

# Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
FOR GOD AND HIS  
WORD

VOLUME 104

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## *Grace*

Grace! 'tis a charming sound,  
Harmonious to the ear;  
Heaven with the echo shall resound,  
And all the earth shall hear.

'Twas grace contrived the way  
To save poor sinful man;  
And all the steps that grace display,  
Which drew God's wondrous plan.

Grace taught my roving feet  
To tread the heavenly road;  
And new supplies each hour I meet,  
While pressing on to God.

Grace all His work shall crown  
Until the end of days;  
It lays in Heaven the topmost stone  
And well deserves our praise.

Lowell Mason

## EDITORIAL

THE brief article by George L. Rogers contained herein entitled "The Type of Teaching" (p.43), sets the theme for this entire issue of *Unsearchable Riches*. The words of this title are from those of the apostle Paul where he declares to the Romans, "Now thanks be to God that you were slaves of Sin, yet [now] you obey from the heart *the type of teaching* to which you were given over" (Rom.6:17).

"The type of teaching' referred to in Romans 6:17 was Paul's gospel," under the influence of which "one who is really united to Christ needs not the restraint of law nor the duress of fear to make him obey, any more than a loving mother must be compelled to care for her babe. The obedience for which Paul thanks God does not ask, 'Shall we sin?'" (p.43).

A. E. Knoch's article "The Example of Christ" (p.5), centered on Philippians 2:1-12, stresses the importance of the believer's self-humility: "May every gathering of saints take these things to heart! It is far more important to have the humble disposition of Christ than to have the most perfect spiritual and physical equipment" (p.9). Indeed, "Even the highest gifts are no ground for self-exaltation, for all comes from God and should be a cause of thankfulness, not pride. The best of us have *nothing that we did not receive*. Nothing has originated in us. We have no more right to it than the most despised of humanity. It is only when we lose sight of God's deity and our creaturehood that we preen our feathers or blow our horn" (p.8).

Brother Knoch's complementary, second article in this issue, "The Human Will" (p.21), addresses Philippians 2:13 where Paul informs us that "it is God Who is oper-

ating in you *to will* as well as *to work* for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:13). "This brief allusion to the human will throws a flood of light into a very dark and dismal doctrine which has so vitiated the theology of Christendom that it has practically robbed God of His deity and believers of a God worthy of the name."

Concerning this "willing" and "working" in which we engage, thus we learn that these themselves are according to God's operations in us for the sake of His delight (literal reading: "God . . . is the one-operating in you . . . the to-be-willing and the to-be-operating . . ." (CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, English sublinear).

The remaining expositions contained herein, both of which are by Dean Hough, are "The Obedience of Grace" (p.29), and "Two Teachings" (p.45).

In the latter article, Brother Hough writes: "There are two major teachings given by God, each of which is given to certain groups of people in view of human sin. The one is the teaching of law, delivered through Moses and given to Israel at Mount Sinai. The other is the teaching of grace based on the cross of Christ, delivered through Paul and given to believers chosen from all nations in the current era."

The former writing is centered upon Paul's words where he insists that while we are *not* under law, we nonetheless *are* under grace (Rom.6:14,15):

Yet "are we not aware of what it means to be under grace? Are we not aware of the importance to our current lives of stationing our hearing under the message of God's grace as a slave who listens carefully to his master's words? . . . Are we not aware that this evangel is like a master to us, and we are like slaves in fidelity to it? It is only as we hear and heed God's word of grace to us (not His word of law) that the reign of Sin in our lives can be attacked" (pp.32,33).

May God, then, be with us—in His *grace*.

J.R.C.



## THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

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

How far have we failed in this matter! More picturesque characters occupy the attention of Christians, and are hailed in their literature and songs. Even the children sing, “Dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone.” But who does it? He would not be a second Daniel, but a fanatic. It is well to be reminded of the patience of Job. But we must not count on his reward. And it is excellent to consider the heroes of faith in the eleventh of Hebrews. But the object and end of their faith are not the same as ours. All of this is instructive and profitable, but cannot compare with the special examples selected by God for us, to guide our feet in His service in this era which is so different from all that preceded, or that will succeed it. Let us henceforth focus our attention on these models exclusively for awhile, and see if we can profit by their example.

This is especially true of the Psalms. In the dim light

of the Reformation and even among those more enlightened in later days, the Psalms have been acclaimed as the greatest source of strength for communion and conduct. Good as they are, they never attain, not even in their highest strain, to the grace and glory which should empower our conduct at the present time. In one way, indeed, the Psalms are in antithesis to present truth, and, we fear, hinder its full apprehension. Being concerned with Israel and the Kingdom, they are disposed to the terrestrial, which we should not be. When we leave them in their own setting, they are even more wonderful and helpful while singing with grace in our hearts to God (*cf* Col.3:16).

This celestial character of our walk is especially clear in connection with the example of Christ (Phil.2:5-8). In setting forth a synopsis of His humiliation, no details of His earthly life are given. The earth seems to serve only as a place on which to erect the accursed tree. There is no mention of His ministry to the Circumcision, or of His royal rights. He comes in the form of a *slave*, in the likeness of humanity. His life on earth serves as the supreme example for the Circumcision. He was their copy, their "underwriting." They are to follow Him in His footprints (1 Peter 2:21). For them no other example is needed. But with us it is different. Only His relation to the earth as the place of humiliation is put before us. The details must be filled in by others. These are involved in His cross, but they are not apparent until the depth of human infamy has been sounded by the apostasy of Israel.

#### EXHORTATION TO A MUTUAL DISPOSITION

We now come to the first of the four exhortations which are found in Philippians. It is strikingly like the opening exhortation in Ephesians 4:1-6. There humility was coupled with *unity*. The unity of the spirit is to be kept with the tie of peace. Where pride prevails this unity fails. So

also here. Humility is associated with a *mutual* disposition. The slight difference in viewpoint arises from the character of the epistles. It may be seen in the words used. In Ephesians it is *one*. In Philippians it is *same*. The spirit's unity consists in *one* body, *one* spirit, *one* expectation, *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God. Corresponding to this, in service there should be in all the *same* disposition, the same love, souls joined *together*, disposed to one thing (Phil.2:2). This might be called *the unity of the soul*, for it is the effect of the unity of the spirit, the outward evidence of the inward power.

Unity of spirit and a mutual disposition are the great need for effective service, even among believers. This is because we are by no means perfected as yet. We are still selfish. We are prone to two sins which should be utterly absent—strife and vainglory. These are products of pride. If we consider ourselves better than others it will lead to contention. If we desire that our superiority be recognized it will be naught but vainglory. No one knows how subtle and widespread these failings are because no one recognizes them as such. They are not condemned, but condoned. We do not expect anyone to allow his pride to be touched. We almost demand that this be resented. Humility—*true* humility—is considered a weakness unworthy of a man and a Christian.

It is not easy for us to recognize the justice of this. If we really possess superior qualities or have advanced to attainments beyond others, why should we not claim due recognition? The answer is very simple. All true worth will be rewarded in the future. But now is the time of *service*. It is most likely that, in that day, only that will be found genuine which did not fight for recognition. All other glory will be found without solid contents, an empty shell. It is impossible for us to decide even of ourselves, nor is it necessary. The truth for today is found only in unity, and the

service for today should be a mutual effort, unmarred by strife and vainglory.

Even the highest gifts are no ground for self-exaltation, for all comes from God and should be a cause of thankfulness, not pride. The best of us have *nothing that we did not receive*. Nothing has originated in us. We have no more right to it than the most despised of humanity. It is only when we lose sight of God's deity and our creaturehood that we preen our feathers or blow our horn. Then it is that we resent any lack of appreciation of our gifts or interference with our work. And this soon leads to dissension and division, which constitute the most glaring faults of Christendom, and are the conclusive evidence of its apostasy and shame.

Normally, we should look to Christians and Christendom to see the fruit of evangelical truth. That is what the "heathen" are compelled to do, apart from reading the Scriptures. What a consolation to look away from such hypocritical Christianity to Christ! Self-abasement, not self-exaltation—such is His disposition. What a comfort there is to be found in His love, which was fixed on others, not Himself. Here we can have real communion of spirit if our eyes and hearts are open to the truth. With Him we can have compassion and pity for those beneath us, not disregard or contempt. It is only by meditation on His career that we may realize the shortcomings of our own. His disposition is the test and corrective of our tendency to exalt ourselves.

There is a notable difference between the ecclesias of Corinth and Philippi. In the former there seems to have been much in the way of gifts and physical endowments. They sneered at the apostle's style of speaking. Yet they were full of factions. They wanted to reign. Yet they were fleshly and immature. Notwithstanding their own estimate of themselves, the apostle could not reveal to them

what was on his heart. We do not read of many gifts in Philippians. Instead of criticizing Paul's oratory they contributed to his support. So it is that we do not read of any schisms among them. And to them Paul writes as to those who have received the highest truth.

May every gathering of saints take these things to heart! It is far more important to have the humble disposition of Christ than to have the most perfect spiritual and physical equipment. A good speaker, with an agreeable presence, and equipped with much truth, is not to be despised. But, alas, too often, as in Corinth, he may divide instead of unite. Apollos did not wish to split the saints, but he did so by his good qualities. What should be cultivated by us all is this *mutual disposition* for, apart from our own pride, we have the *same* objects before us. And this can come only in the measure in which we partake of the disposition of Christ Jesus, as summed up in the phrase: *He stooped to serve*.

#### THE DESCENT OF CHRIST

The *kenosis*, or emptying of Christ, is the ideal for all creation in relation to God. Christ humbled Himself: God highly exalted Him. With us, alas, the tendency is just the opposite. We exalt ourselves so that God must humble us. In His case we have true humility exemplified as in no other, for He went from the place supreme to the deepest depth, and God has made Him Lord of all. Leaving the form of God He took that of a slave. Becoming like a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Apart from being God Himself, nothing can be higher than having the form of God. God Himself is invisible (1 Tim.1:17; Heb.11:27). To bring Him within the range of human comprehension He must be depicted by an Image, having a Form. The living God cannot be made known by lifeless representations. Hence He has chosen One, His

creative Original, in Whom all was created, to represent Him, to be the visible Image of invisible Deity (Col.1:15). His shape or form must be that which is suggestive of God, especially of the character which He assumes on any occasion, in order to reveal Himself to His creatures. Christ Jesus was that Form. In Him God was seen in such a theophany as suited the weakness of the human frame. Yet in visions He appeared in soul-dismaying splendor, as when Isaiah beheld His glory. This passage, as all else in this epistle, deals with service, not essential being.

As the subject of this passage is the height from which Christ descended, it does not treat of His relationship to God in other respects. The equality here spoken of does not arise from intrinsic identity but extrinsic form. Outwardly, to human gaze, He was God, Elohim and Yahweh. This it was which He did not deem pillaging. The fact that He could take the place of God without taking anything from Him is here introduced to show His supreme position in the universe. He was the Effulgence of God's glory (Heb.1:3), the most magnificent and sublime percept to be found. As there was no higher height, He could not be exalted without a previous descent.

Our disposition, and that of the world, is to hold fast to all the wealth and power and dignity to which we are able to attain. Indeed, we are disposed to seek still more, even when that which we possess has become a burden. The motto of the respectable and esteemed is "Ever upward"! It is pressed upon the aspiring youth and preached as gospel in our churches. Ever higher is the aim of the ambitious man. Even in the church this has found its full expression. It is seldom that a preacher does not desire a larger church, or welcome a higher ecclesiastical position. Alas, the most prominent men in Christendom have gone up and not down, and in most cases, have given an example just the reverse of that which our Lord has set before us.

## CHRIST'S SELF-ABASEMENT

That, despite His supernal dignities, the disposition of Christ was one of love and compassion, and utterly lacking in selfishness and pride, is shown by His self-abasement. He *empties* Himself. What this means is clearly indicated by the change in *form*. He was not God and He did not become a slave. But He had God's form, yet He took a slave's form. He did not carry with Him any of the former into the latter. This is clearly shown by the word *empties*. Only when He was transformed, *formed*, as on the holy mount (Matt.17:2), did His face shine as the sun and His garments become white as the light. In this vision He anticipates the form which He will have in the Kingdom, after His exaltation. But it was not a permanent form, only a vision. When He descended the glory was gone.

## CHRIST'S SELF-HUMBLING

Not only does He *empty* Himself by taking the form of a slave, but He also *humbles* Himself, seeing that He came to be in the likeness of humanity. It is humiliating to belong to the human race. Let us take a place among those messengers from other spheres who have visited the earth, and know something of human history. What a sad, sordid, sinful spectacle do we see as we contemplate man's mistakes and misery! Apart from his future, I question whether any creature outside the earth would care to belong to our sin-cursed, death-doomed race. Normally we should be like our first parents, and hide ourselves for very shame. Were we not blinded to our state, and hardened to our fate, we would humble ourselves because we are not merely *like* humanity and *fashioned* as a man, but we actually belong to this base band.

Christ Jesus was not a human being as we are, for God was His Father, yet He bore our likeness. He was not a

man like the rest, for He had no sin and had life in such abundance that it would counteract the disease and death which is our portion. Though He had the likeness and the fashion of a man, He did not possess the mortality and the sin which is the cause of our humiliation. He was human in appearance, not in fact. He did not humiliate Himself simply because, like all of us, He shared the general disgrace. So sensitive was He to sin, that His association with it was enough to humble Him. Thus it was that He became the Man of Sorrows, and made close acquaintance with our grief.

We must not think that all this was independent of the will and heart of God. Quite the opposite. It was a path of *obedience* to God. And it was a revelation of the Deity quite as much as His previous condition. Indeed, the highest service lies in the lowest sphere. His humiliation revealed God's heart as His more glorious condition never could have done. Becoming like a man is only a step in His humiliation. He must stoop lower still, and become like the very worst of men, like the outcast of society, like the very vilest criminal.

It is disgraceful to die, but we do not discern the dire dishonor of it because we all share the shame. But it is far more humiliating to be executed as a criminal, to be deemed unworthy to live even among such sinners as mankind. Even here there are degrees of disgrace. But an agonizing and lingering death, exposed to public scorn, and in the special form on which the curse of God had been pronounced, with every token of human and divine displeasure, such a death is the deepest depth of degradation which can be imagined. Christ did not merely descend to share our common fate of dying and death, but to suffer so as to bring upon Himself the utmost humiliation from man and the deepest abhorrence from the Deity.

The cross of Christ! How little do we realize the abyss



to which He sank! As men cover the grave of a corrupting corpse with flowers, so Christendom has sought to obliterate the offense of the cross by giving the rude stake itself an artistic form. No cross-piece gave the crude pole on which He was gibbeted picturesque proportions. It was never intended to beautify the architecture of our churches or to be fabricated of precious metal and costly gems to adorn the vain worship of the flesh. How terribly has this so-called symbol been altered, both in form and in intent! It should be a symbol of shame, to be shunned with shuddering. In its popular form it has become a symbol of man's utter failure to grasp the deep and dire significance of the manner in which God's Christ was done to death by human hands.

O that the saints could grasp the vast distinction between the death of Christ and the manner of it! Too often, when we speak of the cross, we merely mean His death. Had He died a common death, it would not have revealed the heart of man or the indignation of God. That human beings have brought upon themselves the blood of God's Anointed tells the tale of their alienation as no other act could do. That this was done by those in closest official touch with God, the priests of Israel, is the best evidence of human depravity. Not only was Christ humiliated at the cross, but men were shown to be so low and vile, that naught but divine grace and love could ever give them the right to exist. Indeed, justice demands that they be crucified for this deed. Not only Christ, in fact, but the world, in truth, was on the shameful tree of Golgotha.

#### CHRIST'S EXALTATION

"Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him . . ." (2:9). Christ emptied and humbled Himself, but God exalts Him. He did not exalt Himself. Only God can truly exalt His creatures. For them the way to the heights lies through the depths.

They should share the disposition of God's Anointed, and, in due time, God will raise them up. As the result of His descent to the deepest humiliation He is now on the way to the highest place in God's universe. Already, in countless hearts, His Name ranks far above every other name. It is not merely great but gracious. None of the names on earth can compare with it. It does not inspire fear or admiration merely, but love and adoration.

The word here used is full of precious significance. God has *graced* Him with the Name which outranks all others in the universe. The root thought of this family of words is JOY. The verb *chairō* means *rejoice*. One of its nouns, *charis*, is *grace, favor, gratitude, bounty*. So this verb *charizomai*, JOYize, speaks of an act that brings joy. Usually this is produced by granting an undeserved boon, or bestowing benefits where the opposite is deserved. But here this winsome word tells us of the pleasure which the Name delectable will bring, not only to Him Who bears it, but to those who find it a Shelter and a Satisfaction to their hearts.

The name Jesus is full of precious significance. It is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Joshua. This seems to be shortened from Yahweh-Hoshea, Yahweh-Saviour. Yahweh is the title of the Deity as associated with time, especially the eonian times, that great group of eons in which God is revealing Himself through darkness and light, evil and good, sin and salvation. The cross of Christ stands in the very midst of these eons, and through it He will transmute all the evil into good. Yahweh is He Who will be and is and was. Hoshea is added to describe His work. Jesus is the appropriate name of the *Saviour* Whom God has given to rescue the creation from the thralldom of sin and destruction and death during the eonian times.

The worship and acclamation of the universe—such is the reward which comes to our blessed Saviour for His descent and humiliation. And this will not wait until the

consummation, when all are reconciled to God. During the eons many shall bow the knee to Him and acclaim Him Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. Even now His saints adore His Name, and own His lordship in their feeble way. Already He is at God's right hand, messengers and authorities and powers being made subject to Him (1 Peter 3:22). When He comes, the earth will own Him King. Even beings under the earth, of which we know so little, will adore and obey Him. Celestial, terrestrial and subterranean—all will bow the knee in worship and use their tongues to acclaim the Crucified before the eons end. Low as was His humiliation, so high will be His exaltation.

"For the glory of God, the Father." This is the object of it all, as well as the key to our understanding of it. Christ descended in obedience in order to glorify God, His Father. He was exalted for the same reason. And it is for this cause that every knee shall bow and every tongue acclaim Him Lord—because this not only elevates Him to the place supernal, but at the same time brings to God the glory which is His due. But it is not to God, as Creator, or as Judge. The name Jesus sets forth the *Saviour*; He glorifies the *Father*. There is no constraint here, except that of love. Those who worship Him as Saviour and acclaim Him as Lord become children of God, and give Him glory.

#### THE SAINTS' OBEDIENCE

Having meditated upon the obedience of Christ Jesus and its blessed results, Paul exhorts the saints to emulate His disposition in their own small sphere. Hitherto the Philippians had always been obedient to the truth which he had imparted to them when he was present with them. Now that he has still greater and grander grants of glorious grace for them, which he must send to them in his absence, he exhorts them to carry this out also, in their daily life. It is a high salvation indeed, but it calls for a

lowly walk in humiliation and suffering. It leads down, not up, so long as we are in these bodies of humiliation. With fear and trembling, we bow ourselves under the mighty hand of God, Whose spirit in us is the effective force.

Salvation is not only a future event, but a present power and should be the preponderant influence in our lives. God has a glorious goal for each one of us, just as He has for His Anointed. Let us learn from His example that self-emptying and humiliation, with all their discomfort and distress and agony, are God's will and the only way to attain the future exaltation. Let us not strive against it but be disposed to it, when it lies in the path of obedience, even though it brings fear and trembling with it. Let us be satisfied when *our* will is not consulted, and *our* work is not done, realizing that God's will and work are to be carried out through us, for His delectation. It is God Who wills as well as works in us for His delight. So great is the light shed upon the human will by this word that we will devote a later chapter to its discussion.

When we realize that God is the power of our life, it is revolutionized. Nothing enters it by chance, or by any means without the will of God. Why then murmur when it is not to our liking? It is a comfort that He *knows* our trials and a consolation that He *sympathizes* with us in our sorrows, but how much better to realize that it comes from Him and is a step, into the depths it may be, which leads to our exaltation? It is not a cause for murmuring, but for thanksgiving. Murmuring had no place in the life of our Lord. Not that He lacked occasion. The wise and intelligent in His day did not receive His message. Was He discontented? Quite the opposite. He said, "I am acclaiming Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for Thou hidest these things from the wise and intelligent and Thou dost reveal them to minors. Yea, Father, seeing that thus it became a delight in front of Thee" (Matt.11:25,26).

This is a very practical point with the writer and readers of these lines. We have marvelous things to teach. Humanly speaking, it seems impossible that the intelligent, even scholarly, leaders in Christendom should not grasp them eagerly. But they do not. Their wisdom seems to be useless in the realm of revelation. The fact that they do not receive it seems to reflect on our message, and we are tempted to murmur. Then, again, it is far pleasanter and more respectable to have many men of mental ability and high standing in the world to support and propagate the truth. Would it not have been better to choose priests and scribes as apostles rather than ignorant fishermen? By no means. Let us not murmur at God's ways in choosing the stupid and the weak and the ignoble and the scorned, for only thus can He give the flesh its proper place. Let us rather rejoice.

How many of us are prone to reason that, if this had only been so, that could not have happened. But all such reasoning is vain and a delusion. So intricate are the complex interrelations of human life and conduct that no rational reasoning is possible. It is almost invariably the product of unbelief. God's ways are not to be the subject of our syllogisms, for we are not at all equipped for logical deduction. Once we believe and realize that God's hand is operating all things in our lives, as well as in the universe, all desire to reason will leave us. Faith will replace reason, and dissatisfaction and perplexity will be replaced by contentment and understanding.

Should we come to be in complete concord with the control of God, it will make us "blameless and artless, children of God, flawless in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (2:15). The world, and the saints who have not yet given God His place in their lives, do not fall in line with His will (even if they fulfill His intention), hence they lie athwart His way and are perverse, or they vary

their course, and are crooked. So long as we parallel His course, and do not plot and scheme to improve or evade His plans for us, we will be like His children, in Whom no flaw can be found. Such is the conduct which should come from the contemplation of the course of Christ. It should be the glad obedience of those who make God all in their lives and cheerfully acquiesce in His way for them, seeing that the suffering must precede the glory.

#### LUMINARIES IN THE WORLD

Such saints are not only a delight to God, but the light of the world. This world is a very dark and dismal dungeon. In their day, the disciples of our Lord were the light of the world (Matt.5:14). Since then the light has left Israel, as figured in the olive tree, some of whose boughs were broken off (Rom.11:17). Now the oil is found among the nations, some of whom have been grafted in. But the real luminaries are only those among them who live the evangel, "having on the word of life." They are clothed, as it were, with the luminous garments of God's revelation, and shine in a manner like our Lord when He was on the holy mount.

It is a glorious privilege to give expression to God's truth by verbal utterance or the written pages, by means of the words He has given us to make Him known. But here we have a different method, and, perhaps, a more effective mode of shedding the light of God. Not words for the ears, but works which can be heard by the hearts of our hearers, are the means brought before us in Philippians. These deeds will appear again in the day of Christ, to receive the reward which is their due. In these is Paul's boast, for they show, as nothing else could do, that his efforts had not been empty of results (2:16).

That the path of the Philippians had been a painful one, yet pleasing to God, is apparent from Paul's description of it. It was a *sacrifice*. The sacrifice of "burnt offering" or

ascent offering, which was wholly God's and ascended to Him as a savor of rest, was accompanied by a libation of wine, to express the joyful character of the sacrifice. How well this fits the circumstances here! Paul also suffers in his service, yet rejoices in it. The sacrifice is a joyous one. They rejoice, and he rejoices with them, and, to make it mutual, he would have them rejoice with him.

Notwithstanding its strong strain of humiliation and suffering, our service is one of joy and rejoicing. Short as it is, no other book contains the word rejoice as often as Philippians. Paul made his petitions with joy (1:4). He rejoices and will rejoice in the announcement of the evangel (1:18). He will abide for their joy of faith (1:25). He would have them fill his joy full (2:2). He joys and rejoices with the Philippians and asks them to joy and rejoice with him (2:17,18). He sends Epaphroditus that they may rejoice and receive him with all joy (2:28,29). He exhorts them to be rejoicing in the Lord (3:1). He calls them his joy (4:1). Again he exhorts them to be rejoicing in the Lord always, and repeats it (4:4). He rejoiced that their disposition toward him found expression in their contribution (4:10). What other book can match the overflow of happiness found here in Philippians?

Let us note also that this joy is not in their salvation but in their service. Undoubtedly they enjoyed the grace which had come to them in Christ. But this is a different matter. This joy is in the *Lord*. They were happy in serving and suffering in the midst of weakness, poverty and distress. This is the joy which accompanies our present path of hardship and humiliation. Indeed, it is the firstfruit of our downward disposition in obedience to the will of God.

Let us, then, cultivate the disposition which was in Christ Jesus, which is the very reverse of that which inspires the world and the flesh and the Adversary. Let us not strive to rise high, but to become low, not to rule but to serve,

not ourselves but others. Let us leave all exaltation in the hands of God, Who will raise us up and give us glory in His own good time, as He did with Christ Jesus. He that exalts himself shall be abased. But he whom God exalts shall share with Christ the glories which are His because He emptied and humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

A. E. Knoch

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FOR THE GLORY OF  
GOD, THE FATHER

If all that Christ gains in His future exaltation is the forced acknowledgement of His omnipotence by unwilling knees and reluctant tongues, then all His humiliation has been in vain. As Yahweh, He could have accomplished this before He descended to the accursed tree. It is as Jesus (Yahweh-Saviour) that He will receive, without compulsion, the acclamation of all creation, the worship of every living intelligence. The glory and the grandeur of His exaltation is embodied in the lowly name which shall become supreme. His salvation shall assure Him universal worship; His deliverance will be the theme of worldwide acclamation.

The goal of all is the glory of God. The kenosis of Christ is the first step in bringing about the Fatherhood of the Deity. It is the only way that He could display the riches of His affection, the resources of His love. God has revealed Himself as a mighty Creator in His works. This does not satisfy His heart or the hearts of His creatures. He desires to be their Father. He must draw them by the cords of love. He must win their affection. This is the vast task which began with Christ's kenosis. This is the glorious consummation to which it leads. In eras yet to come God will be the Father of all His adoring creatures. This achievement will make the name of Jesus esteemed above all others in the eons of the eons and beyond.

A. E. Knoch



## THE HUMAN WILL

GOD is operating in us to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:13).

This brief allusion to the human will throws a flood of light into a very dark and dismal doctrine which has so vitiated the theology of Christendom that it has practically robbed God of His deity and believers of a God worthy of the name. It is generally taken for granted that the Bible teaches that man, being made in the image of God, is absolutely sovereign in the realm of his will. Just as God can will, without being influenced by aught about Him, so we can create a decision out of the blue, without the least reference to what we are, or to the world about us.

This nightmare, we are given to understand, is not directly taught in the Scriptures, but must be predicated as its background, or else we could not understand its message! It is pathetic to see the zeal with which men, who have suffered much for God's name, spring up to attack any teaching which threatens the doctrine of man's free will and free moral agency. They have not a line of Scripture on their side, so they inject the idea wherever it seems feasible, and so seek a semblance of support.

### ASPECTS OF OUR WILL

It will be worthwhile to consider some aspects of man's will, to see whether it is "free" or not, and to learn thus just what is meant by God operating in us to will. The wording of this passage will give us a hint, and, if we are correct, we will find ourselves in full harmony with its teaching when we are through.

What is the human will? Our text will help us to determine this vexing problem. The will of believers should be due to *God's operation*. It is not our action, but the result of His. So the will is a result, due to the operation of external factors. Probably we are not conscious of God's operation. We seem to be doing what we will. That is true of many functions of life. Our thinking, our breathing, the beating of our hearts, the manifold operations of digestion, all these are or should be, accomplished without our superintendence or conscious volition. And all are maintained and formed from external supplies or impulses. We eat, we breathe, we observe, and these make us what we are.

Where does the will come from? Do men create it out of nothing? That would be a feat more wonderful than any sleight of hand of which we have ever heard. If God is operating in us, is He then interfering with the creative capacity of His creatures? The wise man knows that the human will is easily influenced from without. In fact it can be changed easily by one who understands human weaknesses. It is manufactured out of motives. It is a compound, made out of what we are within and where we are without. Heredity and environment fuse together to form it. Our wills are determined for us to a large extent by our ancestors, especially one named Adam. The mixture is finished by our associates and associations. If we had brains enough we could figure out any given will-problem like a sum in arithmetic. A given man will react to a given situation as surely as half a dozen plus six make twelve.

#### AUTOMATIC PROCESSES

Oh, someone will exclaim, then man is a mere machine, an automaton, and is subject to a blind fate from which he cannot escape! How often have these words frightened us when we dared to think through to reality! No. Man is not a *mere* machine, but we must all admit that he has many

of the characteristics of one. The fact that he has a soul, and can sense outward things, does not prove that he can sense all of his own operations. If he were not automatic in most of his vital processes, he would be dead in a few minutes. Some of his functions are not within the sphere of his consciousness. The will is one of these.

Man is an automaton in many ways. What would become of him if he had to supervise all of his bodily functions, or if he were even conscious of them all? How could a man who had never even heard of physiology keep the blood pump going and the air bellows working and the stomach churning all at the same time? He would not dare to stop to take a bite to eat. He could not get a wink of sleep. He would, however, have the melancholy pleasure of knowing that he is no mere automaton. Thank God that He, in His wisdom, Himself attends to our vital functions, so that we may look away from them to Him.

#### THE BENEFICENT CREATOR

In these matters man is not subject to a "blind fate," but to a beneficent Creator. He provides parents and food and drink and air, not blindly, but blessedly. All this is a parable of those non-physical functions of our being, the mental, the emotional, and the voluntary. As Creator, God supplies us with the tendencies of our ancestors and with our surroundings and associates. These are incorporated in our mental tissue and enter our brains through our organs of sense. There are times when these two sources (heredity and environment) contribute materials which will not mix, and we cannot "make up our minds." But, in most cases, we subconsciously act upon the impulse provided by the union of these two streams without considering our course.

It is a stupendous blessing that this process is, as a rule, subconscious. If we had to stop and think and combine our hereditary tendencies with the fleeting impressions con-

stantly brought in by our eyes and ears and nose and nerves before we act, many would be run over by automobiles before they could walk. Our wills themselves sometimes prompt us to action before we have time to be definitely conscious of what we are doing. I well remember once resting quietly under a bush, when I heard a buzzing noise, and lazily turned my head to see if the wind was blowing the vegetation. But it flashed upon me in the midst of my sluggish motion, that it might be a rattlesnake. I jumped up so quickly that I still seemed to be thinking of the wind after I saw the snake strike at the spot where my head had been an instant before.

Man is like an automobile, a splendid vehicle to convey the knowledge of God to the creatures of His heart. Let us suppose that an automobile had a free will of its own. Who would care to ride if the steering gear demanded its independence, and turned off the avenue to climb a tree, or insisted on diving into a pit, instead of running on the road prepared for it? If automobiles had free wills the American people would soon be extinct. And if men could break away from the natural laws which guide them, they would utterly destroy one another in a fortnight. The measure in which they are lawless because of death and sin, is well within the reach of God's protecting arm. The steering gear has gone wrong, the wheels wobble, and the automobile seems to be blessed with free moral agency. If you wish to sell the machine it may be well not to boast of its superior spiritual endowments. One who has God's spirit has a steady steering gear and a Driver Who will get him there on the well paved path.

Our consciousness seems to be a sluggish bubble which rises from the operations of the mind and is hardly recognized until it breaks. There is a possibility of uniting sensations from without with the mental fiber within and of sending the resultant order to the muscles and even of act-

ing before we are well aware of what we are about. This is the way the will usually works. It would be intolerable if we had to make up our minds regarding every act of life. It would take more nerve force than most of us possess. Most of our voluntary acts are replaced by habits—things we do “without thinking.”

Too often the sinner is directed to manipulate his will, as though he could do anything with it. An evangelist is not supposed to twist and turn the human will by eloquent exhortations, but to provide divine material for the formation of God's will in men. Of what avail would it be to feed the famished with lectures on the digestive apparatus? It is just as useless to tell a man to will to come to Christ. Give the starving food, and the digestive apparatus, complicated as it is, will do its part. Give the sinner Christ and his will will work of its own accord. Preach the *Word*. This is the most effective motive power for moving the mind of man. By its means God's spirit will bring the sinner into line with God's will.

#### HUMAN IMAGININGS

Men imagine they are sovereign in the realm of the will and that no one can break their resolution—no, not even God. This is childish. They have no greater control over it than the captain of a sailing vessel has over the set of his sails. If he is not demented he will spread them to suit his course, and that is determined for him by the breeze. There are spiritual winds to which men bend their wills. They may whistle ever so long, but these spirit forces are beyond their perception and above their control. Hence men do the will of the flesh and obey the behests of evil spirit powers of which they seldom are aware. These now operate in the sons of stubbornness (Eph.2:2). The great movements in the world, the great leaders, can find success only when they fall in line with unseen spirit forces.

The unbeliever is the sport of the spirits of evil. It is the chief of the aerial jurisdiction who operates in them. Their wills are a compound of the soulish sensibilities of the flesh and the spirit of the world. The believer is not called upon to be passive, to "surrender," to "yield" as is so often taught, but that is what the unbeliever unwittingly does. That is what evil spirits crave. Intelligent subordination to God's revealed will is quite the opposite of a passive reception of passing impressions. The spirit of God does not produce such indefinite "guidance," such loose "leadings." God's spirit works only through His Word.

