Unsearchable Riches

A Bimonthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME LXVI

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NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

Our Father and our God, help us to know
That what is new is really not the year
Nor passage of the seasons here below,
Nor changes in our human thoughts and ways,
But rather is in what does not appear.

The new is not discerned in years or days,
But in Christ's deeds of love and gifts of grace,
In what Thy Son has done to bring Thee praise
And bring to us deliverance and peace
When we the cross and empty tomb embrace.

For Thou hast granted to our lives new lease;
The blessings of the new creation flow,
And still they come and never will they cease
To freshen all our lives with newness true:
How blest we are that Thou should bless us so.

O God our Father and His Father too,
In Christ we come and bring our prayers to Thee;
Unlock our hearts that we might know the new
That Thou hast made. We pray on bended knee
That all of us in this new year perceive
The new Thou hast for those who now believe.

D.H.H.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY, 1975
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-SIX

EDITORIAL

In our series on Ephesians, we have dealt with various aspects of the term *spirit*. We have thoroughly discussed our spiritual blessings among the celestials, as well as the earnest of the spirit, the sealing of the spirit, and praying for a spirit. In the course of this year, D.V., we will reprint additional articles by our late senior teacher, Brother A. E. Knoch, on such topics as *What is Spirit? The human Spirit, Spirit Beings and their Manifestations, The Spirit of God, The holy Spirit, Baptized in one Spirit to imbibe one Spirit.*

God is invisible, and God *is* Spirit. Hence human words will never be able to fully bridge the chasm between His wisdom and our foolishness and stupidity. Only God Himself can do this when He shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. For the enlightened eyes of our heart we have Him Who is the Image of the invisible God, and for our anointed ear we have every divine declaration which comes out of His mouth.

The soulish man is not receiving the things which are of the Spirit of God. However that which the soulish eye does not perceive and which the soulish ear

does not hear, and to which the heart of the soulish man does not ascend—these are the things which God makes ready for those who love Him. To us God reveals them through His Spirit, not by means of pious words taught by human wisdom, but rather with words taught by the Spirit as we have them in the Sacred Scriptures.

The Lord has given us the apostle Paul as a model for walk and service whom we should be imitating. This means, we should attempt the same thing in the same manner, just as the Thessalonians did: namely receiving the Word with joy of holy Spirit and becoming models to other believers, slaving for the living and true God, and waiting for His Son out of the heavens.

Earlier in our lives, we had no alternative but to displease God while we were worrying about our soulish desires and were disposed to that which is of the flesh. Yet when God started the rejuvenation in the spirit of our mind, we found ourselves in possession of an additional disposition, that of the spirit, which enabled us to walk in newness of life. We were no longer obliged to obey Sin; we were freed from its lordship, though not from its presence. We were rescued out of the jurisdiction of Darkness and transported into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. God's Spirit was displacing the old spirit of stubbornness in us, and ever since then, His love has been persuading us to will and to work and to pray for His delight. Whenever we failed in this, it was because we had confidence in the flesh and had not imitated Paul in deeming all to be a forfeit because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, our Lord. Now to our God and Father be glory for the eons of the eons!

H.H.R.

WHAT IS SPIRIT?

As the present secret administration of God's grace has, as its chief characteristic, the possession of *spiritual* blessings (Eph.1:3) among the celestials, and, as the title to these high honors is the homing of God's holy *Spirit* (Eph.1:13,14), we should be well versed in matters concerning the spirit.

In order to clear our minds of misconceptions, we shall first consider the foundation facts concerning the word spirit in the original languages. Having settled these, we shall study its various usages, and show that it is always a faded metaphor. Then we shall seek to define it, a task so difficult that we shall fall back upon a study of its operations and effects to fix its force.

To prevent possible misunderstandings, we wish it clearly understood that *we do not believe that God's holy Spirit is a mere influence or power, without "personality."* Our preliminary investigations are not intended to prove that. Later on we shall give our reasons for believing that the holy Spirit is God's Spirit, and not a *distinct* "personality" from God. This is a totally different matter. All of the arguments usually produced for the "personality" of the holy Spirit may be used to support this position, but not one of them proves that God is one Spirit and His holy Spirit is another.

THE GENDER OF THE WORD SPIRIT

In both Hebrew and Greek, *things* are often called *he* or *she*. Only occasionally, in English, do we give gender to things without sex. But, in the languages of inspiration, this is the rule, rather than the exception. As a result, the use of the neuter gender is arresting, especially when it is used where we would naturally expect the masculine or feminine. This is the case in the Greek at least, with the word "spirit." In the New Testament "spirit" is always *it*, never *he* or *she*. Grammatically, it is always a *thing*, even if used of a person. The terms for God and Christ are always masculine. The word "spirit" may easily be varied to the masculine form if that were desirable or correct. The Scriptures deliberately reject the affixes which would be used if it were a distinct personality. We are reproached for calling a spirit "it," yet we are only imitating the sacred records.

