

# UNSEARCHABLE RICHES

**A Bi-Monthly Magazine  
for God and His  
Word**

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## **EDITORIAL**

WITH this issue our magazine commences its fifth year. In our endeavor to be true to the light God has given us, the continuance of the magazine has always trembled in the balance. More than once has it been an open question whether God would have us get out another issue. The subscriptions have never paid the printing expenses and it is due alone to the liberality of those whose hearts have responded to the message that we have been enabled to continue its publication. We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the friends of the truth for their timely aid.

And now, as we face a new year, it is with confidence and thankfulness. We are thankful that we have the God who has been our stay in the past. We are thankful for the message He has given us and we are confident that this message is not for ourselves only but also for His saints; that He will prepare hearts for its reception and support the medium for its expression.

We are not contending for a mere doctrine. We are championing the revealed character of God. The gloomy cloud of theology has obscured Him from us far too long. Its chilling mists have cooled our enjoyment of His power and His wisdom and His grace. Its libels and aspersions on His name have repelled the instinctive responses of our hearts so that we could not fully and unreservedly justify Him. Nor were we able to defend His honor in the presence of His enemies. But now all this is gone. We are able to vindicate Him in all His ways before all His creatures.

It has encouraged our hearts to hear of the efforts which have been put forth to interest others in the truth. Not only has the magazine been freely loaned to others, but friends have been subscribed for and lists supplied to whom we have sent "All in All." One novel method of presenting the



truth has been suggested by a brother who marked all of the occurrence of "eon" in a New Testament, giving the proper rendering in the margin. This would be a most effective argument.

We are quite sure that there are many thousands of the Lord's people who would welcome the truths we are presenting if they only knew where to find them set forth. It is our earnest desire to reach these seekers after light so that they may share with us some of the rich spoil we have found. May we affectionately urge our readers to co-operate with us in this work?

Various are the ways in which the truth may be spread. Opposition has closed the ordinary avenues through which to make our magazine known. But we are confident that God can and will, in due time, use this very opposition as a means of publishing it abroad. We are prepared to send specimen copies of the magazine, or, preferably, a pamphlet such as "All in All" to addresses which may be furnished us. We especially solicit a criticism or review of our booklets in other magazines and newspapers—secular as well as religious.

The truth is too grand and glorious to be hid beneath a bed of sloth or a bushel of grain. It should be trumpeted far and wide. It ought to be heralded from every house-top. Let us deem it an inestimable privilege to have a part in its proclamation and a share in its sufferings, for truth now, as always in the past, is promised persecution.

We would appreciate a response from those of our readers whom we have invited to renew their subscription. Those unable to pay will be cheerfully entered on our free list for we dare not refuse the truth to those who wish it. The post office regulations are such that we are obliged to ask for a definite expression.

The last pages of this issue are devoted to a QUESTION Box. In it we hope to answer such questions of general interest as our expositions have aroused, or the difficulties which may still cause some to doubt. We hope to make this department a real help.

## THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN THE BOOK OF JOB

The theory that has engaged so much attention, that the book of Job is a philosophical debate or abstract discussion of the problem of suffering, is inconsistent with what we know of Hebrew thought or history. Abstract conceptions and pictures of the ideal, more or less unconnected in themselves, are, judged by the sacred literature as a whole, singularly un-Hebrew in character. There is no evidence of this kind of writing—the apotheosis of the ideal—having been cultivated in Israel in any period that, by comparison, will serve the purpose of a practical exposition of Job. Hence we must dismiss the ideal and make room for the actual and concrete, for the personal and the political.

All the sacred books of the Hebrews sustained some relation to the constitutional history of the nation; and in most cases the relation is apparent. The book of Job is no exception. It is not a drama, or performance in *belles lettres*, but, like other writings, was called forth by some occasion of great national importance. It is not a discussion of an abstract character, virtually independent of historical circumstances. On the contrary, we must regard it as a narrative exhibiting in an illustrative light the case of Job in its bearing upon the experience of another. Deferring to a future occasion the consideration of the situation which is obviously in view, we pass on to review the substantive message of the book of Job.

It deals with the most perplexing of all topics, the Question of Evil. Adversity oft has the effect of driving the frivolous to reflect upon the meaning of life. For God's people, next to the existence of God, the most fundamental question is the presence of evil in the world. Its existence seems to cast a shadow upon God's character, and is a

standing source of perplexity to saint and sinner alike.

For the presentation of so momentous a theme a most effective mode of treatment has been chosen. A situation exhibiting evil that is unique is brought forward in a narrated story, and then upon that situation is concentrated light from successive points of view. In this way the conclusion of the book is brought forward by quite natural stages, while the insufficiency of certain theories current among men is exhibited.

The outstanding feature of the Prologue are two sessions of the Council of Heaven. The Lord is surrounded by "his ministers who do his pleasure." The sons of God are powers attending upon God as a council of officers upon a king. They are functionaries through whom God's government is carried on, and come to report. Among them came "the Satan". An inconsistency of translation\* in the current versions is responsible for the ideas in vogue. The word

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\* The Hebrew word שָׂטָן *satan* means opposer or adversary. It occurs in Nu. 22:22, 32; 1 Sam. 29:4; 2 Sam. 19:22; 1 Ki. 5:4; 11:14, 23, 25; 1 Chr. 21:1; Ps. 109:6; Zech. 3:1, 2; Job 1:6, 7, 8, 9; 2:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7. The verb שָׂטַן is found in Ps. 38:20; 71:13; 109:4, 20, 29; Zech. 3:1. As for the use of the noun observe the following: (1) The angel of the Lord is a *Satan* to Balaam (Nu. 22:22, 32); the Philistines regarded David as a *Satan* (1 Sam. 29:4); the sons of Zeruiah were David's *Satans* (2 Sam. 19:22); in the days of Solomon there was neither *Satan* nor evil occurrent (1 Ki. 5:4); Hadad the Edomite and Rezon were *Satans* of Solomon (1 Ki. 11:14, 23, 25); in Zechariah 3:1 sqq. the vision of Joshua and that of the candlestick are connected with the resumption of the work of building the temple after the suspension of work caused by the Samaritans. (2) The angels act as God's servants. They do His bidding. Their own character does not come into question. They are "good" or "evil", not in themselves, but according to the functions assigned them. When the function is adverse they are called either *evil* (Ps. 78:49), or "destroyers" (Job 33:22; Ex. 12:23). The spirit from the Lord that troubled Saul is called "evil" (1 Sam. 16:14), not in reference to its own character, but to the effect produced on Saul. The spirit that volunteered to entice Abab to his destruction, was not a false spirit in himself, he merely became a "lying" spirit in the mouth of Abab's prophets (1 Ki. 22:14). Thus there is no warrant for identifying the Satan of the Old Testament with the Serpent of Genesis.

is the title of an office, not the name of an individual. This officer comes with the other sons of God, and there is nothing to support the idea that he "crept" in. His office is that of "adversary"; the word implies that he is adverse to the saints in the same way that a supervisor may be considered as adverse to those he supervises. In the present case he describes his office as the inspection of earth; the word *from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it*, are in themselves descriptive of such an office. That they do not imply restlessness is evident from the fact that the same phrase is used of the 'eyes of the Lord' (2 Chr. 16:19), and are close enough to the words ("walks to and fro through the earth," five times repeated) in the vision of Zechariah (chh. 1:10-11 and 6:7), which refer to the spirits which carry out the divine mandates. Neither is the Adversary's action against Job prompted by malignity. To be suspicious is the function of an inspector; and he only does his duty in suggesting a possible flaw in the apparent piety of Job. The position of the Adversary is exactly that of the *Advocatus Diaboli* in the usage of the Roman Church, who has the function of making opposition to the canonisation of a saint, lest any flaw should be overlooked. The view here advanced receives added support from the ritualistic character of the narrative. The exact repetition of questions and formal phrases in the description of the two days suggests that these are periodical gatherings, with formularies of ritual, as each son of God presents himself. The phrase *he will curse thee* has the form of an oath in the Hebrew, as if the Adversary was taking an oath of fealty before assuming duty.

When the Council of Heaven reassembles and the Adversary proposes a yet more implacable trial, he acts in the spirit of some experimenter who tasks himself to devise some terrific strain, in admiration of a substance which has stood an extremity of testing. No one would see a sinister motive in a prosecutor who concentrates his energies to make a trial intensely searching lest it should prove one degree short of being exhaustive. Neither do

the Lord's words, *yet thou movedst me against him*, imply malevolence. They are just the remark one would expect from a superior to a subordinate officer when investigation has shown the suspicions of the latter to be unfounded.

Armed with the Divine decree, the Adversary went forth on his errand, and by concerted action of the varied forces at his disposal brings upon Job a series of disasters, succeeding one another with bewildering rapidity.

Without further dwelling on the Prologue, let it be noted that it serves the purpose of setting up, by superhuman agency, of a spectacle of evil as severe as it is unmerited. The questions raised by such a spectacle it leaves to be debated in the limited sphere of human knowledge. But already the writer has, in the deliberations of the Council of Heaven he has introduced, removed the problem from the sphere of free will and thrown it boldly upon God.

The necessary factors for the debate are in readiness. Job reduced to beggary and smitten in his person with the botch of Egypt, a disease at once agonizing and loathsome and commonly associated with Divine displeasure, lies on an ash-heap outside the city. The news of the disaster has spread far and wide, attracting a crowd of curious onlookers. At last the three friends of Job arrive. Having heard of Job's misfortunes, they hasten to pay a visit of condolence to their old friend; they meet at a common rendezvous, and in company approach the ash-mound, where for seven days and seven nights they are in constant and silent attendance on the sufferer.

The psychological moment is reached when Job breaks the silence with a "Curse". An infelicity of translation is apt to lead astray the English reader. The word is quite different from the expression for "renouncing God", used before. In all the varied forms of darkening which Job proceeds to invoke upon the day of his nativity there is not the least approximation to the sin which the Adversary thought possible for Job, and Job thought possible for his children.

This curse is the starting point of the whole discussion. Though Job has only asked why the luxury of death should be denied him, it is enough to show that he has discarded what the Friends deem the keystone truth of theology, that all evil is a judgment on sin. The Friends appear before us as men absolutely committed to a fixed system of thought. Their minds are closed; those uncomfortable details which mock their theology do not disturb their confidence: they continue to pour out in voluble eloquence generalities which are in accord with their theory. And dissent from their view of God's dealings they treat as apostasy and rebellion against God. Job once held the very views to which the Friends are committed, but he has spiritual life and mental vigor enough to cast them aside now that they have been unable to bear the touch of reality; he dares to have an open mind, and refuses adherence to a time-honored tradition which experience has shown to be insufficient.

Eliphaz, as probably senior in position, answers Job, commencing in an apologetic manner. With much tenderness he allows the former dignity of Job's position, and the largeness of his sympathy and liberality. He has the delicate task of suggesting to this man famed for righteousness that he has been secretly a sinner and is now suffering the penalty of some great sin. His first hint is conveyed in the form of hope: if evil were accidental, springing without seed out of the ground, then indeed Job's case would be hopeless; but since the visitation of calamity is no capricious accident, but its connection with sin is as much a law of nature as that of the upward tendency of fire, there is a way of restoration by forsaking the sin. His main thesis that only they who have sown iniquity reap its fruit, Eliphaz supports by a Vision, in which a voice proclaimed that if God visits any angelic defection with swift punishment, is He likely to overlook dereliction in frail men, who are as easily crushed as the moth. Then Eliphaz proceeds to picture the happy restoration which follows submission, and leaves his experience with Job, recommending it to his especial study.

Lo this, we have searched it, so it is;  
Hear it and know it for thyself.

The position of the two other speakers differs in nothing from that of Eliphaz. Bildad supporting it from tradition and nature, Zophar by dwelling on the unsearchableness of God. And both are careful to emphasize the personal bearing of the doctrine: Job a sinner, with a sinner's hope of restoration upon submission.

In answering these successive speeches Job gives unrestrained vent to his pent up feelings. He justifies the position taken up in the Curse: his calamity gives him a right to complain and ask for a speedy end. He expresses disappointment at the friends who have given him rebuke instead of comfort. He challenges them to look him in the face and accuse him. He makes no pretension to sinlessness, but he knows that no sin on his part can account for the colossal ruin that has overwhelmed him. In recoiling from the views which hitherto he had shared with the friends, Job swings to the extreme of presenting calamity as a persecution by God of helpless man whose life is as a day of an hireling. For God has set him as a mark, watches against him as if he were a sea-monster, breaks him with a tempest, multiplies his wounds without cause, and hunts him as fierce lion. Job commences to array facts in opposition to the Friend's doctrine: impunity of the wicked is to be seen as well as their punishment. They had offered commonplaces of Divine judgment; he retorts with commonplaces of impunity. He confronts the "wisdom of the aged," which has been cited to him, with another wisdom seen in the unfolding of events. The Friends had rested their doctrine on the immeasurable distance between God and man. Job turns this against them: it is just this distance that makes short-lived man helpless to bring his cause before Omnipotence; there is no daysman to lay hand on God equally with himself. As to the doctrine of the judgment of sinners, which is to the Friends the truth of truths, the very beasts know it: yet does that do away with the fact that the tents of robbers are found

prospering, while the just is made a laughing-stock? They will lie on God's behalf: Job will abide by facts, which seem to imply that God is indifferent as between righteous and wicked.

It is all one; therefore I say,  
He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.  
If the scourge slay suddenly,  
He will mock at the calamity of the innocent.  
The earth is given into the hands of the wicked;  
He covers the faces of the judges thereof:  
If it be not he, who then is it?

As Job fastens on God the responsibility for the standing scandal of righteousness abased and iniquity exalted, the thought of a vindication beyond Sheol flashes across his mind. But the idea is forthwith dismissed as unthinkable: a cut down tree may sprout again, even if its stock wither in the ground; but when man yields his breath, where is he?

In the second round of speeches animosities are much more in evidence. Such epithets as "miserable comforters," "physicians of no value," "forgers of lies," fly back and forth, while the views expressed are branded "vain knowledge." "proverbs of ashes," "defences of clay." The Friends maintain their argument by elaborating instances which have come within their range of observation. With the exception of the added thought that the short triumph of the wicked is only to emphasize their fall, the Friends advance no new argument; they only restate their theory in other terms. But Job's thoughts are developing: the views he had previously expressed are assuming definite shape. Whereas, before he had deplored the impossibility of bringing his case to God, he now formulates the idea that God subverts his cause. Again, hitherto in resisting the doctrine of the Friends he had cited instances opposed to their theory. But now that their doctrine has been pressed on him with renewed energy, Job is compelled to meet it squarely. Accordingly, he enlarges on the impunity of the wicked, cites and answers the stock objec-



tions against such impunity. At this juncture his argument is interrupted. The idea of a vindication beyond Sheol, hitherto brought forward as a momentary glimpse to be instantly rejected, now rises to a glorious certainty.

For I know that my Vindicator liveth,  
And that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth;  
And after my skin hath been thus destroyed,  
Yet in my flesh shall I see God!  
Whom I shall see on my side,  
And mine eyes shall behold and not another.

Returning to the impunity of the wicked, he expresses doubt whether such impunity is not a general principle, and tears to pieces the stock objections used to bolster up the appearances of providential equity. What have the Friends to say to these facts?

They have nothing to say: their formal theology cannot endure the light of evidence; the case has become too serious for them; their arguments are exhausted. They fall back upon the basis of their doctrine and each brings to a climax a different phase of a common contention. Eliphaz drops the general terms he had employed, and prefers a formal charge of actual sins. Bildad dwells on the basis of the doctrine; and the distance between finite and infinite overwhelms us as his glowing eloquence depicts the builder of the universe finding flaws in heaven's own brightness. Zophar reiterates the unfailing connection of evil with sin. Inspired by the solemnity of the occasion, he describes in magnificent heights of rhetoric the connection which the Creator since the beginning established between wisdom and departure from evil.

Job, too, carries to a climax each thought which has appeared in his former speeches. The charges of Eliphaz intensify his appeal to God against the Friends' misrepresentation. The certainty of a vindication is now reinforced by assurance of a glorious outcome.

He knoweth the way that I take;  
When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Cheered by this hope, Job resumes the topic of the impunity of the wicked which closed the last cycle; and what before was a doubt, is now regarded as a regular feature of the existing order. He points out that injustice exists as a regularly organized system. He describes encroachment, by removing boundaries, on the common land; the consequent formation of a class sinking in hardship and poverty; the antagonism of classes bred by the extravagance of the wealthy; the crowding of population in cities, and the violence of city crime; finally, the rise of a distinctly criminal class, whose whole existence is a warfare against the light. As he develops his subject we perceive that it is no longer a question of occasional exceptions to the doctrine of judgment on the wicked, but rather whether the existence of evil is not a fixed law of providence. Returning to his own case, Job draws, in a pair of companion pictures, a contrast between his former prosperity and his present abject misery. Coming directly to the specific accusations of Eliphaz, instead of answering them by argument, Job falls into a traditional form of oath, and disclaims all such sins as he could be suspected of.

At this point developments assume an unexpected turn. Among the spectators around the ash-mound was Elihu, of the family of Ram. He is an outsider; he is moreover young and of humble origin, and is conscious of the impropriety of intruding in a private conversation of men who are also his seniors and superiors in rank. Hence, he excuses himself for venturing his youthful voice be heard among such venerable men.

The purport of the speeches of Elihu is, I believe, commonly misunderstood. On the one hand there are those who think that the character of Elihu is intended for a "burlesque;" on the other hand, there are others who assign him a position wholly unwarranted by his speeches.

In seeking to arrive at a just appreciation of his ministry and doctrine, let us note the purpose of his speeches as described by the writer who introduced him, and enunciated by himself. The Friends left off speaking because

Job held fast to his opinion: they could not move him from the position he took up that God subverts man's cause. Hence, Elihu burns with indignation against both Job and his Friends—against Job because he had charged God with wrong; and against the Friends because they had failed to prove him guilty of wrong against God. In other words, his wrath against Job was kindled not so much for his doubt as to God's action, as for representing God as an enemy. His anger against the Friends arose simply from their failure to expose Job's position. He was disappointed in their conduct of the debate; he had expected something better from men of their high rank and mature experience. He was displeased because they had evinced more concern for their doctrine than the honor of God. He does not express dissatisfaction with them on any other ground.

As for Elihu's doctrine it is removed but an hair's breadth from that already presented. All that he seems to do is to slightly modify it in the direction of mildness. Like the Friends, Elihu connects evil with sin; only whereas with them evil is always *penal*, with him it is *preventive*. In other respects his doctrine is substantially the same as that of the Friends. Where he differs radically from them is in the attitude towards both God and Job. They had contended for the wisdom of the fathers: Elihu "will ascribe right to his Maker;" they had expended their oratorical powers in the interests of experience and tradition: Elihu "will speak on God's behalf." As for Job, he will "not answer him with their speeches." Like them, he dwells in terms of great beauty and force, on the unsearchableness of God; but whereas they used it to prove that Job was suffering the penalty of some sin, Elihu uses it to point out that it is just in this unsearchableness that lies a possible solution of Job's difficulty. Since "God is greater than man," it is only a matter of course that His ways in providence should transcend human comprehension in the same way as his works in nature transcend human powers. Therefore, when facing His strange dealings, instead of charging God with wrong, as Job had done,

it behooves him rather to assume the attitude of an humble learner.

That which I see not teach Thou me.

It is in virtue of his right attitude, and not of superior knowledge, that the Elihu speeches exert a rectifying tendency—reproving the Friends, and weaning Job from his opinion to a spirit of expectancy which prepares Job for the words of the Lord Himself, speaking out of the whirlwind.

Expositors who, in one way or another, have exaggerated the ministry of Elihu have been betrayed by the *a priori* supposition that a fourth speaker could be introduced only in the event of his occupying ground entirely distinct from the other three. Thus presuming to dictate what the book ought to be, it was easy to rule out the Elihu section as a "later addition," and miss the impressive lesson bound up with it; that a practical view of God's supremacy is more effective in promoting spiritual ends than unbounded zeal for traditional doctrine.

As Elihu nears the conclusion of his address, he looks up to heaven, and discerns the signs of approaching tempest. Bildad had already spoken of the storm (in ch. 26:9) as the moving presence of God, which the clouds conceal from our eyes, therefore, the first appearance of the "storm that cometh up" leads Elihu to the idea that God is approaching.

The Speech of the Deity is the climax of the whole debate. It constitutes the converging point of the *crescendo* and *diminuendo* movements of the book. But in order to a proper appreciation of this climax we must divest our minds from presumed ideas in regard to the object of the debate. It is not the doctrine of justification—that is not even mooted; nor is it man's sinfulness—that is a common topic with all speakers; neither is it suffering in general. The controverted point is explicitly defined to be this:

## WHY A JUST MAN SUFFERS AS A SINNER

The three Friends answered that the just suffers only when he lapses into the sinner's ways. Elihu suggested that the just suffers to be prevented from lapsing into sin. All these views are manifestly insufficient. To be sure, they embody a measure of unquestioned truth; but they merely explain certain uses of evil rather than account for its existence.

Let it be noted that, with the exception of a few verses in which Job is declared unequal even for the tasks of human government, the speech of the Lord deals exclusively with *animal* creation. This important fact acquires significance when we remember the association of evil with sin insisted upon by the previous speakers, as they endeavored to answer Job's question, Why should the righteous suffer? We can readily see that, in dealing with a problem, we are helped towards a solution if we can see the same principles operating in another sphere. This is precisely what the Lord does in meeting Job's question. His object is not to frame an answer in precise mathematical formulæ, but to impress certain obvious facts which embody an answer—not an answer satisfying the subtleties of metaphysics, but an answer which serves the practical ends of life. In effect, Jehovah says to Job: You ask why you should suffer being just? Is yours a solitary case? Look at the animals about you. The whole vast range of sentient life, in all its gradations—from the young ravens crying for food to the huge monsters on the dim border of human knowledge—is instanced as presenting a spectacle of suffering. All these creatures suffer, yet *they have not sinned*. In the suffering of the animal world lies the answer to the debated point. Evil or suffering, in its inclusive sense, it *not connected with sin; it is rather part of the Divine purpose*.

But there is another point. The Friends, Job and Elihu had vied with each other in emphasizing the unsearchableness of God. Their idea was infinite distance. Here we have infinite nearness and all embracing sympathy. Here

we see not a Deity removed from His creatures by an impassable gulf, but a Deity whose heart beats in unison with His creatures, a Deity which rejoices in all their joys, and is afflicted in all their afflictions. We pause for a moment to think of Paul's marvellous passage in the eighth of Romans, where between the two extremes of a groaning Spirit and a groaning creation is interposed a groaning saint. The whole creation redounds with a music of groans which the interceding Spirit gathers from the invisible aerial chords and wafts on before the throne of God.

The Lord has answered the debated point so far as finite mind can take it in. But the strangest note has yet to be sounded. "And it was so, that after Jehovah had spoken these words unto Job, Jehovah said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath" (Job 42:7). How strange! Job who had charged evil to God (howsoever he may have been rebuked for his wilder utterances) is commended for speaking concerning Him (not concerning Job) that which was right; whereas the Friends who had condemned Job for charging evil to God, are blamed for having spoken folly. Is it not evident that the Friends had said many true and profound things concerning God? and is it not equally evident that Job had said many things that were blameworthy? The reference cannot be to such things as these. The reference is to the *theory* which the Friends had put forth in regard to evil. On this point the Friends were mistaken, while Job was right. Thus, having answered the question raised at the commencement of the book, the Epilogue emphasizes the morale: *that the bold faith of Job, which could impeach God's ways in the name of God's justice, was more acceptable to Him than the servile adoration of the Friends who, in their devotion to tradition, had sought to distort the facts in order to magnify God.*

The words of Job, "*now mine eye seeth thee,*" are an index of a new experience into which he has been brought in consequence of the new conception of the Deity revealed

by the Voice out of the whirlwind. From this position of nearness he acts as daysman between the Lord and his Friends, and as he interceded for them, the Lord turns his own captivity; wealth and prosperity are granted him greater than before, and he dies happy and full of days.

### OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF JOB

**Prologue:** The Man, and the Evil brought upon him (chh. 1 and 2).

**The Debate:** Job's controversy with the Friends (chh. 3-31).

Elihu acts as "daysman" between Jehovah and Job (chh. 32-37).

**The Speech of Jehovah** (chh. 38:1; 42:6).

Job acts as "daysman" between Jehovah and his Friends (ch. 42:7-9).

**The End:** Job's intercession for the Friends (ch. 42:10).

**Epilogue:** The Man, and the Evil removed from him (ch. 42:11-17).

## THE THREEFOLD WARNING

- <sup>8</sup> *Beware* that there shall not be someone who is leading you off as his booty through philosophy and empty seduction, in accord with human tradition, in accord with the world's rudimentary observances, and not in accord with Christ, since all the fullness of the Godhead is residing
- <sup>9</sup> bodily in Him, and you have been filled full
- <sup>10</sup> in Him Who is the Head of all sovereignty and
- <sup>11</sup> authority: in Whom you are circumcised, also, with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the physical body in Christ's circumcision, being buried together with Him in the baptism in which we are roused together, also, through faith in God's operation Who rouses Him
- <sup>12</sup> from among the dead. And you, being dead to the offenses and your physical uncircumcision, He makes alive together with Him, graciously
- <sup>13</sup> forgiving you all offenses, erasing the handwriting of the decrees against us, which were inimical to us, and He has carried it out of the
- <sup>14</sup> midst, nailing it to the cross, putting off the sovereignties and authorities, He makes a public example of them, celebrating a triumph over them in it.
- <sup>15</sup> Then do not let anyone be dictating to you in eating or in drinking, or in sharing a festival



<sup>17</sup> or new moon or sabbaths, which are shadows of that which is about to be—yet the body is of the Christ.

<sup>18</sup> Now let no one be cheating you out of the prize, being inclined to humility and the ritual of messengers, parading among what is seen, being inflated, without reason, by his physical mind, and not holding the Head, out of Whom the whole body, receiving sustenance and being consolidated through the commissures and ligaments, is growing in the Divine growth.

<sup>20</sup> If you die with Christ from the rudimentary observances of the world, why, as though living in the world, are you subjecting yourselves to decrees: "You may not touch, neither taste, nor have the least contact" (which is all for corruption in the misuse) in accord with human precepts and teaching? Which is indeed having an expression of wisdom in arbitrary ritual and humility and aceticism, not in any honor, to the gratification of the flesh.

<sup>3</sup> If then, you are roused together with Christ, be seeking that above, where the Christ is sitting at God's right hand. Be regarding that above, not that on the earth. For you die, and your life has been concealed with Christ in God.

<sup>4</sup> Whenever Christ, our Life, may be manifested, then *you*, too, shall be manifested with Him in glory.

# THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL

## EXHORTATION TO VIGILANCE

God's Fullness is Christ: Christ is our Fullness.

In Him God is fully furnished for every phase of His efforts to reconcile the universe. In Him we, too, are fully furnished from our first faint spark of faith until we are found perfected in His ineffable presence. How little is this believed! How little is it received!

Rationalism and Ritualism are the two enemies of this great truth. Rationalism repudiates Him as God's Fullness: Ritual refuses Him as *our* Fullness. Philosophy robs God of His Christ. Ritual robs us of our Christ: Reason proclaims Him incompetent to cope with the "problems" of the universe: Religion regards Him as insufficient to care for the case of the individual.

Rationalism employs unaided human reason, but Ritual is based upon divine revelation. Hence, the greatest danger with the *believer* lies in the latter. Philosophy may be fought from the standpoint of the word of God and at the same time ritualistic error *founded* upon that same word, from a failure to divide it properly. It is exceedingly difficult for some of God's dear people to see that Christ Himself is the Substance of which all ritual was but the shadow, and that, divine as these shadows were, they must not fall athwart Himself and darken His effulgence.

So difficult is it for His saints to see this, and such a hold has divine ritual, that some special means are needed to impress us with the dangers of its infatuations.

The following outline displays the method God has used in order to impress us with His present estimate of the Divine ritual which He was once pleased to give His people. The passage, it will be seen, alternates between philosophy and religion, between rationalism and ritual. This, indeed, seems to make it so difficult to follow. If

philosophy had been dealt with separately and then the subject of ritual given a distinct section in the apostle's warning it might possibly have been easier for our dull hearts to apprehend. But then we would have missed a lesson quite as important as the warning itself and indeed, vital to it. It is this: *Truth misplaced is more dangerous than error.* Its seeming support in "the Bible" gives it far greater weight with spiritual minds than hu-

### OUTLINE OF COL. 2:5-22

Persuasive expressions (2:5)

Philosophy (2:8)

Empty deduction (2:8)

Human tradition (2:8)

Rudimentary observances (2:8)

Fullness of Godhead (2:9)

Our Fullness (2:9)

Circumcision, Baptism, Decrees (2:10-14)

Putting off Sovereignities and Authorities (1:15)

Shadows—Food and Drink (2:16-17)

Messengers (Angels) (2:18)

Human Commandments (2:22)

man philosophy can ever hope to have. Witness the state of Christendom today. Large as is the hold of rationalism upon the pulpit, the pews are even more distressed by rites and ceremonies, the ghosts of truth designed for other days and for those who could not know the fullness there is for us in Christ. Baptism and Sabbath keeping and the observance of human commandments as embodied in the Discipline—these are the essence of the religion of the day.

Not only do the two themes alternate, but the whole passage is a "reversal" in which each subject is expanded in the reverse order in which it is first mentioned. Yet, at the very heart of all is CHRIST, Who, as the Fullness of the Godhead, is the answer to all philosophy, and as our Fullness, is the answer to all ritual.

God Himself is the Guard of the reconciliation. No sooner was this precious truth revealed than it was attacked in both front and rear. A sham philosophy withstands it to the face. A divine religion stabs it in the back. Gnosticism and Judaism, enemies themselves, clasp hands in their common cause against the reconciliation.

We are prone to handle religion with gloves and class it by itself, but God knows its subtlety and puts it on a par with human tradition.

Reconciliation is not a religion. Indeed, they are sworn enemies. Religion, as God knows it, is a system of Divine ritual. The tabernacle and temple were the divinely appointed places for its ceremonies. But when every form had been duly observed and the last letter of the liturgy fulfilled, it led only to the thick veil which barred all access to the shekinah glory.

Circumcision is but a shadow. The substance is Christ. It figured death: He fulfilled it. Baptism, too, was but a type, telling of His burial. But the circumcised Israelite is kept without the curtains and the baptised priest is shut out of the presence of God in spite of these physical rites and ceremonies.

But the death of Christ leads to no veiled God! Even in that dim ritual the veil yielded once a year when *Jehovah's* goat was slain. Though its body was burned without the camp its blood forced a passage to the glorious mercy seat.

And what is it that veiled God from man?

*Christ's Flesh.*

When He expired the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. It may be hard for many of us who have been taught that He was "God *manifest* in flesh" to receive this illuminating truth. But in the passage from

which this is quoted, it is not *God* Who is manifested in flesh (1 Tim. 3:16). The one clause "proclaimed among the nations" coming before "received up into glory" (which cannot be true of Christ in the flesh) ought to be sufficient, apart from the evidence of the ancient manuscripts, to show that it is not *God* Who is referred to here. We are distinctly told that the veil figured His flesh (Heb. 10:20), and that access is *through* the *rent* veil. But if that flesh manifested *God* it could be no veil to *hide* *God*.

His whole earthly ministry was "straightened." He spoke to them in similitudes, but rejoiced in the hour when He might show them plainly concerning the Father. When His flesh was rent on Calvary, *then* *God* was first revealed. This is the true, the genuine, the solid circumcision.

And this is all ours as well as His. His in fact; ours in faith. If we apprehend its true import we have laid aside our physical frame and its rites and religious duties and base our relationship with *God* solely on the ground of spirit. Then shall we have access unhindered and unafraid into the glorious presence of a manifested *God*.

If the "body of flesh," that is, our physical frame, has been stripped off, what room is there for the baptism of that physical body in water? Here, too, the figure has been displaced by the substance—the burial of Christ.

Thus are the saints "complete in Him." They are fully outfitted for access into the Divine presence altogether apart from the weak and beggarly elementary observances which led only to the ante-chamber of His hiding place.

There is a threefold warning here which remains all unheeded by *God's* own. They are in the toils of philosophy. Plato preaches more than Paul. They are in the toils of ritual. Moses binds more than Paul frees. And when men preach philosophy and practise ritual they are preying on those whose ears have never heeded *God's* warning and who have never heard of the fullness there is in Christ.

The next warning, too, is quite unknown. Sunday, a heathen holidday, has become a spurious sabbath, the observance of which has become the badge of apostate Chris-

tianity. On every hand God's saints are being "judged" and told to observe days and abstain from drinks, as a part of their religion. The days observed by Israel were designed by God to shadow forth the day of rest He had in store. No such significance attaches to our Sunday.

Why, then, should we allow anyone to dictate to us concerning the ceremonial observances of Judaism? They were but shadows at best, and will find their substance in things to come. They all foretell Israel's future earthly blessedness and can only be realized and exhausted by the people to whom they were given.

### CHRIST THE BODY.

But our blessing, too, has its material expression and embodiment. At the right hand of the Heavenly Majesty clothed with a real human form, sits the Man, Christ Jesus. That glorified body of His is the material expression of all our blessings. It is a picture of that spiritual Christ which is "the assembly which is His body."

It is vitally one with Him: we are His members.

It is in the heavens: so are we.

It is seated: we, too, are at rest.

He is its Head: He is ours.

But let each heart trace for itself the transcendent glories which are the portion of His body—both physical and spiritual. That any part of earth's substance should ascend to such supernal glory seems incredible. But no less difficult is it for us to entertain a tithe of the blessing which is ours as His spiritual complement.

Earthly shadows may suffice to show earthly bliss—but heavenly honors demand a heavenly parallel. Israel may be His bride, for marriage is the lot of mankind upon the earth. So, too, with His relationship to Israel as the Lamb. Earth alone can furnish the figure and earth alone can be the scene of its fulfillment.

Is it not ineffably sweet to know that though all earthly figures fail to picture our place and portion, He Himself, throned at the right hand of the Majesty magnificent—He Himself embodies all that we have and are! And what

of all the high honors and loyal love which that body shares as joined to its glorious Head—do not these portray our eonian portion?

The first warning refers us to the past and all we have in Christ by virtue of His work on Calvary and the resurrection from among the dead. His circumcision and His baptism—the realities of which the ritual was but a type—His death and burial and resurrection, all are ours. He was our Fullness in the past. And now, at God's right hand, He is still our Fullness for the present.

But still another warning rings in our ears. Not only may we look *back* and find all in Him, not only may we look *up* and find our all in Him, but we may look *forward* and still find Him our Fullness. He is our Prize.

#### CHRIST THE PRIZE

It has been suggested, and it seems most plausible, that the revelation of God's purpose to create a new race of creatures closer to His heart than angels could ever be, and that He would commit universal dominion to this new order because of their nearer place,—this it was that "in the beginning" stirred up the pride of Lucifer, the peerless priest and prophet and potentate of the angelic host. And this, too, would account for his designs upon the human race at its very beginning. This accounts for the murder in his heart for Messiah, the Man by whom it would all be accomplished.

But Satan's very opposition proves but one of the means necessary to effect this grand purpose! Without it God's power and love would have found no field for its display. Grace would go a-begging unless it were for Guilt.

But sure are we, that redemption is not a mere necessity, or a mere restoration to a former state. Not only does it recover man from Adam's fall, but raises him far above the various ranks of angels, into the very presence and confidence of the Father Himself.

Nor was it merely foreseen: it was *designed*. Angels might display God's power and holiness: but His inmost nature failed to find expression in those marvelous creatures of His hand. And so His *heart* goes to work.

Human infirmity and failure and offense—these are fit fields for His favor, forms from which to fashion a new creation, and one through which He can unfold His fathomless affection, and which would respond in all the fervency of love.

And if those who are thus drawn to Himself fail to respond; if they hide behind angelic ceremonial with fearful reverence, they rob God of the choicest fruit of redemption, and themselves of the highest prize in all the universe,—the prize which Satan himself fain would have grasped—the supremacy and esteem which flow from the nearness and dearness God bestows only upon His favorites.

Let us grasp the Head! Is He near? Is He dear? Is He the highest? Then so are we, for we are His body. Can we imagine Him, like the seraphim veiling His face in the presence of the Divine Majesty? Would it please the Father that He approach through various spectacular forms, with a tardy faltering step? Never!

To the winds, then, with all ritual! It only denies His acceptance. Away with all mock humility! He is worthy. The very angels who may approach only through ritual (of which the Mosaic was a copy) proclaim that *He is worthy!*

And we, too, in Him, our Head, are worthy!

O, to be found in Him! And thus to gain the prize which Christ alone could win, the mead of universal conquest, the place supreme, the reward of closest intimacy and love! This was the mark Paul had before him, for which he pressed forward, forgetting earthly hopes he left behind.

And this should be our goal, too. But, on every hand we encounter that which would rob us of this prize and fill His place with forms and ceremonial, which estrange, instead of reconcile, and put God at a distance, instead of putting us at ease in His presence. May nothing snatch this supernal prize from our hearts once we have laid hold of that for which He has laid hold of us!



## EXALTATION WITH CHRIST

Death and resurrection do not sever us from this earth. Christ Himself, during the forty days after His resurrection, was occupied with the affairs of the Kingdom—an earthly thing. But this is no cue for us. We are not like the disciples who were left behind when He arose from Olivet. *...We went with Him.*

How unutterably grand was His ascension! Not even creation's birth gave the sons of God so much cause to shout for joy, for now He has relaid the foundations of the moral universe and a new creation has been inaugurated far grander than the first with its foundations firmly fixed in God's deepest affections. His lowly descent to Bethlehem had tuned their hearts to sing of glory to God in the highest. But now that glory has been gained. The battle with the hosts of darkness has been fought and won. The flood tide of evil has been turned. The crisis of the eons has been triumphantly passed. The Victor has vanquished every foe. God's great name has not only been vindicated but gloriously glorified.

Great as was the joy which His resurrection brought to His disciples, no public oration greets His reappearance on the earth. The throne of David and of the Son of Man is still left vacant and He ascends to heaven where twice before He had retired from earth's unfriendly inhumanity. First of all, He dwelt in Eden's garden, leaving it only after Adam became estranged. Then He sought a place midst His people Israel and tented with them in their desert wanderings, lingering with them in the land until their offensive sins returned Him to His heavenly throne. Twice He had reluctantly retired.

But now heaven welcomes the return of a Conqueror—the very King of Glory. Could bounds be set upon the bursting joy of the heavenly elders and angels as they behold their Head awarded the place of pleasure and power supreme at God's right hand? Let us not attempt to tell of such a triumph.

*But He was not alone!* In spirit we share this greatest

of all glories with Him and thus wean our hearts from matters mundane which once engrossed us. Satan is enthroned here. How can we find any satisfaction in His abortive attempts to satisfy men's hearts? But in the place supreme—in Christ—there is more by far than heart could wish to engage, to satisfy, to ravish, to entrance.

After He was risen He did not appear except to a few chosen witnesses. Though still on earth His life was hid from the mass of mankind. And doubly so now that He has ascended. And this is true of us as well. Our life has never yet been seen by mortal man. It is concealed with Him in God.

## CHRIST OUR LIFE

But our life shall not always be hid. He Who is our life shall be manifested. Why should we want to be known in this day of His rejection? Let us rest with Him at God's right hand and wait until His time comes. This earth is not our sphere. This time is not our time. But when His hour strikes then our time will come and He will not be glorified without us.

Meanwhile let us fix our hearts upon the heavenly hope we have in Him. This alone will enable us to give our earthly interests their true place. This alone will give us rest and refreshment in the midst of the rush and exhaustion of these strenuous times.

But above all, let us explore the fullness there is in Christ. Let us beware of aught that seems to take His place. What have we not in Christ? In Him we are complete. The very thought that aught is lacking there, of means of grace, or access to the throne of God, or aught that man or God can give, is in itself a slander on His Name!

Are we not circumcised in Him? Is not His word and Spirit all to us that any covenant ever was? His Spirit is our pledge, the sign of all He will bestow. They mutilated the flesh. But we strip off the whole and acknowledge and confess that when He was cut off and died for us, then we, in Him, were circumcised.

And as Abraham of old (to whom the rite was given) would bury Sarah out of sight in hope of resurrection, so we also have been buried out of sight by that baptism which He knew, which He endured for us and we in Him. And when He arose we rose. And when He ascended we left the earth behind for a seat at God's right hand.

How blessed is all this! At the altar we die in Him, a sweet savor unto God. And this was once for all. Not as the oft repeated type, but once for all. And at the laver we are baptised in Him. All defilement which unfits us for God's presence is removed. In Him we tread the courts of God in conscious and unclouded peace.

How few have found their fullness in Christ! And the reason is not far to seek. Instead of heeding the three-fold warning God graciously gave, Christendom has courted philosophy and married ritual.

In its attempt to explain the origin and object of all things it follows human philosophy and ignores Christ. The origin of evil is the greatest of all its problems. As the Gnostics of old it still seeks to exonerate God from the creation of evil. Instead, however, of shifting this to a mythical "fullness," it is now shouldered by a mythical devil, a grotesque caricature of the adversary which the Scriptures know.

The toils of human tradition keep them from Christ. The observance of days is rigidly prescribed in spite of this warning. Asceticism has ruled in Rome for centuries and the commandments and doctrines of men are everywhere made a test of Christianity. "Touch not, taste not, handle not" is openly palmed off as God's exhortation, when the opposite is the fact. We are *not* to be subject to such human injunctions.

Nothing is more evident than that our God knew the dangers which would confront us and has made provision for our escape. Christ is our Refuge from them all.

Christ, as God's Fullness, assures us that, on God's side every provision has been made to reconcile the universe. And Christ, as our Fullness, removing as it does every human pretension to fitness for the Father's pres-

ence, dispels every difficulty in the way of universal reconciliation. Human failure or fitness would be an element which would forever preclude perfection and thwart God's purpose. But if God is pleased to put all upon Christ why should we hesitate? If Christ is all He needs to reconcile us to Himself, why should we not give Him the same honor?

May all who read these lines realize and revel in the transcendent truth of

CHRIST: GOD'S FULLNESS  
OUR FULLNESS

## **A God-Centered Life**

The life that's centered in Thy will, O God,  
May restful be;  
And in its quiet calm,  
Leave all to Thee.

The life that's centered in Thy will, O God,  
No fear need know;  
For Thou dost guide it still,  
In all its flow.

The life that's centered in Thy will, O God,  
Fears no alarm;  
For all the powers of hell  
Can do no harm.

The life that's centered in Thy will, O God,  
Need take no thought;  
For Thou dost care for all,  
Forgetting naught.

The life that's centered in Thy will, O God,  
Need have no plan;  
For Thou art guiding all  
For good of man.

Then let my life be centered all in Thee:  
*Thy will is best.*  
Perfect Thy will in me:  
In Thee I rest.

W. H. W.

## INSPIRATION

To a proper appreciation of the Scriptures two preliminary conditions must be met: (1) We must throw ourselves back into the time when the prophecies were uttered, and view them from the standpoint of those whose knowledge of the Divine will and purpose was partial and incomplete; (2) We must bear in mind the way in which ancient documents become corrupted in transmission.

We will take as an example Ps. 8, and the use which is made of it in the epistle to the Hebrews. It is certain that the ancient text had the appearance of the inscription on the tomb of Ashnumazzar, in which neither vowel-points nor separation of the words appear. It presented a solid, compact mass of characters. Under such conditions the headline served as a divisor: it occupied the place of such tokens of division as are today expressed by numerals, or contents' lines. If we would realize the primitive Psalter, we must pass by all marks of division other than those which stand in the text itself. Every division which is not supported by a headline or an inscription of a definite character, is arbitrary, and represents no more than the judgment of those who handed down the text.

The division of the Psalter as we have it into a hundred and fifty pieces is unauthorized. Evidence of this is found in Scripture. In Acts 13:33, where Paul quotes what in our versions is Ps. 2:7, the ancient reading has "as it is written also in the *first* psalm." Again, Pss. 9 and 10 are one psalm constructed on the method of alphabetical acrostic, which is much broken up. But the most interesting case is that of Pss. 92-97. Ps. 95 is quoted in Heb. 4:3-8 to substantiate the assertion that there remains a sabbath rest for the people of God. But Ps. 95 knows nothing of a sabbath. It is an "orphan" Psalm, as are also Pss. 94,

and 93. Ps. 92, however, bears the inscription. "A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath day." It is the Psalm title that supplied to the writer of the epistle the index of its contents.

But there is another point: some inscriptions were long; when the Psalter came to be divided there was nothing to indicate whether the whole inscription was to be placed at the head of a Psalm or whether part of it was to be placed at the close of the preceding. Here again Scripture has not left us without evidence. From the Psalm of Habakkuk—which, standing by itself, cannot have taken anything from a preceding composition, nor can any concluding words be misconstrued as belonging to some succeeding composition—we learn that the "Chief Musician," line stands always at the close and never at the beginning of a Psalm. Thus Ps. 8 has for its superscript: "A Psalm of David," and for its subscript: "For the Chief Musician: upon Muthlabben." To elucidate the meaning of Muthlabben, let us remember that in a number of instances the spelling is defective; that is, the quiescents (or vowel letters) have been supplied incorrectly; or the vowel-points have been so placed as to perpetuate a misreading. When the Massoretic pointing "stereotypes" a sound reading, we acquiesce to it, but when it perpetuates Rabbinical misunderstandings we pass it by without hesitation. To set the Psalm in its true light, we will quote the words of another.

"Instead of following the Massoretic doctors, let us inquire concerning traditions and explanations other than the one which they seemed to have followed. Among the most striking of these we find that of the Jewish Paraphrase, known as the Targum, which tells us, in effect, that לַבֵּן (leben), "of the son," should read לַבְּיָן (labbeyu), "of the champion"; that is, a quiescent, or vowel letter, should have been supplied to place the word in its proper light. The title, as given in the Targum, is: "To praise, regarding the death of the man who went out between the camps"—that is, regarding Goliath the Philistine." Distinguished Jewish commentators have read לַבְּיָן in

this sense. In 1 Sam. 17:4, 23, Goliath is called "a champion,—אִישׁ־הַבְּנִים (*'ish habbenim*)—"A man who stood between the two—an intermediary who presented himself for single combat to decide and terminate the conflict. Hence, the word בֶּן, "champion."

"Recall the story of Goliath, and then look at the Psalm. The "uncircumcised Philistine" defied the armies of the living God, and cursed David by the gods of his country. David's reply was: 'I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from off thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel (1 Sam. 17:45-46). Is David, whom the Philistine has disdained for his youth, to be victorious through the power of Jehovah? As a shepherd he has killed a lion and a bear—God delivered them into his hand. Is he now to add conquest over the Philistine giant and attendant hosts to the dominion which is already his over the most fierce beasts of the field? Read the Psalm (8) in which he praises God for the result of the contest.'"\* Thus David himself tells us the Psalm commemorates the death of the champion Goliath, and his declaration must be accepted as final. Hence, we must not entertain the idea that the Holy Spirit whispered into the ear of the prophets the actual words they were to write; the truth is, the spiritual insight of the prophets enabled them to discern the workings of God in the events of their day, and as they commemorated the acts of Jehovah for the benefit of succeeding generations, the Spirit of Prophecy charged their language with higher significance and deeper doctrine than could be realized in their day and generation.

Biblical facts call for a modification of traditional views; and as we follow the simple statements of Scripture, the

\* J. W. Thirtle, "The Titles of the Psalms," pp. 71 and 72.



doctrine of inspiration is relieved of a recondite supernaturalism and becomes invested in sublime simplicity. We see the Divine word in its historic *origin* thoroughly adapted to the scanty and partial knowledge of a primitive age and at the same time equally adapted to the requirements of Infinite Wisdom in its inclusive *scope*—we see that Holy Scripture continually shows its distinctive vitality and inspiration in the fact that its statements are capable of applications that are far-reaching beyond anything suggested by their primary purpose. We learn that Messianic conceptions have come down to us in the Old Testament writings more through the experiences of typical personages—in the lives of men who, in their day and generation, adumbrated the One who, in the fullness of time, was to come in the name of the Lord—rather than as a result or definite prophetic teaching. Abstract oracles are rarely found in the Scriptures: rather, we are taught by types and parallels, contrasts and comparisons. Hence, it is not by accident that Messianic conceptions are found in the Old Testament. The Hebrew Scriptures as a whole are concerned with the lives of men who were typical in themselves and their ways, each of them, in his own special aspect or experience, foreshadowing that One of the house of David and the tribe of Judah “of whose kingdom there shall be no end.”

Hence, while, in this study, the primary interpretation has continually been kept in view, there has been no attempt to claim an exclusive place for this. That the majestic writings of Isaiah, for instance, discharged all their wealth of meaning, in one generation, assuredly is no part of the thesis of this paper. On the contrary, the careful adjustment of historical foundations upon which we have insisted has been controlled by a conviction, not only that great things impinge upon some of the most commonplace utterances of the prophets, but also that, in the true historic setting alone, lies the key to the fuller accomplishment. Like the outstanding events in Israelitish history, the words of Divine inspiration are instinct with a far-reaching meaning, either as bearing upon the future of

Israel, or, by accommodation of language, to Christ who came forth from their midst. We have apprehended something of the ways in which the Spirit of Truth leads us from such initial fulfilments as are specified in the headlines of the Old Testament writings, on to others, which, in due course, have become (or will become) eclipsed by an accomplishment that shall give final and complete expression to the purpose and will of God, whether in regard to Israel, the Messiah, or the nations of the world. Students of Scripture cannot fail to find in regard to prophecy what is a commonplace in regard to history, that it has a way of "repeating itself." Many of the great words of the Old Testament seem to be so full of vitality, so deep in meaning, that in the process of the ages they are ever and anon being "fulfilled," every such fulfilment, moreover, looking forward to some particular consummating event in the distant future.

The foregoing considerations have an important bearing on the variations in the New Testament in quotations from the Old Testament. In handling the ancient Scriptures New Testament writers allow themselves considerable latitude. A number of citations exhibit slight changes of verbiage; others are simply paraphrases; and in certain instances the sense seems almost entirely altered.

We will take as an example the citation of Psalm 8:4-5, in Hebrews 2:6-8. Note carefully the variation from the Hebrew text:

## Ps. 8:4-5

What is man, that thou art  
mindful of him?  
And the son of man, that thou  
visitest him?  
For thou hast made him but  
little lower than *God*,  
And crownest him with glory  
and honor.  
Thou makest him to have do-  
minion over the works of  
thy hands;  
Thou hast put all things under  
his feet.

## HEB. 2:6-8

What is man, that thou art  
mindful of him?  
Or the son of man, that thou  
visitest him?  
Thou madest him a little lower  
than the *angels*;  
Thou crownest him with glory  
and honor,  
And didst set him over the  
works of thy hands,  
Thou didst put all things in  
subjection under his feet.

The Hebrew "little lower than *Elohim*," is rendered "a little lower than the *angels*." Why should the apostle substitute "angels" for "God"?

Let us note, first, that whereas the Psalmist commemorates the exaltation of David in consequence of the death of the Philistine champion, the writer of Hebrews dwells on the abasement of the Son of God unto death; and, second, that the Divine name *Elohim*, unlike *Jehovah*, is not applied exclusively to the Deity, but is also used of human beings (Ex. 22:8, 9), angels (Ps. 97:7), false gods (Nu. 33:4), and idols (Gen. 31:30).

After such an act as the killing of Goliath, what could David's note be, other than dominion? The stripling who went out between the camps "to take away the reproach from Israel," said that victory would be his, "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (1 Sam. 17:46). The Psalm concludes, as it began, "O, *Jehovah*, our *Adonai*, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" David is the man whom *Jehovah* has visited (4). And now that the enemy and the avenger had been felled to the earth (2), did he not come next to God in dominion? and was he not crowned with glory and honor (5)? How better could the idea of exaltation be expressed than by saying that God alone was above Him—thou hast made him but little lower than God? The key note of the Psalm is *exaltation*: a man is given authority to rule for God.