#### THE LIGHT OF REVELATION

Our course is often dark, and we need light, not vague "guidance." With a light we can intelligently pick our path, and choose our steps. We are not called upon to obey an inner voice or an outward impression, or to blindfold our eyes and follow an unknown guide, but to use the light of revelation. Within us is the flesh and without us is the spirit of the world and the world of spirits. These are always forcing themselves upon us and producing "impressions." It is true that, if we know the Scriptures, the divine directions will, to a large extent, displace these sinister influences, but this comes through the activity of faith, not the passivity which blindly obeys impulses. God seeks open-eyed, active obedience. The forces of evil desire blind passivity.

Saints who sincerely desire to do the will of God will find that it is not enough to "make up their minds" to do it. However strong their determination, it may not last. The wise way is to provide the will with motives which will keep them in God's will. Above all we must know Him through His Word. We must enter into His present plans and future purpose. Then, without straining ourselves to create an artificial will of our own, this knowledge will become the formative factor in our wills, so that actually

it will be "God Who is operating in us to *will* (as well as to work), for the sake of His delight."

Let me warn all against the fearful practice of making a medium out of God's holy Word. There are those who will insert a needle into the Bible, or open it at random in order to get God's "leading." God's Book is not a planchette, though I have no doubt that the evil spirits prefer it to every other way of deceiving their dupes. God controls our wills only when we intelligently absorb His thoughts, and weigh His ways, and luxuriate in His love. It is detestable idolatry to turn His revelation into a ouija board, and allow evil spirits to speak through its sacred sentences.

At Pentecost God's spirit came on the disciples for power, and uninstructed saints have longed for a repetition of this marvel ever since, not knowing that the spirit is at home in us, to impart not power but life (Rom.8:9). There is great danger in tarrying for the spirit, for deceiving spirits are eager to use such opportunities. In fact the history of all movements of this kind is sufficient evidence that they are merely a brand of spiritism, doubly deceptive because they seem to be based on the Bible, and succeed in arousing spirit manifestations which are mistaken for the power of God's holy spirit.

It is quite true that God revealed Himself directly through the prophets and those who had the gift of prophecy in the Pentecostal era. No one has it now. The only real prophets today are false prophets. If we expect God to speak to us directly through His spirit, apart from His Word, we are assuming the gift of prophecy. Today such a gift is not needed, for the truth has been fully revealed in the Scriptures. Moreover, the fact that those who depend on such revelations are led contrary to the Scriptures and to one another shows that they are not guided by the one spirit of God, but by the many spirits against which we are warned.

Much of the "waiting on God" or "going into the silence"

may be simply a form of spiritism. If we seek to shut out the distractions of the world about us in order to be able to give all our thoughts to God's revelation, that is good, very good. But if we imagine that making our minds a blank, or putting ourselves into a state of passivity will enable us to receive definite instructions from the holy spirit direct, we are under a strong delusion, and lay ourselves open to the deceiving spirits which characterize these last days. The holy spirit of God will indeed guide us into the truth, but only through the word of truth. There is no safety apart from God's written revelation. The spirit that speaks to us apart from it is evil, however much it may imitate the divine.

All who have had an intelligent experience of divine life will readily admit that even the saint cannot please God apart from His operation, and they are glad to have it so. Let them *believe* the passage before us, and seek to realize its force, and they will be gratified still more in the consciousness that even the spring of their good deeds flows from God. They become, as it were, a miniature universe, in which all is out of and through and for Him. The fact that they cannot independently will or work so as to please God will not disturb them in the least. Quite the opposite. They will find their all in Him, and this is only the normal complement of the great goal God has set before Him—to be all in them.

A. E. Knoch

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#### THY WILL BE DONE

The whole mission of Christ may be summed up in the word, "will." He came to do the will of God (Heb.10:7,9). He amplified this when He said, "I am not seeking My will, but the will of Him Who sends Me" (John 5:30). This is emphasized by repetition, when, a little later, He protests, "I have descended from heaven, not that I should be doing My will, but the will of Him Who sends Me" (John 6:38). Thus He prayed in Gethsemane, "Not My will, but Thine be done!" (Luke 22:42).

A. E. Knoch



## THE OBEDIENCE OF GRACE

WE ARE UNDER GRACE. We are not under law, but under grace (Rom.6:14). We are not under law as it “came in by the way” (Rom.5:20) through Moses at Sinai, but under the evangel of the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:15).

The clear statement that we are not under law, but under grace, is repeated apart from qualification in verse 15:

*What then? Should we be sinning, seeing that we are not under law, but under grace?*

The question, “Should we be sinning?” arises from the fact that we are not under law, but under grace. If it had occurred to Paul that he oversimplified his case in verse 14 he would hardly have repeated it word for word, introduced by the verifying expression, “seeing that,” i.e., “seeing [it is so] that we are not under law, but under grace.”

We are not under law. Even though, in bringing the evangel of justification in God’s grace apart from works of law, Paul was not nullifying law (Rom.3:31), nevertheless we are not under law. The law is holy, and its every precept holy and just and good (Rom.7:12); yet we are not under the mastery of law. The law is spiritual (Rom.7:14), but law is not the word of God through which He channels His spirit to us. The just requirement of the law shall be being fulfilled in us (Rom.8:3,4), but it will not happen by the imposition of law over us, for we are not under law. We are exhorted to be exhibiting that great summation of those precepts dealing with our association with

fellow human beings, which is to love one another (Rom. 13:8-10); nevertheless those precepts and their summation are not the power of God to us for a walk of love.

We are not under law, and this is made fully clear in Romans chapter seven. But we are under grace, which is not law, and which is granted to us apart from works of law. This is the channel of God's spirit in our lives, and its truth is essential for a clear understanding of Romans chapter eight.

We are under the grace of God in which we are justified gratuitously through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). We are under grace in that, like Abraham before he was put under the law of circumcision, our believing of God's message to us is reckoned to us for righteousness (Rom.4:3-24). We are under grace in that we are justified by the faith of Jesus Christ and may be having peace toward God through Him, through Whom we have the access by faith into this grace in which we stand (Rom.3:22; 5:1,2). We are under the grace of God, Who commends His love to us, seeing that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8,15). We are under the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man Jesus Christ, seeing that, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10,15). We are under that grace and that gratuity in grace which always superexceeds over every increase of sin (Rom.5:20).

It is in this position, under grace, that we will hear the entreaties of Romans chapters 12-16. There is not the slightest possibility that we have not been identified with the death of Christ and shall not be of the resurrection and living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.6:3-11), for these are matters of grace. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:35-39), for the vast love with which God loves us is a matter of grace in Christ, and not of ourselves (Eph.2:4-10).

## THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD

When the earth became a chaos and vacant, and darkness was over the face of the abyss, the spirit of God vibrated over the waters, and God said, "Let light come to be!" And light came to be (Gen.1:2,3). There was disruption, and there was the spirit of God, and there was the word of God. Where there was evil, it was being replaced by good by means of the combined operation of God's spirit and His word—of His power and wisdom.

What Paul is telling us now follows this primeval pattern. Here is sin, and here is God's word of grace—not the law, but God's evangel of grace concerning His Son. And this revolutionary word is the power of God for salvation to those who are believing. God's spirit vibrates where His word of grace is being believed, a spirit which brings its fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control into the lives of sinners who are taking account of this powerful word of light and love (Gal.5:22,23). So Paul asks the Galatians, "Did you get the spirit by works of law or by the *hearing* of faith?" (Gal.3:2,5). So also he later wrote of our position in Christ: "in Whom you also—on *hearing* the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation—in Whom on *believing* also, you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of His glory!" (Eph.1:13,14).

## SIN AND GRACE

The idea that such divinely sourced grace encourages sin in the current lives of believers reflects a failure to listen to the evangel. The evangel of God says Christ died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3). That is how our sins are dealt with. We are justified in God's grace and stand before God in

grace, and because of this we shall be of the resurrection and walking in newness of life. It cannot be that this evangel of grace is a dangerous teaching, opening the way to increased sin in the present. Our spiritual strength arises from believing the word God has spoken to us. And this word is a message of grace.

It is when we shelve this evangel of grace, when we put it out of our mind and our heart, when we stop taking account of it, when we station ourselves under some other message, even under the holy and just and good law, that we forfeit the spiritual power God has provided for us (cf Rom.7:4-25). The Galatians put themselves under law and lost their happiness (Gal.4:15). The Corinthians were attracted to the wisdom and power of this world, and still had much to learn of the wisdom and power of God which was embedded in the word of the cross (1 Cor.1:18-31). So we also may get distracted from the word of God's grace, which reveals His righteousness, His wisdom, His power and His love. In every way, Romans six directs our attention to the spiritual power of the evangel under which we are placed, and not the least is this so of verses 15-18.

#### ARE YOU NOT AWARE?

As with the question of verse 1, Paul does not reply directly to the question of verse 15, but instead dismisses the insinuation, exclaiming,

*May it not be coming to that!*

Then he asks another question which directs the attention back to the evangel as a work of grace. To be under grace is to be under its vibrant mastery.

*Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves as slaves for obedience, his slaves you are . . . ?*

Are we not aware of what it means to be under grace? Are we not aware of the importance to our current lives of

stationing our hearing under the message of God's grace as a slave who listens carefully to his master's words? Are we not aware of the value of giving dedicated heed to the teaching God has placed over us? Are we not aware of the spiritual benefit to us day by day in believing the message of Christ's faith and obedience in His act of righteousness through which God's righteousness is revealed? Are we not aware that this evangel is like a master to us, and we are like slaves in fidelity to it? It is only as we hear and heed God's word of grace to us (not His word of law) that the reign of Sin in our lives can be attacked.

#### SUBMISSIVE HEARING

The root elements of the Greek verb translated *obey* are UNDER-HEAR, giving the sense of *submissively listening to* what is said to us. This Greek word is most often used in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament for the Hebrew word for HEAR, especially when it gives the sense of "listen to," or "hearken to." The English word *obey* is derived from the Latin word *oboedire*, a compound term meaning, TOWARD-HEAR. In every case, in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and English, the basic, root element is HEAR. The prepositions *under* and *toward* serve to strengthen this sense, so that the hearing is understood as submissive to what is heard or keenly directed toward its message. The KEY-WORD CONCORDANCE defines *obey* as "hear and heed" (p.209). To obey is to listen carefully so that the message heard comes across to us and affects us.

If God's word to us were a matter of law, our obedience would involve, first and foremost, paying careful attention to its instructions, and only then carrying them out.

But the word God gives us is not a word of law; it is an evangel of grace, and grace is JOY. This message does not tell us what we are to do, but what God has done and shall do for us through Christ. Obedience to this message is a

matter of earnest listening. But in accord with the character of the message, the heeding is a matter of joyful and thankful (WELL-JOYed) appreciation so that *it* can work in us. Let us, then, be aware of our place as ardent and careful listeners to God's word of grace:

*Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves as slaves for UNDER-HEARING, his slaves you are, whom you are UNDER-HEARING,*

- 1. whether of Sin for death,*
- 2. or of UNDER-HEARING for righteousness?*

*Now thanks be to God*

- 1. that you were slaves of Sin,*
- 2. yet you UNDER-HEAR from the heart the type of teaching to which you were given over. (Rom.6:16,17)*

All along here in chapter six Paul has been pointing to the evangel as God's power for salvation in our present lives. We cannot lose what Christ has gained for us and what God has given us upon believing this message, but we can fall out of the enjoyment of its blessings of the fruit of the spirit during the present, while we remain in these bodies of humiliation. If we are to be being saved from the reign of Sin in our lives, we need to *retain* the evangel (1 Cor.15:2) in our heart. We are to be *declaring* the evangel that Christ died for us while we are still sinners, and that we are identified with Him in His death, and shall be living to God as Christ is living to God, *not being ignorant* of such grace but be *believing* it, *perceiving* it, *taking it all into account* and *stationing* ourselves in mind and heart before God as He speaks to us of this word of gratuitous grace (Rom.6:1-13).

In accord with this we are to be *placing our hearing under* this message of grace and doing so with singleness of heart. This is what Paul has in mind here as he speaks of obedient slaves.

## SLAVES OF SIN

Human beings, infected with death as a dying process, are slaves of Sin. We listen submissively to our desires, so that death increases its grip on us. Against this enslavement, God gave Israel the law (Exodus 20:20). But it only increased offense against God and wretchedness for the human in the increasing realization of failure. Law did not come with God's spiritual power as it will under the new covenant (Ezek.36:26,27). Yet now, God has given us grace, which is a different matter.

We do not escape the effect of Adam's disobedience, but, like a faithful slave, in giving attentive heed to Christ's obedience and its consequences, we are invigorated with spiritual strength against Sin's mastery.

## OBEYING OBEDIENCE

Grace is the master which God has placed over us who are believing. But in Romans 6:16 Paul does not use the word *Grace* in speaking of our master, but rather he uses the word *Obedience*. We are like slaves who are listening carefully to our master, and this master is called Obedience! We are submissively hearing Submissive Hearing! Whatever can this mean? Are we to obey instructions set before us for our obedience? No indeed. That would mean we are really under law. We are to obey the message that tells of *Christ's obedience*, that is, attentively listen to the evangel of God, His word of grace, telling of the submissive hearing of Christ, His adherence to the will of His God and Father concerning Him.

As Paul has been often doing, he uses a key term to recall a full revelation already presented. Hence, as we have seen, the word *grace* in Romans 6:14 gathers together in itself all that the apostle has said about God's grace to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord. So also, the word *Obedience*

when it is used here in Romans 6:16 as our master, whom we are obeying (UNDER-HEARING), encompasses within itself the evangel of Romans 5:19 where the word *obedience* holds center place. By the single word "obedience," we are pointed back to the astounding teaching that "through the *obedience* of the One, the many shall be constituted righteous." In close connection with this, we are pointed back to all Paul has written concerning the *faith* of Jesus Christ, for the two qualities are like twins. So we keep listening to the evangel as it manifests God's righteousness through the *faith of Jesus Christ* (Rom.3:21,22). We submissively hear this evangel of Christ's submissive hearing of His Father's word to Him, this evangel of His faith-obedience. The pathway set before us here for our current lives is one of hearing the evangel of grace and being invigorated spiritually by what it says.

#### THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST

In Philippians 2:6-11 we find our apostle pointing us to the emptying and humbling of Christ Jesus Who was "*obedient* unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father."

Here is the evangel of grace presented again (as in Romans 5:19) in terms of the obedience (UNDER-HEARING) of Christ. It is not a message of law, but of a work completed by the One Whose disposition was wholly to give of Himself in hearkening to the will of and to the glory of His God and Father, for He prayed in Gethsemane, "Not as I will, but Thou!" (Matt.26:39). His obedience was one of hearing and doing; ours is one of hearing and appreciation of God Who works in us.



Thus as we are obeying, that is, listening receptively and humbly to this word of Christ's humiliation and exaltation, and holding fast to it, God operates in us, instilling in our hearts that awe and trembling joy which comes only from being overwhelmed by the magnitude of God's grace. In this way, we carry our salvation into effect (Phil.2:12,13), for the evangel of grace is God's power for salvation even now to those who are believing with listening hearts.

#### INTO RIGHTEOUSNESS

The obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, results ultimately in all the many sinners, all those who are affected by Adam's disobedience, being constituted righteous. His submissive listening to and faithful heeding of His Father's will for Him shall bring sinful mankind into righteousness. In the same pattern, our present believing and attentive hearing of this message concerning Jesus Christ brings righteousness into our current lives, not as it shall be, but in accord with the earnest of the spirit, the firstfruit of the spirit (Rom.8:23). It is obvious that our obedience does not constitute us righteous. That is the achievement of Christ's faith-obedience. But just as our believing is the basis for God reckoning righteousness to us (Rom.4:4-6), so also our submissive hearing of the evangel is the means through which God instills works of righteousness into our lives. These works begin with thankfulness to God, and they spread to spiritual qualities of love, joy and peace, of humility and patience and endurance, of kindness and faithfulness, and the like of these.

As it was with the Philippians, so also it is with us. As we are obeying [hearing and adhering to] the evangel Paul evangelized, God operates in us to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight. Thus it is our growing realization of how richly graced we are because of Christ's obedience that leads us into the paths of righteousness.

## JOYFUL THANKS TO GOD

It is highly significant that righteousness is immediately associated with thanking God (Rom.6:17). The beginning and continuing accompaniment of righteousness in our current lives is the thankful recognition of God as Cause of all our blessings, the Giver of all the grace we have received.

To be under grace and enslaved to the message of Christ's obedience is a grand position of JOY. It does not lead to feelings of wretchedness under a burden we cannot bear, but to expressions of *joy* to God. Law leads to a focus on ourselves. Grace leads to a focus on God as He is made known through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ. Grace means JOY. And the Greek word Paul uses here for expressing thanks to God is the same. It is JOY returned to God Who overwhelms us with His grace.

*Now thanks [JOY] be to God  
that you were slaves of Sin,  
yet you obey [UNDER-HEAR] from the heart the type  
of teaching to which you were given over.*

When Paul was under law, having an outward confidence in his flesh that he could fulfill it, and was indeed, in relation to the righteousness which is in law, becoming blameless, he was inwardly wretched because he knew that he was not doing all that was required (Phil.3:4-6; Rom.7:21-24). Yet now he was delivered by God, through Christ, and standing before God in JOY, and while recognizing that this JOY is from God, he was directing JOY to God. He was thanking God Who is operating all and speaking to us in the words of His evangel of grace concerning His Son.

In today's world we hardly dare to say that Paul was thanking God for having given the experience of being a slave of Sin. Yet that is the first part of the full expression of thanksgiving to God given here verse 17. Throughout this extended passage the evangel is made known by way

of contrasts, and its glories could never be comprehended without the dark background. Thus the experience of slavery to Sin which is, in the absolute sense, out of God, as all is out of Him (Rom.11:36), prepares our hearts for the greatness and goodness of the teaching of grace to which God has given us over.

#### OBEYING FROM THE HEART

Paul entreats those believers who are literal slaves to be obeying their masters with fear and trembling, *in the singleness of their heart* (Eph.6:5). The sense conveyed by the figurative use of "heart" in Scripture is well expressed in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.141): "Figuratively, as the physical heart is the central and essential organ of the body, so [this word refers to] the center and core of man's spiritual being, not as with us, the seat of feeling and affection, but of motives (Matt.5:8), the understanding (Matt.13:18), [and] the reason (Mark 2:6)." It is akin to the mind. In subjecting our hearing to the message taught by Paul we focus our thinking upon it undistractedly from the core of our spiritual being.

#### OBEYING THE TYPE OF TEACHING

What may escape our notice in verse 16 (and in verse 18 as well) is made plain in verse 17. We may not catch Paul's meaning in personifying the words Obedience and Righteousness as one-word expressions of the evangel of God's grace, that teaching which God has placed over us as our master. But now Paul writes more explicitly and speaks of the believers as those who obey *the type of teaching* to which they are given over. We focus our hearing on the teaching of Christ's obedience, which indisputably is of the grace type, impressing its character of joy on us. We stand under that word of grace concerning Christ's faithful submission to His Father's will. God has given us over

to it, and in obeying it we listen to it with firm allegiance and are molded by it.

Early in this epistle when the apostle was recounting the irreverence and unrighteousness of humanity, he spoke of God *giving us over* to uncleanness, to dishonorable passions and to a disqualified mind (Rom. 1:24,26,28). Yet now God has given us, who are believing, over to a message of grace centered upon Christ's obedience as it reveals God's righteousness. This sort of obedience, that of attentive listening, is altogether salutary for our minds and dispositions, and invigorating to a worthy walk.

The type of teaching to which we have been given over is that presented by Paul who was severed for the evangel of God. To Timothy Paul wrote: "You, then, child of mine, *be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus*. And what things you *hear from me* through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who shall be competent to *teach* others also" (2 Tim. 2:1,2). This is the teaching which is given to us, and which leaves its impression on us, who are listening to it, as type does on the printed page.

#### ENSLAVEMENT TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

In Romans 6:18, the teaching to which God has given us over is referred to as *Righteousness*. God has identified us with the death of Christ, so that we are freed from Sin's condemnation, and He has placed us in a position of faithful slaves who listen attentively to His word, which is in every aspect a message of righteousness:

*Now, being freed from Sin,  
you are enslaved to Righteousness.*

The figure of slavery which Paul has introduced in verse 16 pictures dedication with singleness of heart to one's master. It does not speak here of forced labor, but of devoted commitment. It is essential, therefore, that we

know who our master is and what our master is saying to us. Our master is not Law telling us what we must do, but Grace which tells us what has been done for us. Our master does not tell us what we must do in order to be justified in the sight of God Who sees all as it truly is. But rather, our master, the Evangel of God's Grace, tells us that we are justified gratuitously through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and stand before God, conciliated to Him through the death of His Son. Our master tells us of the faithful hearkening of Jesus Christ to the will of His God and Father so that sinners may be constituted righteous. It is under this master that we are positioned as devoted and attentive slaves.

We are enslaved to that message that teaches we have been freed from Sin's condemnation, in that we are baptized into the death of Christ, and are now put under the lordship of the manifestation of God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ, Who was obedient (**UNDER-HEARING**) to the death of the cross. This is enslavement to Righteousness, not to statutes and precepts requiring our acts of righteousness as set over Israel, but to that evangel of righteousness which has been taught to us and in which God is much more truly made known.

#### GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The evangel of God concerning His Son is first presented to us as a manifestation of God's righteousness (Rom.3:21). Indeed even before this its leading feature, as the power of God for salvation to those who are believing it, is the fact that "in it God's righteousness is being revealed," and this revelation arises out of faith, that is, out of Jesus Christ's faith (Rom.1:16,17; *cp* Rom.3:22). The revelation of the righteousness of God through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ—this is our master. This is clearly not a matter of requirements of works of righteousness which we must

do, but a revelation of God's righteousness which shapes our thinking and bears the fruit of righteousness in our lives. In Philippians 1:9-11 this focusing on the message of Christ's obedience and God's righteousness is described as "testing the things of consequence." It is by this means that we are "filled with the fruit of righteousness."

#### A MESSAGE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

As we are listening to and holding fast to the message of *Christ's obedience*, so are we enslaved to this evangel in which *God's righteousness* is made manifest through the *righteous deed of Jesus Christ* which leads ultimately to *life's justifying* for all mankind (Rom.5:18), and on the basis of which, righteousness already is reckoned to us who are believing (Rom.4:4-8,23-25). God has freed us from Sin, in that He has baptized us into Christ's death so that we are dead to sin's condemnation (Rom.6:2,3; 8:1), and He has placed us under this evangel of grace (Rom.6:14) which is characterized throughout by righteousness. Even as, in God's grace, we are now hearkening to this message concerning the obedience of Christ, as a slave hearkens to his master, so we are enslaved to this same word of God as it reveals His righteousness through Christ's righteous act in the giving of Himself that we may be constituted righteous.

Hence by calling this evangel "Righteousness," Paul encompasses all that he has said on this theme, just as he did by the word "Obedience" in verse 16. He will repeat this in verse 19 with regard to our bodily members. And in verse 22 he will sum up this whole subject of the believer's present life of focusing on the evangel, as a matter of being *enslaved to God*, faithfully dedicated to Him as He speaks to us.

Thanks be to God Who enslaves us to this word of Christ's obedience and God's righteousness.

D.H.H.

## THE TYPE OF TEACHING

OBEDIENCE from the heart evidences true faith, for with the heart the evangel is believed for righteousness. Accuracy of thought is desirable, but faith reaches out for Christ and works under the constraint of His love. One who is really united to Christ needs not the restraint of law nor the duress of fear to make him obey, any more than a loving mother must be compelled to care for her babe. The obedience for which Paul thanks God does not ask, "Shall we sin?"

The type of teaching referred to in Romans 6:17 was Paul's gospel. Had the Romans received the type of teaching taken to the Galatian churches by the subverters, Paul would have written them a corrective epistle instead of rejoicing in their obedience to what they had been taught.

One commentator writes: "It is only modern eyes that see distinct doctrinal types in the New Testament, and Paul, as far as he knew (1 Cor.15:11), preached the same gospel as the other apostles." On the contrary, what modern eyes are discerning ever more clearly are the really great differences which distinguish the two gospels which from the first separated into two companies the apostles of the Circumcision and those of the Uncircumcision. The writer quoted misses the meaning of his proof text. What Paul says there is that, though he and the other apostles differ, as they were obliged to do, yet "whether I," on the one hand, "or they," on the other, "thus we are proclaiming." What they agreed in proclaiming was the historic fact of the resurrection of Christ which they had witnessed at different times

and in different manners. Yet when Paul began to interpret the meaning of Christ's resurrection in that chapter, he taught truth foreign to the Circumcision message and revealed a secret that to them was always a secret.

"The type of teaching" was Paul's gospel in general, yet more specifically it was that part of it which is presented in this chapter. Consequently, Paul can say to the Roman saints "Are you ignorant," "Knowing this," "we believe," "having perceived" (verses 3,6,7,9). And this knowledge of theirs concerned features of his gospel no trace of which can be found in other inspired writings. This type of teaching declared the facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and these facts as affecting humanity at large, but especially those who are baptized into Christ Jesus and so are now sharing the likeness of His death and resurrection.

As the activity of the saints is seen in their obedience, so their passivity is seen in the fact that they were given over to the type of teaching as to the mastery of a new lord. The teaching reveals great divine achievements wrought for us, outside of us, and within us. We have no power to mold the facts without marring them, which, of course, would not be obedience to the teaching.

Corinth, from whence Paul wrote, was famous for casting statuary in metals. As Paul watched the process he saw, in the molten metals being poured into beautiful patterns, a picture of saints, pliant to the divine revelation, being fashioned into the image of God's Son. The truth must hold and mold the saints. We need to beware of the snare of trying to pour truth into the pattern of our philosophy. Even Christ never ventured to speak from Himself, but was a faithful Witness, speaking only the words that God gave to Him (John 8:28; 12:49; 14:24; 17:8,17). His fidelity to God's message and His obedience to God's will must fashion ours.

George L. Rogers



## TWO TEACHINGS

THERE are two major teachings given by God, each of which is given to certain groups of people in view of human sin. The one is the teaching of law, delivered through Moses and given to Israel at Mount Sinai. The other is the teaching of grace based on the cross of Christ, delivered through Paul and given to believers chosen from all nations in the current era.

Moses introduces the first for Israel's attentive hearing in Deuteronomy 4:1 and adds in verse 9 the need to keep it before them:

*Now Israel, hearken to the statutes and to the ordinances that I am teaching you today, to do them, that you may live and may enter and tenant the land that Yahweh Elohim of your fathers is giving to you . . .*

*But guard yourself and keep your soul especially vigilant, lest you should forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they should withdraw from your heart, all the days of your lives.*

Paul gives thanks for the second in Romans 6:17 (as rendered in accord with the root meaning of the word usually translated "obey"):

*Now thanks be to God that you [hearken] from the heart [to] the type of teaching to which you were given over.*

In both cases there is a teaching, and in both cases, those being taught are to listen attentively to it from the heart. The teaching to which Israel was given over was a teaching of statutes and ordinances that they were to do. It clearly

was of the law-type. But the teaching to which we are given over is a teaching of grace, telling us what has been done for us and its effects. It clearly is of the grace-type.

The teaching to which we are given over is the evangel of God concerning His Son. It is a message of grace, apart from works of law, telling us that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). It declares that through this righteous act of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, all mankind will ultimately enjoy life's justifying (Rom.5:18), and that through this faithful hearing and heeding of the will of His God and Father, the many sinners of humanity shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19).

Furthermore, this evangel of grace tells us that we who are believing it are already identified with Christ in His death. Our old humanity was crucified together with Him, and thus it is certain that we shall be living together with Him also (Rom.6:2-11). This teaching of the grace of God and the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ is set over us in our current lives, for us to listen to attentively as the source of spiritual strength in our daily lives.

The teaching which Paul evangelized produces a spirit of thankfulness to God on Whom we rely as the living God Who saves sinners (1 Tim.4:10), for He is working all together for good (Rom.8:28). To hearken to this evangel endows us with the spirit of sonship in which we cry "Abba Father" (Rom.8:15). As we live in a world of groaning and travailing, with this teaching in our hearts and minds we live with expectation of the full enjoyment of sonship ahead; we are awaiting it with endurance, knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:18-25,35-39).

We are not taught to devote our listening to precepts which we must do, but be listening to the evangel that we are justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. Then, writing to us who

are believing and taking account of and listening to this message, Paul entreats us to walk in accord with it. We are not put under the law, but under grace which is a master which brings spiritual power to us rather than demanding power of us who are fleshly.

#### ENSLAVED TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

The teaching of the law was one of righteousness, as Moses made clear in Deuteronomy 4:7,8, again speaking to Israel:

*For what great nation is there which has elohim so near to it as Yahweh our Elohim is in all that we call to Him? And what great nation is there which has statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law that I am putting before you today?*

The type of teaching given through Moses was composed of righteous statutes and ordinances. It was a message of *righteousness*, in that every precept was righteous. But it did not lead to righteousness, for it is impossible for the flesh to do what is instructed in the law, apart from a special implanting of God's spirit (*cf* Rom.8:3; Ezek.36:27). That will be done. Nevertheless, the teaching as Moses put it before them, was to be hearkened to, and not that only, but every precept it instructed them to do was to be done, and if even one precept was not done, it would be as though none were done (*cf* James 2:10). That is what Israel was given over to.

The word of grace which we have heard is also a message of righteousness. But it speaks of righteousness made manifest and achieved for sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ and not by works of law (Rom.3:21-28). It tells us the obedience has already been carried out, not by us, but by our Lord. It tells us of the end of Sin's reign, of the end of wrong, the end of failure, the end of offense, the end of

transgression, the end of enmity and infirmity and irreverence. It tells us:

*Now, being freed from Sin, you are enslaved to Righteousness.*

The type of teaching given through Paul is a message of the highest order of *righteousness*, for it is built on the righteousness of God manifested through the righteous act of Jesus Christ for the justifying of life when all shall be constituted righteous. We are not set under righteous statutes and ordinances which we must do, but rather set under the teaching of righteousness which is the evangel of God concerning His Son.

God has enslaved us to this message of righteousness. And what a gracious enslavement this is! It is of the highest order of enslavement. It is not like the enslavement to Sin which tyrannizes us and twists our thinking and doing. Nor is it like enslavement to Law which leads to wretchedness, for it is not a message telling us that we must do what is impossible for us to do; it does not rest on our doing.

We are enslaved to a master which tells us the work is done. How is that again? We are enslaved to a master which tells us the work is done!

It tells us the Son of God emptied Himself of His glories and humbled Himself to a death of the severest of physical and mental suffering, for our sake, that we might be justified in full righteousness. Its name is grace, the obedience of Christ and the righteousness of God. Our master is that evangel which reports the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ, a finished work of righteousness that encompasses our every need and that of all mankind. We are to give our full attention to this teaching as ideal slaves who will not let their minds wander to other things and not try to insert their own reasonings and ideas into the word of our master.

So we listen loyally, to our master, this teaching of grace, that it may work in us.

D.H.H.

## EDITORIAL

THIS issue of *Unsearchable Riches* is centered upon our service in the Lord as those who belong to Him and are His *slaves*: “You are not your own . . . you are bought with a price” (1 Cor.6:19,20).

In this issue’s first article, “As a Human,” Dean Hough draws our attention to Paul’s words in Romans 6:19 where the apostle “turns to his readers and speaks personally of his concern in writing this section of his letter: ‘*As a human* am I saying this, *because of the infirmity of your flesh*: For even as you present your members as *slaves* to Unclean-ness and to Lawlessness for lawlessness, thus now present your members as *slaves* to Righteousness for holiness.’”

“What we need is grace. Indeed we do not know grace unless we recognize our need of grace. And that is made evident by the infirmity of our flesh” (p.53).

“How can slavery be a matter of grace? It has such a bad reputation! But truly it depends on the master. Just as we have lost the vital connection of the word *obey* with the act of *hearing*, so also we seem unable to appreciate the value of Paul’s usage here of *slavery* as a figure of our position in our present living under grace . . .

“The enslavement of Romans 6:18 is . . . altogether a positive matter. It is a position, not only of humble dependence, but of assurance and security as well.

“We are enslaved to the evangel of God which manifests His righteousness in justifying the irreverent through the righteous deed of Jesus Christ Who was made sin for our sakes. We are not dependent on making ourselves righteous by observing the law’s demands. We are dependent on God’s righteousness in justifying the irreverent through the faith of Jesus Christ” (p.55).

A. E. Knoch's complementary articles "The Service of Timothy" (pp.61-67) and "Epaphroditus' Sufferings" (pp.68-74) are also included herein.

"Between Paul and Timothy there was the loving and living relationship of father and child, and they both together attended to the affairs of Christ Jesus as though they were His loyal slaves" (p.67).

"The case of Epaphroditus is of more than passing moment because it confirms and crowns the great truth that, in this administration, God's power is perfected in infirmity" (p.71).

This issue concludes with Brother Knoch's extended writing, "The Imitation of Paul" (pp.75-96).

"Paul's service now comes before us, preceded by a three-fold warning which is the least heeded yet most needed portion of God's Word for His slaves in this era. The third chapter of Philippians brings before us Paul's conduct in connection with the present administration, for our emulation, and points out the pitfalls which are spread for our feet, or, rather, it warns us against those who have fallen into them . . ." (p.75).

May we be thanking God, our Father, according as our faith is flourishing and the love of each one for one another is increasing (*cf* 2 Thess.1:3).

J.R.C.

