity was by a literal birth, but His precedence in creation and resurrection are figurative expressions. The firstborn son, as a rule, is accorded, not merely the first place in time, but in privilege and honor and allotment. This is the real import of the expression. It is usually used in this figurative sense. We should never reason, from the syllable *born*, that it must involve a literal birth. This is clearly not the case with His pre-eminent place in creation or in resur-

rection. In neither case can we ever imagine any mother, or even a begetting on the part of a father. It is the resultant position which is described as like that of a male offspring come of age who is endowed with the principal possession and privileges of his father.

So it is that we are taught the spiritual essence in the title firstborn. The fleshy and fleshly firstborn, Reuben, is set aside, and his position divided between Judah and Joseph. Besides this, it is significant that Judah saved Joseph’s life when his brethren plotted to kill him. Is not this a suggestion of resurrection? And will not the blessing of Joseph be withheld from Israel until after the rejection and resurrection of Messiah?

Thus also will it be with all mankind and all creation. The dignities and the glories that should have come to Adam he forfeited by his offense. On the contrary, Christ, Who came later than he, on account of His sufficient sacrifice, will be clothed with all earthly honors in place of Adam. He is the sinless and superior Son of Adam, or Son of mankind.

In creation, however, the peerless Son of God was first in time as well as station. God created all else *in* Him and *through* Him, not *by* Him. The Authorized Version is very loose in its renderings of the Greek connective *hupo* UNDER (accusative) and *by* with the genitive. Without due discrimination it renders it *among*, *by*, *from*, *in*, *of*, *under*, and *with*. Unlike most connectives, there are no idiomatic passages that keep the translator from carrying it over uniformly by *by*, except before an object, when it is always *under*. Thus we can say that all was created by God, or God’s creation. But *this is never said* of the Son of God, His Firstborn, in the inspired Original.

For example, the AV in Matthew 1:22, says that “all this was done, that it might be fulfilled *of* the Lord *by* the prophet.” This gives the false impression that the prophet

was the original speaker and that he spoke about Christ. But a prophet does not speak from himself. God speaks *through* him. It is not *his* word which is fulfilled, but *Yah-weh's*. In the CV we read: "Now the whole of this has occurred that that may be fulfilled which is declared *by* (*hupo*) the Lord *through* (*dia*) the prophet."

In 1 Corinthians 8:6, according to the popular version, we have the confusing statement, "to us there is but one God, the Father, *of* whom are all things, and we *in* him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by* whom are all things, and we *by* him." What is the difference between "*of* him" and "*by* whom"? Do not both indicate the efficient source? And how can we be *in* Him if all is *of* him? This is all clarified by a concordant version: "for us there is one God, the Father, *out of* Whom all is, and we *for* Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, *through* Whom all is, and we *through* Him." Creation is always *out of* or *by* the Father, but *through* the Son. He is not the Source, but the *Channel*. He Himself is *out of* God, or He would not be His Son.

This is confirmed, not contradicted, by the highest revelations concerning Christ, in Paul's Colossian epistle. The AV misreads it thus (1:15): Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For *by* Him were all things created, that are in the heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created *by* him, and for him: And he is before all things, and *by* him all things *consist*." But how much clarity and consistency is gained if we translate, as elsewhere, *in* Him is all created, and all is created *through* Him and *for* Him, and He is before all (literally, before *of* all), and all has its cohesion *in* Him. As elsewhere expressed, He is God's creative Original (Rev.3:14), or as the AV renders it, the beginning of the creation of God.

A. E. Knoch

Questions and Answers

FOODS, WHICH GOD CREATES

Now the spirit is saying explicitly, that in subsequent eras some will be withdrawing from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons, in the hypocrisy of false expressions, their own conscience having been cauterized; forbidding to marry, abstaining from foods, which God creates to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who believe and realize the truth, seeing that every creature of God is ideal and nothing is to be cast away, being taken with thanksgiving, for it is hallowed through the word of God and pleading. By suggesting these things to the brethren, you should be an ideal servant of Christ Jesus, fostering with the words of faith and of the ideal teaching which you have fully followed. (1 Tim.4:1-6)

Question:

"I have been taught that the Bible laws against unclean meats are still in effect today. My pastor says that the Bible reveals that such food sources as pork and shellfish are "unclean," hence are unfit for human consumption. He often says that all who wish to obey God will not eat such foods. What is your understanding of this subject?"

Answer:

MANY believe that both Christ's words in Mark 7 and Peter's experience in Acts 10 constitute an effectual divine pronouncement, giving approval to all, to the effect that one may now eat all animal flesh, specifically, those animals

the eating of which was strictly forbidden under Moses' law. In my judgment, however, neither of these texts actually gives any indication of such an idea. Indeed, in light of the administrative setting of these respective passages, it would seem entirely out of place for such a teaching to be found within the scope of these writings.

PETER'S VISION

Concerning Peter's vision, surely it is correct to judge the command "sacrifice and eat!" (Acts 10:13), not as a literal imperative, but as a figurative one. Thus it is not that Peter was literally to "sacrifice and eat" all manner of—insofar as Moses' law is concerned—unclean quadrupeds, reptiles, and flying creatures. Instead, it is that Peter, like a man who thus would involve himself with all manner of *creatures*, was, for the purpose of evangelization, to become willing to involve himself with all manner of *men*, even if the common Jewish perception of such peoples was that they were utterly "unclean" and to be avoided under all circumstances.

At the beginning, Peter was bewildered in himself as to what the significance of the vision which he perceived should be (Acts 10:17). "Now, as Peter is engrossed, concerned with the vision, the spirit said to him, 'Lo! three men are seeking you! But, rising, descend and go with them, nothing doubting, for I have commissioned them'" (Acts 10:19,20). A short time later, Peter averred to these men (as well as to the others with them), "You are versed in the fact how illicit it is for a man who is a Jew to join or come to another tribe, and [yet] God shows me [obviously, through the vision which God had given him] not to say that any *man* is contaminating or unclean" (Acts 10:28).

Thus Peter grasped the fact that "God is not partial, but in every nation he who is fearing Him and acting righteously is acceptable to Him" (Acts 10:35).

Under the evangel of the Circumcision (Gal.2:7), it is through fearing God and acting righteously that one, by His grace (*cf* Rom.11:5), becomes acceptable unto Him. Yet under the evangel of the Uncircumcision (Gal.2:7), Paul's evangel for the nations, we are justified apart from law (Rom.3:21,24) and graced in the Beloved (Eph.1:6). We have boldness and access with confidence, not out of works of righteousness which we do (*cf* Titus 3:5; Rom.4:5), but through Christ's faith (Eph.3:12).

"Acting righteously," in itself, is a relative term. That is, "righteousness" must be judged in relation to one's calling and allotment; its scope encompasses all that is right for a man to do, according to the divine administration which pertains to him, under which he is called, and called upon to be faithful to his God.