But the dominant note in the second chapter of Hebrews is *humiliation*—Messiah's death for the seed of Abraham. The historical aspect of the Psalm, which must ever be kept in view, did not *exhaust* the teaching of the Psalm: it only realized its first outlines. It was reserved for a future time to demonstrate the larger unfolding of the Divine intention. At the time of Christ's death there was a re-enactment of the situation contemplated in the Psalm. Now, as then, aliens possessed the land, and the people feared lest the nation should be wiped out (Jno. 11:48-52). In the days of old, David, the man after God's own heart, went out between the camps to take away the reproach of Israel. Now, Christ, the man in whom God is well-pleased, offered

Himself without the camp and through death brought to naught him who had the power of death (Heb. 2:14). In all these points the circumstances attending the death of the Messiah reproduce the salient features of the Psalm. There is, however, this notable difference, that, unlike David, Messiah conquers the enemy of his people by His own death. This fact necessitates accommodation of language to conform the Psalm with the altered circumstances of the times. The fact that Elohim is applied in another Psalm (97:6) to angels suggests an alternative meaning agreeable with the requirement of the moment and at the same time divinely sanctioned. The statement becomes "a little lower than the *angels*"—and could the self-abatement of the Son be expressed more fitly than by saying that, in order to effect the salvation of His people, He became *lower* than the ministering spirits!

We pass on to another instance of peculiar interest. In I Cor. 15:54-55, Paul freely adopts the words of Hosea repeating "death" in the second line, where Hosea writes "Sheol."

HOSEA 13:14

O death, where are thy plagues?  
O Sheol, where is thy destruction?

I COR. 15:55

O death, where is thy victory?  
O death, where is thy sting?

In order to clear up the question, it should be noted that Hades is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew Sheol, as is evident from the fact that the words of the Psalmist, "thou wilt not leave my soul in *Sheol*" (Ps. 16:10), are rendered, "thou wilt not leave my soul in *Hades*" (Acts 2:27). With this in mind, let us note the further fact, that, though prophet and apostle deal with the same general subject—the abolition of death—one treats it exclusively in relation to Israel, the other treats in relation to humankind. Hosea speaks of Israel's restoration, the *commencement* of the Millennial eon which is ushered in by the first resurrection. Paul speaks of the victory of Christ over the "last

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\* The translators of the A. V. followed the Septuagint. The R. V. gives the true reading.

enemy"—the conclusion of the eon of the eons. In this fact lies the reason for the change.

At the return of the Lord, the promise of Hosea, "I will redeem them from the power of sheol; I will redeem them from death," will cease to be prophecy and become history. The multitudes of Israel whom death has carried to Sheol will come forth from it, and their ranks will be no longer thinned by death. Our Lord, in Luke 20:34-36, emphasizes the tremendous change which is to take place in those who attain to that eon, and the resurrection from the dead. "They neither marry nor are given in marriage"—an end of sexual distinction; "neither can they die any more"—a cessation of mortal conditions; "they are equal unto the angels", a state of being not subject to earthly limitation; "and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection"—a position of dignity.

But at the close of "that eon" Hades itself (or Sheol) is cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14), and thus ceases to exist when the eon of the eons commences; and since the abolition of the death state takes place at the conclusion of the eon of the eons, when the consummation is ushered in, it is clear that, had the apostle used the term Sheol, the whole teaching of Scripture would have been thrown into confusion and involved in hopeless contradiction.

V. G.

## TYNDALE'S TASK

Among the memorable words of William Tyndale, to whom the English speaking people owe more than any other man for their versions of the Scriptures, the following are characteristic.

In his first preface he imposes this task upon his readers, "that if they perceived in any place that the version has not attained unto the very sense of the tongue or the very meaning of Scripture, or have not given the right English word, that they should put to their hands and amend it, *remembering that so it is their duty to do.*"

Though he was the first English scholar to translate directly from the Hebrew and Greek, he himself eagerly embraced opportunities of revising his own work. This is the spirit which actuated his successors, whose learning never led them into the pitfall of infallibility.

Perhaps the most careful and painstaking revision of Tyndale's work was done at Geneva, Switzerland, whence the reformers had fled for their lives during the dark days of Queen Mary. There they spent their time in preparing a new version of the Bible, which they brought back to England with them when Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne. This, the "Genevan Bible," was long the bible of England and was the chief obstacle in the way of the universal acceptance of the so-called "Authorized," though the latter had all the influences of church and state to compel its acceptance.

The popularity of the Geneva Bible was a thorn in the side of King James as it seemed to him to interfere with some of his royal prejudices. And this it was which determined him, even when the Bishops objected, to have a version "as it liked him." However, he showed admirable tact and judgment in the prosecution of the work and it is

a great wonder that, under such auspices, the task was accomplished as well as it was.

What a notable contrast is presented to this in the translators of the Genevan Bible! Exiles from their native land, without influence or wealth, their sorrows drove them to the Word of God for consolation and instruction. And they nobly purpose that their studies shall not only feed their own spirits, but that they revise the English versions according to the injunction of William Tyndale.

Let us visit them at their work. Myles Coverdale, who had already translated it out of Dutch and Latin, is there among the rest. They are engaged on the twenty-third Psalm, last clause of the last verse. Coverdale himself had translated it "that I maye dwell in the house off the Lord for euer." But their studies have led them to conclude that *lorech vamin* does not mean "for euer." It is suggested that the clause be changed to "and I shal remaine a long season in the house of the Lord."

But what will the *people* think of this change! If this does not mean forever it might be construed that the blessings of God's people are to have an end! What heresies might not this lead to! The psalm is so common that the change will be noted immediately. The bishops will denounce it! We will never be able to return to England!

Possibly they reasoned thus. But it is far more probable that, instead of showing the craven spirit of today (which was worshipped even by the American Revisers) they found what was written in the originals and determined rather to please God than men. And so they changed "for euer" to "a long season."

And what was the result? It was the most popular Bible ever introduced. And the "Bishop's Bible" which was supported by ecclesiastical authority did not depart from their example, for they translated, not "forever," but "for a long time."

The motive which actuated the translators of the Geneva version was pure and undiluted love for the word of God. And this, too, was the only power which sustained them in their task. Our so-called "Authorized" was an attempt to

reconcile rival religious communities and to please the King and to avoid disturbing the established religion.

Let those who are prejudiced against the consideration of these truths carefully ponder the following reprints.

COVERDALE'S  
1535

that I maye dwell  
in the house of the  
Lord for euer.

GENEVAN  
1560

and I shal remaine  
a long season in the  
house of the Lord.

BISHOPS' BIBLE  
1568

and I wyll dwell in  
the house of God for  
a long tyme.



## OUR QUESTION BOX

[As UNSEARCHABLE RICHES has now covered a few phases of truth and it is our intention to leave them for other lines of teaching, we shall be pleased to consider and answer the questions and criticisms to which they have given rise. The answers will necessarily be brief and dogmatic and our readers will be referred to previous articles when they have already covered the ground.]

*Which was first in order of time, evil or the plan of salvation?*

Christ, as the Lamb was foreordained *before* the disruption of Gen. 1:2 (1 Pet. 1:20). He was slain, in God's reckoning, *from* this disruption (Rev. 13:8). His suffering became necessary *since* this disruption (Heb. 9:26). As the disruption (A. V. "foundation") marks the entrance of sin into this world or cosmos, it is clear that preparation had been made for it *before* it came, and the Lamb was sacrificed immediately upon its entrance, in God's reckoning.

But more than this. In Paul's letters, which describe *our* relation to sin, we are told that His *grace* was given us in Christ Jesus *before* eonian times. These times antedate sin, not only on earth, but also in the heavens. But grace presupposes sin. So that God's purpose, which demanded the presence of sin, was formed first and sin was given no place until the execution of His purpose demanded its presence. In harmony with this is the promise of eonian life (Tit. 1:2). This also was given us *before* eonian times. There was no sin before these times as there will be none after them. So that a promise of eonian life presupposes the entrance of sin. In accord with this we were selected in Christ before the disruption (Eph. 1:4). Then we were holy and without blemish, for there was no sin: and thus we shall be once again.

Finally, our God has a purpose, and He is operating the universe in line with the counsel offered by that determination (Eph. 1:11).

To Him sin was no unforeseen accident. It is a necessary incident. It does not thwart His purposes. It effects them. And the "plan" of salvation, if we may be pardoned an unscriptural expression, is not a "remedy" or a repair of the ruin wrought by sin. It is no plan necessitated by sin's presence. Salvation is part of God's purpose to reveal Himself, and sin is the stage upon which alone salvation can act.

If sin had been a surprise to God, outside His primeval purpose, no "plan" of salvation or remedy would be any guarantee that such a catastrophe, or a worse one, would not overtake Him once again and all be lost at last. But if sin is but the servant of salvation, it may be dismissed when its work is no longer needed. Reconciliation first, then salvation to effect it, and then sin to stage salvation. This is God's order.

*Did the covering of skins provided for Adam portray the reconciliation?*

No. Reconciliation is based on justification, or, as it may be better expressed, vindication. If a person is vindicated no *covering* is needed. Propitiation, which in Hebrew, means a covering, was figured by the skins which clothed Adam. And in passing, it may be of interest to know that fur-lined cloaks are used to this day in the East, and are found to be most comfortable both summer and winter. The fur is worn on the inside, making an air space around the body which keeps one warm in winter and cool in hot weather. Man has not improved on God's clothing, even from a practical standpoint. Neither has he improved on God's spiritual covering.

But Adam needed no covering until he had sinned. It is only guilt which calls for propitiation. But we have far more than this. We are vindicated. If Adam had been typically reconciled he never would have been driven from Eden, but would have continued to enjoy God's presence and smile. Instead of giving an illustration of reconciliation, God hushed it up (Rom. 16:25), so we must not expect to find it figured beforehand. Justification was not thus kept in silence, for Abraham was told of this blessing. This clearly shows that the first four chapters of Romans, which deal with justification, are concerned with a distinct message from that of the next four. It is true, however, that we must go back to Adam in studying the reconciliation. But the picture he presents must be inverted, as it were, in order to enlighten us on the conciliation. Adam's *offense* and his *estrangement* must be reversed in order to typify God's present grace. Even then they come short. This is fully presented in the fifth of Romans and set forth in "The Conciliation of Mankind," U. R. Vol. IV., No. 3.

*Is grace the basis of salvation in all the ages or only in the present age?*

In Eph. 3:2 we read that the present economy is in a very special way devoted to the dispensation of God's *grace*. Before it and in the next eon the nations will glorify God for His *mercy* (Rom. 15:9). God's *pity* and *mercy* and *grace* must be distinguished. The former two occur together in Rom. 9:15. "I shall be showing mercy to whomever I should

be showing mercy, and I shall be pitying whoever I should be pitying." Pity is but the feeling, but mercy the active aid or succor which pity inspires. Grace includes all this but goes beyond them, in that it is favor shown to those whose desserts are quite the opposite. Pity is the part of most now: grace the portion of some, but eventually mercy will be the privilege of all. "For God locks all up together in distrust in order that He may have *mercy* on all."

*Was not God always favorably disposed towards mankind? Was He not always conciliated?*

God is love, and as such, He must always have the highest interests of all His creatures at heart. But we must not let this basic truth obliterate the secondary truth that God, in the revelation of Himself, does not always maintain this outward attitude. We may insist, and rightly so, that God's love was just as much concerned in driving Adam out of the garden as it was displayed in visiting and keeping him in Eden. But it was expressed in an entirely different way. Adam certainly knew a difference. Though he was covered with a propitiatory coat, he was not reconciled. The feeling there engendered has clung to the race ever since. Jehovah's presence in Israel only accentuated the estrangement. As Israel's God He exterminates the Canaanites. He proclaims Himself the enemy of all who dare to touch that nation. Yet even while He was Israel's God, He never was on intimate terms with them as He had been with Adam. He hid Himself and forbade their near approach from the very start. And His presence not only fails to effect any reconciliation, not only does the nation drift further and further from Him, but He Himself finally withdraws and leaves the temple tenantless.

The presence of Christ among them and the preaching of His apostles proved how superficial was the bond between Israel as a nation and Jehovah.

Even as all blessing is sourced in the death of Calvary, so, too, with reconciliation. But all blessing is not immediately bestowed. And so, too, the reconciliation waited until not only the nations but Israel, too, was entirely estranged from God. The twelve apostles preach in the land. Paul preaches to those outside the land. But Israel is obstinate.

It is evident that this transcendent favor was in God's mind from the first, for all His previous dealings with mankind were but a preparation for it. The distance was needed and the enmity, in order to afford a field for the manifestation of His favor. The crisis was planned without which the riches of His grace would never have been discovered to mankind.

But it is not *until this crisis*, it is not until the nations and Israel both have forfeited every claim to blessing, that the conciliation is proclaimed.

Besides, *conciliation* is distinct from a kindly disposition. Conciliation can come only *after estrangement*. And God takes this attitude towards mankind at a definite crisis, for it is the defection of Israel which brings in world wide conciliation (Rom. 11:15).

*Can the atonement be applied to man's salvation by any other means than faith?*

The old English word atonement meant the same as our word reconciliation, but has now come to be a general term descriptive of the results of the death of Christ.

In the present economy justification is by faith in order that it may be by grace (Rom. 4:16). Salvation, however, has many aspects. Israelites, during the tribulation, will be saved if they invoke the name of Jehovah (Rom. 10:13) and endure to the end (Mat. 24:13).

During the eons, however, salvation is characteristically linked with faith. When they have passed hope and faith retire, leaving love alone to abide. For hope has been fulfilled and looks forward no more. Faith too is replaced by sight. Eonian salvation is only for those who believe; post eonian salvation is for those who have not believed. This is the key to that enigmatic statement (I Tim. 4:10): ". . . God, Who is Saviour of all mankind, *especially* of those who believe." It is clear from this that He is Saviour of some who do *not* believe. The believer's is a special, eonian salvation.

But do not all believe at the consummation? Loosely speaking, yes, but strictly speaking, no. The scriptures are very explicit and consistent on this point. Of those who are finally saved we read that they will *confess*, rather than believe. In the presence of undeniable evidence faith is unnecessary. But *all* shall eventually confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father (Phil. 2:11). We cannot insist too strongly that faith is the only way of blessing now. Yet we must not displace the truth for the present into another economy when other factors enter into salvation, and still less should we inject faith or any eonian condition into the perfection of the consummation.

## FREE MORAL AGENCY

OUR studies on the purpose of the eons and the problem of evil have brought us face to face with the question of man's so-called free moral agency. To much that has been advanced in previous papers it might be objected that, according to these views, man is simply a machine, a plaything in the hands of God,—a being whose actions are involuntary or mechanical, moving only as he is moved. It is argued that, unless man is absolutely free, his responsibility is entirely destroyed. To meet such possible objections, and in further elucidation of the truth, we will endeavor to ascertain from Scripture in what way man is free and responsible and to what extent.

What does the phrase free moral agency imply? An agent is one who has power to act; a free agent is one who acts without constraint; a free moral agent is one who acts as he pleases on all questions involving the qualities of right and wrong. Now, in the ordinary acceptation of the phrase, man is *not* a free moral agent, he is not free to act according to his own judgment or pleasure, but all his actions are wholly under God's control. We will presently substantiate this position by Scripture, meanwhile we may remark that the fact that God absolutely controls man's actions does not destroy man's freedom nor his responsibility. God worketh all things after the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11); this could not be true if man had power to act contrary to the will of God and to resist it indefinitely. Furthermore, the apostle's reiterated statement that "of him, and through him, and unto him are all things" is an utter impossibility if any creature can have its own way and eternally persevere in it. The difficulties that many experience on the subject arise from failure to see that man's freedom lies in the sphere of volition, and not in the sphere of action; his will is free; he is at liberty to choose.

and plan, but God controls his acts. Man can purpose and determine and choose, and according to his choosing he is judged. Hence wisdom refuses to answer the scorers who call upon her in the day of their calamity:

For that they hated knowledge,  
*And did not choose* the fear of the Lord:  
 They would none of my counsel,  
 They despised all my reproof:  
 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way,  
 And be filled with their own devices.

Prov. 2:29-31.

We will now point out the explicitness with which this fact is brought out in the Book of Proverbs. "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps" (Prov. 16:9). "There are many devices in a man's heart: but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand" (Ps. 19:21). In other words, man determines all his wishes, but only those which the Lord designs are carried out. Another proverb expresses this fact even more forcefully: "Man's goings are of the Lord: how then can a man understand his way?" (Prov. 20:24). The great ones of the earth, uniting the supreme form of wealth and power, are, by virtue of circumstances, most likely to act as they please, and yet we read: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the watercourses: the Lord turneth it whithersoever he will" (Prov. 21:1). The book of Esther is an inspired commentary on this text. It tells us what Ahashuerus wished to do with his Jewish subjects, and what he actually did. The decrees sealed with the king's seal, which according to Persian law could not be reversed, was reversed, because contrary to God's counsel. The whole teaching of the book is summed up in a single sentence—"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord" (Prov. 16:33). The lot is cast into the lap; man has his choice; he may plan and scheme and make preparations as much as he please, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Another aspect of the same truth is presented in Psalm 76:10: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Sometimes man is allowed to carry out his devices, and sometimes not; it all depends upon whether they coincide

with God's plan or not; what He can use for His praise, He allows; what He cannot thus use, He restrains.

The wise men are not alone in this testimony: the same is believed and proclaimed by the Hebrew prophets. In perfect harmony with the teaching of the Proverbs is Jeremiah's declaration: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Ps. 37:23 is in the same line, though the Authorized Version has made its translation accord with popular belief. Thousands of sermons have been preached from this text, laying emphasis on the word "good". "The steps of a *good* man are ordered of the Lord." Yet the word "good" is not in the original. The passage is general, not particular: "The steps of man are from the Lord: they (his steps) have been prepared, and his way he (God) desireth; when he falleth he is not cast down, for Jehovah sustains his hand." Man goes the way that God desires; his steps have been prearranged and are all ordained of the Lord. Ephesians 2:10 contains teaching to the same effect with reference to the saints: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." The wicked are God's sword (Ps. 17:13); the seasons of the nations, and the boundaries of their habitations, have been divinely predetermined (Acts 17:26); wicked kings and nations do His mind (Rev. 17:17).

If these Scriptures teach anything, they teach that man is *not* a free actor. Man may choose, devise, imagine, and he will be judged accordingly;—filled with his own devices—but his way, his outward acts are entirely under God's control. Such is the Bible doctrine of free will. We will now consider some illustrations of it.

The instances related in John 7:25-30 and John 8:12-20 are very remarkable. The chief priests and Pharisees sought to kill our Lord, and sent officers to take Him. They were fully determined to destroy Him, and were just as much murderers in God's sight as if they had actually committed the deed; but God would not allow the rulers to carry out their wicked purpose. Why not? "No man laid his hand on him, because his hour was not yet come." They were seeking to precipitate His death, hence were

restrained from accomplishing their intention. Later on, when the appointed time arrived, the rulers were allowed to carry into effect their murderous intents, in order that Christ might give Himself up according to the will of God.

There might be some reasonable question as to whether the case of our Lord was not altogether exceptional. We shall find, however, that the case of our Lord is by no means a solitary one. Forty Jews banded together by a great curse that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. That very night the Lord appeared to Paul, assuring him that he would bear witness in Rome. In the sequel of the narrative we learn how Paul is delivered and arrives at Rome. But why was not Paul delivered from the hand of Nero? Let the apostle answer this question. "I am now *ready* to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith; I have *finished* my course; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness" (2 Tim. 4:6, 7). The wrath of the forty Jews is restrained, because Paul's mission was not finished; the wrath of Caesar is allowed to vent itself, because Paul's course was finished. In like manner, Peter is delivered from the bond of Herod, but is delivered into the hand of his enemies years afterwards, and the reason is that while Herod's attempt to terminate Peter's life was premature, the attempt made afterwards by others coincided with God's appointed time.

We have been led by Scripture to the conclusion that man's free will lies in the sphere of volition, and not in the sphere of action. To state it differently, man is unrestrained in the realm of will, but is restrained in the realm of action. Perhaps it might be said that, if man's will is free, even though his acts are controlled by God, may he not remain eternally refractory, incorrigible, defiant and unyielding? Still others might say that, if the ultimate subjection of all things to God is spiritual and internal, rather than merely external, the realm of man's will is also invaded, and man has no freedom at all.

These objections are the consequence of one-sided thinking which either ignores or rules out the determining factors. In the first place, we must take into account the



eternal fitness of things. In creating God had in mind a definite end as well as a specific immediate purpose for all creatures. Man will ultimately choose the right, because he was made for the right, and to suppose that he will remain endlessly wrong, is to suppose that God's creation will fail of realizing the end intended, a position which involves the failure of the Creator rather than of the creature. Man was created for fellowship with God, so constituted as to enter the bosom of His affections, and he will realize the purpose for which he was designed as surely as God's word never fails. Man will be brought to choose the right, not by pressure of omnipotence, but because he will be led to see that it is the right, and that the right is the best for him.

In the second place, while man's will is free, he is not independent; but, as is often said in common parlance, he is the creature of circumstances. Out of the complex skein of influences and circumstances which surround us arises that complicity of motives, almost endless in its variety, moulding the human will, which throws itself on the side of the considerations which appeal most powerfully to our interests. Take the following instance related in the "Peasant Saint."\* Not very far from the village whee the saint gained his livelihood as wood-chopper, a widow with an infant child consecrated herself to a life of austere asceticism. She built for herself a hovel in the forest, vowing never to leave her humble abode where she would spend her life in prayer and reading the lives of the saints. Several years passed by. One winter the weather was unusually severe, and the woman suffered severely from the intense cold. One very cold morning the wood-chopper chanced to pass by, and noticing the hovel knocked at the door, asking permission to come in and warm himself. A feeble voice bid him enter. On opening the door the wood-chopper saw the woman, with the child clasped in her arms, sinking into a lethargy he knew would be fatal. He tried to persuade her to accompany him to the village, but the woman would not listen to his arguments, pleading that she had taken a vow never to leave her abode. While arguing

*"The Peasant Saint." The life story of Sergius of Radonej, Moscow, 1912.*

with the woman a thought flashed to his mind, and he quickly put it into execution. Snatching the child away from the mother, he started to run in the direction of the nearest village; the mother was roused by the apparent danger to her child, sprang to her feet and started in pursuit; nerved with superhuman strength to fight for her offspring, she followed on; the wood-chopper kept up until he reached a homestead; there he restored the child to its mother and left her in care of the farmer's family. The woman was warmed up by the exertion, and her life was saved.

Seizing upon the resources at his command, the wood-chopper presented to that mother a powerful motive which, dwarfing all other considerations, induced her to do what was best for herself and her child. The woman was spurred on to the exertion that saved her life, by the presentation of an all powerful motive that controlled her will. God has command of infinite resources, and is able to present to each and all motives powerful enough to influence the will in the right direction. He will be able to present motives for the right which will infinitely outweigh any that could be presented for the wrong.

The case of Paul is a perfect example of what we have endeavored to set forth in the foregoing considerations. There is a tendency to regard his case as entirely exceptional. But the very opposite of this is the fact. He is a pattern of them that should believe thereafter (1 Tim. 1:16). A pattern, not in the sense that every circumstance attending his call would be reproduced in all subsequent conversions, but in the sense of its embodying the essential principles of God's dealings in absolute grace. Between "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious" and the "grace abounding exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus," is a vast moral distance, and yet Paul traversed that distance in one instant. He relates his experience in the third chapter of Philippians. He first describes His former standing "in the flesh" (vv. 5-6), and then contrasts it with his present standing "in Christ" (vv. 8-14). The seventh verse is retrospective: the apostle transports himself in thought and tells us of the tremendous change that was wrought in him at the critical moment of his

life. "Howbeit the things that were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ." "Those things which were *gain* to me"—such was his estimate of the things pertaining to his standing in the flesh; he had "confidence" in them, he esteemed them "gain; they loomed up before him as an ideal, a motive worthy of the highest effort, devotion, sacrifice, a motive strong enough to master his whole being, to become the driving force, the ruling passion of his life. "These counted I *loss* for Christ." Does not this account for the changed course of his life? He caught a glimpse of something immeasurably higher and better; he beheld his supposed gains fade one after another in the glorious light that shone from heaven; they melted away like dross before the glory of the Risen One, and Paul cast them aside as refuse. The motives which God was able to present for Christ were infinitely more powerful than the reasons for fighting against His cause. The moment he was made to see the true state of the case, he choose the right way. All that was needed to veer him in the right direction was to open his eyes to see the truth, and empower him to embrace it. "Yea verily," continues the apostle, "I *count* all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ." So powerful were the motives presented to him, that they became the inspiration of his life and the stimulus of his service. Christ was the all sufficient motive which wrought the change in Paul. Surely such motive cannot fail in the case of any one, if only they can be made to realize it as did Paul. Surely every son and daughter of Adam would choose life rather than death, when they fully understand the circumstances of the case.

The motives which influenced self-righteous Saul to cry out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" are the very motives which, at the consummation, God will present to the intelligences in the iron clutches of death. The apostle to the Gentiles exemplifies God's dealings in pure grace, apart from all else. The first recipient of unmixed grace portrays its crowning achievement to be witnessed at the conclusion of the eons. Paul views the consummation in the light of his own experience (Phil. 2:9-11). Was it not

the sight of the Risen One that elicited the confession "Lord!" from the lips of Saul of Tarsus? The vision of the Risen One, as He is unveiled to the universe by the Father, brings all created intelligences under the spell of motives that will swing them as if by magic to the path of filial submission, for it is in the name of Jesus that every knee bows, and every tongue confesses Jesus Christ as Lord to the glory of God the Father." As now in his people, so then in all creatures, He works both to will and to do of His good pleasure; He touches first the spring of action, by fashioning the will in accordance with His, and then the stream of action, by empowering the will to work His good pleasure.

The exponents of endless torments, in their devotion to tradition, are constrained to invest this marvellous Scripture with a meaning that is trite and commonplace. They hold that the final subjection of all things is the product of power divorced from love. Having exhausted the resources of grace in fruitless efforts to conquer rebellious wills, God is forced to play the role of a policeman and club His opponents into submission. According to this, the history of the eons concludes not with a manifestation of God in all His excellencies, where His manifold perfections blend in the grand display of love perfected, but with an exhibition of the failure of love, which, defeated in its efforts, recedes to the background and makes room for vengeance. But the fact is, the apostle here presents the ultimate subjection of all things as the ripe fruitage of the ravishing, self-emptying act of the Son's obedience unto death, just as in the Colossian letter the reconciliation of all things in heaven and on earth is the result of peace made through the blood of His cross (Col. 1:20). Power—unless it be the power of grace—is not as much as hinted at. The confession of Jesus as Lord is not wrung from the lips of created intelligences by torture; it is the spontaneous fruit of hearts melted and won by love, as was the confession of Saul of Tarsus. Without in the least invading their freedom, as above explained, God will be able to bring all men into harmony with Himself, so that at last every knee shall bow and every tongue shall give praise to God (Rom. 14:11).

## THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

THERE is probably no subject that confronts mortals which is more perplexing than the problem of evil. It looms up as a mystery dark and deep, with absolutely no clue to guide us through the tangled maze and riddle of the universe. This is really the idea entertained by Christians generally. Yet, all down the centuries, the Scriptures have supplied a thread of exodus from the labyrinth of this great cosmic problem that presses upon the human mind for solution.

The question of the *origin* of evil has been the one which has mostly engrossed the thought of thinkers; to contrive some way whereby evil might have first come into existence, and at the same time clear God from all responsibility in the matter, has been the chief endeavor of those who have written on the subject; and yet it seems evident that the fact of the *existence* of evil, quintessent from its origin, is the real crux after all.

It is self-evident that an absolutely supreme Deity must be a universally responsible Deity. God must be responsible for whatever state of things obtains, or, what is tantamount to it, responsible for that chain of causes that led to this state of things. If God cannot alter this evil state of things, then He is not omnipotent; if He will not, then He is not all-loving, *unless* He has a purpose to accomplish which justifies the employment of evil. Did not God suffer evil to enter the universe in the first place when He might have prevented it? We certainly must answer affirmatively, for the negation of this statement deprives Him of supremacy. The negation of the statement, that He could have prevented evil from effecting an entrance, deprives the universe of a supreme head, and sets it aimlessly whirling in space, a sport of blind, impersonal forces, with no governing hand above and beyond it. If, then, God

allowed evil when He was able to avert it, there is no evading the issue that He is responsible for all the consequences that have followed in its trail, and the only way to vindicate Him is to take the ground that God has a purpose in evil which, while augmenting His glory, secures a higher degree of blessedness for the creature.

When we think of it seriously it seems as if, in their treatment of the question of evil, the sacred writers were rather unguarded and careless in their expressions. Some of their assertions seem to border on irreverence and, to some, even a positive offense to moral sensibility. How much so may be inferred from the painful assiduity with which expositors have labored to tone down their language.

As an example of the boldness of sacred writers we will instance the oft repeated statement—"All things are of God" (Rom. 11:36; 2 Cor. 8:6; 11:12; Eph. 1:11; Heb. 2:10). The majority of Christians profess to believe it, but their actual views qualify the apostle's statement. "It is impossible to believe this statement in toto," they say. "Had the phrase been used of things Paul heard when rapt into the third heaven, or of the things John beheld when soaring in spirit over the new earth, we would have no difficulty in taking it literally; but surely we cannot be expected to take the phrase absolutely when it is used of a world groaning in pain and reeking in crime. Paul did not mean that absolutely *all* things are of God, the bad things as well as the good, all the crime, and sin, and wickedness; what he really wished to say is that all *good* things are of God." But the apostle knew what he said. His purpose was to reveal and enlighten, not to confuse and mystify. He was fully aware that his teaching was open to objections, criticism, misrepresentation; having those possibilities in mind, as a man of mature experience, trained in rhetoric and philosophy, writing on so momentous a theme, he would be very cautious in his language and state his thoughts with sufficient clearness to be understood. We must accept his declaration as it stands and not import into it conclusions which were handed down to us. Nor is Paul alone in teaching that all things are of God; the same truth in the plainest terms and in the most positive manner all the sacred writers affirm; and no Christian would

think of doubting it were it not for the fact that it is at variance with received ideas. An absolutely supreme God is necessarily a universally responsible God, and such is, as we shall see, the clear, positive, unmistakable teaching of Scripture. To this universal responsibility, evil is no exception, but rather a specially designated feature, inasmuch as God declares Himself to be its creator (Isa. 45:7). On this passage more anon, meanwhile it is evident that, in explaining it away the only alternative was to fall back on the dualism of the Zoroastrian system, and divide the universe into two opposite realms, with a rival god over each. But whereas Zoroastrianism teaches that evil will eventually cease to exist, according to the belief of Christendom the devil emerges from the conflict with a larger following than God and devildom secures for itself a permanent place in God's universe. Is it any wonder that thinking men and women turn away from a theology which is a tissue of glaring and palpable contradictions?

God rules over all; He doeth whatsoever is done in heaven or on earth; He assumes full responsibility. Hence the same act, such as inciting David to number the people, which in one place is attributed to the adversary, is in another place ascribed directly to God (1 Chr. 21:1 *cf.* 2 Sam. 24:1). In like manner Job's afflictions, represented as inflicted by the adversary in one place, are spoken of as due to the hand of God, "the adversary smote Job with the botch of Egypt" (Job 2:7), just as "his acquaintance came to condole over all the evil which Jehovah had brought upon him" (Job 42:11).

On the forefront of revelation, the story of Joseph eloquently proclaims the truth, that evil things are of God just as much as good things. His brethren had made up their mind to destroy him. Dissuaded from their murderous intent, they sell him into slavery, and in order to cover up their crime shamefully deceive their aged father. The sin of Joseph's brethren was dark-dyed; and yet in the course of years, when Joseph became ruler of Egypt, and is at last made known to his brethren, he comforts them by saying: "Now therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life. *So now it was not you that*

*sent me hither, but God*" (Gen. 45:5, 8). It is thus evident that God had willed to bless the world through the sufferings of Joseph; so that in selling their brother Jacob's sons carried out the will of God; and it is equally evident that, while carrying out the will of God, their hearts were not right towards Him; and the calamities of God's trying providence which came upon them were designed as a corrective. Does not this prove to demonstration that "all things are of God"? I will now advert to an example all the more powerful because it seems trite and commonplace. I mean the case of Samson. While in Timnath he became infatuated with a Philistine damsel and was determined to marry her. To the arguments of his parents, who try to persuade him against a marriage condemned by Moses' law, Samson replies: "Get her for me, for she pleaseth me well." None would even dream that God had anything to do with this foolish love affair. "And yet the record reads, 'his father and his mother wist not that it *was of the Lord*; for he sought an occasion against the Philistines" (Jud. 14:4).

The extermination of the royal house of Ahab is another illustration of how evil things are of God. (1 Kings 21:19-29). The accomplishment of it is detailed in 2 Kings chh. 9 and 10. It is a sickening tale of cunning, truce-breaking, treachery, cruelty, barbarous butchery, and yet it was the carrying out of Jehovah's purpose. In 1 Kings 21:21, God says, "I will cut off from Ahab every man-child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel." According to the narrative in 2 Kings Jehu was the perpetrator of the awful deed, and yet it is plainly recorded that God was in it. He is in the crimes and wickedness of men in such sense that He makes them subserve His own wishes, and brings good out of them in the end.

Again, in 1 Kings 12 we read of the revolt of the ten tribes. It was a movement of the people; and yet in the sequel of the story, when the army of Judah was ready to march against Israel, the prophet said: "Thus saith Jehovah, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren, *for this thing is of me*" (2 Chr. 11:4). Jeroboam was the prime mover in the movement which resulted in the secession



of the ten tribes; and yet God says, "I will take the kingdom out of his hand" (1 Ki. 11:35). Should it be objected that the foregoing events occurred in Israel, where God's presence was revealed in an especial manner, we have only to point to the sweeping declaration of the apostle in Acts 17:26: "He made of one every nation of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, having ordained appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation." This clearly shows that the movements of history, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the changes in the world's map that have taken place from time to time, etc., all have been foreordained beforehand; everything works out just as God had decreed.

But there are some Scriptures even more startling. We learn that *the Lord hardened* the heart of the Canaanites, that they should come out against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly (Josh. 11:20). In another place we are informed that it was *of God* that King Amaziah should reject the word of God (2 Chr. 25:20). Psalm 105, in reviewing the dealings of God with the nation, throws light on the sojourn of Israel in Egypt in a way that is truly surprising.

He increased his people greatly,  
And made them stronger than their adversaries.  
He turned their heart to hate his people,  
To deal deceitfully with his servants (Psa. 105:24, 25).

The prophet Isaiah bears out the statement of the Psalmist when he says: "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to robbers? Did not Jehovah?" (Isa. 42:24). Truly, *all* things are of God.

The foregoing are but a few illustrations.

Consideration of space forbids citing further instances. But anyone who will read the Old Testament with this thought in mind will be surprised by the frequency and distinctness with which this doctrine is brought out. If the reader has not thought of this before, let him read the books of Kings and Chronicles, especially noticing how the same acts attributed to human actors in the former book are ascribed directly to God in the latter. God says of the things which to the historian appeared the sole work of wicked men, *I have done it*.

Let us now take a glance at the way the Scriptures view that crime of crimes—the crucifixion of God's Son. With the champions of a heartless orthodoxy it is a stock argument to prove the necessity for unending torments: they point out that there can be no mercy for the perpetrators of such awful deed. But the apostle tells that they did what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done, and that Christ was "delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23; 4:28).

Thus far we have been considering instances illustrating that evil things are of God. We will now look at a passage which expressly states this truth (Isa. 45:5-7).

I am Jehovah, and there is NONE ELSE;

Beside me there is NO GOD: \* \* \*

That they may know from the rising of the sun, and  
from the west,

That there is none BESIDE ME:

I am Jehovah, and there is NONE ELSE.

I form the LIGHT,

And create DARKNESS;

I make PEACE,

And create EVIL:

I am Jehovah, that DOETH ALL THESE THINGS.

I am aware how this passage is disposed of by theological casuists, who have been trained to make the Bible subserve the interests of their systems. It is claimed that the Hebrew word *נָתַן* means *inflicted* evil, so that not moral evil is meant, but evil in the shape of calamities which overtake the peoples. A glance at a concordance shows this explanation to be a makeshift of theorists. The tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9, 17) cannot possibly mean inflicted evil. The serpent was not enticing the woman by a prospect of inflicted evil (Gen. 3:5): that would have been no inducement to transgress. God said, Man has become as one of us, to know good and evil (Gen. 3:22), who can believe that inflicted evil is meant? Neither does Ecclesiastes assert that God will bring into judgment inflicted evil! (Eccl. 12:14). The fact is, the original word is a generic for *all evil*, and is used hundreds

of times throughout the Hebrew Scriptures to denote wickedness and wrongdoing; and there is no reason, so far as language is concerned, to give it any other meaning here. But, apart from questions of language, the context determines the force of the word. Here are two pairs of opposites:

I form the LIGHT,  
And create DARKNESS:  
I make PEACE,  
And create EVIL

What is the opposite of evil? Peace. The particular evil referred to here is *war*; God girds His "anointed" for the conflict and makes him victorious, subduing before him nations and kings. Now war is not a *physical* evil, but is the direct result of wrong-doing; war results from racial prejudice; pride, greed, ambition, revenge, covetousness, and every other wicked passion that simmers in the human breast. So-called physical evils are inseparable corollaries of war, but they are the *result* rather than the cause of it. Without discussing the distinction between physical and moral evil, it is sufficient to say that all evil has a moral quality, and what we call physical evil is the outcome and necessary accompaniment of moral evil, always and everywhere, and yet God says, *I create evil*. In contrast to heathen dualism which derives light and darkness, good and evil, from rival deities, the Hebrew prophet represents Jehovah as sole creator of good and evil, and author as much of adverse as of propitious forces.

I would urge my readers to accept Scripture at its face value, and not allow the thought of the abuses which may be made of it lead them to reject or modify the Word of God. Since God declares, *I create evil*, we need not apologize for Him. He assures us that absolutely *nothing* takes place but His hand is in it, that there is no power that can act independent of Him, in spite of Him, or unknown to Him. If there was, God's government could be entirely upset sometime. According to popular theology the devil has already done that very thing. He invaded God's universe and entirely upset His work; and though

God forthwith evolved a so-called "plan of redemption" to repair damages, yet He is not able to cope with the situation; He cannot banish the daring invader, who has come to stay, to permanently disfigure and disgrace God's fair creation.

Consider for a moment the practical bearing of this doctrine. If all things are not absolutely of God, if there be things that are wholly of the devil, and in which God has no hand, how can we be resigned to the ills and woes of life? What wisdom would there be in Job's saying had he said, "Shall we receive good from the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil from the hand of the devil?" There is no reason why we should receive evil at the hand of the devil in a spirit of trust and resignation, simply because we receive good from the hand of God. But when we know that neither the devil nor wicked men, nor all of them combined, can act independent of God; when we know that evil and good are both of God, then we can be resigned to both, since we know that He is righteous in all His works, and will allow nothing to take place that is not conducive to His own gracious ends.

We have considered the Scriptures asserting that God is the sole creator of all things, that evil is His servant, as are all things, and that His will is accomplished thereby. We will now proceed to consider the *purpose* of evil.

If God is the creator of evil, then it must be that He has created it for a *good* purpose, and that, under His guiding hand, it serves to highten the good. The Scriptures fully bear out this inference.

Let us first turn to Rom. 8:19-23

- <sup>19</sup> For the presentiment of  
the creation is awaiting the revelation of the  
<sup>20</sup> sons of God. For the creation is subordinated to  
vanity (not voluntarily, but because of Him  
<sup>21</sup> Who is subordinating it) in expectation, since  
the creation itself will be freed from the slavery  
of corruption for the glorious liberty of  
<sup>22</sup> the children of God. For we have perceived that  
all creation is groaning and travailing together  
up to now.

Here is an epitome of the entire "purpose of the sons".

The whole creation is represented as awaiting, with growing and travailing in pain, the revealing of the sons of God. Then we are told that the creation was subjected to vanity—this fallen state—not of its own will, but by the will of Him who has subjected the same in hope, that is by the will of God. Strange as it may seem, yet Paul positively asserts that God made the creation subject to the bondage of corruption. Further on in the same epistle, unfolding God's ways with Israel and the nations, he makes a statement even more astounding:

- <sup>30</sup> For just as *you* once distrust God, yet now  
<sup>31</sup> obtain mercy by *their* distrust, thus these, too,  
distrust this mercy of yours in order that *they*, too,  
<sup>32</sup> may obtain mercy. For God locks all up together  
in distrust in order that He may have mercy on all.  
<sup>33</sup> O the depth of God's riches and wisdom  
and knowledge! How unsearchable are  
His verdicts and untraceable His ways!  
<sup>34</sup> For who knows the Lord's mind? Or who  
<sup>35</sup> becomes His counselor? Or who first gives  
to Him and it will be repaid to him? For *all* is  
of Him and through Him and for Him.  
To *Him* be the glory for the eons! Amen!

Why should God do such strange things as subjecting creation to vanity and locking Jews and Gentiles in disobedience? Such strange acts are unjustifiable in themselves; but neither is an end in itself, both are *means* to an end, and are fully justified by the results achieved through their medium—the deliverance of creation into the liberty of the sons of God, and the mercy upon all. Evil is God's prerogative; in His ways with the creature He acts on the principle enshrined in the adage, "the end justifies the means." "A dangerous doctrine," someone interjects. "If God acts on the principle that the end justifies the means, why not adopt it generally as a rule of conduct, seeing we are enjoined to be imitators of Him?" The answer is simple. The apostle does not say that we should imitate God in *all* things, but only in *walking in love* (Eph. 5:15, 99). God has acted toward us in love, we are to imitate His attitude in our dealings toward men. God does a great many things which man is enjoined *not* to do. God kills and hurts (Deut. 32:39); man is forbidden

to do either, because he is not possessed of unlimited power. When God kills he also makes alive, when he hurts he also heals; but man can neither heal nor make alive, and is thus forbidden to destroy what he is unable to restore. In dealing with evil man is *overcome by it*, whereas God *overcomes by means of it*. Man is warned, in the most solemn fashion, to abstain from evil because he has no control over it; but God has perfect and absolute control over all things and is thus able to use them for universal good. Our difficulties on this point arise from inability to see *how* evil is conducive to good. But the examples we have considered, as, for instance, the case of Joseph, prove that He has done it in *some* cases, and if He has done it in some cases it is not difficult to believe that He will do it in *all* cases. The two passages in Romans state the good ends to which evil conduces, and thus we come to know something of the purpose of evil. We do not see enough to comprehend its vast sweep, but we do see enough to establish us in the belief that this purpose is grand and glorious, and in perfect harmony with His character.

In conclusion, I will remark that, in this respect, as in many others, there seems to exist a certain analogy between nature and revelation. We know that all organic processes involve a certain balance of opposing forces and in all of them is a union of conflicting tendencies. The phenomena of physical life involve at every instant, as a part of themselves, all the essential phenomena of the death of tissue. The same balance of opposing forces exists also in the unfolding of the "purpose of the eons". The so-called mystery of evil precisely as it is in the world is absolutely indispensable to the realization of God's purpose, because it is the necessary condition of all true good in the world. For good, spiritual, moral, or personal, is the overcoming of evil. Created intelligences shall never know themselves, until they learn for themselves that all the comfort of life, all its strength, victory, and blessedness, comes only through the sufferings of Christ.

Thus the Scriptures teach that light and darkness, good and evil, are really parts of the same Divine economy. Good and evil proceed from the same Author; they co-operate for the same ends; they are included in the same

vast chain of causation. The only difference is that we know a little more about the one than we do about the other, and that the One who presides over both alike lays—or seems to lay—a little more stress here than He does there. God sees as a whole what we see in fragments. When the organist sits at the key-board of his instrument he plays some passages soft and some loud; sometimes the notes he gives forth are muffled, sometimes they are loud and clear. But the different parts of His playing are all upon the same instrument, and they all harmonize together. The same note is alternately subdued and emphasized; and there are *crescendoes* and *diminunendoes* to connect the soft with the loud. So with Him who sits at the key-board of the universe and touches the chords of universal action: the music which results is not broken and discordant, but it all blends into a subtle harmony and the rising and the falling cadences alike contribute to the realization of the pre-determined goal

V. G.

## JEW AND GENTILE RECONCILED

- <sup>11</sup> Wherefore be remembering, that once *you* —the nations in flesh, who are being termed “Uncircumcision” by those termed “Circumcision”, (made with hands in flesh)—that in that era you were apart from Christ, having been estranged from the citizenship of Israel, and guests of the covenants of promise, having no expectation, and without a God in the world.
- <sup>12</sup> Yet now, in Christ Jesus, *you*, who once were far, become near in the blood of the Christ:
- <sup>13</sup> for *He* is our Peace, Who makes both one, tearing down the central wall of the barrier—
- <sup>14</sup> the enmity in His flesh—repealing the law of precepts in the decrees, in order that He may create the two, in Himself, into one new humanity,
- <sup>15</sup> making peace: and may reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, killing the
- <sup>16</sup> enmity in it, and, when He comes, He preaches the glad message of peace to you, afar, and peace to
- <sup>17</sup> those near, seeing that, through Him, we both are having the access, in one spirit, to the Father.
- <sup>18</sup> Accordingly then, you are not guests and sojourners any more, but are fellowcitizens of
- <sup>19</sup> the saints and of the family of God, being erected on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being
- <sup>20</sup> the top of the corner, in Whom the whole building, being joined together, is growing into a holy temple
- <sup>21</sup> in the Lord, in Whom *you*, too, are being built together with them for God’s habitation in spirit.



# THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL

## JEW AND GENTILE RECONCILED

**GOD IS ONE.** There is no division or dissention in Him. And in this, the highest revelation of His grace, His saints, too, become a unit in Christ.

When human government succeeds in splitting the earth into a multitude of jarring and warring kingdoms, He steps in and unites them all under one Head again (Eph. 1:10). Christ was once Head of all. He descended beneath the feet of all. But God, for His Own great Name's sake will restore His Headship to Him. Thus will all discord in the sphere of government be forever gone.

So, too, in the sphere of reconciliation He will not be satisfied until all are equally near His heart, and none can claim the place of priest.

None of this unity can be attained on earth, however, so long as Israel can claim the place pre-eminent. So long as they are *near* and the nations *far*, unity there cannot be.

Mankind, at present, is a most hopeless mass of conflicting interests. It is divided into a thousand fragments. There is the basic division of the sexes. It seems almost strange that this should be a basis of discord. But so it is. In Christ this distinction is gone. There is the difference of race. In Christ this disappears. There is the diversity of station, now slave and master, high and low, all are one in Him. But the greatest difference of all—the one most vital to relationship with God—is that of circumcision, with its attendant privileges of relationship to Christ, of citizenship in Israel, of participation in the promises and a part in the glorious expectations of the chosen nation.

With all the blessedness which justification and even conciliation bring, they do not bridge the barrier between Israel and the nations. They do not bring in unity.

Let us follow the unfolding of the conciliation, as it was revealed. Like all of Paul's ministry, it did not blaze forth

in meridian brightness all at once, but went "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 5). We have found it first in the fifth of Romans bringing the justified believer into perfect peace with God. We have pondered it in the eleventh of Romans, where the nations, as such, are conciliated, so that, in spite of Israel's defection, the way of faith is open direct to God without Israel's intervention. We have mused upon its ministry in the fifth of second Corinthians, after all physical relationships to Christ are repudiated.

And now, as we enter the Ephesian epistle we are told that, not only is blessing changed in kind,—spiritual blessings superceding Israel's physical marvels—but the very sphere of blessing is changed.

First, indeed, the mystery of Christ is revealed as it had never been revealed before. His heavenly headship is made known for the first time, so that heaven and earth are united under a single Suzerain. But more than this, the sphere of blessing for those to whom Paul ministered is changed from earth to heaven.

And now the question arises, Is the division, hitherto so marked, between the Circumcision and Uncircumcision who believed to continue in this new realm? There is no necessity for this, for Israel's prior claim to blessing never included heavenly creatures. These were always their superiors.

It is the grand function of the Ephesian letter to answer this question in all the details. This is done categorically in the definition of the "mystery" in chapter three, beginning with the end of verse five and including verses six and seven. It reads thus:

in spirit the nations are to be  
*joint* allottees and a *joint* body, and *joint* partakers  
 of the promises in Christ Jesus, through the glad  
 message of which I am become the servitor,  
 in accord with the gift of God's grace, which is  
 given me, in accord with its powerful operations,

The words "in spirit" have hitherto been appended to the previous statement. Their position makes them emphatic. But what need is there of emphasizing the fact

that a *revelation* came to the apostles and prophets *in spirit*? Could it possibly have come any other way? But if we put "*In spirit*" at the beginning of the next clause its message is clear, and the reason for its emphatic position is vindicated. For, physically, the succeeding statements are not true. They cannot be true in the physical sphere. They can only be true in the realm of spirit.

It is, then, *in spirit*, that the nations are united with believing Israelites in a three-fold bond of blessedness. They are *joint* allottees, members of a *joint* body and *joint* partakers of God's promises in Christ Jesus, of which Paul had been the dispenser.

There is a triple unity here (and a three-fold cord is not easily broken) which it is our highest interest to acknowledge and appreciate.

God has a heavenly allotment to bestow upon believers now, even as He has an earthly allotment for Israel in the land in the day of her glory. The customs of land tenure in Israel are so different from ours that it is quite difficult to find equivalent terms in English. As a rule, land was not, and is not today, owned by individuals in Palestine. It belongs to the crown, held by the community, and is allotted each year. The lot was cast into the bag and the portion of land was assigned to each one as Jehovah disposed the lot. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, He does not sell ought of it. He only allots portions of it to His people for their enjoyment. Just so with our "inheritance" in heaven. Our portion there will not be our to *own*, but to *enjoy*. So we are compelled, for the sake of accuracy, to use the words *joint allottee* to show our portion in the heavens.

Nor should we confuse this with a "heavenly" calling or city. All things *on earth* will yet be "heavenly". The Lord called some while on earth. He calls some from heaven after the rejection of His earth message. This was the "heavenly calling". The heavenly city will come down *out of heaven* upon the earth. The kingdom *on the earth* will be called "the kingdom of the *heavens*" and will be a "heavenly" kingdom. But the allotment in Ephesians is not merely "heavenly" but *in heaven*. These distinctions are clearly indicated in the original by the use of the dative

case in Ephesians, when *locating* blessings and the geniture case elsewhere when *characterizing* them. We could never be *joint* allottees on earth.

This section of the mystery does not consist in the fact that we are allottees. This was well known before (Rom. 8:17). The secret lies in the fact that we are *joint* allottees. We share the allotment on equal terms with those of Israel, who accept Paul's message. The mystery is usually taken to be "the body". But the truth of the body was no secret (Rom. 12:4). The *joint*-body was a secret, yet even this is but one of three items which compose the mystery. The allotment has no reference to the "body". Nor has the joint participation which follows any distinct reference to the "body". In fact "the body" is not the mystery at all. The secret now revealed lies in the fact that it is a *joint*-body. The Spirit has actually invented a word to express it, for there is no such thing in nature as a body in which all the members are of equal rank. This is unity indeed.

But we are principally concerned at this time with the third section of this statement of the secret.

The versions point this passage as though Paul is informing the Ephesians (among whom he had labored for years) that he was a minister of the gospel! There should be no point after "gospel". What he insists on is that the nations are now *joint* partakers of—not the gospel which Peter and the twelve were preaching—they were now *joint* partakers of the gospel which *he* had preached to them before.

They had been partakers before this time (Rom. 15:27), but not *joint* partakers. At one stroke of the apostle's pen we are relieved of the thought that the gospel which he preached was now discarded—the justification and reconciliation and expectation and glory of which he had been the dispenser, which he had received direct from God, apart from the twelve—by one word he glorifies all these grand blessings by making them ours on equal terms with those of the chosen nation who may accept Paul's message.

Let this scripture settle the matter. Paul's previous ministry does not vanish at the revelation of the mystery—it is rather enforced and enhanced by the very statement

of the mystery itself. The nations *were* partakers of this ministry, *now* they are *joint* partakers.

The categorical statement of the mystery we have been considering is the key to the whole epistle to the Ephesians. The body of the epistle is taken up with its elaboration. The first half develops its doctrinal details; the latter half its practical purpose.