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As we do here, we often borrow from the rich heritage of the writings of A. E. Knoch, and indeed we agree wholeheartedly in much that he shared through his many years as editor of this magazine. Recently we have been reprinting articles from his pen which boldly distinguish Paul's message of grace in contrast to that of the law as given to Israel. We feel this is a most critical and timely matter for our faith in these days. It is for this reason that we reprinted the article entitled, "Israel Under the Law," in our fourth issue of 2012. Yet in doing so we made no mention that Brother Knoch changed his views regarding the place of the book of Hebrews (but certainly not regarding Paul's evangel) in a later series of articles, appearing in volume 49 of *Unsearchable Riches*. In fairness to his memory, we do so now.

## AS A HUMAN

IN Romans 6:19, Paul turns to his readers and speaks personally of his concern in writing this section of his letter:

*As a human am I saying this,  
because of the infirmity of your flesh.*

He has been telling us of things we cannot perceive by means of our senses, concerning what has been done for us and what shall be in the future. But all along he has the present in view as introduced in verse 2 by the verb, *living*: “We, who died to sin, how shall we *still be living* in it?”

Our teacher and fellow human speaks in recognition of what we all are right now: infirm in flesh. And he wants us to know that the very things he has been saying about the past and the future are power to us in the present in view of the infirmity of our flesh. The believing and retaining of these revelations of a physically unseen and unfelt past and physically unexperienced future provide real strength for joy and peace and endurance and a worthy walk to us in the very perceptible present.

The first thing we are to know (that is, not be ignorant of) with regard to our living is that we died! We died to sin (Rom.6:2), for we are baptized into Christ’s death (Rom.6:3). The baptism in view here is not a ceremony or physical “sacrament” performed by human beings and experienced in the flesh, but a baptism in spirit as an operation of God (*cp* 1 Cor.12:12,13,18; Col.2:12), Who has identified us with Christ in His death and entombment (Rom.6:3-7). This was not an event experienced in the flesh, but we believe it occurred; we have accepted it as so. It is a matter of spiritual grace. Our old human-

ity was crucified together with Christ, and sin is not reckoned to us (*cf* Rom.4:8,16-25).

With regard to our present living, our death together with Christ is fundamental. This has occurred, and nothing can change it, for it is a work of God in the death of His Son.

The next revelation which also is basic for our present living is that we shall be living together with Christ, Who is no longer dying, but is living to God (Rom.6:8-11). This also is certain and sure. Nothing can separate us from this operation of God's love. We died to sin and shall be living together with Christ. That is where God has stationed us. That is our position before Him. Consequently, Paul writes, "Thus you also be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11).

So it is that Paul evangelizes the evangel of God's righteousness, love and grace as the channel of God's spiritual power everyday in the lives of believers. We need this spiritual power very much, for we are infirm in our flesh.

#### HUMANS ARE INFIRM IN THE FLESH

As a human, Paul himself is aware that good is not making its home in his own flesh (Rom.7:18). David also had written (Psa.6:2):

*Be gracious to me, O Yahweh, for I am feeble;  
Heal me, O Yahweh, for my bones are flustered.*

As human beings we *all* are in the same fix (Rom.1:18-3:20,23). For it was through one man that sin entered into the world, and death entered through sin, and thus death passes through into all humanity, on which all sin (Rom.5:12). We are all sinners because of death operating in us. We are feeble in our flesh and deserving of death as the consummation of our dying condition (Rom.1:32; 3:



23; 6:21). Not one of us can be justified in God's sight by works of law, simply because we are unable to fulfill its righteous requirements (Rom.3:20).

What we need is grace. Indeed we do not know grace unless we recognize our need of grace. And that is made evident by the infirmity of our flesh.

It has thus come about, in God's grace, that we have heard and accepted the evangel of His grace, which says: "For Christ, while we are still *infirm*, still *in accord with the era*, for the sake of the *irreverent* died. For hardly for the sake of a just man will anyone be dying: for, for the sake of a good man, perhaps someone may even be daring to die, yet God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still *sinners*, **Christ died for our sakes**. Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him" (Rom.5:6-9).

This is how God justifies the sinner who is infirm in flesh. God achieves this by means of the death of Christ in Whom we all are created (*cf* Col.1:16-20). It is not of ourselves (Eph.2:8,9; *cp* Rom.8:28-30). It is through the faith of Jesus Christ, Who died, and this was *for all* (Rom.3:22), so that, in the full and ultimate meaning of the cross, all died (2 Cor.5:14), and all will be vivified in Christ (1 Cor. 15:22). Now in Romans six Paul seeks to show what this evangel of God's grace means to us who already are believing it, during our lives as death operates in us and Sin exerts its corrupting influence.

#### BECAUSE OF INFIRMITY

In this, speaking as a human who is infirm in flesh to humans who are infirm in flesh, Paul recognizes our infirmity. In view of this weakness, he is not at all appealing to us to overcome our flesh by submitting our flesh to the demands of the law. The precepts of law are right-

eous and good, but our flesh is weak. Consequently, God has placed us under the teaching of grace! This teaching declares that what is impossible to the law because of the infirmity of the flesh, God does. He does this by sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh so that sin in the flesh would be condemned (*cf* Rom.8:3). Now, as a human who knows the infirmity of his flesh, Paul leads us to focus on this evangel of God's doing, in order that God's spiritual power may work in us in our present living.

The law, given through Moses, spoke to Israel as though they could be superhumans who could be so strong in the flesh as to do what they were instructed to do. They themselves said, "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do" (Exodus 19:8). They boasted in the law, but through the transgression of the law they dishonored God (Rom.2:23). (Yet they shall be shown mercy, and God will write the law on their heart; *cf* Rom.11:26-31; Jer.31:33; Ezek.36:26,27.)

But in saving us in His grace alone, God is wholly honored and glorified (as He shall be by all when He is All in all), for the consummations of the eons have attained to us (1 Cor.10:11). This is not of ourselves, and we enjoy it now in spirit. Boasting is debarred (Rom.3:27; Eph.2:8-10).

#### GIVEN OVER TO GRACE

Consequently, it is the word of God's evangel of undiluted grace which operates in us, as Paul wrote to the believers in Thessalonica (1 Thess.2:13):

*And therefore we also are thanking God unintermittingly that, in accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God, which is operating also in you who are believing.*

The teaching to which we are given over (Rom.6:17) is the teaching of grace. Paul calls it a *type* in that it impresses

its pattern on us who are believing it and attentively listening to it from the heart. It declares that our position before God is one of gracious deliverance from what we are in flesh. Yet it is not a position the excludes slavery, for we are enslaved to God's Word of Grace, which was called "Obedience" in verse 16 and is now called "Righteousness" in verse 18:

*Now, being freed from Sin,  
you are enslaved to Righteousness.*

#### ENSLAVED

How can slavery be a matter of grace? It has such a bad reputation! But truly it depends on the master. Just as we have lost the vital connection of the word *obey* with the act of *hearing*, so also we seem unable to appreciate the value of Paul's usage here of *slavery* as a figure of our position in our present living under grace. Not every feature of a term is brought over in its figurative usage. Here the sense of humble attentiveness and dedication to the master is in view. This is in harmony with the verbs *obey* in its primary sense of submissive listening and *present* in the sense of mentally *stationing* ourselves under (or *standing beside*) the word of God's grace.

The enslavement of Romans 6:18 is, therefore, altogether a positive matter. It is a position, not only of humble dependence, but of assurance and security as well.

We are enslaved to the evangel of God which manifests His righteousness in justifying the irreverent through the righteous deed of Jesus Christ Who was made sin for our sakes. We are not dependent on making ourselves righteous by observing the law's demands. We are dependent on God's righteousness in justifying the irreverent through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.5:26). We are dependent on what God has done through the faith obedience of His

Son. By this means (and this means only) we are justified (righteous-fied) gratuitously in God's grace. Here is our security. It is not of ourselves. It is God's oblation and His achievement (*cf* Eph.2:8-10).

We are given over to this message, and it provides us with spiritual strength which we greatly need—strength for all endurance and patience with joy.

At Sinai, Moses gave God's word of law over to Israel, in view of their sinfulness. It declared: "Yahweh your Elohim shall you fear, and Him only shall you *serve*, and to Him shall you *cling* . . ." (Deut.6:13). In Hebrew, the word for "serve" is the same as the word for "slave." Israel was to enslave (active voice) themselves to Yahweh, serving Him only. This single-minded slavery is elucidated by the verb *cling*, a verb expressing dependence and attachment. It was to be of the highest level, fully devoted and hallowed to Yahweh's word of law.

Yet this was to be a slavery of self-propelled doing, backed up by the fear of divine indignation. Nevertheless, they were no different from anyone else with regard to flesh and its infirmity (as testified by David). Saul of Tarsus learned that "the law is spiritual, yet I am fleshly . . . . Consequently, I am finding the law that, at my willing to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying beside me. For I am gratified with the law of God as to the human within, yet I am observing a different law in my members, warring with the law of my mind" (Rom.7:14,21-23).

What shall rescue us out of this body of death?

Grace! We are not under law, but under grace!

God has enslaved us to the evangel of Christ's submission to the will of His God and Father bringing about the manifestation of God's righteousness. This is indeed a slavery of blessing, in which we cling with ardent attachment to God's word of love, righteousness and peace. It is a slavery which exults in its master. Indeed it is a slavery,

not of one who fears indignation, but of one who has "the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!' The spirit itself is testifying together with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom.8:15,16). To be enslaved to God's message of righteousness achieved fosters the spirit of sonship in us.

#### PRESENTING OUR MEMBERS

Hence, continuing in Romans 6:19, Paul speaks of our enslavement under grace as it affects our bodily members such as our eyes and ears, our mouths and lips and throats, and our hands and feet. Because of the operation of death within, which stings us with sin (*cf* 1 Cor.15:16) our members easily come under enslavement to Uncleaness and Lawlessness. They are infirm. Yet by positioning our members at the side of the powerful evangel of God's *righteousness* manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ, for justification, our members are strengthened in a pathway of holiness:

- A. *For even as you **present** your members  
as **slaves** to Uncleaness and to Lawlessness  
into lawlessness,*
- B. *thus now **present** your members  
as **slaves** to Righteousness  
into holiness.*

The verb *present* occurs five times within seven verses (twice in verse 13, once in verse 16 and twice here in verse 19). It is a compound term in Greek, **BESIDE-STAND**, with the sense of being positioned or stationed by the side of something or someone. We see this in Matthew 26:53 where Jesus testified to Peter who did not understand the need of the cross: "Or are you supposing that I am not able to entreat My Father, and at present He will *station by My side* more than twelve legions of messengers?" As

previously noted, it is likely that Paul had the stationing of the people of Israel before Yahweh at the foot of Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:17; *cp* Exodus 34:2 ) in mind for purposes of comparison and contrast. They *stood below* (Deut.4:10) the mountain, positioned by the side of the fear-inspiring sounds and sights accompanying Yahweh's giving of the law. They were to keep themselves and their bodies under the instructions of the law in all their activities. They were to cling to Yahweh as He spoke to them in the law, keeping it always at their side as they lived their lives:

*These words which I am instructing you today will come to be in your **heart**. You will repeat them to your sons, and you will speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you arise. You will tie them for a sign on your **hand**, and they will come to be for the browbands between your **eyes**; you will write them on the jambs of your house and on your gates.* (Deut.6:6-9)

The ease with which our bodily members come under the direction of the lusts of our flesh (*cf* verses 12 and 13), is something we are all familiar with. What comes out of human mouths is compared with the smell of an open sepulcher and the stinging poison of asps, defrauding and cursing with bitterness (Rom.3:13,14). This is uncleanness. The shedding of blood and the bruises and wretchedness which are scattered about in human pathways (Rom.3:15,16) testify to the human position of slavery to lawlessness.

We may say that this indictment of uncleanness and lawlessness in human behavior is a relative matter, not applying on the same level to everyone. But Jesus Himself included anger in the category of murder, and lust of the heart in the category of adultery (Matt.5:21-28). Our bodily members are given to uncleanness and lawlessness because of the infirmity of mortality which is in our flesh.

## EVEN AS — THUS NOW

Paul's language reminds us of that in Exodus and Deuteronomy when God placed Israel under the law. The events at Sinai provide many helpful parallels for comparison and contrast for us who are placed under grace. But even more important are the ways in which Paul continues to gather together the themes he has already introduced in Romans in support of his current thoughts. Hence he takes the word *obedience* from Romans 5:19 and the word *righteousness* from the great, extended theme of divine righteousness and justification expounded from Romans 3:21 to the end of chapter five.

So also in Romans 6:19, Paul uses the formula, *even as . . . thus now* which was so prominent in chapter five, and most striking there in verse 18 and 19:

A. *Consequently, then, as it was through one offense  
for all mankind*

*for condemnation,*

B. *thus also it is through one righteous deed,  
for all mankind*

*for life's justifying.*

A. *For even as, through the disobedience of the one man  
the many were constituted sinners,*

B. *thus also, through the obedience of the One,  
the many shall be constituted righteous.*

In all three passages the A sections deal with our human infirmity in connection with Adam, and the B sections with righteousness in connection with Christ. What is true with respect to our future deliverance into righteousness has vital significance to us at present while we are infirm in flesh. What came through Adam is more than matched by what comes through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The pattern of the evangel is also the pattern of our living. What Adam did, bringing in death, sin, offense, disobe-

dience, uncleanness, lawlessness—this is superexceedingly dealt with by what Christ did, bringing in life, righteousness, holiness. This is the message which directs our members as we station them under its influence. Mortality and sin, corruption and offense, uncleanness and lawlessness shall be put to an end by the death of Jesus Christ, and life's justifying when all are constituted righteous will take its place.

Over and over again, we take account of this word of God concerning His Son. We listen to it with fervent attention, stationing ourselves and our members at its side. This word, protective and comforting, encouraging and strengthening, is what we need as the closest of companions day by day. By this means we are being hallowed, our members becoming devoted more and more to God and His evangel even now, in accord with the earnest of the spirit.

Thus Paul guides us as one who understands our infirmity, yet has learned himself where real strength for worthy walk in our present lives is found. It is found in the very evangel we are believing for salvation secured at the cross and to be enjoyed in fullness in the future.

#### FOR HOLINESS

God has hallowed us in Christ Jesus (1 Cor.1:3). He has devoted us to Himself, so that we shall be living to Him as Christ is now living. This evangel of what God has done in Christ Jesus and shall bring into full realization is power for present holiness as well. Holiness is not our obligation to be fulfilled by self-effort. It is a fruit of grace (*cf* Rom. 6:22) which God works in us as we hold fast in faith to the evangel of God's righteousness and love, channeled to us through the death and resurrection of Christ. Here, like "righteousness" in Romans 6:16, holiness is the earnest of the enjoyment of what we shall be.

D.H.H.



## THE SERVICE OF TIMOTHY (Philippians 2:19-24)

AS PAUL is bound, and cannot visit the Philippians himself, he sends Epaphroditus and contemplates sending Timothy. In these two characters we have two "living expressions" of the evangel for this economy. They set forth the highest ideal in service and suffering. In Timothy we see the model slave. His very name is eloquent, for it means Honor-God. He is one of the few of whom it could be said that he did not seek his own, but others' good. In many ways he seems to be a typical character for the present, combining, in his own person, both Circumcision and Uncircumcision, and the weakness of the flesh with the power of the spirit.

The facts of Timothy's life, as recorded in the Scriptures for our instruction, are doubtless intended to give us a living picture of the inception of this administration. After Paul's separation from Barnabas, the Levite, he came to Lystra, the place where he had been stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19). It is more than possible that it was at this time that Paul received the transcendent revelations which he later makes known in his perfection epistles (2 Cor.12:2). So that Timothy, in *spirit*, commences with this administration, yet in flesh is connected with the previous kingdom heralding. He commences at Lystra and goes all the way to Rome, not only in flesh, but in spirit.

With striking attention to detail, we are told that he was the son of a *believing Jewish woman* (Acts 16:1). This Jewess belonged to the dispersion, evidently, as she is found outside the land, and wedded to a Greek. As such she may well represent that believing remnant of Israel

among the nations, to whom Paul was especially sent. But he also turned to the Greeks, and the company of people who received his message was a mixture of believing Israelites and Greeks. Such a combination, also, was Timothy. God will use this body of people in His highest service. So He used Timothy.

From the very beginning, Timothy earned the approbation of the brethren in Lystra and Iconium, where he lived (Acts 16:2). Probably he believed through Paul's ministry when he was there before, for, while he was, physically, the son of a Jewess and a Greek, spiritually he was Paul's child in faith (1 Tim. 1:2, 18; 2 Tim. 1:2). This may illustrate an important point in service in the present administration which needs to be pressed. While the body of Christ is composed of those who are a mixture, physically, being from both Circumcision and Uncircumcision, this should not extend to their spiritual parentage. They should all be children of Paul. Those who receive life and are nurtured by means of his ministry are equipped for service today. Those who are mixed in their spiritual descent, being children of Peter as well as of Paul, are not fit to serve acceptably in this administration of God's grace.

It would seem that Timothy was with Paul much of the time thereafter. At Berea he remained behind when the Jews of Thessalonica came there, and Paul was sent away by the brethren but he soon received word to rejoin Paul at Athens (Acts 17:15). When he found Paul in Corinth, Paul was pressed to certify to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. When they opposed, Timothy probably listened to the memorable words, "Your blood be on your head! Clear am I! From now on I shall go to the nations" (Acts 18:6). Thus Timothy was present at the commencement of the Corinthian ecclesia, and actually experienced the great crisis there when Paul left his brethren according to the flesh and turned to the Uncircumcision.

The next time that we hear of Timothy he is sent with Erastus to Macedonia, and doubtless went to Philippi (Acts 19:22). Paul himself remained in the province of Asia. It is evident from this that he no longer was a mere attendant of the apostle, but was himself an apostle, commissioned by his spiritual father to represent him in the work. As Paul himself wrote to Timothy, he had fully followed his teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings (2 Tim.3:10). This is precisely what each slave of our Lord should do today if he wishes to render acceptable service, and to have a part in the ministry of this administration. Even the order in which these essentials are given is significant, for only those who *fully* follow Paul's teaching are really eligible for service and suffering.

Paul follows with the injunction, "Now *you* be remaining in what you learned and verified, being aware from whom you learned it . . ." (2 Tim.3:14). The tendency to forsake Paul's teaching is very strong. In his own days all in the province of Asia turned from him (2 Tim.1:15). Since then Christendom as a whole has left his teaching or so adulterated it with Circumcision doctrine that it is practically nullified. Therefore it should be our very special endeavor to guard against this propensity in ourselves. God graciously granted some light at the Reformation and through the so-called Brethren, but the reaction is very strong, and the light is dimmed. Even so with us. Already some are failing to *remain* in the truth, which few, indeed, have ever grasped in anything like its fullness.

Later Timothy was sent to Corinth also. In Paul's words concerning him we may receive further insight into his service. Paul writes to them, "I am entreating you, then, become imitators of me. *Therefore* I send to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will be reminding you of my ways which are in Christ Jesus . . ."

(1 Cor.4:16,17). Paul's "ways which are in *Christ Jesus*" is a key phrase for the present. Nowadays this is ignored. Paul is pushed aside and men are reminded of the ways of the *Lord Jesus* as He ministered to the Circumcision, as recorded in the four gospels. But Timothy was taught better. Being vitally connected with both sides, he knew that this is no model for the Uncircumcision. Paul's teaching calls for ways which accord with Christ Jesus in *glory*, not as a homeless Wanderer on earth.

Again the apostle writes: "If Timothy should be coming, look to it that he should be with you fearlessly, for he is working at the work of the Lord, as I also. No one, then, should be scorning him" (1 Cor.16:10,11). At another time Paul wrote to Timothy himself: "Let no one be despising your youth . . ." (1 Tim.4:12). And again; "God gives us, not a spirit of timidity, but of power and of love and of sanity" (2 Tim.1:7). Among the carnal Corinthians Timothy makes a pleasing yet pathetic contrast. Too young to command the respect due to an elder, he seems to have had a tendency to timidity and fear. How different from the popular conception of a great church dignitary of today! Youth is aggressive and self-reliant and needs little encouragement to assert itself. Yet the model here set before us is one whom the world (and most of the church) would despise, and who needed to be encouraged not to allow himself to be slighted.

#### INFIRM IN THE FLESH

Perhaps Timothy's tendency to timidity was due in measure to his physical condition. He had a weak stomach and was frequently infirm (1 Tim.5:23). Many of us may be able to sympathize with him in this, and can realize how it unfits one for that self-assurance which is deemed essential in those who must meet the public. But we may rest assured that it was given him by God, not to hinder

but to help, for the Lord's work never needs the arm of flesh, and in this administration of the spirit, great physical endowments may be a hindrance to genuine and acceptable service. Not that we should seek to be ill. We do all in our power to counteract our infirmities, yet thank God for those which remain, for they are doubtless needed in order to keep us lowly (*cf* 2 Cor.12:7).

Among the last words on record which Paul writes to Timothy we see how true Timothy remained to his father in faith, and how Paul longed for one on whose fidelity he could count. Perhaps we may take the action as symbolic for this present era, for the second epistle to Timothy deals with the last days. He writes, "Endeavor to come to me quickly, for Demas, loving the current eon, forsook me and went to Thessalonica . . ." (2 Tim.4:9,10). If there ever is to be a return to Paul, it must be done speedily. Demas is probably derived from the root *dem*, PUBLIC. The public, the mass, even of the church, have abandoned Paul. Not a few are antagonistic to him, even among those who, like the Thessalonians, were once lovers of our Lord's advent. Let us, then, in spirit, hasten back to Paul, and to the revelation which he gives from his prison in Rome.

Such is the career which prepared Timothy to be a model for service in this era. The quality of his preeminence in contrast to others is clearly seen in the short paragraph which Paul devotes to him in this epistle. He wishes to know how the Philippians are, so that he also may be of good cheer. He wishes to send someone, and his choice falls on Timothy, "for I have no one equally sensitive, who will be so genuinely solicitous of your concerns, for all are seeking that which is their own, not that which is Christ Jesus" (Phil.2:20,21). Here he probes deep, into the very heart of the matter. Are we seeking our own, or that which concerns Christ Jesus? Do we serve selfish interests, or those of our Lord?

One of the delicate touches in this epistle lies in the word “equally sensitive.” Though all is spirit now, in service the spirit should control and ennoble our sensations, and make us most sensitive to the welfare of those whom we seek to serve.

Two things are needed, a fine perception of the feelings of others and a genuine solicitude as regards their affairs. It would be useless to send some unimpressible or callous representative whose heart strings could not vibrate in tune with theirs. And still less would be done if he were indifferent to their concerns. In service we should approximate the vital sympathy which each member of the human body shows for the others, for this is the figure used of our relationship in Christ.

“All are seeking that which is their own.” What a word to find in this epistle, when, in the flush of their first love, the saints were nearer the ideal than at any time since! If all sought their own *then*, what shall we say *now*? Some, indeed, there have been, through the years, of whom we would say that they did not consider their interests, but gave up all for Christ. But, if we should ask them, doubtless they would also confess their failure in this regard. It seems to be the universal sin in service which few of us are able to overcome. Yet it should be our aim, despite our failures, to forget our own concerns in preoccupation with the things of Christ.

#### SLAVERY WITH PAUL

As we have seen in our review of Timothy’s career, he had been thoroughly tested as a companion and servant of Paul. This is most aptly summed up in the words, “as a child with a father he slaves with me for the evangel” (2:22). Two pictures are presented here, child and father, slave and lord. Between Paul and Timothy there was the loving and living relationship of father and child, and they

both together attended to the affairs of Christ Jesus as though they were His loyal slaves.

I have often been criticized for using the word "slave" to describe the character of our service. But I delight in it. There is no question of its correctness. This alone should settle the point, for interpretation and feelings must be barred in translation. But here, for instance, it is in fullest harmony with the context, for a slave, who has no privileges or property of his own, makes a good figure for those who should not seek their own. I imagine that the objection may arise because we do not wish to serve without doing our own will and attending to our own welfare. But I glory in the "title" slave, and only wish my service were in accord with this lowly distinction.

Yet Paul was not willing to part with Timothy until his own matters (which were also his Lord's) had been settled. It must have been a vast comfort to him to have Timothy at hand in his imprisonment. At his first defense no one went with him, but all abandoned him (2 Tim.4:16). Perhaps this influenced him in calling for Timothy and keeping him until his fate had been finally decided. And, indeed, he would wish to send the news to his friends at Philippi as quickly as possible. What better commendation for the model slave than the fact that Paul would not part with him even though he would like to have sent him!

Such is the example set before us today: closest association with Paul in his teaching and ministry, and loyal devotion to him in his imprisonment. Is not this a picture of the path we should pursue in spirit? May the Lord send us slaves like Timothy, having His honor at heart, seeking that which is Christ Jesus', a genuine child in faith of Paul, following his teaching and practice, sensitive and solicitous of the welfare of the saints!

A. E. Knoch

## EPAPHRODITUS' SUFFERINGS (Philippians 2:25-30)

SUFFERING is the supreme service. It comes nearest to the sacrifice which our Saviour made for us. The service of the strong is acceptable to God, yet the work of the weak is far more welcome. It is a deeper display of sacrificial love and demands much more affection to suffer than to serve. It is when both are combined that we see the highest response to God's grace. And both are found in the four examples set before us. Christ was the supreme Sufferer. Paul had his splinter in the flesh and his persecutions. Timothy had his frequent infirmities and the evils from without. Epaphroditus, the apostle of the Philippians, was especially signalized by his suffering, which took him very near to death (2:25-30).

Suffering for God is the highest privilege which can be accorded His creatures. The Philippians themselves knew this by experience, for they were graciously granted not only to believe on Christ, but to suffer for His sake (1:29). In them the two extremes meet, for in no other part of God's Word is there so much emphasis on both suffering and rejoicing. And this is true of Epaphroditus also, for twice in this brief paragraph concerning his sufferings we read of the rejoicing of the Philippians in connection with it (2:28,29).

Epaphroditus signifies *charming*, and such is the account of his career in this epistle. We read of no great deeds that he had done, no "souls" that he had won, but only that he was commissioned to carry the gift of the Philippians to Paul.



He transformed this somewhat prosaic task into a memorable achievement by risking his soul in its accomplishment. So is it with earth's common occupations. Weakness and suffering may make them deeds of honor and charm, worthy of highest recognition, bringing joy and delight to the heart of God and man.

Epaphroditus is given five titles which are characteristic of his service. These are: brother, worker, soldier, apostle, and minister. The number is especially appropriate, as five is usually associated with weakness, the outstanding feature of service. On one side these remind us of the family circle, of the workshop, and of the army. Epaphroditus belonged to the same spiritual family as Paul. This, of course, is basic. Service *must* be based on spiritual, not on physical ties in this administration. Beyond this we *must* be *fellow* workers of *Paul* if our service is to be acceptable to God.

#### FELLOW SOLDIER

There seem to be four who take the title soldier in Paul's epistles, Paul himself, by implication, Epaphroditus, Archippus (Philemon 2), and Timothy. Paul's charge to Timothy is well worth pondering in this connection, for we may easily receive a false impression from the figure of a soldier. We associate it with violence and glamour. It really conveys the thought of devotion and suffering. Like all figures, only a section of the soldier's life is used in the likeness, not the whole. So that Paul wrote: "*Suffer evil with me as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus*" (2 Tim.2:3).

Many who went through the war learned that real soldiering did not consist in parading about in fine uniforms, but in enduring all sorts of discomfort and hardship in the midst of rain and mud and weariness and wounds and death. It is this side of the soldier's life which portrays our course in His service. It is not simply endeavoring to accomplish His

work in pleasant surroundings, but in the midst of opposition and evils of all sorts, which test our endurance and try our physical frames to the utmost. Not that we seek suffering, or castigate ourselves. No soldier does that. He does the opposite. In every way he seeks to build up and conserve his forces for the fight. We do not invite evil, we face it. Then we thank God and suffer it, for His sake.

#### THE APOSTLE EPAPHRODITUS

We are far too prone to stereotype the usage of words and make a proper name out of a common noun. This is shown by the rendering of the Authorized Version in this place. Acting under the tradition that only the twelve could be named *apostles*, they changed the rendering here to messenger. How could the Philippians appoint an apostle? The same superstition insists that Paul took the place of Matthias. But apostle simply means *commissioner*. In some ways it would be far better if this term were used. That is why I have it in the sublinear. Are there apostles in the church today? Of course there are commissions and commissioners today. That is not the point. If we are asked whether *God* commissions men today the answer must be in the negative. The apostles are in the foundation.

Epaphroditus was the apostle *of* the Philippians. But that was a totally different matter from being God's apostle *to* the Philippians. He had no such authority over the ecclesia or its doctrine or practice such as Paul or Timothy might exercise. He was simply given the power to represent them in carrying their gift to Paul in Rome. He was not merely a "messenger." He may have conveyed a message as well, but his main business was to transport their present to the apostle. Being commissioned ("apostled") to do this he became their commissioner or apostle for the time. Such "apostles" may well find a place today. It did not occur to me at the time, but I also have done

this duty, and was an "apostle" for a brief period, empowered to convey a sum of money to evangelists at some distance from the city.

#### EPAPHRODITUS THE MINISTER

Yet I was also a "minister," for it ministered to the needs of the workers. How far this word has lost its proper usage is seen when we say that Epaphroditus was Paul's "minister." We may be sure that Paul did not attend his church, or listen to his sermons, or "sit under his ministry." To be sure, ministration is not simply serving or dispensing. It is a public office. The priests ministered in the temple (Luke 1:23; Heb.10:11). The political authorities are God's ministers (Rom.13:6). In this sense was Epaphroditus the minister of the Philippian ecclesia, inasmuch as he was their public functionary and attended to their ministration for them. As the priests brought the people's offerings to God, so he carried the Philippians' gift to Paul.

The charm of Epaphroditus is revealed in the exquisite sensitiveness of his character. He was depressed, not because he is infirm (though that may have been the case also), but because the Philippians had heard of his infirmity. Even though drawing near to death he is concerned about them, and the sorrow he causes them, rather than his own disability. Paul shares in this charming consideration, and hastens his return to them, so that he, in turn, may not be burdened by their sorrow. Indeed, the whole interchange of sympathetic feeling is charming to a degree seldom seen among mortals. It is the delectable fruit of God's love, which should always grace the service of His saints.

#### INFIRMITY AND DEATH

The case of Epaphroditus is of more than passing moment because it confirms and crowns the great truth that, in this

administration, God's power is perfected in infirmity. Paul himself, after he had healed others, was given a splinter in the flesh (2 Cor.12:7). Today God's grace is our sufficiency. Paul gloried in his infirmities, that the power of Christ should tabernacle on him. This was by no means the teaching of the twelve, or even of Paul himself when he was connected with the heralding of the kingdom. That day of physical marvels was announced by displays of *power*. The *powers* (not the infirmities) of the coming eon were produced as tokens of its nearness. Even the nations were given gifts of healing, in view of the coming glory. But, as the kingdom heralding ceased, the powers that accompanied it withdrew.

There are circles of believers today who would not have hesitated to charge Epaphroditus with lack of faith, if not with actual sin, for his failure to appropriate the healing in the atonement. For them it is a disgrace to be ill, and, even if it is the consequence of their self-sacrifice in the Lord's work, it is a dishonor and a shame. How different was Paul's estimate! Quite to the contrary, he writes to them and to us: "*have such in honor*, seeing that because of the work of the Lord he draws near unto death, risking his soul that he should fill up your want of ministration toward me" (2:29,30). Infirmity of the flesh is as much in keeping with the truth today, as was the health and healing which accompanied the heralding of our Lord or of the twelve, or of Paul's own earlier ministries, which were still connected with the kingdom.

Paul was probably the greatest healer among the apostles. He more than duplicated every sign recorded of Peter in the book of Acts. The lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple was not the beneficiary of so wonderful a miracle as was the lame man at Lystra (Acts 3:2; 14:8). Of whom else do we read such words as these: "powerful deeds, not the casual kind, God did through the hands of

Paul, so that the handkerchiefs or aprons from his cuticle are carried away to the infirm also, to clear the diseases from them. Besides, wicked spirits go out" (Acts 19:11,12)? In this matter Paul seems to have easily eclipsed all others.

#### FROM GLORY TO GLORY

Yet in this, as in all else connected with Saul, who is called Paul, there is a gradual but mighty change, which he himself describes as a going from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18). Superficially, one might expect that this would bring still more physical strength and healing, but the advance is confined to the spiritual sphere, while the physical wonders fade away with the failing kingdom hopes.

Personally, in immediate connection with the highest revelation of which Paul could boast (2 Cor. 12:1-7), he is given a painful and irritating affliction in the flesh, in order to keep him down. He who healed others cannot heal himself. And when he prayed for its removal, his persistence did not avail. So far as we know it was never withdrawn from him, so that we must picture the great apostle himself as a pathetic figure physically, in the latter part of his career, as at once the revelator and exponent of the great truth for the present, that *God's power is perfected in human infirmity*. It was in his latest days, in prison and unable to cure himself or his friends, that Paul was most powerful.