The law of Moses, however, is not a timeless standard of righteousness. For example, it is not because of the law of Moses but because of the law of conscience, according to nature, that we become aware of our duty to honor our parents (*cp* 2 Tim.3:2,3). And, if it should be that our conscience has become so defiled that its testimony on this question is weak or clouded, we have Paul's words in Ephesians 6:1-3 explicitly entreating believing children thus to behave with regard to their parents. In this passage, Paul employs Moses' words even as he does in many other instances; for in this matter, God's instruction to Israel is essentially the same as His instruction for us today. But in doing this, the apostle by no means subjects us to Moses' writings, as such, or otherwise to the law of God which He gave to Israel. That is, it is not determinative, but incidental, to our own obedience that the sons of Israel were commanded to honor their parents.

While "sons" is the correct translation, in such instances the word is not used literally in reference to gender but metonymically (i.e., by association), in reference to all

the descendants of Jacob, both male and female. That is, while the “sons” are spoken of, it is understood that by association, the daughters are included along with them. Paul too uses the word “sons” in a figure when he terms all the believers, male and female, “sons of God” (Gal. 3:26,28). Thus “all the saints” (Eph.1:1) have been designated beforehand for “the place of a son” (Eph.1:5); that is, for a place of great significance and worth, near and dear to the Father’s heart.

MARK 7:19

The words “—cleansing all the foods” in Mark 7:19 do not appear in the parallel account in Matthew 15:11, 17-20. They appear to be a contracted (elliptical) phrase, a phrase in which the obvious is understood but not expressed. While Matthew’s account does not include these words, it does supply the summary statement which makes evident the parable’s significance: “Now to be eating with unwashed hands is not contaminating a man” (instead, it is the uncleanness of man’s own heart which “contaminates” him; Matt.15:18-20).

Accordingly, I would suggest that the thought to be grasped from the words of Mark 7:19, “—cleansing all the foods,” is simply that the ordinary impurities which are carried along with or attached to foodstuffs (which may not be fully removed before eating, with or without washing), cannot contaminate a man since they do not go into his “heart,” but instead into his bowels (the contents of which, subsequently, passing out of the body altogether, go out into the latrine).

The words “—cleansing all the foods,” in the CV, are preceded by a dash in an attempt to indicate that there is something other than standard word flow here. It should be noted as well that the definite article (“the”) is in the Greek. In succinct form, the idea contained in these words

is this: “—cleansing all the foods [occurs by this means].” Through digestion and elimination, the foods which one eats (whatever foods these may be) are cleansed from any dirt or other impurities which may have attended them.

Peter, even as all those identified with the evangel of the Circumcision, continued to be under the law and subject to its precepts, including those concerning unclean meats (*cp* Isa.65:4; 66:17; Matt.5:17-20; James 2:10). The law was never “done away”; it is simply that it was never given to the nations; even the Israelites who receive Paul’s evangel are to imitate him and deem the law’s righteousness as refuse, as that which they are to discard (Phil.3:8).

PAUL’S TEACHING

Consequently, insofar as righteousness before God is concerned, we today declare, “*Every* creature of God is ideal and *nothing* is to be cast away, being taken with thanksgiving” (1 Tim.4:4). “Thanksgiving” is the only proviso. And, of every creature, Paul declares, “it is hallowed through the word of God and pleading” (1 Tim.4:5b).

Yet even though Paul plainly states that it is so, some still do not believe that every creature of God is now hallowed for food. They justify their unbelief through the claim that since “hallow” means “set apart (from),” then those animals which are holy must be set apart (as approved) from the remainder of animals, which, therefore, are not set apart and are not approved. Since they are aware that under Moses only certain animals are hallowed, and since they believe that “hallowed” means “set apart (from),” they conclude that when Paul speaks of hallowed creatures in 1 Timothy 4:4, he is speaking of the same limited group of hallowed creatures of which Moses writes in the law.

In reply, we simply point out that this reasoning cannot be correct, for Paul says, “every creature of God”; not, “every creature of God deemed holy under Moses.”

If this latter thought were Paul’s meaning, the apostle would have said so.

We also point out the fact that it is not true that “hallow” means “set apart (from).” In essence, “hallow” signifies “consecrate” or “devote” to a certain purpose. By extension, it is often used of that which is “set apart (from)” others of the same general kind; yet this is incidental to its basic meaning and is not the essential thought. It is incorrect to say that “holy” means “set apart (from).” Indeed, “hallowing” does not require the exclusion of certain of the entities of a given kind. Therefore, it does not follow that if there should be such a thing as “holy” animals, there are also unholy animals. In any certain usage, this may or may not be the case. For example, the entire tribe of Levi and the entire nation of Israel were hallowed for God’s service and according to His purpose; none were exempted from this designation.

That which is hallowed is that which is identified with a certain purpose, whether a holy harlot (*cf* Gen.38:21,22) or holy animal flesh (in the case of Leviticus 11, holy insofar as Israel is concerned). That which is holy is that which is devoted to (i.e., used for or involved in) a certain practice or activity.

Leviticus 11 (or Deuteronomy 14), however, is not the place in Scripture where “every creature” is hallowed, but where only certain creatures are hallowed and the rest are deemed unholy! Yet Paul speaks of a “word of God” which affirms the devotion (the hallowing) of *every* creature of God as being that which may be partaken of as food. In this respect, he deems every creature “ideal”; that is, nothing need be cast away or refused, so long as it may be partaken of with thanksgiving.

According to Paul, every creature thus is hallowed (i.e., connotatively, *approved*, or correctly identified as serving for food; *cp* 1 Cor.7:14); and this is so, both “through the

word of God,” and also through “pleading.” (Note that the term here is not “prayer,” but “pleading.”)

Apart from this first epistle of Paul written to Timothy, it is only at the time prior to Moses and subsequent to the flood that we find a “word of God” in which it is evident that no formal divine restrictions are placed on what may be eaten. Indeed the situation for Noah and his sons was very plainly this: “Be fruitful and increase and fill the earth and subdue it. And the fear of you and the dismay due to you shall come on every living animal of the earth, even on every flyer of the heavens, and in all which is moving on the ground, and in all the fishes of the sea. Into your hand are they given. And every moving animal which is living is coming to be food for you. *As the green herbage* [which was given without restriction], I give to you *all*. Yea only flesh with its soul, its blood, you shall not eat” (Gen.9:1-4).

With respect to creatures which may be eaten for food, it is evident that Paul likens our present situation as members of the body of Christ to that of those who lived following the flood. In a parallel sense today, in accord with the ancient precedent of Genesis 9:1-4, every creature of God is now hallowed for food. Even as in that day of old, in which every moving animal was permitted for food, thus also today, every creature of God is ideal and nothing is to be cast away, being taken with thanksgiving.