The joint allotment is fully explained in 1:3-14 and 6:10-17. The joint body is developed in 1:19b—2:5a and 5:21—6:9. The joint participation with the Circumcision is expanded in 2:5b—2:22 and 4:17—5:20. It is especially with the last item of the mystery that we are concerned, for the conciliation is a part of Paul's previous ministry of which, we are now told, we have become joint partakers. The passage which especially sets this forth is chapter two, verses eleven and twenty-two. Here we are first asked to recall the condition of believers previous to the time when they became joint partakers. The highest that can be said of them (*from the standpoint of flesh*) is that they were *guests*. The promises contained in God's covenants were not directly for them, yet did not forget them. The covenant with Abraham made provision for the blessing of all nations. But joint participation was entirely out of the question.

*But now.* These thrilling words introduce the great change which the revelation of the mystery has wrought. Their *physical* status is not changed, but physical access to God is denied even Israel by the destruction of the temple. The central wall of the barrier, the *soreg*, which denied the nations all access into the sacred courts, this barrier is crumbled to dust, so that there are no longer two courts, one near for the Circumcision, and one far for the Uncircumcision. There are no courts at all! Now we both have access—not to the court of the priests, not to the holy place, not to the holy of holies—but to the Father!

The enmity, or estrangement between Jewish converts and the believers among the nations was based upon the flesh of Christ. The Jew was related to Him by ties of blood, the nations were not. But when His blood was shed by that near nation, then they laid the basis for a bloodless relationship of spirit which was presaged by the rending

of the veil which hid the God of Israel even from her priests. Jew and Gentile are now one. A false coloring is given this passage by the rendering "ordinances." There is no reference to ordinances here. The word *dogma* means a *decree*. Caesar made decrees, not ordinances (Lu. 2:1, Acts 17:7). The decree of the apostles was to the effect that the believers among the nations need *not* observe Jewish ordinances. So they were very far from being ordinances (Acts 16:4). The two remaining occurrences (Eph. 2:15, Col. 2:14) refer to these decrees. These are the only occurrences. The decrees issued by the council of Jerusalem are repealed. There is now an entirely new humanity in which the old-time distinctions and divisions vanish. Adam's descendants are a confusion of factions. Christ heads a new humanity in which there is not a vestige of any of the old divisions left. His cross, displaying as it does the utter worthlessness of the Jewish claim to superiority, destroys all ground of enmity and unites them both into one.

*Thus it is that there is reconciliation between Circumcision and Uncircumcision.*

Romans five adjusts the estrangement between God and the individual. Romans eleven puts the nations under God's proclamation of peace, Ephesians two, however, reconciles Jew and Gentile to one another in Christ. They are guests no longer but fellow citizens, and members of God's family circle. They are no longer shut out of God's courts but in spirit are themselves His sanctuary.

It is important to note that the reconciliation between Jew and Gentile is *mutual*. It is not that the Jew who believes lays aside his enmity or that the Gentile is willing to be at peace with the Jew. Both are actuated by one spirit which destroys all differences between them. Both are in Christ Jesus in whom physical distinctions vanish.

The word here used for reconciliation is a composite made up of the word which we have hitherto translated "conciliatoin" and a prefixed connective which is usually translated "from." This changes "conciliation," a one sided amity to *re-conciliation*, a mutual friendliness. The entire context of this passage is evidence to the effect that there is more than mere conciliation. Both parties are affected. There is

reconciliation. The importance of this as bearing on the universal reconciliation is noted when dealing with that subject (Col. 1:20).

The department developed by the unities which the mystery inaugurates are rehearsed in the fourth chapter. Never before did Jew and Gentile have the same hope, or faith, or baptism. Now there is *one* expectation for all. Before the chosen nation expected Messiah to return to Olivet and save them from their enemies. The nations and those of the Jews who came under Paul's preaching, looked forward to meeting Him in the air, as the apostle Paul had been taught by special revelation. As the third item of the mystery tells us, this ministry of Paul's still continues. They still have the hope of being "ever with the Lord." This is further fixed by the fact that Ephesians was written to the very ones who had this prior expectation (Eph. 1:12). But Col. 1:5 leaves us without any doubt on this score. They still looked for "the hope \* \* *whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.*" Both the Colossians and the Ephesians were looking forward to meeting the Lord Himself from heaven (1 Thes. 4:16) as they had been taught under Paul's previous ministry. Now, however, this hope is enriched and glorified. It includes a celestial body (1 Cor. 15:49) and a heavenly allotment.

If we insist that there is *one* hope for God's saints now, it is only that we may apprehend and appreciate the great truth of the reconciliation. Were His saints divided as they were of old, were destiny dependent on deeds, or His grace doles out according to knowledge, then reconciliation there could not be.

*God's people are one!* There are no God made distinctions between them. They have only *one* spirit, *one* faith, *one* hope, even as they have only *one* God, who is over *all* and through *all* and in *all*.

Let us, then, allow no barrier between ourselves and God. And let us allow no breaches to come in between saint and saint, for here, too, God desires unity—the unity that reconciles.

One of the distressing symptoms of any advance in knowledge or experience is the tendency to cause a division between the people of God. This division does not stop with

local fellowship but usually advances to a claim of a "second work of grace" by means of which God accords them peculiar privileges not granted to others. Such is the so-called holiness movement. Believers are divided into "sanctified" and "unsanctified." So too there has been much teaching which destroys the truth of the "*one* hope." Some would limit Him coming to "those who look for Him" (Heb. 9:28) forgetting that this is written to Hebrew believers quite outside the scope of the present economy. Others would make a special company of those who have entered the higher truths of the prison epistles, failing to see that these very epistles are most emphatic in denying any such division. The building which is founded on *grace* cannot be finished by "experiences" or knowledge. It is a question of *grace*, undiluted and unadulterated, which gives all equal privileges and blessings quite apart from their realization or appreciation.

Let us go on to learn and realize the astounding graciousness to us in the secret economy, but let us never depart from the underlying principles that all is of *grace*, in *spirit*, which assures perfect *unity*. Then shall we appreciate the truth of reconciliation in its bearing upon the relation of saint to saint.

But if we do not realize the unity of the spirit, how can we give it a practical place in our conduct? So long as it is not apprehended, every fresh item of recovered truth or revolt from unspiritual conditions will divide and disrupt and disintegrate.

May God preserve those who are finding rich spoil in His word from marring the spirit's unity! And may He lead His saints more and more into the realization and enjoyment of this aspect of the reconciliation, which provides, not only for peace between Jew and Gentile, but also between every warring faction of His beloved church!

God is One. We are one in Christ Jesus. We are all members of *one* body, we have *one* spirit; *one* hope, *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God. In His sight we are not divided!

Such then is the glorious operation of the reconciliation among the saints: unity of spirit, unity of blessing, unity of heart!



## THE THRESHOLD OF ROMANS

How remarkable it is that this great epistle, the grand Pauline summary of evangelical truth, should have been directed to that city which has seen the rise into power and formed a base of operations for that great community which knows neither its evangel nor its power. Where Paul once, as a prisoner in chains, told out the simple, soul-captivating truths of the gospel, lifting up the cross of Christ as God's manifested way of dealing with sin, there, today, with the pomp and ceremony of a carnal king, the self-styled vicar of Christ sits on a throne without Paul's chains on the one hand, and without Paul's gospel on the other. Paul, the prisoner, was a liberator of men, but the reputed successor of the Apostles binds chains, grievous to be borne, upon those who bow the knee in acknowledgement of his authority.

There is a time and place for everything, and so, though every verse of this opening chapter of Romans is like a well-packed mine, laden with the treasure-trove of truth, present necessity demands not an exposition of each verse but rather a message from the chapter as a whole, that will reach and edify the reader's heart.

We notice in Paul's opening statement that he places the emphasis not upon himself but upon his message. If he speaks of himself it is as a slave—a slave to whom has been entrusted the grace of apostleship. If he speaks of his message he describes it as an *evangel*. He separates and magnifies it by calling it *the evangel*. He dignifies it by naming it the *evangel of God*. The Gospel of God was then the message of Paul. The glad news of liberty for the bound; peace for the troubled and rest for the weary. It is good news, its dominant note being one of gladness and joy, something unexpected, something undeserved, something—as unbelief would say—"too good to be true." It is *news*,

a message undreamed of by mortal man, an evangel beyond the imagination of the human mind to conceive. It is *God's* good news; as true as God is true; freighted with His love; bearing the imprints of His attributes; strong in the might of His Omnipotence.

With such a gospel Paul faced the heathen world, sunk as it was in licentious self-indulgence of every kind, and covered with the black mist of ignorance. With such a gospel Paul won the heathen world for Christ. With such a gospel the early Church overthrew the might of Paganism. With such a gospel the heroes of the martyr age could face the lions without a moan, and go to their deaths with songs of triumphant exultation on their lips. *It was a gospel with God in it.*

Why is it that the so-called gospel of the modern church is so powerless and weak? This is the reason: it has no God in it. And this is what makes it easy to distinguish between man's gospel and God's: God's gospel has *God* in it; man's gospel has *man*. The one emphasizes God's righteousness, the other man's religiousness. The one exalts the cross, the other ignores it. The one makes sin a reality, the other makes it a mere shadow of the mind. The gospel of God deals with man as a creature of Deity, dignified with the potentiality of divine sonship. The gospel of materialism degrades him by finding his origin in the chance meeting of some primeval atoms. Evolution decrees him to be not much more than an educated; though tailless ape. Christian Science would have him the poor "dupe" of the Universe, seeing things that have no existence; feeling pains that have no reality; dwelling in a body without real substances; in short declaring that man at best is but the humbug of Time. Such sorry concoctions of the human brain proclaim their origin in their abject weakness and insufficiency when put to the test in the hour of need.

But it was *God's* gospel, and not man's, that Paul was entrusted with. And right away Paul defines for us the content of his evangel: "concerning his son Jesus Christ." *Christ* was the Gospel of God. Not merely a message in words, not merely a code of rules and regulations like that given at Sinai, but a revelation in living flesh and blood—God's unveiling of Himself in His Son. Men's gospels are

always *methods*—new methods of government, new methods of ethics, new methods of thought, but God's gospel is not a method, it is *Himself*. We may observe how simply Paul, in a few expressive terms, takes in the entire circle of events in connection with the revelation of God in Christ. The Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of Messiah, are all included within the scope of Paul's "good news."

The Incarnation is referred to in the phrase "made of the seed of David." It relates to His humanity. "Good news" it was that the angel heralds brought to the shepherd-watchers when Christ was born. "Glad tidings of great joy" they called it. Tidings of great joy when the maker of heaven and earth took upon Himself the limitations of Time and Space, becoming obedient to the restrictions of finite form. Tidings of great mystery when the Hand that set the sparkling worlds on high rolling on their various courses, and spread out the diamond-studded pathway of the milky way, clutched with baby fingers at a mother's breast. Tidings of surpassing glory when the Omnipresent source of all life lay passive in the tender, loving restraint of a youthful mother's arms. Tidings of infinite wonder when the Omniscient One—the all-knowing One—looked up with the helpless stare of a baby's gaze into a maiden's smiling face. No wonder the angels sang! The Universe will yet sing at memory of this, the marvel of the ages—Deity incarnate. The Incarnation was God's grip on humanity in the Person of Christ; God's laying hold of something He had formed for Himself; God claimning His own.

Good news was this indeed to men. Think of the conceptions of God as held by the heathen nations! Recall the Moloch worshippers who fed the flames of their sacrificial fires with the bodies of their helpless babes! Think of Bacchus, the god of the drunkard's revel, and his miserable consorts in wretched lust and crime! Think of the deities of Olympus, with their jealousies, murders, thefts, and other hellish attributes, and then, over against the hideous picture, place that other picture of the manger scene. Which of the heathen nations, wise in their own conceits, could bear the thought of a God in infant form? The ideas of innocence, purity, and love, associated with

such a scene, would not coincide with the attributes of their divinities. Men had deified their passions, and immortalized their vices, but now God "humanizes" His virtues, and embodies His changeless love in human form. Was all this not something *new*—the gospel of God, concerning His son Jesus Christ our Lord, made of the seed of David according to the flesh?

But the wonder and the mystery of Paul's evangel grows upon us when we pass on to another fact emphasized here. A baby God! that surely were a marvel, but a *dead* God!! What means this? Would proud Greece consider such a thought? or imperial Rome forsake its honored shrines for a mortal God? Nay, verily, murder and vice, drunkenness and lust, would not degrade the Gentile's gods to their worshipping dupes, but incarnate childhood or sacrificial death would snap the ties of reverence and awe. Why then are such elements included in a world-gospel? In simple words the reason is, if human birth is a mystery, God, in Christ, shared with humanity the mystery of birth; if human death is a tragedy, God, in Christ, shared with humanity the tragedy of death. But, of course, He did more than this, for, in sharing the mystery of birth, He destroyed and removed the mystery in revealing Himself as the grand goal of human life; and, through participating in the tragedy of death, He annihilated the tragedy by showing Himself triumphant victor over death and hades.

But Paul's evangel did not stop at Messiah's death, if it did it would not have been an *evangel*. It included the resurrection, without which the gospel would not have been complete. The incarnation involved the identification of Christ in the tragedy of human death; the resurrection was the identification of humanity in the triumph of His resurrection. The great transition from tragedy to triumph was what was enacted in the drama of Calvary—Christ sharing in the tragedy of human death; humanity sharing in the triumph of His resurrection. Consequently the gospel of God is not only the good news of God's incarnation into human weakness, as pictured in the Babe of Bethlehem, but the participation by weak humanity in the triumphant power of the Omnipotent God.

ALAN BURNS.

## FROM GLORY TO GLORY

PAUL's ministry differs from that of the twelve apostles in a number of important points. They received definite commissions from the Lord while still on earth to guide them for the entire course of their ministry. But Paul receives his commissions from heaven, not all at once, but in gradual installments. This is clear from his initial commission as he rehearses it before King Agrippa (Acts 26:16). He is to be "a minister and a witness, both of the things wherein thou hast seen Me *and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee.*"

As a consequence of this Paul's ministry divides into four distinct periods:

I. Saul proclaims Jesus as the Son of God (Acts 9:1-30).

II. Saul separated by the Spirit: Paul preaches Justification (Acts 13:1-19:20, see 21).

III. Paul no longer knows Christ after the flesh: teaches the Conciliation (2 Cor. 5:16-21), (Acts 19:21-28:28).

IV. The dispensation of the Secret Economy committed to Paul (Eph. 3:1-9).

These do not supercede each other on a dead level, but each ministry includes the former, yet adds to its display of grace and glory. The preaching of Jesus to the Jews as the Son of God opens up the way to preach justification to the other nations. Justification in turn, provides for the proclamation of peace, the conciliation.

All of these together form the basis on which the dispensation of the Secret Economy rests.

The grace shown to the nations now were impossible apart from conciliation. This favor flows from justification. And these all depend upon Christ's glory as the Son of God.

In the apostle's own words, his ministry goes "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). Moses' ministry went from glory to gloom. He did not put a veil on his face to hide the glory. The sons of Israel saw that glory (Ex. 34:30). (Change the "till" to "when" in Ex. 34:33.) He put the veil on to hide the fact that it was a *fading* glory. It did not last. It vanished, just as the administration of the law did in practice. It came in voices and lightnings and fire, but it ended in dealing out death.

Not so with Paul's ministry. It began in grace and gathered more grace and glory as it progressed.

#### THE FIRST PERIOD

So great was the glory of Saul's first sight of the Lord that he was blinded by its brightness (Acts 9:18). Here he gets his initial commission, to which we have already referred. This ministry never enters his epistles, so we must gather its gist from his personal utterances as recorded in the book of Acts.

It was like that of the twelve, in that it inculcated repentance and pardon, but unlike their commissions, it was to be proclaimed to the nations, to whom Saul is particularly sent (Acts 26:16-20). Similar to this is the account we have of this ministry in the city of Damascus (Acts 9:20-22). He proved that Jesus was the Messiah, but also preached Him as the Son of God.

#### THE SECOND PERIOD

After his conversion, the next great landmark in the life of Saul was his *separation*, by the Spirit, (together with Barnabas) to a special ministry (Acts 13:2). Then Paul, as he is now called, preaches a sermon in Psidian Antioch which adds much lustre to his ministry, for there he first broaches the grand doctrine of justification, or vindication, by faith.

True, it is only a side issue, as it were, brought in in connection with the pardon he had previously proclaimed. But the germ was there and it found a fuller expression in the first four chapters of his Roman letter. Its gracious character is seen when, being rejected by the Jews, it is

freely proclaimed to the idolators, and "as many as were ordained to eonian life, believed."

This ministry is often referred to by Paul as "my gospel." It continued until he had "fully preached the gospel of Christ" from Jerusalem unto Illyricum (Rom. 15:19). It includes Paul's itineracy among the nations, including the establishment of assemblies in Galatia, at Thessalonica, and Corinth and Ephesus. The epistles to Thessalonians were written during this period, as well as that to the Galatians and the first epistle to the Corinthians, but the second Corinthian letter and that to the Romans was not penned until its conclusion. They mark the crisis between this period and the next. This part of Paul's ministry is most significantly concluded as follows: "So mightily grew the word of the Lord, and prevailed. And after these things were ended \* \* \*" (Acts 19:20-21.)

#### THE THIRD PERIOD

"After these things were ended" introduces us to Paul's purpose to visit Jerusalem and Rome. The latter connects this crisis with his letter to the Romans (Rom. 15:22-25). His visit to Jerusalem gives us a graphic picture of the character of his new ministry, the conciliation. By this ministry, every barrier between God and the nations is effectually removed, yet, when Trophimus is in Jerusalem, he is denied all access into the courts of Jehovah, and the mere suggestion that he has dared to draw nigh, throws the whole city into an uproar.

At this point it is well to note the distinctive character of the blessing to the nations which is being developed through Paul's ministry. According to the prophets, all blessing to the nations must flow through Israel. Their blessing is always "*with* His people" (Rom. 15:10). And hitherto, in spite of the fact that Israel is apostatizing, blessing has been "*to the Jew first*" and the nations have been made partakers of "*their spiritual things*" (Rom. 15:27). Now, however, it is becoming more and more evident that blessing is *not* dependent upon Israel's national salvation. Conciliation is not based on their blessing, but on their "*casting away*" or defection (Rom. 11:15).

In fact, Paul's ministry waxes as Israel's wanes. Its glories grow brighter in the gathering gloom.

Israel's ascendancy over the other nations had two distinct aspects: it was political and it was ecclesiastical. Both are assumed by the apostles when they send a decree for the assemblies among the nations to obey.

But when Israel fails utterly as the priest nation, so that, instead of bringing the nations to God, they drive them away, then God opens up a spiritual way of access to Himself which eclipses the tardy and cumbrous approach which Israel knew.

In the eon to come gentile blessing will be proportioned to Israel's superior bliss. Now, however, Israel's *failure*, provides the field for God's grace to act towards the hated aliens. Paul's third ministry is fully set forth in the fifth to the eighth, as well as the eleventh chapters of the epistle to the Romans. Its burden is peace. In it God beseeches men to lay aside all enmity and accept the conciliation He has effected through the death of His Son.

It was promulgated after Paul's itinerant ministry, being made known by means of prophetic writings. Being based on Israel's defection, rather than her restoration, it was entirely new—a secret unknown to the prophets or the twelve apostles (Rom. 16:25-26).

By it Israel's religious supremacy vanishes until the time of her restoration and the aliens may approach God in spirit and enter into the enjoyment of reconciliation.

#### THE FOURTH PERIOD

During the three previous periods Israel is still before God. The book of Acts still traces the affairs of the kingdom as proclaimed by the Spirit. Israel is not finally set aside until Paul is a prisoner in Rome. Isaiah's solemn salvation of God is sent direct to the nations (Acts 28:28). Not until this crisis was it possible to reveal the last and crowning ministry of the great apostle. Hitherto blessing must be in some sort subordinate to Israel. But now they are out of the way and grace is free to carry out the dictates of love. If nothing new is to be done then the nations



are in a bad case, for, according to the prophets, their only channel of blessing has been choked. But God has already done something new. He has already revealed the secret which effectually disposed of Israel's religious reign and now the grandest glory of all greets the gloom which gathers around Israel's national grave. The scope of blessing has already been limited to *spirit*, and now the *sphere* of blessing is changed from earth to heaven. Whatever God may do, even in grace, cannot go counter to His revealed counsel with that nation. On earth political supremacy must be reserved for His earthly people. But in heaven no such restrictions reign.

There He may lavish the glories of His grace without infringing the least upon their peculiar prerogatives. And so a secret is made known—the secret of Christ—which places Him upon the highest place in heaven, even as He shall be upon the earth. And this secret it is which underlies Paul's final ministry. It leaves earth for heaven. Jewish privileges disappear. The nations are not discriminated against in this supernal glory, but are blessed equally with the chosen people in the heavenly spheres.

They are fellow sharers of this allotment, fellow members of the body and fellow partakers of all that which, in his previous ministries, Paul could only portion out to them as dependents of the elect nation.

Thus, during Paul's four ministries, two forces have been at work. One has dragged Israel down into the dust, the other has raised the nations to the place of blessing and the believers among them to the supreme pitch of power and glory.

The way to this height has been gradual. At least four distinct steps mark the ascent to this pinnacle of grace until at last we find ourselves at the very zenith of revelation. This is found in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, epistles written after the apostle was imprisoned in Rome. They contain the truth of all truth for us. They are the touchstone of all doctrine for the present. They are the limit of glory beyond which there can be no more.

In the last days of this economy it is of principal importance that we get a clear grasp of Paul's ministries

and of their relation to each other. From first to last, they contain truth for the present time. His very call is a pattern of those who should afterward believe (1 Tim. 1:16). It was an exhibition of utmost grace outside the land of Israel and it came from heaven. Thus his ministries begin and end with three striking characteristics—grace, heavenly grace, and shown in an alien land.

The first two periods of Paul's ministry have much in common, and so have the last two. The first are itinerant. Preaching is by word of mouth. Israel's prior place is acknowledged. Paul delivers the decrees from the apostles at Jerusalem. After the great crisis when he no longer knows Christ after the flesh Israel no longer gets priority. The apostle spends his time in prison and writes rather than preaches.

The first two are in accord with Israel's blessing in the day of the Lord and the nations get a place such as will be accorded them in that day. But in the last two, two great secrets are made known—the conciliation and the secret economy—which give the nations a standing quite apart from Israel altogether.

From this it follows that Paul's earlier ministries need modification to accord with the present truth. His preaching of repentance was not even committed to writing, and his utterances in the Acts are clearly intended to conform to the Kingdom on which that book is a treatise.

*But after he was separated,* there is a marked change. Then he begins to bring in truth which, though applicable to the Kingdom in its future manifestation, is distinctly truth for the present day. Justification is not restated in the prison epistles, but it is inferred in such passages as Eph. 4:24; 5:9; 6:14; Phil. 1:11; 3:6-9.

During this period, too, he receives the glorious truth of the Lord's coming and deliverance from impending wrath. He received this *from the Lord*. It is manifestly not from the other apostles for they never preached any such thing. This truth does not appear in the book of Acts as it is manifestly out of line with its subject. It is revealed to the Thessalonians (1 Th. 4:16-17), and is referred to in the prison epistles in Eph. 1:12 and Col. 1:5.

"Whereof ye heard before in the truth of the gospel" shows clearly that the apostle is reminding the Colossians of this truth which he had previously preached during his itinerant ministry. This is in thorough accord with his explanation of the "mystery" (Eph. 3:6-7) "that the nations should be \* \* \* fellow partakers of the gospel of which I was made a minister."

To put a comma after "gospel," so that we have the apostle telling the Ephesians that he actually *was* a minister of the gospel is ridiculous. He had been among them for years preaching the gospel. When he had made it known to them, however, he had to tell them that their share in its blessings was subordinate to Israel, but now that provision is removed and they may share them equally with the chosen nation.

These blessings are not abrogated by the latest revelation: they are only modified to conform to its burden, that all blessing is now co-ordinate for both Jew and Gentile.

But these early truths are not only confirmed to them, not only are they shared by the nations equally with Israel, but they are transformed from glory to glory.

The "Lord" shall descend from heaven, we read in Thessalonians. This was His title with regard to the nations then (Acts 10:36). There is nothing said of our bodies. We shall be "ever with the Lord," does not necessarily give a heavenly allotment. But to the Corinthians comes an added glory, for they are told of the change of the bodies of the saints from an earthly to a heavenly one. "Ever with the Lord" and a heavenly body are strong symptoms of the impending truth, but it is not until Philip-pians is penned that all the glory bursts forth from this marvelous doctrine.

There we shall not only be *with* Him, but *like* Him. There our heavenly bodies inhabit their heavenly home. There He is not only our Lord, but our Saviour and Christ.

Let us note carefully that it is not the believer, or the apostle personally, who goes from glory to glory, but the Apostle Paul's *ministry*.

## A STUDY IN NUMBERS

*(A correspondent sends in the following interesting study in the significance of numbers as applied to the books of the Bible.)*

### MAN'S VERSION

No. of books, 66. Factors  $11 \times 6$ .

Old Testament, 39. Factors  $3 \times 13$ .

11 signifies disintegration and disorganization.

6 is man's number.

13 is the number of apostasy.

### THE INSPIRED ORIGINAL

No. of books, 63. Factors  $3 \times 3 \times 7$ .

The Hebrew Scriptures, 36. Factors,  $3 \times 12$ . Or, according to the three fold division, Law, Prophets and Psalms, 24. Factors  $3 \times 8$ .

3 signifies Divine perfection.

7 denotes spiritual perfection.

12 is used for governmental perfection.

8 stands for resurrection and superabundance.

Greek Scriptures, 27. Factors  $3 \times 3 \times 3$ .

### THE REVELATION

Place value according to A. V., 66. Factors  $11 \times 6$ .

Place value according to the originals, 63. Factors  $7 \times 9$ .

7 stands for spiritual perfection, a prominent number in the Revelation.

9 suggests judgment and finality—which agrees with the subject of the book.

III

G. A. B.

## OUR QUESTION BOX

*Did Job's wife say "Curse God, and die", or "Bless God, and die", and what did she mean in either case?*

Job's wife said, "Curse God, and die." The primitive Hebrew text in Job 1:5, 11; 2:5, 9; Ps. 10:3; 1 K. 21:10, 13 had the word קלל, *qalal*, curse; but the Sopherim changed it to בָּרַךְ, *barach*, bless from a false sense of reverence. But, quite apart from the Massoretic notes recording the alteration, it is evident, alike from the tenor of the narrative and force of context, that the primitive word implied delinquency. The adversary did not intimate that, if stripped of property or stricken in his person, Job would bless God to His face! He suggested that Job was likely to sin against God if severely tried. In like manner, Job feared that his children had offended against God. What ground would there have been for apprehension, or what need for sacrifice, if his sons and daughters had "blessed" God!

The counsel of Job's wife becomes full of force once we dismiss the idea (which has not the slightest foundation in fact) that Job was the son of Issachar. Nothing is clearer than that the scenes of the Book of Job are laid in the land of Edom. The three principal personages—Job, Eliphaz, Elihu—are Edomites; Bildad is probably a Moabite; Zophar an Ammonite. Thus all the characters of the book, though worshipers of the true God, belong to nations under Divine ban. Ammonites and Moabites were excluded from the congregation of Israel (Deut. 23:3), and Jehovah said He would have war with Amalek (the grandson of Esau) from generation to generation (Ex. 17:14-15). When this fact is borne in mind, the suggestion of Job's wife becomes both intelligible and natural. Job was a worshipper of the true God—Israel's God. His good wife was not so well grounded in the ways of God as her husband and now, after a series of crushing calamities, appalled by his plight, she says, in effect: "You have recanted the religion of your ancestors and forsaken the gods of your people for a strange God—see what you get for it! Will you still adhere to the foreign religion? Your experience proves your course to have been wrong; you have gone too far; your case is hopeless; curse God—this foreign God—and die."

No less intelligible is the sin which Job thought possible for his children. His sons and daughters, like many sons and daughters since, did not fully follow their father in things spiritual. Perhaps they cared as little for the gods of Edom as for Jehovah; but on the formal occasions of ceremonial feasting they followed the customs of the country by offering oblations to the gods of the land, and thus sinned against Jehovah. Hence, when the days of feasting were over, Job offered sacrifices according to the number of them all.

A well-known writer and preacher says that the Book of Job "is enshrouded in mystery, as to authorship, as to characters presented, as to geographical location of the scenes, and as to date."

The fact is, there is no "mystery" whatever connected with either of these points.

The geographical location is "the land of Uz," concerning which Scripture offers positive information. The thirty-sixth chapter of Genesis is a record of

The generations of Esau in Canaan—vv. 1-8.

The generations of Esau in Mount Seir—vv. 9-14.

The chiefs of the sons of Esau—vv. 15-19.

The chiefs of Seir the Horite—vv. 20-30

The kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel—vv. 31-43.

From this document we learn that the sons and grandsons of Esau and the sons and grandsons of Seir the Horite (the original inhabitants of Idumea) became "dukes" of Edom, "according to their habitations in the land of their possession" (Gen. 36:43). The various districts of Mount Seir were named after their dukes. Thus "the land of the Temanites" (Gen. 36:34) was named after duke Teman, grandson of Edom (Gen. 36:15). The "land of Uz" took its name from Uz, a grandson of Seir the Horite (Gen. 36:27). The weeping prophet exclaims: "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz" (Lam. 4:21). It may be difficult to determine the exact location of the land of Uz, but it is certain that it was a district in Idumea.

The foregoing is confirmed by the statement that Job was the greatest of "all the sons of the East." An examination of this title may assist us in fixing the locality of the land of Uz. Gen. 29:1 declares that Jacob, after crossing the Jordon, came into the land of the sons of the East; it occurs four times in Judges, ch. 6:3, 33; 7:12; 8:10, and refers to the trans-Jordan Amalekite and Midianite hordes; and we meet it again in the following prophecies: In Isa. 11:14, where they are associated with Edom and Ammon; in Jer. 49:28, where the sons of the East are identified

with Kedar, second son of Ishmael; and lastly, in Ezek. 25:4-10, the Ammorites and Moabites are associated with the sons of the East. Clearly therefore, the Edomites are among the sons of the East, and we have seen that the daughter of Edom dwelt in the land of Uz. From 1 Ki. 4:30 we learn that they were renowned for wisdom.

As for the characters presented; Job, a dweller of the land of Uz and greatest of the sons of the East, was an Edomite; Eliphaz is a Temanite, a descendant of Teman, grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:15), or native of Tema, a city of Edom (Gen. 36:34, Amos 1:12); Elihu is a Buzite; Buz belongs to Edom, since it is mentioned in company with Tema and Dedan (Jer. 25:23). Bildad is a Shuhite; Shua or Shoa, in Ezekiel 23:23, is associated with Koa, both belonging to tribes bordering on Chaldea; in Jer. 49:8 Shua is mentioned in connection with Edom and Teman; Zophar is a Naamathite, a descendant of Naamah, a name connected with Ammon (1 Ki. 14:21-31).

In the light of the foregoing facts the appendix to Job in the Septuagint, taken from the Syrian version, seems to hand down valuable information founded on fact. This subscript identifies Job with Jobab, the second of the kings of Edom (Gen. 36:33); who was the great-grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:13), by his wife, a native of Bozrah.

The kingly character ascribed to Job is consistent with several passages throughout the book.

Job. 3:13-15. If Job had not been of princely rank he could not have claimed burial with kings and counsellors of the earth who "lie in glory, every one in his own house" (Isa. 14:18).

Job. 39:7. This verse pictures Job going forth to the seat of justice in the city gate, and to the seat in the broad place where business was dispatched. In the ancient times the administration of justice was a kingly function.

Job. 29:9-10. His going forth to the seat of justice is marked by exhibitions of profound respect. Unless Job had been of kingly rank princes would not have refrained from speaking in his presence, nor would nobles have kept silence.

Job. 29:25. Here Job actually states that he sat as chief, and dwelt as a "king" in the army.

According to the Septuagint the three friends were of rank and position equal to that of Job himself. Eliphaz is described as king of the Thaimanaeans; Bildad, as tyrant of the Sauchaeans; and Zophar, as king of the Mimaeans; Job himself being described as king of the Austiae, or Aestiae.

The words "king" and "tyrant" would only be used by the trans-

lators to convey to the Greek mind the nature of the dignity intended, and would correspond to the Arab titles "Ameer" and "Sheikh."

The Rev. F. C. Cook (Dictionary of the Bible, Art. Job) is of opinion, that the name of Jobab may have been converted into Job, in commemoration of his trial. The Septuagint imply as much in their postscript: "His name before was Jobab. . . . Jobab, who is called Job."

The question of authorship (and the related question of date) cannot be dealt with now for lack of space.

*A certain writer says that in the parables of Matthew 13 we have a form of the kingdom different from that contemplated in the prophets and one that is foreign to God's mind. Is this so?*

We are exhorted to "keep the form of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13). The closer we abide by the expressions of Scripture the better. A great deal of current theological phraseology is misleading because it represents human ideas rather than Divine conceptions. The phrase in vogue "Kingdom in mystery" is unbiblical. Matthew speaks of the "mysteries of the Kingdom." The word "mysteries" is in the plural; the mysteries, or secrets, are many. The parables do not speak of a *form* of the Kingdom, but of *events* connected with it. Scripture knows absolutely nothing about "a form of the Kingdom different from that contemplated in the prophets." True, the parables reveal things *hidden* from the prophets; but while the events pictured in the parables are not found in the prophets, the events themselves belong to the Kingdom contemplated in their writings.

Of course it is improper to speak of what the parables unfold as "foreign" to the mind of God. The idea is refuted in this very chapter. It is expressly asserted that without a parable spake He nothing unto the multitudes; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 13, 34:35). Instead of the events represented in the parables being "foreign" to God's mind, they were present to God's mind from the foundation of the world, though they remained hidden until our Lord disclosed them. The word which our versions render "foundation" means "disruption" (Vide *Unsearchable Riches*, Vol. I. pp. 101, 261). This makes the passage more forceful and trenchant, for it tells us not merely that the secrets of the Kingdom were present to His mind from the beginning, but also the weightier fact (lamentably ignored) that His purpose has been unaffected by sin. Sin is not an accident which necessitated a modification of God's purpose: it is an incident provided by His purpose and an integrant part of it.



Nothing "foreign" to His mind can ever take place. Nothing ever has, or can jar His purpose; every detail has been prearranged, and everything works out just as He expected. If something could take place foreign to His mind, contrary to His purpose—something in which He has no hand, with which He is unable to cope—entirely independent of Him, unknown to Him, or beyond His reach—if there is an evil power that can act independent of God, spring upon Him surprises requiring alterations of plans, or introduce anything permanent in its effects, then this power is a rival God. According to orthodoxy the devil has done these very things. He acted independently of God in introducing evil, forced Him to revise His plans, and introduced sin and death which God is unable to banish. Consider for a moment the self-contradictions of creedal theology. It claims that none save God has creative power, yet since it also claims that God has no connection whatever with evil, it is necessarily made entirely distinct from and independent of God, and thus the devil is invested with creative power. According to the creeds God only has life in Himself, and yet they speak of evil being in the end "shut up with itself to feed upon its own vitals in the lake of fire." If God alone has life in Himself, where does evil get *its own vitals* from? Again, according to the belief in vogue, there was not a particle of evil in God's universe; in introducing it the devil "spoiled" creation; but as evil is eternal, creation is eternally spoiled, and God is forced to put up with a workmanship inferior to the one He had in mind. Redemption is said to be God's way to "restore" creation to pristine perfectness, but since sinlessness is lost beyond recovery, redemption is inadequate to the task of restoration. Evil, it is said, will retire into its own chaos, in sight of holiness reigning triumphant; and thus God who detests evil, and is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, is forced to eternally look upon a cesspool where wickedness feeds upon its own vitals! Where is the superabundance of grace? What becomes of Paul's "much more"? The contrasts of orthodox theology answer the question. Let us look at some of them. Thousands of redeemed ones, versus tens of thousands, eternally tormented in the lake of fire; a sinless primeval creation, versus an eternal state defiled by the presence of a cesspool where hideous creatures, human and angelic, exist in opposition to God; a redemption potentially embracing all, versus a redemption operative only in some. "Much more" is a mockery in the face of this

If we inquire how has it come about that theology has involved itself in such a maze of contradictions, the answer is to be sought in the discrepancy between theological theory and practice. Theoretically the creeds descant in loud-sounding terms on the "attributes" of God,

while practically they deny them, making Him subject to accident, failure, limitation. Practical failure to allow the Divine attributes full play and scope has resulted in misapprehension of His work. The three great divisions of time—pre-eonian, eonian, post-eonian—which mark various stages of God's creative activity—inception, development, completion—making together one complete work, have been conceived as a finished work, a ruin, a restoration. With such mistaken view of His work it was inevitable that redemption should be degraded to the level of a "remedy" or cure—an antidote to counteract the poison of a serpent's bite.

Another cause of confusion flowing from practical failure to give God's supremacy absolute place, has been the repudiation of the doctrine of God's connection with evil. The great statement, "I Jehovah create evil" (Isa. 45:7)—a statement which tells us that God is the master of evil because it is his creation, that it serves His purpose, and is under His absolute control—has been whittled down to mean that earthquakes, famines, and such like physical phenomena, are punishments for sin. Having made the word of God void by exegetical inventions, theologians have undertaken the task of proving by wordy and obscure arguments how a sinless creature with not a speck of evil in all God's universe, might yet become intensely evil, and God not be in any degree responsible therefore. If we would accept the word of God all this vain talk would be silenced; for "thus saith Jehovah, I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I Jehovah do all these things."

*It seems very puzzling to one who does not understand the original languages that nearly every interpreter—some of good standing—give a different version of the passages they are considering. Can you tell me how this is?*

Apart from the undoubted human weakness of interpreters which would lead them to give a rendering to suit their interpretation rather than suit their interpretation to the best version, the difficulty lies in the lack of any *standard* in translation. Even when two writers come to the very same conclusion as to the sense of the original, they may not express it in the same way in English.

The object of the new version which is used in this magazine is to provide a standard. As far as possible the English rendering of each word is such as will fit *every* occurrence of the word. By thus rendering the word consistently throughout, the reader is furnished with the true context in every case and this context will either confirm or condemn the rendering.

It is even more important that a word be rendered consistently by the same English word, or a close synonym, than that it should be the exact equivalent of the Greek. Exact equivalents are comparatively rare, for a given Greek word generally varies from its English rendering in some shade of meaning, or coloring, or usage; not to speak of the many meanings attached to most English words. But if an English word is consistently the representation of a given Greek word, its contexts will be the same as the Greek word. Even as it is possible to define the Greek word by its contexts, so, also, it will be possible to fix the meaning of the English. And the meaning thus gathered will be more precise than the English word itself could ever convey. It will be insensibly impressed on the reader by the contexts in which it occurs. The definition thus conveyed comes to the reader as that of the spirit of God, and not that of the translator.

As the formation of this standard is in progress, there will be changes in the version, but it is hoped that, eventually, the entire Greek scriptures will be presented to the English reader in such a form that he will be practically independent of the editor of the version, and be able to test any rendering for himself.

We are very keenly sensible of the confusion caused by the multiplicity of translations. Yet our effort is not to add to this chaos, but provide a standard by means of which any and all renderings may be brought to the bar of the divine context.

*Where is a resurrection from the lake of fire taught in the scriptures?*

The lake of fire is distinctly defined as the second death (Rev. 20:14, 21:8). In it is cast all that is still at enmity with God. So that, death is indeed the *last* enemy (1 Cor. 15:26).

And we are just as decidedly told that Christ is the one who *abolishes* death and brings life and incorruptibility to light (2 Ti. 1:10). The reading "hath abolished" is not true as to fact or as to grammar. It is in the indefinite form (commonly called the aorist tense) simply recording the fact apart from time. Death has not been abolished yet.

How and when it will be abolished is told us in the fifteenth of first Corinthians. It is to be abolished by means of universal vivification (1 Cor. 15:22). This takes place at the consummation (1 Cor. 15:26).

It is useless to look for plain statements on this subject in parts of the Scriptures whose scope is limited to eonian truth, such as the Revelation. It is unwise to look for it anywhere but in the special portion which deals with this topic. Death and resurrection are ex-

haustively treated in the fifteen chapter of first Corinthians and there it is we should look for clear statements as to their ultimate goal. There we are distinctly told that the last enemy that shall be abolished is death (which must refer to the lake of fire, for the *first* death cannot be the *last* enemy). And there we are told that it is to be done by a universal *vivification* rather than resurrection.

The term "resurrection" is applied to those who have afterward died again, such as those who suffer the second death. Hence there is not a *resurrection*, merely, from the lake of fire, but a *vivification* beyond which there can be no death.

## THE PURPOSE OF GOD

IN PAUL'S letters repeated reference is made to God's "purpose" (Rom. 8:28; 9:11; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9). In all these scriptures the word is *prothesis*. Its force may be gathered from the fact that the twelve loaves which were placed on the Tabernacle table before the Lord are styled "loaves of purpose" (Matt. 12:4; Mk. 2:26; Lu. 6:14; Heb. 9:2). Hence the scriptures which speak of God's *prothesis* tell us that He has set before Himself a definite aim or object which He is bent on achieving.

In Eph. 3:11, occurs the phrase, "according to the purpose of the eons which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This phrase is fraught with deep meaning; it indicates that God, through the eons, is prosecuting a certain work, in pursuance to a prearranged, definite plan. Nothing is left to chance, or to the emergencies of the case, but everything is arranged with perfect precision beforehand; and yet the prevalent idea among Christians is virtually the same as if God had no plan at all—they hold that God's purpose has sustained a rude set-back at the hands of Satan, so that the whole period of sin's existence resembles a haphazard scramble between good and evil; thus far evil has had the best of it, but the good will triumph in the end; rather, the good will not be absolutely triumphant, but it will at least gain some advantages. In opposition to this puerile idea, the apostle asserts the fact that God has a purpose, the purpose of the eons, prearranged and perfected before the initial step was ventured upon; a plan providing for every event and movement, and according to which the minutest detail will be carried out. The programme has been mapped out by God, and every step in the process and

the final outcome is infallibly settled. It may be objected that, if this be so, man's free moral agency is completely ruled out. This question has been fully dealt with in a previous paper; the present question is in regard to the purpose of the eons.

The belief of Christendom in respect to the work which God prosecutes may be summarized thus: In the beginning God created everything in six days, and rested on the seventh; but His rest being disturbed by sin, He was obliged to resume work. Hardly had God finished His work and pronounced it "very good", than the devil appears upon the scene and unsets His work, spoils everything, so that the Lord is compelled to go to work again to repair damages, and He has been ever since straightening out the tangle; ultimately He will succeed in establishing something like the semblance of the pristine order; He will be unable to wholly undo the evil, or to entirely destroy the mischief wrought by the devil, for many will be irrecoverably lost, and will be eternally tormented in the lake of fire. However, God will succeed in rescuing a portion (some say the minority, others, the majority) of humanity from this terrible doom, and to this end He works. But who can, after sober reflection, adhere to a view like that above, a view which utterly traduces His character, representing Him to be a weakling, who can be thwarted in His will, obstructed in His plans, and successfully resisted? Views responsible for such misconceptions must be at fault somewhere. Let us seek to find out where lies the fault.

The first chapter of Colossians, within the compass of a few verses, contains a summary view of the Divine forepurpose. The Creation of all things is the first movement in the execution of the plan; at the opposite extreme, as the climax of the plan, we have the Reconciliation of all things. The character of the intervening period, and the Divine activities during its course, is graphically emphasized in the phrase "peace being made through the blood of His cross".

Since Reconciliation is here conceived as being from the very outset the climax of all things created, it is evident

that primeval creation was not the adequate expression of His consummated plan, but the preliminary stage, of a glorified world, in which weakness, flaw or failure can have no place. Hence creation may be said to have been complete only in the sense in which a step which is integral part of a complex whole may be said to be complete in itself.

It might be said perhaps, if any one was disposed to play the part of an objector, that, according to this view, creation was not perfect. The answer is, the universe as it came forth from God was perfect, but it was not perfected with the perfection of maturity. We proceed to point out the difference between "perfect" and "perfected."

In the third chapter of Philippians, our versions use the word "perfect" in a way which suggests a contradiction; for, in v. 12, the apostle emphatically disclaims perfection, whereas, in v. 15, he as emphatically claims it for himself and those who were with him. The solution is simple: the Greek word rendered "perfect" in v. 12 is a verb in the perfect tense, whereas in ver. 15 it is an adjective. This fact puts a new complexion on the passage, and makes it one of singular cogency and force. The apostle says: "Not that I have already obtained, or am already perfected;" in other words, to reverently paraphrase his sentence, I have not yet reached the goal; I am not yet crowned: What the Lord had in mind when He gave Himself for me, was not the present life of trial and training, but the crowning day, when my body of low estate will be refashioned so as to become in form like unto the body of His glory. That climax I can never attain until the Savior Himself comes from heaven. Meanwhile, there is a sense in which we can be perfect—"whereunto we have already attained, by that same rule let us walk." Thus the difference between "perfect" and "perfected" is the difference between the attainment which is a present possibility, and the attainment which is impossible until the resurrection; or, to state it otherwise, it is the difference between relative and absolute perfection, between the good work begun and the good work completed. Our Lord furnishes a striking illustration of the distinction we seek to emphasize when He

said, "Behold, I cast out demons, and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected" (Luke 13:32). Every act and word of His was perfect, indefectible, complete; but each was only *part* of a mission, so that while each step was perfect His ministry could not be *perfected* until the full number of steps was reached.

It is thus also with creation. God leads it to the appointed goal not at one bound, but by a long process and a gradual one; a process marked by successive stages and those stages all contributing towards the appointed end. Thus creation, though perfect when looked at by itself, is seen to be incomplete considered as the initial step of a vast undertaking. The New Creation is no after-thought called forth by the opposition of the devil; rather, it is the foreordained culmination of a process appointed for creation every stage whereof is divinely prearranged. The New Heavens and New Earth are not something devised to replace those which the devil "spoiled"; they are the fruitage of creation's finished course—the culmination, acme and climax of the primeval—perfection perfected.

But if this is true of the material universe it holds good equally of man. In 1 Cor. 15:45-49, the apostle draws a contrast between Adam and Christ; he shows how they *differed*. Adam was *not* like Christ; they were not "made" alike (*ver.* 45). Hence, there must be a material difference between Adam who was the "image and glory of God" (1 Cor. 11:7), and Christ, who is the "image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15). Adam was a faint reflexion, a shadow, a silhouette of the Deity; Christ is the effulgence of His glory, the very impress of His substance (Heb. 1:3). Now, since those whom God foreknew were foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, and since such conformity is only realized in resurrection, it is evident that man was to attain Christlikeness by a process of development and testing during which, being under certain restrictions, he was to exercise his volition in accordance with God's revealed commands. The creation of man, as of the whole present creation, was planned in view of the fall, and therefore is, so to speak, in an infralapsarian manner. His origin from dust makes his return thereto possible;



Adam bore in his primeval condition the possibility of death. There was—for this is the meaning of the tree of life—in Eden a means of transferring man without death to a higher stage of physical life. If I err not, this is the significance of the Transfiguration. Our Divine Lord, in compliance with the Father's will, took upon Himself the likeness of the flesh of sin, and as He went about doing the will of Him who sent Him, He endured the contradiction of sinners and resisted unto blood striving against sin. In His perfect walk on earth, as born of a woman, born under the law, He glorified His Father, did His will, magnified His law. What did He deserve personally, as man? The Transfiguration furnishes the answer. But the glory into which He deserved to be translated without tasting death, He reached only through the death of the cross.

The foregoing consideration accounts for the naiveness and childlike simplicity of the first pair. Man was unfinished; he was only half-made. Like Ephraim, he was "a cake not turned" (Hos. 7:8). What could be expected of man in this crude, rough state? These considerations have an important bearing on the question of salvation. We hear on every hand about "conditions" of salvation: theology loudly proclaims that man's salvation rests entirely on himself; that there are certain rules to be complied with in order to be saved; that God has done what He could, made man's salvation possible; and if man will repent and do many other things he will be saved; otherwise, not. This colossal error roots itself in a misapprehension of salvation, and of God's work. The work of God, as has been shown, is to conform man to the image of God's Son; this is the task which God proposed to Himself, and He alone is responsible for its attainment. And now the question arises, What is salvation? The Scriptures answer that salvation is life—life from the dead. The Bible represents man in Adam as dead, having "no life in him." When we speak of life we mean physical existence; but Scripture does not recognize physical existence as life. After his transgression Adam had physical existence as much as before, but he was dead unto God. Our Lord's say-

ing, "Let the dead bury their dead," means that those bearing the corpse were as dead as the corpse itself. That saying illustrates precisely man's condition before God: physically he is active, spiritually he is dead. Hence the mission of Christ was to bring life to the world. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Fallen man is not only guilty, needing justification, or sinful, needing cleansing; he is dead, needing life, and anything short of that is vain, futile. Salvation, then, is life for a dead race. The Scriptures bristle with this truth: it is the great central truth of the word—Christ our life, not merely our wisdom, redemption, propitiation, or mediation; all this is true and blessed, yet it falls short of the fulness of His mission. He comes to bring life; He *is* our life as He Himself declares, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Salvation is the consummation of creation, the impartation of life to a dead race, thus bringing them finally to His image; and this work depends solely on God; it is not conditional, for if it were it would be contingent; but that is inconceivable; we cannot allow the thought that God's creative work is contingent, or that He would commence a work and not bring it to a worthy finish. "When I begin, I will also make an end, said the Lord" (1 Sam. 8:12).

In a word, the truth on this point is this: all that *man* does has to do with his training, development, instruction; his final salvation—his entrance into life—in no sense or degree depends on what he does. The end is fixed and settled in the immutable purpose of God, and *all* will ultimately be vivified in Christ, as surely and unconditionally as all have died in Adam. The misconception that many entertain on this subject arises from their religious training, and not from the teaching of the Bible. In current evangelical theology salvation is conceived of as nothing more than escape from the penalty of sin—the scorching fires of hell; and in order to effect this escape man must *do* certain things, thereby securing to his own credit the merit of Christ; add to this the ideas in vogue investing man with power to persistently resist His Maker, so that in vain God expends upon him all the resources of infinite mercy, wis-

dom, and power—add these errors, and you have a groundwork of falsehood broad enough to build up almost any amount of tradition, superstition, and absurdity.

On the other hand, when we see the truth that salvation is life, the consummation of the creative work of God, the completion of Christ's mission, Who came to give life, Who is our life, and hence is called the *vivifying* spirit—the life-giver of the world—when we see that this stupendous work of vivifying a dead race is entirely of God, and has nothing to do with the penalty for sin, any more than it has with the reward for good works—when we see further that God has resources infinite, manifold, inexhaustible, whereby He is able to reconcile all things unto Himself—when we catch a glimpse of these grand truths, we shall cease talking about “conditions” of salvation. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men unconditionally; thus also by the righteousness of one the *free gift* came upon all men unto a justifying of life—equally unconditionally (Rom. 5:17). Man exercises his freedom intermediately, between death and life; the individual is not responsible for his dead state, nor can he help himself to life, but intermediately—during the eons—he is free; he has his choice and is dealt with accordingly. Here is where come in good works, rewards, praying, witness bearing, enduring—by these experiences man is developed, taught, trained, while every passing hour brings him nearer to his final goal, which is immutably settled in the will of God. As the beginning is of God, so is the end. As man cannot originate absolutely, neither can he determine. Beginnings and finalities are entirely in God's hands. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” If it were not so, everything would be uncertain; if the final outcome were contingent, there could be no certainty as to what it would be. It might be chaos, instead of the perfect universe of “all things new.” But when we know that God is the first and the last, then we can look upon all things intermediate with perfect trust and composure. Think you that God would make the ultimate results of His purpose depend upon weak,

foolish mortals?—place the infinite in the hands of the finite? Verily nay; the wisdom of God is not so foolish; God alone determines eternity.