#### PAUL AND HIS COMPANIONS

We see this change coming over the scene even more clearly in Paul's connection with his companions. Surely the great healer would wish to cure his own intimate friends and associates in the Lord's work. But, in proportion as the spiritual grace increased, the physical receded. His own child in the faith, whose service he so highly commends in this epistle, is *frequently* infirm (1 Tim. 5:23). That Paul

is concerned about it is evident from the fact that he recommends, not a remedy, but a palliative. Weak Timothy became his most powerful aid. "Trophimus, being infirm, I left at Miletus" (2 Tim.4:20). In his earlier days, before the present grace was revealed, he would have healed him. Now infirmity is not to be removed but used. Through it God's power is to be revealed. Some day we shall see that Trophimus' infirmity effected more for God than the most wonderful miracle of healing would have done.

And so today. God's power is not apparent in mighty muscles or in buoyant health, neither of which is to be despised. He displays His glory in broken vessels of clay, so that the excellence of it is not of man but of God. And it is our duty and privilege to bestow especial honor on those who risk their souls in carrying out His work. God could easily keep them in health or cure their weaknesses, but that does not accord with the transcendent grace which is granted to us in this secret administration. Soon after it was revealed to Paul, long before it was made public in his imprisonment epistles, the physical blessings of the kingdom not only retired but, in Paul's case at least, were replaced by positive physical impotence and pain.

Epaphroditus risked his soul to fulfill his commission. It is evident from this that he did not shrink back in the face of danger. He knew before that it might cost him his health, if not his life. He had no such illusion as that the wonderworking apostle would heal him. He committed himself wholly into the hands of God, Who had mercy on him and spared his life. Now he has an honor compared to which all earthly glories fade away. What distinction can compare with his place among the slaves of God? For he it is who was chosen to be our model, to teach us how to serve God acceptably in suffering.

A. E. Knoch

## THE IMITATION OF PAUL (Philippians 3:1-4:1)

PAUL's service now comes before us, preceded by a three-fold warning which is the least heeded yet most needed portion of God's Word for His slaves in this era. The third chapter of Philippians brings before us Paul's conduct in connection with the present administration, for our emulation, and points out the pitfalls which are spread for our feet, or, rather, it warns us against those who have fallen into them. And, indeed, almost the whole of Christendom, including its most illustrious leaders and its most noble saints, have failed in a measure in finding the way of true service. Even in Paul's own day many were enemies of the *cross*, though zealous workers and saved believers. Today the apostasy is so general that few think of objecting to it or warning God's slaves against it.

The keynote of true service is rung out once again: "Rejoice in the *Lord!*" Not in ourselves, in the flesh, or the terrestrial at this time, but in Him, in spirit, among the celestials. To be safe, we should keep this ever before us. Paul apologized for repeating this so often, but it is sorely needed, for it is seldom heeded. Indeed, few realize the precise force of the simple terms used. It is a very different matter to rejoice in *Christ* in regard to our salvation and glory, and to rejoice in the *Lord* in relation to our service for His sake. This chapter deals with service, not salvation. It is saved saints who are enemies of the *cross* (not of Christ), whose consummation is destruction (so far as their service is concerned). This is no chapter for unbeliev-

ers, but for saints in their character as *slaves*, who rejoice in their Master, or *Lord*.

#### THE TRIPLE WARNING

The threefold warning is given to us in highly figurative language, hence it will be well to identify the figures, and put them into literal language. The warning seems to be a reversal, in which the first item corresponds with the last, so we will set it forth in this way, to help us to connect the corresponding parts.

*Beware of curs,  
beware of evil workers,  
beware of the maimcision,  
for we are the circumcision who are  
offering divine service to God in spirit,  
and are glorying in Christ Jesus,  
and have no confidence in flesh.*

From this it seems that "curs" are those of the nations who have confidence in the flesh, and the "maimcision" those who rest on their literal circumcision. The whole is in contrast to the previous eras when circumcision had its place and the nations were to be blessed through the physical seed of Abraham.

#### BEWARE OF CURS

The dogs of the East, when grown, were half-wild scavengers of the villages, without an owner, existing on the refuse or offal, and universally detested. Hence it became an epithet for those outside the pale of promise, in the same class, almost, with hogs. Our Lord said (Matt. 7:6):

*You may not be giving that which is holy to the curs,  
nor yet should you be casting your pearls in front of hogs  
lest at some time they be trampling them with their feet,  
and, turning, they should be tearing you.*



Peter also speaks of both together in his parables (2 Peter 2:22). In order to convey this feeling of contempt we have not translated the word *kuōn* by *dog*, as is usually done, but by the more accurate *cur*.

Curs are outsiders (Rev.22:15). In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus we find a hint of this (Luke 16:21). But there is more than that in the picture Paul puts before us. They are outsiders who devour the offal of the Circumcision. The key to the correct interpretation lies in the following context. Paul recites a list of what he has as a physical descendant of Israel and then adds that he deems it *refuse* (3:8), that he may gain Christ. This refuse, this offal, which he has thrown away, is eagerly devoured by the *curs*, that is, those of the outside nations who seek to appropriate that which belongs to Israel in the flesh. They sometimes call themselves "spiritual Israel," and other euphonious terms, but here they are called "curs." They have confidence in the flesh. Beware of them!

#### EVIL WORKERS

Christendom has many "workers." It seems cruel and heartless to make most of them evil. Indeed, one is tempted to call all "Christian" work good, when the motive seems to be commendable. But one consideration alone shows that, in a very real sense the work of Christendom is evil. Until very recent times, the church had such confidence in itself that it proposed to bring about the conversion of the world without the coming of Christ. And, indeed, that is still the aim of the great majority of "Christian" workers. Yet all such efforts must be evil, despite their commendable object, for they propose to take the glory which belongs to Christ alone, and make it their own. All work which does not glory in Christ Jesus is evil. All which boasts in the flesh is evil. All which is disposed to the terrestrial is evil. Beware!

## THE MAIMCISION

This is the epithet which reveals what the Circumcision really are in this era when the flesh has lost all standing before God. Circumcision was once a token of covenant relationship with the Deity. It entailed many precious privileges. It will have a great place in the future again, when the physical seed of Abraham will be restored to divine favor. But now circumcision has lost all virtue and has degenerated into a mere mutilation of the flesh. The right to the rite is a physical one. Descent from Abraham is essential, except for proselytes. This term may be applied to all who give it a place in service today, whether they are actual sons of Israel, or take this rite upon themselves in order to share in the blessings which it is supposed to bring.

Circumcision is a *cutting off* of the flesh, and was intended to set forth its futility. Had the Circumcisionists fully realized what the sign signified, they would have lost all confidence in the flesh. Instead they gave the flesh the highest place, and sought to make it the basis of all blessing. As we, who place no confidence in the flesh whatever, really carry out the true significance of the sign (even if we do not possess it) *we are the genuine Circumcision*. We have no ritual, no priesthood, no temple in which to go through the outward forms and ceremonies of the divine service, but, in spirit, we offer to God that essential worship which the temple service only shadowed. Too often, alas, the substance was lacking. We need no physical symbol. We dare not be circumcised. It has become a badge of apostasy. Beware of the maimcision!

## PAUL'S PHYSICAL PREROGATIVES

But what of Paul himself? He certainly belonged to the Circumcision. What is his attitude toward these physical prerogatives of his? In seven distinct steps he describes

to us the height which he had attained in the divine religion. He could measure himself with the best of them. Narrower and narrower he draws the circle of privilege, until at last he stands almost alone, a solitary example, at the summit of human religious attainment.

#### CIRCUMCISION THE EIGHTH DAY

The rite of circumcision was not confined to the sons of Jacob or Israel. Abraham received it before Isaac was born, and he circumcised Ishmael and all who were in his house (Gen.17:24-27). After the example of Ishmael, his descendants perform the rite in the thirteenth year. Yet all who were circumcised reckoned themselves a special class, being associated with Abraham. Paul, in his claims, really goes back to Isaac, for he adds "the eighth day." This is a smaller circle of privilege than that of circumcision alone. The striking fact is that this class begins with him who was born of parents as good as dead, when the energy of the flesh was replaced by the power of faith.

#### OF THE RACE OF ISRAEL

Not all who were circumcised the eighth day belonged to the race of Israel. Esau and his descendants are not reckoned in this more highly favored class. Yahweh repeated His promises to the patriarch Jacob, not to Esau. The nation of God's choice is confined to the descendants of Israel. There was a covenant made with the Circumcision. But there was still another made with Israel when they came out of Egypt. To them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the legislation, the divine service, and the promises (Psa.9:4).

#### THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN

Benjamin was the best beloved of Jacob's sons after Joseph was taken from him. The tribe took a prominent

part in the affairs of Israel, and had the honor of having the temple and Jerusalem within its borders. Israel's first king, Saul, came from Benjamin. It was the only tribe which remained true to the house of David, when the ten tribes broke away. It was an additional honor to belong to such a tribe.

#### A HEBREW OF HEBREWS

In Paul's day the nation was divided into two parties, very much as in these days: one could speak of orthodox Jews and liberal Jews. All the Jews had learned to speak Greek, yet some of them had gone much further, and had forsaken the traditional customs to become Hellenists, with Greek culture and customs. This was especially the case among the dispersion. Paul had been born in Cilicia, so was especially tempted to leave the "Hebrews," as they were called, for more modern ways. Yet he did not yield to these influences, but clung to the traditions. Indeed, he was a leader among such. He even expresses his position here by a Hebrew idiom. For the superlative they used this form. The holiest division of the tabernacle they called the holy of holies. So, to express the fact that he was most "orthodox," he calls himself "a Hebrew of Hebrews." Religiously this was a more select class than the mass of the nation.

#### A PHARISEE

In relation to the law the Jews of our Lord's day were divided still more. Among the "Hebrews" there was a sect of special sanctity and severely strict in the law's enforcement. Notwithstanding the excesses to which Pharisees went in its interpretation, and the fact that they overloaded it with human additions, outwardly, at least, they were recognized as the champions of the law, and opposed all laxness in its observance. No doubt the most of them were hypocrites, as our Lord so clearly showed. But they

were pardonably proud in their stand for the Scriptures, and against human reason and philosophy. It was a distinct gain to belong to their ranks rather than to those who gave the divine legislation no such place in their lives.

#### PERSECUTING THE ECCLESIA

Paul was no half-hearted, indifferent religionist. Much as we may condemn his misdirected zeal in harassing those who had accepted the Messiah, we must allow that it testified to the earnestness and depth of his convictions. He was a zealous Pharisee, quite above the average in the intensity of his desire to serve the God of his fathers. Among his contemporaries he had a right to expect special recognition for his services on behalf of the Jewish faith, as he saw it.

#### BLAMELESS

A blameless reputation in the midst of the strict Pharisees was no light accomplishment. Let us not think here of sin, for the apostle himself confessed that, while, blameless in the sight of men, he was the foremost of sinners in the sight of God. It is clear that he carried out the observance of the law so fully and accurately that the most fault-finding Pharisee could not detect any lapse. A very notable achievement! It is a question whether Saul of Tarsus could do any more, religiously, to better himself or attain a higher standing in the flesh before God. And it is very much to be doubted whether any other man of his day could equal his record.

#### PAUL FORFEITS ALL

When Paul was on board the ship which was taking him to Italy, it entered a bay called Ideal Harbors. But, as it was not a fit place in which to winter, the navigator and the man who had chartered the ship proposed to go on

to Phoenix, in Crete. Paul expostulated, saying, "Men! I behold that sailing is about to be with damage and much *forfeit*, not only of the lading, and of the ship, but of our souls also" (Acts 27:10). The outcome was that the ship and its cargo were *forfeited* by their action in pursuing the voyage against the counsel of Paul.

We have brought in this incident in order to give a graphic illustration of the meaning of the word *forfeit*, which is one of the features of the passage before us (3:7,8,8). Like the ship, Paul was loaded with all sorts of valuable cargo, but he forfeited it all in the great crisis which he had just passed through. Indeed, the ship is a picture of the kingdom as heralded in the book of Acts, especially as it concerns Paul and those with him. At the end of the book it goes to pieces and all that belonged to it was lost; only those who believed were given to Paul, and with him went to Rome.

All these physical advantages were a gain to Paul, but they hindered a much greater gain. They seemed excellent in the dimness of human ignorance, but they became intolerable in the light of the knowledge of Christ. So Paul does not part with them reluctantly, but deems them to be no better than refuse, or offal to be thrown to the curs. All his cherished merit, his blameless walk, his proud pedigree, on which he had prided himself in days gone by, the like of which is the chief reliance of the religionist to this very day, were seen to be so many incumbrances to keep him from the complete appropriation of Christ. Away with it! May his example help us all to refuse the refuse which religion offers us, in order to keep us from the full appreciation of Him Who is our All!

#### GAINING CHRIST

But how could Paul speak of gaining Christ after all these years of sainthood and faithful service? How can he say "that I *may* be, found in Him" when He had been

“in Christ” for many years? He is “working out” the salvation he had received. He is carrying it into effect. While all believers rely on Christ for salvation, few indeed are wholly dependent on Him for service. To let those things go which seem an advantage to us is quite a different matter from forsaking recognized sin. The Jew must forfeit his most cherished prerogatives, and the gentile all his terrestrial advantages if he wishes to gain Christ in this sense. Christ must become their All in service as He is in salvation.

#### RIGHTEOUSNESS IN CHRIST

Saul was what he was in himself. His righteousness was his own, based on the law. Blameless as he appeared before his fellow men, at heart he was most unrighteous. This came to the surface in his zeal against Christ and His saints. Nothing could be more unjust than to sympathize with Stephen’s murderers, or to persecute those who belonged to the Just One. Away with such self-righteousness! Now Paul wishes to be found *in Christ*, not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith (3:9).

#### TO KNOW HIM

The knowledge of Christ is especially extended to His sufferings and death, and to His resurrection. *There is no reference whatever to His life and ministry in the land as a Servant of the Circumcision*, which is knowing Christ after the flesh (2 Cor.5:16). Our vital connection with God’s Anointed does not commence until His crucifixion, and associates us with His resurrection and ascension.

#### CONFORMED TO HIS DEATH

Righteousness demands the death of the unrighteous. This includes the whole race. Christ alone was righteous, hence He alone could die for the sake of others. His death

for us fulfills the demands of justice, yet at the same time involves our death in Him. We should have died on Golgotha rather than He. His sufferings were ours by right, not His. This knowledge puts an end to us and all our pretensions in the flesh. Paul no longer saw himself blameless before men but smitten and slain in the sight of God. He may have been a circumcised Israelite, a Hebrew and a Pharisee, but he was a dead one. The death of Christ put an end to all his physical pretensions, and absolutely settled his unrighteousness. Conformity to the death of Christ is the one absolute essential to acceptable service. So long as we still cling to something of our own, we cannot fully find our place in Christ.

#### THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS

None of us can actually endure the sufferings which came to Christ when He died on behalf of sinners. Nor can we add our own to His sufferings on behalf of the race, for He alone is qualified to save. Had we such sufferings to endure, they would be because of our own sins, and not those of others. How then can we enter into "the fellowship His sufferings?" By the vital recognition that these sufferings, being *for* us, were really ours, and show God's estimate of what we were in ourselves. This enables us to escape from ourselves and our supposed excellences in the flesh, and to transfer ourselves into Him. There we find all our supposed losses overwhelmingly recompensed.

#### THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

If we are identified with Christ in His death, then we will be in His resurrection also. Actually, literally, we will be made alive because we are His (1 Cor.15:22). But this is not in view here, for we are concerned with life and service for Him now, not in the future, when these warnings and exhortations will no longer be needed. We are not now



concerned with resurrection itself, but with a knowledge of its power in our present service. This is viewed from two different angles, both of which should powerfully affect our course. One is the past resurrection of Christ. The other is our own future resurrection.

There is a tremendous reservoir of potential power in the realization that our Lord has been raised from among the dead. Its implications are limitless. If He has accomplished this, He is able for all else. We have a Lord Whose power knows no limits, and does not even retreat before death, the last of all our enemies. All human effort is circumscribed and impotent in view of death. The work in which we are engaged is not so. It will not fail, because it is in the hands of the Deathless One.

#### ATTAINING TO THE OUT-RESURRECTION

We avow, as Paul did before Felix, "that there is to be a future resurrection of the just as well as the unjust" (Acts 24:15). "All who are in the tombs will be hearing His voice, and those who do good things shall be going out into a resurrection of life, yet those who commit bad into a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28,29). These resurrections do not occur at the same time. There is at least a thousand years between them. Therefore it is necessary that the former should be an *out-resurrection*, for the rest of the dead do not live until the thousand years are finished (Rev.20:5). It is also evident that, should a resurrection occur even before this, it also would be an *out-resurrection*. It is important to note that Scripture does not distinguish these by a special phrase. We never read of an "out-resurrection from among the *saints*." All are simply from among the *dead*.

It is evident from this that *out-resurrection* is for believers only and leads to eonian glory, in contrast to the latter resurrection, which leads to judgment. In the out-resurrec-

tion we will be sinless, and lead a life of perfect conformity to the will of God. This is the ideal to which our present life should conform. What would we not give to be as we will be when vivified! To serve as we will in that glorious time! What is more practical than to seek to attain it now?

Let us keep in mind the context in which this term is used if we wish to correctly interpret its message. Paul is concerned with his *service* (Phil.3:4-16). His previous course in unbelief led to the persecution of God's saints. Could anything be further from our occupation in resurrection? Now Paul wishes to regulate his actions so as to anticipate his behaviour in the out-resurrection. He puts it, "conformed to His death, if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection out from among the dead" (Phil.3:10,11). For this he wishes to know the *power* of His resurrection.

That he is not referring to his own literal resurrection is evident from what follows. "Not that I already obtained, or have already been perfected . . ." No one could possibly suppose that he had died and had been raised. But the conduct of the apostle may very well have been so like that which will be ours in resurrection, that his friends might easily suppose that God had already actually bestowed upon him the power which belongs to that day.

Christ Jesus has grasped, or taken hold of Paul in order to conform him to His own likeness. That will be openly manifest in the case of all saints when the out-resurrection actually takes place. But Paul wished to grasp that ahead of time, here and now. He wanted the power of that future life to transform his present career.

The powers of the coming eon were present in our Lord's ministry and in that of the twelve, and even in Paul's earlier course. Now that the kingdom is no longer the subject of testimony, these physical marvels have of necessity vanished. In their place we should seek to anticipate the spiritual powers of the future glory which awaits *us*. These are

in reality far greater than those of the kingdom, though their character is very different.

#### THE RACE

In order to give our service the proper direction and incentive, our career is compared to a race, yet not in regard to competition with others—that is not here, and would spoil the picture—but in regard to our attitude.

The racer pays no attention to that which is behind him. It would be a great hindrance. He does not stand up straight, but stretches far forward in the direction of the goal. He not only wishes to arrive there, but to cover the course in such a way that he will receive a prize, a reward for his efforts.

It is vital that we keep the picture here presented to us well within the bounds of the context. Much misunderstanding would have been avoided if thoughts foreign to the theme had not been worked into it. It is true that, in a race, many run and only one wins the prize. According to that there is no use for us to enter it, for Paul would surely carry off the single prize and the rest of us would have nothing but disappointment for our pains. But this aspect of a race is not at all in view here. The lessons are drawn from altogether different features, and this should not be allowed to intrude.

#### FORGETTING, NOT REGRETTING

Few, indeed, who have learned what they are in themselves, can look back without regret. Paul might have made much more mention of his past errors in his epistles. But he never brings them up without good cause. There is no power in our past, especially not in the years of self-exaltation before we began to find our all in Christ. Many are tempted to spend much time regretting their own ignorance and selfishness, and thinking how much bet-

ter it would have been if they had been enlightened at an earlier age. Such regrets weaken and unfit us for our forward striving toward the goal, conformity with Christ, and should be discouraged. Let us forget our past advantages and disadvantages and look ahead. Back of us is ourselves, ahead is Christ.

#### THE PRIZE

The prize set before us is God's calling above, which might be rendered the "up calling." Like our Lord before His exaltation, our present career is a "down calling," a descent, a humiliation. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto the death of the cross. Wherefore God highly exalts Him. Exaltation is the prize set before Him and us. The glory awaits us at the goal. God has called us, indeed, but He has not yet called us *up*. Now we need to be emptied of ourselves and be found in Him, in lowliness seeking *conformation* to His death, and a realization of the power of His resurrection. Then we will realize it to the full and attain the prize of prizes, *transformation* into His glorious likeness. It is presented as a prize because it cannot be ours until we reach the goal at the end of the race, not that we alone win it in competition with others.

#### MATURE SAINTS

Among the saints there are many, if not most, who cannot follow what is here set forth. They have many things in the flesh, race, position, attainments, and reputation, which they cannot forfeit for Christ. Of conformity to His death they know little or nothing, nor of the power of His resurrection. In a word, they are *immature*. In the language of the race course, they lag behind and cannot see the goal.

There is a tendency to create a gap between the mature and the immature, those who have gone ahead in the race and those who lag behind. We would be inclined to urge

the laggards to mend their pace, and to catch up with those ahead of them. But the immature have no clear realization of their backwardness. They sometimes consider minority quite the normal state, and maturity an undue assumption. It seems a settled opinion that, in religion, there must be clouds and mystery. Clearness is only conceit. This comes largely because they are constantly occupied with the Scriptures intended for the immature, and have never followed Paul into perfection. But there is no exhortation to them to hurry, but to the mature to accommodate themselves to them. "In what we outstrip, there is to be a mutual disposition to observe the same fundamental rule" (3:16).

#### PAUL'S UNIQUE PLACE

Paul occupies a unique place in God's revelation. What other man could calmly put himself before us for imitation?

Peter would not do so. He would have his readers follow in the footprints of Christ (1 Peter 2:21). Yet in the section concerning our Lord in this epistle, we are not exhorted to go in His steps, but only to imitate the disposition which sent Him from heaven to the death of the cross. All intermediate "steps" between His incarnation and the cross are avoided by including His life's history in one word, "He humbles Himself." In His earthly career He was the great Example for those who will enter the kingdom which He heralded. But His conduct was not in accord with present truth, for this would have clashed with His whole ministry which was to the Circumcision, and confined to the earth.

Few who have considered the matter have not wondered at first how Paul could take so much upon himself. Not only could he make himself a model (1 Cor.4:16), but, quite unlike any other apostle, he could speak of *my* evangel (Rom.2:16; 16:25; 2 Tim.2:8), or *our* evangel (2 Cor.4:3; 1 Thess.1:5; 2 Thess.2:14), without the least attempt to

excuse himself. Some have thought it most irreverent for him to couple himself with the evangel after this fashion. And it cannot be condoned on any other ground than the real one, that to him was committed an evangel distinct from all the rest, which can best be described by this fact, rather than by any special side of it, such as *grace*, or *conciliation*, or *Uncircumcision*.

If Paul lived today Jeremiah would no longer be called the weeping prophet. Paul's lamentations over the saints would far exceed his over Israel. It seems almost incredible that even in Paul's day *many* were walking so as to cause him so much concern. What are these days compared to those? As lead to gold, as dusk to midday. If there were so many in those days who were *enemies of the cross* (3:18) how must it be today? Should we not expect to find nearly all in this category? Nothing else can be expected. There is an almost universal insensibility to the teaching of the cross, and its effect on the physical and terrestrial. The saints hold fast to their own righteousness, and will not let go. They do not care to be found in Christ.

#### ENEMIES OF THE CROSS

Paradox though it seems, most of those who are friends of Christ are enemies of His cross (3:18). They are willing to part with their sins and evil and take Him as their Saviour, but they do not wish to part with their goodness or personal advantages and superiorities and be found alone in Him. They do not realize that the manner of Christ's death puts an end to all that man is in himself. They wish to be somebody on their own account. And this makes them antagonistic to the cross. Their attitude is cloaked under various euphemistic terms, which reveal a latent pride in their origin or their character or their attainments in the flesh. All of this clashes with the cross.

## WHOSE CONSUMMATION IS DESTRUCTION

This phrase kept me from grasping the tragic meaning of this passage for a long time. It seemed, indeed, that Paul was speaking of believers, for why should he mention any others when speaking of imitating his walk? No others but saints could come into view in this passage. But that the phrase "whose consummation is destruction" (3:19), should refer to them seems quite incredible, until the proper background is furnished by a consideration of the whole epistle, and especially this section of it. This letter deals with *service*, not with *salvation*. The disobedient among the saints have already been referred to as "curs," as "evil workers," as the "maimcision," terms whose harshness is excusable only on the ground of truth and necessity. They are intended to be helpful in rescuing the saints from delusive dangers against which they need an alarming admonition.

Here we have such a dire warning. It is a fact that all service done under the influence of the flesh will be destroyed. All self-righteousness must perish. That is its consummation. If it is not forfeited now, it will be burned up at the dais of Christ.

At the final consummation God is not only going to be in all, but *All* in all. What we have here is only the process to this end. The unbeliever will be prepared for it by judgment. The believer should anticipate it now in his service, by gaining Christ in the measure in which he forfeits that which is his own. But if he does not do so, he can look forward to nothing but the destruction of his deeds in that day, when he stands in front of the dais of Christ, to be requited for that which he puts into practice through the body, for it will be reckoned bad (2 Cor.5:10). If anyone's work shall burn up, he will *forfeit* it, yet he shall be saved (1 Cor.3:15).

## WHOSE GOD IS THEIR BOWELS

This strong and striking figure seems to set before us a form of idolatry which puts the satisfaction of the flesh in the place of the Deity, so far as service is concerned. It is abundantly in evidence in most so-called Christian worship. Much more is done to satisfy the soul than to edify the spirit. Beautiful sights and melodious sounds and pleasant scents are used to attract, in place of the love of God and the glories of His Son.

## WHOSE GLORY IS IN THEIR SHAME

Blind to the shame in which the cross of Christ has sunk all fleshly religion, it has become the boast of Christendom. An apt expression of this is the form which has been given to the cross itself. In place of the severe and shameful stake, the badge of human depravity, it has been converted into an ornament to adorn church buildings and their ritual and the dress of devotees. Much of the boast of Christendom is in things which are contrary to the cross of Christ, and which, if seen in its light, would cause deep humiliation and shame.

## WHO ARE DISPOSED TO THE TERRESTRIAL

A disposition to the terrestrial is the normal attitude of man. Almost all of the Scriptures are concerned with the earth and that which takes place upon its surface. For Peter and the Circumcision to be thus disposed is quite in keeping with the character of their calling. But today it is a sign of immaturity and opposition to the cross, for the terrestrial is still outside of Christ, and, like the flesh, is not subject to Him, neither is it able. If Christ were today engaged in blessing the earth as He will bless it in the future, then, in Him, we also would be concerned with its betterment. But, *without Christ*, the cross has condemned



the world and its works, and we should not seek to do anything outside of Him.

Not that we are to be recluses and hermits, or do nothing to earn a livelihood. We have our duties. We must provide for our own and pay taxes. We must be subject to the authorities. But, in spirit, we are not of it, especially with any of its plans for self-improvement before the presence of Christ. Such efforts are contrary to the cross, and are antichristian in character, for they seek to displace Him, and make His presence unnecessary. We know that as a whole all such movements will end in failure, for the earth will need Him more and more, as time goes by, in spite of all that anyone can do. He alone can heal its mortal wound.

#### CELESTIAL CITIZENSHIP

In glorious contrast to our present place of humiliation on the earth is our potential place of exaltation in the heavens. We have no valid rights on earth. It, with its fullness, belongs to Yahweh, and He has not delegated any of its privileges to us. But why should we wish to meddle here, seeing that God has given us a far more glorious sphere? We are citizens of the heavens (3:20). We will not go there as fugitives of earth or as guests dependent on the hospitality of others. We will need no pass, no visa, as though we were foreigners, limited in our rights and restricted in our movements, alien expatriates, despised emigrants of a despicable and death-doomed race. This we would be in ourselves, but in Christ we are entitled to all the rights and privileges which He Himself can claim.

#### AWAITING A SAVIOUR

Salvation has its tenses, past, present, and future. We were saved, we are being saved, and we shall be saved. It is not finished until our Lord descends from heaven and we ascend to our allotment. We await Him in various char-

acters. He will come as a Saviour with regard to our bodies, for these have not yet felt His touch. Our salvation is still incomplete, and will remain so in the physical sphere as long as we are here.

#### THE BODY OF OUR HUMILIATION

No one is so keenly sensitive to the degrading corruption and impotence of our bodies as the saint who has caught a glimpse of His glory.

But the phrase means more than that. It is not merely a humiliating body, but the body which accompanies and accords with our humiliation (3:21). So long as we are in it we are to humble ourselves, as well as suffer the humiliation it involves. This is not the time for us to be glorified. The Corinthians were sated and rich and reigning, while the apostles were a gazing-stock to the world, but that was due to the Corinthians' carnality (1 Cor.4:8-10). A mortal body is the proper place to display our present humiliation. Undesirable as it is in itself, we should be thankful for it, as it prepares us to appreciate the body that shall be ours in the future.

#### THE BODY OF HIS GLORY

Paul never met our Lord in His post-resurrection body, as He presented Himself to His disciples. When he saw Him it was enveloped in a glory which the eyes of the disciples never could have borne. To the disciples on the way to Emmaus our Lord presented no outward evidence of His glorified position. This was dimmed, and invisible in His intercourse with the kingdom saints. This was not the body which pertained to His glory. This is not the prototype of our future frame. Even the transformation on the holy mount, though His face shone as the sun, seems to have been bearable to their sight (Matt.17:2). But when Paul saw Him on the Damascus road, the light irradiating

Him was above the brightness of the sun (Acts 26:13). Its beams were too bright for Paul's poor eyes, and blinded them, scorching the sclerotic coat into scales (Acts 9:18). Such is the body of His glory.

Contrary to our conceptions, glory and subjection go together. Now our flesh is not subject and is inglorious. Then it will be endued with power and effulgent in its splendor. This is because it is once more connected with the source of life and power and fully under the sway of Christ. Independence and insubjection drag down to degradation and death. Dependence and subjection lead to life and glory. The transfiguration of our bodies will inaugurate a similar operation to include the whole universe, for He is able to subject all to Him. In each case it will involve glorification, so that, at the consummation, when all will be subject, He will hand over to God a universe glorified as well as subject.

#### STAND FIRM

Having delivered his warnings, designed to shield us from the special evils which beset our course, Paul proceeds to add positive exhortations equally needed to aid us on our way. We are all liable to waver, to differ in our dispositions, to be depressed, to worry, to be engrossed by the evil rather than by the good (4:1-9). How wonderfully he introduces his words! His readers were beloved and longed for, his joy and wreath (4:1). It seems to me that, in milder measure, this is true of all to whom God's truth comes through Paul. I, for one, feel almost as if I were a Philippian, for I am certainly in his wreath and would like to be his joy, and love him and long to see him, as he would me, were we acquainted. Paul puts the personal touch here, and speaks as to particular friends.

Stand firm *thus* in the Lord, my beloved (4:1). Here is the tone which lifts the favorites of grace. There is no

threat of doom in case of disobedience, only the constraint of love. Since that day the slaves of the Lord have been inconstant, unsettled, unsteady, changeable, fluctuating, vacillating, wavering, restless, uneasy, erratic, fickle—anything but firm in the Lord in regard to His service in this era. We do not speak of Christendom, which has been far more constant in the service of the flesh and the terrestrial than the saints have been of Christ and the celestial. Yet God's patience has not been exhausted. The exhortation still calls to us, *stand firm in the Lord—thus*. As imitators of Paul, as forfeiting everything of the flesh and finding our all in Christ, there is a vast opportunity for service, such as seldom comes to the sons of Adam.

A. E. Knoch

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Brother **Andrew Lonyo**, of Chesterfield Township, Michigan, died on May 26, 2013 at age 84. Rejoicing for many years in the grace of God and God's eonian purpose in Christ Jesus, Andy supported our work both financially and by means of his time with volunteer service. We will miss his happy smile and kind spirit, but praise God in knowing we shall be roused together in that day and always be together with our Lord.

**Joseph Yoder**, of Menifee, California, died on July 28, 2012 at age 85. Joe is survived by his wife Mary, as well as by his brothers Charles and David, and his sister Evelyn Tatton. The Yoder family have been friends and supporters of our work for many years, finding much of spiritual benefit and encouragement in the Concordant translation of the Scriptures, and especially in the evangel of our salvation as heralded by the apostle Paul.

**Laurel Shaw**, of West Covina, California, fell asleep in Christ on April 7, 2013 at age 87. Laurel, too, was a long-time friend and supporter of the Concordant ministry, together with her husband Jack who survives her. Her meek spirit and kind and gracious ways, were a salutary influence upon all who had the privilege of her close fellowship.

## EDITORIAL

THIS ISSUE is devoted to the use of the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament* (CVOT). It begins with a portion of A. E. Knoch's word of praise and appreciation for God's Word as it appears in the *Concordant Literal New Testament*, followed by a few, selected notes and reflections by Brother Knoch concerning the history and aims of the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Next is a reprint of the *Abbreviation Key* and the *Instructions for Use* for the Version.

In the remainder of the magazine, I attempt to provide an example of putting the various features of the CVOT to use by means of a study of Psalm 72. The idiomatic translation of this psalm is provided on pages 110 and 112 with a more literal rendering offered on the facing pages of 111 and 113.

I have tried to draw attention to certain unique features of the Version as explained in the *Instructions for Use*, and use them in opening up the meaning of the psalm for a growing appreciation of its values. A translation is necessarily an interpretation. But the more closely it can follow the original wording the more likely it will reflect the right interpretation. In using the "concordant method" of translation we are dedicated to this goal. Without supposing we have reached it fully, in accord with Philippians 3:12 we nevertheless strive toward it.