Of course even as one might prefer not to eat certain green herbs (finding a certain herb less desirable, or even offensive and quite undesirable), one might prefer not to eat various animals. Yet such judgments of desirability, even as of nutritional value and healthfulness, will vary considerably from nation to nation and person to person, according to one’s culture, education, and personal preference.

Similarly, Paul recognizes that, in the lives of some, perilous circumstances might well arise in which survival would demand the eating of certain animals ordinarily deemed

objectionable. Yet under such circumstances, if one were able to receive such life-sustaining food with thanksgiving (even if only through earnestly pleading to God for the ability to partake), one may freely partake of it. Indeed, Paul would have us know that thus, through heartfelt *pleading* (in contradistinction to a mere routine, formal request), even the most ordinarily undesirable food is “hallowed” (and so, approved) for eating; even as, according to precedent, it is hallowed as well by the word of God (recorded in Genesis 9:1-4).

So it is evident that it is a withdrawal from the faith—indeed that it is a teaching of demons—now to advocate “abstaining from foods, which God *creates* [even if He does not approve, under Moses] to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who believe and realize the truth, seeing that every creature of God is ideal and nothing is to be cast away, being taken with thanksgiving, for it is hallowed through the word of God and pleading” (1 Tim. 4:3-5; *cp* v.1).

If some of us, because of habit, preference, opinion, or merely former teaching, even now choose not to eat certain meats, that is fine. But if others of our brethren, not having our notions or not having shared our experiences, wish to eat the very foods which we prefer to set aside, that is fine as well.

Paul declares, “I have perceived and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is contaminating of itself [i.e., nothing is intrinsically “unclean”], except that the one reckoning anything to be contaminating, *to that one* it is contaminating” (Rom.14:14).

PURSUING PEACE

Even so, in our conversations, and especially during fellowship meals shared with other believers, let us be discreet and sensitive to the convictions of others, ones who,

even as ourselves, are precious to God. As Paul wrote in Romans 14:15-18, “For if, because of food, your brother is sorrowing, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not, by your food, destroy [i.e., induce loss or retrogression, to] that one for whose sake Christ died. Let not, then, your *good* be calumniated, for the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in holy spirit. For he who in this is slaving for Christ, is well pleasing to God and attested by men.”

“Consequently, then, we are pursuing that which makes for peace and that which is for the edification of one another. Not on account of food, demolish the work of God. All [food today], indeed, is ‘clean’ [in the sense of not being prohibited], but it is evil to the man who with stumbling is eating. [So] It is ideal not to be eating meat, nor yet to be drinking wine, nor yet to do aught by which your brother is stumbling, or is being snared or weakened” (Rom.14:19-21).

For us, then, the kingdom of God, even as its associated righteousness, is not concerned with matters of food and drink. Yet since God’s reign in our lives today does encompass all those matters of “righteousness” with which we *are* concerned, even as “peace and joy in holy spirit” (Rom. 14:17), let us accordingly be “pursuing righteousness, faith, love, peace, with all those who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart” (2 Tim.2:22).

James Coram

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

A Scripture conference and fellowship gathering is to be held in Union, Washington, January 15–17, 1999. The theme for these meetings is: “Praise and Prayer in Accord with the Evangel.” The guest speakers include Jim Coram, and Dan Newell. For directions or information concerning lodging, please contact Erin Western (253-565-6677 or 253-208-7214).

YAHWEH'S CONSUMMATION OF JOB'S CAPTIVITY

YAHWEH's revelation of Himself as the One Who is ultimately responsible for all things has become the solution to Job's agony and is now seen as the true theme of the book.

¹⁰ + **Then Yahweh Himself turned back the captivity of Job when he prayed on behalf of his associates. And Yahweh added to all that Job had by a double portion.**
¹¹ + **All his brothers and all his sisters came to him and all his acquaintances from before, and they ate bread with him in his house. Then they sympathized with him and comforted him over all the evil that Yahweh had brought upon him. Each of them gave to him one kesitah, and each, one pendant of gold.**

¹² + **Thus Yahweh Himself blessed the latter years of Job more than his beginning. He came to have a flock of fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand pair of oxen and a thousand jennies. Also he came to have seven sons and three daughters. He called the name of the first Jemimah, the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Kerenhappuch. Women so lovely as the daughters of Job were not found in the whole country. Their father gave them an allotment in the midst of their brothers.**

¹⁶ + **Job lived after this a hundred and forty years. And he saw his sons and his sons' sons to four generations.**

¹⁷ + **Then Job died, old and satisfied with days.**

Job's experience, filled with unrelenting pain and grief is well expressed by the term *captivity* in 42:10. He had been captured by calamity and could not escape.

Even more sobering, Yahweh Himself was the One Who had brought him into these bonds of affliction. That was what Job had maintained all along, despite his lapses into self-pity and self-defense. And that was what Yahweh had just confirmed in the stirring poems of chapters 38-41. Now, Job's surviving family members, long absent from the scene, appear to sympathize and console Job *over all the evil that Yahweh had brought upon him* (Job 42:11).

The root and responsible cause of Job's captivity is to be traced, not to Job's sinfulness and enmity, not to the guile of the Adversary, but to God. Therefore, if there is to be an end of Job's captivity, it must be God Who achieves it; if there is to be a reversal away from the sorrow and into blessing and satisfaction, it must be God Who brings it about.

James calls this *turning back* of Job's captivity, "the *consummation* of the Lord" (James 5:11). It is not simply an end, and far more than a return to a former condition. The turning back is a return to prosperity by means of a process that consummates in its goal; it speaks of both an end and a gain. God has put an end to the evil He had brought on Job, but also God has brought Job into a great gain of good. It is through God's imposing of this great evil and the endurance granted Job, that he now *sees* Yahweh (42:5) with a happiness and a peace that he could not otherwise have known.

JOB'S LATTER YEARS

In the account of Job's former years, given in chapter 1, the focus was all on Job. Job was "flawless and upright" (1:1). Job "came to be the greatest of all the sons of the East" (1:3). Job was assiduous in following the practices of worship and sacrifice laid down by God (1:4,5). The

Adversary drew attention to the weak basis of Job's flawless behavior and suggested that Job would act quite differently if Yahweh would withdraw His special protection and take away his blessings. Then Job would scorn Him to His face (1:9-11).

But now specifically and directly traced to the evil Yahweh had brought on Job and the consummation gained by Him, the focus is all on the Deity. "Thus," through the very experiences described throughout the book of Job, "Yahweh *Himself* blessed the latter years of Job more than his beginning" (42:12).

If someone should say that Yahweh blessed Job because of Job's endurance, we still see that Job's endurance must be traced to the operations of God within and round about Job. In the words of James, Job's endurance is something we *hear* of, but God's consummation is what we *perceive*.

The consummation provided by the Lord includes the sheep and camels and oxen and jennies, the sons and daughters and Job's long life and satisfied days.