It makes all the difference in the world whether we consider God's work as having been completed in Eden, and then upset by the devil, or whether we see that this work only began there, that the fall was part of that work, and that redemption, resurrection, judgment, punishment, are simply steps and stages in the same creative process. According to current ideas the fall was an "accident", a mishap to God no less than man, and redemption is then degraded to the level of a makeshift expedient—a "scheme" as it is often called—to repair damages. Such a view makes God to be altogether such an one as ourselves, a being subject to accident and failure, instead of One who worketh all things after the counsel of His will. Surely, no thoughtful person can entertain ideas so derogatory to God's character. God's work began with creation; the fall was a step in the same process; and all the results of that step up to the consummation are further stages in the same process.

V. G.

## THE THRESHOLD OF ROMANS

WE HAVE noticed that the gospel of God is Christ-centred. We must, at least, in passing, remind ourselves of a triple relation which Messiah sustains as pointed out by Paul:—

- (1) A relation to David—Seed;
- (2) A relation to God—Son;
- (3) A relation to us—Lord.

And all of this is *gospel*. It is good to know that Christ is king; good to know that Israel's sceptre is in no weakling's hand; and well to learn that One is king whose throne is based on righteousness and truth. Perish the Alexanders, the Cæsars, the Napoleons of earthly clay! These were never *kings* who knew not what it was to rule themselves. These had nought of *royalty* who bowed their knee in worship of the petty vices of the day. Nor were they *rulers* whose souls were tightly bound by the vile passions of the flesh, to which they rendered the unswerving service of the slave. Time seems to laugh as it strikes the bauble of empire from such puppet's brows, and rocks the gilded thrones on which these mortals sit. But the good news proclaims a throne unshakeable, a monarch too from whose brow no hand save His alone shall dare remove the diadem.

And bear in mind that we have here no self-styled "king". No Absalom is He usurping the royal seat. He was *born* king. True king was He crucified, too. But greater far is He than David's son. The "seed of David" He was in truth, but only "according to flesh". In the sphere of spirit His paternity was divine. "Son of God according to the spirit" was He declared to be by resurrection from the dead. "Sons of God" there are by creation; "sons of God", as well, by choice. "Son of God" in human sphere was Adam before the fall. "Son of God" was he by creation, but not by choice. "Son of God, according to the

spirit of holiness" the resurrected One was declared to be. Moral glories cluster around *His* sonship. David had other sons who dragged his name and theirs in history's mire. Of David's seed could One alone be termed **THE SON OF DAVID**. Of Adam's progeny could He alone be named **THE SON OF MAN**. By virtue of creative power, and inbreathed spirit, was Adam called a "son of God". Others, too, there were in the heavenly realms who bore that title. Still more, redeemed from human sin, shall so be named in a future day (1 John 3:1). But He who is "the King of kings and Lord of lords—great David's greater Son"—who stands alone as the Man of men, takes also to Himself alone, by right divine, the wondrous title of "**THE SON OF GOD**." Many there are whose titles grace them; but here is One whose titles are graced by Him. He gives meaning to kingcraft, dignifies humanity, and glorifies sonship. Terms that, applied to men, were meaningless and void, He now expands and deepens with added vigor and force. All other sceptres are but broken reeds compared with His; all other thrones, however great, but "shadows of the true" when viewed in the transcendent glories of His royal seat.

And He is **LORD**. The "gospel of God concerning His Son" contains no anarchy. It abolishes rebellion. The good news is not a message of man's freedom from righteousness, but of his liberation from sin. It places the already eminent Christ in the place of pre-eminent Lord, and brings every faculty of the individual believer into harmonious relationship to Him.

Some of these titles of the Sent-One are transitory and limited, it is true; some bear evidence of the kingdom character of the time during which the Roman epistle was penned; nevertheless, in all, though varied, does His glory shine. "*His Son*", thus does the Spirit claim Him as God's possession, the Father's inheritance. "*Our Lord*" is faith's responsive call, coming from those on whom God also looks as "sons".

The "beloved of God" were those to whom Paul's wondrous letter was penned. Not merely the objects of His sympathy, His pity, or His mercy. *Love* is the word.

The Creator's craving is to be at one with the creature He has made. Happily indeed did Wickliffe render it, “the darlings of God.” The “gospel of God”, concerning the “Son of God”, was the glad tidings addressed by Paul to the “darlings of God”. No wonder that such a message was called a gospel. Small wonder that it stands alone, unrivalled by the petty schemes of man designed to hide his folly and his need. The philosophies of the day may have spoken of man in himself, and humanity as a whole, as but a passing bubble on the vast ocean of life. With “God's darlings” in its ears, faith defies such pessimism, and builds its hopes on the broad foundation of the love of the changeless One. “What did He make me for?” the heart might ask, to which God's gospel would offer the reply: “He made you that He might love you.” If that is the heart of the gospel, none the less may we recognize it as being in very truth the heart of God as well.

A lady was once telling her little daughter the “old, old story”, and speaking to her of the wickedness of the world He loved. With mother-art she dwelt upon the awful contrast between the two, the lights and shadows of her subject. “Do you not think,” she asked, as she concluded, “do you not think it wonderful that God should have loved such wicked people?” The mother was startled to receive an instant—“No!” On pressing for a reason the little one replied, “Mother, *it was just like God!*” The younger heart had felt its way instinctively to a truth which the older reason had failed to grasp. The intuition of the child had reached a goal to which the elder's logic had not attained. Seeing that God is what He is, it is not a wonderful thing that He should have done the marvels that history records. It would have been a mystery had history no such wonders to inscribe. Creation with its untold glories; the charm of the early morn and the beauties of the rising sun; the sweet melodies of God's feathered choirs in forest glades; the reverential hush of the evening hour when the earth would seem to silently adore its Maker's power; and yet the babe's philosophy would explain it all—“It's just like God.” Truly it is a gospel with God in it.

The "will of God" Paul speaks of next. What if it be but the matter of a Romeward trip? God is Sovereign as well as Saviour. We would consult our time-tables, but Paul would consult his God. And Paul's joyous boast in all his ministry was the fact that it was "of God". His was not an apostleship "of man" (Gal. 1:1), nor was his message to the nations derived "from man" (Gal. 1:12). He traced the first movement of his evangel back to its source in "the good pleasure of God". And this—the circle of obedience—is the sphere to which the gospel of God, would lead God's darling ones without exception. Paul seeks for a prosperous visit to the saints at Rome. And prosperous it was though taken in chains, for his shackles contained no link but was allowed for in "the will of God". His will it is that takes the anguish from the mourner's tears, that soothes the sorrows of the heart, and calms the fevers of life. Within that will is restfulness and peace, for there the God of peace doth rule supreme.

Paul's message was not the fiction of a dead and buried Jew. His cheek would register no tell-tale blush of shame as he would tell to proud Rome the story of Israel's Christ. The Gentile nations might well hide their faces in confusion did they describe the vicious "virtues" of their demon-gods. No ill tidings were those for which the great apostle was an ambassador to the nations. "Glad tidings of great joy" he brought, "concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ our Lord." The gospel of God was no mere expression of divine sympathy with the sufferings of the human race. The media of omnipotent energy, it was the channel of life, the transmission of vitality to a people "without strength". Perfect love casts out all fear; hence the Evangel of the Perfect Lover banished all thought of shame from the heart of Paul.

The philosophies of the heathen could offer no hope to the weaklings of the race. They furnished no moral recoil against the repulsiveness of sin; indeed, how could they when that which was a vice in man became a virtue in the gods? In Bacchus the drunkard could see the deification of his controlling passion. In other demon deities the profligate and the thief, the degraded and depraved, could find



the reflection of their own vicious condition. But Paul's was a gospel of triumphant manhood for it was a message of omnipotence; not indeed an omnipotence which, acting from without, crushed humanity into fragments, and turned men into mere mechanical automata, but rather one which expanded and expressed to the utmost every faculty and power that made a man a man and not a beast or a thing. The "power of God" it was which men had channelled to them in the glad tidings. Very soon does Paul lift up his eyes to the wonders of creation, and he does so but to perceive in heaven and earth the symbols, or proofs, of the Almighty's endless power. Already has the apostle declared that not in weakness but in power was the Son of God, as such, marked off from other men. This, then, is the might of Paul's evangel—creative power! This the dynamic energy of his gospel—the power of His resurrection! Man's gospel may taste sweet at first, but its dregs are as bitter as gall. Man's love, professed, may sound alluring to the ear, but the serpent of hate has coiled within the vain pretence. The weakness of man is full displayed in the pseudo-gospels which he has devised. But, on the other hand, *God's* gospel, concerning *God's* Son, to *God's* beloved ones, contained *God's* ability and mighty efficiency in effecting His own good and acceptable will.

But what of the moral base and texture of this Pauline message? What principle of righteousness can we find in the schemes of man's devising? Will the gospel of God be found as lacking as they in equity and truth? Far be it! "therein is the righteousness of God declared". The good news is not a subterfuge enabling man to evade the lawful claims of divine justice. Nor is it a method by which the sinner may cheat the throne. God offers His righteousness to man on no unrighteous ground. No cloud casts its shadow on the crystal purity of God's evangel. It reflects the spotlessness of God Himself.

Well indeed might Paul refuse to blush when he considered that his was a message of divine superlatives. It was the gospel of *God*—what better scheme could bankrupt man devise to meet the depths of human need, depths known and met by God alone? It concerned the Son of *God*—

"to whom else can we go?" Beloved of *God* were those to whom the gospel came, loved with a love that breaks the back of words in its describing. The power of *God* it brought—who then would question the divine ability? The righteousness of *God* without a seam did it reveal—who then would challenge the right to stand before the throne of those clothed therein? This is the lesson of the threshold of Romans—the emphasized God. Not man's way of getting up to God, but God's way of reaching down to man. Not man's love to God, but God's love to His darlings. Not man's weakness but God's power. Not man's religion, but God's own righteousness. Not man's "methods", but God's Son. Yes, God must be *all* in the gospel. He was *all* in Christ. He must be *all* in the individual. He will be *all* in the universe. "For of Him and through Him, and to Him, are all things."

ALAN BURNS.

## THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN ECCLESIASTES

### 4. THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

IN the First Book, or chapter, of his work Ecclesiastes was wholly occupied with the problems of individual experience in the sphere of mental and technical activity; the Second Book (3.1-4.8) is wider in its outlook: the writer approaches the task of surveying the work of God.

The "times and the seasons" as a whole are subjected to review. They are introduced with the phrase "To every work there is a set time, and a time to every purpose under heaven." These important words indicate the special points dealt with in this section. Two distinct terms are used. The word rendered "season" signifies a time definitely set apart for a special purpose, by royal edict or divine appointment, as is clear from its occurrences. It is used to denote—the time specified by the princes for the adjustment of the mixed marriages among the returned captives (Ez. 10.34); the leave of absence granted to Nehemiah by a firman of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2.6); the Divine appointments relative to the temple services (Neh. 10.34; 13.31); the establishment of the feast of Purim by decree of Esther and Mordecai (Esth. 9.27, 31). The meaning which inheres the word translated "time" is clear from its usage in other parts of Ecclesiastes. We will take two of the most typical occurrences. "The wise man's heart discerneth time and judgment" (Eccl. 8.5). Note the setting of the passage. The whole paragraph deals with subjection to authority, and the thought is emphasized that within the limits of obedience to the king there is safety:

Whosoever keepeth the commandment shall know no evil word. In what follows Ecclesiastes seems to have in mind the possible objection that resistance to evil is as much of an obligation as submission to right, to which answers Ecclesiastes that the wise know when each is in proper order.

Akin to this is a passage further on, "Happy art thou, O land, when thy king is a son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness" (Eccl. 10.17). The idea is doing a thing in the proper manner at the proper time; its meaning is what we should express by the metaphor of *place*: "everything is good in its proper *place*." The connection in which the terms are used suggest the ideas of divine appointment and appropriateness, so that the import of the sentence introducing man's times is that, since for every work there is a time divinely determined, man's purpose must fit in with God's arrangement of things. Hence the idea (developed in Book IV) that events are neither good nor evil in themselves, but according to their relation to God's time of approving them. Hence, too, the thought (which forms the special subject of Book V) that human happiness does not consist in carrying out one's every wish, but in fitting them with God's time; so that while the drift of things is irresistible, the individual can, by adapting himself to it, achieve his purposes.

The "times and seasons", then, are the predetermined times which pass over Israel and over all the kingdoms of the countries (1 Chr. 29.29), the phases in the experience of nations which constitute historic epochs, the historic stages which mark the accomplishment of His purpose among the nations of the world. That this is the meaning is abundantly clear, not only from the scope of the passage, but also from the usage of the same phrases in other parts of Scripture. Can anyone believe, for example, that there is "a time to kill, and a time to heal"—a time when it is proper for any individual so to do? What are we to make of "a time to heal" according to this interpretation? Can one heal or restore the life of his fellow man which he has taken away, and how? When all the passages where the same phrase is used are read together it becomes evident that the expression "kill and heal" (as all the others) refers to the sentencing and pardoning of transgressors against civil law. In this sonnet-like enumeration of the times and seasons our author unfolds a procession of his-

tory, the great underlying principles of historic movements. The piecemeal experiences which make up the history of nations are passed in review, each touched with that marvelous felicity of descriptive suggestion which is the chief charm of Ecclesiastes' style.

The times are twenty-eight in number. They commence with "birth", *i. e.*, creation, when God gave outwardness, expression, to the archtypal thoughts of His mind, and they conclude with "peace". The intervening times are times of estrangement, marked by confusion, waste, ruin, toil, sweat, pain, passion, and blood. They are an epitome of the history of mankind: they begin with "death", pointing back to the sentence pronounced in Eden, and end with "war", looking forward to the great battle on the fields of Armageddon which closes the history of Man's day.

Having stated the times in poetic form, Ecclesiastes proceeds to consider them. First, he draws respecting them certain deductions which necessarily follow from the revealed character of God (3.9-15); then he considers them from a matter-of-fact view of the actual condition of things (3.16-4.8). Considering the times which God has appointed for Adam's sons in the light of the Creator's character, Ecclesiastes expresses the conviction:

He does everything beautiful in its place: also he sets the eon in their heart; yet so that man cannot find out the work God does from the start to the winding up.

The phrase, "He has set the eon in their heart", is very striking. The rendering "world" in the current versions, and the marginal alternative "eternity", rob the passage of its grand meaning. In perfect harmony with the whole cast and character of Hebrew prophecy, the "times" of Ecclesiastes culminate in the golden age of peace. The character of the Messianic age is painted in colors most gorgeous and brilliant in the prophets. But the crowning glory of the Messianic eon is peace. War exists no more, and the Messiah wears the august title Prince of Peace. That beyond the Thousand Years lies another eon, the prophets know (Isa. 65.17; 66.22); but they

faintly discern it as a far-off, vague, indistinct something which they style "beyond." They lead *up* to the eon of the eons, but they never enter *into* it. The Millennium is pre-eminently *the* eon of the prophets; the whole grace and glory of Messiah's work concentrate in it; all that they know for the Jew, and for the Gentile, focalize themselves in that one eon and radiate out to the succeeding which they barely discern as a tiny speck on the distant horizon. Ecclesiastes asserts that God has set the presentiment of that eon in the heart of man. No man can find out how God is working it out through the "times"; His ways transcend human thought, and yet the expectation of a golden eon is the core of man's spiritual constitution. In spite of the fading figure of the present evil eon which attracts and lures his eyes, and with which he seeks to satisfy his longings, the eon is implanted in his heart, directing his longings to the age of peace, and the attainment of a state in which man finds satisfaction and enjoyment. The thought is exactly on the line of Paul's teaching in Rom. 8.18-23, and it illustrates the progressive unfolding of the conception.

Ecclesiastes next gives expression to the thought that God's appointed times were in the very nature of things intended for man's profit and enjoyment. "I know that there is nothing better in them than to rejoice and get good in life, and also that every man should eat and drink, and see good in all his labor, is the gift of God." Whatever *is*, is for a purpose, and that purpose is God's thought in creation. This is true, not only of the works of nature, but also of the events of history.

Another fact which follows from the truth of the Creator's supremacy is the immutability of the times. God acts on fixed principles which no effort of the individual will ever influence or alter. "I know that whatsoever God does it shall be for the eon: nothing can be taken from it nor anything added to it." The tremendous importance of this truth in its bearing upon man's conduct Ecclesiastes will develop in a subsequent chapter, meanwhile he ventures to suggest one of its practical values—to foster man's dependence on God.

God does it that man should fear before him.

In this statement Ecclesiastes is borne out by Paul, who, in his sermon to the Athenians, declares that God has determined the seasons of the nations that they should seek Him (Acts 17:26, 27).

Ecclesiastes concludes this side of the survey with voicing the oft reiterated belief (emphasized at the close as the chief aim of the book) in a future rectification. "What was is now; and what is to be has already been: and God is behind what is fled." Here are two ideas: the law of "recurrence", in virtue of which the times ever repeat themselves; and the "inquisition" of the times. He has already stated, in the preceding verse (14), that the times are leading up to *the eon*: they contain the seeds which will then yield their fruit. In other words, we may compare the times to a flight of stairs, leading step by step to the golden age of peace.

In what follows Ecclesiastes proceeds to show that the above representation is not borne out by the actual state of things. "Nevertheless I see under the sun in the place of judgment, that evil is there: and in the place of justice, that evil is there." The word "moreover" *וְכֵן* is sometimes rendered "yet" (Gen. 7:14; 2 Ki. 14:4), and it must have this force here: "In spite of the reasonableness of the foregoing deductions, they are at variance with actual experience." The actual condition of things in the world tells a very different tale. The times are often seen reversed: wickedness is seen in the place of justice, and while this fact may be construed to argue an hereafter for rectification, it more often leads to the view that man is not different in his end from the beasts (3:16-22); suffering under oppression which makes death preferable to life (4:1-8); skill attained at the price of baneful rivalry and bitter competition fostering idleness in some and egotism in others (4:5-6); tireless effort dismayed by the recognition of its purposelessness (4:7-8)—all these realities which cannot be ignored force totally different conclusions.

The survey has yielded the following result: the theoretic side, founded on deductions flowing from the character of

the Creator, argues that the "times" are for man's good; the practical side, resting on stubborn facts which everywhere stare us in the face, argues that the "times" contribute to man's misery and suffering. The reflective process has established an antagonism between good and evil. Here for the present the consideration of God's work is allowed to rest. But the clash between the ideal and the actual—the discrepancy between the traditional adoration of the works of the Lord, and the growing difficulty of the recognition of evil in the world—has given rise to a number of perplexing practical questions. These are dealt with in a string of "notes" (4:9—5:9).

#### NOTES

When studying the form of this work it was pointed out that the intervals between some of the "books" are filled with strings of sayings, which sustain some relation to the preceding matter; in fact, they are in the nature of "notes" dealing with the practical side of certain points that have emerged in the course of investigation.

In the group before us we have a series of four maxims arranged in pairs, each pair being founded upon an antithesis.

1. *The Value of Friendship* (4:9-12). In a previous paragraph our author has been speaking of competition as fostering idleness in some (*The fool foldeth his hands together, etc.*), and isolation in others (*Better is an handful of quietness, etc.*) In this maxim Ecclesiastes seeks to show that both these attitudes towards rivalry are as harmful as rivalry itself. The word "labor" is elsewhere rendered in our versions by "misery" (Judg. 16:16), "sorrow" (Job. 8:10), "wickedness" (Job. 4:8), "trouble" (Job. 5:6), "mischief" (Job. 15:25), "pain" (Ps. 25:18), "grievance" (Hab. 1:3), "iniquity" (Hab. 1:13). "Trouble" furnishes a sense agreeable to the scope of the passage. The point is, that the "trouble" incident to intercourse between man and man, arising from differing mental attitudes, interests, temperaments, etc., are amply rewarded by such advantages as



sympathy, help, strength. *Two shall withstand.* The verb means "to stand still" (Gen. 18:8, 22; 19:27; Josh. 18:5; Ps. 119:90). Here is the sense of *holding one's own*: two or three can hold their own where one is overpowered.

2. *The Vanity of Adulation* (4:13-16.) There is no historical allusion here: it is a pictorial representation of matters of general experience. The sense is obscured in our versions by rendering one pair of Hebrew words "poor", and another pair "old." "Better is an obscure and clever youth than a renowned and foolish king who knows not to receive admonition. For out of prison (*i. e., the womb*) he (the foolish king) came forth to be king; yea even in his kingdom he was born poor. I saw all the living which walk under the sun that they were with the youth, the second (*i. e., the successor*, as in ch. 4:8) that stood up in his stead. There is no end of all the people, even of all them over whom he (the successor of the foolish king) was; yet they that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a striving after wind." The thought of the whole is: In essence, apart from the trappings of royalty, the king is as poor as any youth born in obscurity; both were born naked (for *born poor* cf. Ch. 5:15, Job 1:21, 1 Tim. 6:7) and what does this external finery amount to? When the old king is gone, all the world flocks to his successor; but that successor will equally be forsaken in his turn.

3. *The Vanity of Folly* (5:1-7). This has obviously in mind the materialism produced in some by the spectacle of wickedness seated in the place of justice. Two maxims enjoining reverence in things divine are contrasted with the folly of speaking against God. The drift of thought is best apprehended from the parallelism of clauses

Obedience better than sacrifice (*To draw nigh to hear is better*, etc.)—v. 1.

Ignorance better than neglected light (*Better is it that thou shouldest not vow*, etc.)—vv. 4, 5.

Hasty words improper because God is greater than man—v. 2.

Hasty words dangerous because God may requite man—v. 6.

Image: Dream—v. 3.

Image: Dreams—v. 7.

Speaking against God is like the talking in sleep of an over-worked brain.

4. *The Value of Wisdom* (5:8-9). The writer has before him the effects of oppression noticed in the survey. We follow the reading of the Septuagint: "If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the violent wresting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the purpose: for the High One watches over the high (*i. e.*, the governors of the oppressed provinces) and the high ones over them." The object of the passage is to emphasize the fact that, strange as it may seem, God has a purpose in all that takes place. Ver. 9 seems to illustrate the effects of recognizing and ignoring that truth by rulers: the one looks upon the province as a thing to be developed, the other looks upon it as a field for extortion.

## THE IMMANUEL PROPHECY

WE have received a number of requests for an elucidation of Isaiah 7:14. The present paper has been written in compliance with such requests. A prophecy of such magnitude seemed to demand a fuller treatment than the question column admits. It was felt that in a separate article we would be able to respond more satisfactorily than in a brief, dogmatic way.

"The Vision of Isaiah" is arranged upon a singularly clear and harmonious plan. The whole falls into two main divisions, or "books"; the first embraces chh. 1-35, the second comprises chh. 36-66. The two divisions, while having individuality of interest, have a number of common features which form a bond of unity welding them into a compact whole. Both divisions are unified by the specific mention in the text of a political situation, and both conclude with pictures of the Kingdom Age. Again, both divisions are connected with an historic crisis—the Unholy Alliance (in the days of Ahaz) of Pekah with Rezin against Judah, and the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib (in the reign of Hezekiah). Further, each division is characterized by a Messianic prophecy of great import—the Child Immanuel and the Suffering Servant—intimately associated with the historic crises just noted.

The question at stake in the reign of Ahaz was the perpetuity of the Davidic house and throne. The entire Immanuel section (chh. 7-12) revolves around this one theme. The two boastful foes, the usurper Pekah and Rezin, had struck up a base friendship in order to put an end to David's kingdom and set up on the throne of Judah a creature of their own (v. 6); but since they have no authority from God to do so, their scheme will miserably miscarry

and turn out to their damage. With this political development, so definite in time and aim, as a starting-point the prophecy steadily advances, by gradual stages, to the time when the Child Wonderful sits upon the throne of David to uphold it with judgment and righteousness for the eon (9:7). More than this: for a climax, the Assyrian who has been presented as the instrument of God's indignation against His apostate people, himself becomes the object of God's indignation, and the Sign Immanuel, already enlarged (ch. 9:6) into four weighty, symmetrical pairs of titles, is further expanded into the full picture of the great Davidite and His peaceful rule (chh. 11, 12). Plainly the dominant note is *dominion*. The nations conspire to depose Judah from her royal station, but the conspiracy is frustrated by the All-Ruler. The Messianic portraiture is in harmony with the theme in question: throughout this book He is presented as a *Ruler* who establishes a reign of peace and righteousness and rules over the house of Israel (4:2; 6:5, 9:6-7; 11:1-10; 24:28; 32:1-2). The portrait in ch. 11 presents Him as a King uniting all the virtues adorning a ruler in God's sight and salutary to His people. His weapon is his word which suffices everywhere to secure victory for righteousness. The peace proceeding from this ruler is shared not only by His people but by the whole of nature. No hurtful, destructive powers are found in the land, so richly does it flow with the knowledge of the Lord, so permeated is it by the Divine Spirit, who dispenses life and love. This Davidite, who sits enthroned in this peaceful, glorified land, attracts all nations by His divine dignity, actuated as they are by desire for the spiritual blessings which he dispenses.

The historic crisis in the forefront of the second division raises deeper issues. Here the foreign invasion, which threatened national ruin, was aggravated by the king's mortal sickness, which threatened dynastic downfall. The king was childless, and since the promise of Messiah was bound up with the Davidic house, dynastic extinction involved annulment of Messianic hopes. The God of Israel was seemingly setting aside the promise made to David,

when He sent to the stricken king the message "Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live" (Isa. 38:1). But, as the sequel of the story proved, the very experience which threatened to set at naught the nation's fondest expectations became the source of a glorious aftermath of prosperity and peace. The burden of the second division is *redemption*; accordingly the Messianic idea running through these chapters is of a *Redeemer*—an idea which finds fullest development and expression in the prophecy of the Suffering Servant (52:13-53:12). The Servant of Jehovah is the Mediator by whom Israel is redeemed and God's Kingdom is established upon earth.

Though an exposition of Isa. 53 is outside the scope of this paper, I cannot refrain from remarking that the exegesis of the synagogue (adopted by rationalistic Protestants) which in general denies the Messianic reference of this prophecy, and applies it to the dispersed nation of Israel, which is to be restored again after accomplishing a monotheistic mission in the world, is a makeshift. How could the nation in one aspect suffer for the nation in another aspect? That vicarious expiation is here spoken of, cannot be seriously questioned. As plainly as human language is able, it is said and reiterated unweariedly (vv. 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12) that the Just One bears the stroke which else must have fallen on the entire nation (v. 6). Nothing can be clearer than that the central point in the prophecy of the Suffering Servant is the consummation of the ideas embodied in the sacrificial system. There vicarious sacrifice is the underlying idea; there the sinless animal suffers for the sinner's good; there a propitiary offering is offered to God. What these ordinances dimly and unconsciously foreshadowed this prophecy unfolds in its entire fulness of meaning: it severs those great ideas from the inadequate embodiment of the Levitical ritual, and sets forth their adequate expression in the Servant giving himself to a sacrificial death for the salvation of his people. This is the deepest ground and most glorious design of his suffering.

A peculiar morphological feature of Isaiah plays an important role in exegesis: he is the great master of the

**Digression.** All biblical writers make much use of digressions; but with Isaiah the digression seems to be a regularly recurring feature for producing literary effect. In the great Messianic prophecy of chh. 7-10:4 there appears an elaborate chain of digressions, and digressions from those digressions, and digressions removed a degree further still, like Chinese boxes one within another; when the last degree of removal has been reached, the writer returns regularly on his steps, picking up without fail the broken threads, and thus resumes his argument by steps as formal as those by which he had departed from it. At the close of this article the reader will find an analysis of this prophecy, in which these transitions are accurately marked; and when the law has been caught, the clear thinking of Isaiah is at once apparent.

The portion of the Immanuel section which engages our attention at this time (7-10:4) consists of four closely related prophecies—alternately addressed to Judah and her enemies—unified by the repeated reference to three topics: (1) the Alliance of Northern Israel and Syria against Judah; (2) the Assyrian invasion; (3) the sign Immanuel.

Expositors of all schools, however much they may differ in particulars, agree in understanding the "virgin" who bears the child Immanuel to refer to a virgin (real or ideal) of Judah. The interpretation here advanced is that the term Immanuel is at first connected with a woman of the enemy's land, but is subsequently claimed in a truer sense for the people of Judah. My grounds are as follows: the term Immanuel occurs three times. (1) In the first instance (7:14) the prophet is offering comfort in the panic caused by the news that the united forces of Syrians and Ephraimites were marching on Jerusalem, and announces a sign from God. Rezin and Pekah before striking up an alliance had successfully operated against Judah independent of each other. Having confederated they wax more certain of success. So confident are the allies of carrying their campaign against Judah to a successful issue, that a woman (of the enemy) bearing forth a son calls him by the proud

name "God-with-us"; but while that proudly named child is still an infant he will be eating famine fare. That "butter and honey" is an expression for famine fare is clear from the use of it farther on (7:22). "Butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the midst of the land." That is, in consequence of the devastation, agriculture and vine-culture will be unknown; only cattle-keeping will be left. (2) The second occurrence of the term is in ch. 8:8. The Assyrian hordes are to inundate Israel: they will "fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel"—O boaster of God-with-us. The whole passage relates to the enemy's land, except the single parenthetical clause that they will sweep onward into Judah. When we come to the third occurrence of the expression (8:10) there is clearly a change in the use of it: the connective "for" shows that what before was a proper name is here converted into a phrase. The prophet hurls his defiance at the allied enemies: "Make an uproar, O ye peoples, and be broken in pieces; take counsel together, and it shall be brought to naught; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for GOD IS WITH US." The victory which the invaders anticipated for themselves is realized by the invaded, and thus the enemy's boast is appropriated in a truer sense for the people delivered by God. (4) But the rich outlook of blessing connected with the term Immanuel does not stop here. The prophecy goes on to describe the glorious triumph in store for Judah, and at the climax expands the idea of the child named from the Divine presence into something yet more glorious: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government is come on his shoulders; and his name is called (not merely "God-with-us", but) Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Constant Father, Prince of Peace." Thus the whole group of prophecies forms a compact whole, and the chief figure governing and binding them together is Immanuel.

It may be objected that the interpretation here advanced is at variance with the New Testament use of it. Matthew (1:22) relating the birth of our Lord from a virgin mother cites the passage of Isaiah: "That it might be fulfilled

which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us." Against this objection I would urge the careful consideration of the following points:

(1) As regards the literal meaning of Isa. 7:14 nothing can be clearer than that the child whose birth is announced will be little more than an infant when the alliance of Israel and Syria is overthrown by the Assyrian conqueror. Hence the verse could refer to the birth of Christ only in a secondary or mystic sense. The advocates of the received interpretation are forced to recognize this and offer various explanations to brook the difficulty. Some say, with Delitzsch, that Isaiah beholds as present an event belonging to the remote future. Others, with Driver, understand the child as a "pledge and symbol". Still others hold that "the prophecy is not addressed to the faithless Ahaz, but to the whole house of David"—that it was "a continuing prophecy addressed to the Davidic family." This assertion, that the expression "house of David" in Isa. 7:13 has a continuing force, is disproved by its use in this very chapter (*ver.* 2) and in ch. 22:22 as well as in other parts of Scripture (I Ki. 12:19, 26; 13:2; 14:8, etc.). To all these explanations applies the remark of one of its unholders: "There is no explanation which does not oblige us to make some assumption not directly sanctioned by the text." Is it not simpler to say that the New Testament writers, recognizing that the utterances of the prophets while dealing with contemporary situations bore relation to more distant parts of the Divine plan, cite expressions of the Old Testament *apart from their historic setting*, with the feeling that the very language of the prophets is instinct with a significance over and above the historic events with which it dealt primarily? Examples of this kind are not wanting: Matthew 2:15 furnishes an unmistakable illustration. In the account of the flight into Egypt Matthews says: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, 'Out of Egypt did I call my son.'"



The reference is clearly to Hosea 11:1, which reads: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." It is evident that the words of Hosea must be separated from their context in order to bear the construction he places on them. Thus as regards the verse of Isaiah cited by Matthew, the present interpretation conflicts with Matthew's use of it only in the way in which all other interpretations conflict with it.

(2) When we pass from particular verses to the general drift of the Immanuel section, the interpretation here offered affords a better basis for the theological use of the term than any other: for it involves the connection of the term Immanuel with the triumph of Judah in the Child Wonderful (9:5) who is pictured as Ruler in ch. 11. The general train of thought is as follows: The arrogant foe, confident of overthrowing Judah, names the newly-born child of a woman by the name God-with-us; God's sign is that while that child is still an infant he becomes involved in the general ruin of his land (7:14-16). The fulfilment of the Divine sign is carried into effect by the Assyrians (8:8). Here comes the transition. With the overthrow of its foes, Judah awakens to a realization of God's presence in their midst (8:10), and joyfully greets the child who is born to sit on David's throne (9:5): it is realizing the utter confusion of the one in whom centered the enemy's hope that Judah exclaims: "*To us a child is born, to us a son is given.*"

The above interpretation simplifies this group of prophecies from the historic standpoint as well as from the theological. The connection of ch. 7:14-16 with Judah necessarily involves the connection with Judah also of the verse that follows:

"The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria."

This creates the difficulty of understanding a threatened invasion of Judah by the Assyrian in the very heart of a prophecy whose avowed aim is to comfort Judah under the

Syrian-Ephramite invasion. The difficulty is met by saying that Ahaz, instead of seeking help from his God, threw himself into the arms of the Assyrian monarch and called him to his aid, a course which did him little good. In answer to this it is sufficient to point out that Kings and Chronicles know nothing of an Assyrian invasion in the reign of Ahaz. The interpretation here advanced effectually removes all these difficulties. The connection of ch. 7:14 with the Northern Kingdom involves the connection of the verses that follow with the Northern Kingdom and makes the transition in the prophet's address (*ver.* 17) from Ahaz to Pekah easy and natural. Having given (in *vv.* 7-16) to Ahaz a sign that the enemy's scheme will miscarry, Isaiah proceeds to address the king of Israel and goes on to describe the downfall of Samaria. I may add that the sentence (8:17) "days that have not come from the day that Ephraim departed from Syria" is most unnatural in an address to Judah: in an address to Northern Israel it is a most natural expression, meaning, "Since thou becamest a kingdom."

The recognition of the parenthetical structure of this whole group of prophecies, more especially of chh. 8:9-9:7, carries with it the explanation of this difficult portion of Isaiah. The section opens with a realistic vision of foes combining against Judah but brought to confusion (8, 9, 10). At this point the prophet digresses to point out to the panic-stricken people that trust in God is the only effectual remedy for their trouble and proposes a Divine "law and testimony" (8:11-16). The address to the people is interrupted by a description of the acceptance by the prophet and his children (to whom he has given significant names) of the Divine commission (8:17-18). The message to the panic-stricken people is now resumed; they are urged to appeal to the "law and testimony" of their God instead of seeking the indistinct mutterings of wizards and clairvoyants (8:19-20). Finally the prophet returns to the topic with which he started his address—the defeat of Judah's foes.

The subjoined analysis is designed as an aid to the study of this difficult portion of Scripture.

## GENERAL ANALYSIS

Chh. 7-10:4 are made up of four addresses, thus:

To the King of Judah—7:1-16.

To the King of Israel—7:17-8:8.

Judah and her Enemies—8:9-9:7.

The Fall of Israel—9:8-10:4.

Syllabus of Isa. 7-10:4, indicating the parenthetic structure.

## THE TRIUMPH OF JUDAH AND THE FALL OF SAMARIA.

1. Judah and her Enemies.—The unholy alliance against Judah to overthrow the Davidic dynasty and set upon the throne of Judah a creature of their own (7:1-9).—Adonai's sign to Ahaz: confident of success, a woman of the enemy names her child God-with-us; but before the child is old enough to discern good from bad the allied kingdoms will be overthrown (7:10-14).

*Digression A.—The fall of Samaria.—The Assyrian invasion represented under a series of images: 1. The Fly and the Bee. 2. The Razor. 3. Butter and Honey. 4. Briers and Thorns (7:15-25).*

*Digression AA.—Jehovah's sign (Maher-shalal-hash-baz) to the people of the fall of Samaria recorded. (8:1-4.)*

*Digression A resumed. The series of images of the Assyrian invasion completed: 5. The River.—The land of the boaster God-with-us inundated by the Assyrian hordes. (8:5-9.)*

1. Resumed. The alliance against Judah broken in pieces.—The enemy's boast God-with-us realized by the people protected by their God (8:9-10).

*Digression B.—A word for the timid: Jehovah's testimony (8:1) bound and sealed (8:11-16).*

*Digression BB.—The prophet accepts the testimony (8:17, 18).*

*Digression B resumed. A word for the timid continued: The people should appeal to God's testimony instead of turning to wizards (8:19, 20).*

1. Resumed. The distress of the proud foes (Ephraim).—The triumph of Judah in the Child Wonderful.—The Davidic throne established (8:21-9, 7).

*Digression A resumed. Ephraim devoured by the Assyrians.—Ephraim impenitent under judgment.—Ephraim devoured by his own iniquity.—The fall of Ephraim's corrupt rulers (9:8-10:4).*

## ISRAEL RESTORED TO JEHOVAH

- <sup>25</sup> For I am not willing for you to be ignorant of this secret, brethren, lest you may pass for prudent with yourselves, that callousness has come upon Israel, partially, while the fulness <sup>26</sup> of the nations may enter. And thus all Israel will be saved, according as it has been written:

"The Rescuer out of Zion shall arrive!  
He will turn away ungodliness from  
Jacob;

- <sup>27</sup> And this is My covenant with them  
Whenever I should take away their  
sins."

- <sup>28</sup> As to the joyful message, indeed, they are  
enemies because of you, yet as to selection  
<sup>29</sup> they are beloved because of the fathers. For  
God's graces and invitations are unregretted.  
<sup>30</sup> For just as *you* once distrust God, yet now  
<sup>31</sup> obtain mercy by *their* distrust, thus these, too,  
distrust this mercy of yours in order that *they*, too,  
<sup>32</sup> may obtain mercy. For God locks all up together  
in distrust in order that He may have mercy on all.  
<sup>33</sup> O the depth of God's riches and wisdom  
and knowledge! How unsearchable are  
His verdicts and untraceable His ways!  
<sup>34</sup> For who knows the Lord's mind? Or who  
<sup>35</sup> becomes His counselor? Or who first gives  
to Him and it will be repaid to him? For *all* is  
of Him and through Him and for Him.  
To *Him* be the glory for the eons! Amen!

# THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL

## ISRAEL RESTORED

**GOD IS FAITHFUL.** Israel has been unfaithful. But shall her unfaithfulness make His promise void and His efforts ineffectual? Not so! even conciliation must retire to allow His plans to have full play. He had a purpose in locking up the nation in distrust. Just as their rulers carried out His sovereign and predetermined counsel in crucifying the Son of God, so the nation, too, in rejecting the offer of salvation afterwards, fulfilled His purpose. Both rulers and nation were bent only on their own will, but behind all was the inflexible fiat of the Omnipotent, the wisdom which could weld their very waywardness into a way of working out His will.

Since, then, Israel's blindness is not an end in itself, but merely a means to magnify His mercy, it must needs come to an end. The prophet's "how long?" (Isa. 6:11) shows very clearly that he had not the slightest suspicion that Jehovah was going to go back on His previous promises. He knew that their callousness must come to a conclusion. And this is confirmed by the Lord's answer, indefinite as it seems.

We, too, once we grasp the grand truth of Israel's restoration, cannot but echo the prophet's words, "How long?" And we are much better furnished for an answer than he could possibly be. We may meditate upon it from two distinct aspects: conditions among the nations which presage their being cut out of the olive tree, and signs in Israel which imply her restoration.

Israel, nationally, was cut out of the olive tree for lack of faith, and the same fate is speedily overtaking the nations. The fact that a few, a remnant, believed God did not save Israel from her doom. Neither will the fact that a feeble few among the nations hold fast the faith, and

even recover much of what has been lost for centuries—these few cannot fend the fate of the nations as a whole. The nations, as such, are fast following in the footsteps of apostate Israel. Faith has either degenerated into tradition or is openly decried by skepticism.

For a long time the characteristics of the "latter times" (1 Ti. 4:1) have been in evidence. Spiritism, misnamed "spiritualism", has long been teaching the doctrine of demons. Multitudes have been deceived by the seducing spirits of that cult, so that now we are no longer startled, as once we were, by the uncanny presence of the supernatural.

Likewise, it has been a long time since first we were advised to leave meat out of our menu. Now it is an article of religion with many of the occult eastern cults which have invaded Christendom and even of zealous Christian sects.

That bodily training (a most laudable thing in its own place) has largely usurped training in godliness is all too much in evidence in those Christian associations which provide for both. The gymnasium has effectually displaced that training of the spirit which is so much more profitable.

And even more notably evident are the tokens of the *last days* (2 Tim. 3:1-5). Insubordination to God is fast finding fruit in the insubjection of children to their parents. This has shown a marked increase in the last generation. And when has the love of money become so acute as in the last few years? Men are money mad. And when has pride and boasting reached such a pitch as in this vaunted age of progress? Yet natural affection and the relationships which spring out of it are violated on all sides. Divorce is openly commended. The family seems in danger of becoming obsolete. Selfish pleasures have driven all thought of God, and the delights to be had in His love, from men's hearts.

But the most significant token of the apostasy is the fact that godliness, or devotion, has become a futile form. The services of the churches preserve every outward show, but the power has departed. And in the frantic effort to hold

the people, instead of returning to the vital truths of holy writ, the pulpit apes the theater and the rostrum, and repudiates the power of vital godliness.

And would we try to stop the advancing tide of apostasy? We might as well sweep back the breaking billows of the sea, for God has spoken, and shall it not come to pass? O, how many there are who are ignorant of this secret! And it is not strange to find them giving the nations a place of prudence quite beyond Israel. The very pulpit which refuses to acknowledge the failure of the nations is itself a positive proof of the apostasy. Faith bows to God's decree, but distrust doubts its own doom.

We conclude, then, so far as the nations are concerned, that they have failed utterly in their trust and the time is ripe when they shall be cut out of the olive tree. The conciliation has well nigh run its course! This feeble attempt to illumine its message may be too late for even the faint response which it may call forth. The darkness is gathering fast. Let us who know its precious burden make no delay in heralding it abroad!

But if premonitions of the end of the age abound among the nations, still more striking are the signs in the Nation of Destiny, God's ancient and beloved people. For well nigh two millenniums they have fulfilled the curses which are written in their sacred scriptures, and shall they not enjoy the blessings which the same holy word contains? More and more is it becoming evident that God's set time has come to remember Zion and to comfort the people on whom He placed His holy name.

The signs in Israel are two fold. The people are preparing for the land; the land is preparing for the people.

The curse caused the land to become a desert and the cities ruins. But now the rains seem to have returned, and the ruins are not only being explored but restored. Jerusalem, which was little more than a Moslem village a few decades ago, has become a Jewish city. Its business has passed into the hands of its ancient owners. It has spread far beyond the walls and consists mostly of Jews, many of whom are seeking an asylum from the oppressions of the nations from which they came.

The prophecies of the thirty-first of Jeremiah and the fourteenth of Zechariah are being literally fulfilled, for the city is indeed being built "from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner," or, as the latter prophet puts it, "from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's wine-presses." This tower was once supposed to be on the eastern side of the city, but it has been discovered on the western side, while excavating for the foundations of a new hotel. The country between this and the tombs of the Kings and of the Judges, between which the king's wine-presses are situated, is rapidly being covered with a modern city of much better construction than that inside the walls.

Land that has lain fallow for centuries is now being farmed by Jewish colonists who are making a success of agriculture as they have of finance.

As in Egypt, when the time of their redemption drew nigh, they multiplied far more than the Egyptians (Ex. 1:12), so the past two centuries have witnessed a wonderful increase. At that time there were probably only about three million Jews in all the world, now there are at least four or five times that number, in spite of the many persecutions which they have endured.

But not only is the land of Israel responding to the voice of the future, but Babylon—proud Babylon, that lies prone in the dust of decay—Babylon, too, is hearing the cue of her prompter, and is arising to the part she has to play. Once the granary of the world with the most extensive irrigation works on the face of the earth, it flourished like the garden of Eden, which, indeed, was most probably in its midst. And now, not only is it to be restored by the rebuilding of its irrigation system, but a large tract has already been supplied with water from the Euphrates by means of a barrage consisting of masonry piers with thirty-six openings fitted with sluices to hold the water to the required level.

When we come to meditate upon the Mystery of the Great Babylon, we shall see that all this is but the setting of the scenes for the final act in the great drama of man's rebellion against God. For it is in Babylon, not Jerusalem,



that apostate Israel defies the blessings of Jehovah, her God. Agriculture will never content the money making merchant which the Jew has become. They will go back to the land it is true and probably buy their own land—a shrewd bargain, surely, when Jehovah has already given it to them gratis—but commerce is a practical impossibility in Jerusalem. So the ephah (Zech. 5:6), the symbol of commerce, carries the woman to the land of Shinar, and there is set on its own base. So that the development of Palestine and the restoration of Mesopotamia are both on the program just before the refining and redemption of Israel. So much for the stage upon which the last scenes are being set for man's misrule. But what of the actors in this great tragedy?

A concrete case, which may well stand as a type of the whole nation, is that of Mendel Beiliss, a Jewish youth who narrowly escaped death upon the terrible charge of the "blood accusation." But he has finally been acquitted and leaves Russia for Palestine, where Baron de Rothschild has bought him a farm.

The people of Israel are not only multiplying in a much greater ratio than the nations among whom they are scattered, but the race consciousness which they have never entirely lost has of late been fanned into a flame by persecutions without and by federation within. They are no longer scattered fugitives but stand before the world as a nation.

The year 1896 was the most memorable, politically, of all the Christian era. All the years of Napoleon and Charlemagne together cannot equal its importance. What, you say, happened in that year? A handful of Jews met and held the first Zionist congress, and lo! the nation which showed no signs of life since Bar Cochba's days (136 A. D.) suddenly finds itself a political unit which the nations, such as England, recognize and deal with as a nation. And so there is the strange anomaly—a nation without a land. Yet there is only one land for that people, just as there is only one people for that land. England may offer a part of Africa, Argentine may beckon, but, for the present, at least, Zion is the only haven of Zionism.

The Zionist Congress has become a permanent institution. Dr. Herzl, whose "Das Judenstaat" (The Jewish State) first roused his brethren from their lethargy to hopes of being once more a nation as of old, Dr. Herzl had not the least idea that he was working along the lines of prophecy. Neither does the Congress heed the words of Jehovah, but blindly follows the feeling that forces them to fly back to the land of their fathers. And, while all is being done in utter disregard of God's purpose and plan, yet, even in their unbelief, they are surely carrying out the program He has prepared.

They are striving strenuously to effect their own salvation, but it will turn to their destruction. Of old when Hoshea, whose name means "salvation," was to become their deliverer, his name must be changed to Jehovah-Hoshea, Joshua, that is, *Jehovah* the Savior. This is the Hebrew for Jesus (Heb. 4:8). And in the terrible days which come before the kingdom only "those who invoke the name of Jehovah shall be saved". All their scheming and planning will not effect their salvation, nevertheless it is all contributing to the fulfillment of God's purpose. God not only saves but He also locks up in distrust—all is of Him. And by the same token He works not only through faith but also through failure and unbelief—all is for Him.

*God's graces and invitations are unregretted.* The word usually translated "gifts" here means far more than a gift. We might call it a "free gift," but as it is but a form of the word "grace," we may best learn its import from this relationship. What God has promised Israel will be hers because of His unforced favor. All their law keeping (?) has done is to draw down the curses for which it calls. All their covenant keeping (?) has done naught to win the blessings which they crave. But God's gracious promises, which depend on Him alone, will surely be fulfilled. And, far from their defection marking the failure of these graces, it is the means to bring them about. For just as the nations were made subjects of mercy by their distrust of Israel's mercy, so now the mercy which they are to obtain is made

possible by their own apostasy. God wishes to have mercy on *all*. But how could that even be unless first He locks them up in distrust? So now Israel is locked up, but many there are who seem to hear the key grinding in its lock which will open the door to Israel's restoration.

In the past Israel's task was to learn and teach the great truth that there is but *one* God: and now they are about to learn and teach a deeper truth, that there is one *God*. Not unity alone, but an all-sufficient and most gracious God.

God's graces are *unregretted*. This means more than "unrepented of." He not only does not change His mind, but His love is never disappointed or despairing. It has never relied on a due response to feed its flame. It finds in itself the sufficient and satisfactory ground of continuance. Having loved, it loves to the end. All the depths of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge are pledged to perform its purpose.

The grandeur of this apostrophe must not be lost by us, for it is the rich and mellow fruitage of preceding passage. We may be perplexed by God's dealing with Israel or by the failure of the nations, but when once we see how it accords with God's purpose, our perplexity gives place to worship and adoration. It is only as we see God's *purpose*, we repeat, this happy result can follow. At present Israel is still apostate and, worse yet, the nations are just as unfaithful.

The word of prophecy, indeed, assures us of Israel's restoration, but here we see not only the height of His riches and wisdom and knowledge in their restoration but also the profound wisdom and knowledge which can work in the depths.

But, are we not told that His judgments are unsearchable and His ways past finding out? This indeed was true of His dealings with Israel and the nations before He made known the great truth that He locks up all in distrust in order that He may have mercy on all. But now so much, at least, of His ways are clear to faith.

But let us not confound His *verdicts* and His *ways* with His declared *purpose*. They deal with processes in attaining the goal, but God's purpose is the goal itself. We

make such distinctions daily. We see the plan of a building and we are quite content to leave the execution of it to the contractor. In our simplicity, if we had never seen a building erected before, we would wonder at some of the methods of construction. We might well ask why men begin to dig *down* when they start to build *up*. But the builder knows well that he must lay his foundation deep. Just so with God's purpose and His ways. His purpose is one *and He has made it known*; His ways are many and some of them are hid.

Can we not *believe* the announcement as to His purpose even if we do not understand the elements which enters into its execution?

Shall we deny His decision because we do not see how some details can possibly be carried out? What would we think of the gardener who would not plant a seed because he could not see how it can grow and blossom and bear fruit?

Let us rather enjoy the fruit of God's great effort beforehand, for we know that every seed He plants will grow. Let us *believe* what He says as to the final outcome of His purpose and await and welcome all His words which enlighten us as to His way in working it out.

The word "verdict" here is worthy of study. It is *krima*, which registers the result of the action denoted by *krinoo*. This is generally translated "judge" but must not be given the common thought of "condemn" which is expressed by *katakrinoo*. When the apostles "judge" the twelve tribes of Israel in the regeneration (Mt. 19:28) they will not *condemn* them but rather *govern* or *rule* them, seeing that they will all be righteous. So, too, *krima*, verdict, does not carry in itself an adverse sentence or verdict, but rather the result of rule and government.

Israel's defection and restoration are alike His "verdicts". These were indeed inscrutable or unsearchable before their object was made known. Their defection *seemed* to defeat His purpose—but it fulfilled it. So each one of us doubtless can find examples in our own experience where God *seemed* to care little for His own cause—but His seeming indifference was but the studied neglect of His inimitable wisdom.

The way to a place is not the place. Neither are God's ways the goal to which they lead. Faith may grasp the goal, but it would take almost infinite wisdom and knowledge and time to consider and account for His multifarious ways. The burden of these is beyond us. They are a labyrinth we cannot follow—they are *untraceable*. To return to the figure of the seed. Why must the seed *die* in order that it may bear fruit? How does life come from the dead? We need not be like the child and dig it up to see *how*—for then, perchance, it will not grow at all—but all we need to do is to cultivate and water and God will give the increase. We plant and partake—the *process* is all *His* work. So in God's ways. They are beyond our ken. But though we cannot follow Him in His path, we can believe Him when He tells us of its end.

And what is its end? First let us ask what was the beginning? *All* was of Him—this we can understand. *All* is *through* Him—this is perplexing to sight but obvious to faith. *All* is *for* Him—this is the goal. Here we have a compendium of universal history—the past, the present and future in its relation to God. In the midst of the maze in which we find ourselves we look back to one settled point in the past—God is *One of Whom* all has come: and we may just as well look forward to the future and rejoice that out of all the intricate tangle in which we are enmeshed shall come that far grander and more glorious truth—*all* is *for* Him. Literally this reads all is *into* Him—the exact converse of the first statement, which is literally, all is *out of* Him.

But some will exclaim, impatiently, *how can ALL be for Him?* And we answer He has just been explaining how Israel's *defection* contributes to it. And if He can do it by means of the very opposition which seems to make it impossible, it little beseems us to question His ability to carry out His word. And if we had not the slightest hint as to *how* He would carry out His word, it is ours to *believe* in spite of all appearances. This is what gives flavor to faith. It takes God at His word in spite of all appearances.