As for Psalm 72, many will dispute, not only my understanding of its message, but our rendering of it in English. This is one reason why we have included a "literal" translation of the text as it appears in the Masoretic text. This offers

a more objective rendering of the Hebrew words and grammar as indicated by that text. The literal version provides a test for the idiomatic translation, but the Hebrew text as we have it is not without flaws. Where we have changed it by emendations supported by ancient translations and commentaries (including more recent textual commentaries), as well as by a recognition of possible scribal errors in copying the text, we have endeavored to keep the context of the passage in view as the determining factor.

There is little agreement concerning the meaning and message of Psalm 72, and for this reason it may have been a poor choice as a test passage for the CVOT. But it does afford special opportunity for focusing on one phase of God's operations as they relate to rule and subjection and the manifestation of His glory. Our own experience in flesh under governments ruled by others in flesh does awaken in us a desire for a kingdom and King such as David describes in this psalm. It will be a kingdom under law directed by Christ as the Son of David, centered in Jerusalem, yet indeed it will be a blessing to all the nations of the earth, and all will pray for Him and count Him and His rule blessed and happy.

But this phase of Christ's kingship is not our expectation. Our calling is in grace and our position is under grace; we are identified with the death of Christ already in spirit, and we will be living together with Him in the oncoming eons when God will be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace among the celestials. Our part is not in the terrestrial kingdom under Christ as the *Son of David*, but in His kingdom as the *Son of God's love* (Col.1:13). It is under Christ in this Position that all will be brought into reconciliation through the blood of His cross, the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love. Then it will be, to expand the words of Psalm 72:19 that the entire universe will be filled with the glory of God!

D.H.H.

## THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

GOD'S WORD is mankind's most precious possession. What are all the treasures in the world compared with it? Do they even begin to approach the riches which are brought to us by the knowledge of His mind, the appreciation of His love? Indeed, it is God Himself Who is revealed in the sacred scrolls. They alone are the channel of His light, and His life, and His love. Is it not the object of all creation and all revelation to lead us to a knowledge of the Deity? And is it not the finest and most fruitful work in the world to bring God's great gift nearer to earth's peoples in its original purity, preciousness and power, and to seek methods of making their access to this boon as easy and practical as possible? Every human undertaking, and every translation of the Scriptures, fails and falls short of perfection. Our finite understanding, our faulty opinions as to the meaning of words in the ancient languages of inspiration cannot be fully evaded. To reduce this baneful influence to a minimum should be our earnest endeavor if we wish to approach the ideal set before us.

It has pleased God to give us His revelation in languages not our own. He chose the tongues of the ancients, which He refined, to suit them for this purpose. The most tremendous task that can occupy the mind and heart of a mortal is to convey to the people of today the impression produced on the native reader of that day by the Hebrew, the Aramaic and the Greek original. This is what we endeavor to do.

A. E. Knoch

## NOTES AND REFLECTIONS

GOD HAS SPOKEN! He talks to us in foreign tongues. Nothing is so imperative as a firsthand knowledge of His inspired revelation, without the intervention of human faults and disabilities. This is made impossible by the usual methods of translation. We can come much nearer to the ideal through systematic obedience to the laws of language, because, first of all, it leads to much greater accuracy, and, secondly, it is self-corrective. A word uniformly translated absorbs its true intent from its contexts.

The plan of the Hebrew Concordant Version is essentially the same as that employed in translating the Greek. Wigram's Englishman's Concordance was used in the preliminary work. It contains every Hebrew word found in the Scriptures, usually followed by all of the passages in which it occurs, as rendered in the Authorized Version, as well as two indexes. The English index lists every English word used in the AV, followed by every Hebrew word which it translates. The Hebrew index lists all the Hebrew words and every English word used to translate them.

The English vocabulary was formed as follows: The occurrences of each Hebrew word were studied as listed in Wigram, and the nearest English equivalent was written in our concordance. This was entered or underlined in the English and Hebrew indexes. Whenever it was discovered that a term had served as the translation of another Hebrew word it was crossed off, and all other translations of the Hebrew word chosen were likewise struck out. This process of elimination was continued with frequent changes and revisions, over a long period of time, until most of the



words in the divine vocabulary seemed to have been given their nearest English equivalent.

In this way the vocabulary of this version was built up before it was used in translation. This method forces us to be more consistent and accurate than would be possible without it. The chief advantage, however, is this, that it largely eliminates private opinion in the rendering of any particular passage. The words have already been fixed before the compiler comes to turn the sentence into English.

In order to secure uniformity, a card index was made of every form of every Hebrew word, and to each was added its English standard. The whole Hebrew text was copied, on special sheets in English, or Latin letters, so that the standards in the index could be placed beneath each word, making the sublinear uniform. As a companion to this, a complete Hebrew lexicon was written in loose leaf form, to record the standards and register further improvements.

After the vocabulary and grammar had been settled in this manner, about half of the Hebrew Scriptures were translated tentatively, using Ginsburg's Masoretico-Critical edition of the text as a basis, in order to test the vocabulary and the state of the text. The poetical portions were chosen because they contain many literary forms, especially parallelisms, with their synonyms, which are a great help in further refining the vocabulary, and in recovering the ancient text.

Not many changes were needed in the vocabulary, but the consistent renderings revealed the fact that even the Masoretic text, in many cases, has failed to preserve the original rendering. The rabbis seem to have realized that the text was gradually becoming more corrupt, so they sought to stereotype the form it had in their day. They did not change it, even when they knew that it was wrong, but put some of these mistakes on record in the margin.

A. E. Knoch

# ABBREVIATION KEY

## Sources of Variant Reading

~...~	Conjecture
...~	
7... <sup>o</sup>	Septuagint (LXX)
7...	
M...	Other manuscripts
... <sup>s</sup>	
Q...	Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls)
S...	Samaritan Pentateuch
... <sup>n</sup>	
S... <sup>ph</sup>	Altered by Sopherim
Sy... <sup>c</sup>	Syriac
... <sup>c</sup>	

## Examples of Combinations

7...~	Conjecture confirmed by Septuagint (LXX)
7...~ <sup>c</sup>	Conjecture confirmed by LXX and Syriac
Q...~	Conjecture confirmed by Qumran
7... <sup>o</sup>	Insertion from LXX
7...Q	LXX and Qumran
M... <sup>cs</sup>	Other manuscripts and Syriac

## Grammatical Indicators

=	dual or plural
\	Hebrew particle <b>ath</b>
'	emphatic pronoun
!...	incomplete verb
...!	participle
-...	complete verb
...-	infinitive
... <sup>c</sup>	causative verb form
m	make verb form

## Word Indicators

.	the	nr	near
>	to or for	o	obligate
+	and	ob	obscure
a	any	p	pass
ad	adult-male	pc	precede
af	after	pl	place
b	become	pr	pray
bd	behold	ps	possess
bf	before	pt	palate
bk	back	r	remembrance
br	break	ra	radiant
bt	between	ri	rise (noun)
cl	clean	s	same
cv	covet	sa	say
d	do	sc	sacrifice
... <sup>d</sup>	...ward	sf	self
du	duration	sl	slaughter
f	from	sp	speak
fl	filter	st	station
fr	further	stn	stone
g	give	not <sup>t</sup>	not
h	human	t	that
i	in	u	under
j	judge	w	which
ki	kind	wi	with
mn	many	wt	what
mr	moreover	y	yea
mt	mortals	yr	year
n	note		

## Footnote Abbreviations

◊	footnote symbol in text
Hb	Standard Hebrew Text
LXX	Septuagint
Ms	Manuscript(s)
MT	Masoretic Text (used for distinctions in the vowel pointings)
lit.	literally

## INSTRUCTION FOR USE

THE PUBLICATION of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) is an ongoing project endeavoring to provide, in a consistent English translation, a closer reflection of the grammar, syntax and word usage of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts than can be found in other current versions. By analyzing the contextual usages, a single English word was first selected as the most suitable equivalent for each Hebrew word. To achieve readability some words were then given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, are generally not used for other Hebrew words.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TYPEFACES

**Boldface** type is used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew.

Lightface type is used for words (or parts of words) which have been added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text, thus avoiding ambiguous renderings and making the English read more smoothly.

Examples from Genesis:

1:2 **over** the surface = **over face**

1:3 **Let light come** to **be** = **Let light become**

### SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Where the definite article ("the") appears in the Hebrew, and we have omitted it, a small (·) takes its place on the word to which it belongs.

Example from Genesis 1:16:

**luminaries = the luminaries**

We have used a small “plus” sign (+) for the common Hebrew conjunction **and** when it is omitted in the CVOT or rendered by a different English conjunction.

Examples from Genesis 1:14:

**+that they = and they**

**+ for = and for**

Also, when the Hebrew preposition for “to” is not rendered by this term in English, or left untranslated we show this by the symbol (’), as in Genesis 2:3 where **’by** represents the Hebrew preposition generally rendered **to**.

The symbol (‘) is used to represent a special Hebrew term which generally indicates the direct object of a sentence or clause. It occurs twice in Genesis 1:1 pointing to the two direct objects of the verb **created**. This is helpful to the translator because the position of the direct object varies in Hebrew in relation to the verb and subject.

In addition, a number of superior abbreviations and words are used to indicate variations from the standard translation of Hebrew terms. The abbreviations used are listed in our Abbreviation Key under the heading, *Word Indicators*. An example of this is the use of the term <sup>d</sup>**make** in Genesis 1:26 for the Hebrew verb for **do**. Another example is the term <sup>h</sup>**man** used in Genesis 17:12 where the Hebrew word literally meaning **human** appears when English idiom would more naturally call for the word **man**. (This distinguishes this term from the regular Hebrew word for “man,” as used in Genesis 2:23,24.)

When the full word is given in superior letters we do not list it in our Abbreviation Key. An example of this is the rendering <sup>way</sup>**journey** in Genesis 30:36, where this rendering of the Hebrew word for **way** is distinguished from the regular Hebrew word for **journey** as found in Exodus 17:1.

## VARIANT READINGS AND FOOTNOTES

Since the incorporation of variant readings from sources other than the traditional Masoretic text involves the judgment of the translators, all words and phrases which are not derived directly from the standard Hebrew text are indicated both at their beginning and end. The symbols used are listed in the Abbreviation Key.

When a variant reading replaces a reading in the Masoretic text or can be supported by a consideration of common scribal errors in copying the text, a footnote is usually provided to indicate the traditional reading or otherwise offer support for the emendation.

For example, in Genesis 2:2 our translation uses **sixth** in place of the Masoretic reading, **seventh**. As noted in the Abbreviation Key under the heading, "Sources of Variant Reading," the small italic <sup>7</sup> at the beginning of the word "sixth" indicates that this is the reading of the ancient Greek translation called the Septuagint (often identified in academic studies by the abbreviation LXX). In addition, the italic letters <sup>n</sup> and <sup>c</sup> at the end of the word inform the reader that the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Syriac translation of the passage also have this reading. The small symbol ~ at the end of "sixth" indicates that even though the Masoretic text has "seventh" (as shown in the footnote), the conjecture that "sixth" was the original word is given some support from the Masoretic reading itself. (In this case the two Hebrew words for *sixth* and *seventh* are similar enough to be confused, especially since they are both used elsewhere in the immediate context.) Contrary conclusions are offered by others, but it seems more likely to us that the original text distinguished between the *finishing* of Elohim's work on the sixth day and His *ceasing* from the work on the seventh day.

But when a variant reading is an addition which does

not replace a reading in the Masoretic text, there ordinarily will not be a footnote. For example, the CVOT inserts the conjunction **and** following the word **land** in Genesis 1:11 because it is found in the Septuagint version (<sup>7</sup>), the Samaritan Pentateuch (<sup>n</sup>), the Syriac version (<sup>c</sup>) and certain Hebrew manuscripts such as the Targums (<sup>s</sup>), even though it is absent in the traditional Hebrew text. The information provided by the superior indicators before and after the word in the translation text itself is sufficient, and no footnote is needed.

A special case is a variant reading based on the practice of certain ancient scribes called the *Sopherim* to substitute the Hebrew term "my-Lord" (*Adonai*) for the Name, *Yahweh*, in certain places out of a fear of misusing the sacred Name. In these instances the CVOT simply restores the Name with the indicators *s-ph* attached, as follows: *<sup>s</sup>Yahweh<sup>ph</sup>*. No footnote is provided in these instances.

In some cases, footnotes provide alternate translations for especially difficult words or phrases, variant readings which are of interest but not inserted in the text, meanings of certain proper names and occasional cross-references. When these are not associated with notes on variant readings, they are referenced in the CVOT text by the symbol <sup>◊</sup>.

The word **haplography** is often used in footnotes; it refers to the common scribal error, where the copyist's eye skipped from one occurrence of a Hebrew letter, word or words to a similar terminology in the adjacent context, thus omitting a portion of the original text. This apparently occurred in Genesis 41:56, where two phrases beginning with "all" may well have appeared originally, but one phrase was lost when the eye of an early scribe moved from the first "all" to the second "all" in the process of copying the text.

## EMPHASIS

Pronouns in Hebrew are expressed by distinct spellings of the regular verbs, but sometimes they are included as separate words as well. In such cases there is probably an intention of emphasis. This is indicated by an accent mark (') following the pronoun (as in Genesis 3:12, where the word "she" is accented) or by repeating the pronoun (as done with the words "I, I" in Genesis 19:19).

It is likely that when the definite article is used with the Divine Title, **the Elohim**, an *emphasis of particularity* is indicated. To reflect this, we generally use the rendering, "**the One, Elohim**" (*cf* Genesis 5:22), in such cases.

The normal word order in a Hebrew thought is verb-subject rather than subject-verb as in English. Hence, in the less usual pattern, when the subject occurs before the verb in Hebrew, a certain measure of emphasis is laid on the subject. Often this is shown by inserting the appropriate pronoun immediately after such a noun, as in Genesis 1:2, where the CVOT has "**the earth, it came to be . . .**" This tells the reader that the Hebrew puts emphasis on the subject, "earth."

The unusual addition of the Hebrew letter *hê* to certain verb forms suggests an intensity of feeling that is difficult to express in English. Especially in the case of imperatives or exhortations, this is usually indicated in the CVOT by the addition of the lightface word "do" as in Genesis 11:3, "**Do let us mold . . .**"

## THE HEBREW VERB

The Hebrew language, strictly speaking, has no verb forms which express either past or future. There are two main verb forms:

1. When the verb inflections of person and number are indicated by *postfixing* equivalent endings to the verb

stem, the emphasis remains on the *fact*, for which the stem stands. We have rendered such forms by the Indefinite or simple present tense ("he-comes") or the past tenses ("he-came," "he-has-come," "he-had-come"). When the context indicates a future sense, we have used the auxiliary term "will" with this verb form ("he-will-come"), and when a sense of contingency is called for we use the auxiliary term "would" ("he-would-come"). Otherwise this form is indicated by the use of a superior, horizontal stroke (ˉ) in front of the verb.

This verb form which lays emphasis on the *fact* expressed by the verb is usually called the preterite or perfect tense in Hebrew grammars. In rendering this form in our word-for-word "sublinear" we consistently use the simple present tense ("he-comes").

2. When the pronoun part of the verb is *prefixed*, the emphasis shifts to the subject pronoun, thus indicating that it is in the *process* of carrying through an *action*. Generally, we have rendered this form by the progressive present tense ("he-is-coming") or the future tense with the auxiliary term "shall" ("he-shall-come," or "he-shall-be-coming"). If the context indicates past time, the progressive past tense is used ("he-was-coming"). Where a sense of contingency is in view, the auxiliaries "should," "may" or "might" are used ("he-should-come," "he-may-come," "he-might-come"). This form is also used to express a mood of supplication or desire, and in such cases we use the auxiliary words "let" or "may" ("Let-it-come," "May-it-come"). Otherwise it is indicated by the use of a superior, vertical stroke (ˊ) in front of the verb.

This verb form which lays emphasis on the ongoing *action* expressed by the verb is usually called the future or imperfect tense in Hebrew grammars. In rendering this form in our word-for-word, "sublinear" we consistently use the present progressive tense ("he-is-coming").



## THE PRINCIPAL DIVINE TITLE

The different forms of the Divine Title have been rendered as follows: **El**, **Eloah**, **Elohim**. In the popular versions, these three forms are rendered "God." However, some Bible translators have indicated the difference outside the text.

The shortest form of the Divine Title, **El**, is singular. It occurs over 200 times in the Old Testament, signifying the sense of Disposer or Subjector.

**Eloah** is also singular, and 41 of its 58 occurrences are found in the book of Job. In order to express motion or direction, the ending *-ah* (the Hebrew letter *hê*) is occasionally postfixed to a noun, such as *westward*, *eastward* (Ezek.48:3). It is conceivable that the title **Eloah** refers to Christ and was intended to reflect the general direction of His activity, which is *Godward*, *toward-the-Deity*, *toward-the-Subjector*, *toward-El* (cf John 1:1).

The title **Elohim** is plural (*-im*) only in the sense that *El* (God) acts through *Eloah*, and others who are energized by the Spirit of *El*.

It should be noted that when the Divine Name or Titles are taken from the Septuagint, a strong element of conjecture is involved. The Greek *theos* could stand for *El*, *Eloah* or *Elohim*. *Elohim* has been adopted in the version as the most likely original form underlying the Greek. Likewise, the Greek *kurios* ("Lord") could stand for either the Hebrew *Yahweh* ("Jehovah") or "my Lord" ("Adonai").

## THE TETRAGRAMMATON

The Divine Name, **Yahweh**, is composed of the elements of the verb "to become." In Revelation 1:4,8 John seems to interpret the meaning of the Name for his Greek readers: The One "Who is and Who was and Who is coming."

## PSALM 72

### Solomonic

- 72** O Elohim, <sup>g</sup>bestow Your right <sup>7</sup>judgment~<sup>c</sup>  
    <sup>o</sup>on the king,  
    And Your righteousness <sup>o</sup>on the son of the king.
- 2** May he adjudicate Your people <sup>i</sup>with righteousness,  
    And Your humble ones <sup>i</sup>with right judgment.
- 3** The mountains shall bear peace for the people,  
    And the hills blossom <sup>i</sup>with righteousness.
- 4** He shall <sup>j</sup>redress the humble of the people;  
    He shall save <sup>o</sup> the sons of the needy one  
    And crush the exploiter<sup>l</sup>.
- 5** <sup>7</sup>He shall <sup>c</sup>abide long~ with the sun  
    And before the moon, in a generation of generations.
- 6** He shall descend like rain on the grassland,  
    Like showers, drenching the earth.
- 7** <sup>7</sup>Righteousness~<sup>cs</sup> shall bud in His days,  
    And <sup>mn</sup>abundant peace until the moon is no more.
- 8** + He shall hold sway from sea unto sea,  
    And from the Stream unto the limits of the earth.
- 9** Before Him ~His foes~ shall bow,  
    And His enemies<sup>l</sup>, they shall lick up the soil.
- 10** The kings of Tarshish and the coastlands,  
    they shall render a tributary present;  
    The kings of Sheba and Seba, they shall offer levy.
- 11** And all the kings shall bow down to Him;  
    All nations, they shall serve Him.
- 12** For He shall rescue the needy one imploring,  
    And the humble one, <sup>+</sup>when there is no helper<sup>l</sup>  
    for him.

PSALM 72

To Solomon

- 72 Elohim, your-[judgments]  
to-king, give,  
And-your-righteousness to-son-of king.
- 2 He-is-adjudicating your-people in-righteousness,  
And-your-humble-ones in-judgment.
- 3 They-are-bearing, mountains, peace for-people,  
And-hills in-righteousness.
- 4 He-is-judging humble-ones-of people;  
He-is-saving to-sons-of needy-one  
And-he-is-crushing exploiting.
- 5 [They-are-fearing-you] with sun  
And-before moon, generation-of generations.
- 6 He-is-descending like-rain on-grassland,  
Like-showers, drencher-of earth.
- 7 He-is-budding in-his-days, [righteous-one],  
And-many-of peace until no moon.
- 8 And-he-is-swaying\* from-sea unto sea,  
And-from-stream unto limits-of earth.
- 9 Before-him they-are-bowing, [desert-tribes],  
And-his-enemy-ings, soil they-are-licking-up.
- 10 Kings-of Tarshish and-coastlands,  
present they-are-returning;  
Kings-of Sheba and-Seba, levy they-are-offering.
- 11 And-they-are-bowing-down to-him, all kings;  
All nations, they-are-serving-him.
- 12 For he-is-rescuing needy-one imploring,  
And-humble-one, and-there-is-no helping  
for-him.

- 13 **He shall be a refuge <sup>on</sup>for the poor and needy one,  
And the souls of the needy shall He save.**
- 14 **From fraud and from violence  
shall He redeem their soul,  
And their blood shall be precious in His eyes.**
- 15 **And He shall be living;  
+ One shall give to Him from Sheba's gold,  
And one shall pray about Him continually;  
The entire day shall bless Him.**
- 16 **There shall come to be a plenitude of cereal  
in the earth <sup>i</sup>to the summit of the mountains.  
Its fruit shall rustle like the Lebanon,  
And they <sup>f</sup>of the city shall blossom  
like herbage of the earth.**
- 17 **His Name shall <sup>b</sup>remain for the eon;  
Before the sun shall His Name be propagated,  
And all nations shall bless themselves in Him  
and <sup>m</sup>call Him happy.**
- 18 **Blessed<sup>l</sup> be Yahweh Elohim, the Elohim of Israel,  
Doing marvelous<sup>l</sup> works by Himself alone,**
- 19 **And blessed<sup>l</sup> be His glorious Name for the eon!  
+ <sup>`</sup>The entire earth shall be filled with His glory!**
- Amen and Amen.**
- 20 **The prayers of David son of Jesse are <sup>all</sup>ended.**

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**72:1 7-- judgment:** Hb judgments.

**72:5 7-cs He shall abide long:** Hb They shall fear You.

**72:7 7--cs Righteousness:** Hb The righteous one.

**72:9 --- foes:** Hb desert-tribes.

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A number of changes have been made in our translation of this psalm since earlier printings, as we continue our attempts to recover the original Hebrew text in accord with readings in the ancient Versions and Hebrew commentaries, likely errors in scribal copying and contextual considerations.

- 13 **He-is-refuging on poor-one and-needy-one,  
And-souls-of needy-ones he-is-saving.**
- 14 **From-fraud and-from-violence he-is-redeeming  
their-soul,  
And-it-is-being-precious, their-blood, in-his-eyes.**
- 15 **And-he-is-living\*;  
And-he-is-giving to-him from-gold-of Sheba,  
And-he-is-praying-himself about-him continually;  
All the-day, it-is-making-blessed-him.**
- 16 **It-is-becoming\* plenitude-of cereal in-the-earth  
in-summit-of mountains.  
It-is-rustling like-Lebanon,  
And they-are-blossoming from-city  
like-herbage-of the-earth.**
- 17 **It-is-becoming\*, his-name, for-eon;  
Before sun it-is-propagating, his-name,  
And-they-are-blessing-themselves in-him, all nations,  
and-they-are-make-happying-him.**
- 18 **Being-blessed Yahweh Elohim, Elohim-of Israel,  
Doing marvelous-ings, alone-him,**
- 19 **And-being-blessed, name-of his-glory for-eon,  
And-it-is-being-filled his-glory, `all the-earth,  
Amen and-Amen.**
- 20 **They-are-caused-all, prayers-of David son-of Jesse.**

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NOTES

Each group of words joined by hyphens (as well as single words) represents a single term in Hebrew.

Verbs followed by an \* are shortened in the Masoretic text, indicating they were read with a tone of desire and supplication.

The definite article ("the") is shown only where it actually appears in the Hebrew, even though it is sometimes indicated by the pointed Masoretic text.

Bracketed words represent the Hebrew readings which we have emended in the CVOT.

## JUDGMENT AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

PSALM 72 is headed, **To-Solomon**, a compound term which is rendered in the CVOT, **Solomonic**. It closes (along with the second scroll of Psalms) with reference to the prayers of David. From this we may view it as originally composed by David with his son, Solomon, in view. Yet the more we listen to its words, the more we begin to realize that "lo! more than Solomon is here!" (Matt.12:42; Luke 11:31), and more than his reign of forty years is here. Consequently, enlarging its scope and significance, this psalm should certainly be read in connection with those clear declarations in the Prophets (and even the Law and other Psalms), using similar words and thoughts, concerning the Promised One, the Son of David, the Christ, as King during His future kingdom on the earth. This is what continues to give the psalm value to His chosen people, and especially will do so during those dark days ahead of "the great affliction" (Rev.7:14).

And this is its value to us, for whatever is said about Christ and His reign, especially (as here) in relation to righteousness and peace and the glory of God, is truly beneficial to our learning, even if it is not directly concerning our calling. We are not under law, but under grace. But we rejoice in every phase of Christ's reign.

Consequently, from this perspective, seeing in David's prayer a prophecy of Christ as the King ultimately in view, we have capitalized the pronouns in reference to Him. Also, while we recognize the mood of fervent petition which seems to be sustained in the Masoretic Hebrew text

through much of this psalm (except verses 12-14), we have rendered the “imperfect” verb forms starting with verse 3, as declarations of what shall be. This is the pattern generally followed by the translators of the Septuagint Version, working from their unpointed Hebrew text.

In this article I propose to look at Psalm 72 as rendered in the CVOT, noting some of the Version’s unique features. In attempting this, I will be considering its relationship to Solomon, but even more critically, watching for what is said concerning Christ and the terrestrial kingdom of God.

Yet also, taking a hint from the CVOT rendering of the Hebrew term “Selah” (as the AV transliterates it), which appears by itself here and there in certain psalms, I will insert an “Interlude”<sup>1</sup> from time to time suggesting points of comparison and contrast with our own calling under grace and expectation of Christ’s celestial kingdom. For “All scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness, that the man of God may be equipped, fitted out for every good act” (2 Tim.3:16,17).

#### KING OF KINGS

The most important factor in the kingdom of God is the King. In its highest meaning, Psalm 72 sees Christ in the thousand year eon ahead, when He shepherds the nations with an iron club and assumes His position as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev.19:15,16). But unlike the emphasis in the vision given to John, this psalm focuses on the King’s effect upon Israel and the nations during His days *after* the initial judgment in which He pours out the wine trough of the fury of the indignation of God. Judgment continues, but as an operation of *maintaining* wis-

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1. I am taking this term to indicate a pause for meditation on what the psalm is saying.

dom, righteousness, peace and prosperity for all that eon, throughout all the earth.

David himself received Yahweh's unconditional covenant to raise up his seed and establish the throne of his kingdom for the eon (2 Sam.7:12,13). Regarding this, Yahweh's promise of the King and His eonian kingdom, was celebrated in Psalm 132:11, as follows:

**Yahweh has sworn to David the truth;**

**He shall not turn back from it:**

Out ~~of~~ the **fruit of your loin**

**Shall I set One 'on your throne.**

This lay on David's heart as he sang the words of Psalm 72. Whether or not Solomon was the Promised One, David knew it was certain that out of the fruit of his loin a King will rise Who will reign for the eon. It will be a reign of law in which the exploiter will be crushed and the wrongs of the humble and needy will be redressed. Those who are His foes and enemies will bow down to the soil and propagate His Name. All nations will bless themselves in Him and recognize Him as the Happy One Who brings happiness and succeeds in all that He does. The entire earth shall be filled with God's glory!

#### INTERLUDE

Yet the viewpoint of this psalm is limited. There is no explicit recognition of the death of Christ for sinners. The old creation remains. The people are under law, and in this, because of the flesh, there looms eventual failure when Satan is let loose from his jail (Rev.20:7). It is a part of the process which leads to the goal, a great step forward from what we experience now, but not yet that level of Christ's exaltation based solely and solidly on His obedience to the death of the cross (cf Phil.2:6-11).

It was given to Paul to make known the secret of God's



will. This accords with God's delight which He has purposed in Christ. It is "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth" (Eph. 1:9,10).

That was still a secret when Psalm 72 was written. Yet the wide extent of the millennial rule serves as an opening to the expanding revelation.

#### AN IDIOMATIC VERSION

In the Preface to the first edition of the Concordant Version of Genesis, A. E. Knoch wrote, "The version is, of necessity, somewhat idiomatic when this is necessary to carry over the sense of the original."<sup>2</sup> But by becoming familiar with the various features of the CVOT as explained in the *Instructions for Use* (pages 103-109) a more literal translation can be traced.

In the opening lines of our translation of Psalm 72, we find at least three of these features: (1) the use of bold-face and lightface type, (2) the use of symbols and abbreviations, and (3) the insertion of a variant reading.

The idiomatic translation of Psalm 72:1,2 is:

O Elohim, <sup>g</sup>bestow Your right <sup>7</sup>judgment~<sup>c</sup>

’on the king,

And Your righteousness ’on the son of the king.

By omitting the lightface words and changing **bestow** to **give** as indicated by the letter <sup>g</sup> and restoring the preposition **to** in place of **on** as indicated by the ’ symbol, and finally, by using the plural word **judgments** in place of the emendation, **judgment**, we can easily read the two lines more exactly as stated in the Masoretic text:

**Elohim, give Your judgments to king.**

**And Your righteousness to son of king.**

2. IN A BEGINNING, Concordant Publishing Concern, 1957, pp.7,8.

Although this does not reflect the actual Hebrew word order in the first line (which places the imperative verb, *give*, at the end of the clause), it does illustrate how the CVOT can be used both as an idiomatic translation, and (with some limitations) as a tool for indicating a literal reading of the traditional Hebrew text.

But what does this mean? What does the psalmist desire for the king? Is there any value in using “bestow on” for “give to,” and “judgment” instead of “judgments”?

#### BESTOW RIGHT JUDGMENT

The CVOT sees the giving as a *bestowal* of the *attributes* of judgment and righteousness, that is, judgment and righteousness as qualities rather than as acts. The psalmist prays that, by Elohim’s bestowal, these may become part of the character of the king. He looks to Elohim to settle special *endowments* like wisdom or strength or integrity on the king.

But we have trouble with the word *judgment*. A. E. Knoch wrote: “Unfortunately the English word *judgment* has, by its contact with human affairs, taken on a vindictive tinge. We ought to have a new word which is neutral.”<sup>3</sup>

Many English versions use the word *justice* here, and that has been urged on us. But *justice* is best reserved as a variant of the Hebrew word rendered *righteousness* in this passage. As an attribute, *judgment* is a matter of insight; it is the ability to make a wise decision. Solomon’s judgment was an aspect of the wisdom which God gave him. That is not particularly implied by the word *justice*, which, as a quality, is a matter of rightness. The two words are companions, not equivalents; they complement each other in this description of ideal kingship. We have joined the two qualities into one when we add the lightface word “right”

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3. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.17, p.120.

to judgment, but the better solution would be to see in the word *judgment* by itself the neutral meaning of the ability to make, or the act of making a wise decision whether or not it seems pleasant or unpleasant.

### THE GIFT OF JUDGMENT

If the word, *judgments*, as given in the Masoretic text here, were the original term used, it would be best understood in reference to Elohim's *ways* or *patterns* of judging. This may be the sense in Psalm 10:5 where the ways of the wicked one are contrasted with Yahweh's judgments. Yet generally divine judgments have the sense of Yahweh's *acts* of judgment, as in Psalm 103:6 where they are set in parallel to His acts of righteousness:

**Yahweh is the One <sup>d</sup>executing acts of righteousness  
And right judgments for all those being exploited.**

Indeed it is God's gift of the quality of judgment which will enable the king to execute right judgments. Both the attribute of judgment and the executing of acts of sound judgment are gifts from God for the king. But the fact that the ancient Septuagint and Syriac translations of Psalm 72:1 have the singular, *judgment*, in parallel to the singular, *righteousness*, in the second line, strongly support the emendation.

Righteousness and judgment as divine qualities are set before us in Psalm 89:14 where we read:

**Righteousness and right judgment are the basis  
of Your throne;  
Benignity and truth, they stand <sup>lpc</sup>before  
Your presence.**

Here are four attributes: righteousness, judgment, benignity and truth[fulness]. They all are qualities uniquely characteristic of God. Similar usage is found in Psalm 37:6 and 97:2. Of special interest is the reading in Psalm 36:5,6,

where the Hebrew word for *judgments* (plural) appears in older, printed editions of the Hebrew text. But in reconsidering the textual evidence, the recent, standard edition, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*,<sup>4</sup> places the singular form in the text line. The CVOT adopts that reading, as follows (Psa.36:5,6):

**O Yahweh, Your benignity reaches 'to the heavens,  
Your faithfulness unto the skies.**

**Your righteousness is like the mountain ranges  
of El,**

**Your judgment like the vast abyss:**

**Both human and beast You 'save, O Yahweh.**

Here also, it is God's quality of judgment and His quality of righteousness, as well as His benignity and faithfulness which are specifically in view.

#### INTERLUDE

The subject of judgment in relation to the believer is not prominent in Paul's epistles, for we are positioned under grace in Christ Jesus, and nothing is now condemnation to us (Rom.6:14; 8:1). Yet as to our service in the Lord, He is our just Judge (endowed with the attribute of righteous judgment), Who will give "wreaths" at the dais to those who have served faithfully (*cf* 2 Cor.5:10; 2 Tim.4:8). We also are told that we shall judge the world, messengers and life's affairs (1 Cor.6:1-3). This is most astounding! In order to participate in such acts of judgment, we will need to be blessed with God's bestowal of *His* attribute of judgment. And this will most certainly be ours, for, on the basis of God's grace through the obedience of Christ to the death of the cross, we shall be conformed to the image of God's

4. edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, Deutsche Bibelstiftung, Stuttgart, 1967, p.1118.