There is also Job's heightened expectation. "Affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness *expectation*" (Rom.5:3,4). Job's expectation goes beyond the years of prosperity just ahead. In his distress Job had asked, "If a master dies shall he live again?" (Job 14:14), and he proclaimed in faith, "I know my Redeemer is living . . . Whom I shall perceive for myself" (19:25,27). This expectation is now sealed by God's own words concerning His wisdom and power in chapters 38 through 41 applied to Job's experience of affliction. Nothing is without a cause or a purpose because God is as He reveals Himself to be. Death and sin and sorrow cannot be final things.

Consequently, although Job is given double the number of sheep and camels and jennies that he had before, he has the same number of sons and daughters (*cp* Job 1:2,3; 42:12,13). The only way Job's children will be doubled

in number is by deliverance from death. This becomes, therefore, Yahweh's answer to the question of 14:14, and the fountain of Job's continuing satisfaction.

His current blessings crowned with expectation reveal the character of the Lord's consummation of Job's experience. But even more so, the fullest expression of the consummation achieved by God is found in Job's exultant words in 42:5, "*But now my eye sees You.*"

SATISFIED WITH DAYS

Yahweh has turned back the captivity of Job. He has reversed the very evil He Himself had brought upon him. This evil has done its work and has opened blessings of many sorts, wisdom and riches and children and "satisfaction of days." This last blessing is more than longevity. It is long life with thankfulness and peace. If there were hard times and occasions of sorrow and frustration during these extended years, there was still satisfaction. For Job there would be no more whining, no more wishing he had never been born, no more defendings of self. Satisfaction comes with the appreciation of God that Job has gained. Indeed there must have been further experiences of evil for Job, though surely not so severe, and certainly not so sharp a test. But, except for one matter, these are not mentioned in light of Job's testedness.

Yet there is one evil for Job that remains in view. "Job *died*." This means that God's final consummation of good is still put in abeyance for him as with all mankind. It awaits the realization of the results of Christ's faithfulness in dying for God's enemies. That realization is described in Romans 5:18 in terms that parallel but transcendently exceed the words "satisfied with days." Because of the One, Jesus Christ, Job, whose name means "enemy," and all mankind will ultimately enjoy "life's justifying."

D.H.H.

LESSONS FROM JOB

THE book of Job has captured the minds of many writers, including several associates of our work in the past and contributors to our magazine. We conclude our series of studies on the book of Job with the following summations by these valued teachers on various themes of the book:

GOD'S BLESSED CONSUMMATION

Job has justified God and condemned self. The flesh is abased. The "consummation" is reached. Satan's blows have produced the desired effect. The captivity is "turned back" and made to yield "the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow therewith." The consummation has justified and vindicated the strange, inscrutable process. Let us not chafe, then, if He startles us from the even tenor of our ways, neither let us measure His dealings by the small span of our mind. Nature, as we know it, is but one circle of the limitless whole, over which God reigns. What is beyond the circle we know as nature, we are ignorant of. The place we live in is so narrow, and the facts we deal with are so familiar, that we feel far too knowing, and are prone to forget that our knowledge is limited and defective. When we are passing through deep waters, and all seems contrary to us, let us know that all around the vast sphere, the unseen God is operating, in accord with a law that is above our understanding, and a light that is not for our eyes. Amid the mystery of the present condition of

affairs, He leads all things toward final order and rest and perfection. Let us trust Him, then; let us give Him glory in all things; let us justify Him at all cost, and the smile of His face will soon brighten our path.

V. Gelesnoff

JOB'S FAITH

Job was sifted, as was Peter, and his faith held. In spite of his recriminations he looked beyond the immediate, regarding his affliction as of God. And this is the strong note of the narrative. The origin and purpose of evil is of and with God. There is a meaning in its existence beyond human knowledge. Men do evil but apparently no good comes of it. But when God employs it, it is only and essentially for good. The ordering and the end are His own. Yet because man is not always permitted to see this, its presence is assigned to Satan, or the gods many of this mundane system.

Yet Satan is but an instrument, powerful as may be his office. Men, too, are unconscious agents of God's supreme will. Through all, however, the Lord's consummation is sure. Did they but know it, it is men's great mainstay. The infliction of evil is for our learning, and thereby we are shown, as was Job, the nearness of God. But how revealed are the divine compassions as we see and know them in Christ! How almost inexpressible our position as "in Him," and our indebtedness for so great a revelation! Job had no such light. It was given him, however, to see in most marked ways, a wonder-working God.

Now, Job can pray indeed, and its ministry blesses his friends. He becomes to them a channel of real knowledge. They see "the Lord's consummation." And, that God has a wiser and more beneficent purpose in evil and calam-

ity than chastening or correction. There is an outcome of good that few may see. Yet, it is always there. And one day, when the lessons that evil engenders are truly learned, creation far and wide will find but good, and that in God.

William Mealand

GOD'S USE OF THE COUNTERWORKER

At the conclusion of this most unique book we can perhaps ask: What objective is behind the book? Undoubtedly many aspects lie within the chapters of the book. For instance, the supremacy of God is there, as it is in every book of the Scriptures. The book certainly shows God using evil, though that is not a feature exclusive to Job. It records many thoughts of a number of persons, formed and expressed in thorough ignorance of what El was doing, yet each claiming to have much actual understanding. Because this is so large a part of the book, it must have a relation to the object designed around it.

The debate is certainly not the plot of the book, but it is a background or network necessary to carry forward that which was set in motion in the two introductory chapters. Surely then we cannot be mistaken when we suggest that the object of the book is to set out, once and for all, that El uses one who works contrary to Himself, and through this one is afforded the circumstances wherein El reveals Himself to His creatures to a fuller degree than is possible otherwise. The counterworker or adversary is thus lifted out of that obscure position which lacks either reason or value, and is shown as a factor *needed in the ways of Yahweh*.

The implications of this idea are such as to suggest the need for a sequel arising out of the main discussion of the book. Moreover, the sequel is hinted at when the book tells, in concrete terms, what blessings came to Job. This

comes in chapter 42 after we hear of Job's increased understanding of Yahweh.

In the epistle of James, this result is taken out of the form of being a simple display in family and estate, and it is put into definite words: Job endured. That is the great point. Patience is not really in the picture. Job's endurance led to the revelation that Yahweh is very compassionate and pitiful, and that He leads events to His own consummation. To this conclusion all matters and items of the book contribute, and it is the truth brought out in the wider range of the eons.

Thus the Adversary fills that part for which he was intended. And the result is that El is able to reveal the glories of His righteousness and His love. These are glories which show Him to be the Father, the One Who is to be All in all His creation.