And need we press the word *all* to its legitimate conclusion? Was all of Him? Or are there two gods, neither of whom is "*of*" the other; each being independent? Far be the thought! God is one and *all* is of *Him*. And by that same token *all* will be *for* Him. Not *some*, not *many*, but *all*.

And shall we discover all this wealth of wisdom, this consummate knowledge, without response? Shall not our hearts echo the apostle's apostrophe as we extol and laud the God of the *all*, and give Him all the glory which He will most surely gain? Such a God as this ought to stir our hearts and kindle our affections and arouse our adoration. To HIM, INDEED, BE GLORY FOR THE EONS! *Amen!*

## A PICTURE OF PUNISHMENT

IN a paper devoted to this subject, which appeared on the pages of our magazine, we pointed out the fact that punishment is one of the agencies for the accomplishment of God's forepurpose, rather than an integrant part thereof. We have seen that it is neither penal nor eternal, but remedial and temporary. Our province now is to show that the figures of Scripture are in perfect harmony with its doctrine.

Take as an example Psalm 36. The servant of the Lord first considers the misdeeds of the wicked (*vv.* 1-4), and then meditates on the loving-kindness of the Lord as manifested in His ways with the upright and the wicked (*vv.* 5-12). In harmony with the bearing of God's ways on these two classes, the Psalmist speaks of God's righteousness and judgment (*v.* 6); the former is shown to the upright in heart (*v.* 10); the latter is seen in the fall of the workers of iniquity (*vv.* 11, 12). Mark the language:

Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God;  
Thy judgments are a great deep.

Righteousness is compared to the mountains, His judgments, to the great deep.

The two doctrines differ as much as the objects to which they are likened. The mountains are visible: it is only now and then that fogs hide them from sight or clouds conceal their summits. Of the sea we see but the surface; its mysteries are hidden from our sight. These features are very appropriate in their application to the doctrines in question. Righteousness as a Divine attribute fully accords with the character of God set forth in Scripture; and it presents no difficulty to the human mind, since all who admit God's existence theoretically recognize (howsoever they may deny it practically) the fact of His righteousness,

it being evident that God must possess in a superlative degree a quality deemed highly desirable in men. But judgment, though an equally prominent item of revelation, seems at variance with God's character as revealed in Scripture, and, owing to this fact, many have found difficult to accept it. Of course, the difficulties come from the assumption that judgment is an end in itself instead of a *means* to an end.

Mountains are mentioned in connection with the primeval earth. The anointed cherub was set upon the holy mountain, and walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire (Ezek. 28:14); they continue throughout the entire course of the present earth; and they will have a place on the new earth. Its metropolis is built on a mountain (Rev. 21:10). The sea, on the contrary, is never mentioned in connection with the primeval earth; it passes away with the passing away of the present earth; on the new earth there shall be no sea (Rev. 21:1). In contrast to the mountains, which are found both in the primeval and the new earth, the continuance of the sea is rigidly confined to the present earth, its appearance and disappearance synchronizing with the entrance and exit of sin. Therefore, when the Psalmist says that God's righteousness is like the mountains, he ascribes to it the same elements which inhere the mountains—solidity and permanence; as when he likens judgment to a great deep he emphasizes its transitoriness. He asserts, in terms of figure, what is elsewhere stated in plain terms, that whereas the one is permanent, the other is evanescent.

Can anyone believe that these figures have no special meaning? Is all this merely accidental?—simply a casual coincidence? Remember God by His Spirit is the real author of the inspired word. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Is it not certain then, as we have suggested, that these differing figures, so peculiar and striking, are in perfect keeping with the teaching of Scripture on the subject.



## OUR QUESTION BOX

*What is "the writing of truth" in Dan. 10:21?*

The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth chapters of Daniel contain one continuous prophecy of what shall befall Daniel's people in the latter days (10:14). It is a matter of necessity to have a starting point. This is given in ver. 21. The words of the angel: "I will tell thee what is inscribed in the writing of truth," imply that he had come to make clear what had already been given. When the vision of the Four Beasts is given, the interpretation vouchsafed to Daniel concludes with the significant words: "Hitherto is the end of the matter"—that is, this is as far as the interpretation went. Many points were not explained, hence Daniel was not fully satisfied, for he says: "As for me, Daniel, my thoughts much troubled me" (7:28).

The vision of the Ram and He-goat revealed other important items relative to Israel's future, but evidently there was much that Daniel was not able to put together in relation to the entire vision, for that chapter concludes with the words: "And I, Daniel, fainted, and was sick certain days; then I rose up and did the King's business: and I wondered at the vision, but there was none to make it understood." Accordingly in ch. 10:12 we find that Daniel "set his heart to understand," seeking Divine illumination with prayer and fasting. Coincidences between this prophecy and those of chh. 7 and 8 lead us to the conclusion that the "writing of truth" is the record of the former visions, and the purpose of this unfolding is to amplify the former visions in a way that would enable the prophet to get a full view of the things leading up to, and consummating, the times of Gentile supremacy.

*What Scripture is there which teaches that Adam's death passed beyond the dominion committed to him?*

It is written, "For since, in truth, death is *through* mankind, *through* mankind, also, is the resurrection of the dead." The connective employed (*dia*) is important. It is used in English compounds, such as *diameter*. It is in contrast with *ek*, out of, which would have described mankind as the *source* of death. As it is, *dia*, through, makes mankind the *channel* of death.

Note, too, it is not *Adam* who is the channel of death here, not yet *aner*, "man" as distinct from woman (*gune*), but *anthroopos*, humanity, mankind. But if humanity *channels* death it must needs bring it to others. That this is true we have ample evidence on every hand in the brute creation. They die. Why? What have they done? Nothing. Their death comes to them *through* humanity. This is in line with what is said of all the creation in the eighth of Romans.

But our question would specially limit the conveyance of death to Adam's dominion. We know of no Scripture which thus limits this general statement. Death, wherever it is, must flow through mankind. Is it not better to *believe* this statement in all its exactitude than to modify it by our own unbelief? Of course many things are absolutely impossible—for *us*, but not for *God*. But there are examples of death in the higher spheres of creation. The most illustrious is the case of the One who, though a Man Himself, yet died as the Son of God. And need we insist that His death was indeed *through* mankind?

The eighty-second Psalm merits an extended exposition in this connection. But we need only focus our attention on verse seven. "Ye shall die like mankind." The word for "men" here is the equivalent of the Greek word which we have translated "mankind." Now, just as death *through* mankind shows that it reaches others, so death like mankind shows that those here spoken of are not members of the human race. This is evident from the psalm itself, which also sets forth the cause of their sentence. It was dealt out for misrule of mankind. So here we have a concrete example of the statement that death does indeed channel *through* mankind to other creatures of a higher rank.

*Why do you assume that one age, and only one, must be considered as covering the period from the Flood to the Day of the Lord?*

We once "assumed" that the present age ended with the coming of Christ for His body, because we read of the "church age" or the "gospel age" in the writing of gifted and godly men who were endeavoring to set forth the truth of the church as distinct from Israel. But when we studied the word which the Holy Spirit uses (which we called *eon* for the clearness' sake), we had to drop this assumption. "This *eon*," spoken by our Lord, clearly refers to a time when "the church age" has passed. Besides this, "that *eon*," (Lu 20:35) is preceded by the resurrection of Israel. We cannot convince ourselves that this is a mere "assumption," for it is founded upon no human authority that we know of, and was and is founded only upon the inspired word itself.

Likewise as to the beginning of this *eon*. We "assumed" it started at the cross, at Pentecost, etc. But where is the *scriptural* evidence

for *these* "assumptions?" Why, the Lord's own words concerning the end of this eon show clearly that none of these events could possibly usher in another eon. This eon must commence prior to His ministry.

Lu. 1:70 speaks of "His holy prophets, *who have been from the eon*" [since the world began A. V.]. The same expression occurs in Acts 3:21 and 15:18. All of these carry us back long *before* the days of our Lord, at least as far as Abraham (Gen. 20:7).

From the additional light gathered from its association with *kosmos* world, we gather the further truth that, as a new world began at the flood, so also there was a new eon inaugurated there. Still further study into the significance of the terms world and eon confirm this position, for the introduction of the new element of human government was in itself a most marked change in the constitution of human affairs—more marked than any change since then—till government comes to its climax in the Man of Sin and is deposited in the hands of Christ Himself.

In conclusion let us ask a question. What Scripture is there which contradicts this position? If not at the flood, then when did the present eon commence?

*If we, being complete in Christ, appear guiltless before God and no act on our part can separate us from that love, what incentive is there to induce one to resist the temptations of immorality?*

This question always arises upon the reception of the conciliation. Indeed, immediately after the apostle sets forth this transcendent truth in the fifth of Romans, he asks and answers two questions, which put the same difficulty before us.

The first (Ro. 6:1) is: "Shall we *persist* in sin that grace may increase?" The second (v. 15) is: "*May* we sin, seeing that we are not under law but under grace?" The first question is answered by setting forth the truth of our death with Christ and our life toward God. It ends with the significant statement that "Sin shall not master you, for you are not under law, but under grace." "Thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" has been tried, but law has utterly failed to emancipate man from Sin. On the contrary, law brings bondage to Sin. But grace gives perfect liberty. Yet liberty is not license. It is true that, if we persist in sin, grace will increase. But it is also true that grace woos with far more effect than the fear of the law's penalties. To please God is a much more potent incentive for those who know Him than all the thunders of Sinai. It was fitting, and in accord with His purpose, that we should sin while estranged and enemies, for this provided for a display of His favor, but now that we know Him, no such fitness exists, and sin would

reflect upon His character. To persist in sin, while inviting more grace, is contrary to the tendency and teaching of that grace.

But then, without *persisting* in sin, *may* we sin, seeing we are not under law but under grace? Here again the fact that sin cannot but call for grace is not denied. It would be an immense relief to many of God's dear saints if they could only realize this emancipating truth. But they are afraid that it will lead to looseness and sin. On the contrary, a true appreciation of the grace by which we are established, of liberty from the law, will give a joyous power over sin which the law never could impart.

Grace liberates. Yet if we should voluntarily slave for Sin we should become, in practice at least, that which we once were, of which we are now ashamed. We should act as Sin's slaves when we are God's slaves. The rations of Sin are death and distance from God—which we cannot bear. We might be tempted to think that God gives eonian life as *wages* to those who serve Him. Not so. It is given to us as a free gift, altogether apart from our conduct. But does not this very fact, coupled with all His favors in the past and present, appeal to us most potently so that we voluntarily leave the service of Sin for the service of God?

Our morality, or lack of it, does not affect our relationship with God. Grace knows no barriers whatever, either in our past, present, or future. On the other hand, however, our morals should be and are far more tractable in the liberty of grace than under the lash of the law.

## EDITORIAL

WE cannot refrain from recording our thankfulness and appreciation of the efforts put forth by our friends to help us spread the truth. All the ordinary avenues of publicity have been closed to us and when we attempt to enter the door is shut in our faces. We glory in every evidence of persecution, knowing that we are appointed to it, yet we are burdened for lack of utterance. The riches we have to dispense will not diminish with their dispensation but rather increase to the glory of God. May we have the privilege of co-operating with all, whose eyes and hearts have been opened, in making known the glorious riches of His grace.

A correspondent, who is most anxious to circulate and spread the truth as unfolded in the pamphlet "All in All" and at the same time advertize the magazine, suggests that those anxious to co-operate, could procure a few extra copies of the pamphlet and pass them around among Christian friends, to be returned when read, or otherwise if the individual should be interested.

Many requests have been received for tracts, both for believers and unbelievers. We have therefore prepared three tracts of envelope size, entitled, "Be Conciliated to God," "How Can a Man Be Just with God?", and "The End of the World, When?" The latter deals briefly with the subject of endlessness. These may be had at twenty-five cents, or one shilling, per hundred, but will be freely furnished (D. V.) to all who wish to distribute them.

We hope, ere another issue of the magazine is sent forth, to revise and republish the articles on the Mystery of the Gospel in book form, together with the General Survey and an extended Introduction and Conclusion. It will contain the articles on the Previous Commissions and the

Eonian Times as well, the whole forming a convenient compendium of the whole subject of Conciliation and Reconciliation. It is needless to say that we desire every one to have an opportunity of tasting of this glorious truth. Nothing is more needed: nothing is more neglected. It has already proved a boon to a few, why not make it a blessing to many? We invite your co-operation and prayers in this behalf.

The opposition which has developed has turned out to be a convincing evidence for the truth. With a single exception there has been no real appeal to the Scriptures at all, but to *human* authority. We have the greatest respect for the names of great and good men and do not object to considering what they have said. But when their word is pitted against the Word of God, their very greatness and goodness become obstacles to the apprehension of the truth.

An appeal to human authority is the refuge of weakness. It is a symptom of apostasy from God's Word. There is no more certain sign of the lack of Scriptural support than a recourse to human dogma.

But the most pitiful evidence of distress is found in the ungodly method which seeks to distract attention from the truth by personal attacks and slander. If all the charges were true, instead of false, it would not touch the truth. Peter's "*Ye denied the Holy One and Just*" was true even though he had been a most flagrant offender himself. To throw dust in the air is ever the method of the enemy, but it never helps to clarify the atmosphere. Truth needs no such dark devices to illuminate it. Time and again the enemies of our Lord tried to detract from His teaching by insinuating that He was only a Nazarene, a common carpenter, one of the *fellahheen*. They even sought to throw a shadow on His nativity, notwithstanding the fact that His every action proved Him to be the Holy One of God.

And so did they with His servants. The apostles were not professionals and it was used against them. Paul's speech was contemptible, why should they listen to *him*?

We rejoice that God was able to use these very detractions for the furtherance of the truth and we are convinced that He will do so again.

An encouraging symptom is the fact that those who search and test our message are the ones who are most thoroughly convinced. Those, however, who have not considered it, who are *afraid* that it may be true, these, of course, cannot appreciate or enjoy the truth. We court the fullest investigation, the most rigid scrutiny, for we are concerned with facts and the truth and not our own feeble and faulty expression of it.

The greatest hindrance to the acceptance of the truth is exaggerated or misplaced truth. It is a case of not rightly dividing. In dealing, for instance, with the destruction of the lawless, we yield to none in the acknowledgement of this truth, but we beg to be excused if it be insisted that this is a *final* destruction, or annihilation. There is no question as to God's ability to annihilate (though the argument from "creation" is founded on a misconception), but *God has not said* that He would *finally* destroy. On the contrary, He has spoken of a consummation, or finality, when all will be *made alive*, not destroyed. The question is not one of God's ability, but of His purpose and His revelation of it.

Indeed it is never a question of God's power, or any of His attributes, divorced from what He is in Himself. The true test as to whether any doctrine is in accord with God must always take into consideration the truth that God is Love and Light. In Him is life. Distance and darkness and death are compatible with what He is only in the measure in which they reveal Him as life and light and love and only on the ground that their *conquest* is the most impressive proof that He is Love and Light and Life. Revelation displaces darkness because He is Light. Resurrection discards death because He is Life. Reconciliation dissolves distance because He is Love.

Not that we are merely reasoning thus from God's revelation of Himself. We are simply correlating the facts of the case with the truth. We are simply comparing what He has said He will *do* with what He has said that He *is*. Hitherto, before we apprehended or acknowledged what the final outcome of His ways would be, we had insuperable difficulties in squaring His acts with Himself. Now, however, He is found to be in perfect accord with Himself. His hand is at the service of His heart.

It is sincerely hoped that no one will misconstrue our effort to get a response from each one who wishes the magazine. The post office requirements were never intended for a magazine like ours, still we are not at liberty to evade the law on that account. All we need is evidence that you desire the magazine. We are not after the money, for, as a matter of fact, the subscriptions do not cover the cost of printing. The liberal donations alone keep the work going. In the administration of these gifts it is our object to be as economical as possible, hence we do not wish to use a stamp in mailing magazines which may be sent at the pound rate. We are sending a return postal to those who have received the magazine six months beyond the limits of their subscription. It is hard for us to speak of this matter and we trust no one will take the least offense, but sign their name and address to the card and mail to us. This will entail no expense whatever to those unable to pay. Many have already responded and will accept our thanks for their courtesy.

THE extraordinary interest manifested in the subjects of Death and Resurrection, the so-called Intermediate State, as well as the resurrection "out from among" the dead spoken of in the epistle to the Philippians, seems to indicate that the time is almost ripe for an exposition of the Mystery of the Resurrection. Instead of detached articles on various aspects of this important theme it will be better to present the subject in all its bearings in one connected treatise.



## “A SHOCKING BLASPHEMY”

CONTROVERSY is fraught with dangers. Engrossed by the one desire to condemn a contrary view, the judgment of the controversialist becomes warped, and he does injustice to himself while he unconsciously misrepresents the position of his opponent. A fresh illustration of this is afforded by a recent criticism of our article “The Problem of Evil.”\*

We are not saying that our critic has deliberately misrepresented our position, but that his eagerness to condemn has prevented him from viewing the subject in its true perspective. He represents us as saying that “*God is the author of sin.*” We said nothing of the kind. Our critic has been misled from the very start by the unwarranted assumption that “evil” and “sin” are synonymous terms; on the strength of such assumption he has taken upon himself to change our statement. Since this point, as well as the whole subject of God’s connection with evil is dealt with in a separate editorial, we will not here dwell on this point.

In dealing with Isa. 45.7 we said that the interpretation of the passage which assumes that the word here rendered “evil” *always* means inflicted evil is unfounded. We stated that the Hebrew word here employed is not restricted in its biblical usage to inflicted evil, but is used of moral evil as well; then we gave Scripture evidence for this and referred to the concordance for fuller proof. Our critic bears me out on this point. He says: “The Hebrew word which is translated evil in this passage is the general word for evil covering both moral evil, the evil which one does, and natural evil, the evil which one suffers.” Yet a little further he says that “a thorough examination of the con-

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\*“Victor Gelesnoff’s Shocking Blasphemy,” in “*The King’s Business*,” Vol. V, No. 2.

cordance shows that Mr. Gelesnoff's statement is utterly false"! He first declares that the word covers both natural and moral evil and then denies it! In his efforts to denounce he has fallen into a glaring self-contradiction.

Again he says: "The passage simply teaches that God sends men peace in heart and that God sends men disquiet of heart." But what says the context? It speaks of war and its accompaniments—the subduing of nations, the loosing of the loins of kings, the opening of doors and gates, the breaking in pieces of doors, cutting in sunder of bars, and acquisitions of treasures of darkness. Do these things take place in the human heart? War is the result of wrong doing. The so-called natural evils which afflict mankind are the direct result of Adam's disobedience; and since the so-called natural evil is a consequence of the moral, the passage which speaks of its origin necessarily employs the term in its inclusive sense. When facing the question of evil men are wont to dismiss it by saying that God *permitted* it. Just so. But how does Omnipotence permit a thing without assuming responsibility for the thing permitted?

Our critic says on this word: "Some of the meanings given to the word in one of the most modern and exact of Hebrew lexicons is "adversity, affliction, bad, calamity. These are the first meanings given. This lexicon among all the meanings given does not give sin at all among its meanings; the nearest it comes to it is in the last definition, 'Wrong'." What are the facts? The Hebrew lexicon referred to is Dr. Strong's. The word in question is marked No. 7451. The definition given is "*bad* or (as noun) *evil* (natural or moral)." Then follows a list (in alphabetical order) of the various renderings of the word in the A. V., which our critic has mistaken for the lexicographer's "definitions." He omits the definition given in the lexicon, which fully bears out our assertion; he palms off the renderings of the A. V. as "definitions", and only gives five of them, the first four and the last. Among the renderings which he leaves out is found "wicked." He takes from the "most exact" lexicon what suits his view and leaves out what is antagonistic to it. Is this the reason why the name of the lexicon is withheld from the readers?

"But we are not so much concerned with Mr. Gelesnoff's reasoning as we are with his teaching." Of course, one who starts with the determination to condemn is eager to get rid of the evidence. The subject of God's connection with evil was illustrated by an array of passages. Our critic ignores them as a negligible quantity. He simply says we are all wrong, and apparently expects his opinion to have the authority of an *encyclical*, for he does not trouble himself about giving evidence. Among the passages given was Rom. 11. 32.

"For God hath shut up all into disobedience,  
that He might have mercy upon all."

Will our critic construe this passage to mean that God sends peace and disquiet in the hearts of men, or will he charge the apostle with "shocking blasphemy." It is very convenient to form an opinion regarding the meaning of a passage, disregard the others dealing with the same topic, and when the opinion thus formed is called in question take shelter behind the declaration that those who live close to God need no concordance to decide whether a teaching is right or wrong. Fellowship with God cultivates Bible study, and the concordance is the best aid to it. Only a theology founded on human opinion need fear a concordance.

Our critic asserts that our position "is the position held generally by Pantheists, Christian Scientists, R. J. Campbell and others who are recognized as gross errorists". This remark is wholly beside the mark. Pantheism accounts for the existence of evil by devising rival deities. The view which shifts the burden of responsibility from Omnipotence to a finite creature is much more akin to Pantheism than the view which believes in one Creator who is absolutely supreme. Christian Science attempts to solve the question of evil by saying that it is but an illusion of the mind. Here again eagerness to condemn has betrayed our critic into making an arbitrary statement which the facts will not bear out. Mr. R. J. Campbell expressed the idea that sin is a quest for God; the roué who goes out to corrupt innocence is, in a blundering way, seeking after God. Between Mr. Campbell's view and our position that God, as sovereign, and

omnipotent, assumes full responsibility for all that takes place in the universe, and controls all things for the accomplishment of His purpose, is a vast gulf. A mind which confounds such radically different conceptions proves its incompetence to handle questions of truth. All this goes to show that criticism bent on condemnation is partial in its methods, and untrustworthy in its results.

"When we learned that he had been led to an acceptance of the position that the Church is not the bride of Christ, and that a new dispensation began in the closing verses of the 28th chapter of Acts, we began to tremble for him." The expression "bride of Christ" is not in the Bible. Rev. 21:9 speaks of the "bride, the wife of *the Lamb*", and the phrase refers, not to the Church, but to the city New Jerusalem. In Scripture the church of this dispensation is spoken of as the Body of Christ, and never as the Bride. From the close of the Baptist's ministry the Bride is never mentioned until she reappears in Revelation (Jno. 3:29; Rev. 21:2, 9). The doctrinal part of the Ephesians has fully set forth the doctrine of the church as the Body, the practical part deals with the conduct which becomes the members of His body. In ch. 5, 22-33 the apostle treats of the conjugal relation. In vv. 23-30 he institutes a parallel: the model for a husband's treatment of his wife is Christ's treatment of His body. In v. 31 he cites the words spoken by Adams at the institution of marriage in Gen. 2, 24. Genesis records the marriage of Adam and Eve: it knows nothing of Christ and the church. It is claimed that Adam and Eve are *types* of Christ and the church. As there is no statement to that effect in the Bible, it is wholly gratuitous for any body to make it. The first part of v. 32 is a comment on the citation from Genesis in the preceding verse: "This (man's leaving father and mother and cleaving to his wife) is a great mystery." The second part of the verse explains Paul's object in referring to Genesis: "But I speak in regard of Christ and the church." The physical relation between husband and wife is used to illustrate the higher spiritual relation between the Head and the members of the body. The earthly relationship is readjusted by a heavenly standard. The force of the "nevertheless" in v. 33 depends

on the fact that the church is the body, not the bride. Without a shred of Scriptural warrant a pet doctrine is made the test of soundness as to faith, and dissent from man's statement of it is treated as pride and rebellion against God.

A word about the personal statements. I went to Chicago neither from Rochester nor from the tailor's bench. Neither was I led to Christ through the ministry of Mr. Gaebelein. I was led to a knowledge of evangelical truth by reading the New Testament, and took an open stand for Christ several years later in the Salvation Army. I had been engaged in Christian work for some time when I met Mr. Gaebelein. Unless meant as an insinuation, one is at a loss to understand why the mode of one's earning a living should be brought up at all. Erroneous statements are not easy to retract, hence it is regrettable that information of a personal character should have been publicly given out without ascertaining its correctness. Since Dr. Torrey says that he was not certain of being correctly informed the only right course was to refrain from divulging it. It has served no purpose, and in making it our critic has needlessly exposed himself to the charge of insinuation. Here is a most solemn warning for us all. The grounds of controversy are exceedingly slippery and full of pitfalls. The foot can easily slip, and one may find himself in a deep pit from which it is not easy to get out.

Our critic concludes by saying that his denunciation is prompted by loyalty to Christ. The inquisition claimed the same. We mortals are all too prone to think that *our* views of truth are *the* truth, and when differing views are put forth, we imagine that the faith trembles in the balance, and that we must defend it at all hazards; whereas the truth of the matter is that the faith is trying us and our exertions to defend it only mar the testing. Uzzah imagined that the ark was in danger of falling, and lost his life in an attempt to steady it. There are many sad sights in the world, but none is more pitiful and disgraceful than the sight of one servant of Christ denouncing another who cannot frame himself to pronounce his Shibboleth. Since our critic has not given my correct name, I sign my name in full.

VLADIMIR GELESNOFF.

## "IN MEEKNESS CORRECTING"

WHEN we say that God creates evil we are simply quoting from the Word of God, and that, too, from the authorized version. Nevertheless the statement has been termed nothing less than a "shocking blasphemy". To substantiate this charge the phrase has been changed, and we are represented as having said that "God is the Author of *sin*."

This leads us to restate, with all the emphasis possible, a most important but much neglected principle. *When the Spirit of God uses two distinct terms, He has two distinct meanings.* God has never said that He created *sin*. So we, too, refrain from doing so. Sin is lawlessness (1 John 3:4). As God is the Lawgiver, He is not under any law, but is above His own enactments. When He does that which would be sin in man, it is no longer sin. He kills. If we should do this it were a grievous sin. If the state does it it is lawful. When God does it, it is far removed from sin. From this we can see that God is not a man and must not be judged by human standards. Sin, as we have said, is lawlessness. Its most graphic definition in the Hebrew is found in Judges 20:16, where "seven hundred left-handed men could sling stones at a hair breadth and not *miss*" or *sin*, for it is the same word. Now God never misses the mark. He never sins.

We may illustrate this by the most flagrant sin which man has ever committed—the murder of the Son of God. We know that they killed the Prince of Life (Acts 3:15) with lawless hands (Acts 2:23). Yet He was smitten of God. It pleased the *Lord* to bruise Him (Is. 53:4, 10). They were but carrying out the determinate counsel of God. The very act of God which puts away sin, was man's most grievous sin. The act was the same, but the actors were different in rank and motive and object. What God does is

right because He is God and because His motives are God-like and His object blessing.

The murder of God's Son, apart from His resurrection, were the greatest calamity in the universe. But, unlike man, God was able, not only to kill, but to make alive again.

We may learn a parable from the sphere of matter. It is not intrinsically evil, as the gnostics affirmed. When it is displaced, when it is out of harmony with other matter, then it becomes evil. The defiling soot is only a diamond in a different form, or relation to other substances. Just so in the moral sphere. No act is wrong in itself, but only as its relation to other acts or to the actor is wrong. To murder a man is to break the law: to execute a man is to fulfill the law: yet the act is one. The state never murders. God has invested mankind with the power of life and death. God never sins. Yet who will deny that He slew the Lamb, slain from the disruption? We might as well contend that the men of Israel were free from the charge, for *they* did not raise the cross. The soldiers did that. But back of all can we not discern the One Who set Him as a mark for His arrow? Are we not glad that He made Him a sin offering for us and sent down fire from above to consume Him?

We are told that evil is of two kinds, "moral" and "natural." And once more let us say with all the emphasis possible: *When the Spirit of God uses only one term He does not refer to two radically distinct and exclusive thoughts.* The Hebrew vocabulary is so rich that the English language is sorely taxed to provide suitable equivalents. If evil were really divided into two spheres, "moral" and "natural," it would not have taxed the Hebrew tongue or the Divine Author to have expressed them. He has refrained from doing so. *Let us not be wise above what is written.* The division of evil into two classes is one of the exigencies of theology, and is an impertinent innovation in the domain of truth.

"Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee and thou be found a liar."

(Prov. 30:6).

But if the word for evil cannot be thus divided, how may we discover its real meaning? By the concordance method, which is the only safe and satisfactory way to settle such questions. In passing, let us say, however, that the concordance method does not consist in referring to the *dictionary* matter which is given in some concordances. There is a constant tendency for the lexicographer to derive his definitions from current translations, and thus the seeker is led to traverse a circle and gets back to the prejudice with which he started. There is nothing morally *evil*, however, in referring to the lexicon, yet in doing so by all means let us not cull those definitions which suit our purpose and deny the rest. An instance of this was brought before us lately. In discussing the definition of evil as given in Strong's Concordance we quote "Some of the meanings given to the word in one of the most modern and exact of Hebrew lexicons is 'adversity, affliction, bad, calamity.' These are the first meanings given. This lexicon among all the meanings given does not give sin at all as among its meanings. The nearest it comes to it is in its *last* definition, 'Wrong.'" What are the facts? The following is a copy of the definition referred to in Strong's Concordance:

7451. רָעָה *ra'ah*, *rah*; from 7489; *bad* or (as noun) *evil* (nat. or mor.):—adversity, affliction, bad, calamity, + displease(-ure), distress, evil ([favoredness], man, thing), + exceedingly, × great, grief (-vous), harm, heavy, hurt (-ful), ill (favoured), + mark, mischief (-vous), misery, naught (-ty), noisome, + not please, sad (-ly), sore, sorrow, trouble, vex, wicked(-ly, -ness, one), worse(-st), wretchedness, wrong. [Incl. fem. רָעָה *ra'ah*; as adj. or noun.]

Now in Strong's Concordance the *definition* (*bad* or *evil*) is given in italics and *after the punctuation mark*:—"are given all the different renderings of the word in the authorized version." So that the definition given in this "the best concordance that there is" (?) is *bad, evil* (natural or moral). This is followed by a list of the renderings in the authorized version. It will be noted that our objector does not quote the real definitions at all but substitutes therefor



some of the renderings of the authorized version. He sedulously avoids quoting "wicked" even though he seems under the mistaken impression that these are definitions.

Let this example be a warning. If we *must* refer to a lexicon by all means let us not shut our eyes to the real definitions and then hide such renderings from our disciples as do not suit our prejudices. This will only cause shame and confusion.

But a far, far better plan is to go direct to the concordance *itself* (a lexicon is not a concordance) and get the Holy Spirit's definition from the contexts. If possible use a Hebrew concordance such as "Davidson's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance." As very few can use this with comfort, the "Hebraist's Vade Mecum" may be substituted, or; for those who know no Hebrew, "The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance" is most practical. The only objection is the fact that the contexts are in the English version, and, of course, are not always correct. These concordances are immeasurably superior to Young's or any of the rest. In the Greek Scriptures, the best published so far as known to us, is Bruder's (out of print), among the Greek concordances. Then, for English readers, "The Englishman's Greek Concordance." No one who has a heart for God's word should use anything further removed from the original than this. The indexes make it possible for one quite unacquainted with Greek to use it, though a slight knowledge of Greek is helpful.

So, then, in *reality* we are in perfect accord with Strong's Hebrew Dictionary. If we were inclined to appeal to any human authority, this one would well suit our purpose. Now to which class of evil shall we assign the course which first distorts our words to mean "sin" and then appeals to the absence of this term in the dictionary? But it might be retorted, moral evil *is* sin! As you wish it! Then Strong's Dictionary also defines this word as sin, for he, like us, says it refers to *moral* evil.

And what classification shall we give the method which not only calls the translations of the Authorized Version Strong's *definitions*, and claims they are arranged according to rank when they are merely in alphabetical order,

and suppresses the very one which would destroy its contention, but actually insinuates that it is not there when we are told "the nearest it comes to it is in its last definition, 'Wrong'." Why was the word wicked (Gen. 6:5; 18:18; Deut. 18:11; 17:2; Is. 47:10; Jer. 44:9) concealed?

"By their fruits ye shall know them." A mind which can entertain and publish such palpable errors of fact cannot safely be followed in matters of truth. There is, however, a real difficulty to many in the statement that God creates evil which a little consideration will remove. This is not the first time God is connected with evil in the Scriptures. In the garden of Eden the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was planted by God. Here, indeed we have the clue to the whole matter. We are inclined to think of this tree as simply imparting the knowledge of evil and *not* good. But it was first of all "the tree of the knowledge of good. . . ." Adam had not the knowledge of good. How was he to realize and appreciate good? By this tree. Yet, in tasting the tree, he must needs taste of the tree of knowledge of good *and* evil. The two are inseparable. *Good is known only by means of evil.* An active choice of good is impossible apart from a refusal of evil. Thus it is in human affairs. Yet even before the tree had been tasted the gods (Gen. 3:5) and Elohim (Gen. 3:22) knew good and evil. The association of evil with God is, perhaps, the real stumbling block. We will proceed, then, to consider some passages where God is said to use evil.

Job recognized that the evils he was suffering were from God (Job 2:10) and this is confirmed in the end (Job 42:11) in spite of the theology of his friends. Yet should we be guilty of carrying the botch of Egypt it would be criminal. To avoid the spread of disease all incoming vessels are quarantined and it is a crime to carry a foreign plague to an innocent victim. Yet this is what happened to Job at God's hands. And Job would be the first one to justify God for the severe evils He brought upon him. We are not to curse at all, yet He curses His people (Jer. 26:3; Dan. 9:14). The incendiary is severely punished by our law, yet He burned whole cities (Jer. 21:10). We shudder to think of the fiendish men who turned wild beasts upon the

Christians in the Roman amphitheatre, yet He made His people the prey of evil beasts (Eze. 14:15, 21). The dagger of the assassin condemns him to death, yet He puts the people to the sword (Jer. 42:17; 44:11; Eze. 14:21). We denounce the avarice of those who withhold food from the people in order to fatten their purse, yet He sends the famine which reaches both rich and poor (2 Ki. 6:33; Jer. 19:9; 42:17; 44:11; Eze. 14:21). Destruction is a misdemeanor, yet He destroys whole cities (Jer. 26:18; Jon. 3:4), and desolates whole countries (Neh. 13:18; Jer. 44:2). The very quarantine officer who would allow the introduction of a plague would be liable to severe penalties, yet Jehovah sends the pestilence (Jer. 32:42; 42:17; Eze. 14:21). A sinister influence may not be brought to bear upon any man, yet God sent an evil spirit to trouble Saul (1 Sam. 16:14-23; 18:10; 19:9).

Well may we ask with the man of sorrows,

Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass,  
when the Lord commandeth it not?

"Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?"

(Lam. 3:37-38).

And well, too, may we agree with the wise man when he says:

"Jehovah hath made all things for His own sake: Yea, even the lawless for the day of evil."

(Prov. 16:4).

"Consider the work of God:

For who can make that straight which He hath made crooked?"

(Ecc. 7: 13).

All of these scriptures make it plain that the very same act may have a very different aspect according to the one who does it.

All evil which is done with due authority, such as paternal or political, whether inflicted by parents on their children, or masters on their servants, or the state on its sub-

jects, or God on His creatures (of which the rest are but figures) all such evil loses its "immoral" quality because it is salutary and corrective. Its morality lies, not in the evil, but in the relation sustained between the one who inflicts and the one who suffers. Hence, even moral evil, committed by criminal men, loses its immoral quality when referred back to the One Whose purpose was being effected by the evil and Who not only has the undoubted right to inflict it but Whose every act will yet receive the undivided applause of the universe.

In fact the very same act, when viewed from the standpoint of the human perpetrators, is full of "moral" evil; yet when it is viewed from the vantage of the Divine operations, God Himself still calls it an evil and claims that He is the real power behind it. But the moment that "moral" evil touches Him it is transformed into "moral" glory, just as in the case of Job, its object is the blessing of the creature as well as the honor of the Creator. No evil committed by irresponsible man can be anything else than "moral" evil. And no evil created by God can have the least taint of moral turpitude, because it is always directed towards the ultimate reconciliation of its object.

"But though He cause grief, yet will He  
have compassion.

According to the multitude of His loving  
kindness. (Lam. 3:32).

It has been suggested that the reason why it is so strongly insisted that God is the creator of evil lies in the fact that on this truth the great doctrine of monotheism depends. The dualism of the Parsees and the Gnostic philosophy assigned the creation of good to one god and the creation of evil to his rival, just as Christendom does today. To meet this the Hebrew Scriptures insist on only One Creator of both good and evil. It is only those who insist on the eternity of evil who are driven into this gross dualism.

Those who see God's beneficent and loving object (which is not restoration, simply, but reconciliation) will have no difficulty in believing His own statements as to the creation of evil and at the same time justify and glorify Him for its creation,

A. E. K.

# THE APOCALYPSE

## THE MASTER THOUGHT OF THE BOOK

THE teaching of the Bible, with the exception of Paul's epistles, which are identified with the Divine purpose relating to heaven, follows one definite line of thought—the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. Genesis gives the germinal thought: the other books trace the development of the idea in its various ramifications: the Apocalypse gathers symbolism from all over the field of biblical literature in order to illuminate the thought which makes all the sacred books a single unity. Nothing could be clearer than that the ideas of the Hebrew Scriptures find their consummation in this final utterance of prophecy. The strong angel, arrayed with a cloud, stands on earth and sea, and cries with a great voice that at the sounding of the seventh trumpet "is finished the mystery of God, according to the good things which he declared to his servants the prophets" (10:7). Hence it is that the symbolism of the book is mainly that of the old prophets; the isolated symbols and figures of the ancient seers are linked together and unified in this final outpouring of the prophetic spirit. At the sounding of the seventh trumpet all heaven shouts the master thought of the whole book: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ" (11:15). When the chorus of the great voices has subsided there is a momentary unveiling of the Ark of the Covenant; a foundation Old Testament symbol of God, not as the Creator of the universe, but as the divine ruler of a chosen people. What follows brings together the leading Messianic gems of the ancient prophets: there is an echo of Isaiah's virgin with child, suggestions of the early promise of conflict of the serpent with the woman's seed, a reference to the one who is to rule the nations with an iron rod, the re-

deemed of Israel's tribes standing on a sea of glass flushing with the hue of victory singing the "Song of Moses and of the Lamb"—the first salvation of God's chosen people at the Red Sea grown into a world-wide salvation embracing all nations. Amidst this revival of old-time song and ancient symbol the swelling volume of voices in heaven proclaims the attainment of the goal to which both were pointing: "Now is the salvation and the power, and the kingdom, become our God's, and the authority of his Christ" (12:10).

The many points of connection of the *last* book with the *first* have already been pointed out by others. Only two common features need be noted here. The Genesis narrative centers around two thoughts: the enunciation of the Divine counsel respecting the earth, and the failure of man. At the very outset we have the investiture of man with authority to rule for God in the earth; this idea is subsequently complimented by another—the election of a chosen nation as a medium of blessing to all the families of the earth. The Apocalypse contemplates these ideas in full fruition. The title "ruler of the kings of the earth" in the salutation to the churches is an index of the special character in which our Lord is set forth, a character which every subsequent vision accentuates. The opening vision in heaven takes the form of three symbolic pictures passing one into another like dissolving views. First, the Throne of Deity is manifested; around it all the grades of authority move in a ceaseless round of adoration. Then a Book sealed with seven seals becomes visible in the hand of enthroned Deity: a sense of oppression being felt that none is able to unseal it, one of the elders declares that the Lion of the tribe of Judah shall unseal it. As we look for this victorious Lion there appears in its place a Lamb *standing as though it had been slain*. As the Lamb takes the Book from the hand of Deity the symphony of universal adoration is transferred to this Lamb. Under the sixth seal the day of wrath is actually breaking, and terror-stricken men seek to hide themselves from the wrath of the Lamb. In the central vision, which presents the conflict of the forces of the world with those of God, a momentary break in the narrative presents the Lamb and His followers on Mount Zion arrayed for war.

The supreme moment is reached when the heavens open and the King of kings descends accompanied by the hosts of heaven. By the link of the white horse he is seen gathering to himself the various powers of judgment which appeared under the seals. Brief sections display the overthrow of all the forces of preceding visions: Beast, False Prophet, Dragon, and thunder-like voices in heaven announce the marriage of the Lamb. And when the new heaven and earth is ushered in, tranquillity and blessedness proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb. What the temple and the lampstand faintly shadowed forth is now manifested in fulness: the Lamb Himself is the Lamp and Temple of His people (Rev. 21:22, 23). As in Exodus the Lamb is identified with Israel's redemption, so in the Apocalypse the Lamb (the supreme symbol of the whole book) is identified with the redeemed of the chosen people. The city which John saw adorned as a bride for her husband is the city for which the cloud of witnesses looked (Heb. 11:10, 16). On its gates are inscribed the names of Israel's tribes, and on its foundations are the names of the twelve apostles ruling over the tribes. Thus the idea of earthly rule administered by man through the medium of a chosen nation attains its culmination in the Apocalypse.

Genesis 1-11 is a brief historic notice of first beginnings in development. First we have the multiplication of Adam's posterity, and the development of wickedness leading up to the flood. Then the recommencement of the world in Noah, the Covenant of the Rainbow, and the breaking out again of separation between the righteous and the wicked, this time in nations, Canaan being the ancestor of the wicked nations. What is made prominent in the narrative is the religio-political character of the apostasy. Before the flood false worship and brute force are prominent in the line of Cain. On the one hand is the development of things secular, with weapons of war for a climax, and on the other hand of religion, the calling themselves by the name of Jehovah. The two ideas converge in Lamech. The Song of Lamech celebrates the apotheosis of man. The "vengeance of Cain" is an echo of God's sentence: the new power of vengeance provided by deadly weapons is beyond even Divine power.

The bruise of Lamech and the young man is an echo of the first promise: concentration of worldly power is the attainment of humanity's victory. After the flood there is a recurrence of the same tendency in the line of Ham. Babylon becomes (and remains throughout Scripture) what the city of Cain had been in the antecedent age—the centre of a religio-political system. In the Apocalypse apostasy is seen at its zenith. Concentration of worldly power is symbolized as brute force, or power of a monstrous beast, set on by the dragon. The second beast shadows forth, not world power, but world religion. Uniting the marks of the lamb and the dragon : working miracles he causes all to worship the first beast, whose authority he exercises, establishing a badge the lack of which excludes from all human intercourse. It is no longer external brute force, but wordly force organized as a false religion. During the whole period of the end this system will hold unfettered sway over all mankind with the exception of the elect of God. Hence the special subject which moves all heaven to praise is the destruction of Babylon from off the face of the earth.

The next paper will be devoted to a study of the symbolism.



# THE MYSTERY OF THE RESURRECTION

## WHAT IS MANKIND?

God alone knows what mankind is. For, while humanity is fitted with many means of sensing the world about it, it has no eyes within. So to the word of God we turn to learn what He, who formed the first human being, has to say as to His own handiwork.

As we are especially concerned with the constitution of man himself, in order to view aright the subject of resurrection, we will pass over the first account of man's creation (Gen. 1:26-29), which views him in relation to God and to the creatures of his dominion, and pass on to the detailed account of his own composite formation as rehearsed in chapter two, verse seven. As this lies at the root of all subsequent study let us form a concordant version of this important passage and study each word thoroughly before we proceed.

7 And Jehovah Elohim forms the man of soil from the ground, and He breathes into his nose the breath of life, and the man comes to be a living soul.

This brief, yet comprehensive account, naturally falls into three distinct statements, which concern the body, the spirit, and the soul: The "man"—formed from soil. The "breath"—the basis of the spirit. The soul—the result of the union of body and breath. It is noted that these are not three distinct entities. The soil was there before, the spirit, too, was given (Ec. 12:7) by God, *but the soul was not added to these*. It was simply the effect, like the light of a lamp, of which the oil might figure the body and the oxygen the breath. Indeed this word "become" in the exact form which it takes in this passage is first used in Gen. 1:3 in the phrase "there *was* light." Now we know that light is not a substance existing apart from the agents by which

it is manifested, but is merely the effect of certain relations between substances. The precise form of this word "become" occurs six times in the first chapter (Gen. 1:7, 9, 11, 15, 24, 30), in the phrase "*and it was so.*" In each of these it is abundantly clear that it notes simply the *effect* of the previous words and never gives the idea of another and distinct addition to what has been said. In fact, it is a question whether a single passage can be adduced to show any such usage. This is most significant, for the word occurs hundreds and hundreds of times, so often, indeed, the ordinary concordances give only a few specimens of its usage.

The first occurrence of this word is a notable example of its force. Gen. 1:2 should read, 'And the earth *became* . . .', not *was*. From this we know that it was *not* "waste and void" but became so as the effect of some interference. This is confirmed by Is. 45:18. Our point is that "becomes" registers the effect or result of previous action and introduces no new element.

This inspired record of the formation of man by the One Who knows, ought to settle conclusively the fact that man is of the soil, that his life is of the spirit, and that he becomes a living soul quite apart from the addition of aught else. Withdraw the spirit and the soul also goes, for it was the impartation of spirit which occasioned its presence. The first two elements existed before Adam was created. The body was made of the soil. The spirit was God's gift. But this is not true of the soul, for it is not an *addition*, but a *consequence*. But this will be fully discussed when we come to study the soul itself.

The truth that man is a bipartite being is reflected in his physical frame, which is, indeed, a visible expression of what he is. Everything is either in pairs or is bilateral, pointing in no uncertain manner to the truth that man is not only biped but bi-partite. He is not composed of three parts, but two.

Matter—so far as our human senses take cognizance of it—has three forms: solid, liquid, and gaseous. We are well aware of the distinct qualities of each of these, yet we fail to grasp their significance. Everything that we sense is a parable: it is the stepping stone from the known

to the unknown. This has indelibly impressed itself upon all language, for spirit is never expressed in terms of solids or of liquids. It is always associated with air. By the figure of implication it is called by the same name as the wind. In Hebrew and Greek, and Chaldee, the languages of inspiration, the same word is used for "wind" and "spirit." It is a sad token and a parable of the degeneracy of our days when the English language persistently speaks of spiritual things as "psychical", which is, by interpretation, *soulish*. Too often, alas, the so-called spiritual is *soulish* and is well named "psychic".

The soul is not figured by the gaseous forms of matter, but by the liquid. It may be "poured out" (Job. 30:16). It is like a "*watered garden*" (Jer. 31:12). It is definitely stated to be represented in the human body by the blood (Lev. 17:14, here mistranslated "life").

The solid portion of the human body is matter in its highest expression. Yet by itself, apart from its connection with the blood and breath, the human frame is but so much soil, and it quickly returns to its native elements when deprived of either blood or breath.

The blood, according to scripture, *is*, that is, represents, the soul. This will be more fully discussed and established when we deal with the subject of the soul. In contrast with both breath and body it is a fluid. Yet, at the same time it is the medium of communication between the breath and the body. The air is of no avail to the body except through the blood. Neither is the soil of any use except through the blood. Yet the blood is the vehicle which joins the two together. It is not composed of distinct materials but is the joint product of the breath and body. But this will be further developed later in its proper place.

#### THE HUMAN BODY

We are first struck with the *manner* in which God made the man. He is the great Potter, for this very Hebrew word is thus translated in Ezekiel. It is not represented here as a distinct creative mandate, but the careful, painstaking,

loving molding of the creature which was to satisfy His heart.

Hebrew is very rich in terms descriptive of humanity—richer than Greek, and far richer than English. So, in considering any passage in which the word “man” occurs it behooves us to inquire what peculiar aspect is made prominent by the expression used in the original.

The following list will be useful to anyone wishing to pursue this interesting and profitable line of study:

אָדָם *adam*, human

ἄνθρωπος *anthroopos*, human

in contrast to spirits and beasts (Gen. 6:7)

אִישׁ *ish*, husband

ἄνῆρ *aneer*, husband

in contrast to *isha* (Gen. 2:23) and *ginee* (Jn. 4:16) wife

זָכָר *zachar*, male

ἄρσεν *arsen*, male

in contrast to *n'kevah* (Gen. 1:27) and *theelu* (Mt. 19:4) female

גִּבּוֹר *gever* powerful

אָנוּשׁ *enosh*, mortal

It is obvious that the last term cannot be used of man before the entrance of sin, before death entered. Nor is the descriptive appellation “powerful” ever used in the book of the beginning which we have misnamed “Genesis.”

The first three words are all used in connection with creation. One distinguishes the sexes, which indeed seems to have been an innovation in God's creation. Another views this distinction from the relationship of husband and wife. The first term, Adam, however, brushes all these differences aside, includes both sexes, and distinguishes the *human* race from the creatures above as well as below.

We may rest assured, then, that in this passage we have the beginning of mankind, as such, apart from any divisions which came in later, such as the sexes, or strength or weakness.

Now the term *Adam* in Hebrew is but a variation of the word *ground*—*adamah*, which presses upon us the important fact that mankind is but a part of the ground. Not only is this taught in this passage, but, in the judgment scene which followed Adam's offense, he is doomed to return to the ground because he had been taken out of it (Gen. 3:19).

It is often a moot point as to what is essentially the man. We have the answer here, for, before the spirit is imparted the form which Jehovah Elohim made is called "the man." This is fully confirmed by the apostle, when he says (1 Cor. 15:45-49):

. . . . "The first human, Adam, becomes a living soul: the last Adam a life giving Spirit.  
 46 But not the spiritual first, but the soul-ish; there-  
 47 upon the spiritual. The first man is out of the earth—soil-ish; the second man is out of heaven.  
 48 Such as the soil-ish, such are the soil-ish, too: and such as the celestial, such are the celestial, too.  
 49 And even as we wear the image of the soil-ish, we shall wear the image of the celestial, too.

The first man is not only *soul-ish* but *soil-ish*, if we may be pardoned for coining a much needed expression.

It is contrary to both scripture and fact to say that man was formed of *dust*. The body is composed mostly of moisture. The Hebrew word *gaphar*, here translated "dust" is also rendered *mortar* (Lev. 14:42, 45) where water is absolutely needful, it "grows into hardness" (Job 38:38), and clods (Job 7:5), it forms caves (Isa. 2:19), and when Elijah had poured twelve jars of water over the offering it is not probable that there was any "dust" left for the fire to consume (1 Ki. 18:38). The word *dust* is evidently a misnomer. It refers to a part of the ground, evidently that which appears from the surface downward. Mankind returns to it, for it was taken from it. Mankind as sprung from the first man is essentially *soul-ish* and *soil-ish*. It is

the prerogative of the second Man to be spiritual and celestial.

The Greek version of the Hebrew scriptures uses the very word which the apostle applies to man in his epistle. So that, if we translate "soil" in the first instance, we ought to translate "soilish" in the second, to preserve the connection. "Earthy" would rather show man's relation to the earth; soilish shows his derivation from the soil.

The statement that man was made of the soil of the ground is amply evidenced by the fact that it is from the same soil that humanity derives the food which repairs the body. Whether it be vegetable or animal food it can all be traced back to that part of the ground which will sustain plant life—which we call the soil. By means of the process of life and death man is continually being renewed and nowhere else can he find the necessary elements except in the tillable surface of the earth. Out of this he was originally formed; through this he maintains his body; into this he must return. It may seem needless to dwell upon this aspect of man's creation, yet its very simplicity will furnish us with the key to an understanding of the difficult subjects of spirit and soul.

#### WHAT CONSTITUTES CREATION

But some will protest, "Is not man distinctly said to be a *creation*?" (Gen. 1:27; 5:1, 2; Deu. 4:32; Ps. 89:47; Isa. 45:12). And, according to Heb. 11:3, is not creation the making of something out of that which had no previous existence? If "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear", how is it possible that Adam was *created* out of materials at hand and not out of nothing?

A concordant version of this passage will soon show that this scripture has no bearing on the matter at all. Nothing is said of the material "world" for the word is *aioonas* cons. And the word for "framed" is never so translated elsewhere, but "mend" (Mat. 4:21; Mar. 1:19) and "restore" (Gal. 6:1) "fitted" (Rom. 9:22), being usually rendered by "per-

fect" (Heb. 13:21; 1 Pet. 5:10). It is derived from *artios* equip (2 Tim. 3:17 "perfect"), and a study of each occurrence will satisfy us that it refers to an *adaptation* or *adjustment*. It is not probable that they would be mending the nets *in* the boat, but rather that they were readjusting them so that they would be ready for another catch. These changes, together with others of a minor nature would give us a concordant version as follows:

11 Now faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction of matters which are not being observed, for in it the elders are witnessed to.