Son (Rom.8:29; 1 Cor.15:47-49). Thus even as the word of the cross (1 Cor.1:18-25) is the basis of our future place as judges, so also this message of God's grace is what works in us even now for adjudication [THROUGH-JUDGEMENT] among ourselves.

On the other hand, God's attribute of *righteousness* is central to the evangel of God which we have heard and believed. It is revealed to us in its full manifestation in God's work of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ. Paul writes: "For not ashamed am I of the evangel . . . For in it God's righteousness is being revealed, out of faith, for faith" (Rom.1:16,17). That is not in view in Psalm 72.

#### GOD'S GIFT TO SOLOMON

As for Solomon, he asked for a hearkening heart to judge His people, and Yahweh replied (1 Kings 3:11,12):

**+Because <sup>w</sup> you requested `this `matter and have neither asked for yourself many days, nor asked for yourself riches, nor asked for the soul of your enemies<sup>l</sup>, <sup>+</sup>yet you have asked for yourself understanding<sup>-</sup> to make out right judgment, behold, I will do according to your word.**

Following this promise, the Scripture recounts Solomon's particular act of judgment and righteousness regarding the two women who claimed to be the mother of the same child (1 Kings 3:16-27). This act of righteous judgment is an example of God's endowment of judgment and righteousness upon Solomon in action. The act arose from God's endowment which had become part of Solomon's character. As an act of judgment it was especially a reflection of the gift of wisdom (1 Kings 3:28):

**+When all Israel 'heard `of the judgment <sup>w</sup>that the king had judged, <sup>+</sup> they stood in 'fear <sup>f</sup>before the face of the king, for they saw that the wisdom of Elohim was <sup>i</sup> within him to <sup>d</sup>execute right judgment.**

## FAILURE UNDER LAW

Yet Solomon did not fulfill the terms of Psalm 72. In instructing his successor, David had said: "I am going in the way of all the earth. So you will be steadfast and become manly. You will keep the charge of Yahweh your Elohim to walk in His ways, *to observe His statutes and His instructions, His ordinances*<sup>5</sup> *and His testimonies as written in the law of Moses*, so that you may act intelligently in all that you do and everywhere that you turn around" (1 Kings 2:2,3).

The law is holy and just and good, but the flesh is weak (Rom.7:7-14). Vladimir Gelesnoff summarizes Solomon's failure as the inability of the flesh to walk steadfastly in accord with the law of Moses:

"[Solomon] transgressed the law in *three* points, and the Lord raised unto him *three* enemies.

"The Mosaic law imposed upon the king three prohibitions: (1) to multiply horses, (2) to multiply wives, and (3) to multiply silver and gold (Deut.17:16,17). Solomon flatly violated these injunctions. He acquired thousands of horses for the royal stables, besides carrying on an extensive horse trade with the adjacent kings, for which purpose was organized a company of royal merchants (1 Kings 4:26; 10:28,29). He took one thousand wives (1 Kings 11:3). He multiplied gold and silver to such an extent that the former became very common, while the latter was thought nothing of in his days, its value being on a par with the stones on the street pavement (1 Kings 10:21,27).

"The selection of Egypt as a center for horse traffic naturally would induce many Israelites to settle there for commercial purposes. To offset this allurements the Lord

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5. literally, **judgments**; we may say that ordinances are laws as they originate in the divine judgment of what is fitting in particular situations.

made Jeroboam, Solomon's opponent, a favorite at Pharaoh's court.

"Solomon married an Egyptian wife. This alliance tended to promote cordial relations between the two countries and foster friendship with Israel's ancient foe. To counteract the influence of Egypt the Lord endeared as a son to his father-in-law Solomon's implacable enemy.

"To check the unlimited flow of silver and gold which poured into Jerusalem, the Lord raised against Solomon the king of Syria, to harass the foreign traffic of Israel.

"Solomon made affinity with Egypt, and the Lord made Egypt the rallying center for his enemies!"<sup>6</sup> (cf 1 Kings 11:1-40).

Because of his flesh, Solomon failed to exercise judgment in his own personal life. This human problem will be largely remedied in the future kingdom when, under the new covenant, Yahweh will write His law on His people's heart (Jer.31:33,34). (But even that, as we have noted, is not a full solution.)

Over all will be the King, He Who comes of the seed of David, the One supremely in view in Psalm 72.

Accordingly, in Isaiah 11:1-9 we read of Him and His rule of righteous judgment in prophetic language of certainty:

**+Then a Twig will come forth from the set slip of  
Jesse,**

**And a Scion, it shall be fruitful from his roots.**

**And the spirit of Yahweh will rest upon Him,**

**A spirit of wisdom and understanding,**

**A spirit of counsel and mastery,**

**A spirit of knowledge and fear of Yahweh.**

**+ His scent<sup>-</sup> will be in the fear of Yahweh,**

**And not<sup>y</sup> by the sight of His eyes shall He judge,**

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6. V. Gelesnoff: *The Pathway of Faith*, pp.40,41.

Nor <sup>y</sup>by the hearing of His ears shall He arbitrate.  
 + He will judge the poor <sup>i</sup>with righteousness  
 And arbitrate for the humble of <sup>Q</sup>the<sup>l</sup> land  
<sup>i</sup>with equity.  
 + He will smite <sup>Q</sup>the<sup>l</sup> earth <sup>i</sup>with the club  
 of His mouth,  
 And <sup>i</sup>with the spirit of His lips  
 shall He <sup>e</sup>put the wicked to death.  
 + Righteousness will <sup>b</sup>be the belt of His waist,  
 And <sup>f</sup>faithfulness the belt of His loins.  
 + Then the wolf will sojourn with the lamb,  
 And the leopard, it shall recline with the kid,  
 And the calf and the sheltered lion,  
<sup>7</sup>they shall graze~ together,  
 And a small lad shall lead<sup>l</sup> <sup>i</sup>among them.  
 + Then the young cow and the bear,  
 they shall graze together,  
<sup>7</sup>And together<sup>o</sup> they shall recline their young,  
 And the lion, it shall eat crushed straw like the ox.  
 + Then the suckling will revel over the hole  
 of a cobra,  
 And on the light-shaft of a viper  
 the weaned<sup>l</sup> child will obtrude his hand.  
 They shall not <sup>e</sup>do evil,  
 Nor shall they <sup>e</sup>bring ruin in all My holy mountain,  
 For the earth will be full of the knowledge  
<sup>`</sup>of Yahweh  
 As waters are covering <sup>y</sup>the sea.

We see that indeed the supplication of David for his son, Solomon, will be fulfilled in Christ. He will be endowed with the divine spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel and mastery. These are the attributes of kingship which are possessed by the Great Offspring of Jesse in His work of judging the poor with righteousness, redressing their wrongs and arbitrating for the humble of the land with equity.



This view of Psalm 72 as pointing to Christ is not a new one. One modern commentator notes: "The Targum at verse 1 adds the word 'Messiah' to 'the king', and there are rabbinic allusions to the psalm which reveal the same opinion."<sup>7</sup> It will certainly be with the Messiah in view that Israel will be soliloquizing this psalm in the coming days of the present wicked eon, when adjudication with righteousness will be obliterated from the world's rule. No one else can meet the standards set forth here for ideal rule.

#### RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUDGMENT

However the close connection between the first two verses indicates that the supplication for Solomon continues in verse 2. Thus we see David praying that Elohim would bestow on Solomon those attributes for righteous actions which shall be manifested by the promised One.

**May he adjudicate Your people 'with righteousness,  
And Your humble ones 'with right judgment.**

The attributes of judgment and righteousness requested in the first verse are reversed in the second verse and viewed as acts. Together the two verses exhibit the following structure:

- A. *Judgment* as an attribute (v.1a)
- B. *Righteousness* as an attribute (v.1b)
- B. *Righteousness* in action (v.2a)
- A. *Judgment* in action (v.2b)

Judgment and righteousness, righteousness and judgment—these are the qualities and ways of the King which lead to peace and plentitude.

The Hebrew word for *adjudicate* in verse 2 is not the same as the Hebrew word for *judge* (*redress*) in verse 4.

7. Derek Kidner: PSALMS 1-72, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries*, vol.14a, InterVarsity Press, 1973, p.254.

The context indicates that the two words are similar in meaning, but they do not have the very same meaning.

Searching out the two words in our VOCABULARY INDEX FOR THE CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,<sup>8</sup> we find that *judgment* and *judge* are in the same family. But *adjudicate* is in a different family which includes the Hebrew word for *Lord*. (The verbs *rule* and *govern* are sometimes used in other translations where we have *adjudication*, and these would relate to the noun, *lord*, quite well.) We may say that adjudication speaks of an *authoritative* settling of a wrong, whereas the verb *judge* signifies the making of a *wise* decision.

#### INSCRUTABLE JUDGMENTS

What David prayed for will be brought to pass by God. But it was not to be fulfilled in Solomon. It is God's judgment that rule shall be placed in the hands of His Son, Who according to the flesh, comes as the Seed of David. So also it is God's judgment that Christ's reign on the earth shall not come until God's own determined time. And it is God's judgment that even when it comes as described in Psalm 72, it shall not be a full-fledged and unending operation of divine righteousness, peace and well-being. Nevertheless, that exaltation of Christ where righteousness, peace and glory triumph under His reign shall ultimately be enjoyed by all, everywhere.

"O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are *His judgments*, and untraceable *His ways*! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!"

D.H.H.

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8. available on our web site at [www.concordant.org](http://www.concordant.org) or in printed form from our office (P.O. Box 449, Almont, MI 48003).

## PEACE AND PLENTITUDE

WHEN David's promised Seed will come to reign on the earth and adjudicate His people with righteousness and judgment (Psa.72:2), there shall be peace throughout the earth (Psa.72:3):

The **mountains shall bear peace for the people,**  
**And the hills blossom <sup>i</sup>with righteousness.**

God's judgment is righteous, and this in turn bears the fruit of peace for the people along with righteousness among the nations. It has been observed that mountains and hills are often referred to in Scripture as figures of earthly powers.<sup>1</sup> In Solomon's day there was an unusual measure of peace widely spread on the earth. It was a time much different from the continuing warfare of David's days.

Yet in view of the millennium when Christ is King, the supplications for Solomon become full-fledged declarations of salvation. Instead of jealousy and hate, corruption and enmity, the governments and peoples of all the earth will be affected by Christ's kingship with policies of peace and ways of uprightness.

In Hebrew the word translated *peace* also holds the sense of *well-being*. It means an absence of turmoil and conflict, but also it signifies, by the figure of association, the presence of prosperity and plenty. Because of the qualities of judgment and righteousness bestowed on the King, there will be peace.

Yet that happy rule has not yet come; it did not come

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1. cf *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.19, p.170.

even when Christ descended two thousand years ago as Jesus, "Yahweh-Saviour." He came to save His people *from their sins* (Matt.1:21), and this required His rejection and crucifixion before the peace and salvation spoken of in Psalm 72 could be realized. Yet, because of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (*cf* John 1:29), that time of peace and prosperity shall be realized. What a day that shall be for all the earth!

#### INTERLUDE

In the meantime, for us who have been granted the grace of hearing and believing the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, and whose realm is inherent in the heavens, it is well to pray for our fellow human beings and those who are in superior station over us. This is as our apostle Paul wrote to Timothy (1 Tim. 2:1-4):

*I am entreating . . . that petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanksgiving be made for all mankind, for kings and all those being in a superior station, that we may be leading a mild and quiet life in all devoutness and gravity, for this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, Who wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth.*

May God grant, in accord with the counsel of His will, a measure of judgment and righteousness to those around us and those above us even in the perilous periods in which we live (*cf* 2 Tim.3:1).

#### JUDGMENT AND SALVATION

Psalm 72:4 speaks surely of a far greater king than Solomon and a more blessed kingdom than his reign. Indeed Solomon's misrule culminated in Yahweh's promise that, rather than blessing, He would humiliate the "seed of David" (1 Kings 11:39). And after Solomon's death, all Israel came

to his son, Rehoboam, and spoke of the harsh service and heavy yoke that had been placed upon them by Solomon (1 Kings 12:4). This hardly fulfills the vision of Psalm 72.

Yet the King Who will come as the promised Seed of David will manifest judgment and righteousness in all His dealings. His judgment will be seen as just and fair by all. For those who have been exploited it will clearly be a matter of redressing their wrongs and delivering their souls from sorrow and pain. And for the exploiters who had crushed them (*cf* Psa.94:5), they will be exposed and crushed (Psa. 72:4) without grounds for complaint:

**He shall <sup>j</sup>redress the humble of the people;  
He shall save <sup>></sup> the sons of the needy one  
And crush the exploiter<sup>l</sup>.**

The salvation spoken of here and later in verse 13 is salvation of the *soul* (*cf* v.9), which lays emphasis on the senses. The judgment will deliver the low and needy from sensations of despair to those of happiness and peace.

Thus it will be that Christ will come as the One Who is "speaking in righteousness" and is "abundant to save" (Isa. 63:1). And this will not be confined to the land of Israel alone, but will extend throughout the earth (Isa.42:1-4):

**Behold, My Servant! I am upholding <sup>i</sup> Him;  
My Chosen One Whom My soul holds dear!  
I have <sup>g</sup>bestowed My spirit upon Him,  
<sup>Q</sup>And<sup>l</sup> He shall <sup>e</sup>bring forth right judgment  
to the nations.**

**He shall not cry out nor lift His voice,  
Nor shall He <sup>e</sup>make His voice heard in the street.  
A reed that is bruised<sup>l</sup>, He shall not break,  
And a flaxen wick that is dim,**

**He shall not quench it;  
Unto truth He shall <sup>e</sup>bring forth right judgment,  
<sup>Q</sup>And<sup>l</sup> He shall not be dimmed nor bruised**

**Until He should place right judgment in the earth  
And the coastlands 'wait for His law.**

#### INTERLUDE

Christ's reign on earth will be a glorious time of peace and salvation. Yet it will be under law, and Christ comes to us in grace, apart from the imposition of works of law.

We all are needy, yet also we all are enemies. This is a critical point in distinguishing our calling from that of the Circumcision. We are the infirm and lowly ones, not because we have been exploited, but because we have nothing of ourselves in which to boast (*cf* 1 Cor.1:26-29). The evangel of Romans 3:21-8:39 is not unfolded until it is recognized that, by works of law, no flesh at all can be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). In accord with this, as enemies, although we bow in acclamation to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we are not crushed, but rather conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10). Such dominance of grace is not in view in Psalm 72.

#### ABIDING LONG

The first line of verse 5 in the Masoretic text reads: "*They shall fear You with the sun.*" But the Septuagint translators seemed to have worked from a Hebrew text which read: "*He is being caused long with the sun.*" Again, the two readings would appear much alike in the Hebrew. But the abrupt change of subject from "He," the King, to a plurality of people called "They," the changes of "He" to "You" in reference to the King, and the introduction of fear into this context disrupt the flow of thought.

Our "judgment" in favor of a slight change in the Hebrew, supported by the reading of the Septuagint, is truly harmonious with the context, not only of the psalm as a whole, but of the immediate context in which duration is emphasized. Hence we read (Psa.72:5):

**<sup>7</sup>He shall <sup>c</sup>abide long~ with the sun**

**And before the moon, in a generation of generations.**

The sun and moon speak of permanence in the sense of continuing through human history as far into the future as from the distant past. That is the viewpoint of the psalm. It does not speak of an everlasting kingship, for ultimately, when all is subjected to Christ, He will subject Himself to God that He may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28). Indeed, even the reign which is in view here in Psalm 72 will give way to a higher phase of Christ's kingdom in the new creation. Nevertheless He will abide long in carrying out the work of judgment, righteousness and peace described here. It will be a generation of generations, a grand and lasting generation of a thousand years which exceeds all past generations in glory.

#### REFRESHING AND ABUNDANT PEACE

In the last days of this eon, Christ will descend with indignation, but in "His days" of kingship during the millennium He will bring abundant peace (Psa.72:6,7):

**He shall descend like rain on the grassland,**

**Like showers, drenching the earth.**

**<sup>7</sup>Righteousness~<sup>cs</sup> shall bud in His days,**

**And <sup>mn</sup>abundant peace until the moon is no more.**

The fine figure of the King's descent like showers bringing a much needed drenching to the earth reflects one of the earliest prophecies of the rule of the One Who is just and upright, and Whose ways are right judgment. As his life drew to a close, Moses sang a marvelous song in praise of Yahweh, Israel's Elohim. It began in Deuteronomy 32:1-4 with words like those of Psalm 72:6, as follows:

**<sup>c</sup>Give ear, O heavens, and do let me speak,**

**And let the earth hear the sayings of my mouth.**

**My monition shall trickle as rain,**

**And<sup>nc</sup> my saying shall distil as night mist:  
 As drizzle on verdure,  
 And as showers on herbage.  
 For the Name of Yahweh am I proclaiming:  
 Grant greatness to our Elohim!  
 The Rock—flawless are His deeds,  
 For all His ways are right judgment.  
 The El of faithfulness and without iniquity;  
 Just and upright is He.**

That prophecy was like refreshing showers to Israel after the long journey through the wilderness. So Psalm 72 tells of the One Who Himself will descend to the earth with blessing, like rain on the grassland. After many generations of arid, human governments, He will establish Elohim's kingdom of judgment and righteousness and abundant peace.

According to Revelation 15:2-4, when Christ returns as the Lambkin, those who come off as conquerors will sing this song of Moses along with the song of the Lambkin, as follows:

*Great and marvelous are Thy acts, Lord God almighty!  
 Just and true are Thy ways, King of the eons!  
 Who may by no means be afraid of Thee, Lord,  
 And glorify Thy name?  
 For Thou only art benign.  
 For all nations shall arrive  
 And worship before Thee,  
 For Thy just awards were made manifest.*

In his comments on the book of Revelation, "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ," Brother A. E. Knoch wrote concerning this passage: "The prelude to the bowls includes the song of the Lambkin also. It is the complement of Moses' song. That dealt with Israel's past history, as the basis for the judgment in view. This deals with their future story



which follows these inflictions. Those who come off conquerors from the wild beast and from its image and from the number of its name, tune their lyres to the song of the Lambkin, which celebrates the acts and the ways and the name of the Almighty King.

“The song of Moses recites the failure of Israel’s sons to worship their God, but the song of the Lambkin celebrates the glorious fact that all the nations will bring their service and adoration to Yahweh. They have seen His acts; they have learned His ways; they rejoice in His justice. Israel’s priestly work prevails.”<sup>3</sup>

#### RIGHTEOUSNESS IN HIS DAYS

The Hebrew text of the first line of verse 7 has an adjective, meaning “righteous (one)” or “righteous (thing),” but the Septuagint and Syriac translations, as well as Hebrew paraphrases have the noun form, “righteousness” as in the opening verses of this psalm. There is little difference in the Hebrew spelling of these two forms, but the parallel with “peace” in the second line of verse 7 makes it clear that righteousness itself, as carried out in divine judgment in the future kingdom on earth, is what shall bud in those days of Christ’s kingship.

In harmony with this, Isaiah 32 opens with these words:

**Behold, according to righteousness a King shall reign,**

**+As for chiefs, according to right judgment shall they control.**

Christ shall reign, and under Him will be chiefs who will be endowed with the gift of judgment. Hence the prophet continues in Isaiah 32:16,17:

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3. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.18, pages 232,233.

**+Then right judgment will tabernacle  
in the wilderness,  
And righteousness, it shall dwell in the crop land.  
+Then the <sup>d</sup>work of righteousness will <sup>b</sup>be peace,  
And the service of righteousness, quietness  
and trust unto the eon.**

#### FROM SEA UNTO SEA

For a thousand years the qualities of judgment, righteousness and peace will dominate under the kingship of Christ. These qualities will extend everywhere (Psa.72:8):

**+ He shall hold sway from sea unto sea,  
And from the Stream unto the limits of the earth.**

The boundary of the promised land itself will extend "from the Sea of Weeds to the sea of the Philistines and from the wilderness unto the Stream" (Ex.23:31). Yet Psalm 72:8 gives only one specific reference point, the Stream (which is the Euphrates). The identifications of the two seas are not specified, opening up the application to any land area between large bodies of water. Similarly, although the same Hebrew word is used for *land* and *earth*, the reference to Tarshish, the coastlands, Sheba and Seba in verse 10, which are outside the land of Israel, make it certain that indeed "all nations" (*cf* verse 11) of the earth are included under the sway of the King. The extent of Christ's effective reign will far exceed that of Solomon. Although centered in Jerusalem it will be global in its reach.

#### SUBJECTION OF ENEMIES

In verses 9-11 of our psalm the thought turns from words about Christ's effect on His people and the nations, to the response that shall come to Him from His former foes:

**Before Him ~His foes~ shall bow,  
And His enemies<sup>l</sup>, they shall lick up the soil.**

The **kings of Tarshish and the coastlands,**  
**they shall render** a tributary **present;**  
 The **kings of Sheba and Seba, they shall offer levy.**  
**And all the kings shall bow down to Him;**  
**All nations, they shall serve Him.**

There can be no doubt that these words apply in full truth only to the righteous One Who comes first in humility, riding on a donkey, the foal of a jenny, but Who shall cut off all the instruments of battle and speak peace to the nations (*cf* Zech.9:9,10). He shall hold sway throughout the earth. There shall be no warfare and no opposition, or self-serving policies among the nations.

The CVOT also emends the Hebrew in Psalm 72:9, replacing the unexpected reference to "desert-tribes," or "desert-beasts" (a term seldom used) with the word "foes." In this case, the emendation is not supported by the ancient versions, but the Hebrew words for *desert-tribes* and *foes* are very similar and could easily have been confused in copying.

The terms "foes" and "enemies" often appear in parallel (e.g., Psa.27:2; 74:10; 81:14; 89:42; Isa.1:24; 59:18; Lam.1:5; 2:4,17). Like *judgment* and *adjudication* they are similar in usage and meaning, but each provides its own distinct emphasis.

As indicated by our *Vocabulary Index* the word *foe* is in the CONSTRICT family and is often rendered *distress*. It speaks of those who oppose by distressing and constricting *acts*. While *enemies* certainly oppose by means of acts, these acts are seen as rising from an attitude of enmity within. Fundamentally a foe is an opposer in action and an enemy is that opposer in his schemes of the mind. In its most basic sense an enemy is an enemy in *comprehension* [THROUGH-MIND] (*cf* Col.1:21).

In Psalm 72:4, we saw that the King will crush the

exploiter. Now in verse 9 we learn that those who had sought to limit Him by wicked schemes and acts will bow to the soil before Him. By placing the subject before the verb in several lines here (an unusual word order in Hebrew), a special emphasis is laid on the fact that *enemies* and *kings* and *all nations* will be subjected! The CVOT attempts to show this emphasis by adding the verbal pronouns to the subjects in these instances: "His enemies, *they*," "kings of Tarshish and the coastlands, *they*," "kings of Sheba and Seba, *they*," and "All nations, *they*." These former enemies are marked out here as those now made submissive to the King.

#### RESCUE, REFUGE, SALVATION AND REDEMPTION

The tone of supplication is entirely absent even in the pointed Hebrew text in verses 12-14. The psalmist declares with conviction concerning the King:

**For He shall rescue the needy one imploring,  
And the humble one, <sup>+</sup>when there is no helper<sup>1</sup>  
for him.**

**He shall be a refuge <sup>on</sup>for the poor and needy one,  
And the souls of the needy shall He save.  
From fraud and from violence shall He redeem  
their soul,**

**And their blood shall be precious in His eyes.**

The King's actions of rescue, refuting, salvation and redemption for His people in that day are certainties. The King rescues the needy one from his imploring, and He does the same for the humble one who is without help. He becomes a refuge from physical poverty and need, granting salvation for the suffering soul, redeeming the oppressed from fraud and violence.

The King will look on those whose blood was shed, from Abel through the time of Israel's great affliction, as

precious in His eyes (*cp* Psa.116:15). According to Daniel 12:2, these shall awake to eonian life in the kingdom. These were given the special privilege of becoming types of the One Who now redresses their wrongs along with all His needy people in that day. With these terms of rescue and refuge and salvation and redemption, together with the reference to the precious blood of the needy, the psalm brings us close to the theme of all scriptural themes: that of the One Who will rescue and save and redeem the sinner by *His* precious blood. It would be given to Isaiah to reveal that the One foreseen in Psalm 72 will be One Who would be given up to death because of the transgression of His people (Isa.53:4-10):

<sup>so</sup>**Surely He Himself has borne our illnesses,  
And our pains, He was burdened with them;  
+As for us, we accounted Him assaulted<sup>l</sup>,  
Smitten<sup>l</sup> of Elohim and humbled<sup>l</sup>.  
+Yet He was wounded<sup>l f</sup> because of our transgressions,  
7And<sup>Q</sup> crushed<sup>l f</sup> because of our depravities.  
The discipline of our well-being was on Him,  
And <sup>i</sup>with His welts comes healing for us.  
All of us, like a flock, have strayed;  
Each to his own way, we have turned around,  
+Yet Yahweh Himself causes <sup>`</sup>the depravity of us all  
to come upon <sup>i</sup> Him.  
Hard pressed is He, and He is humbled<sup>l</sup>,  
+Yet He is not opening His mouth;  
Like a flockling to slaughter is He <sup>l</sup>fetched,  
And as a ewe is mute before her shearers<sup>l</sup>,  
+ He is not opening His mouth.  
From restraint and from judgment He is taken,  
And <sup>`</sup>on His personal fate, <sup>a</sup>who is meditating?  
For He is severed from the land of the living;  
<sup>f</sup>Because of the transgressions of My people,**

<sup>7</sup>He is led to death~.

And <sup>Q</sup>they~ <sup>lg</sup>appoint His tomb `with the wicked,

+ `With the rich <sup>Q</sup>His sepulcher~,

<sup>on</sup>Although He had done no<sup>t</sup> wrong,

And no<sup>t</sup> deceit was in His mouth.

+Yet Yahweh desires to crush~ Him,

<sup>Q</sup>And<sup>l</sup> He causes <sup>Q</sup>Him<sup>l</sup> to be wounded.

Should His soul <sup>l</sup>place a guilt offering,

He shall see a seed,

He shall lengthen days,

And the desire of Yahweh shall prosper in His hand.

In accord with this prophecy, Peter will fill out the message of Psalm 72:12-14 with these words:

*And if you are invoking the Father, Who is judging impartially according to each one's work, you may behave for the time of your sojourn, with fear, being aware that not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, were you **ransomed** from your vain behavior, handed down by tradition from the fathers, but with the **precious blood of Christ**, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world, yet manifested in the last times because of you, who through Him are believing in God, Who rouses Him from among the dead and is giving Him glory, so that your faith and expectation is to be in God. (1 Peter 1:17-21)*

And Paul, who would become severed from his ties with Israel, yet whose heart would dwell on their future salvation with delight (Rom.10:1), also would write of the time when "all Israel shall be saved." That salvation accords with the words of Isaiah 59:20,21 and 27:9, as follows (Rom.11:26,27):

*Arriving out of Zion shall be the **Rescuer**.*

*He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob*

*And this is My covenant with them  
Whenever I should be eliminating their sins.*

The One Who is the Redeemer and Rescuer of Israel from their sins and transgressions will be the Saviour of their souls in His days as perceived in Psalm 72.

Even as Israel failed to recognize their Messiah when He came before them, so even today they do not recognize the absolute need for His suffering and the shedding of His precious blood. But before they enter into the blessings spoken of in this psalm, He will reveal Himself to them and say to them as He did to John in vision, "Do not fear! I am the First and the Last, and the Living One: and I became dead, and lo! living am I for the eons of the eons" (Rev.1:17,18).

#### THE LIVING ONE

When Solomon was anointed king, the people shouted: "May king Solomon live!" (1 Kings 1:39). Literally, they said, "King Solomon shall be living!" But they shortened the verb, "shall be living," so as to speak hurriedly, with emotion. By this means a mood of fervent supplication was probably expressed. For the equivalent expression in English, we would say, "Long live King Solomon!"

The very same shortened form of the verb "shall be living" appears in the Masoretic text of Psalm 72:15a. Yet in accord with the viewpoint of the prophets and the Septuagint Version, we are overlooking the shortened form of the verb and taking it in its regular, declarative sense. In reference to Christ, Psalm 72:15a declares as a further word of praise: "And He shall live!" or expressed more vividly: "And He shall be living!"

However often this psalm is read as the Masorites seem to have read it, with fervent hope and supplication, it seems very likely that in accord with its highest value, it will be

sung with with a tone of fervent exultation. The King shall be living! The One Who died, He shall be living, and He is the One Who shall be reigning for the eon!

Psalm 72:15a seems to stand out from all the rest of the psalm. It does not match the second line with parallel terminology, as in the other couplets, and thus invites special attention. If the resurrection of Christ is discerned in this psalm, it is here. And the resurrection means necessarily that He died.

We look back again at the Song of Moses, where we read of Yahweh in His work of adjudication, declaring of Himself, "I am the Living One for the eon" (Deut.32:40). The King shall be living as the One Who died, and lo! He is living!

#### INTERLUDE

I cannot pass by this remarkable line concerning the King as the living One in His terrestrial reign without some reference to Christ's significance to us now and in the future among the celestials as the living One. In that Christ died, He died to Sin once and for all time, and in that He is living, He is living to God (Rom.6:10). In that I have been baptized into Christ's death, so that I died together with Him, I shall be living together with Him also (Rom.6:3,8; Col.2:20; 3:3,4; 2 Tim.2:11), and in this, living to God.

This shall be true of us all. We shall know what life truly is. The association with Christ as the Head of the body will be spiritual, which is far closer than the physical nearness of Israel to their King in the millennium. But we all (ultimately all mankind) shall know Him as the One Who died for us and is living.

#### A LIFE OF BLESSING

The King (Who died for His people) shall be living, and He shall be blessed. And His kingship will be a blessing of vibrant life every day throughout the earth (Psa.72:15,16):



**And He shall be living.**

**One shall give to Him from Sheba's gold,**

**And one shall pray about Him continually;**

**The entire day shall bless Him.**

**There shall come to be a plenitude of cereal**

**in the earth 'to the summit of the mountains.**

**Its fruit shall rustle like the Lebanon,**

**And they of the city shall blossom**

**like herbage of the earth.**

#### GOLD AND PLENTITUDE

The presence of the One Who died and is living will be a blessing throughout the earth. He will be enriched with gold. And in this, judging from Solomon's example as a type of Christ, we may see Him as the One responsible for the radiant temple as the dwelling place of the glory of God. We also may see Him here as the Determiner of the earth's economy. Each individual will recognize the King's importance to his and her own life and will pray for Him. Every new day, from morning to night, will be a means to bless Him anew. There will be no famine, no failure of crops in the cultivated areas of the countryside, but a plenitude of cereal and fruit. And those of the city will be as flourishing as the blossoming herbage which will grow there and throughout the earth.

#### BLESSED AND HAPPY

In bringing judgment, righteousness, peace and well-being to the entire earth during the millennial eon the King will be honored and praised as no other king has ever been. His works shall be marvelous, and His Name shall be lauded wherever the sun shines. In blessing Him the people shall be blessed in Him, and in noting and singing of His happiness they are made happy, as Psalm 72:17 declares:

**His Name shall <sup>b</sup>remain for the eon;  
 Before the sun shall His Name be propagated,  
 And all nations shall bless themselves in Him  
 and <sup>m</sup>call Him happy.**

In calling the King happy, the nations will be testifying that their own happiness is sourced in Him. Not only the reign of Solomon, but the rule of Job in his land foreshadows, in remarkably similar language, that future time described here in verse 17. In his sufferings Job describes his former position and its effect on others who called him happy and testified in his favor (Job 29:7-16):

**'When I went forth<sup>-</sup> to the gate  
 standing over the town  
 And 'prepared my seat in the square,  
 The youths would see me and hide themselves,  
 +While the hoary headed would rise and stand.  
 The chiefs would restrain <sup>i</sup> their declarations  
 And 'place the palm <sup>o</sup>ver their mouth;  
 The voices of the noblemen were hidden back,  
 And their tongue would cling to their palate.  
 'When the ear heard, + it <sup>m</sup>called me 'happy;  
 And when the eye saw, + it 'testified in my favor.  
 For I made a way of 'escape for the humble  
 who implored',  
 And the orphan and him who 'had no<sup>t</sup> helper'.  
 The blessing of the one perishing 'came on me,  
 And I caused the heart of the widow to be 'jubilant.  
 I put on righteousness, and it 'clothed me;  
 My right judgment was like a robe and a turban.  
 I became eyes to the blind,  
 And feet to the lame was I.  
 I was father to the needy ones,  
 And the cause of him I knew not,  
 I would 'investigate it.**

As happy as that time was, how much happier must Job's position have been when Yahweh blessed his latter years more than in the beginning (Job 42:10-12)! Not only in his sufferings, but in his governing as well Job stands as a type of Christ, Whose reign will surpass in glory every scriptural type.

#### MARVELOUS WORKS

The psalm closes in verses 18 and 19 with exclamations of praise to Yahweh Elohim, Who is responsible for the marvelous works of that coming kingdom, so that the entire earth is filled with His glory. "Amen and Amen," that is, *Faithful and Faithful* are these words:

**Blessed<sup>1</sup> be Yahweh Elohim, the Elohim of Israel,  
Doing marvelous<sup>1</sup> works by Himself alone,  
And blessed<sup>1</sup> be His glorious Name for the eon!  
+ 'The entire earth shall be filled with His glory!  
Amen and Amen.**

Finally, at the end of both Scroll Two of the Psalms and Psalm 72 we are reminded of David who led the way in this collection of songs of praise and prayer to Yahweh Elohim:

**The prayers of David son of Jesse are *all* ended.**

In this study we have seen how David's prayer for Solomon becomes a prophecy concerning Christ and the blessings of His terrestrial kingship.