E. H. Clayton

GOD'S UNDERLYING PURPOSE

The underlying purpose of God in dealing with mankind is brought before us in the book of Job, who lived before the law was given. According to popular notions prevailing in religious circles today, Job should never have suffered, for he was a just man and feared God. The evil that came upon him was not for any ill that he had done, or as punishment for any crimes that he had committed. He did not break any law and suffer its just penalty. God did not deal with him on the ground of law or of retribution at all. Even when sorely tempted to curse God, he did not yield to it. Nevertheless his trial continued until we are almost tempted to join his false friends and insist that he must be getting his just deserts, for God must not be accused of treating him unjustly.

We do not consider the *end* that the Lord has in view. We imagine all evil must be related to something *bad* in the *past* instead of something *good* in the *future*. We do not realize that evil is a *gift* from God, designed to bring us *down* to our proper place and raise God *up* to the position His deity demands in the glorious consummation, when He will be All in all. We need evil for what we *are*, and *shall be*, not merely for any wrong that we have done. Evil is not essentially a *penalty*, but a *preparation*. It is *humbling* and *revealing* and necessary for the appreciation of good and of God.

A. E. Knoch

THE NEED OF TRIALS

Trial, probing, experiment is a thing God does not need for Himself, since He knows all. But His creatures need it, for they are here to learn, like Job, not only what is in themselves, but also what is in God.

God's attitude toward Job is very different from that which we usually associate with trial. Like Job's false friends, we imagine that His object was to expose the evil in Job. But it was rather to reveal the good. The first trial was the loss of what Job had, but he endures and exclaims: Yahweh, He gives, and Yahweh, He takes away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh!

Yet Satan is not satisfied, which leads to the touching of Job's bone and flesh. It is no longer a question of mere reward for deeds, or of Job's possessions, but of heart loyalty to God under the most trying personal affliction. This it is that God values in His creatures. For this His heart hungers. And this it is that He got from Job, and will yet get from everyone, when He is All in all.

A. E. Knoch

Notes on 1 Samuel

YAHWEH'S IS THE BATTLE

(1 Samuel 17:41-58)

IN the confrontation of David before Goliath we see God's chosen one armed with faith, opposing the mighty champion armed with sword. The battle belongs to Yahweh; consequently, it is brief and decisive.

THE PROVING OF FAITH

⁴¹ + Now the Philistine ^{lgo}came walking + near to David, and the man carrying the large shield was before him. ⁴² + When the Philistine 'looked up and 'saw 'David, + he 'despised him, for he ^bwas only a youth, + ruddy with a well-favored appearance. ⁴³ + The Philistine 'said to David, Am I a cur that you are coming to me ⁱwith staves ⁷and stones? + David ^{lsa}replied, No', ⁱunless you should be more vicious ^fthan a cur^o. + The Philistine 'maledicted 'David ⁱby his elohim, ⁴⁴ and the Philistine 'said to David, Do ^{go}come to me and let me 'give 'your flesh to the flyer of the heavens and to the beast of the field.

⁴⁵ + David ^{lsa}replied to the Philistine, You are coming 'against me ⁱwith sword and ⁱspear and ⁱscimitar; + yet I am coming 'against you in the Name of Yahweh of hosts, the Elohim of the arrays of Israel, Whom you have challenged ⁷today^o. ⁴⁶ Yahweh shall lock you up in my hand 'this 'day. + I will smite you and ^ctake off 'your head from ^{on} you; + I will give ⁷your^o corpse ⁷and the corpses^o of the camp of the Philistines 'this 'day to the flyer of the heavens and to the wild animal of the earth. + Then the whole earth shall know that there is an Elohim 'in Israel. ⁴⁷ And

'this whole 'assembly shall know that Yahweh shall 'give victory ^{not} without ⁱ sword +orⁱ spear. For Yahweh's is the battle, and He will 'deliver you into our hands.

Goliath showed that he felt insulted by David's presence by asking if they thought he was a wild dog that could be driven away with a club or stones. David's response is most serious: Anyone defying the living God is more vicious than any wild cur. So Goliath curses David by his gods and bids David to come close so he can slaughter him and feed him to the birds.

David responds simply by giving a voice to his faith. Goliath was armed with sword, spear and scimitar, but David was coming "in the Name of Yahweh of hosts." Yahweh would lock Goliath up in David's hand, the whole earth would come to know the true Elohim is in Israel, and Israel would come to learn "Yahweh's is the battle," Who gives the victory without a sword or spear. For David, the entire purpose of the battle was the glorification of God.

THE IMPOSSIBLE BATTLE WON FLESH IMMOBILIZED

⁴⁸ + **Then it ^boccurred ^twhen the Philistine arose and ^{lgo}came + 'near to meet David, +that David 'ran + 'quickly toward the array to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹ + David 'stretched 'his hand into the wallet and 'took from there a stone. + He 'slung it and 'smote 'the Philistine 'on his forehead. + The stone 'sank ⁷through the helmet^o into his forehead, and he 'fell on his face ^{to^d} the earth.**

⁵⁰ + **David, ⁱwith sling and ⁱ stone, was 'faster ^fthan the Philistine; + he 'smote 'the Philistine and 'put him to 'death. +But there was no sword in David's hand; ⁵¹ +so David 'ran up and 'stood ⁷over^{cs} the Philistine, + 'took hold 'of his sword and 'pulled it from its scabbard; and ⁱwith it he put him to 'death and 'cut off 'his head. +When the Philis-**

tines 'saw that their master of war was dead, + they 'fled. ⁵² +Then the men of Israel and Judah 'arose and 'shouted and 'pursued 'the Philistines as far as ⁷the entrance⁻ of Gath⁻ and as far as the gates of Ekron. + The fatally wound-ed of the Philistines 'fell 'along the Shaaraim road + ^frto Gath and ^frto Ekron. ⁵³ +When the sons of Israel 'returned from dashing⁻ after the Philistines, + they 'robbed 'their camps. ⁵⁴ +Then David 'took 'the head of the Philistine and was about to 'bring it ~to Saul~, +but he ^pput 'his ^{all}weapons in his tent.

What were the arrays of the living God doing at this time? It is interesting that Israel with a king (Saul) was in the same condition as Israel without a king when the coffer of Yahweh was taken and the glory was departed from Israel. Israel was simply standing by, in fear, waiting for God to do something. The astounding thing, which the book of Samuel has testified to Israel, is that the very presence and power of God can reside in a human, in His anointed. In 1 Samuel 5:1-5 the god of the Philistines falls on its face before the coffer of Yahweh. After the Philistines stand it up again, Yahweh causes it to fall again, cutting off its head and hands. The same things Yahweh did to the idol of Dagon, David did to Goliath. The message here is the Word of God becoming flesh and delivering humanity.

FAITH UNLEASHED

The shepherd who ran after bears and lions to deliver the lambs they were carrying away now runs toward this dog to deliver the flock of Israel. His hands and fingers were quite familiar with the inside of the shepherd's wallet and the sling and the placing of stones. He could focus his eye on the enemy. "David with sling and stone was faster than the Philistine" (v.50). Faith did not hesitate to fulfill its destiny.