<sup>2</sup> By faith we are apprehending the eons to have been readjusted to God's statement, for what is not out of what has been appearing is being observed to have come to pass.

This puts the passage in perfect harmony with its context. It is hard to see why the apostle should prefix his eulogy of faith by a reference to creation, but it is most apt and pertinent to explain *why* the Hebrews should imitate the faithful of old. They had heard and welcomed the proclamation of the Kingdom. They were looking for its appearing. But the Kingdom did not come. Not only so, but it seemed to recede with each succeeding year. What is the matter? The nation *as a whole* has rejected its message. Paul's ministries, of which they could hear, but which they could hardly understand, have followed Israel's failure. Their dispensation would take much time. The eon, which had threatened to end in judgment and the speedy advent of the Kingdom is now being adapted to the new grace. This grace was not evolved out of the previous revelations concerning the Kingdom. Rather it came in spite of its rejection. It is a pure product of the word of God.

This being so, what place is left the pious Israelite? He is thrown back to the same ground as the saints of old who looked for the Kingdom and embraced it afar off. In other words, while realization is postponed, faith takes its place.

As this passage is the only one which seems to teach

the philosophical theory of creation, we are left free to examine all the passages which speak of creation to see if any of them insist on creation out of nothingness; or if, perchance, there are more which speak of creation as it is in the case of Adam—out of pre-existing materials. A patient search will reveal the fact that, while not a single passage can be adduced to support the theory that creation refers to the substance of things and not their form, there are many which refute it.

The Hebrew word *בָּרָא* *bara*, is the only one translated “create” and this is done quite consistently (Ps. 89:47; Nu. 16:30, Ex. 34:10 are the principal exceptions) so that the student can easily test this matter.

A very striking passage is found in Nu. 16:30. Here it should read “if the Lord *create* a *creation*”. But we look in vain for any new substance, in fact it has no reference to matter at all. It was without precedent, and this seems to be one of the primary notions in the meaning of “creation”. The mere fact that the female was *created* as well as the male (Gen. 1:27; 5:2), when we know that the woman was taken out of the man (Gen. 2:28), further confirms the truth that creation is only a new mode of matter—an unprecedented organism into which it is formed.

Adam was *formed* (Gen. 2:7) and *made* (Gen. 5:1) and *created*. All of these are also predicated, in one breath, of the restored of Israel in the day of her future glory (Isa. 48:6, 7). Surely they will not be made out of nothing, but are the physical seed of Israel.

During the thousand years, not only are those upon whom His name is called a new creation, but the physical marvels (Isa. 41:18-21) and the marriage canopy (A. V. “defense”) which will hover over Jerusalem in that day will be a creation (Isa. 4:5).

The Greek equivalent *κρίσις*, will tell the same tale. We are created in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:10). The new humanity is a creation (Eph. 2:15 “make”). Nowhere are we told of the creation of either spirit or substance. Philosophy’s bible would open up with the creation of *matter*. But God always presumes this and creates some new form of matter or phase of spirit. It is not that matter was created in a chaotic state and *formed* into the



heavens and the earth, but the arrangement or organization of matter into the form of heavens and earth—this was the act which is called "creation".

We conclude, then, that, just as the creatures which the waters *brought forth* (Gen. 1:21) are called a creation, so mankind, though formed of soil from the ground, is a creation too, because the creature thus formed was the first of its kind, new, strange and startling.

It is a notable fact that the body is not mentioned in the description of man's creation, and, as we shall see, neither is the spirit. It is not the exact truth, then, to say that the man's body was formed from the dust of the ground. The record is that the man himself was so formed. Humanity is of the soil, soilish. It is soil. Hence we are quite authorized to believe that, as to humanity, the body is the essential and distinctive part. Perhaps most of us have been taught that this is true of the spirit, but this is not in accord with the record. Even in the future glory there will be no disembodiment, but we shall have a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44). So that, when it is compared with a tent (2 Cor. 5:1) it is only in contrast to our permanent and heavenly bodies. Let us, then, lay for a foundation this clear statement: "And Jehovah Elohim forms the man of soil from the ground."

A. E. K.

## THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN ECCLESIASTES

### 5. DESIRE

BEFORE proceeding with our studies in Ecclesiastes it may be well to point out a peculiar morphological feature of this author. The five books, though they are independent, are yet, so to speak, "dove-tailed" together by the way in which the final thought of each leads directly to the next. The effect is that each successive composition is of the nature of a digression from the composition standing before it, but a digression which is expanded into an independent piece of writing.

The Third Book (5:10-6:12) resumes and carries forward to completion the train of thought developed in Book I. There Ecclesiastes was engaged in surveying the various departments of human activity: here he analyzes the spring of all activity under the sun—desire, or, as the original has it, the soul. The mode of treatment is both simple and methodic. The thoughts are drawn in orderly sequence: maxims (5:10-12); illustrations (5:13-6:6); reflexions (6:7-12). The Book opens with a series of maxims setting forth the Vanity of Desire in its several phases. These are followed by a number of typical instances supporting the ideas expressed in the maxims. Then follow practical reflexions suggested by what has been gleaned in the course of investigation. Like the preceding, this Book is also followed by a string of "notes" embodying in pithy sayings the results which wise thinking has yielded. (7:1-12).

In the First Book, where the author successively subjected to review the various phases of human activity, with the only result that each was found wanting, the sentiment was voiced that all labor, though bringing a sense of pleasure, fails to give genuine satisfaction. Now this line of thought is carried one degree further: what has been found to be true of outward activity is found to be equally true

of the inward principle which prompted it. Ecclesiastes asserts that the soul is not satisfied with the attainment of the objects desired. This is the starting-point of the present book:

He who loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance with increase.

Having thus stated the main thesis of the present discussion, Ecclesiastes proceeds to elaborate it. He points out that attainment without satisfaction is a familiar experience, and the added fact, attested by concrete examples in actual life, that attainment is frequently attended by hurt and followed by failure, while on the other hand genuine happiness is found to exist where the most coveted objects of human envy are absent—

When goods increase, the eaters thereof increase also: and what remains of the success to the owner, saving the beholding with his eyes?

These considerations have paved the way for introducing the two contrasts which occupy the place of prominence in this book: on the one hand is a picture of God-given prosperity and God-given satisfaction in it, and on the other hand is the opposite picture of the same God-given prosperity and the satisfaction withheld. These companion pictures emphasize the idea, which is unweariedly reiterated, that happiness is not within the power of man, but is the direct and special gift of God to the individual:

The sleep of a servant is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the fulness of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

Every man to whom God gives riches and wealth and gives him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God. Yet\* shall not he remember much the days of his life; because God afflicts him in the gladness of his heart.

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\*The rendering "for" (5.20) in our current versions is very faulty. כִּי *ki* here, as often in this book and elsewhere, has an adversative force. It often denotes a reason *notwithstanding*, as well as a reason *for*.

The rendering "answer" in our current versions obscures completely the real sense of this verse. The verb עָנָה *anah* occurs some one hundred times and is translated by such verbs as "afflict" (Ps. 119:67, 107), "humble" (Deut. 8:3; 21:14), "hurt" (Ps. 105:18), "chasten" (Dan. 10:12), and there is no reason why it should be rendered differently in Ecclesiastes. The meaning "afflict" or "chasten", which is borne out by the context of every occurrence as well as by the various derivatives of this word, invests the passages of this book where it occurs with grander significance and deeper doctrine, as may be seen at a glance. Ch. 1:13 and 3:10 express the idea that what is wrought under the sun, as also the times and seasons, have been designed by God for man's discipline and training. The next passage (10:19) is even more instructive.

A feast is made for laughter, and wine  
gladdens the heart: but money spoils the  
whole (viz., the laughter and the gladness).

Here the verb "afflict" is used in the related sense of "defile" or "spoil", as in Gen. 34:2. The suggestion is, as a means to procure the good things of this life, money is good; but it may spoil happiness if it becomes the minister of lust. The material things of the world are grasped to be used for ends beyond themselves. The problems of humanity gather around the fact that man lives a moral life in and through material things. As his spirit is clothed and conditioned by the body, so his whole life is clothed by the things of the world. These make him what he is; but he in turn makes the world. Its gold is a new creation when he mints it into money; for he stamps it with a new significance, which is moral and legal, national and social. So, also, the jewels of the earth become insignia of monetary and aesthetic rank; and the common comforts and necessities, which are first the accessories of physical life, become still more the accessories of a life whose base is not physical but mental and moral, in the sense that all social things are such.

The power and glory of the world, as these are known to man, are moral, but made out of the material. All riches

and grandeur are glorified dust. From this we can see the precise point at which Satan can grasp the power and glory of the world, and be Prince in it over men, even while it belongs to God. The kingdom of Satan is a *moral* power; his power is over men who have sinned; and when he touches the moral affairs of men and sways the issues of right and wrong, he touches the point where power and glory emerge from brute force and common matter. Gold is God's in the mine; minted into currency it is the creation of man. As man's creation, it is good to the man who seeks by it sufficiency of want and good works; it may become Satan's peculiar possession and instrument when it gains the significance of wealth and social display and rivalry. A gold coin is God's in the hand of the innocent child, who delights in its radiance and color. It becomes Satan's in the hands of the ambitious man who strives after mastery. The beauty and lustre which please the little child cannot debase him; but the same lustre may kindle in the full-grown eye the light of envious desire, and fill the lustful heart with dull discontent or base dishonesty. I have dwelt on these passages at some length in order to impress upon my readers the necessity of adhering to the meaning which inheres a word. Consistent translation rescues this passage from the trivial, not to say vulgar, sense which our translators have foisted upon it.

To return to our passage: in 5:19 Ecclesiastes was speaking of natural happiness as being God's gift to the individual. The thought is amplified, in v. 20, by the assertion that natural happiness, like all things belonging to the eonian system, is alloyed with affliction. Parents spoil their children by giving free vent to their wishes; rulers corrupt manhood by lavish prodigality of favors to their supporters. But God's methods are adapted to man's present constitution, which is a strange admixture of good and evil. All His ways have in view the debasing effect of unstinted gratification. His dispensation of the good that gladdens the heart is tempered by the evil which chastens the spirit. In all His methods is discernible a subtle combination, an exquisite balance of goodness and severity whereby spiritual aspirations are developed and heightened and baser instincts are curbed and subdued.

The vanity of desire (as did the vanity of labor) appears most fully in the light of death. "This also is a grievous evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what advantage has he in laboring for the wind?" In concluding this composition Ecclesiastes dwells on this thought. Only two points need be noted here. He has been describing the spectacle of accumulated wealth with happiness withheld by God, and pronounced it the worst of all fates—an abortion is better than he. He passes on to practical reflexions:

Do not all go to one place? All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the soul is not filled. Wherein, then, is the wise† better off than the fool? or the afflicted who knows to walk before the living.\*

The recognition of ability to enjoy the details of passing life as a God-given thing and the spectacle of the man to whom "God gives no power to eat" of his wealth naturally lead on to the thought that God acts on fixed principles which the individual is powerless to alter.

What is he? his name was given long ago, and it is known that it was Adam: neither can he contend with Him Who is mightier than he?

And since man is incapable of resisting his Maker, what is the use of following "words" ("theories or doctrines") which pretend to further man's welfare but in reality only multiply vanities. Who can tell what is good for a man in this life, or who can tell what shall be in the hereafter? These questions are dealt with in the notes which fill the interval between this Book and the next.

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†That is, since all go to one place (Sheol) and have the same natural necessities, wherein is the afflicted who retains his bearings better off than the fool who succumbs?

\*The rendering of our version, "For what advantage hath the wise," fails to bring out the real force of this sentence and mars the connectedness of the passage. The relation of this sentence to the preceding is not confirmatory: it is apodictic, hence the *כִּי* *ki* must be rendered *then*, and the meaning of the passage becomes clear: The assertion: "*All the labor of man is for his mouth, yet the soul is not satisfied*," raises the question, *Wherein, then, is the wise better off than the fool?* which, in a general way, is answered in the following verse: "*better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul*," viz., even satisfaction of the senses is better than ever roving desire.

## NOTES

The series of sayings is suggested by the two questions which concluded Book III, and which relate to the present life and the hereafter. *Who knows what is good in life? . . . . Who can tell a man what shall be after him?* I understand these questions as the interposition of an imaginary objector, and the "notes" that follow as the rejoinder of Ecclesiastes. The keynote to these sayings is found in the recurring word "better", which reveals both the point and purpose of these sayings and the relation they sustain to the discussion standing before them. To the "wandering soul" casting an envious eye on another's wealth Ecclesiastes says (in view of the instances considered): Since appearances are often misleading, it is not possible to decide that one's life is truly prosperous and happy until we know how it terminates. To the questions bearing on what is good in life and the hereafter Ecclesiastes answers: (1) What is really good is not determined by personal preferences, but by the general effect of a thing upon men. (2) Man's beyond may, in a general way, be inferred with a certain degree of probability from the present.

The thought developed in this string of sayings rests upon a series of "oppositions" arranged in two groups, which must be taken together, though the proverb separating them clearly has no connection with them.

1. The good name (only established at death.)

Ointment (the symbol of feasting.)

2. Mourning (metonymy for death which sums up the whole life.)

Feasting (exhibiting merely certain phases of life.)

Reason: it exerts a wholesome influence on the living.

3. Sorrow.

Laughter.

Reason: it improves the heart.

Contrast: the wise (seeking self-improvement) are in the house of mourning; the fools (seeking to idle away the time) are in the house of gladness.

4. Rebuke.

Song.

Reason: giddy songs as short-lived as the cracklings of thorns consumed by fire.

PROVERB: Oppression elates the wise:  
bribes pervert the understanding.

5. The end of a word (establishing the truth of a forecast.)

The beginning thereof (raising questions as to the possible outcome.)

6. Patience (looking to the end of a word.)

Hastiness (the impatience that does not wait to prove things.)

Warning: hasty spirit a sign of folly.

7. The former days (affording a complete view by their entirety.)

The present days (seen imperfectly because incomplete.)

8. Wisdom.

Allotment.

Reason: both wisdom and money defend against external attack, but wisdom also affects the life—the life of character.



## THE FULNESS OF THE WORD

God finds His Fulness in Christ, Who is His living expression (Col. 1:19; John 1:1). As the *Logos*, the "Word," or Expression, He manifests the mind of God in fullest measure. Man was created in God's image and likeness and all of God's creations bear the stamp of their Creator, yet these are but partial and imperfect expressions, ill suited to manifest Him fully. Nor need we look for any revelation of God beyond that which is given us in Christ.

The same is true of the written Word of God. It is His expression, given, indeed, in fragments, but now full orb'd and final; a complete and comprehensive revelation of Himself. It is grand to know that nothing of man outside of this Word is needed to aid us in becoming acquainted with our God. But beyond this is the incomparably grander realization of its fulness.

This word for "filling full" may be either full-fill or fill-full, according to the context. Often it is fulfill, as when we read of the Scriptures being fulfilled, or a ministry, as the last occurrence in Colossians (4:17). But in all the other instances in Colossians it must be rendered fill full (1:9, 25; 2:10; 4:12). We are not "fulfilled" in Him, but filled full. We should be perfect and filled full in all the will of God. These two instances are rendered "complete" in the authorized version, and they might just as well have rendered "to complete the word of God" as "to fulfill the word of God." In fact Paul did not and could not fulfill the word of God. None of the prophecies were fulfilled by the ministry here referred to, for it is expressly stated to be a *secret* ministry.

Hitherto, as we read in the thirteenth of first Corinthians, knowledge was fragmentary. "For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But *when that which is perfect*

*is come*, then that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13:9, 10). Now that perfection has come (Eph. 4:13; Phil. 3:15; Col. 4:12) the word of God has been filled full, to the end that every man may be presented perfect in Christ Jesus (Col. 1:28).

Let us cherish this triune fulness: Christ, the Living Expression of God, His **FULNESS** and our **FULNESS**; and the third **FULNESS**—the written word, or expression. This fulness is closely associated with Paul's ministry. It consists in the revelation of a secret—the expectation of the nations during this economy. This expectation is heavenly as to place, and this it is which rounds out or culminates God's expression of Himself.

Previous to Paul's ministry revelation had been limited as to sphere—the earth—and as to time—the eons. It is self-evident that God is not limited to the earth or to the eons, so that the expression then given was partial, fragmentary. Paul's ministry, however, is transcendent—it knows no bounds. Its key word is "all." The creation of the heavens and the earth in the beginning, the creation of the new heavens and the new earth in the future—these are the limits of previous manifestations of God, and it is almost all confined to His mundane activities in the present earth.

Paul's revelations are higher—they include the heavens. They are earlier, for they record activities *before* the eons. (1 Cor. 2:1). Then it was that the secret hidden wisdom, in which we glory, occupied His mind and heart. Then it was He gave us His purpose and grace in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 1:9).

May we have grace to allow this transcendent truth to sink deeply into our hearts and may we draw from its depths many a satisfying draught! *Our blessing is first*—first in time and first in rank.

Thus Paul fills up what was lacking of God's expression as to the past. But he is also the only transcendent eschatologist. John can take us back to the beginning (John 1:1) and forward to the new heavens and new earth (Rev. 21:1), but Paul goes further in both directions. His "before the eons" is balanced by his description of the con-

summation, the realization of which can never find a place within the eonian times. During the eons Christ must be supreme. He was first and will be first again. In the consummation He subordinates Himself and resigns all supremacy which was justly His. Such an abdication is entirely absent from all previous revelation and cannot possibly transpire within the confines of the eons. Death, too, which is the last enemy, is never fully conquered until the eons have run their course and are ushered off the scene. The second death lingers to the last. And, as a consequence, the vivification of all can never be true so long as the eons occupy the stage. Perhaps some will murmur and say we have no definite details of that day. The account is all too meagre. Not so. Let us but consider the facts which are revealed and they will afford infinite food for reflection. Let us suppose that the eonian times were like that ineffable bliss in only two particulars. Let government go and death be done away. How many pages would there be left in our Bibles? It is sin which calls for so much detail and explanation. But then sin will be absent and God will have finished His self revelation. The very lack of further detail is eloquent and proclaims the glories of the consummation.

Thus we find that God has given us a *full* revelation, for it reaches its fruition, the realization of Himself as Father and the reconciliation of the universe to Himself. More is not needed, more would cumber the Divine record and defeat its end.

But, we are asked, what room, then, is there for *faith*? If all is revealed, we do not need to trust. Quite the contrary, for faith is not faith at all unless it is founded on His word. Faith in an indefinite, unrevealed future is impossible. That would be *credulity*, not faith. When faith is exercised in believing what God *has* spoken there will be no need for the nebulous, indistinct imaginings so often misnamed faith. There is much need for faith. Not faith in irrelevant details which are not revealed, but faith to appreciate the fulness and accuracy of what has been made known.

That the fulness of the word does not include all the minutæ of human history is unnecessary to state, but that would be plethora, not fulness. No one could write it: no one could read it. But the fulness is not of this nature. It has for its object, not the chronicles of humanity, but the expression of God. This is fully accomplished.

Neither is it concerned with all of God's ways or all of His verdicts: only specimens of these are exhibited which involve the whole. A concrete example of this is found in our Lord's life. The incidents on record are but few among a great number (John 21:25). Yet the four accounts give us a most satisfactory and full statement, from which nothing vital is wanting.

The one subject which, from its nature, can be fully expressed is God's *purpose*. Not His purposes, as we often speak, and thus confound His purpose with His ways, but His one absorbing purpose—for scripture knows of but *one* purpose of God and *one* purpose of the eons. In expressing the elements which contribute to its realization, explicitness is all that is needed. It is just as easy to tell us whether few, many, or all will be justified. It is no more difficult to declare that some, rather than all, will be made alive. And if only a chosen few are to be reconciled, that is almost as easily said as that all shall be embraced in its folds.

We repeat, the purpose of God is *one*, and needs no acumen to discover it, or philosophy to prove it. It needs only a childlike faith to *believe it*. And the revelation of this purpose, giving us a grasp of the entire sweep of God's dealings with His creatures impresses us with the fulness of the word.

Many other considerations would lead us to the same conclusion. The warning not to add to the Apocalypse (Rev. 22:18) suggests it; the literary structure of the Scriptures—the revelation retreating, as it were, to the subjects of Genesis and bringing them all to fruition—this also enforces the fact that the Scriptures are rounded out. Yet we need not appeal to this but rather rest on the definite statement of the apostle.

Let us take heart, then, and go forward. God has withheld nothing from us. Our hope of a perfect knowledge of Him does not lie in an unpromised future supplement to the

Scriptures, but rather in a present persistent and painstaking examination of what He has revealed. Now that we have grasped, as it were, a telescopic view of the entire purpose of God, it remains to enjoy the minute details of His word by means of faith's microscope. And we shall be no less astounded by the perfection of its smallest atom than we have been with the magnificent grandeur of the whole.

A. E. K.

## OUR QUESTION BOX

*In Isaiah 41:23 God claims exclusive power to forecast future events. How is it then that some predictions made by men (such as clairvoyants) have come to pass?*

Isaiah 44:7; 45:21; 46:10 are in line with the passage in chapter 41:23. It is important to note that the point of Jehovah's challenge is not (as generally interpreted) the power to *predict* future events. *Shew us things for to come* is regularly combined with *declare ye the former things*, and what Jehovah claims for Himself is the ordering of the entire course of history. This view, which is fully borne out by the statement (in 44:7), "And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people?" and the other passages given above makes the declaration of Jehovah one of singular grandeur and force. On the presumption that Jehovah claims for Himself power to predict, what is to be made of the companion claim *Declare ye the former things*?

Mankind has been slowly learning the thought of "law" or invariable sequence in nature and human events. Such law seems to imply power of foreseeing the future when the laws of things have been traced. It goes without saying that in God's providence there is an element of the incalculable, sufficient to defeat man's effort to foresee everything, nevertheless, from what is known of law it is possible to foresee certain things with a tolerable degree of probability. Human predictions that have come true are due to this natural cause, not to speak of the working of "seducing spirits and working of demons" mentioned 1 Tim. 4:1-3.

*What is the meaning of the expression "Kiss the Son" in Psalm 2:12?*

The reading "kiss the son" is a Massoretic misapprehension stereotyped upon the text. The first words of v. 12, as pointed in the Massoretic text, are נִשְׁקֶרְבָּר *nashku-bar*—"Kiss the son." That this is a faulty vocalization is clear from the following considerations:

(1) The word בָּר *bar* is not Hebrew, but Chaldee: it *never* occurs

in the Psalter nor anywhere in Scripture, except the Chaldee portions of Daniel and Ezra.

(2) In v. 7 of the Psalm we find the regular Hebrew word for "son" (בֶּן *ben*).

(3) Had "kiss the son" been meant, an article would have been prefixed to the substantive.

(4) The absence of this mark of emphasis indicates that here we have an abstract substantive, which should be vocalized to read נָכוֹר *bor*—purity, as in 2 Sam. 22:21; 25; Job 9:30, 22:30; Ps. 18:20, 24; Isa. 1:25.

(5) This reading has the support of ancient authorities. Aquila and Symmachus read the unpunctuated Hebrew *nashku-bor*, for they translated "worship in purity." The Septuagint rendering, though rather paraphrastic—"accept correction"—agrees with them.

(6) The rendering "worship in purity" is demanded by the Psalm itself. The Psalm is in three parts. In the first part (vv. 1-6) the Psalmist speaks about the attitude of the kings and rulers of the heathen towards the All-Ruler and His Anointed, and the All-Ruler's attitude towards them. Since the Psalmist *speaks about* the nations and Jehovah, he *speaks* in the third person. (vv. 3 and 6 are in the first person because they reproduce the very words spoken by others).

In the second part (vv. 7-9) the Anointed King is the speaker. The opening note of his address (in the first person, v. 7a) announces as the theme of his speech the decree of royal investiture. The decree is read verbatim: it is in the second person, as recording the words actually *spoken to* the Son by Jehovah.

In the third part of the Psalm (vv. 10-12) the Psalmist, with the foregoing facts in mind, turns to *speaking to* kings and princes of another class. Whereas the kings and rulers of vv. 1-2 were heathen who know not God and act against Him, the kings and rulers he is speaking to now are professed worshippers of Jehovah lacking in fidelity. They are called upon to "worship in purity," for when God breaks out in judgment against the heathen the "sinners in Zion" shall not escape.

The verb נָשַׁק *nashak*, to kiss, is associated with acts of heathen worship in 1 Ki. 19:18 and Hos. 13:2. In fact, these two passages enable us to perceive the force of the Psalmist's appeal. The princelings and rulers of Judah had taken part in the impure rights of idolatry. In these circumstances, amendment of life is demanded, in terms that denounced a terrible penalty in case of continued duplicity.

It may be of interest to note that the Greek word for worship, *proskuneo*, also means "to [throw a] kiss towards."

*To what period of the exile does Ps. 126 refer?*

You, like many others, read into this psalm exilic sentiments, through misapprehension.

The “captivity” of a city, in the Hebrew idiom, does not necessarily imply deportation; the “captivity” of a people, in fact, is at times predicated of misfortune and disaster endured in their home and fatherland.

The phrase *שׁוּב שְׁבוּת* (in this place appearing as *שׁוּב שְׁבוּת*) does not in an exclusive sense mean “to bring captives back from exile; its simple significance is “to restore to a former state.” The words are applied, not only to peoples and nations, but even to individuals who had been overtaken by great affliction and trial *but never went into exile*, as in the case of Job (Job 42:10); also to a land whose restoration to a former state of prosperity was alone implied in the reference (Jer. 33:11). As appearing in Ezek. 16:53, the phrase is explained (in v. 55) to mean “their former state.” When used to describe return from exile, the phrase is frequently supported by qualifying phrases intended to make the meaning definite and plain. “The Lord will turn thy captivity. . . . and gather thee from all the people” (Deut. 30:3; Jer. 29:14). “I will bring again the captivity. . . . and cause to return into the land” (Ezek. 29:14; Jer. 30:3). “At that time will I bring you in and gather you: when I bring again your captivity” (Zeph. 3:20).

The view point of Ps. 126 is Zion itself: it celebrates a deliverance that gave joy to Zion, and caused surprise among the nations.



## AN APPRECIATION

**THE WIDER GOSPEL, or *The Ages to Come in the Light of Promise.*** By M. L. Dodds. Published by Elliot Stock, 7 Paternoster Row, London, E. C., \$1.00.

We gladly welcome this volume from the pen of Mrs. M. L. Dodds, the daughter of Scotland's great hymn-writer, Dr. Horatius Bonar. It is an wholesome expression of independent Bible Study, in refreshing contrast to the parrot-like repetitions of other men's thoughts with which the modern press afflicts us. The fearlessness of a faith willing to believe all that God the Lord has spoken is manifested in the writer's determination to accept the promises of God without discounting them. The sufficiency of even a little Scripture is evidently accepted without question and the ability of God to accomplish all that He has promised gloried in. The chapters vary, of course, in worth, but the spirit in which the entire work is written is so charming that we must commend the book as a whole.

There is much that bears quotation, but we cull the following at random:—

"What, too, is sin? Can it be the final, invincible, irreducible thing which God Himself in certain circumstances is powerless to overcome? That surely were to make sin a second God!" (Page 10).

"But our minds are not simple; they are like palimpsests written all over with the records of centuries, so that, when something new is written, the old characters show through, and the scroll is blurred. The words of promise have such a familiar sound, we have become accustomed to them, accustomed also to hear them explained in a particular way, that they do not even reach our ears in their native grandeur. Once, perhaps, startled and awake, we inquired what "to reconcile all things," "to sum up all things in Christ," could mean, and our hearts gave a great leap towards the expected answer. But those whom we revered warned us to beware of believing and hoping too much. Traditions lay heavy on us, the human commentary tarnished the promise, and ever after the joyful sound seemed less joyful." (Page 31.)

"You tell us that you cannot entertain hope for all, except by doubting positive warnings spoken by Christ; we tell you, on the other hand, that we cannot despair of any except by doubting promises as positive." (Page 122).

We sincerely trust that our sister's work will have an extensive circulation, and lead many into a deeper acquaintance with the God of all grace, thus bringing untold glory to our Master, Christ.—A. B.

## EDITORIAL

### "THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS"

ONE of the most distressing symptoms of the present apostasy is the intense zeal with which the saints hold fast the form of *unsound* words. They recast the currency of God into molds of their own devising and destroy all the value of its Heavenly stamp. So long as they refuse the divine vocabulary and fail to see its fulness and sufficiency, their thoughts will be befogged with the mists and vapors of the earth.

These reflections are suggested by the response to our appeal, in the last number, not to confuse the two distinct thoughts of *evil* and *sin*, on the one hand, nor to *add* to God's vocabulary (which is perfect like its Author) by inventing various kinds of evil. These are characteristic of the two evils which afflict the students of God's word.

We confess that we felt hurt when Dr. Torrey insisted that *we* did not distinguish between evil and sin. Why then, did we use two distinct terms, and use them precisely as we meant them to be understood? But how must *God* feel when *His* words, refined and purified as in a furnace, receive such treatment? Was He not able to choose His words with precision? Was He unable to find a fitting expression? And who of us is able to correct Him?

And so, too, with the question of "moral" and "natural" evil. Were these descriptive terms unknown to Him that He failed to use them in order that we should not go astray as to the various kinds of evil? Or does

He depend on human "common sense" to fill out the gaps in His manuscript?

O, that we realized the absolute perfection of the God with Whom we have to do! It would give us such a sense of the sacred sufficiency of His holy word that we would not dare to suggest a flaw in His revelation as He gave it at the first.

We should not expect to have clear thoughts on this subject so long as we do not hold fast the pattern of sound expressions and refuse the form of unsound words. The latter are fetters which enthrall our thoughts and keep us captives of the imaginations of mankind.

### "FREE MORAL AGENCY"

THE most audacious denial of God lies in the doctrine of "man's free moral agency." We search in vain for any such thought in the Divine Records. In fact, the Scriptures are replete with examples and precepts, with doctrine which denies any such bold effrontery. Yet it has become the corner stone of Christendom, the touchstone of all truth, the text of orthodoxy.

*"I want what I want when I want it."* This is man's melodramatic attitude. But lo! *Man gets what he gets when he gets it.* This is the tragic truth. And has anyone of His own saints been so blind as not to see this in his own experience, if unable to read His word?

What a contrast with the perfect Man! *"Not My will but Thine!"* He absolutely refused to exercise His "free moral agency" even in His direst distress. And therefore it is that God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name pre-eminent.

There is no room, in this universe of ours, for two "free moral agents." Either God's will will be carried

out or the creatures'. If the creature is a free moral agent, then God must wage eternal war or bow in humble submission to His creatures' will. But what man is there who is able to pursue his own path for a single day? He may plan and plot, he may work and wait, but who can insure success? Shall not the proverb, with naught but the candle of human experience to pierce the gloom, shame those who bask in the blaze of God's truth?

"Man proposes; God disposes."

And if we cannot guide the helm of our own little craft aright for a single day, shall we presume to defy Him Who is operating the universe in accord with the advice offered by His own determination?

We challenge all to bring forth a *single* Scripture which sets forth man's free moral agency. Just as is the case with the theory of human "immortality," there is not a jot of evidence in the divine records to support it. If there is, let it be produced.

## GOD'S PERIODS

THE history of sin, of death, and of eonian time, according to the thoughts and theologies of human systems, are like an interminable sentence, divided it may be into clauses by means of colon, semi-colon, and comma, but eternally lacking the finality of a conclusive period. Traditional theology is prodigal in immortality. It ascribes infinity with profusion to all that it considers, whether human souls or human sins; eons past or future; the very antitheses of life and death are not exempted from having the endlessness of deity attributed to them. "Theology" has yet to be indicted in the Court of Truth for having altered the documents of revelation, and for having erased from its pages the periods placed thereon, inscribing its own ill-chosen commas instead.

Sin, death and the eons are but so many phrases in the sentence of Time. Time itself is scarce a paragraph in that it has removed the divisions from the volume, destroyed the chapter groups, erased the paragraphs, and by substituting commas for periods, reduced the entire book to an unmeaning jangle of endless contradiction. It has placed idol-gods on the throne, and worships the enlarged personification of its own human weakness, unwisdom and cruelty, bowing the knee to God, not as "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," but rather as the Torquemada of the Universe, the Grand Inquisitor of Eternal Sin and Endless Wrath. The tremendous vitality resident in faith may be deduced

from the fact that faith still lives despite the crushing incubus of such a weight upon it, and from the fact that it has ever produced, and is now producing, theologians who are better than their theologies, and believers who rise superior to their creeds.

Omnipotence rules the universe. No world is there so large, nor atom so small, that it may exclude itself from His inclusive reign. But it is not mere force that is thus crowned king. Omniscience forbids us thinking of Creative Cause as blind. The thought which oozes from creation's every pore suggests a thinker as its source. Creation restrains us from thinking of its Maker as a Being without a head, and the cross no less restrains us from thinking Him without a heart. No brute force, unseeing and unfeeling, handles men. No monster power, eyeless and heartless, maps out their way, and appoints their destiny. No mere intellect, cold and passionless, scans the affairs of humanity, and sketches out the course of its appointments. No weak sentiment, powerless and irrational, wishes indulgence to a petted, ruined race, whose good it is impotent to procure. An all-wise, all-powerful, all-loving Father is the God "in whom we live, and move, and have our being." Such an One "cannot deny Himself," and hence will not permit such eternal denials of His nature, as endless sin and endless death would be. Omniscient, He has decreed their transiency, and, Omnipotent, waits to enforce the decree. He who has appointed the turning of the tides, when the rising waves, dashing in anger upon the rocks, halt in their fury at the utterance of a higher law, and then, baffled and defeated, retreat, has also fixed the tidal limits of sin and death, beyond which they may not reach, and from which they shall eventually retire in that final ebb which shall never know a turning.

It is no impertinence to erase the commas of human placing, the impertinence rather lies with those who dare to leave them stay, in reverence to the glamour of their years. The worship of antiquity is something other than the worship of truth, and the idolatry of age demands an iconoclasm of its own. Let us not fear to demolish the occupants of Christendom's Joss-house; but, remembering that truth is eternal, despoil the temple of the many gargoyle-featured inventions with which theological fetish-worshippers have stored it to repletion. The return of truths which traditon sneers at as modern heresies, is but the renaissance of eternal verities, and what men call "orthodox belief" is often nothing but a fungus-growth on primitive truth, from which it has sapped and drained the fluids of vitality.

The inability of man to leave periods where God placed them in Scripture is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in his handling of Hebrews 9:26. Here is one of the key-texts of the Bible. So misunderstood and misinterpreted as but to jam itself in the lock instead of opening it. The variety of renderings which we find in translations of this text is itself an indication of the theological mud-puddle in which the translators floundered. It need hardly be said that there is no inspiration in nonsense, and any rendering of Scripture which lacks sense thereby convicts itself of having failed to approximate the idea of the original. Let the reader, if he can, decipher the hieroglyphics of the authorised version: "But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." And the change from "world" to "ages" does not help us very much in solving the riddle, for the question still remains, how could He have appeared in the end of the ages, if the ages are never to end? Or, if we grant that they come

to a conclusion, seeing that that "end" must still lie in the remote future, how could Messiah's manifestation be said to have taken place in it? If we are ignorant, wilfully or otherwise, of God's periods, then we should be keenly sensitive to the dilemmas which arise before us, for how shall we square our translation with history on the one hand, and, on the other, how shall we square our idea of the ages with what this verse declares concerning them? The efforts which many have made to extricate themselves from these difficulties have but mired them deeper in the bog. Their evasions need not detain us.

Two things are very clear, even in the authorised, from Heb. 9:26. One is that sin has been, or is to be, put away; the other is that the ages have had, or are yet to have, an end. As Scripture speaks of ages yet to unfold themselves, of an "age to come," of "ages to come," and of a crowning "age of the ages" still in the future, we know that any translation, or interpretation, which makes the "end of the ages" to have already taken place, is in direct opposition to those other Scriptures which place it in the future, and as no one portion of Scripture can contradict the remainder of Scripture, we have to reject such translations as missing the mark. The same kind of difficulty presents itself in regard to the putting away of sin. By the mass of commentators this has been viewed as having taken place in the past, at the time of the making of the sacrifice. Two things are thus put in the past: the end of the ages, and the end of sin. But experience contradicts the one thought, as common-sense does the other. Age-time still exists, hence "the end of the ages" cannot have taken place. Sin still lasts, and hence it has not as yet been "put away." We will not pause to consider whether Christ bore the



*punishment* of sin, as some would have us believe Paul meant to write. We are not dealing with what Paul *intended* to write, but with what he *wrote*; and the gloss which makes Scripture always say that Christ bore the punishment of sin, always evades the patent fact that Scripture prefers to say that He bore the sin itself. The simplicity which will read what the verse says, without evading its meaning, or weakening the terms employed, or substituting others, is bound to arrive at the truth which its translation conceals, or rather contradicts. The first step in the right direction will be the acknowledgment that the ages have an end; the next will be the acceptance of the fact that sin is not an eternal habitant of the universe; and, lastly, bowing to the united testimony of other Scriptures respecting the ages, and of every-day reference as to sin, by placing the end of the one, and the putting away of the other, not in the impossible past, but in the future tense.

Though the reader may have accepted the two period-points thus divinely placed beyond the extent of sin and death, he will still be perplexed by the involved appearance of the text before us. The plan which we will now adopt is that of bringing in another Scripture, concerning the meaning of which there is no controversy, and which appears equally involved, but whose involved structure will throw light on that of the verse before us. The Scripture referred to is Hebrews 2:9. It is evident that the sequence of this verse is not chronological. Indeed, the central sentence—"crowned with glory and honor"—appears to dislocate the right order of events, and throw its teaching out of joint. He has not been "crowned with glory and honor, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." His coronation with glory is not a preparation for death, nor in order to die, but a

consequence of death, which was the lowest point in His becoming "lower than the angels." In order to get the sense of the entire verse, we must therefore remove the clause which speaks of His crowning from its centre to its conclusion, which will at once restore the harmony and chronological sequence of its teaching. The confusion in the structure of chapter 9:26 is somewhat similar, resulting in a failure to grasp the historical sequence, or order, of the events there considered. By altering the authorised version only so far as the occurrence of the word "world" is concerned, but changing the order of the phrases used, we may better grasp the sense, or idea, which it was Paul's endeavor to utter.

"But now once hath He appeared,  
In the end of the ages to put away sin,  
By the sacrifice of Himself."

And, if we view the first half of this verse as containing the triple antithesis to its latter half, we may translate:

"For then often,  
Since the overthrow of the world,  
Must He have suffered."

Further, by placing the two portions of the verse in order, and by arranging its parts according to their structure, the intended contrasts between its members becomes apparent, as follows:

- (a) For then often,
- (b) since the overthrow of the world,
- (c) must He have suffered;
- (a) But now once hath He appeared,
- (b) in the end of the ages to put away sin,
- (c) by the sacrifice of Himself.

The necessity of many appearings seems to be contrasted here with the one final and efficacious sacrificial appearing which has already taken place. The beginning

of the ages, marking the incoming of sin through the overthrow of the cosmos, is in sharp relief over against the future end of the ages, marked by sin's outgoing. And, lastly, the need for suffering caused by sin, is balanced by the atoning sacrifice which He made when He offered up "Himself."

A verse, which an ill-premised theology has so sadly beclouded, is now seen to be ablaze with light. Let us revel in its glory, despite the anathemas of evangelical popes. Not knowing, or choosing not to know, that God has put a period to the duration of the eons, men speak of "endless ages," and talk of "eternal sin," but were no other Scriptures to be had, this one alone would more than suffice to prove the coming end of eonian time, and the abolition of evil, and so victoriously overturn these unwarranted assumptions of traditionalism.

A. BURNS.

## THE SYMBOLISM OF THE APOCALYPSE

It is important to notice that the symbolism of this book extends beyond outward form into the underlying interpretation. The symbolism of the Apocalypse is the symbolism of the Old Testament revived; the symbolic ideas are not merely revived, they are at the same time varied, massed together, and intensified. Indeed, few of the forms of this book are drawn from any other source. A distinctive feature of the Apocalypse is the device of "echoing" the ancient prophetic oracles. What I have in mind is perhaps best conveyed by a phrase of the book itself: *The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*. The thought is, the forms of ancient prophecy find their solution and fulfilment in this crowning revelation. The various forms of Hebrew prophecy are fused to make the symbolic setting of the last prophetic writing.

From the foregoing is evident that the best preparation for it is to study the Old Testament, more especially the prophets. To aid the student, we will point out the "echoes" of the prophets in the Apocalypse.

The messages to the seven churches of Asia, in point of form, are an echo of the opening address of Amos (1:3-2:16), in which Israel and Judah are presented as among the Seven Doomed Nations. Particular addresses of doom are made to each of the seven peoples, these being bound together by recurrent formulae which vary in detail. So the apocalyptic messages to the churches are enclosed between recurrent formulae at opening and

close of each, the formula varied in detail for each church. The opening formula describes the Divine Speaker; the close is made up of a promise and a cry of emphasis. The manifestation of the Son of Man is chiefly from Daniel (10:5, 6). The messages themselves are eloquent in their allusions to Jewish history and institutions, promises and messages. The Lampstand, the Temple, the Manna, the White Stone, the Morning Star, the Tree and Book of Life, the Iron Rod, the Key of David, the Seven Spirits, Balaam, Balak and Jezabel; all these figure prominently and make it evident that the proper preparation for appreciating them is to study Old Testament history and prophecy, and not church history.

#### CHAPTERS FOUR AND FIVE

The throne, surrounding brightness, and living creatures, recalls Ezekiel's vision by the river Chebar. What Ezekiel saw in moving splendor, is now presented in majestic repose.

The twenty-four elders. An echo of the temple arrangement of the priesthood into twenty-four courses. The seven spirits before the throne point to Zechariah's vision of the Candlestick (4:10): emanations of Deity.

The glassy sea, like unto crystal, is an echo of the Tabernacle laver and the ten lavers of Solomon's temple; or it may refer to the "waters above the firmament."

The Book sealed with seven seals is an expansion of Daniel's sealed book of prophecy (Dan. 12:4).

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, from the blessing of Jacob (Gen. 49:9).

Incense, the prayers of the saints; compare Ps. 141:2.

The number "ten thousand times ten thousand" recalls the similar use of *thousand* in the Old Testament

(Dan. 7:10; Ps. 68:17); also compare the song of the maidens who met David on his return from the encounter with Goliath. *Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands* (1 Sam. 18:7).

## THE SEALS

In the riders of the first four seals, we have an expansion of Zechariah's horsemen, with the colors made significant, and a combination with Jeremiah's four forms of doom: Death, Sword, Famine, Captivity (Jer. 18:23). Ezekiel's sign of the Siege, with the accompanying instruction to *eat bread by weight*, helps to interpret the third horseman (Ezek. ch. 4).

The cry, How long? under the fifth seal, is an echo of Isaiah 6:11 and Zechariah 1:14. In all these instances the phrase appears in connection with God's indignation against Israel.

The horrors of the sixth seal are a clustering together of the prophetic woes which herald the dawn of Jehovah's Day (Joel 3:9-15; Isaiah 2:10-21; 34:3-15; Nahum 3:12-18; Hosea 10:8; Matt. 24:5-14).

The restraining of judgment until the saints are sealed is an exact echo of Ezekiel's vision of polluted Jerusalem (Ezek. ch. 8).

The words of the elder: "They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lambs," are a combination of Isaiah's "*though your sins be red as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow*" (Isa. 18), with Zechariah's vision, where Joshua's *filthy garments* are changed for *rich apparel* in token of acquittal (Zech. 3:5).

"They shall hunger no more," "the lamb shall be their shepherd." One is from the imagery of Isaiah (Isa 49:10), the other from Ezekiel's discourse on Israel's shepherds (Ezek. 34:23).

The silence at the opening of the seventh seal recalls Zechariah's cry forming a brief interlude between two visions: *Be silent, all flesh before the Lord; for He is waked up out of His holy habitation* (Zech. 2:13). Also an echo of Exodus 14:13, and Isa. 2:22.

#### THE TRUMPETS

THE fundamental idea of the trumpets is similar, in object and outcome, to the seven trumpets which accomplished the downfall of Jericho (Josh. 6). In Joel, the trumpets are connected with Jehovah's Day (Joel 2:1, 15).

The fire of the altar cast on earth as commencement of judgment is an echo of Ezekiel.

The first three soundings are echoes of the plagues of Egypt. The image of the mountain burning with fire is from Jeremiah's oracle against Babylon (Jer. 51:25). Wormwood is a favorite symbol of Jeremiah (9:15; 23:15).

The fourth sounding brings about a diminishing of sunlight. This is not so much the prophetic oracle of darkened sun (Amos 3:9; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15), as the reversal of Isaiah's conception of light of sun as sevenfold (Isa. 30:26).

The star which falls from Heaven under the fifth trumpet points to Isaiah's proverb against the king of Babylon (Isa. 14:12). Smoke from the pit. Smoke frequently appears in connexion with doom (Isa. 14:31; Jer. 1:13). The locusts like unto horses. The idealization of locusts into an invading army is the great symbol running through Joel.

The horsemen of the sixth seal remind us of Isaiah's army (ch. 3:24-30) and Habakkuk's chaldean swarms (Hab. 1:5-17).

The eating of the little book, sweet in the mouth, but

bitter in the belly, is an exact echo of Ezekiel's experience (Ezek. 2:9-3:3).

The measuring of Jerusalem with a reed calls up to mind Zechariah's vision of the man with the measuring-line (Zech. 2:1-4) and Ezekiel's vision of the man with a line of flax and a measuring reed (Ezek. 40:1-4).

The two sons of oil refer us to Zechariah's vision of the Candlestick (Zech. 4); there it seems to refer to the union of priesthood and principedom; here it refers to a testimony pending the appearing of the One who will be both Prince and King upon His throne.



## THE BREATH OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

We have seen that mankind receives its name from the ground, for our physical constitution is essentially identical with the soil of the ground. The real name of mankind is "ground" — "groundkins" would be a good Anglo Saxon appellation.

A somewhat similar course has been pursued in order to help us to an understanding of the spiritual part of our make-up. *Ruach*, *spirit*, in Hebrew often refers to the *wind* (Gen. 8:1; Ex 10:13, 19; 14:21; 1 Ki. 19:11; Ps. 1:4). By using the same word for both wind and spirit, we are impressed with the fact that the spirit is like the wind. And indeed, this is just what our Lord told Nicodemus, in the third chapter of John's gospel.

The breeze is blowing where it is willing and  
you are hearing its voice, but do not perceive  
whence it is coming and where it is departing:  
thus is everyone who is begotten of the Spirit.

Ordinarily, however, the Greek word *pneuma* is a special term for spirit, and a different form—*pnoë*—is used for wind or breath.

Nothing, however, is said in our text of the man having a spirit, just as nothing was said of his having a body. Breath is said to be forcibly injected into his nose. Yet we know from other passages that God gave him a spirit. How shall we account for this omission here? It is evident that the spirit *was* imparted, and it seems most likely that this was done by means of the breath. That this was the case, the notable phrase, "the breath of the spirit of life" proves.

In the description of the deluge, all the animals as well as mankind (except those in the ark)—all in whose noses was “the breath of the spirit of life”—perished (Gen. 7:22). This remarkable phrase merits careful study. It occurs again in 2 Sam. 22:16; Ps. 18:15. The word for breath is in the so-called “construct” state. The nearest to which we can approach this in English is by affixing “of” and translate “the breath of the spirit of life.” It is evident that there is a close connection between breath and spirit. What the relation of breath to spirit is may be discovered in another way.

The translators of the Septuagint, when they turned the Hebrew text into Greek, made use of the two Greek forms already noted in translating the two distinct Hebrew words for “breath” and “spirit.” These two words are *pnoë* breath (Acts 17:25) and *pneuma* spirit or “Ghost” (Lu. 24:39 and often). If we can fix the difference between these two Greek words, we have the key to the relation of “breath” to “spirit” in Hebrew.

The root of these two forms is the same. They differ only in their final letters.

Now the affix *-ma* in Greek marks the *effect* or *result*. For instance, *krino* is *judge*, *krima* is the *sentence passed* (Ro. 2:2,3). So that the relation between breath and spirit is one of cause and effect. Genesis records the cause—the impartation of breath—other passages register the effect—the reception of the spirit.

The spirit, then, is not the man, but rather a gift to the man from God (Ecc. 12:7), just as the breath was given to the lifeless form of Adam. In this mankind differs from spirits. They may clothe themselves with material manifestations, but man is, primarily, the product of the soil, and there can be no true human being without a body.

The truth that mankind is not essentially spirit, but soil, may be confirmed in many ways. When we expect the Scripture to mean the *body* it speaks of the *man*, as in that notable passage concerning Christ's resurrection:

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in the unseen, nor suffer *Thy holy One* to see corruption."

It is evident that "corruption" refers to His bodily frame, which, unlike Lazarus and all other men, did not decompose into its elements at death.

Our experience also affirms the fact that the spirit must have a physical basis through which to operate. If certain portions of the brain are removed, the memory is gone, or some other department of the mind's mental faculties may be impaired by a simple nerve pressure or dislocation of the bony structure of the skull. Now, if this occurs in life, while the spirit still remains, what becomes of these faculties at death, when the spirit withdraws and the physical organs through which it acts go to corruption?

The phenomena of hypnosis seem best accounted for by the theory that the faculties are temporarily abandoned to the spirit of another. Now the important fact which will help us in studying the truth before us is that the spirit of the hypnotic subject has no conscious realization or record of itself when thus driven from its function by another's spirit. Yet the effects of the spell are very marked on the physical structure of the subject. So that, when the spirit is isolated from the body it has no separate existence, but immediately it returns to its place, self-consciousness returns.

What, then, is the function of the breath? It is called the "breath of *life*". And it changes the man from a dead body to a living soul. The body without the spirit is dead (Jas. 2:26). The absolute dependence of life

upon the spirit is well illustrated by the breath. A man may fast for forty days and live forty years longer, yet he cannot do without breath for forty minutes. Breath is a thousand times more indispensable to life than food.

Let us note closely, then, that *life* is associated with the breath and spirit just as *sensation*, as we shall see later, is associated with the soul. Before the breath was imparted, Adam had no life, but the moment that breathing commences, the vital functions begin to act. The resuscitation of the drowned is doubtless a good illustration of the effect of the breath upon his lifeless form.

Life or vitality must be sharply distinguished from sensation. A paralytic may have no sensation, yet be possessed of life. Sensation, moreover, requires *both* body and spirit, *both* soil and breath. Adam had no sensations before the breath gave life. Neither did the breath feel before it vivified the body. But when both were united, *then* Adam became a living soul. Then he could see and hear and feel.

It has often been pointed out that the literal Hebrew reads "the breath of *lives*" as though there were more than one life intended. Without burdening our pages with a dissertation on the Hebrew plural, it is evident from the other passages in which life is used in the plural, that our notion of the "plural" is radically different from the Hebrew. It does not refer to number so much as to complexity. Perhaps the explanation here may be the undoubted fact that humanity combines in itself the three varieties of life with which we are acquainted. The hair is akin to vegetable life, without soul, or sensation, which may be severed without hurt and is fixed by means of roots in the cuticle. The body is the highest expression of animal or soul life, with its delicate devices

for sensing the outward world. The spirit is akin to realm of etherial intelligences.

The prevailing confusion which fails to distinguish life from soul is accentuated by the persistence with which current versions translate soul by means of "life". But life is never synonymous with soul in the Word and it is presumption to interchange the terms.

If the reader will correct the following passages in his Bible, it will at least save him from denying the truth which we have set forth, because his "Bible" teaches otherwise.

In Gen. 1:20 "life" should read "soul," for the beasts and birds and creeping things which have soul or sensation are put in contrast with the plants, which is to be their food, which have no soul or sensation. Both plants and animals have life. In Gen. 1:20, 21 and 24, the translators were restrained from rendering "soul" "life," because it was joined to the word "living." They could hardly say "living life". So they changed it to "creature". It is exactly the same phrase which they correctly translate "living soul" in Gen. 2:7. By translating it "living creature" three times and suddenly changing to "living soul" when man is spoken of, the impression is given that man is different from the other animals in this regard. The aim of the Author is the exact opposite of this. By calling man a "living soul" after He has thrice used this phrase of animals which move, He emphasizes the fact that man is like the animals in this respect. The American revisers have given "Heb. a *living soul*" in their margin.