For us now, even when the lawless one has not yet been unveiled, whose presence is in accord with the operation of Satan (2 Thess.2:6-12), we hear of that blessed time of righteousness and peace under Christ's kingship with comfort and joy. How much more will these words from the Law and the Psalms and the Prophets mean to the faithful of Israel when the son of destruction arises over mankind at the end of this eon.

## INTERLUDE

Now in view of our calling in grace, we declare:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ. (Eph.1:3)*

And we pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of His Son, that we may perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what is the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing (*cf* Eph.1:15-23).

D.H.H.

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Brother **Jack Shaw**, of West Covina, California, died on July 1, 2013, at age 90. Jack's wife Laurel preceded him in death on April 7, 2013. They were married for almost 70 years. Jack was a devout believer who reveled in the evangel of Christ, and was a member of the board of directors of the Concordant Publishing Concern. He encouraged and helped us in many ways, most especially through the salutary influence of his abiding good cheer and kindness.

**Stella Sta Maria**, of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, died on April 7, 2013. She is survived by her husband Jeff (who is the Malaysian agent of the Concordant Publishing Concern), to whom she was married for 48 years. Stella had a quiet and unassuming manner, exemplifying the ideal of "the aged women [to be] in demeanor as becomes the sacred . . . teachers of the ideal, that they may bring the young wives to a sense of their duty to be fond of their husbands, fond of their children" (Titus 2:3,4).

**Charles Cronk**, of North Fairfield, Ohio, fell asleep in Christ on June 17, 2013, at age 60. From his youth, Charlie rejoiced in the grace of God in Christ Jesus. He had a great sense of humor and enjoyed making people smile.

## EDITORIAL

IN the following pages we say much about Adam and Sin and Death, but this is so that we might focus on Christ and Righteousness and Life. And this is so that we might be growing in realization of God.

We begin with the CVOT of Genesis 2:5-17, matched on the opposite page by a literal rendering of the Hebrew. This is followed by two articles on the phrase, "to die you shall be dying," in Genesis 2:17, and Paul's explanation of this phrase in Romans 5:12. These two studies (and a later one on the word "rations") are a bit technical, dealing with grammar and word meanings. But the issue is a critical one. Is death being conceived of (in these passages) as a process which proceeds to a culmination of the body's return to the soil, the soul's return to the unseen and the spirit's return to God?

The three articles on Romans take the position that this is truly Paul's viewpoint in his exposition of the evangel of God. In Adam, human beings are sinners who are dying and shall die. Yet in Christ, we all shall be constituted righteous to the end that all will be living to God, so that He becomes All in all (*cf* Rom.5:18,19; 1 Cor.15:21-28).

In the meantime, only a few are believing this evangel which is wholly centered on God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and wholly directed to the glory of God. But as we are believing it we find it is the power of God for salvation. Thanks be to God that we have been given over to this teaching, listening to it attentively, from the heart (Rom.6:17)!

D.H.H.

## GENESIS 2:5-17

<sup>5</sup> +As for any shrub of the field, it had not yet <sup>l</sup>come into being <sup>i</sup>on earth, nor had any herbage of the field yet been <sup>l</sup>sprouting, for Yahweh Elohim had not <sup>c</sup>made it rain on the earth, and there was no human to serve <sup>`</sup>the ground.

<sup>6</sup> +But mist, it <sup>l</sup>ascended from the earth and irrigated <sup>`</sup>the whole surface of the ground.

<sup>7</sup> + Yahweh Elohim <sup>l</sup>formed <sup>`</sup>the human out of soil from the ground, and He <sup>l</sup>blew into his nostrils the breath of life; and the human <sup>l</sup>became <sup>></sup> a living soul.

<sup>8</sup> + Yahweh Elohim <sup>l</sup>planted a garden in Eden, <sup>f</sup>in the east, and there He <sup>lpl</sup>put <sup>`</sup>the human whom He had formed.

<sup>9</sup> +So Yahweh Elohim <sup>c</sup>made <sup>l</sup>sprout from the ground every tree desirable<sup>l</sup> to the sight and good for food, <sup>+</sup>with the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup> + There was a stream flowing forth from Eden to irrigate <sup>`</sup>the garden; <sup>+</sup> from there it <sup>l</sup>parted and became <sup>></sup> four headstreams. <sup>11</sup> The name of the first one is Pishon; it is the one surrounding <sup>`</sup>the whole land of Havilah where the gold is. <sup>12</sup> + The gold of <sup>`</sup>that land is <sup>s</sup>very<sup>n</sup> good; the pearl is there and the onyx stone. <sup>13</sup> + The name of the second stream is Gihon; it is the one surrounding <sup>`</sup>the whole land of Cush. <sup>14</sup> + The name of the third stream is Hiddekel; it is the one going east of Asshur; and the <sup>`</sup>fourth stream, it is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> +Then Yahweh Elohim <sup>l</sup>took <sup>`</sup>the human and <sup>l</sup>settled him in the garden of Eden to serve it and to keep it.

<sup>16</sup> And Yahweh Elohim <sup>l</sup>instructed <sup>on</sup> the human, <sup>></sup> saying<sup>-</sup>: From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat<sup>-</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> +But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not <sup>l</sup>eat from it; for <sup>i</sup>on the day you eat<sup>-</sup> from it, to die<sup>-</sup> you shall be dying.

## A LITERAL RENDERING

<sup>5</sup> And-all shrub-of the-field not-yet it-is-becoming in-earth, and-all herbage-of the-field not-yet it-is-sprouting, for not He-causes-rain, Yahweh Elohim, on the-earth, and-human there-is-no to-serve `the-ground.

<sup>6</sup> And-mist, it-is-ascending from the-earth, and-it-irrigates `all face-of the-ground.

<sup>7</sup> And-He-is-forming, Yahweh Elohim, `the-human of soil from the-ground, and-He-is-blowing in-his-nostrils breath-of lives; and-he-is-becoming, the-human, to-soul living-one. <sup>8</sup> And-He-is-planting, Yahweh Elohim, garden in-Eden, from-east, and-He-is-placing there `the-human whom He-forms. <sup>9</sup> And-He-is-causing-sprout, Yahweh Elohim, from the-ground all tree being-desired to-sight and-good to-food, and-tree-of the-lives in-midst-of the-garden, and-tree-of the-knowledge-of good and-evil.

<sup>10</sup> And-stream forthing from-Eden to-irrigate `the-garden; and-from-there it-is-being-parted and-it-becomes to-four heads. <sup>11</sup> Name-of the-one Pishon; it the-surrounding-one `all land-of the-Havilah which there the-gold. <sup>12</sup> And-gold-of the-land the-that good; there the-pearl and-stone-of the-onyx. <sup>13</sup> And-name-of the-stream the-second Gihon; it the-surrounding-one `all-of land-of Cush. <sup>14</sup> And-name-of the-stream the-third Hiddekel; it the-going-one east-of Asshur; and the-stream the-fourth, it Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> And-He-is-taking, Yahweh Elohim, `the-human, and-He-is-settling-him in-garden-of Eden to-serve-it and to-keep-it. <sup>16</sup> And-He-is-instructing, Yahweh Elohim, on the-human, to-say: From-all tree-of the-garden, to-eat you-are-eating. <sup>17</sup> And-from-tree-of the-knowledge-of good and-evil, not you-are-eating from-it; for in day-of to-eat-you from-it, to-die you-are dying.

## TO DIE YOU SHALL BE DYING

A NOTABLE PASSAGE—which, indeed, contains the very first mention of death in the Word of God—is the penalty imposed on Adam in case of his disobedience.

“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen.2:17, AV).

How are we to understand this statement? That Adam lived on for nine hundred years is beyond dispute (Gen.5:5).

### “SPIRITUAL DEATH”

In my earliest efforts to solve this problem of the death which overtook Adam when he sinned, I fell back on a phrase then common among Bible expositors, that is, “spiritual death,” in contrast to “physical death.” Later, when I sought to avoid unsound unscriptural expressions, I was forced to drop these non-scriptural phrases. Then I saw how misleading they were. The effect of Adam’s sin was not confined to his spirit, and his relationship to God. It vitally affected his physical frame. He became mortal, in the active sense of dying, and this he has transmitted to the race, which accounts for all disease and sin as well as alienation from God. Adam and his posterity have been *physically* dying ever since. It is true that he became *figuratively* dead to God, yet the figure is not founded on his spirit alone, but upon his future literal death, which included spirit, soul and body.

How confusing this manner of speaking may be can be seen in the death of our Lord. He died *physically* when He commended His *spirit* into the hands of His Father (Luke 23:46). So it is with all flesh, for it has no life apart



from the spirit. Literal death always includes both flesh and spirit, for the flesh returns to the soil when the spirit returns to God. The converse is true also. Death limited to one of man's components is impossible, or figurative. The fact that unbelievers are figuratively dead *to God* is based upon their literal death. They are not dead *to men*, spiritually or otherwise. They are simply so oblivious of the Deity as if they were literally in the grave.

The complementary terms "spiritual life" and "physical life" are also non-scriptural and unsound, for they imply that there is life apart from spirit. It is not easy for us to avoid them because we are not accustomed to the language of figures which is so freely used in the Scriptures. It is necessary for us to break with these misleading expressions, however, for it is practically impossible to grasp the truth as to death and life so long as we harbor them.

#### PROCESS AND CULMINATION

The literal Hebrew wording, "To die you shall be dying," brings before us a *process* of death, culminating, indeed, in actual death, but of indefinite duration in its operation.

The same phrase is used in a similar sense in Genesis 20:7; 1 Samuel 14:44; 22:16; 1 Kings 2:37,42; 2 Kings 1:4,16; Jeremiah 26:8; Ezekiel 3:18; 33:8,14.

The most interesting of these occurrences is 1 Kings 2:37, where we have the identical statement made to Shimei by Solomon in case he should dare to leave the confines of Jerusalem. "In the day . . . to die shall you be dying" gives us a perfect parallel case. And, like Adam, Shimei transgressed. And like him *he did not die* on the day he crossed the brook Kidron, but went to Gath after his servants and returned. This would not be so notable if Solomon had offered some excuse for not keeping his word and sending after him to fulfill his threat. Indeed, Solomon reiterates his previous words, not omitting the phrase "in the day"

and proposes to carry it into execution several days afterward! It is evident that his understanding of this phrase was quite different from the impression conveyed by our usual English translation.

Such evidence as this is valuable—far more valuable than the labored efforts of Hebrew scholarship. Learning is ever lame, but here is evidence of Solomon's interpretation of this phrase—and how many would dispute his knowledge of Hebrew?

#### DYING TO DIE

The penalty imposed upon eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was *death* (Gen.2:17). The AV rendering, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," seems to definitely declare that Adam would die the very day in which he ate. Nevertheless, the event showed that this could not be the meaning, for Adam not only did not die that day, but lived over nine hundred years (Gen.5:5). This is much longer than most of his descendants have lived. There is little doubt that the Hebrew could be rendered idiomatically as our popular version has it, so far as words and grammar go. The question is one of figurative language. They render the literal Hebrew TO-DIE YOU-ARE-DYING as a figure of speech in which the one form of the verb, TO-DIE, is used to emphasize the other, which gives it the sense of certainty. This figure is often used in the Scriptures.

#### DEATH UNKNOWN

But such a figure depends upon a background of experience. It is not likely that Adam was acquainted with death in any form, so that even its literal meaning would be difficult to grasp. Without understanding this first, a figure would be entirely incomprehensible to him. Moreover, the actual consequences, which followed the eating of the for-

bidden fruit, were exactly in accord with the literal Hebrew. The *dying* process began right after eating. Hitherto, food had imparted the needed substances for maintaining *life*. Now an element was introduced which produced a slow form of *dying*, accompanied by painful and humiliating experiences. In this way the fruit imparted the knowledge of both good and evil. Eventually, however, the evil prevailed, and Adam's body dissolved in *death*. All this is confirmed by the judgment passed upon him.

#### INHERITED DYING PRODUCES SIN

The forbidden fruit imparted to Adam and Eve the knowledge of good and evil. This tree is no longer with us, but the *death* which it imparted has been inherited by the whole race. *This it is what makes men sinners*. We do not need to be lured and deluded by a sinister spirit being in the form of a serpent, nor do we need to eat forbidden fruit. It is not that our *nature* is sinful, but because the *dying* process, which Adam first felt on the day he ate the forbidden fruit, has been continued and prolonged, not only until the day of his death, but in all his progeny. The life which he had received when Yahweh Elohim blew into his nostrils the breath of lives (plural), was not limited to himself alone, but included the entire race which springs from him. After his offense, he passed on the dying process, so that each one of his descendants also acquires the knowledge of good and evil. This is confirmed by Paul in Romans (5:12) where he says: "Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through to all mankind, *on which* all sinned."

#### NOT DEATH, BUT DYING

It was not Adam's *death* that gave him the knowledge of good and evil, but the experience of *dying*. There is no knowledge in the unseen which he entered at death

(Ecc.9:10). In Eden he had nothing but good, but did not appreciate it. Afterward, for nearly a thousand years, the good was accompanied by increasing evil as he grew older, so that he doubtless looked back to Eden and to his younger days with longing and appreciation. *The good had not given him the knowledge of evil, but the evil did endow him with the knowledge of good, and of God's goodness and love, which gave it.* That is the function of evil, and we may rest assured that God will see to it that it will not be overdone, lest it have the opposite effect, and show Him to be a god of hate.

#### EVIL LIMITED BY DEATH

If the lesson to be learned from the knowledge of evil were never finished, but continued endlessly, it would defeat the purpose God intended it to accomplish. If Adam were still alive, many thousands of years old, instead of nine hundred, decrepit, diseased, helpless and hopeless, would that serve the loving purpose of God? A measure of evil is necessary before men can appreciate the good that God gives them by His grace, before they are able to praise and adore Him for it. But endless, infinite evil would only turn His creatures' hearts against Him with utter despair and hate. So it is that *God has wisely shortened the process of dying by death*, where there is no knowledge whatever (Ecc.9:5), until the resurrection. Adam had been formed from the soil (2:7), and, in death, he was to return thither (3:19). And so with all mankind. God's purpose is served and their lesson is learned by a comparatively short course in evil on the earth.

A. E. Knoch

*For the momentary lightness of our affliction is producing for us a transcendently transcendent burden of glory.*  
(2 Cor.4:17)

## DYING UNTO DEATH

THE best commentary on the words “to die you shall be dying” in Genesis 2:17 is Romans 5:12.

*Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death . . . .*

Through one human, sin entered *into* the world, the system or arrangement of things which God had established. And through this one act of sinning death also came in as a corrupting process within the human pair. Considering Adam by himself as head of the human race (as Paul does), from that very day in which he disobeyed the instruction not to eat of the fruit of the one tree called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam was dying in such a way that he most certainly would die. So as to die, he was dying.

Moreover, this was an operation of death that spread to Adam’s descendants:

*. . . and thus, death passed through into all mankind . . .*

What happened to Adam was passed on *into* all mankind. *Thus* it was that death as a process of dying which continues unto the state of death has infected the entire human race.

Furthermore, on account of this condition, all sinned.

*. . . on which all sinned.*

And so it continues to be. Sin reigns in death (Rom. 5:20). It does not reign in the state of death (for the dead cannot sin), but rather it reigns in this continuing operation of death inside us, which takes us downward to such

a state of dissolution that we die. It is this tyranny which calls for a solution in which it is abolished. And this can only be accomplished by the One Who came in the form of a slave and the likeness of humanity in order to die for us who are sinners.

We know we are dying, and we know we are sinners, and knowing how this came about is not as essential as knowing the fact that it is so. Yet the simplicity of cause and effect as Paul reviews it, centered upon one act of one human as it affects all humanity, is extremely helpful to us in understanding and appreciating the evangel of God which concerns one particular act of the One Human (the One in Whom we are created), Jesus Christ, as it affects all humanity. Adam is a type of Christ Who puts an end to sin and death, and brings in righteousness and life.

Our deep concern, therefore, is this word of God called His *evangel* concerning His Son. And we give attention to Genesis 2:5-17 (as Paul does in Romans 5) as it sheds light on God's glorious work of righteousness, power and love in the giving of His Son for sinners. To speak of Adam is to speak of sin and death, bringing humanity to ruin. To speak of Christ is to speak of righteousness and life, bringing humanity to life's justifying. In both cases ONE affects ALL.

#### HEBREW REPETITION

The Hebrew language delights in what seems to us to be redundancies. Verb forms are frequently used with their corresponding noun forms, striking us as almost unnecessarily stating the obvious. Egypt **oppressed** the Israelites with **oppression** (Exodus 3:9). In Lamentations 1:8 Jeremiah cries out over Jerusalem in that it has **sinned a sin**. There will be a future day when Yahweh asks the daughter of Zion, "Now why are you **shouting a shout**?" (Micah 4:9).

It is a matter of emphasis to be sure, but an emphasis made by employing a single concept both as verb and object.

The distinct functions of verb and object are retained. We could say that Egypt burdened the Israelites with oppression, or that Jerusalem sinned with idolatry, or that the daughter of Zion raised a shout. But this pattern of identifying the action and its results by means of one term keeps our minds on track. We are not allowed to miss the point.

Now, as we have seen, not only does Hebrew connect verbs with their corresponding nouns, but in a similar way it often joins two forms of a verb in one phrase, usually a finite verb with its infinitive form. This first occurs in Genesis 2:16 where God speaks to the human, Adam, with the first positive instruction of Scripture. The CVOT idiomatic reading is:

**From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat.**

The emphasis indicated by the repetition of two forms of the verb "eat" is brought out by the AV rendering, "thou mayest *freely* eat," and most modern versions follow this pattern, using similar adverbs, such as "surely" or "indeed." The CVOT shows the emphasis by preserving the repetition of the verb "eat," joined by the lightface word, "yea." By heeding the information concerning verbs in our Instructions for Use and Abbreviation Key the student can trace out the actual verb forms used in the Hebrew idiom, but for now, we provide this in our (presently unpublished) literal rendering (see page 147) as follows:

**From-all tree-of the-garden, to-eat you-are-eating.**

The emphasis is on the act of eating. The verb "you may be eating" identifies the act, expressing it as an ongoing activity. (In this case the Hebrew indicates a mood of contingency based on Adam's desires as a "living soul"; hence we use the auxiliary *may*.) Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, long considered an authoritative and trustworthy work, describes this verb form as representing actions "which

are regarded by the speaker at any moment as still continuing, or in process of accomplishment.”<sup>1</sup>

But the emphasis is not made by repeating the verb (“you may be eating, you may be eating”). It adds the infinitive “to eat” to the verb. As with the idiom using a verb with its noun form, where the noun retains its function as a noun, here also the infinitive retains its function, in this case as an infinitive of purpose. If we change the verb to a related one, we see how the infinitive works in this phrase: “To eat, you may be ingesting food.” Here, the infinitive identifies the purpose of the act. Yahweh tells Adam, in effect: “So as *to eat* you may *be eating*.” Adam needs to eat. In order to meet that need he is to be eating the fruit of the trees of the garden.

With this in mind we come to verse 17 where God lays down a negative instruction, again the first of all such directives in God’s Word:

<sup>17</sup> **“But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying.**

So as *to die*, Adam shall *be dying* should he eat of the fruit of this particular tree. The action is visualized as occurring in time, a process indicated by the suffix, *-ing*. The result of this process was to be that Adam would die. (A similar English expression is the judicial sentence: “He is to be hung by the neck *until dead*.” This called for both process and result in order to make certain that a possible breaking of the rope, or some other unforeseen event transpiring before death occurred, would not nullify the objective that the criminal would become dead.)

The negative instruction of Genesis 2:17 centers on the same act as the positive instruction of verse 16. Both have

1. GESENIUS’ HEBREW GRAMMAR (E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley, editors), Oxford, 1976, p.313.



to do with eating, and in both cases the eating is specifically related to the trees of the garden. The act of eating is one of taking food and putting it *into* the body. It is a simple act. It is an elementary act. And it composes the dominate theme of Genesis 2:5-17. Note how we are prepared step by step for verse 17:

At one time there were no shrubs to bear fruit for eating (verse 5).

There was no rain to irrigate plants for food (verse 5).

And there was no human to take care of plants or to eat their fruit (verse 5).

But then we read that, as for irrigation, mist was ascending from the earth (verse 6), and this is expanded later in verse 10 by flowing streams of water in association with the lush garden.

But now in verse 7 a most important step is made: Yahweh Elohim formed the human from the soil of the ground in such a way that the human became a living soul, who had the desire for food and the ability to care for plants which produced the food.

At this point we read that Yahweh Elohim planted a garden in which He placed the human, and He sprouted trees which produced fruit for food, including two particular trees, one for living, and one for knowledge (verses 8 and 9).

The matter of the stream for irrigation (verse 10) completes the process of remedying the lacks of verse 5. (Verses 11-14, providing further information concerning streams and lands outside the garden and non-edible riches are not directly related to verse 17 except that they lay groundwork for matters which will become relevant should the instruction of verse 17 not be followed.)

Finally, with all the missing elements provided, we are prepared for the pivotal events of Genesis 2:15-17. There is the human, and there is the well-irrigated garden with

trees bearing fruit. All of this focuses attention on one particular act: *eating*.

Food is for the inside. So also, the penalty of eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was an internal matter. The dying would not be by means of stoning, sword, fire from heaven or the like, but would be related directly to the eating of the forbidden fruit. And this, as Paul testified, was passed through *into* all mankind from Adam.

#### SATAN'S STRATAGEM

In deceiving Eve, the serpent inserted a negative into Yahweh's exact words, saying: "*Not to die shall you be dying*" (Gen.3:4). This was a direct contradiction to what God has said. Eve also had obscured the clear simplicity of Yahweh's instruction by adding words He had not spoken. She spoke of not touching the tree, which is an external act, but Yahweh Elohim had spoken only of not eating, which is an internal matter. Then to distract Eve's mind further from God's words, the Adversary immediately directed attention to a truth which God had not spoken: "On the day you eat of it your eyes will be unclosed, and you will become like Elohim, knowing good and evil." In this way, the immediate issue, which was what God had said, was set aside. God's word was confused by Eve and then denied by the Adversary, who changed the subject.

In Romans 5 Paul speaks of death as it was described in Genesis 2:17. It is an ongoing operation which has passed into us from Adam. It is like a despot who reigns over us. Paul directs us to the issue at hand, the issue which the Adversary had so cleverly set aside.

To claim that Genesis 2:17 refers to "spiritual death" is to divert the subject into mystical channels of theology. It is to make an explanation which is not supported in the words God used even if it could have been understood by Adam. God's own explanation is given in Genesis 3:17-19:

**'Because you hearkened to your wife's voice and <sup>l</sup>ate from the <sup>7</sup>only<sup>0</sup> tree<sup>w</sup> that I instructed you, <sup>7</sup>saying<sup>-</sup> you must not <sup>l</sup>eat from it,**

**Cursed<sup>l</sup> is the ground <sup>l</sup>on your <sup>p</sup>account;**

**In grief shall you eat of it all the days of your life.**

**<sup>18</sup> + Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you,**

**And you will eat <sup>l</sup>the herbage of the field.**

**<sup>19</sup> <sup>i</sup>By the sweat of your brow shall you eat <sup>7</sup>your<sup>0</sup> bread,**

**Until you return<sup>-</sup> to the ground,**

**for from it were you taken.**

**For soil you are, and to soil you shall return.**

To die, Adam was dying in a long process of grief and sweat until he would return to the soil.

#### OTHER OCCURRENCES

The phrase, "to die, [you are] dying," occurs elsewhere about twenty times in the exact form found in Genesis 2:17, with the infinitive "to die" joined to the progressive action verb. These later passages reflect the Genesis passage in pointing to a process of dying which leads to death, but, of necessity, in a shorter framework of time than might have been expected in ordinary circumstances. All who might have been or were placed under this sentence were already "dying in Adam" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22), but this was understood as a hastening of the process by an imposed act of execution.

For Abimelech (Gen.20:7), Jonathan (1 Sam.14:39,44), Ahimilech (1 Sam.22:16) and Jeremiah (Jer.26:8) the sentence was not carried out for various reasons. But had Abimelech not returned Sarah to Abraham, or Saul been willing and able to carry out his threats, or the priests and prophets and people of Jerusalem not been turned from their evil intention against Jeremiah, death both as a hastened process and as a consummating state would have

occurred. As for Manoah (Judges 13:22), the sentence was in his mind, yet had it been imposed by God, Manoah and his wife would have experienced a quickened process of dying and its culmination in becoming dead. In the case of Shimei (1 Kings 2:37,42) the process of dying began in a legal sense, with execution hanging over him, as it were, from the day he crossed the Kidron, and culminating some days later in the act of Benaiah coming upon him, "so that he died" (v.46). For David's child of Bathsheba (2 Sam.12:14), Ahaziah (2 Kings 1:4,6,16), and Ben-hadad (2 Kings 8:10), the process of dying was already being shortened by illness before the sentence was proclaimed by divine authority, and it continued with the certainty of death in view until they died. Finally Yahweh warned the wicked of the house of Israel with these very terms (Ezek.3:18; 33:8), in which a fearful process was expressed as well as its outcome.

#### "DYING, THOU SHALT DIE"

The translation, "dying, thou shall die," suggested by the notes in *THE COMPANION BIBLE*,<sup>2</sup> at Genesis 2:17 and Numbers 26:65 has served well in opening up the meaning of the Hebrew. Although the infinitive is rendered as a participle, and the verb as a simple future, the end result represents the Hebrew meaning in idiomatic English quite well, except it does not clearly retain the sense of purpose. More cross-references are given than those mentioned above because passages using slight differences in the Hebrew from the exact form in Genesis 2:17 are included. Nevertheless, the sense of a process of dying leading to the state of death is applicable in all these instances.

D.H.H.

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2. *THE COMPANION BIBLE*, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1990, pages 6 and 222.

## ADAM AND CHRIST AND US

WE LONG to be removed from what we are and become what Christ is. We long to be removed from being slaves of Sin and to become slaves of God, Whose righteousness is revealed in the evangel, and Whose love is commended in the death of Christ for our sakes. Even as Christ died, but now is living to God (Rom.6:10), so we look forward with expectation to be as He now is.

We have death in us. It has passed into our race and reigns over us so that we sin (Rom.5:12-14,17). Death reigns in our bodies, and Sin reigns in death (Rom.5:21).

We long for it to be otherwise.

For believers, it is otherwise!

It is otherwise, not in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit (*cf* Rom.8:4), in accord with God's evangel concerning His Son.

We have died. God has baptized us in spirit into the death of Christ. Our old humanity has been crucified together with Christ (Rom.6:2-7). In our position before God we are dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord, and so our apostle urges us to be taking this into account (Rom.6:8-11) day by day.

We did not or do not feel or in any way experience by soulish sensations this crucifixion of our old humanity. We have no visible and tangible evidence of it. Yet it is declared to be so by the word of God. We believe it, and in believing it and declaring it and reckoning it is so, and listening attentively to it and presenting ourselves before God with this in mind and heart and being devoted to it as true like a slave who loves his master, we are invigorated by it in our walk and living.

Paul would have us listen to this seemingly unbelievable word and be clinging to it in faith (someday faith will be discarded for sight!). He would have us be declarers who declare the evangel of God's grace and of the gratuity of grace which is in Christ Jesus. Our teacher would have us be perceivers who perceive with the eyes of our heart what God has said about our position before Him in Christ (someday that position which has been procured by the faith of Jesus Christ will be perceived with full perception, in full realization!).

We cannot live now, in the flesh, as we shall live in bodies immortal and incorruptible, conformed to the image of God's Son. But to focus on this message in faith is to be invigorated by the earnest of the spirit, bearing the fruit of the spirit.

#### ADAM AND CHRIST

What we are in flesh because of Adam, and what we are in spirit because of Christ has been made plain time after time starting with Romans 5:12. *Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned . . . But not as the offense, thus also the grace* (Rom.5:12,15). Hence we read of the two positions:

#### ROMANS 5:15

##### A. In **Adam**

1. *By the offense of the one*
2. *the many died.*

##### B. In **Christ**

1. *The grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ,*
2. *to the many superabounds.*

The effect of Adam's offense on his many descendants

is that they are dying unto death. The effect of God's grace operating through the gratuity which is in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ shall superabound over death and all its effects until all its many victims are delivered from it.

## ROMANS 5:16

A. In **Adam**

1. *The judgment is out of one act of sinning*
2. *into condemnation.*

B. In **Christ**

1. *The grace is out of many offenses*
2. *into a [righteous] award.*

Adam's one act of sinning led to God's judgment which brought mankind under the condemnation of death as a process reaching to its state. The grace of God in not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all, and the gratuity in grace, which is the obedience of Jesus Christ in His death for sinners, deals with all the many offenses of all the many descendants of Adam, and brings about the righteous award of justification (*cf* Rom.3:21-28).

## ROMANS 5:17

A. In **Adam**

1. *By the offense of the one,*
2. *death reigns*
3. *through the one.*

B. In **Christ**

1. *Those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness*
2. *shall be reigning in life*
3. *through the One, Jesus Christ.*

By the one offense of the one man, Adam, and through him, death reigns over humanity. That is how our dying condition as it leads downward to death began. As sin-

ners we may find this offensive to ourselves. Why should we be reigned over by a power that obtained its enthronement long before we were born? "O human! who are you, to be sure, who are answering again to God?" (Rom.9:20).

On the other hand, we who are believing have already, in spirit, obtained the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness which has come through the One, Jesus Christ. We shall be reigning in life, judging messengers and life's affairs, as instruments of God through whom He displays the transcendent riches of His grace. (And the fact is that all will ultimately be obtaining the joy and peace which Christ has gained for them, and all shall be living as recipients of God's favor.) Is it offensive to us that this is not at all of ourselves, but an operation of God in the giving of His Son, Who subjected His will to the will of His God and Father? (To be sure, it is offensive to those who wish to boast in themselves, and we all probably retain some measure of this pride.) We had no say in this grace, not being able to give our counsel to God concerning what He should do about sin and death. (And that is a good thing, too—a very excellent thing indeed!)

#### ROMANS 5:18

##### A. In **Adam**

1. *It was through one offense*
2. *for all mankind*
3. *for condemnation.*

##### B. In **Christ**

1. *It is through one just [deed]*
2. *for all mankind*
3. *for life's justifying.*

It was just a little offense. In fact some think it never occurred at all, seeing in the account of Genesis three a kind of parable, an elaborate figure of speech to describe



what is "natural" to the race and all living things. But our condition is a condition of condemnation from God resulting from His condemnation of Adam. It is a condemnation to a process of disintegration ending in the state of death. To see this is to increase in appreciation for Christ Jesus, our Lord, for what He did and its effects on the entirety of the human race. Only through the operation of God's righteousness in Christ's one most momentous and enormously important act in dying for sinners in obedience to God's will can this be achieved. That it shall be realized for all mankind is more certain than death, for death will be swallowed up by life (cf 1 Cor.15:54-57).

## ROMANS 5:19

A. In **Adam**

1. *Through the disobedience of the one man,*
2. *the many*
3. *were constituted sinners.*

B. In **Christ**

1. *Through the obedience of the One,*
2. *the many*
3. *shall be constituted [righteous].*

We are constituted sinners. That is our constitution, our make-up. We cannot change it. All the wisdom of the wise and all the strength of the strong has never made us any different, nor will it ever do so. There is only one way by which sinners can become righteous in all they do and are. That is the way of Christ's obedience, the way of His death and resurrection.

The disobedience of Adam was his failure to hearken to the instruction God gave him concerning the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The obedience of Christ was His submissive listening to God's instruction to do what He did not want to do (Matt.26:39; Heb.10:2). (In

accord with Romans 6:16 we are to listen submissively, that is, be obedient to this word of Christ's obedience. Whether we do this or not does not change what Christ did and its effects on us in the oncoming eons, but not to do it certainly deprives us of spiritual strength and growth in our present life and walk.)

## ROMANS 5:20

A. In **Adam**

1. *Where sin increases*

B. In **Christ**

1. *grace superexceeds.*

What Adam did can never exceed in its effects what Christ did. Grace triumphs over every sin. It always superexceeds with its saving and justifying goodness. This is seldom appreciated, or even wanted where there is trust in human wisdom and power.

## ROMANS 5:21

A. In **Adam**

1. *Sin reigns*
2. *in death.*

B. In **Christ**

1. *Grace [shall] be reigning*
2. *through righteousness*
3. *for life eonian*
4. *through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

We see it all around us and know it within ourselves, this effect of Adam's sin in which death as a dying process leads downward to death as a state in which there is no element of life. But we are believing the evangel of God's grace which manifests the righteousness of God in justifying the irreverent through the blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and assures us of life eonian through the same One, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## ROMANS SIX

It is because of Sin reigning in death, and because we turn our attention away from God's grace that our minds get cluttered with such foolish declarations as that of Romans 6:1. As members of Adam's race we are not particularly attracted to grace from God which leaves us without His commendation of us and without warrant for boasting in ourselves. The evangel exposes us for what we are. Grace testifies that we are infirm in the flesh. It is God's answer to the outrageous boast of Exodus 19:8 when Israel declared: "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do."