John's account of the life of Christ presents Him as the Son of God. In doing so John omits the struggle in prayer in Gethsemane, in which the will of the flesh is subjected to the will of God. The boldness of Christ in John's account of the Gethsemane incident exhibits His undaunted faith. Knowing fully everything that was about to happen, Jesus *came out to* the squadron of soldiers, and *He asked them*, "Whom are you seeking?" He told them again He was the One they were looking for, and, if they really wanted Him, to let His disciples leave. He would remain there alone for them to take. And when Peter tried to protect Him, the Lord rebuked him and healed the enemy. This iron faith of Christ was prefigured in David, running to slay the giant. And here, in the account in which the words, "if it be possible let this *cup* pass from Me," are absent, the words of Christ resound with purpose and amazement, "Thrust the sword into the scabbard. The *cup* which the Father has given Me, may I by no means be drinking it?" (John.18:4-11).

THE ENEMY'S HEAD

"He slung it and smote the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank through the helmet into his forehead . . . so David . . . took hold of his sword . . . and cut off his head" (vs.49-51). "And I shall set enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He shall hurt you in the head, and you shall hurt Him in the heel" (Gen.3:15). From the beginning it has been prophesied that Christ would be injured, but not lastingly, while He would totally vanquish the Adversary. This is the reason for the sevenfold mention of Goliath's head in this chapter. Christ's victory over Satan and death, in the weakness of human flesh, focuses all glory on God and His purpose.

"Then David took the head of the Philistine and was about to bring it to Saul" (v.54; some manuscripts read, "brought it to Jerusalem"). The head of the opponents'

hero or king was a trophy of war. When the Philistines finally killed Saul, they took his head and placed it in the temple of Dagon (*cf* 1 Chron.10:8-10). As with the ark being placed in the temple of Dagon, it seems to have been common practice for such trophies and weapons to adorn a nation's temples. In this case, the head of Goliath may have been taken back to a significant place in Israel and had a mound of stones raised over it for a memorial.

If the reading of this passage cites Jerusalem as the destination for Goliath's head, some suggest the passage is an anachronism—a statement that is out of time with the context. Since Jerusalem was not yet the capitol, it may seem unlikely for it to be taken there. However the writer of Samuel may have been well aware of events occurring later and filled in details here. Israel, Benjamin in particular, did possess the area of Jerusalem, but not the stronghold of the Jebusites (Judg.1:8,21; 1 Chron.11:4-8). It is probable that David made a return visit to Bethlehem, even though he did not remain there as shepherd for Jesse's flock. He may have taken the sword and head of Goliath back with him. The sword came to rest in Nob, just north of Jerusalem, where David received it later from Ahimelech (1 Sam.21:1-9). Goliath's skull may have been memorialized on some hill in the area of Jerusalem at that time, or it could also have been moved there from another place during David's reign later.

GOLGOTHA

A memorial mound of stones over Goliath's head would probably be called *Gal-Goliath* (meaning *heap* or *mound of Goliath*). With the passing of time, it may have become known as *Golgotha* (*skull*, or *the place of a skull*).¹ When

1. Suggested in *HIDDEN PICTURES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT* (Ada R. Habershon; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1982).

Jesus Christ died on the cross, He made the hill of Golgotha the place where the serpent's skull was crushed. It may well be that in God's providence the hill of Golgotha would receive its name when the son of Jesse placed the giant's head there.

THE ADVERSARY'S WEAPON

"So David ran up and stood over the Philistine, took hold of his sword and pulled it from its scabbard" (v.51). The weapons of Goliath were unused against David. Perhaps this too speaks of Christ. Christ's death was not a fatal blow from the Adversary, rather it was a laying down of His life. "Therefore the Father is loving Me, seeing that I am laying down My soul that I may be getting it again. *No one is taking it away from Me, but I am laying it down of Myself.* I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to get it again. This precept I got from My Father" (John. 10:17,18). "For the Chief of the world is coming, and in Me it has not anything" (John.14:30). "For Thou wilt not be forsaking my soul in the unseen, nor wilt Thou be giving Thy Benign One to be acquainted with decay. Thou makest known to me the paths of life. Thou wilt be filling me with gladness with Thy face" (Acts 2:27,28).

"David . . . stood over the Philistine, took hold of his sword . . . and cut off his head" (v.51). Goliath was beheaded with his own sword! Haman was hung on his own gallows! (Esther 7:9,10). Pharaoh thought the Israelites were trapped between the wilderness and the sea, but the sea became his death, not theirs (Exodus 14). But greater than these is the victory of Christ! "Since, then, the little children have participated in blood and flesh, He also was very nigh by partaking of the same, that, through death, He should be discarding him who has the might of death, that is the Adversary, and should be clearing those whoever, in fear of death, were through their entire life liable to slav-

ery" (Heb.2:14,15). Death was the sword in Satan's hand, and by death Christ defeated him. No wisdom or devising can approach to God's. On this thought Paul quoted from Job, "He is clutching the wise in their craftiness" (1 Cor. 3:19; cf Job 5:12,13; Psalms 7:15,16; 9:15,16).

FAITH MULTIPLIED

David's victory over Goliath instantly collapsed the courage of the Philistines and inflated the courage of the Israelites. Similarly, the faith of Jesus becomes our faith. Paul said, "Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in *faith that is of the Son of God*" (Gal.2:20). Faith is a gift of God to us (Eph.2:8), and with it He will also supply the competence that we may fulfill His purpose for us (Col.1:12).

And so the Israelites charged down into the valley they feared as death itself. Hurdling Goliath's corpse they rushed up the other side, pursuing the Philistines to their fortresses. It sounds so like the words of Christ, ". . . the gates of the unseen shall not be prevailing against it," *My ecclesia* (Matt.16:18). Death cannot hold those who are Christ's. They will be raised to live and reign with Him.

WHOSE SON IS HE?

⁵⁵ + ^{as} **When Saul had seen⁻ David going forth to meet the Philistine, he had said to Abner, chief of the military host, ^aWhose son is this lad, Abner? And Abner had ^{ls}a replied, As your soul lives, O king, how should I know?** ⁵⁶ + **Then the king had ^{ls}a ordered, You ^{ask} inquire! ^aWhose son is this stripling?** ⁵⁷ + **So, ^{as} when David had returned⁻ from smiting⁻ the Philistine, + Abner had ^ttaken him and ^bbrought him before Saul, ⁺while the head of the Philistine was still in his hand.** ⁵⁸ + **Saul ^ssaid to him, ^aWhose son are you, young man? + David ^{ls}a replied, The son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite.**

Perhaps Saul was planning to make David's family exempt from national taxes, according to the promise, and needed to know more about the family. But it is somewhat surprising to see how much space in this chapter is given to identifying David and his origin. The following outline briefly highlights the prominence given to this topic.