In Gen. 9:4, life is connected with the blood in the versions. This is most misleading. It is the *soul* which is in the blood, not the life (Lev. 17:11, 12, 14, Deut. 12:23). Sometimes this is noted in the margin, but often

it is not. Indeed, the Heb. word for soul is rendered "life" one hundred and seventeen times (nearly as many as the real word for life). The Greek word for soul is changed to life forty times and is rendered correctly only fifty-eight times. How can a reader of such a version possibly arrive at the truth? There could not be better proof of the fact that the distinction between life and soul has been lost. Instead, however, of acknowledging this and seeking to adjust ourselves to the facts of revelation, we have corrupted revelation to conceal our ignorance. To enable our readers to correct this, we will give a complete concordance of the words for soul when dealing with that subject.

The spirit is the source of life. It is the spirit which gives life (John 6:63): the flesh is of no avail. The concerns of the spirit are life and peace (Rom. 8:6). A soul has life, but cannot impart it. Hence, "the first human, Adam, becomes a living soul; the last Adam a life-giving spirit." (1 Cor. 15:45). "The letter kills, but the spirit gives life." (2 Cor. 3:6). "He who sows to spirit shall of spirit reap eonian life." (Gal. 6:8). "He had authority to give spirit to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should speak." (Rev. 13:15).

Thus, the lesson which we learn in the beginning of man's creation is reviewed again and again throughout the Scriptures. Life in all its phases is dependent upon breath or spirit. It is not the man, but is God's gift to him, for "in Him we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28). "If He gather unto Himself His spirit and His breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again into soil." (Job. 34:14-15).

This supplies us with the true interpretation of that much misunderstood passage, "My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3).

It is true that the Heb. *adam*, when preceded by the article *ha*, may refer to *the* man, Adam. But in this passage, the presence of the article does not depend on the inspired text, but upon the pointing of the Masorites. Take off their points and the word stands just as it does without the article.

It must be understood that the Hebrew, as inspired, had no vowel points. These were invented some time previous to the tenth century by the Massorites, or “possessors of the tradition”. They fixed the traditional views of their day on the face of the text by means of certain little lines and dots. In this passage they have a sign  $\cdot$  (pronounced *aw*), called *kamets*, which indicates that the article *ha* is to be understood.

As the word stands in the present texts, it is (or should be)  $\text{בְּאָדָם}$ .  $\text{בָּאָדָם}$  is its form without the article. It will be seen that the only difference is the vowel points under the first letter. The sign  $\cdot$  denotes the article; the sign  $\cdot$  denotes *no* article.

But when these signs are gone, both are  $\text{בָּאָדָם}$ . Thus the distinction is based on human tradition, not on divine revelation. And even were we sure that the article belonged before it, it would not be an infallible proof that it refers to Adam personally. A few instances will show this. The next occurrence of this phrase is Gen. 9:6: “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, *by man* shall his blood be shed.” Surely not by *Adam*, but by mankind as a whole. The same is true of Ex. 8:17, 18; 9:10; 13:2; Lev. 24:20; Nu. 8:17; 18:15; 31:11,26; 2 Sa. 23:3; Jer. 17:5; 49:15; Mic. 7:2; Ps. 68:18;78:60; 118:8; Ec. 2:24. The marginal suggestion of Ps. 68:18 “thou hast received gifts *in the man*” is the only passage that at all seems to support the thought that “*the man*” in Hebrew necessarily means *Adam*. All of the other

passages protest against it. There is no real foundation for it, and the margin of Ps. 68:18 must be rejected also.

But there is positive evidence that this passage refers to mankind, not Adam alone. The early translations, which were made from much earlier copies of the Hebrew text than we possess, support the evidence of the concordance.

It is rendered *men* in the Septuagint. The context makes it clear that the meaning of the text is that mankind has come to such a pass that God is about to withdraw his spirit from them. They are but flesh and when He takes His spirit to Him, they will perish. This He does in the deluge. The ancient versions also supply conclusive evidence that the word rendered "strive" means rather "to remain." The Septuagint uses the word *katameinei* "lodge" (Acts 1:13). The Vulgate renders it *permanebit*, the Syriac and Arabic "dwell." It was probably corrupted from דֹּוּר *door* (Ps. 84:10), which looks very much like דֹּון *doon*, as may be seen by comparing their letters.

As in the old creation, so in the new, too. The emission of breath in the form of words is the basis of spiritual life. The words of God, like the breath of God in the beginning, imparts His spirit, which is life. Of Israel He said, "I will put a new spirit within you;" (Eze. 11:19). But not to them only is the spirit given. God has poured forth His love in us by means of the spirit He has given us (Rom. 5:5). But the greatest of all examples of the vivifying power of God's spirit is His Christ. He was of David's seed in relation to flesh but powerfully specified God's Son as to His most holy spirit (Rom. 1:3-4). Not only was His life by the direct operation of God's holy spirit (Mt. 1:18) but through that spirit He was able to raise the dead (Mt. 9:24; 11:5; Lu. 7:14; John 11:44).



This it was which clearly demonstrated that He was God's Son. And when He was raised Himself, we are told that He was made alive in spirit (1 Pet. 3:18).

To understand resurrection aright, we will need to bear these truths in our heads and hearts. It is as the Son of God, the title which emphasizes His spiritual relationship to His Father, that Christ raises the dead. For, as the Father, being Spirit, has life in Himself, even so He gives the Son to have life in Himself (John 5:26). He is the true Bread of Life (John 6:35). And when they misunderstood His figurative appeal, He told them plainly: "It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life." (John 6:63).

So it will be in the resurrection. The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear shall live (John 5:25). For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them, be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord!" (1 Thes. 4:16-17).

## 6. THE WORK OF GOD

In the Fourth Book (7:18-9:15) Ecclesiastes returns to the subject dealt with in Book II—the work of God: there be emphasized the antagonism between good and evil; here he considers the relation between the two opposites. The opening sentence strikes the keynote of the whole section.

Consider the work of God: for who can set in order that which he has made crooked?

In the day of good be good; and in the day of evil consider: God has even made the one side by side with the other, in order that man should not find out anything after him.

This is an epitome of the thesis which our author proposes to consider.

A detailed exposition is not in harmony with the suggestive character of these studies. Hence we must content ourselves with noting the general drift of thought and offering a few remarks on the more obscure passages.

In seeking to understand this portion of Ecclesiastes the student is confronted with a formidable critical obstacle. Our versions translate the noun חֶשְׁבֹן *cheshbon* in three different ways: "reason" (7:25), "account" (7:27), "invention" (7:29). It must be evident to the least critical reader that the writer's thought is necessarily obscured when in a paragraph with a sustained argument the same word is represented by three different terms conveying divergent, and even unrelated, ideas. To grasp the actual

thought which Ecclesiastes wished to convey, we shall have to turn our attention to this word. In the two other occurrences the word is rendered "device" (Eccl. 9:10), and "engines" (2 Chr. 29:15). This last passage furnishes the key to the situation. In relating the reign of king Uzziah the chronicler says: "And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be set on the towers and upon the battlements, to shoot arrows and great stones withal." The word "engines," though in harmony with the scope of the passage, is defective in that it restricts the term to a single sphere, whereas a conspectus of its occurrences proves that such is not the case with the Hebrew word. Devices are not all mechanical: they may be moral. Hence we suggest "scheme," as covering both fields. 2 Chr. 26:15 is deeply interesting because here the term occurs in the substantive, adjective and verbal forms;\* "schemes schemed by scheming men"; it is the context that shows the schemes of Uzziah's men to have been mechanical devices for shooting stones and arrows.

With the obstacle of translation removed, the passage at once acquires consistency as well as force and cogency. Having stated that God has made the day of good side by side with the day of evil, Ecclesiastes instances familiar experiences supporting the assertion (7:15-28), and then, surveying the totality of things, expresses the conviction that man lacks the power to solve the mystery of the whole.

All this have I proved in wisdom: I said,  
I will be wise; but it was far from me. That  
which has been is far off and deep, deep; who  
can find it out?

Accordingly, in what follows, Ecclesiastes endeavors to

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\*Our versions obscure this fact by their rendering "*engines, invented by cunning men.*"

find a partial solution answering the practical ends of life. He says:

(25) I turned about to know and search out, and to seek wisdom and the scheme, and to know the evil of folly and foolishness of madness: (26) And I find a thing more bitter than death—the woman who is a snare, and her heart is as nets, her hands, bands: whoso is good before God shall escape her; but the sinner shall be taken by her. [(27) Behold, this have I found, saith Kabeleth, one to one to find out the scheme; (28) which my soul still seeketh, but I have not found.] One man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found. (29) Behold, this have I found besides\*—God made mankind upright, but they have sought out many schemes.

This whole paragraph, more especially verses 26-28, have occasioned many gratuitous remarks. Expositors have decided that Ecclesiastes informs us that "a wise man is rarity; a wise woman not yet found." There is no difficulty in following the argument when the passage is properly printed. The suggestion here offered to treat vv. 27 and 28 *a* as a parenthesis removes the difficulty, and makes the passage singularly impressive (See Vol iii, pp. 251, 252). By reading the words of ver. 28, *one man among a thousand have I found*, etc., on from ver. 26, the sense is clear: One God-pleasing man among a thousand succumbing to feminine temptation can be found; a God-pleasing woman among courtesans not yet found.

As regards v 27, there is an ellipsis of the verb which must be supplied. The text of the R. V. version has "laying," which is a good suggestion. The difficulty, however, lies not in supplying the omission, but in determining to what the phrase "one thing and another" ("one to one" in the original) refers. Commentators, as usual, have availed

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\*This is the force of **לְבַד** *labeled*. Not "only", but "besides", as something beyond what is said before of both sexes.

themselves of the difficulty to display their exhaustless store of ingenuity; one of them going to the extreme of suggesting that the passage means "counting women one by one"! Since the topic consistently discussed throughout the section is the relation between good and evil, "one to one" cannot refer to anything else. The point is that to arrive at an intelligent understanding of the universe, good and evil must be considered together as parts of the Divine plan. This fact fits with the special scope of this section, or "book," and throws light on many otherwise obscure passages.

Many readers are shocked at the sentiment expressed in the statement

Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldst thou make thyself desolate? Be not overmuch evil, neither be thou obstinate; why shouldst thou die before thy time? It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this; yea, also from that withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall make his way with both.

Others would explain the words away by "gentle irony," or otherwise. Considered in the light of the special scope of the whole section, the passage presents no difficulty. Here, as in many other places in the book, Ecclesiastes is simply expressing in the form of precepts the perplexity of providential dealings. The fact of providential dispensation which permits the righteous to fail, and the unjust to succeed, is here made a basis of conduct. The benevolent purpose of the Creator is often carried out by means which seem at variance with His character: with such a thought in his mind our author says that even from evil the wise man may not be able to withdraw his hand. The important point of the passage is that even in well doing it is possible to go to extremes: as surely as evildoers endanger their

lives in risky ventures, so surely just men can make themselves obnoxious. That this is the meaning is abundantly clear, not only from the general trend of thought, but also from the maxims which follow (7:19-22). It is evident that the word "ruler" cannot here refer to a king; for the multiplication of such by ten would be a disadvantage. The "rulers" must be the king's officers or agents, and then the meaning is clear: wisdom in the king is better than multiplication of officers, for it is a mistake to punish small offenses, nor is it well for the king to be informed of everything that goes on.

The difficulty which many experience with ch. 8:9 arises from considering the verse by itself. The passage becomes clear (though not free from difficulty) when 8:9-18 is treated as a whole paragraph elaborating one phase of the common argument. The thought is: there is a time when one individual has the power to oppress another; the wicked oppressor dies and is buried; similarly the righteous victim is taken away (by death) from the holy place and the city: both come to the same end, and the sight of this "vanity" of providence encourages sin. *Though a sinner do evil—yet surely I know it shall be well with them that fear God.* A paradox: in spite of appearances it is not so; or in spite of individual cases the principle of judgment on the wicked is sound. Ecclesiastes impresses the importance of maintaining moral principle side by side with complete inability to understand God's mysterious ways.

Another passage claims attention ere this study is brought to a conclusion.

I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

The word "chance" is not here employed in the sense in which it is often used—as the synonym of "luck." Its only other occurrence is in 1 Ki, 5:4, where it is rendered "occurrent", and is associated with *evil*. This "chance" is the converse of "time": the season, not when things are favorable to man, but are adverse to him; the expression is the equivalent of "love and hate" in *ver.* 1; its intention being to expand the idea of *ver.* 2, "all things come alike to all." It is a fresh reiteration of the dominant thought of the book that adverse and favorable seasons take place in accordance with God's pleasure and affect all men alike, irrespective of character, ability or personal accomplishments.

In the progress of his quest concerning all that is done under the sun Ecclesiastes has arrived at the truth that God is universally supreme. This conclusion is reached not by a process of consequence-making resting on presumed premises: it is forced upon our thinker by the existing order of things. When his inquiring mind turned from the consideration of the problems of individual experience to the larger problems of the universe, the world seemed a house hopelessly divided into two irreconcilable rival factions scrambling for the mastery. Chaos and anarchy seemed to reign. Then flashes the idea that good and evil are integral parts of one great plan, and therefore must be taken together and considered as a whole. The thought is firmly grasped that God is absolutely the first great cause; absolutely all things are of Him; all things are His servants working out His will. With the dawning of this truth a mighty change steals over Ecclesiastes. He breaks away from his gloomy thoughts, to apostrophise in a tone of rapture the man who has found wisdom (8:1).

Who is as the wise man, or he who knows the interpretation of a word? A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the sternness of his face is changed.

The tone of confidence deepens as the thinker advances toward his conclusion. From the vantage point of God's immutable, sovereign "scheme" he can, with perfect composure, look down upon the "many schemes" of puny men with the assurance that they work out the will of God. Can the knowledge that all things have their origin in a Divine forepurpose, that they are under absolute Divine control, and that neither wicked men, nor any other evil power, nor all of them combined, can act independent of God, fail to give rest to the heart? Under the shadow of this great truth we may abide in perfect safety.

Ecclesiastes dwells with all possible emphasis on the absolute sovereignty of God. Herein lies the reason why his book is neglected and misrepresented. The dualistic theology of Christendom, with its Manichean idea of a conflict between two rival deities and its dogma of the permanence of evil, found itself at irreconcilable variance with the absolute supremacy of God postulated by Ecclesiastes. Accordingly theology contrived to set aside the testimony of this unique book by throwing over it the veil of false interpretation. The prevailing notion which stigmatizes Ecclesiastes as "the book of the natural man" roots itself in the dualistic creed of Christendom. It is the makeshift of pious men who think more of traditional theology than the truth of Scripture—an exigency demanded by creeds which foster pagan fables, creeds which make evil an interloper in a scheme of good, instead of a foreappointed means designed to *reveal* the good, and thus deny the omnipotence, traduce the character, and impeach the wisdom of the Creator. With interpretations such as this a study of the Bible resting on the sure foundation of grammatical connections and relation of parts to the whole of a book, is in uncompromising antagonism.



## NOTES

It is clear that these "notes" sustain a relation to the preceding matter. Ecclesiastes had been describing an incident bringing out the mournful fact of wisdom achieving where strength failed yet remaining unrewarded because united with poverty. This leads to a series of reflexions on how the efforts of wisdom may be neutralized by folly—"Then said I."

In point of form, this string of sayings, like the others, presents the same feature of symmetrical arrangement. The whole falls into two groups, the topics dealt with in the one group being taken up again in the other.

Wisdom and Folly (the former neutralized by the latter)— 9:16-10:3	Wisdom and Folly (contrasted in their effects)—10:12-15
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Rulers (the evils of misgovern- ment)—10:4-7	Rulers (the character of gov- ernment reflected in the con- dition of the land)—10:16-17
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Evils and Maxims (suggested by the foregoing)—10:8-11	Evils and Maxims (suggested by the foregoing)—10:18-11:6
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I proceed to point out the drift of thought in each group. There is a real connectedness, not formal and syllogistic, but such as inheres discursive meditations: each saying prompts the other, but by associations discerned by the feeling rather than the ethical reason. The first group begins by instancing certain ways in which wisdom is hindered by its opposite folly. This calls up to mind the most formidable handicap to wisdom—the misconduct of rulers. The next paragraph turns from the political to the common life. The favoritism of rulers results in relaxation of law and outbreaks of violence. For *He who digs a pit shall fall therein* compare such passages as Ps. 7:15 and Prov. 26:27. *He who breaks through a fence, a serpent shall bite him. He who moves stones shall come to grief; And he who breaks through the wood shall be impoverished.*

These sayings exhibit various ways of encroaching, by removing boundaries, on the common land; in other words, violations of the commandment "Remove not the ancient landmark." The next pair of maxims cautions against thoughtless actions which misgovernment is apt to provoke. "If the iron be blunt, and one does not inwardly curse it, then he must use force: but wisdom secures the right advantage."\* This verse has been involved in obscurity. The strange and ambiguous rendering of the Septuagint shows that the meaning of the passage had become uncertain long before the pointing of the text. The misapprehension has been stereotyped in the Massoretic text. The Massoretes, like the seventy, read the word פְּנִים *panim* as a substantive, and pointed it accordingly. By vocalizing the word as an adverb the saying acquires a sense at once forceful and in perfect harmony with the context.\* The sense is clear: when a tool becomes blunt—the preceding verse suggests its becoming dull while in use—one must either cast it off or sharpen it. The first impulse is to throw it away: but wisdom chooses the better alternative. To put it in a more general form, when things go wrong the tendency is to give vent to ill temper, and give up the

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\*There is an ellipsis in each hemistich of this proverb. "If the iron be blunt, and one does not inwardly curse it, then—force: but wisdom—right advantage." In the first hemistich the ellipsis is both of the governing verb, and the relative pronoun. Job 24:19 affords an analogous example of such double ellipsis: "Heat carries off the snow waters, sheol—have sinned"; that is, so "sheol (carries off those that) have sinned." Another example is found in ch. 10:1 of this book. "Dead flies taint the fragrant ointment, so a little folly—honor and wisdom"; that is so "a little folly (taints one in) honor and wisdom."

\* פְּנִים *panim* occurs several times as an adverb, and is rendered "within" (Lev. 10:18; I Ki 6:18); "inner part" (2 Chr. 29:16); "in" (2 Chr. 24:18); "inward" (Ezek. 40:16; 41:3).

work; but wisdom will control rashness and do what is best. The appropriateness of the maxim is enhanced by its setting. He had been describing social wrongs encouraged by misrule. He goes on to say that these are likely to arouse outbursts of indignation which may be as harmful as the wrongs themselves. It is a caution against hasty action, followed by a companion maxim guarding against the opposite extreme of indecision. *If the serpent bites before it is charmed, then there is no advantage in the charmer.* The point is: once the opportune moment is past, action is unavailing.

The topics treated in the second group are the same, but viewed from a different angle. First wisdom and folly are contrasted in their effects. Then the misery of a land governed by an incompetent ruler and drunken nobles is contrasted with the happiness of a land whose king and officers are dominated by a sense of honor and discretion. As in the first group, the evils of misgovernment call to mind the debasing effects of perverted judgment, and these in turn call forth a series of wise precepts. The gluttony and drunkenness of the princes leads to a contemplation of a triplet of evils of which intemperance is the sire—idleness, misuse of money,\* disrespect for lawful authority. The saying, *Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter,*" is puzzling to a modern reader. The reference is not (as often interpreted) to a system of espionage. The proverb is grounded on the idea that the king in Israel was supposed to be endowed with an extraordinary faculty of penetration which could bring the truth to light.

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\*For an explanation of 10:19 see *Unsearchable Riches*, Vol V, page 111.

In contrast to the selfishness that goes hand in hand with the foregoing evils, Ecclesiastes recommends benevolence in the spirit of Prov. 11:24:

Cast thy bread upon the waters:  
For thou shalt find it after many days.  
Divide the portion into seven,  
Yea, into eight:  
For thou knowest not what evil shall be upon  
the land.

The closing sentence has emphasized the impossibility of man's reading the future: the idea is immediately reinforced by another:

If the clouds be full of rain,  
They empty themselves upon the earth:  
And if a tree fall toward the south or toward the north,  
In the place where the tree falleth, there shall it be.

This saying puts the thought of irresistible necessity, as in other places of the book (1:4-7; 9:2, 11). The thought is that as the seasons of prosperity (rain) and devastation (the storm uprooting the trees), so visitations of good and evil take place in accordance with God's plan and come alike to all. In what follows the fact of providential dispensation that "time and chance" come alike to all is made a basis for conduct. *He that observeth the wind, etc.* Weather forecast founded on observation of winds and clouds is uncertain: dependence thereon paralyzes fruitful exertion. *As thou knowest not the way of the wind, etc.* There has been much dispute as to whether רוח *ruach* here should be rendered *wind* or *spirit*. In my judgment the reading "wind" provides a clearer sense, and better adapted to the whole spirit of the passage. The intention of v. 5 is to extend the idea of the preceding verse. The thought is in line with the one expressed in ch. 8:8. There

the point was man's inability to *control* the forces of nature: here it is man's *ignorance* of the laws governing the movements of those forces. Thus the passage, by successive gradations, spans the entire range of God's operations. We have: (1) the mystery of nature; (2) the mystery of generation; (3) God's work as a whole, extending over nature and mankind. *In the morning sow the seed*, etc. A figurative designation of every regular vocation. The idea is that man's uncertainty in regard to natural processes and the course of human history, instead of encouraging idleness, is—or should be—a stimulus to tireless effort. Since it is not possible to know whether one kind of labor or another will prosper, prosecute both with diligence: if one fails there is the other to fall back upon; or both may come out equally well. The sentiment expressed is equivalent to Paul's injunction, "Be instant in season and out of season."

## OUR QUESTION BOX

*What is the force of "also" in 1 Tim. 3:16?*

The R. V. reads: "Every Scripture inspired of God is *also* profitable for teaching. . . ." The rendering *also* is manifestly defective. Who does not know that what God has inspired is profitable?

The Greek text is as follows: *pasa 'graphē theophneustos kai ophelimos*, viz., "every divinely inspired Scripture is profitable." The verb *is* is absent in the Greek text. Such *omissions* are frequent in the Greek Scriptures. How is the omission to be supplied? *The verb must be supplied to join the subject and the predicate* so that the passage with the supplied omission would read: *Pasa qraphē theophneustos ESTIN kai ophelimos ESTIN*—every scripture divinely inspired *IS*, and profitable *IS*. The phrase "every scripture" is correct, and refers to the various parts of the Sacred Writings referred to collectively in the preceding verse.

That the translation of *kai* by "also" in unwarranted, is proved by other passages having the same construction. We will instance two of them. 1 Tim. 4:4 is identical with 1 Tim. 3:16 in its construction; there is no verb in the original text, but the revisers have rightly supplied it: "Every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be rejected." Why have not the Revisers rendered it like 2 Tim. 3:16? Because they shrank from lapsing into the ridiculous by making Scripture read that "Every creature of God, if good, is *also* not to be rejected."

But there is another identical passage: "But all things *are* naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13). Here also the copula and the verb "are" are wanting in the text, but the revisers have supplied the verb at the right place. Why they did not translate it like 2 Tim. 3:16, because they did not wish to appear ridiculous saying: "All things, naked, are *ALSO* open . . . ." viz., *some* things are not *naked* and open in the sight of God.

Thus the revisers themselves have refuted their rendering of 2 Tim. 3:16.

*Does not the word parousia refer exclusively to His coming to Israel?*

The word "parousia" is made up of two Greek words, "beside" and "being." Hence it means a "being beside" or "presence." It must be carefully distinguished from three other words which are also translated "coming." These are *apokalupsis* revelation (1 Cor. 1:7), *eisodos* entrance (Acts 13:24) and *eleusis* advent (Acts 7:51). *Parousia* presence has no reference to the act of coming, but rather to the state of being present. Neither is it the designation of a particular event, but is used of the presence of Stephanas (1 Cor. 16:17), of Titus (2 Cor. 7:6, 7), of Paul (2 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 1:26; 2:12). In the last instance it is contrasted with "absence." These "parousias" occurred in the past.

In the future it is applied to the presence of the Lord, which is our expectation, in the epistle to the Thessalonians (1 Th. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Th. 2:1, -). This will transpire *before* the tribulation (2 Th. 2:1-2). It is applied to the Lawless One who will be present in the *midst* of the great tribulation (2 Th. 2:9). It is often applied to His presence for His people Israel *after* the tribulation (Mt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; Jas. 5:7, 1; 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:4; 1 John 2:28). So that it is not confined to any particular aspect of the Lord's coming, but rather to the fact of His presence in the air and on the earth at the end of this eon and the beginning of the next. Then it is that all who are in Christ will be made alive (1 Cor. 15:23).

Those belonging to His body will be made alive at His presence in the air, the sleeping saints of Israel at His presence on the earth. It is all His presence.

It is also used of the day of God—the eon beyond the day of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:12). It is clear, then, that *parousia* is not the proper name of an event, but a common noun, and refers to the presence of some one, either in the past or in the dim distant future. When used of the Lord it includes the entire scope of His advent, whether to the ecclesia which is His body or that which is His bride.

*If the Devil is to be destroyed, and the destroyed Devil is to be restored—then nothing seems to prevent the conclusion that death may be restored—and so the whole trouble commences all over again.*

This difficulty is founded upon two misconceptions due to a faulty version. The title "devil" is used as a proper name and the word "destroy" is more accurately rendered *discard* or *abolish*. We will consider each in turn.

Of the nine words rendered "destroy" in the A. V. *apollumi* has by far the best right to be so translated, in the active voice (Lu. 17:27).

*Diaphtheiroo* refers rather to *decay* (2 Co. 4:16). *Kathaireoo* means *pull down*. *Kataluoo* denotes *demolish* (Mt. 27:40). *Luo* means to *loose* (Met. 16:19). *Portheoo* is *ravage* (Gal. 1:13). *Phtheiroo* carries the thought of *corruption* (1 Cor. 15:33). We give this list to show how difficult it is to get clear thoughts on this subject from the version we are accustomed to. *Katargeoo*, however, which is the word our question refers to as *destroy*, is composed of two parts, one of which is the ordinary word for *work*, the other meaning *against*. It conveys the thought of rendering inoperative, "putting out of commission" in popular phraseology. This is clearly seen in its first occurrence (Lu. 13:7). "Why *cumbereth* it the ground?" The fig tree was not only fruitless, but it hindered the ground from bearing any other crop. From this came the derived meanings of *discard* or *abolish* or *repeal* or *exempt*. We are exempt from the law (Ro. 7:6 "delivered"). The decrees are repealed (Eph. 2:15 "abolished"). We discard childish things (1 Co. 13:11). We do not destroy them. So we would rather restate the question. If the "devil" or *slanderer* is to be discarded, how can he be restored without involving the possibilities of the re-instatement of the death state after it has been discarded?

"The devil" is *not* the proper *name* of a person. It is an appellation. It may refer to the being who is otherwise known as Satan, or it may be used of Judas (John 6:70), or of the men of the last days (2 Tim. 3:3 "false accusers") or even the aged women (Tit. 2:2) or even the wives of the "deacons" (1 Ti. 3:11). In the last passage it is translated "slanderer," which is its true meaning.

Now, when God is All in all, there will be no *slanderer* there to mar its bliss. Neither will there be any *sinners* there to spoil our happiness. Sinners are not restored, neither is the slanderer. But, we who *were* sinners, will be there, and he who *was* the slanderer will also fulfill the word which God has decreed. Our bodies of sin will be discarded, never to be restored, yet we will not lack bodies in which to glorify His grace.

We have tried to be careful not to say that "the Devil" or "Satan" will be "restored." God does not thus speak. Restoration is far from reaching to the height of his purpose. He will reconcile *all*—not *as* sinners, or *as* slanderers—but *as* justified and glorified.

*Is there a Kingdom of the Father before the consummation?*

There is. It is confined, however, to those who know Him as their Father and will not become universal until the Kingdom of the Son of God is handed over to Him at the consummation. The Kingdom of the Son of Man has its place in the coming eon, the Son of God rules in the



eon of the eon, which follows it. The Kingdom of the Father follows these last two eons. But, while this is so, it must not be inferred from this that the reign of each is absolutely confined to these times. The Kingdom of the Son is a present spiritual reality so far as we, who believe, are concerned (Col. 1:13). The Kingdom of the Father is likewise present in the day of Jehovah, even as He taught them to pray: "Our Father . . . Thy Kingdom come." (Mt. 6:10, 13 Lu. 11:2). But it is always either *their* Father's Kingdom (Mt. 13:43) or *His* Father's Kingdom (Mt. 26:29)—not a universal sovereignty like that of the Son of Man. "The Fatherhood of God" is a truth to be realized at the consummation. In the meanwhile it is like so many other misplaced truths—error of the most dangerous kind.

*Should not 1 Cor. 15:24 be punctuated as follows (with a period after consummation) and the clauses introduced by "whenever" be referred to "then" of verse twenty-eigh?*

"a firstfruits, Christ, next they that are Christ's at His parousia, next the telos (resurrection). Whenever He shall deliver . . . then shall also the Son be subordinate to the One subordinating all things, in order that God may be All in all."

The punctuation of any translation is merely a concession to the weakness of the modern mind. It has no place in the inspired original. Yet the translator should not follow his own judgment merely, but be able to give a reason for His pointing. We will now show why we have used a dash (see All in all, page 62) where it is proposed to put a period. A parallel passage, where both "thereafter" and "whenever" are used in the same logical relation as in this passage occurs in Mark 4:2:

" . . . first a blade, thereafter a spike, thereafter full wheat in the spike. Now, whenever the fruit should be given up . . . "

In both passages we have a list of three things, the last being introduced by "thereafter." In both the following statement begins with "whenever." The only difference we are interested in is the fact that "now" a disjunctive, separates the two statements in Mark, but not in Corinthians.

The important question for us to settle is this: Is there any logical relation between the "full wheat" and the harvesting? They are in different sentences separated by a period, yet the logical sequence is too obvious to miss. The harvesting does not follow the blade or the spike, but the *full wheat*, and when this is ripe, the sickle is put to work. The little word "now" tells us that the harvest does not immediately follow

the filled out grain, but when it is ready to fall. But in Corinthians there is no such disjunctive. The relation between the "consummation" and the "handing over of the Kingdom" is closer than that between the full wheat and the harvest.

But the handing over of the kingdom is only one member of a lengthy explanation which has its own symmetrical structure (see page 52, All in all). This connects the handing over of the kingdom with the subordination of the Son. Now the point and pivot of the explanation lies in its central member, the fact that death is to be abolished. The abolition of death is the equivalent of the vivification of all. It is the explanation of how and when all in Christ shall be made alive. So that the whole explanation is very closely related to the previous statement that, in Christ, all shall be made alive. Hence, as the explanatory clauses are not separated from *telos* by a disjunctive as in Mark, they should not receive a period, but rather a point such as will indicate the fact that they are explanatory of the preceding statement. The dash performs this office in English. In reality all that follows up to verse twenty-nine is one connected sentence. But such long sentences are very hard for the English reader to grasp. All of Eph.1:3-14 is one sentence, but our weak minds are not able to carry such a connected chain. We are forced to stop at times for breath. So that the logical relation between the various parts of any passage should engage our attention rather than the pointing, which, at best, must condescend to English infirmity and usage.

*Is the purpose of delivering up the Kingdom revealed?*

The Kingdom is delivered up or handed over to God the Father in order that He may become All in all. So long as God delegates government to anyone—even His Son—so long is the purpose of the eons unfulfilled. It is the office of the Son to reveal the Father, and when this is accomplished, He, as an Intermediary between God and His creatures, withdraws in order that they all may find their All in Him.

*Does 1 Cor. 15:45-57 refer to a resurrection far beyond the millennium?*

Volume IV., page 188, explains our position on this point. Concerning verses 54 and 55, we say: "This was the shout at the resurrection of the great Firstfruits; this will be our challenge at our own awakening; but this will be finally fulfilled at the consummation."

Scripture is very explicit in its distinction between that which "comes to pass" and that which is "fulfilled." Now we have taught, and will enlarge upon it in the future, that the mystery of the resurrection, as taught in verses 51 and 52, are our imminent expectation, not a far off

resurrection at some future time. This does not hinder us from applying the quotation from Hosea, nor from noting that it is not said to be *fulfilled*, but that the *fulfillment* will take place at the consummation as is indicated by the holy Spirit's changing "hades" of the LXX to "death" so to conform it to the facts as they are at the consummation.

*In a certain edition of the Bible a third speech is assigned to Zophar. Is this right? What grounds are there for this?*

Since you do not state what edition of the Bible you refer to, I am unable to express an opinion about the views advocated.

With respect to Job, chapters 26-28, I have been led to the conclusion that vv. 2-4 of chapters 26 should be transferred to the commencement of chapter 27, and that chapter 27:7-28:28 is a speech of Zophar. Thus a corresponding change is supposed in the heading of the speeches.

"Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said"—Chapter 22.

"Then Job answered and said"—Chapters 23 and 24.

"Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said"—Chapters 25 and 26:5-14.

"Then Job answered and said"—Chapters 26:2-4 and 27:2-6.

"Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said"—Chapter 27:7 to end of chapter 28.

"Then Job took up his parable and said"—Chapters 29, 30 and 31.

The grounds on which this rearrangement rests are as follows:

1. All critics recognize the difficulty in the division between the three speakers in the third round of speeches as it appears in A. V. and R. V., which has the effect of making Job take up a position at variance with his former contention and with his subsequent words.

2. The most marked feature of literary style in the book is its extreme parallelism; this makes it highly improbable that the third colloquy should be imperfect, by the omission of a speech from Zophar, and a reply to him from Job.

3. The sentiments in chapters 27:7-28:28 agree exactly with what Zophar had been maintaining throughout the debate. In the beginning of his third speech (27:13) he uses the very words which concluded his second address (20:29). It is impossible that Job could thus side with the friends without any indication that his views had changed.

4. If chapters 27:7-28:28 is attributed to Job, then his friends had convinced him; which was the very thing Elihu declared they had failed to do.

5. Zophar makes the climax or peroration of the friend's case. Job had stoutly maintained to the very end the position taken up in the curse:

"My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go:  
My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live."

Accordingly, Zophar opens his third address by formally classing Job with evil doers:

"Let mine enemy be as the wicked,  
And let him that riseth up against me be as the unrighteous."

As a confirmation that Zophar is summing up the case for the friends I may instance his words (27:12): *Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it; why then are ye become altogether vain?* The materials for the debate are evidently becoming exhausted, and Job is more immovable than ever. Zophar has said, *I will teach you*, and then turns to include his colleagues in his views: *Ye yourselves have seen it; why then*, he asks, *are ye become altogether vain?* that is, why are your united attestations to go for nothing with Job? The present arrangement of the speeches, by which all this falls on Job, creates an incongruity.

*I have been told that Job. 36:14 should read "among the holy." Both A. V. and R. V. read "among the unclean." Which rendering is right?*

The rendering of our versions is certainly correct. The substantive קדש *qadesh*, in both its masculine and feminine forms, is sometimes used in a bad sense.

The masculine form קדש *qadesh* is rendered by our versions *sodomite* (Deut. 23.17; 1 Ki. 14.24, 15.12, 22.46; 2 Ki. 23.7), and *unclean*, with the marginal alternative *sodomite*, in Job. 36.14.

The feminine form קדשה *qedeshah* is rendered *harlot* (Gen. 38.21-22, Hos. 4.14), and *whore*, with the marginal alternative *sodomitess*, in Deut. 23.17.

That in the foregoing passages the word carries an evil sense is proved by the context in each case. Pederasty and prostitution played a prominent part in the religious ceremonies of ancient paganism. Each temple had its staff of "holy ones"—religious sodomites and prostitutes—who supported the temple service by immoral practices. Passages like Gen. 38.21; 1 Ki. 14.24, 15.12, 22.46; 2 Ki. 23.7, and Hosea 4.14 show that those detestable heathen practices, so unsparingly condemned by Jehovah's law, had made inroads in both Israel and Judah.

## EDITORIAL

OLD notions of every kind, and most of all religious notions, are hard to dislodge from the mind. It does not matter how unscriptural they may be, or illogical, or even absurd, if only they have been believed for generations, if only they have been entertained by good and learned men, if only they have found a way into the current versions of the Bible, they are reverently received, and become "fixed" ideas.

The original Scriptures were divinely inspired, and therefore all their statements on a given subject are in full accord one with another; but the translations of the Scriptures, like the ecclesiastical systems which produced them, were not inspired, and the peculiar reverence frequently given to their opinions is not grounded in reasons, and would often be amusing if it were not sad. Traditions of good men and current versions (even though "authorized") are broken reeds to lean upon, and those relying thereon are certain to experience disappointment.

As an illustration of this may be instanced the following recent statement of a defender of orthodoxy:

"As we write we are not unconscious of much that is written today in 'a show of wisdom' and must say once for all and here that the 'summing up of all things in Christ' does not give us explicit information in regard to the destiny of all creatures in eternity. This remains in Christ's hands (Jno. 5:24). Besides we have never found a way to logically, etymologically or theologically make the word 'things' mean 'persons.' We are slow

to yield the New Testament in its present versions. We believe that much that is called version is perversion. We are not willing to receive a translation of our Testament at the hands of a novice. In attempting to 'arrive at the text' let us be careful we do not receive a 'pretext.' Some think it a high-sounding phrase—'The Greek says'—so and so; but it will be found often to cover a multitude of ignorance rather than display master wisdom."

With this megaphonic utterance, made with all the air of a final pronouncement, a "professional" theologian steps on the arena of polemics to make a declamation against "novices." He avows his slowness to yield the New Testament in its present versions, and that slowness involves him in hopeless confusion and glaring contradictions. He says that much that is called version is perversion. That is unfortunately true. But the remark applies pre-eminently to the so-called "authorized" version. A translation which renders the same identical phrase "end of the world" and "world without end," and thus arrays one set of Scriptures against another—a translation burdened with such palpable contradictions can lay no claim to authority and is not entitled to confidence. This and other like inconsistencies of the current versions proclaim the fact that the translators were not free from the deluding art, which changes the meaning of words, as alchemy does, or would do, the substance of metals, to make the truth conform with the creedal ideas prevalent at the time. Since the translators were "veterans" and men of learning, the flagrant contradictions into which they fell go to show that neither age nor scholarship can be relied upon in matters of truth; that close adherence to the original text is the only safe course.

We proceed to point out the sad plight into which unbounded confidence in the present translations betrays its devotees. The assertion is made that there is no way "logical, etymological or theological" to make "things" mean "persons." Yet the very versions which he follows in a most servile manner expressly call a person a *thing*. "Wherefore also the HOLY THING which is begotten shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). If the Person of persons is called a *thing*, why should not mere creatures be thus designated? Indeed, in several instances persons are specifically included in the phrase "all things" (1 Cor. 3:21; 8:6; 12:19; Col. 1:20). Hence, according to the present versions, it is both logical and theological to speak of persons as "things." Thus the assumption that "things" cannot mean persons is refuted by the very versions on which it is founded.

Nor is this all. The word "things"—on the strength of which the ultimate reconciliation of all creatures is denied—is NOT IN THE ORIGINAL of Eph. 1:10, as it is not in any of the foregoing passages. The original has the pronoun with the definite article—THE ALL—and what the original has is a "loud-sounding" verdict against which there is no appeal. Since the word "things" is *not* in the original, arguments founded thereon are purely imaginary, as the deductions derived therefrom are fictitious. They are not entitled to consideration, and should be dismissed as a piece of mental acrobatics. But what is one to think of "professionals" who, in the name of logic and theology, indulge in a demonstration against "novices" without even examining God's inspired word, and build up a whole system of doctrine upon a term which is NOT in Scripture. Controversial methods rise no higher than countroversial motives. Those following such questionable tactics may deceive

themselves into thinking that they are contending for the truth, but actions speak louder than words, and those who, pretending to establish truth, ostensibly ignore and contemptuously push into the background the source of truth—the inspired sacred original—testify that their professed zeal for truth is in reality a mere contention for theological folklore to which they have committed themselves *a priori*.

Such fraudulent tactics fully account for the ridicule heaped upon those who appeal direct to the original. *Orthodox theology cannot bear the touch of God's inspired word.* The champions of orthodoxy are aware of this. They are afraid of the original. They fight for their own prestige. Their men-made doctrines can only thrive where ignorance of the original prevails. They appeal to the superstitions incorporated and perpetuated in the current versions. They accredit their tenets by appeal to human opinion. Foregone committal to a creed has warped their judgment; they are unable to deal with facts. Instead of taking the truth for their authority, they seek authority for the truth. Professedly Protestant, they are Romanists at heart; they keep God's people away from the inspired original as the Roman priests keep their parishioners away from the Bible. They know full well that the awkward, grotesque fabric of creedal theology is doomed to collapse; that once the mother-right of the original to control translations is recognized, the chains of a binding traditionalism of interpretation are burst asunder, and many a theological dogma will be relegated to the scrap-heap of ancestral errors.

We will now remark, first, that the "dispensation of the fulness of the seasons" *precedes* the consummation; it lies within the span of the ages, not beyond them.



Second, the headship of Christ is not over *things*, but over intelligences. This is fully set forth in Paul's epistles. Corinthians presents him as "head of every man" (1 Cor 11:3). Ephesians views Him as "Head of the Church, which is His body" (Eph. 1:22). Colossians winds up this segment of truth by presenting Him as "Head of every principality and power" (Col. 2:10). Hence, the summing up of "the all" in heaven and on earth in Christ as Head implies that mankind, the church and principalities and powers will be in the dispensation of the fulness of the seasons, swayed by Christ as Head. Harmony is attained when "the all"—in heaven and on earth—are reconciled to God (Col. 1:20). So long as a single creature remains unreconciled, harmony is impossible. The dogma of endless torment in the very nature of things precludes the establishment of universal harmony. A universe with a vast cesspool where moral and degraded beings writhe in the agonies of ceaseless pain is far from being harmonized. To apply the word harmony to such state of affairs is nothing short of mockery. By some strange anomaly this writer says that Christ "will restore things to their primal unity." This statement involves a strange incongruity and contradiction of terms. We are assured that the universe originally enjoyed the bliss of sinlessness. The word "restore" implies that this pristine condition will be re-established, that the universe will return to a condition equal to the primal. There is no maintaining this, however, in face of the dogma of the endlessness of evil. If evil is permanent, restoration is impossible; the most that can be hoped for is eventual segregation of evil; and the universe is endlessly doomed to remain in a state inferior to the primeval.

There are many passages which plainly affirm the

ultimate salvation of every creature. But if there were none other than Col. 1:20, that alone is sufficient to establish it beyond dispute. And the fact that annihilationists, and orthodoxers alike evade it is proof of its adamant strength. Lest we be charged with "altering" God's word, we quote the passage from the Revised Version.

For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church; Who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens. (Col. 1:16-20).

Two things are unmistakably clear and beyond all cavil, even in the present versions:

(1) The same phrase—"The all" is used both in connexion with creation and reconciliation, and must have the same force in both cases. There is no limit to "the all" in creation; there can be none in reconciliation. The two movements are co-extensive; the second perfects and consummates what the first brought into being.

(2) The phrase "the all" refers to intelligences and not to things animate or inanimate. This is abundantly clear in spite of the interpolated "things" in our versions. Both animate and inanimate creation will share in the benefits flowing from reconciliation, just as it has shared in the bitter effects of estrangement. The creation falls or rises with the fall or rise of intelligent beings. It

neither falls nor rises by itself. The rebellion of intelligences, angelic and human, affected the universe for woe; the reconciliation of intelligences, angelic and human, will affect the universe for weal.

Adherents of orthodoxy, in their devotion to tradition, seek to evade the plain, unmistakable teaching of Col. 1:20 by resorting to the subtleties of sophistry. From the fact that the pronoun "the all" is in the neuter, they argue that things and not persons are meant. But the absurdity of such claim becomes apparent on a moment's consideration. In the first place, that intelligent beings and not things are meant is settled beyond a doubt by the fact that "the all" in heavens (at whose reconciliation orthodoxy especially demures) specifically includes "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers." These terms indicate the rank of the spirit creatures. Only those who fear to take God at His word are driven to the absurdity of applying the words of the apostle to pieces of furniture or territories. In the second place, the use of the neuter is demanded by the all-inclusive scope of the operations under discussion: it excludes from consideration such things as sex, race, moral condition, and takes in all the denizens of earth and heaven, irrespective of these distinctions. Furthermore, the question of gender is simply an *accident* of language. There is no reason why "city" should be feminine and "building" masculine. Neither has a gender. "I am the way, the truth and the life" (Jno. 14:6). These three nouns are feminine. We might as well argue from this fact that Christ was a woman as to contend that the use of a neuter pronoun precludes a reference to persons.

In Greek the nouns "bird," "child," "offspring," "sheep" are all neuter, but that does not exclude the fact that sex exists among them. Gender is not in ques-

tion. Again, the Greek words "church" and "synagogue" are feminine. Does this argue that their membership consists exclusively of women? "Crowd" is masculine. Does this prove that it includes men only? The context of Luke 11:27 makes it clear that women were present. The phrase "the body (of Christ)" is neuter. Will anyone insist that it is made up of "things" and not persons, because the term "body" is neuter? Like examples of the usage of the neuter gender could be multiplied indefinitely; but these are sufficient to prove how utterly baseless is the contention that Col. 1:20 refers to *things* because the phrase "the all" is neuter. Such idle and puerile arguments are like the hopeless exertions of a drowning man grasping at a straw.

Again, it is argued that the words "whether—or" limit the reconciliation of the universe to heaven and earth, so that there may be another sphere which is unaffected by reconciliation. The truth is that the formula, "whether . . . or" never detracts from a statement, but rather amplifies it. Anyone can verify this to his own satisfaction by reference to a concordance. A striking example of its force is afforded by Col. 1:16. "In him was the all created, in the heavens and upon the earth, the visible and the invisible *whether* thrones *or* dominions *or* principalities *or* powers; the all has been created by him, and unto him." The general statement "the all created" is amplified by two complementary statements "in the heavens and upon the earth," "the visible and the invisible." This last clause is further expanded by the clause "whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers." The general statement and its various amplifications are further summarized in the statement "the all has been created by him, and unto

him." The statement is as sweeping as human language can make it.

We live in days of bewildering confusion. What are we to do in this Babel of conflicting doctrines? Believers ought to adhere closer to the inspired word. Helps, comparatively inexpensive, are available, by means of which those unacquainted with the languages of Scripture can ascertain to their own satisfaction what *is* in the Bible and what is *not* in it. A teacher should remember that his prime duty is to make the text of Scripture accessible and intelligible to the people. His duty does not consist in retailing human opinion or forcing his views upon his hearers. His business is to ascertain facts and dispense them, leaving to his hearers the task of drawing inferences for themselves. The coming of the Lord draws nigh. Let all lovers of God combine their efforts in sweeping aside every impediment which obscures His word.

V. G.

## THE TIME OF THE END

Is **THE** Time of the End upon us? This is the question asked by many Christians as the canons of the warring nations roar from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. For the last fifty years alarmists have been pointing to current events as sure signs of the approaching end. The alarmist preachers have received as axiomatic that prophecy is a condensed text book of history tracing the continuous course of events, and the efforts of expositors have been directed towards the discovery of such a series of events as in their judgment best answers the language of prediction. Some have found in prophecy the history of the Maccabean era recorded very fully; others say it is not to be found there at all! Some discern the rise, progress and fall of Islam portrayed so distinctly that they are amazed their view is not universally accepted, and yet others, just as diligent students, say of such expositions that they are utterly mistaken, for no mention of this phase of religious and political power is made. Some there are, again, who find the history of the Papacy down the centuries written so distinctly that it should be visible to the humblest reader, while yet others state that the Popes and the religious system headed by them must first be read into Scripture, else they cannot be found there. It is really no marvel, in view of these confident assertions and as confident denials, that many should give up the study of prophecy as an obscure hieroglyphic which cannot be deciphered.

The very phrase "time of the end" does not convey to many minds any distinct idea. Some entertain the notion that the phrase implies that the whole social and political fabric, as well as the whole material universe, will sink into a chaos similar to that described in the words, "the earth was waste and void". Others think that something is coming to an end, but just what that "something" is they do not know.

In seeking to arrive at an understanding of this term we are to be ruled entirely by what the Scriptures say. The first thing to observe is that the phrase "time of the end" is nowhere used outside the book of Daniel, where it is found five times (8:17; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9). Now the chief element of the book of Daniel is that of the possession of world-supremacy by the nations. It deals with what our Saviour calls "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). Every incident and prediction revolves about this idea. In the opening chapter we have Nebuchadnezzar's triumphant march against Jerusalem; in the last chapter the Gentile kingdoms are laid low by the heavy stroke of Divine judgment, and Daniel's people are delivered as the resurrection morning gilds the sky.

Expositors have taken for granted that the prophet's declaration to Nebuchadnezzar "thou art the head of gold" denotes possession of the people, the city, and the land of Israel. If this is so, why are none of the seven kings who possessed the land of Israel in the time of the Judges ever called "heads"? They possessed the land of Israel as truly as the Babylonian monarch ever did, the Philistines having taken even the ark of the covenant. Daniel's explanation should once for all dispel this popular error. "Thou, O King, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the

kingdom, the power, and the strength and the glory; and whithersoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee to rule over them all: thou art the head of gold" (Dan, 2:38, 39). Nothing is said here about Israel's land: it is a question of dominion "whithersoever the sons of men dwell". The Book of Daniel deals with world-supremacy. Opening with the account of the transfer of this power from the Judean monarch to the Babylonian, the supremacy is seen passing from kingdom to kingdom, until, slipping from the drunken hands of the Grecian king it temporarily leaves the possession of men, to be taken up again for a short time by a great ruler, who, like former monarchs, "shall do according to his will".

Before proceeding with our inquiry it will be well for the reader to firmly grasp the fact that "the times of the Gentiles" are bounded by the reign of Nebuchadnezzar in the past and Jerusalem's deliverance in the future. Our Saviour, speaking to his disciples, pictured the horrors of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and concluded his address by saying: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Lu. 21:24). Since A.D. 70 Jerusalem has been trodden down by the nations. In 1187 it was captured by the Turks under Saladin and has remained in their power ever since. The crescent is still over the place where Jehovah's house once stood. From this we know that the Times of the Gentiles still run their course.

The Hebrew word *qets* is derived from a verb which means *to cut*, and its force may be seen from



such passages as "the end of all flesh is come before me" (Gen. 6:13); "at the end of two full years" (Gen. 41:1); "at the end of the four hundred and forty years" (Ex. 12:41). It denotes a cutting off, a finishing. Hence the expression "time of the end" refers to the finishing of a time: *it denotes the terminus of the Times of the Gentiles, which is the dominant theme of the book of Daniel.* We have seen already that Daniel and Christ unan-  
imously affirm that Jerusalem's deliverance marks the close of the Times of the Gentiles. This great event marks the conclusion of the Time of the End, which is the converging epoch of the period of Gentile supremacy. The terminal point of the Time of the End is thus clearly established.

But where does it begin? How long does it last? The Book of Daniel gives definite answer to both of these questions in chapter twelve, verses 9-11. Here we are informed that the taking away of the continual burnt offering, and the setting up of the abomination of desolation, is the starting point of the Time of the End. Its duration is expressly declared to be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

If we take God's word at its face value, everything is plain. It is expositors moved by the exigencies of preconceived theories who have caused confusion by altering the meaning visible in the words by permutative spiritualization. We must take the words in their fundamental and unquestioned usage, and not think of proposing arbitrary or speculative senses for them. To do this is to make the prophecies of Daniel the convenient material for every kind of private interpretation, as the confusing variety of opinion among expositors manifestly proves.