Romans 6:2-11 corresponds with 5:1-11. What we are in relation to Christ is dominant:

*We died to sin; we are baptized into Christ Jesus, baptized into His death, entombed together with Him through baptism into death.*

*Even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also [shall] be walking in newness of life.*

*Planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, we shall be of the resurrection also.*

*Our old humanity was crucified together with Him, that the body of Sin [shall] be nullified, for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin.*

*For one who dies has been justified from Sin.*

*We died together with Christ.*

*We shall be living together with Him also.*

Romans 6:12-15 brings this message of our identification with Christ in His death and life into our lives. We are under this message of grace. It is not a message which opens the way to sinning, but a message of God's power for salvation, revealing His righteousness and Christ's faith-obedience, so that it works in us who are believing (cf Rom.1:16,17).

These middle verses of Romans six give us a new outlook concerning ourselves and what God has in view for us. The old is still here. But the new becomes operative in our minds, and this, in turn, works on our walk.

#### ROMANS 6:16-23

In the remaining verses of Romans six Paul continues this theme of the evangel's power in our lives. But here he resumes the comparison between what we are because of Adam and what we are in spirit because of Christ. We will never fully appreciate God's grace through Christ until we perceive our dire need of grace in view of the mastery of Sin over our dying flesh.

Hence in verses 16-22 the apostle contrasts life as an obedient slave of the master called "Sin" with life as an obedient slave of the master first called "Obedience" and then called "the type of teaching to which we are given over," and then called "Righteousness," and finally identified as "God." It is because of Adam and his one act of sinning that Sin has such mastery in human lives so that we listen attentively to its directives. The result is death, coming upon us as a condition which leads ominously to the absence of any element of life. But now a new Master has risen over us who are believing, not law demanding our obedience to instructions for righteous behavior, but the evangel of the obedience (the submissive hearkening) of the One Man, Jesus Christ, the evangel which is the teaching God has given us through His chosen apostle, the evangel manifesting God's righteousness in justifying the irreverent, the evangel which is God's evangel, making Him known through His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. This evangel is ultimately fulfilled and enjoyed in fullness with all being constituted righteous (*cf* Rom.5:18), but already it is set over us and bearing fruit in our lives. This is the type of teaching to which we are given over.

Attentively listening to and clinging to this word of grace strengthens us in a walk of righteousness. Paul, who also is a human being and knows our need, directs us to listen attentively like a loyal and loving slave (*cf* Exodus 21:5,6) to this word of God concerning His Son. The former enslavement is due to Adam's disobedience and is characterized by its focus on soulish desires and independence from God. The latter is due to Christ's obedience, which now becomes a directing power in the believer's life for joy and peace.

We may summarize verses 16-18 as follows, as they contrast these two enslavements with Adam and Christ respectively:

**A. In Adam**

1. *we are slaves of Sin*
2. *into death.*

**B. In Christ**

1. *we are slaves of Obedience,*  
*enslaved to the teaching of the evangel,*  
*enslaved to Righteousness,*
2. *into righteousness.*

Here we notice again that "righteousness" in verse 16 is the result of Christ's obedience, and in verse 18 it is parallel with Christ's obedience, His death for sinners, in which God's righteousness is made manifest. As we listen with dedication to the evangel of Christ's obedience which will be fully realized when we are constituted righteous, God works in us to be willing and working for the sake of His delight (*cf* Phil.2:12,13).

It is in Adam that we are slaves of Sin. It is in Christ that we are freed from the condemnation of sin reckoned to us (Rom.4:6-8; 8:1) and are brought under the powerful mastery of God's word of righteousness made manifest and of love put on display.

## ROMANS 6:19

The pattern continues in verse 19 where Paul recognizes the effect of the forces of death and sin which oppress us, but, using the imperative voice, directs us to present our members, that is, *stand* them *beside*<sup>1</sup> the evangel of God's righteousness. This leads to holiness in our walk, a walk that is different from the lawlessness of the old humanity, and reflects the disposition of Christ as it is devoted to the glory of God (*cf* Phil.2:5-8):

A. In **Adam**

1. *Even as you present your members as slaves  
to Uncleaness and to Lawlessness*
2. *for Lawlessness,*

B. In **Christ**

1. *thus also present your members as slaves  
to Righteousness*
2. *for holiness.*

We can see, therefore, how critical Romans 5:12-14 is to Paul's presentation of the evangel of God concerning His Son. Our faith is not centered in Adam, but Adam is a type of Christ, so that what we know of him and his one act of sinning as it affects mankind, greatly aids us in becoming acquainted with Christ and His faith-obedience as it affects mankind, and especially now as it affects us who are believing.

These considerations on our relationship to Adam in flesh and to Christ in spirit will be continued in an article on Romans 6:20-22, followed by a meditation on Romans 6:23.

D.H.H.

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1. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.280.

## THEN AND NOW

WE UNDERSTAND what we are in Christ most clearly when we recognize what we are in Adam. In Romans 6:20-22 these two positions are contrasted in terms of slavery and freedom. For the believer there is an old slavery and a new one, and an old freedom and a new one, each with contrasting results:

### A. In **Adam**

1. *For when you were slaves of Sin  
you were free as to Righteousness.*
2. *What fruit, then, had you then?  
—of which you are now ashamed,*
3. *for, indeed, the consummation of those things  
is death.*

### B. In **Christ**

1. *Yet now, being freed from Sin,  
yet enslaved to God,*
2. *you have your fruit  
for holiness.*
3. *Now the consummation  
is life eonian.*

Fresh in Paul's mind as he writes this passage is what he had just written in verse 11 concerning our identification with Christ in His death and the certainty that we shall be of the resurrection also, walking in newness of life. Thus we are to be reckoning ourselves to be:

1. Dead indeed to Sin,
2. Yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

We *were* slaves of Sin and free as to the mastery of the evangel of God's righteousness. That was where we stood

before God as unbelievers. But now He has baptized us into the death of Christ, so that we are dead to Sin and living to God. That is where He has placed us. This new position is *in Christ Jesus, our Lord*. As He has died to Sin once for all, so have we, and as He is living to God, so shall we.

In our old position, like all descendants of Adam, we were slaves of Sin without any power provided to make it otherwise. Before we believed we were *free from* the power of the evangel of God's *righteousness* in our lives. We were bearing the fruit of shame, with death as the certain consummation.

Now we stand before God under grace which enslaves us with love to Him as He is revealed in the evangel. We no longer are free from the spiritual power accompanying faith in the revelation of God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ. It is this power which produces fruit of holiness, the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control (*cf* Gal.5:22,23; *cp* Eph.5:9; Phil.1:11). The certain consummation before us is life eonian.

Life eonian is certain, for it has been procured (*cf* Eph. 1:14). It is God's gracious gift (Rom.6:23), not because of our bearing the fruit of devotion to God as slaves of holiness, but because of the devoted obedience of Jesus Christ. That is what makes the consummation of life eonian certain. It lies before us and works within us as we are believing.

The consummation of the enslavement to Sin which Adam's offense brought into the world is death. So as *to die*, human beings are dying. Had Christ not been given up because of our offenses and been roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:25), there could be no outlook for any of us, including Israel, but death. But because of God's love to us in that Christ died for the sake of sinners there is a new consummation in which all shall be vivified (1 Cor. 15:22). For the believer this has a spiritual application and



a spiritual invigoration today and will be fully enjoyed in the oncoming eons.

#### ENSLAVEMENT

It is a peculiar viewpoint of the modern, western world that every form of slavery is evil and most forms of freedom are good. This has tended to blur Paul's thought here in Romans 6.

To be a slave of Sin is indeed a great evil. But to be a slave of God as He is revealed in the evangel is a most blessed and happy position. So also to be free from the powerful influence of this evangel manifesting the righteousness of God in the justification of the irreverent is a position of genuine deprivation and evil, while freedom from the position of slavery to Sin by our identification with Christ transcends every vaunted freedom imagined by man.

There is certainly a sense of oppression in enslavement to Sin, comparable to the situation in Egypt when God's chosen people were put under hard service:

*So the Egyptians made the sons of Israel serve [slave] with rigor, and they embittered their lives with hard service [slavery] in clay and in bricks, and with all service [slavery] in the field, all their service [slavery] which they served [slaved] among them with rigor. (Exodus 1:13,14)*

In Hebrew the word for *slave* is the same word for *servant*. Yet we do not see it as a matter of wretchedness when we read that "Yahweh Elohim took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to *serve* it and to keep it" (Gen.2:15. *cp* Gen.2:5). Here slavery is a blessing, devoid of any sense of rigor and hardness. It is a place of usefulness which exactly fits human needs and abilities. It all depends on the context, on what the service involves and its purpose, and most importantly on the master. Adam's slavery in Eden was most delightful and highly acceptable, although, not knowing good and evil, he did not realize it

until later when the ground was cursed and bore thorns and weeds, and he ate his bread in grief and by the sweat of his brow (Gen.3:17-19).

It is in accord with Israel's slavery in Egypt that humanity is a slave of Sin. Paul will soon write, "I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not. For it is not the good that I will that I am doing, but the evil that I am not willing, this I am putting into practice. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, it is no longer I who am effecting it, *but Sin which is making its home in me . . . .* A wretched human am I" (Rom.7:19,20,24).

Our enslavement to God as He is revealed in the evangel of grace, is an enslavement of love. This is pictured in the case of the Hebrew slave who rejected his release from servitude (Exodus 21:2-6):

*When you buy a Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve you, and in the seventh he shall go forth free gratuitously . . . . Yet if the servant should say, yea say, I love my lord, my wife and my sons; I shall not to forth free, then his lord will bring him close to the elohim, and bring him close to the door or to the jamb, and his lord will bore his ear with an awl; and he will serve him for the eon.*

#### WERE AND ARE

When Paul writes "you *were* slaves of Sin" (Rom.6:17,20) he is not denying that Sin is making its home in our flesh (Rom.7:17,20). The tenses of past and present refer to our position before God, *in Christ Jesus, our Lord*. It is a position enjoyed in faith. God says we died to sin. This is the word of God in His evangel concerning His Son. As descendants of Adam we still sin in our flesh. But in believing the evangel that we, as slaves of Sin, have died, and that we are justified in God's sight, the evangel of God's righteousness and Christ's obedience becomes a new master in

our lives. This new master is not the law, which instructs us to live righteously. The new master is the glad message that we *are* righteous in *Christ Jesus, our Lord*.

Yes, we still sin. Indeed it is only as we know the tyranny of Sin in our flesh that the teaching of our death to Sin and to our enslavement to Sin becomes an evangel of great joy and power to us. Yet also it is only as we cling to this evangel as a slave who loves his lord and remains loyal to him that our new enslavement to God can become operative in our lives even now, against the tyranny of the old enslavement.

We listen to the welcome words that we *were* slaves of Sin, bearing fruit of shame, leading only to death, and that we *are* now freed from this enslavement. We stand beside this emancipating word and stand our members beside it. We are like slaves who are joyous, separated from embitterment, joined with loving appreciation for our new place and position in Christ. This is what God has given us in His grace. This is what Paul means by enslavement to God.

#### FREED GRATUITOUSLY

We are slaves who love our Lord. God has **set us forth free gratuitously** through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). Unlike the situation with the Hebrew slave this freedom remains even while we enjoy our new position as slaves to God. Being identified with the death of Christ, we are coming to realize the value of our new standing before God Who pours out His love in our hearts. As with the slave of Exodus 21:6 God has bored into our ear, but not with an awl, but with His instrument of love. This has to do with submissive listening to what God says to us in His evangel. We are attuned to the welcome saying that He is bringing to us in His word, a message that all is well, a word of joy and peace, in which God's power vibrates (*cp* Gen.1:2).

## ENSLAVED TO GOD

Hence we see that in Romans 6:22 Paul climaxes a series of phrases concerning our present position:

- (1) We are *under grace* (6:14).
- (2) We are *submissive hearers of Christ's submissive hearing of His Father's will* (6:16).
- (3) We are loyal slaves who *attentively listen from the heart to the type of teaching to which we are given over* (6:17).
- (4) We are graced with *enslavement to the evangel of God's Righteousness* in the justification of sinners (6:18).
- (5) We are *enslaved to God!*

The words, "enslaved to God," correspond to the words, "living to God," in Romans 6:10 and 11. First of all, Christ is living to God. This is a matter of enslavement, of full devotion and faithful listening to what God says to Him as seen most dramatically and unforgetably in His obedience (UNDER-HEARING) to the death of the cross.

So it is the gracious gift of God to us, not simply that we are justified and conciliated, but also that we are enslaved to Him. To be enslaved to the teaching of grace and to Righteousness as it characterizes the evangel is to be enslaved to God. Again and again it must be emphasized. Our enslavement to God is not an enslavement to Him as He spoke to Israel at Sinai. We are not slaves to the demands of His law, but to the declarations of His grace. It is in this message that God's power resides for present living, "training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon" (Titus 2:12).

While riding along a highway I noticed a car with a personalized license plate saying: OBEY GOD. I strongly suspect the owner of that vehicle did not mean to say what Paul is saying in Romans 6:16-22 about obedience and enslave-

ment. In most peoples' minds obedience to God has to do with trying to carry out the "ten commandments." Few are able to connect the word "obey" with the evangel of grace, or the word "enslave" to God as the One Who has justified us gratuitously in His grace.

The human objection is: If God has done it all, what is there for us to do?

What we are to do is what Paul has been telling us in Romans 6. He would have us hearken to and hold fast to what God says to us so that God may be working in us. This is our enslavement. It is an enslavement to an evangel.

But again, to us as we are in the flesh, that seems to be a dangerous way of living which should not be boldly proclaimed.

Nevertheless, here in Romans 6 Paul is definitely thinking of slave-obedience as a matter of focusing on the evangel of God's grace.

We are enslaved to God, Who pours out His love in our hearts through the holy spirit (Rom.5:5). We are enslaved to God, Who brings us into the expectation of His glory in His work of salvation and peace. We stand in grace (Rom.5:2). God is not reckoning sin against us (Rom.4:8). It is for us to be believing this revelation of truth so that its power for joy and peace, patience and meekness and self-control might be exercised in our lives even now.

#### ASHAMED

The fruit of enslavement to Uncleanliness and to Lawlessness, i.e., to Sin, is shame. Human beings know what shame is, and, like Adam and Eve, they try to cover up their shame and hide from God (*cf* Gen.3:7-10), or, on the other hand, bring it into the open as though it were not shame at all, but rather a cause for boasting, as Cain's grandson, Lamech, did (*cf* Gen.4:23,24). In either case it is shameful.

We are ashamed of the fruit of our enslavement to

Sin (Rom.6:21). But, like Paul, we are not ashamed of the evangel (Rom.1:16). When we first hear it, we may think it goes too far in its grace, not allowing anything of ourselves in which we may boast. Does it really say that where sin increases, grace superexceeds? Would this not be understood by most people to mean that "we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing?" Is it not an encouragement to sin to say we are not under law, but under grace? Shall we be sinning, seeing that we are not under law, but under grace?

May it not be coming to that!

What is not shameful is that God righteously justifies sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ—sinners who cannot be justified in His sight by works of law. What is not shameful is that we are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. What is not shameful is that we are justified by the only means by which we can be justified. What is not shameful is the righteousness of God and the obedience of Christ. This, which is not shameful, does not bear fruit of shame.

#### FRUIT FOR HOLINESS

As slaves of God, clinging to Him as the One Who spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all, we have our fruit, not for shame, but for holiness. Yet, as with the words *obedience* and *slave*, there is much confusion with the word *holiness*, its verb form, *hallow*, and adjective form, *holy*, and especially concerning its related noun, *saint* (meaning, *hallowed* one).

"Holiness in man is a relation to God and not a moral or spiritual quality. A holy person is one who is set apart to God for His use . . . . In Scripture the verb to hallow means to devote a person or thing to God, and holiness is the result of that act, without the thought of change of moral quality being necessarily present. Thus Scrip-

ture often predicates holiness of that which can have no moral quality and even of those who are unbelieving and immoral. To sanctify, then, is not to cleanse from sin, but to dedicate something or someone to God.”<sup>1</sup>

The verb here in Romans 6:22 is not *hallow*, but *enslave*. But the sense is similar. As believers, devoted like slaves to the God of grace and righteousness and peace, the fruit or result of that devotion is also set apart for God. It pleases Him. Our position before God is under grace, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. It is in believing this, in attending to it in mind, by ear and heart and mouth, that we grow in realization and appreciation of God, and we bear fruit which honors God—fruit for holiness.

#### CONSUMMATION OF DEATH

When we were unbelievers we did a lot of pretending. In the back of our minds (sometimes in the front) we knew we were in deep trouble and that we would die and that would be the end of it all. We may have found some comfort in philosophical and religious ideas that are not found in God's Word. Perhaps we tried to convince ourselves that we would continue to live in the “good” things we had done, and in people's memories, the ways by which we may have affected the world. Nevertheless, it is death as the very opposite of life that lies before humanity apart from God's love in sparing not His own Son, but giving Him up for us all.

#### LIFE EONIAN

We shall enjoy life eonian. It is God's gracious gift (as the next verse will remind us). It cannot be taken from us. But Paul is speaking of our lives as believers right now. We live day by day in awareness of what is ahead. We cannot

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1. George L. Rogers: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.23, p.431.

prove this is so. What we perceive around us and in our flesh tells loudly against it being so. But our enslavement to God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ and as it bears fruit of devotion to God, makes the consummation of life eonian real to us. The outlook of those who are devoted in mind and heart to God as the God of grace is life eonian.

We know it is so that we shall enjoy life eonian because this glorious future does not rest on any endurance in good works of law which we have done (*cp* Rom.2:7; 3:20). It rests on God's grace which justifies us through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. It rests on what God is, righteous and faithful and loving, as He is manifested in the evangel we are believing.

The consummation of the life of the believer is not life as we have it in Adam, life corrupted by death operating in us, life of infirmity and failure and shame. It is life as Christ is living now. As Romans 6:9,10 makes clear the consummation set before us is:

1. That we shall be roused from among the dead, vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22).

2. Like Christ we shall no longer be dying, Had Adam and Eve, after their disobedience, been allowed to eat of the tree of life and live for the eon they would have eonian life while still dying, eventually like those kept alive by artificial means while "brain dead." Our old humanity has been crucified with Christ. It is gone. We shall be living and walking in newness of life. Dying and death will be behind us once and for all time.

3. Eonian life for us will be a life of living to God in every way, a life of loving enslavement to Him. This is a life of true and vital significance and usefulness.

We now have the assurance of God's word that this is what shall be, and indeed as to our position in Christ this is how we now stand before God.

D.H.H.



## THE RATIONS OF SIN

OBJECTION has been raised to the rendering "the *ration* of Sin is death." It is claimed that the usual rendering *wages* is more correct. What are the facts? The first thing to be considered is, Which Greek word is best rendered wages? The word *misthos* is the only other word rendered wages in the Authorized Version. It is translated *reward* twenty-four times, *hire* thrice, and *wages* twice. A careful study will show that *reward* is hardly correct, for it is usually a remuneration for service. *Hire*, on the other hand, is too harsh. But *wages* always suits.

The next inquiry is, What is the difference between this word and *opsōnion*, the other word rendered *wages*? Two of its occurrences seem to show that this word is not correct.

No one can read Paul's epistle's and fail to see that he did *not* work for wages. None of the ecclesias paid him a proper sum for his services to them. How, then, could he say, "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service" (2 Cor. 11:8)? How much nearer the facts to render it, "getting *rations* for dispensing to you!" But the phrase "wages of Sin" (Rom. 6:23) is still more objectionable. The context uses the figure "*slaves* of Sin." Now slaves are not paid wages, in the literal accepted sense of the term. And Sin, we may be sure, is not an exceptionally generous slave owner. It does *not* pay wages. The sinner does not look for a future pay day. All he gets is present *rations*.

Again, let anyone read Paul's defense in 1 Corinthians 9:1-7. Is he pleading for a salary? There we have three comparisons. One who tends a flock gets *milk* from it. One who plants a vineyard gets *fruit*. Quite a good ration, milk

and fruit. And the third figure should be in line. A soldier gets something to eat and drink also. In no case is a money payment in view. The apostle pleads only for rations, to enable him to work. The wages all wait until the future. He will receive them from the Lord, not from the saints.

With this agrees a near relative of the word, *opsarion*, food fish. The word ration cannot be deduced from this, or it also would be confined to fish. The meaning must be gathered from its usage, in its own contexts. These, if diligently investigated, will show that it does not refer to money, but food, not to wages, but *rations*.

Sin, like slave holders, does not pay *wages*, but only supplies *rations*.

A. E. Knoch

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## A PROVISION FOR SLAVES

RATION refers to the poor provision made for the sustenance of slaves. It is a scant reward for hard service. Death fittingly rewards the service of sin; the evil pair are always found together . . . .

The statement that death is Sin's ration destroys the error that death is a "debt of nature" and is without moral character. Death is as unnatural as sin is, and both are passing episodes in the purpose of the eons. The false philosophy that accepts death as natural denies the spiritual relation of men to the Creator and degrades them to an unmoral level where they have no kinship with Him. For man who is created in the image of God everything of good or ill that befalls him must have a moral and judicial significance. The cross is the consummate expression of the fact that the ration of sin is death and that death and sin are most unnatural.

George. L. Rogers

## THE GRACIOUS GIFT OF GOD

How do we know that what is ahead for us is life eonian? We know it because it is *God's gracious gift*. And it is God's gracious gift *in Christ Jesus, our Lord* (Rom.6:23).

The certainty of life eonian is not based on anything we have done or do. It is not built on any efforts we make to carry out works required by the law. It is not even the result of enslavement to God in listening attentively to His evangel and bearing fruit for holiness.

Romans 6:23 is different from Romans 6:20-22 in that it leaves *our walk* and *our acts* out of the picture. This verse is not concerned with what we do but with what God does for us, in Christ, in contrast to and deliverance from Sin's mastery over us and its effect.

In Romans 6:23 God is the One Who acts in the giving of His gracious gift. Where we come into the picture is that we are graciously given life eonian, and we are graciously given this gift *in Christ Jesus, our Lord*. God is the Giver, and we are the obtainers. And Christ is the One in Whom God gives and in Whom we obtain. That is the only way to life eonian, but it is the way of certainty.

This is very radical. Eonian life is not something we earn. Nor is it anything we contribute to by doing something called "our part." It is God's gracious gift in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Yet, in that it is in Christ Jesus, it is indeed, something earned. But it is not earned by us, by works of law, not even by our faith. It is earned by the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ, by His death for our sakes, in which we are

put to death to Sin (and to law). The prepositional phrase, "in Christ Jesus, our Lord," is critical. It has a double application. It is not to be connected only to the words "life eonian," identifying our position in the enjoyment of life eonian, but also, most importantly, to the words "the gracious gift of God," telling us where God's grace is located, identifying Christ Jesus, the Anointed Saviour, as the One in Whom He graces us with eonian life. God graces us in Christ Jesus, our Lord, with life eonian in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

That is what makes life eonian certain.

*For the ration of Sin is death, yet the gracious gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

As this message of our salvation is worded here, there are three parallel points of contrast and one vital point ending the verse which lacks an expressed parallel in the first half of the verse. Yet the context clearly supplies the missing phrase as shown by the following arrangement:

A. *For*

1. *the ration*
2. *of Sin*
3. *is death*
- [4. in Adam].

B. *Yet*

1. *the gracious gift*
2. *of God*
3. *is life eonian,*
4. *in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

The *ration* is contrasted to the *gracious gift* (the *charisma*).

The *ration* is *of Sin*, and this is set in contrast to the *gracious gift* which is *of God*.

The *ration* of Sin is *death*, which is put in contrast to God's *gracious gift* of *life eonian*.

God's *gracious gift* of life eonian is *in Christ Jesus, our*

*Lord.* The contrast between this and Sin's ration of death being *in Adam* is not stated here. But this is clearly taught in Romans 5:12 and verified in 1 Corinthians 15:22. Humanity is afflicted by Sin's ration of death because of Adam's one act of sinning. *In Adam all are dying.* Nevertheless, *in Christ all shall be vivified.*

The omission here of the fact that human beings are under Sin's mastery and have death operating in them because of what they are "in Adam" serves to put the emphasis on the words "in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Adam is a type of Christ, but in the end all that relates to Adam is done away with, and Christ stands alone as the One in Whom God's purpose for humanity is achieved.

#### TWO POSITIONS

The opening line of verse 23 (section A) refers to the believers as they are (along with everyone else) as descendants of Adam, enslaved to Sin. Because God has baptized us in spirit into the death of Christ (Rom.6:3), we can speak of our enslavement to Sin as what we were "then" (Rom. 6:20,21). Yet in the flesh we still are experiencing the mastery of Sin which entered into the world through Adam.

The second sentence (section B) refers to the believers as they are "now" in spirit (Rom.6:22). This is where we are different from the unbeliever. We are not free from the influence of the evangel which proclaims the gracious gift of God. We are enslaved to God as He has revealed Himself in His love, in that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.

Romans 6:23 is an exultant wording of the evangel of God concerning His Son. Yet, although it is often heard in what is called "evangelistic preaching," it is generally presented in such a way that it fails to convey its joyful message of grace. Many take it as a warning against sin and a call to submit to religious service so that one can escape

from "eternal death." But instead, it is a declaration (not a warning) concerning the power of Sin (not the effect of our sins) and what *God* has done about it (not what we must do about it).

The text is not speaking of our sins. It does not say that our sins produce death. The evil here is not our sins (as evil as they most certainly are), but Sin as a stern and oppressive slave owner. Because Paul's teaching in Romans 5:12-21, as it is based on Genesis 2:17 and 3:17-19, has been so confused by human tradition, it seems wise to me to keep going over the same ground: It was through one man that sin came into the world, and through this one act of sinning, death came into the world and passed into all mankind, and because of this all sin (Rom.5:12). It is in this situation where humanity is infected with the fatal disease of dying, that Sin reigns over us, so that we are enslaved to it (Rom.6:16,20). In doing so, it bears the fruit of shame as it did for Adam and Eve. And the consummation of this dying process, filled with corruption and shame, is death in its literal sense of the entire absence of life (Rom.6:21), the return to what we were before we were born, to what the Scriptures call "the Unseen."

Romans 6:23 is not telling us about the prospect of two eternally separated divisions of humanity, one of sinners who go to hell and the other of the saved who live forever in heaven. In that it is addressed to believers it is concerned with us in two contrasting ways, one as we are in the flesh (in Adam) along with all mankind, and the other as we are in spirit, being identified with the death of Christ. The verse is not contrasting the elect with the non-elect, the believer with the unbeliever, but God's chosen ones, who are believing the evangel, as we are in Adam with what we are in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Yet in speaking of us, in no way does it imply that some of mankind, who are indeed dying in Adam, will never be

vivified in Christ and be enjoying the justifying of life (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22; Rom.5:18). God's grace is unalterably opposed to eternal misery and barren loss. And His message of grace, when it is fully appreciated, will not allow any sense of hopelessness regarding others or indifference toward them to remain in the hearts of those who are chosen.

Nevertheless, in Romans 6:23 in its immediate application, both section A and section B speak of us as we are in the flesh, under Sin's mastery, and as we are under the mastery of the God of impacting grace in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

#### FOR

As noted in our studies on Romans 1:16-18 the conjunction "for" introduces "the logical reason" for what has just been said.<sup>1</sup> The reason why the consummation of shameful enslavement to Sin is death and that of devoted enslavement to God is life eonian is now set out before us.

#### THE RATIONS OF SIN IS DEATH

The CV translates the plural word "rations" as a singular in accord with English grammar to correspond to the singular word "death." But it marks it as a plural by inserting three small parallel lines before the word. Indeed, the rations are truly one thing, but one thing supplied continually over and over again. In this there is a plurality which should be kept in mind. Death keeps coming on us like an attacking army.

#### SIN'S MASTERY

In the context of Romans 6:15-23, the metaphor Paul uses is slavery. A slave's rations are not really wages (as the common English translation puts it), but simply what

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1. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.114.

is provided by the slave owner. In that the Greek word for *ration* means PROVISION-PURCHASE,<sup>2</sup> it would seem that they were provisions of food purchased by the slave with a pittance given by the master for this purpose. But any money involved was not payment for work, but simply means for maintaining the life and strength of the slave. The contrast here between rations and the gracious gift is between two kinds of provisions, neither of which is determined by the slave. But the rations differ greatly from the gracious gift in what they say about the slave owner and what they do for the slave.

Sin has no feeling for its slaves. Indeed it has no feeling at all. It is like a monstrous machine. It just does what it does and provides what it provides, and what it does and what it provides are both of them evil.

When sin came into the world it came by means of food which was eaten by Adam and his wife, and in eating this food they suffered the consequence: To die they were dying. In accord with this Paul speaks now of Sin, personified as a slave owner which provides its slaves with death as a process (we are dying), which leads to the eventual state of being dead. Rations are food, or means for getting food. The food provided by Sin is the decreasing vitality and strength of mortality, bringing us to death.

This is what we have in Adam.

#### THE GRACIOUS GIFT

The Greek word used here is not simply *grace* (JOY, *charis*), but JOY-effect (*charisma*). It is grace with an impact. In Romans 1:11 Paul speaks of the spiritual *charisma* that he wanted to share with the Romans. It was a powerful message of grace designed to impact their lives (most likely the word of the conciliation added to the rev-

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2. cf KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.239.



elation of God's righteousness in His work of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ as this is expounded in Romans 5:1-11). But it is the word's usage in Romans 5:15 and 16 along with the foundational word, *charis*, that is most helpful to us in the context of Romans 6:23. Let us look at that earlier passage with the rendering "gracious gift" being used for *charisma* and "grace" for *charis*:

*But not as the offense, thus also the **gracious** gift. For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather the **grace** of God and the gratuity in **grace**, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds.*

*And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the **gracious** gift is out of many offenses into a just award.*

The *charisma*, as well as the *charis*, is Christ's faithful and obedient act of dying for sinners. Both terms are one-word expressions of the evangel we have received and are retaining, which declares that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:1-3). Yet as summed up in the word *charisma* this message of grace is seen as a gift which has powerful effects.

#### OF GOD

The *charisma* is the marvelous provision of God for those He has enslaved to Himself. Here God is contrasted with Sin in the role of Slave Owner, and the superiority of His mastery over that of Sin is as great as the superiority of His gracious gift over Sin's rations, and as glorious and welcome and jubilant as eonian life is over death.

God is the Owner Who cares with deepest love for us, and this is expressed by His power-packed gracious gift. He commends this love of His to us in that while we are still sinners, His Anointed One, Who is His Son, died for our sakes, and this was in obedience to God's will. For God

spared not His Son, but gave Him up for us all. In this God not only acted through His Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord, but in Him, so that all that our Lord did manifested the mind and heart of God.

We know how powerful Sin is as a slave owner. How much more powerful and successful in His purpose for us is God! "What shall be separating us from the love of God *in Christ Jesus*? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? . . . Nay! in all these we are more than conquering through Him Who loves us" (Rom.8:35-37).

#### LIFE EONIAN

The gracious gift of God is life eonian, which, in this context as it relates to the believers, is life during the oncoming eons (*cp* Eph.2:4-10). It is not "eternal life," but life in the eons ahead in which all enemies are brought into subjection to Christ. In these periods of duration there will be much going on, for Christ will be reigning, and God will be bringing all into subjection to His Anointed One. But the eons ahead and the eonian life enjoyed in them are not eternal; rather they lead forward to the time when God becomes All in all.

The word "eternal" may sound pleasant and assuring to our ears, but if it has any real meaning as an adjective describing the life God gives us in Christ it seems to shut out any sense of activity, purpose and achievement in that life. Even to describe life when God becomes All in all as "eternal life" seems to suggest something static. And then to couple this with a concept of "eternal death" can only darken our appreciation of God's gracious gift. Life will not end with God becoming All in all, for death will have been abolished so that all will be, as Christ is now, no longer dying, but living to God. That is life with purpose and life which involves each one in that purpose.

In God's grace we lead the way in the enjoyment of the life gained for sinners by the death and resurrection of Christ. God's *charisma*, given to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord, is life eonian. This is not life as we know it now, or even as Adam and Eve knew it before they sinned, but life justified (Rom.5:18), in which Grace reigns through righteousness (Rom.5:21), and in which we will be living together with Christ, no longer dying, but living to God (Rom.6:8-11) with full appreciation of all His goodness, His righteousness and love, secured by His power and settled in His peace. It is life in which each one is given a special place of service in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

#### CHRIST JESUS, OUR LORD

How can we measure the grace, the *joy* of God's *charisma* achieved in Christ Jesus, our Lord, and granted to us as life eonian in Christ Jesus, our Lord? Truly this is grace with an impact. We, who are so much like Adam, have had enough of him. We would come to know more of Christ Jesus, our Lord, in Whom we have life eonian.

He is the Christ, the Anointed One in Whom all shall be headed up, not by the force of battle, not by the elimination of some (who somehow are not to be considered part of "the all") in everlasting death, but the same way our lot is cast in Him: by God's grace through His Beloved's blood (*cf* Eph.1:3-12).

He is Jesus, the Saviour, in Whose Name every knee shall bow and every tongue acclaim His Lordship (*cf* Phil. 2:9-11).

Already God has graciously given to us the assurance of life eonian in Christ Jesus as our Lord, this grace of expectation which impacts our lives with spiritual strength. To Him be the glory for His *charisma* and all its powerful and joy-filled effects!

D.H.H.

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