- David's Background and coming (12-22)
- The Unachievable Reward (23-30)
- The Coming of Faith (31-40)
- The Proving of Faith (41-47)
- The impossible Battle Won (48-54)
- Whose Son is He? (55-58)

Yet this too is a shadow of things concerning Christ. One of the major themes of John's account is the identity and origin of Christ. The first chapter abounds with descriptions of Christ: the Word of God, the One through Whom all came into being, the One in Whom is life, the Light of life, the only-begotten of God, the One on Whom the Spirit of God remains, the Baptizer in holy spirit, the Son of God, Rabbi, Teacher, Messiah, the One of Whom Moses wrote, the King of Israel, the Son of Mankind, and many more.

But despite the signs and abundant proofs of His identity, we read, "Can anything good be out of Nazareth?" (1:46); "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, with whose father and mother we are acquainted? How, then, is he saying that 'Out of heaven have I descended?'" (6:42); "But this man, we are aware whence he is, yet the Christ, whenever He may be coming, no one knows Him, whence He is" (7:27); "For not out of Galilee is the Christ coming! . . . Search and see that out of Galilee no prophets is roused" (7:41,52); "We are aware that it was to Moses that God has spoken. Yet this man—we are not aware whence he is" (9:29); "When, then, Pilate hears this saying, he was the more afraid . . . and is saying to Jesus, 'Whence are

you?" (19:8,9). And what was the reason the Jews determined that Christ must be crucified? It was His identity. He said He was the Son of God.

Even though David had played sweet music to soothe Saul's mind, and even though Saul thought he had sent David to his death, he knew not who he was or where he was from. So was Israel with Christ. Before his stoning, Stephen told Israel that Joseph was not known to his brothers till the *second* time, and that Moses was *rejected the first time* he came to deliver his brethren (Acts 7). So also, Christ is unknown and rejected until His second coming to Israel.

David stood before Saul with the head of Goliath in his hand, and Saul didn't know who he was. Christ healed the sick, made the lame walk, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead, and they asked, "Till when are you lifting our soul? If you are the Christ, tell us with boldness" (John 10:24). The leaders of Israel were like the chief of the dining room in Cana. They did not know the origin of the wine. They could taste it, they could smell it, they could see it, but it wasn't given to them to recognize it. But in God's grace, it was given to the servants who drew the water to know, and those who are called know that He is the Son of God.

J. Philip Scranton

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FOR HE WAS ROUSED

THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST settles once and for all the fact of human sinfulness. If any are to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (Matt.5:48) they must be saved from their sins. If anyone of God's people, Israel, is to find and follow the way into life (Matt.7:14; 19:17-21) that one must be saved from sinning with the law written on his heart. To be saved from outer darkness and lamentation and gnashing of teeth, from Gehenna and its fires, from condemnation and loss, there must be a Saviour Who saves from sins.

ALL ARE SINNERS

When the apostle Paul developed important and basic details of the evangel of God in his epistle to the Romans, he began with a lengthy exposition of the fact that "Not one is just" (Rom.3:10); "no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight" (3:20), "for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (3:23).

Since this is true, then all are "defenseless" (Rom.2:1), and all are hoarding for themselves "indignation in the day of indignation and the revelation of the just judgment of God" (2:5). Every single human being fails in the matter of "endurance in good acts" (2:7), and therefore we all face "indignation and fury, affliction and distress" (2:9).

But of course Paul brings us to this impasse in order to show the grace and glory and power and goodness of the evangel. "Yet now," he writes, "apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and

the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing" (Rom. 3:21,22). The faithfulness of Christ even to the death of the cross is what makes the difference.

It is God's sparing not of His Son (Rom.8:32) that brings salvation out of affliction and distress, so that despite our racewide failure of being workers of good, glory and honor and peace (*cf* Rom.2:10) will ultimately come to all. "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

DARKNESS CAME

In a similar way, the entire book of Matthew has led us to the conclusion that not one human being is righteous; all are sinners. Matthew's account has focused on Israel, so that their sinfulness is especially evident in the crucifixion of Christ, but all mankind were represented and thus involved. When the "darkness came over the entire land" from the sixth to the ninth hour of that solemn passover (Matt.27:45), and when Jesus cried, "My God! My God! Why didst Thou forsake Me?" (27:46), and when He cried with a loud voice and let out the spirit, while the earth quaked (27:50,51), who can conclude otherwise than that "all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God"?

Despite the occasional act of selfless kindness and loyalty and trust, the disciples and followers of Jesus, including Peter and John and the Mary's as well, were sinners needing to be saved from their sins. In view of the demands of perfection in the law, no one among the Lord's people, Israel, could plead full exemption from the condemnatory judgments spoken of by Jesus throughout His ministry.

The view for all Israel at the point of the three hours of darkness when Christ hung on the cursed piece of wood, is just the same as Paul described it for all mankind in Romans 2:9. The darkness encompasses them all, so that the impending indignation of God (Matt.3:7) hung over them all.

They all stood "liable to the Gehenna of fire" (Matt.5: 22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33) in the coming kingdom. Since no one had destroyed his own soul on His account (nor could anyone have done so) when the forces of evil were united against Him, they all stood there facing the destruction of their souls when the Son of Mankind would come in the glory of His Father, with His messengers, paying each in accord with his practice (*cf* Matt.16:24-27).

It was evident that in the end they all had spent time in the broad and spacious way into destruction (Matt. 7:13). Who among them was worthy to escape lamentation and gnashing of teeth (Matt.8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30)? How could this nation, as a whole, from top to bottom, become exempt from the condemnation experienced by Sodom (11:23), and how could Jerusalem avoid unfavorable comparison with repentant Nineveh (12:41)? The nation of Israel had shown itself guilty of treating the Lord *directly* as the "goat" nations will have treated Him *indirectly* by their treatment of His people in their time of trouble (*cf* Matt.25:41-45). The condemnation for that sort of failure is described by the Lord as "chastening eonian" (Matt.25:46).

THE LIGHTING UP

Even as Matthew 27 supports the truth of Romans 3:10-20,23, so also there is a parallel between Matthew 28 and the central chapters of Romans. The full light of Paul's evangel, introduced with the blazing noonday sun on the road to Damascus, is not found in Matthew. But there is

a *lighting up* of God's work of salvation that comes with "the lighting up into one of the sabbaths" that is spoken of in Matthew 28:1.

It is on the basis of the death of Christ and the darkness He endured, added to His resurrection, that God's promises of blessing to Israel will be fulfilled. Jesus came to save His people from their sins, and this will be realized because of the events of those three days set forth in Matthew 27 and 28. The glorious significance of Christ's death and resurrection, especially as Paul unfolds it in Romans and even more transcendently in Ephesians is not perceived in Matthew. But, as Paul also was graced to reveal, these events become the solid basis of the fulfillment of Matthew 1:21. It is now established that, in God's appointed time, Israel will be avowing with their mouth that Jesus Is Lord, and be believing in their heart that God rouses Him from among the dead, and so they shall be saved in personal realization and living manifestation (Rom.10: 9;11:26). The truth of this consummation is even now in Matthew 28 lighting up in the words of the Lord.