The utmost confusion has been introduced into men's

minds by the unworthy method of "spiritualizing" the plain and clear declarations of the prophet. There are those who say that when Daniel mentions days, as in 8:14; 12:11, 12, not days, but years, are meant. But we ought not to allow ourselves the liberty of changing the meaning of words to accomodate His word to our presumptions. When Daniel speaks of days we will agree that it means days, and nothing else, unless there is a specific statement to the contrary. History has fully vindicated this position. The "year-day" theory stands discredited in the light of fact. Experience has demonstrated its fallacy. According to Dan. 12:11, as has been shown, the 1290 days begin with *the taking away of the continual burnt offering, and the setting up of the abomination of desolation*. Hence, the historic interpretations which apply this prophecy to the profanation of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes or the capture of Jerusalem by the Mohammedans, are wholly wrong, whether or not they spiritualize the term "day". As to the first view, we have historic testimony to the effect that the profanation of the temple by Antiochus did not last 1290 days. It commenced on the 15th of Chisleu, in the 145th year (1 Mac. 1:54), and ceased on the 20th day of the same month in the 148th year (1 Mac. 1:52). Therefore the period of its total continuance was 1085 days. The year-day theory affords no relief, for 1290 years after Jerusalem fell into the hands of Antiochus Epiphanes nothing happened which answered to the terms of the prediction even in the remotest way.

The second view, which reckons the 1290 days (taking them as years) from the conquest of Jerusalem by the Moslems under the caliph Omar in 636 A.D., is wholly beside the mark. At the time Omar took Jerusalem

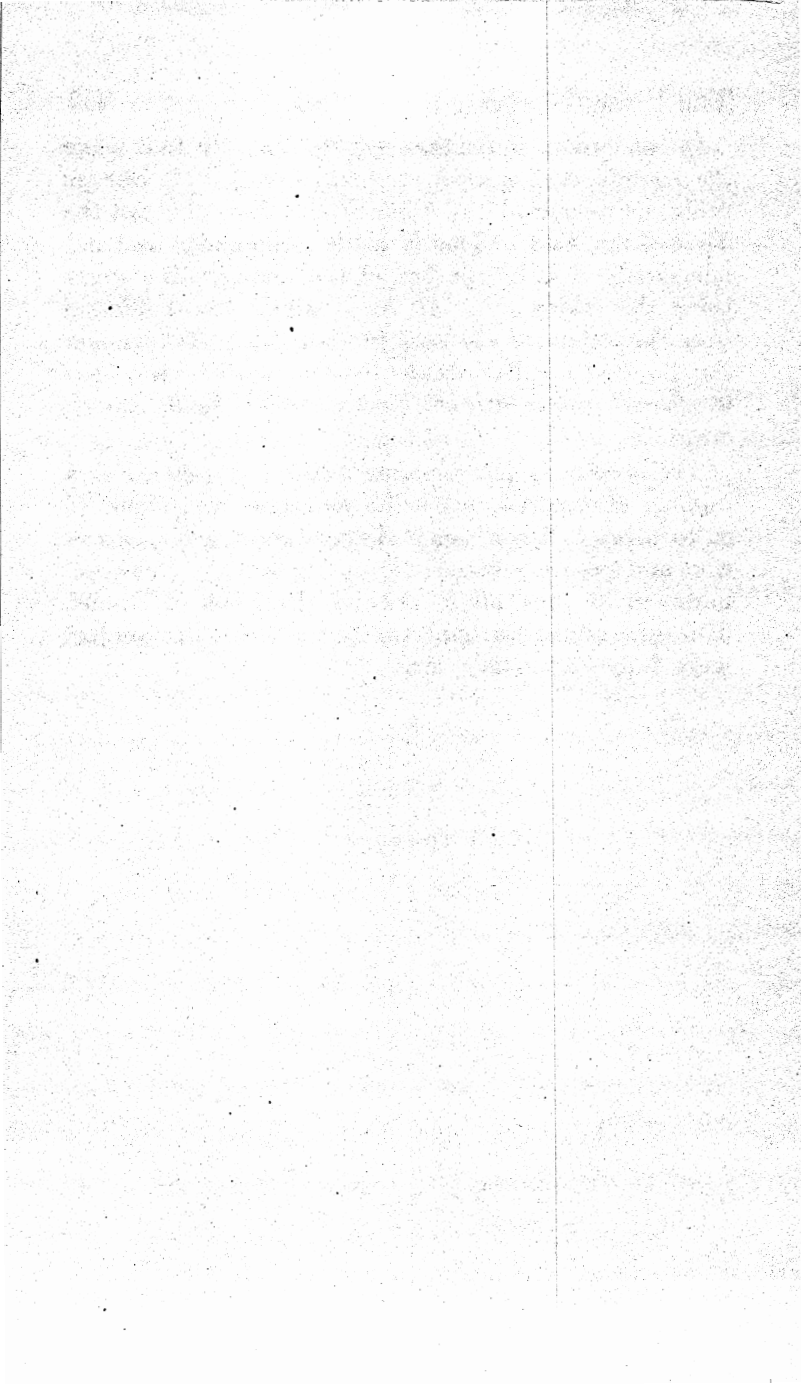
there was *no temple* and the sacrifices *had ceased* several centuries before. The fact is there were *no sacrifices* for Omar to take away, nor did he set up any abomination. All he did was to convert church buildings into mosques. And those churches, with their images, paintings and spectacular ceremonial, were more idolatrous than the system which superseded them.

Upon examination we have found that these historic interpretations cannot stand the test of reality. Where, then, is the ground for these interpretations to stand upon? They have no true foundation, surely. They cannot abide the test of historic fact or the touch of Scripture. Who, then, wants to cling to interpretations which time has proven defective?

The apostle Paul, in his discourse to the Athenians, declares that God has determined the appointed seasons of the nations, and the bounds of their habitation (Acts 17:26). All nations have their place in the Divine working of things: they all contribute, in a greater or lesser degree, their share, and play their part in the great epoch of the Times of the Gentiles. All national movements and activities converge in the Time of the End. Doubtless the present general European crisis will contribute powerfully—perhaps more powerfully than antecedent crises—to bring about the condition of affairs which will eventuate in the final crisis to be unfolded in the Time of the End. But just what it will contribute, and to what extent, remains to be seen. For a Christian observer of contemporary events the first essential requirement is restraint. To venture predictions is gratuitous and risky. Our prognostications can only be based on probabilities, and are tentative at best. The improbable and unforeseen is what usually happens.

In conclusion, it remains only to reiterate that while the terrible conflagration that has engulfed all Europe brings us nearer to the Time of the End, it is *not* the Time of the End. This is made abundantly and unmistakably clear by the fact of the inaugurating event being the taking away of the continual burnt offering from the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. Before ever the Time of the End dawns *the Jews must rebuild their temple and resume their sacrifices prescribed by the Mosaic law.*

The present article has been written in response to a number of inquiries, when the magazine was about to go to press. Under such circumstances exigencies of time and space combined in imposing brevity. We hope, however, to take up a study of the Book of Daniel. This will afford an opportunity to treat the subject more fully and satisfactorily.



## WHAT IS THE SOUL ?

“FOR the Word of God is living and operative and sharp above every two-edged sword, and penetrating up to a division of soul and spirit. . . .” (Heb. 4:12). The lack of vitality and penetration in human literature and intercourse is most clearly evidenced by the utter failure to distinguish between soul and spirit. It is almost universally the case that when the soul is spoken of, the spirit is intended. The English words which have been derived from *psuche*, the Greek word for soul, all refer to various aspects of spirit. *Psychology* has to do with mind, not sensation. These words, which originally meant soul, have now been transferred to spirit. *Psychic*, instead of bearing its true meaning, soulish or sensual, denotes pneumatic, or spiritual. These are not mere curiosities of philology, but the sure indexes of the present day confusion which we must detect and avoid if we wish to get the truth on the subject of the soul.

To get a firm grasp of the true and proper idea conveyed by the term “soul” is not the work of an instant. It can only come by a careful consideration of the contexts in which it occurs. These form an infallible index of its force. Yet here the English reader is at a great disadvantage because the version which he is accustomed to use conceals their force by translating the same words in the original by a variety of terms. They translate soul so often by the term “life” that the distinction between soul and life as well as between soul and spirit is almost obliterated.

With two exceptions the word soul always represents the Hebrew word *nephesh*. Job 30:15 and Isa. 57:16 have no reference to the soul. The latter should be rendered "breath." Apart from these every occurrence of "soul" in the "authorized" may be depended upon to be correct.

But in a multitude of instances *nephesh* has been translated by other expressions. We give a list of these passages so that the student may correct them in his Bible. In all there are about forty-four variations. These are grouped together where the meaning is allied.

The translations of נֶפֶשׁ *nephesh* in the Authorized Version, except where rendered "soul"

any, Lev. 2<sup>1</sup>24<sup>17</sup>Nu. 19<sup>11</sup>Deu. 24<sup>7</sup>  
 appetite, Pr. 23<sup>2</sup>Ec. 6<sup>7</sup>  
 beast, Lev. 24<sup>18</sup> 18 18  
 body, Lev. 21<sup>11</sup>Nu. 6<sup>6</sup>19<sup>13</sup>Hag. 2<sup>13</sup>  
 breath, Job 41<sup>21</sup>  
 creature, Gen. 1<sup>20</sup> 21 24<sup>2</sup>19<sup>10</sup> 12 15 16<sup>1</sup>Lev. 11<sup>46</sup> 46  
 dead, Lev. 19<sup>28</sup>21<sup>1</sup>22<sup>4</sup>Nu. 5<sup>3</sup>Nu. 6<sup>11</sup>Jo. 4<sup>8</sup>  
 dead body, Nu. 9<sup>6</sup> 7 10  
 deadly, Ps. 17<sup>9</sup>  
 desire, Ec. 6<sup>9</sup>Jer. 22<sup>27</sup>44<sup>14</sup>Mic. 7<sup>3</sup>Hab. 2<sup>5</sup>  
 fish, Isa. 19<sup>10</sup>  
 ghost, Job 11<sup>20</sup>Jer. 15<sup>9</sup>  
 heart, Ex. 23<sup>9</sup>Lev. 26<sup>16</sup>Deu. 24<sup>15</sup>1Sa. 2<sup>33</sup>2Sa. 3<sup>21</sup>Ps. 10<sup>3</sup>  
 Pr. 23<sup>7</sup>28<sup>25</sup>31<sup>6</sup>Jer. 42<sup>30</sup>Lam. 3<sup>51</sup>Ez. 25<sup>5</sup> 15<sup>27</sup>31<sup>1</sup>Hos. 4<sup>8</sup>  
 hearty, Pr. 27<sup>9</sup>  
 him, Pr. 6<sup>16</sup>  
 life, Gen. 1<sup>30</sup>4<sup>5</sup> 5<sup>1</sup>19<sup>17</sup> 19<sup>32</sup>30 44<sup>30</sup> 30 Ex. 4<sup>19</sup> 21<sup>23</sup> 23 30  
 Lv. 17<sup>11</sup> 14<sup>14</sup>14<sup>14</sup>Nu. 35<sup>31</sup>Deu. 12<sup>23</sup>23<sup>19</sup>21 21<sup>24</sup>6<sup>1</sup>Jos. 2<sup>13</sup> 14  
 9<sup>24</sup>Jud. 5<sup>19</sup>17<sup>12</sup>18<sup>25</sup> 25 Ru. 4<sup>15</sup>1Sa. 19<sup>5</sup> 11 20<sup>1</sup>22<sup>23</sup> 23  
 23<sup>15</sup> 26<sup>24</sup> 24<sup>28</sup> 21 2Sa. 1<sup>4</sup>14<sup>7</sup>16<sup>11</sup> 18<sup>13</sup> 19<sup>5</sup> 5 5 23<sup>17</sup>  
 1Ki. 1<sup>12</sup>12<sup>23</sup>3<sup>11</sup>19<sup>3</sup> 3 3 4<sup>10</sup>14<sup>20</sup>31 39 39 42 42<sup>2</sup>Ki. 1<sup>13</sup> 13 14  
 7<sup>10</sup>24<sup>24</sup> 1Ch. 11<sup>19</sup> 19 2Ch. 1<sup>11</sup> Est. 7<sup>3</sup> 78<sup>19</sup>16<sup>1</sup> Job 2<sup>4</sup> 6  
 6<sup>11</sup> 13<sup>14</sup>31<sup>39</sup>Ps. 31<sup>13</sup>38<sup>12</sup> Pr. 1<sup>18</sup> 19<sup>6</sup>26<sup>7</sup>23<sup>12</sup>10<sup>13</sup> 8 Isa.  
 15<sup>4</sup>43<sup>4</sup>Jer. 4<sup>30</sup> 11<sup>21</sup> 19<sup>7</sup> 9<sup>21</sup>7 9 22<sup>25</sup> 34<sup>30</sup> 21<sup>38</sup>38<sup>16</sup>30<sup>18</sup>  
 44<sup>30</sup> 30<sup>45</sup>46<sup>28</sup>48<sup>6</sup> 49<sup>37</sup> 51<sup>14</sup> 30 30 Lam. 2<sup>19</sup> 5<sup>9</sup> Ez. 32<sup>19</sup>  
 Jon. 1<sup>14</sup>4<sup>3</sup>

lust, Ex.15<sup>9</sup>Ps.78<sup>18</sup>  
 man, Ex.12<sup>162</sup>Ki.12<sup>41</sup>Ch.5<sup>22</sup>Isa.49<sup>7</sup>  
 me, Nu.23<sup>10</sup>Jud.16<sup>301</sup>Ki.20<sup>32</sup>  
 mind, Gen. 23<sup>8</sup> Deu.18<sup>628</sup> 1Sa.2<sup>352</sup> Sa.17<sup>8</sup> 2Ki.9<sup>15</sup>  
     1Ch.28<sup>9</sup>Jer.15<sup>1</sup>Ez.23<sup>17 18 18 22 28 24<sup>25</sup>36<sup>5</sup></sup>  
 mortally, Deu.19<sup>11</sup>  
 one, Lev.4<sup>27</sup>  
 person, Gen.14<sup>2136</sup>Ex.16<sup>16</sup>Lev.27<sup>2</sup>Nu.5<sup>6191831<sup>19 35</sup></sup>  
     40 40 4635<sup>11 15 39 3035<sup>20</sup></sup>Deu.10<sup>2227<sup>25</sup></sup>Jos.20<sup>3 9</sup>1Sa.22<sup>22</sup>  
     2Sa.14<sup>14</sup>Pr.28<sup>17</sup>Jer.43<sup>652<sup>29</sup>52<sup>30</sup></sup>Ez.16<sup>517<sup>17</sup>27<sup>13</sup>33<sup>6</sup></sup>  
 pleasure, at, Deu. 23<sup>24</sup>Ps.105<sup>22</sup>Jer.34<sup>16</sup>  
 whither will Deu.21<sup>14</sup>  
 will, Ps.27<sup>1241<sup>2</sup></sup>Ez.16<sup>27</sup>  
 would have, Ps.35<sup>25</sup>  
 they, Job 36<sup>14</sup>  
 thing, Lev.11<sup>10</sup>Ez.47<sup>9</sup>  
 self, Lev.11<sup>43 44</sup>Deu.4<sup>15</sup>Jos.23<sup>11</sup>Ki.19<sup>4</sup>Est.4<sup>139<sup>31</sup></sup>Job  
     18<sup>4 32<sup>2</sup></sup>Ps.131<sup>2</sup>Isa.5<sup>14 46<sup>2</sup>47<sup>14</sup></sup>Jer.3<sup>11 17<sup>21</sup>37<sup>9</sup></sup>51<sup>14</sup>  
     Am.2<sup>14 16<sup>3</sup></sup>Jon.4<sup>6</sup>  
*Omitted*, Gen. 37<sup>21</sup> Lev.24<sup>17 18</sup> Nu.31<sup>35</sup> Deu.19<sup>622<sup>26</sup></sup>  
     Jud.18<sup>25</sup> 1Sa.22<sup>3</sup> 1Ch.5<sup>21</sup> Isa.3<sup>2056<sup>11</sup></sup> Jer.2<sup>2440<sup>14 15</sup></sup>

By combining this list with the occurrences of "soul" the student will have at his command every context which the Hebrew Scriptures afford for the study of this most important term.

The following specimen from a projected Greek concordance will help those who have no concordance of the original. Every reference is given, segregated into groups according to the grammatical relation which the word sustains to its context. Thus "soul" is in one line while "souls," in the plural, is in another line. The genitive of the Greek is found following "of soul" and "of souls." The dative follows "in soul" and "in souls." The accusative, our English objective, is not distinguished in form from the nominative, but rather by its place in the sentence. The vocative is indicated by an exclamation point, thus "soul!" In each case those



references which have no article are given first, then those which have it, prefixed by "the s," on the same line.

soul  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ,  $\eta$  *psuche*:  $\text{נֶפֶשׁ}$  *nephesh*.

The result of imparting breath to the man, Gn2<sup>7</sup>; in the blood, Lev17<sup>14</sup>; limited to moving creatures, Gn1<sup>20</sup>; distinguished from life, Gn2<sup>7</sup>; from spirit and body 1Th5<sup>23</sup>—a *sentient* being. *Fig.* the person as viewed from the standpoint of his sensations or experiences, Re6<sup>9</sup>.

soul, Ac3<sup>23</sup>Ro13<sup>1</sup>Re16<sup>3</sup> the s, Mt6<sup>25</sup>12<sup>18</sup>26<sup>38</sup>Mr14<sup>34</sup>

Lu1<sup>46</sup>12<sup>23</sup>Jn12<sup>27</sup>Ac2<sup>31</sup>4<sup>32</sup>20<sup>10</sup>1Th5<sup>23</sup>He10<sup>38</sup>3Jn1<sup>2</sup>

souls, Ac2<sup>41</sup>1Pe3<sup>20</sup> the ss, Ac27<sup>37</sup>

of soul, Ac27<sup>22</sup>Ep6<sup>6</sup>Col3<sup>23</sup>He4<sup>12</sup>10<sup>39</sup> of the s, M16<sup>28</sup>

Mr8<sup>37</sup>12<sup>30</sup> 33 Lu10<sup>27</sup>Ro16<sup>4</sup>He6<sup>19</sup>1Pe2<sup>11</sup>Re18<sup>14</sup>

of souls, 1Pe1<sup>9</sup> of the ss, Ac27<sup>102</sup>C12<sup>15</sup>He13<sup>17</sup>1Pe2<sup>25</sup>

in soul, Mt6<sup>25</sup>Ac2<sup>43</sup> in the s M22<sup>37</sup>Lu12<sup>19</sup> 22Ph2<sup>30</sup>

in souls, Ac7<sup>14</sup> in the souls, M11<sup>29</sup>He12<sup>3</sup>

soul, M10<sup>28</sup>Mr3<sup>4</sup>Lu6<sup>9</sup>Ro2<sup>9</sup>1C15<sup>45</sup>Ja5<sup>20</sup>2Pe2<sup>8</sup>

the s, Mt2<sup>20</sup>10<sup>28</sup> 39 3916<sup>25</sup> 25 2620<sup>28</sup>Mr8<sup>35</sup> 35 3610<sup>45</sup>

Lu2<sup>38</sup>9<sup>24</sup> 2412<sup>20</sup>14<sup>26</sup>17<sup>33</sup>Jn10<sup>11</sup> 15 17 24 12<sup>25</sup> 2513<sup>37</sup> 38

15<sup>13</sup>Ac2<sup>27</sup>20<sup>24</sup>Ro11<sup>32</sup>C1<sup>23</sup>1Jn3<sup>16</sup>Re12<sup>11</sup>

souls, Lu9<sup>56</sup>2Pe2<sup>14</sup>Re8<sup>9</sup>18<sup>13</sup> the ss, Lu21<sup>19</sup>Ac14<sup>2</sup> 22

15<sup>24</sup> 261Th2<sup>8</sup>Ja1<sup>21</sup>1Pe1<sup>22</sup>4<sup>19</sup>1J3<sup>16</sup>Re6<sup>9</sup>20<sup>4</sup>

soull Lu12<sup>10</sup>

We suggest that these passages be translated uniformly. It is no crime to cross out mere human deviations and insert Divine verities in their place. If soul meant "life," as our translators so often suggest, why was it not written with the Greek word for "life" in the original instead of the word for "soul?" We have already convinced ourselves of the fact that soul and life are utterly distinct by the phrase "living soul." If we translate the word *nephesh* in that phrase as it is so often translated, we come to the absurd conclusion that, as the result of the impartation of the breath of life, man became a "living *life*." Could Job have said, "My *life* is weary of my life?"

The distinction between soul and spirit is no less pronounced. Besides the passage in Hebrews, which gives the word of God the monopoly of this distinction, we have the list "spirit and soul and body" (1 Th. 5:23). It is needless to say that this does not enter into the relation of the soul to the spirit and body at all, but only to its blameless preservation unto the coming of the Lord. The fact that the soul is the effect of the union of spirit with body is neither taught nor refuted by this text. It is thoroughly in harmony with the two-fold constitution of man. For, while the soul is not one of the units of which man is constituted, its condition in view of His coming has a place quite as important as the body and spirit. And the preservation of the entire man involves the soul just as much as the two units on which it is based.

Now, instead of soul and spirit being the same, they are put in striking contrast in the discussion of the differences between the first man and the last Adam. The first became a living *soul*, the last a life-giving *Spirit*. This contrast is more cogent still in the adjectives "spiritual" and "soulish." In the second chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians this distinction is obscured by the rendering "natural." Not the natural, but the *soulish* man does not receive the spirit's things. This is reserved for the spiritual man. So, too in the fifteenth chapter. The body is there called a *soulish*, not a "natural" body (1 Cor. 15:44, 44, 46) in contrast to the spiritual body of the resurrection.

The truth that soul refers to sensation or conscious experience is really acknowledged by the translators themselves, though they concealed it from their readers by their rendering. Many who think of the soul as the seat of our highest spiritual faculties would be surprised

to know that it has its proper place between such words as "earthly" and "demoniacal."

In Jas. 3:15 we have: "Earthly, soulish, demoniacal." The translators rendered it: "Earthly, *sensual*, devilish." Here, however, if we take the word *sensual* in its present day acceptation, they have overshot the mark. But in their days it probably meant very nearly what *soulish* means—one who is swayed by physical sensations. The crowning proof of its antipathy to spirit lies in its last occurrence (Jude 19). There we read of those who are "soulish, *having not the spirit.*" Here again the translators render it "*sensual.*"

Having noted that there is a distinction between life and spirit and soul, we are now ready to inquire more closely into the characteristics which define the latter. The first few occurrences in Genesis will supply us with the information which we need at this point. There we find developed the broad distinctions between flora and fauna, plants and animals.

It is most instructive to note the contrast between the introduction of plants on the third day of God's work of restoring the earth and the creation of living souls on the fifth and sixth days. Plants are, indeed, living *organisms* quite as much as animals, yet they differ from animals in a number of important particulars which are duly emphasized. Plants do not *swarm*. But the first mention of living souls brings out this characteristic. "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living souls" (Gen. 1:20). This rendering may, perhaps, best convey to our minds the fact that the words "bring forth abundantly" and "moving" of the common text are but different grammatical forms of one expression in the Hebrew. To "swarm" or breed corresponds with the seed of the plants, but seems also to involve the idea of

motion, which is further developed in the next occurrence of the word "soul."

Plants cannot *move*. They are rooted to their place. But not so with animals. This is brought out in the second statement: "And God created . . . every living soul that *moves*" (Gen. 1:21).

Plants are never called souls, yet, like the animals, they derive their nourishment from the soil and carbon from the air. But in them this combination causes no sensation or consciousness, which is the chief characteristic of a soul. Generally speaking it is only those forms of life which can move from place to place, which possess the further function of sensing the outward world, of being conscious of their own existence.

Now when, a few verses later, man is brought upon the scene, we are informed that he, too, becomes a living soul. What shall this convey to our minds? Simply that he, too, like the animals, would propagate by breeding, would be able to move from place to place, would have the power of sensing the world about him and a conscious realization of his own existence. He is not a plant, but an animal and possesses these endowments in common with other animals.

Instead of this phrase marking a difference between the man and the previously created animals, it shows his similarity to them. In fact, until we study and appreciate what has already been said of living souls, we are at a distinct loss to realize what is meant when the man becomes a living soul.

A striking recognition of man's distinctly *human* attributes is found in the Apostle's address at Athens (Acts 17:28). The spirit is recognized in the statement that "In Him we live." The soul is implied in the word "move," and the body in the third item, which is the

usual word for "are," for the identification of the man with his material structure is consistently confirmed throughout the Scriptures. "In Him we are living and being moved and are" is a clear indication of the apostle Paul's analysis of mankind. And that he considered it most elementary is evidenced by the fact that he does not hesitate in proclaiming it to unbelieving idolators.

Plants have life as well as animals, but it is not a conscious life. They do not see and feel and hear and taste. This is the force of being a "living soul."

The connection of soul with the senses is evidenced by a selection of interesting passages. The taste is especially intended in such scriptures as "whatsoever they *soul* lusteth after" (Deut. 12:15, 20, 21), "thy *soul* longeth to eat flesh" (Deut. 12:20), "eat grapes thy fill *at thine own pleasure*" (Deut. 23:24), "Their *soul* abhorreth all manner of meat" (Ps. 107:18), "a thief, if he steal to satisfy his *soul*" (Pro. 6:30), "eateth to the satisfying of his *soul*" (Pro. 13:25), "an honeycomb, sweet to the *soul*" (Pro. 16:24), "if thou be a man given to *appetite*" (Pro. 23:2), "The full *soul* loatheth an honeycomb, but to the hungry *soul* every bitter thing is sweet." (Pro. 27:7) "should make his *soul* enjoy good" (Marg. or delight his *senses*) (Ecc. 2:24), "the *appetite* is not filled" (Ecc. 6:7). "to make empty the *soul* of the hungry" (Isa. 32:6), In all of these the point lies in the sensation accompanying the use of food, the physical satisfaction which the soil furnishes when we partake of its products.

This is amply confirmed by our Lord's words: "Be not anxious for your *soul*, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink. . . . Is not the *soul* more than food . . .?" (Mt. 6:25). These creature needs is what the soul craves, yet true satisfaction is not to be found in them. Even as He said on another occasion:

"For what shall a man be profited if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his *soul*? or what shall a man give in exchange for his *soul*?" (Mt. 16:26). This is the evil which the wise man saw: "A man to whom God giveth riches, wealth and honor, so that he lacketh nothing for his *soul* of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but an alien eateth it. . ." (Ecc. 6:2).

So, too, he who prefers the indulgence of his physical senses to loyalty to Christ, who shrinks from the discomfort and distress which His disciples must endure, he shall lose his soul in the time of His exaltation. But he who "loses his soul" now for Christ's sake, he will gain it in that day. In the phraseology of today, to "lose your soul" is the very worst calamity which can occur. It is equivalent to eternal damnation. Yet our Lord used these very words and urged His disciples to "lose their souls." "Whosoever will save his *soul* shall lose it." (Mt. 16:25). He who would save his soul (which is continually put before the sinner today) is discouraged and restrained by the fact that such will lose their souls. Once we allow the true scriptural force of "soul" the passage is luminous with meaning and "the salvation of the soul" takes on an entirely different color. It is never once used in Paul's epistles. In fact he speaks but very seldom of the soul. Indeed he highly commends Epaphroditus for "risking his soul" for the sake of his fellow Philippians. This risk was evident in his sickness and the depression which accompanied it. Paul could never commend anyone risking their salvation for any cause. But in Hebrews and James' and Peter's first epistle, which concern us with the physical blessing of the earthly Kingdom, in these letters we read of the salvation of the soul.

The term "soul" is often used as a figure of speech to denote the person from the standpoint of his sensations or experience. This is called a metonymy of the adjunct, because an object is characterized by some closely related thing. Thus we speak of a ship as a "bottom" when we refer to its cargo, or we may call it a "sail" when we call attention to its speed or appearance. So human beings, when we wish to point specially to their feelings or sensations or experiences, may be called "souls." A familiar instance is the phrase "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Eze. 18:4). Now they had been using this proverb in Israel: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." In other words, they accused Jehovah with punishing them for the misdeeds of their fathers. In reply Jehovah says that the soul that sins—the one who actually experienced the sensations connected with the sin—that soul shall die, and not one that never was experimentally connected with the sin.

With this key in hand, how much more impressive and harmonious is the proverb, "A righteous man regardeth the *soul* of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." It is not simply the *life* of the beast which is here spoken of, but the comfort and strength and sustenance of the beast which is the object of the righteous man's solicitude. He will not overload it; nor will he underfeed it. He will see that it is well taken care of at all times. That this is the real thought the second member of the couplet confirms, for all of this is in contrast with the cruelty of the wicked.

And how luminous does our Lord's invitation become in the light of a true understanding of the soul! "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden . . . and ye shall find rest unto your *souls*." (Mt. 11:28-29).

It is the soul that feels the pressure and distress of life's burdens and responsibilities and it is the soul that finds its rest in His yoke.

And the same light shines from that striking contrast—the rich man who said to his soul: "Soul, thou hast many goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry." But his soul was never to enjoy the feast he had prepared for it.

Therefore He told them not to be anxious for their soul, *what they should eat*. We would have said that eating was a care of the *body*, not the soul. But He knew better, and, while He spoke of clothing as connected with the body, eating was for the soul. Indeed all living souls need nourishment, but not necessarily covering. No soul can live without food, but the animals, except man, need no protection from the elements beyond what is provided for them by nature.

Just as the divine illustration of the spirit was in the *breath*, so we have the divine picture of the soul in the *blood*. Much has been lost by the arbitrary change of the word soul to "life" in the passages where this is clearly taught. "The *soul* of all flesh is the blood thereof" (Gen. 9:45; Lev. 17:11, 14, 14). So that our Saviour's sacrifice is graphically described by Isaiah: "He *poured out* His soul unto death." As to fact, it was blood which He poured out; as to truth it was His soul.

Now, why should the blood be chosen to picture the soul to us? We have already seen that the soul has its origin, not in the body merely, nor yet in the spirit alone, but in their combination. And what could better portray this than the blood? It is fed from food by means of assimilation and thus is linked to the body and the soil; it is fed from the air by means of respiration and is thus linked to the breath and spirit.



Having learned that soul is synonymous with sensation and that the soul of the flesh is in the blood, we are prepared for the further truth that "it is the *blood* that maketh an atonement for the *soul*." (Lev. 17:11).

Now, as the soul is in the blood, what is more proper as a means of propitiation than blood? The same holds good in the higher sphere of justification or acquittal. The blood of Christ, the memorial of His sensations or sufferings for sins, is the pledge of our safety from coming indignation. He poured out His soul, for when the soldier pierced His side, the blood flowed forth (John 19:34). And when He sought to calm them, He could not say (what would have been most natural) that a spirit has no flesh and *blood*, but "a spirit hath not flesh and *bones*, as ye see Me have." (Lu. 24:39). In perfect concordance with this we are told that "there is a *soulish* body and there is a spiritual body." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit in contrast with the living soul of the first Adam. Flesh and *blood*, indeed, does not inherit the Kingdom of God, for the blood is badge of a soulish body, but flesh and bones denote a spiritual body. The statement that His body never saw corruption (Acts 2:31) in the tomb is enough to show that it was the very same body which endured the suffering of Calvary. And this is but beyond question by the nail prints and the spear wound. And the further fact that it is bloodless shows us that propitiation is accomplished. The "blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" had been poured out.

The just and merciful law which Jehovah gave to His people Israel, while it insisted on the death of countless victims in sacrifice and countenanced the slaying of animals for food, made due provision that they should not suffer. It was obligatory that the hunter pour out

the blood of an animal taken in the chase (Lev. 17:13) and blood was never allowed to be eaten.

To this very day the slaying of animals for food is the work of a Jewish rabbi who is specially trained for the work. He has a keen bladed knife with which he severs the animal's throat and drains off the blood. The carcass is called "Kosher" meat. No other will be eaten by the pious Jew. This is far better than the usual practice of stunning an animal about to be slaughtered, for it not only eliminates suffering for the animal, but avoids the possibility of tainting its flesh by means of the blood during the process of dying.

The blood of the sin offerings was poured out at the foundation of the altar (Lev. 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34; 5:9). When their souls were poured out these souls went under the altar. It is said that in Solomon's temple there was a vast pit under the altar to receive the rivers of blood which flowed from the thousands of sacrifices which were offered upon it. So that we must seek the soul of the sacrifices under the altar, where the blood had been poured.

It is the suffering and anguish which God's witnesses endure that calls for vengeance. When Abel died his blood cried from the *ground*, whence it had been poured. But when His martyrs die for the sake of their testimony to the one great Sacrifice, their blood is, as it were, poured out under *the altar* and their death ascends as a sweet savor to God. Hence we read of those under the fifth seal (Rev. 6:9) who were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held that their souls were under the altar, where it was customary to pour the blood of the sacrifices. And the reason for the figure characterizing them as "souls" is very evident, for they cry for vengeance on those in the land who had shed their

blood. It was the sufferings unto death which they had endured for His sake which cried aloud for vengeance. We do not imagine that Abel's blood, which had been swallowed by the ground, actually became endowed with the organs of speech and made an articulate audible appeal to Jehovah. Neither do we need to imagine that the souls of His martyrs received a miraculous embodiment for the purpose of crying aloud for vengeance on their adversaries. To say the least it would take a large altar to cover them all or very small souls to be cramped in such numbers in so small a space. Such a dismal bloody, ashy pit would hardly be a fit recompense for their previous tribulation!

Many attempts have been made to define the soul. Among these may be mentioned the suggestion that it refers to man as an *organism*. This is chiefly founded upon those passages in which a dead soul is translated a dead "body," which could not be touched without defilement. Yet these instances are better understood when we remember the figurative use to which the word is put in connection with death. When death is viewed as an experience, it is the soul which departs; when it chronicles the end of life, it is the spirit which expires. It all depends upon the viewpoint.

That the soul is not merely another name for "organism" may be seen from several considerations. Plants are organisms, yet they have no soul. They are living organisms but not living souls. The glorified body, too, could hardly be *contrasted* to a living organism for it continues to be such even when it becomes a spiritual body. To call a soulish body an organized body tells us nothing more than is already contained in the word body. Let us put the word "organized" for soulish and it will be evident that it will not do. "The *organized*

man receiveth not the things of the spirit" (1 Co. 2:14); earthly, *organized*, devilish (Jas. 3:15); *organized*, having not the spirit"—these are discords which hinder, rather than help, our apprehension of the true force of the term "soul."

The context gives us the needed clue to a clear distinction between soul and spirit. The soul senses the material, tangible, visible, physical sphere; the spirit moves in the realm of the etherial, the invisible, the metaphysical. The soul *sees* the letters upon the page, the spirit *perceives* the meaning which they convey. Terms which primarily refer to soul have been transferred to spirit. We *taste* food with the soul and we *taste* God's goodness with the spirit. We *feel* the comforting warmth of the sunshine with the soul, and we *feel* the effects of His love in our spirits.

It is not that soul is essentially bad and spirit essentially good. Nor yet the reverse, for many evil things, such as pride, may be spiritual rather than soulish. Yet, as the delights of the senses are satisfied by the physical, so the spirit craves the metaphysical. The prevailing tendency is towards allowing the soul to rule, giving full scope to the gratification of the senses. This is because the body is a soulish body. It exaggerates the importance of its sensations. It does not respond to the spirit.

To capitulate, just as human *existence* is joined to the soil (for the *man* was formed of the soil before the spirit was imparted), and as spirit is the precursor of *life*, so the soul is the seat of *sensation*. And for human beings, sensation is impossible, except where there is a material body vivified by a spirit. Sensation does not depend upon a distinct entity or organism apart from either body or spirit, but rather upon their union.

## THE ALL

UNDER the above heading we have in preparation an exhaustive article dealing with the limitations of the word which is usually rendered "all". It seems to be supposed that we base our belief in the reconciliation of all on the presence of the article "the" before "all". The article, it is urged, *limits* while its absence denotes universality.

We suggest, however, that all words are limited by their context irrespective of the presence or absence of the article. A single sentence settles this: "But when He saith 'All things (no article) are put under Him' *it is manifest* that He is excepted, Which did put (the) all things under him." From this it is also manifest that both "all" and "*the* all" were commonly understood by the Corinthians as including the entire universe, even including God Himself, unless the context limits it.

Again, in the phrase "All in all" the second "all", which defines the sphere of God's Allness in the consummation, is *without* the article, which, it is admitted, may denote universality. Hence the argument as to presence or absence of the article refutes itself.

In either case the truth stands firm. "*The* all" is to is to be reconciled to God so that He will be All in "all".

We welcome every effort to search into the minute exactitude of the Original. To enable the reader who is unable to consult the Greek to get at the facts and form their own conclusions, we hope to present an ultimate concordance of the word in question.

## THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN ECCLESIASTES

### 7. LIGHT AMID THE SHADOWS

THE whole of Ecclesiastes is now before us. Undertaking an investigation with a view of finding out what is good for Adam's sons, our thinker has arrived, 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 golden age of peace. The unraveling of the universal plan is not complete; for the totality of things is pronounced in-Creator of both good and evil, and, as the Highest, watches over His creation and leads it through blood and strife to a comprehensible.

As thou knowest not the way of the wind,  
nor how the bones grow in the womb of her that  
is with child; even so thou knowest not the work  
of God who does the whole (11:5).

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 his 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. Its practical thoughts are two—immovable faith in God, and the duty of happiness.

The Fifth Book (11:7-12:7) gathers up the threads. Its opening phrase breathes the serenity springing from a faith grounded on the hope that creation's goal is the perfection of the Creator.

Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing  
it is for the eyes to behold the sun.

In this sweet, winsome spirit he brings home to the heart the morale in his own inimitable way.

Remove provocation from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh; for youth and the prime of life are vanity. The brevity of life is a reason to make the most of it. Old age with its infirmities will soon overtake you; do not indulge in follies lest your declining years be saddened by regret. Then follows a most exquisite *tour-de-force* of symbolism under which are veiled the symptoms of senile decay followed by death. Probably some of the symbols are lost; but on the whole it is possible, without straining, to see a possible interpretation for each. The poetic beauty of the passage is marvellous. In interpreting symbolism, as with all the higher forms of allegory, the first critical requirement is restraint. To press details to too literal significance is gratuitous and risky exegesis. I attempt no more than a simple suggestion for each detail.

*Or ever the sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars be darkened.* Since the opening words of Book V take the "light" and "sun" as symbols of the happiness of conscious existence, it seems evident that the *darkening*

of this light is the gradual fading of the joy of living.—*And the clouds return after the rain.* This symbol carries the idea of the preceding a step farther. In youth we quickly rally from the overstraining of health; this is a storm that quickly clears up. In age the rallying power is gone: “the clouds return after the rain.”—*The keepers of the house shall tremble.* Probably the trembling of hands and arms.—*The strong men shall bow themselves:* the stooping frame.—*The grinders fail because they are few:* the teeth.—*Those that look out of the windows be darkened:* sight becoming dim.—*The doors shall be shut in the street:* probably refers to clinched jaws. *When the sound of the grinding is low, and one shall rise up at the voice of a bird, and the daughters of music shall be brought low:* failing appetite, early waking or short sleeping, low tone of the voice.—*They shall be afraid of that which is high, and terror shall be in the way:* the unsteady gait of old age compared to the gait of a frightened person.—*The almond tree shall blossom, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and the caper-berry shall burst;* the last stage of the decay: the failing powers at last give way, and then the symbolism is dropped: “Man goeth to his eonian home; and the mourners go about the street.”

So far we have had symbols for failure of powers; now for actual death and dissolution. *Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken:* the simile of a golden lamp, suspended by a silver cord, suddenly snapping its cord and breaking, the light becoming extinguished.—*Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern:* sudden cessation of every day functions. Then follows the dropping of the symbolism: “And the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto God who gave it.” The latter part of this sentence by analogy



with the preceding line must be interpreted to mean no more than that the man becomes just what he was before he was born.

The salient points of the Epilogue (12:8-12) have been dealt with in connection with the Prologue. There remains a word to be said regarding the conclusion of the book expressed by the writer in 12:13, 14. "The conclusion of the word let us hear: Fear God and keep his commandments: for therein is the whole task of man." דבר *davar*, "word", rendered "matter" in R. V., points, even without an article, to the precise discourse of this book, and therefore to the entirety of the "words of Kobleth" in 1:1, דבר is frequently used in this collective sense (I Sam. 8:17; Josh. 21:48, *etc.*). By "commandments" neither the decalogue nor the observances of the law are meant. This is evident from the fact that neither are mentioned. The reference is rather to the "times", or God's seasons of approving things. He has already spoken (in Book IV) of God's "plan" in contrast to man's "many plans", and now the ground thought is advanced that man's whole task is to attune his whole life with God's plan. The necessity for this is reinforced, in the following verse, by the thought of a coming season of rectification. Many have been misled as to real import of the concluding statement by the wrong idea which confounds judgment with punishment. When the Palmist prays "Judge me, O God", (Ps. 43:1) he does not mean "Punish me", but uphold my right, vindicate me. When we read "He shall judge the poor of the people" (Ps. 72:4) the thought is not that the king will punish the poor; it means that he would do right by them. Thus the conclusion to the book lays stress on the idea expressed in the course of investigation (8:6) that rectification is one of the appointed "times" in the working out God's plan.

## THE APOCALYPTIC SYMBOLS

THE introductory symbol of this section, the unveiling of the ark of the covenant, is a symbol of God, not as the creator of the universe, but as the divine ruler of a chosen people. The reappearance of the ark tells us that the set time to favor Zion has arrived. The woman with child is an echo of Isaiah's Immanuel, while the man child is but an elaboration of Isa. 66:6-7. The appearance of the dragon is surrounded by nature symbolism, a fact which reminds the reader of the cosmic catastrophe which accompanied the entrance of sin. The symbol of the dragon is founded on such passages as Job 3:8, 40:15; Ezek. 29:3; Isa. 27:1. The conflict in heaven between the forces of Michael and those of the dragon calls up to mind Paul's statement concerning the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies (Eph. 6:12). The flight of the woman to the wilderness and her preservation there by God is an echo of Hosea's faithless wife lured to the wilderness (Hos. 2:14).

### THE TWO BEASTS

The beast rising out of the sea is an echo from Daniel's visions into which are woven details from other portions of Scripture. The "head smitten unto death" is in all probability an echo of the words to the serpent: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." In the phrase "And the dragon gave unto him authority . . . over every tribe and people and tongue and

nation" is a suggestion of the temptation of our Lord in the wilderness of Judah.

#### CHAPTERS FOURTEEN AND FIFTEEN

It is said of the one hundred and forty four thousand that "they are virgins". The whole context proves that virginity is here used as a symbol of separation from defiling influences. It is only a plural modification of the final symbol of the Lamb's bride. The harvest is an echo of Joel (3:13) and Matthew (13), and the treading of the widepress is a symbol of Isaiah (63:1-3). The final detail, "even unto the bridles of the horses" is an echo from Isaiah's Assyrian flood (8:8). The singing of the song of Moses and of the Lamb by the harp players on the glassy sea is very suggestive. The initial salvation of Israel from Egypt has grown into the salvation of all nations.

#### THE BOWLS

In prophecy the bowl is the regular symbol of judgment: compare Jeremiah's cup of the Lord's fury (25:15). The seven last plagues are suggestive throughout of the plagues of Egypt intensified. The last plague—the hail—with its mention of "the weight of a talent" seems to connect itself with Zechariah's vision (5:5-11). Under the name of Babylon is summed up the long series of ancient prophetic oracles. To understand these chapters the reader must prepare himself by a careful reading of the prophetic denunciations of Babylon instead of wasting time in reading the history of the Roman Catholic church.

Habakkuk's ode of Jehovah's descent in judgment should be read together with the descent of Christ pictured in Revelation nineteen. The invasion of Gog

and Magog is an echo of Ezekiel (chapters 38 and 39). The throne of judgment and the books is from Daniel (7:10). The new heavens and earth are mentioned in Isaiah (65:17; 66:22). The picture of the new Jerusalem brings together Isaiah's glowing pictures of Jerusalem in her glory (55:11 sqq.), while the measuring of the city with a reed and the river of life are echoes of the final vision of Ezekiel.

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## Our Question Box

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*How can it be shown that "death" in 1 Cor. 15:26 refers to the death state and not to the cessation of dying?*

What is the subject of the passage? It is resurrection. Now the cessation of the act of dying is not resurrection at all; in fact it removes the necessity of resurrection. Furthermore the immediate subject is not *keeping* alive, but *making* alive—vivification—and the abolition of the act of dying makes no one alive, while the abolition of the death state makes all alive. This is the proposition the apostle has before him.

Furthermore, this abolition must not precede the abolition of *all* sovereignty and all *authority* and power. Now it is true that in the last eon, there shall be no *more* death—the death state shall receive no additions in that eon—yet this is not its *abolition*, for the lake of fire (which is the second death) continues throughout its length and sovereignty and authority is *not* abolished. This is clear from the fact that there are *kings* (Rev. 21:24) and the Lambkin occupies the *throne* with God (Rev. 22:1), and His servants continue to *reign* (Rev. 22:5). It is not until the end of this eon, at the consummation, that the lake of fire, into which death has been cast, and which alone comprises the death state, is abolished.

*Are we not to understand "all rule" (1 Cor. 15:24) as referring to opposing rule only as is explained in the next verse?*

It is always dangerous to add to the Word of God even in our thoughts. The sentence itself is very explicit and makes use of a strong figure of speech to assure us that *all* sovereignty and *all* authority and power are to be abolished. The repetition of the word "all" is unnecessary to the sense and is intended to emphasize the fact that not some kinds of sovereignty but *all* is to be abolished. That sovereignty which does not oppose God is included is further evident from the fact that the sovereignty of the Son (which surely cannot be classed with *opposing* rule) is included, for He, too, lays aside His scepter at that time. Now, the next phrase "*for* He must reign till every enemy has been put under His feet" does not limit the previous statement. The conjunction "*for*" (*gar*) does not limit. It gives the reason. Neither should we read "the last enemy to be abolished is death." The emphasis is on "*last*." It stands before the word enemy when, in Greek, it should normally come after it. So that we should read "The *last* enemy . . ." In other words, all sovereignty and authority and power held by anyone except God Himself is inimical to God's purpose to be All in all His creatures. So long as there is a go between of any kind, whether priest or king, there

is a measure of estrangement between God and His creatures which must not continue permanently. When He is their All, when access is unhindered, when there is perfect subjection, then an intermediary is only in the way. *All* sovereignty and *all* authority and power are "opposing" forces, hence *all* are to be abolished. These, it must be remembered, refer only to delegate rule, not to the sovereignty of God Himself. Under Him the "kingdom" continues as a paternal despotism, if we may be allowed the use of such an expression.

*Does not God harden the hearts of those who do not believe so that they cannot believe and so are finally lost?*

God does indeed harden hearts, but such scriptures as Mt. 13:12-15; 25:29; Mk. 4:24-25 and Jno. 12:37-40 do not record His reason for so doing. The purpose of God in Israel's unbelief is fully treated in the eleventh of Romans. There we read that God locks *all* up together in distrust. Why? *In order that He may have mercy on all.*

*If Christ's words are not final in the case of Judas, how can we know they are final in the case of those who were not lost?*

The Lord was careful to refrain from the use of the word "final." He never said that anyone was "finally" lost or "finally" saved. All of this belongs to the times of the eons, in which nothing is "final." Judas was *lost*, the eleven were *saved*. He will suffer affliction and anguish for his awful crime; they will enjoy the summit of earthly blessing and glory. But when it comes to *final* things we must look to other scriptures which speak of final things. If God had revealed a final state in which all would eventually be lost, then blessing would be limited to the eons and would terminate with them. But as He has revealed an ultimate in which all are saved, we need only believe Him, both as to His severe judgments on those who are lost during the eons and His reconciling grace at their close.

*If repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ are essential to salvation, how can Judas and the devils be saved?*

That Judas regretted his action we are plainly told (Mt. 27:3). But it must never be conceded that repentance and faith are "essential to salvation." Such a statement is far too sweeping. These are essential to an entrance into the *Kingdom*, but nowhere are we told that Paul includes repentance in the gospel of God, or in the "gospel of the Mystery," which is in force at present. The necessary elements of salvation change with each economy. Now all that is demanded is *faith*, so to

agree with grace (Rom. 4:16). In the day of Jehovah, *confession* will be added (Rom. 10:9). Then only those who invoke the name of Jehovah will be saved, for these only will endure to the end. Salvation, no matter how much of the creature element may be introduced, is all of God, and He alone has the right to lay down the conditions. We have no right to insist that He always acts on the same principles, for He has not in the past and will not in the future. And if He should insist on repentance on the part of the demons, He would not be at a loss to grant it to them. The whole question is simply this: Is God going to reconcile the universe to Himself or not? If He says He will, it is foolish to put imaginary hindrances in His way and it is wicked to wrest His own word so that He contradicts Himself. Those who take Heb. 2:16 as a proof that salvation is not for angels, must not forget that, if this is true, it must follow that it is not for the nations either, who are not of the seed of Abraham.

*Is not the wilful sinner finally blotted out of the book of life?*

Psa. 9:5 makes it clear how long the blotting out is to last. As the LXX renders it, it will be "for the eon and for the eon of the eon." That is it will be for the two succeeding eons, up to the consummation. Or, in other words, *up to the final state*. This is in exact accord with the passages which teach that such will have their place in the lake of fire (Rev. 13:8; 3:5).

*Is there not a great gulf fixed so that no one can pass from death to life?*

The great gulf of Luke 16:26 has no reference to a final state. This is stated as being *hades*, and *hades* itself is cast into the lake of fire, so that there will be no *hades* long before the final state.

*When it is said that the "last state" of the deliberately wicked is worse than the first, is not this the final state?*

This is an illustration of the wicked generation to whom the Lord spoke (Mt. 12:45; 2 Pet. 2:20). The context limits the expression to demon possession. There is no comparison between the time *before* he was possessed by demons and the second time they enter him. Neither was it any reference to any time after they leave him. The terms "first" and "last" are often used relatively, not absolutely. Peter himself (2 Pet. 3:3) speaks of the "last" days. No one attempts to take this absolutely for we know that these days precede His coming, after which come the days of refreshing. The resurrection of life is often spoken of as at the "last" day. Christ was seen "last" by the Apostle Paul. Does this mean that no one shall ever see Him again?

*Does Eph. 1:10 teach the destiny of all creatures in eternity?*

Eph. 1:10 has no reference to "eternity" if the time following the consummation is referred to by that expression. In "eternity" Christ is not presented as the Head of all but as having handed over His leadership, for He delivers up the Kingdom to the Father that God may be All in all. Eph. 1:10 refers to the eon of the eon, the final of the series, when God subordinates all to the Son, but not to post eonian perfection when all sovereignty and authority and power are abolished.

*What logical ground is there for changing "things" to "persons" in Eph. 1:10 or Col. 1:20?*

A reference to a concordance will give ample logical grounds for making the word "things" include persons. When the apostle assures the Corinthians that all *things* were theirs, what did he mean? Did he include persons? Were Paul and Apollos and Cephas persons or *things*? Even in the authorized version, then, "things" is applied to persons. We read "that holy *thing* which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Lu. 1:35). Surely we must not degrade Him to a *thing*.

The word "thing" does not occur in the original of the passages in question. It is simply the translator's attempt to render the so-called "neuter" gender of the word for "all." Now this "gender" is simply an indefinite form which may be applied to things or persons or to both at the same time. The word for *little child*, for instance, is in the so-called "neuter" gender, yet no one would argue from this that little children were not persons, but *things*.

How did Paul's readers in those days understand this expression? In 1 Co. 15:27 we read: "He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith 'All things are put under Him,' it is manifest that *He* is excepted which did put all things under Him." We will not pause to point out the emptiness and absurdity of putting all *things* under His feet. Persons are surely included when the apostle is solicitous lest he should be understood as including *God Himself* in the phrase. We have quoted from the common version which refers to Him as "which." When the translation was made "which" was applied to persons as well as things and the word "things" had no such exclusive use as the question involves.

To be *above* all things and to *fill* all things are very empty glories, indeed, unless there is some reference to persons (Eph. 4:10).

How can "all *things*" be "made alive" or rather "preserved alive" as the true reading is (1 Tim. 6:13)? How shall we understand the exclusion of persons when all *things* are to be in *subjection* under His feet (Heb. 2:8)? And how can all *things* (it is the same expression in the original) *speak* (Rev. 5:13)?



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