REJOICE!

The first word of the risen Lord noted in the book of Matthew is "Rejoice!" (Matt.28:9). Because of His death and resurrection Jesus can now speak in the context of salvation and the joys of the kingdom. Whereas Jesus began His public ministry with the word, "Repent!" (4:17), just as John the Baptist had done (3:2), His message now to the disciples begins with "Rejoice!"

Yet the people have not repented and have not come into appreciation even of their need of salvation from their sins. There is joy in our Lord's salvation out of death, but His greeting must mean more than that. Unless His resurrection means salvation and life for His people whom He came to save from their sins, then the joy is greatly restricted.

Even the repentance of the disciples has been slow and halting. But now with the resurrection, their thinking is being greatly changed from that type of rebuke and opposition voiced by Peter in Matthew 16:22 and the jealousies of 20:24, and above all else from their failures to understand the import of our Lord's words. True repentance comes with the opening of eyes to see, and that is now stirring with progressive increase in the eleven.

The greeting "Rejoice!" is the complement of the promise of Matthew 1:21. It also is the beginning, within the hearts of the eleven disciples, of appreciation for and assurance over the character of the kingdom, first presented in Matthew 5:3-12 by the word "Happy." It is not that there would be no sadness and affliction in the days to come. Far from it, for opposition and struggle remained strong and would continue until the Lord's return. But with the resurrection of the Saviour, the joy and happiness of salvation and life are certain to come.

FEAR NOT!

The next message by the risen Saviour is "Fear not" (Matt.28:10). This repeats the message first heard by the two Mary's from the messenger at the sepulcher, "Fear you not! For I am aware that you are seeking Jesus, the Crucified. He is not here, *for He was roused*" (Matt.28:5,6). "Rejoice!" and "Fear not!" are words that speak of achievement and expectation. They speak of good that is done and is to come. They stand in contrast to the "Beware" and the "woe" heard in the Mount of Olives discourse prior to the crucifixion (Matt.24:4,19). But even then the Lord spoke of happiness for certain ones who were "faithful and prudent" (24:45-47).

The question may then arise: How does anyone become faithful and prudent? What level of faithfulness, goodness, even perfection (*cf* Matt.5:48), does one have to reach to

escape the woe and the lamentation and the gnashing of teeth? But that is not exactly the right question as Matthew 5:48 should make clear. It rather should be: Since no one can reach the level of faithfulness, goodness and perfection described by the Lord, what must *God* do in order to save anyone from his and her sins?

That question may have been developing in the hearts of the eleven. The letters of Peter and John certainly indicate progress in this sort of thinking (*cf* 1 Peter 1:18,19; 1 John 2:2). In the giving of His Son for the world (John 3:16), God laid the solid foundation of His work of salvation. In opening their eyes to the truth, God was already enriching the lives of the eleven with faithfulness and goodness.

But this was not instantaneous. We recall how Thomas could not believe Jesus had been roused until he saw the nailprints in His hands and felt the wound in His side (John 20:25). But Thomas did believe when God mercifully provided the evidence demanded.

Consequently, it is all of God. First of all God does the work of salvation for sinners. Then, for some, He grants faith to believe what He has done, not perfect faith yet to any, but nevertheless faith, and that from God.

Now after the resurrection this growing light starts to shine, dimly at first, but more and more forcefully in the lives of those whose eyes are opened. Words of judgment and condemnation still speak truly, but they are now seen in the new context of the resurrection. Lamentation and gnashing of teeth are no more permanent than the darkness of Matthew 27:45 or the abyss of our Lord's death. The light will strengthen now because of what the Saviour endured and because He was roused "according as He said."

Just how the Lord's commission of Matthew 28:16-20 is to be understood has long been a controversial subject. Many have seen it as a general pattern for Christian leaders, considered somehow as heirs of the eleven disciples, to

spread the gospel and bring others into the "church." Others point out that the disciples themselves never seem to have undertaken the task, while Paul's commission to the nations did not include the specific feature of baptism mentioned here and included many new and distinctive features that are notably absent in the Lord's ministry to Israel.

Many years ago, A. E. Knoch pointed out that this commission begins with the Lord's "*presence* and exaltation and is to be carried on while He is *with* them, to the very close of that yet future eon."¹ It takes place during the opening years of the millennium. The blessing of the nations is in view, and so this commission stands in contrast to that of Matthew 10:5-8 where the disciples were charged not to pass forth into a road of the nations. That former commission directed the disciples in the past. This present commission is for the future.

Since these words are spoken regarding the promised kingdom, we can see how they fit in with the Lord's many teachings concerning blessings to come. The fifth chapter of Matthew especially has that time in view.

ALL AUTHORITY

Our concern here, however, is not so much with the details of those promises of glory to come, but with whether or not the many warnings and prophecies of judgment to come dim the light and goodness of that glory. Does the Lord's authority in establishing the kingdom extend to the imposition of everlasting sorrow and suffering, or of eternal destruction?

This cannot be. Fire and destruction, lamentation and chastisement never can be independent of the glory. They cannot be permanent expressions of divine authority, ends in themselves, standing apart from the blessings forever.

¹ A. E. Knoch: MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, pp.107,108.

They must be constructive, ultimately edifying to those who undergo them, just as Job was blessed through the experience of affliction in conjunction with Yahweh's revelation of Himself.

It is fitting, therefore, that the Lord speaks in Matthew 28:18 of His authority in relation to discipling the nations and identifying them with the name of the Father Who loves them and gives His Son for them, and of the Son Who died for them, and of the holy spirit which enriches their lives with rejoicing and peace. There is no doubt whatsoever that the judgment of the nations is carried out with authority. But now, at the close of Matthew, the divine authority is seen directed entirely to that which is embraced in the word *salvation*. Hence the authoritative judgments serve as temporary steps toward the authoritative glory.

LO! I AM WITH YOU

We began this article with the claim, "The crucifixion of Christ settles once and for all the fact of human sinfulness." Now we can say that the *resurrection* of Christ settles once and for all the fact of salvation by the Saviour. The teaching of everlasting hell is proved false by the resurrection of Jesus, Who is the Saviour. The sinner cannot save himself from his sins. But the Saviour can and will do so. He shall save His people and all sinners from their sins.

Now Jesus can speak to His disciples concerning the authority given Him for the discipling of all the nations. There is a basis for the kingdom and all its features. Even the judgments are settled on this foundation so that they can be constructive and edifying to all concerned. But Jesus does not speak of them now. All is encompassed in the grand assurance of His closing words in this account of His ministry: "Lo! I am *with* you all the days till the conclusion of the eon! Amen!"

Dean H. Hough