An apparent exception is sometimes produced to prove the opposite. The holy Spirit is called a consoler or entreater, a *paraklêtos*, in the Greek. This word is masculine. The pronouns referring to it are, of course, masculine also. This is supposed to prove that the holy Spirit is masculine. But the immediate context, in explanation, speaks of the holy Spirit, and refers to it as *it*. This is a purely grammatical concord. Perhaps it can be understood by English readers if I give another example. The spirit is an *earnest* (Eph.1:14) or *arrabœn*. This is a masculine noun. We can see here how little the gender has to do with sex or personality. An earnest is *not* of the male sex. It has no individuality. *Paraklêtos* no more proves these things than *arrabœn*. It is a delusion to reason about Greek grammar as though it were English. No one would think of using the fact that "earnest" is masculine to prove the "per-

sonality" of the holy Spirit. Its "personality" depends on the fact that it is God's Spirit, not on arguments that lose all their force when examined in the light of the languages of inspiration.

At times even the ancient manuscripts show some uncertainty as to the gender. In Ephesians 1:14 Alexandrinus changes the indefinite *ho* (which) to the masculine *hos* (who), and reads, "the holy spirit of promise, *who* is an earnest." As it is evident that the bias of the ancient fathers was in favor of the masculine, as it is among theologians today, the reading of the two older manuscripts, which agrees with the usual usage, must be correct. There is not a single passage where the textual evidence supports the masculine.

We have carefully examined the evidence on this matter, in the originals. We have attentively considered the many arguments which have been produced against our position. We know full well that we are going counter to the trend of evangelical scholarship as well as the most unreasonable prejudice on the part of zealous servants of our Lord. We have already been much misunderstood, and are accused of views which we do not hold. Nevertheless, our commission from the Lord is to *make known the facts as they are in His holy Word.* Knowing the facts, we count on the commendation of our Lord, and insist that spirit is never aught but neuter in the sacred scrolls. Much light has come to us through acknowledging this. We have sought to pass it on amidst much contention. We shall continue to stand on the irrefutable facts of Holy Writ.

THE LITERAL MEANING

Both the Hebrew and Greek words for spirit are

figures of speech. Literally they denote air in motion, a *wind* or *blast.* Sometimes there is a slight question whether it is literal or figurative. Some have proposed to translate John 3:8 somewhat as follows: "The *spirit* is breathing where it wills, and you are hearing the sound of it, but you are not aware whence it is coming and whither it is going. Thus is everyone begotten by the spirit." But the word *breathing* should be *blowing,* and a spirit makes no *sound.* Both are true literally of a blast of air. It was spoken to one without spiritual perceptions in order to illustrate what he could not understand. Nicodemus knew about the motions of the air, but he was ignorant concerning the movements of the spirit. Hence we translate literally *blast,* rather than figuratively *spirit.* The great key words of God's revelation, in the Original, should be familiar to His saints. In Hebrew the word spirit is *ruach.* Probably it was anciently pronounced *ruch,* for the *a* has been supplied by the Masorites, who give the traditional vowel sounds of their own time, rather than the original pronunciation. In this form it is still found in the German verb *riechen* and the noun *Geruch* which means *smell,* and this is the significance of the Hebrew also, when used as a verb. Its force is readily seen in the description of idols, "which neither see, nor hear, nor eat nor *smell*" (Deut.4:28). Perhaps our word *scent* is still nearer, as, "he *scents* the battle afar off" (Job 39:25).

The act of smelling, or active scenting, consists in producing a miniature WIND from the object to the nostrils, in order that particles may be transferred to the sensitive membranes, and produce the appropriate sensation. It is so important that we should know the actual facts in building up our conception of the meaning of this word, that we will give all of the

passages in which *ruch*, though primarily denoting WIND, is used of the exercise of the soulish sensation of smell. It is associated with the nose. In the following transliterations, *ch* represents the German or Scotch sound, as in lo*ch*, and *i*, as in all languages except English, has the sound of long *e*, as in b*e*.

ruch, WIND, smell, ventilate

Ex. 30:38	whosoever shall make like unto that [perfume], to *smell* thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.
Gen. 8:21	and the Lord *smelled* a sweet savour [*rich*, smell]
27:27	he *smelled* the smell [*rich*] of his raiment
Lev. 26:31	I will not *smell* the savour [smell]
Deut. 4:28	neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor *smell*
1 Sa. 26:19	If the Lord have stirred thee up against me, *let him accept* [smell] an offering
Job 39:25	he *smelleth* the battle afar off
Psa. 115: 6	noses have they, but they *smell* not
Amos 5:21	I will not *smell* in your solemn assemblies

Precisely the same letters, but pointed by the Masorites to read *rahvach*, have the sense of "ventilate," or figuratively, "inspirit," as follows:

1 Sa. 16:23	so Saul was *refreshed* [*inspirited*]
Job 32:20	that I may be *refreshed* [*inspirited*]
Jer. 22:14	wide house and *large* [margin, *throughaired*, or *ventilated*]

A corresponding noun (as noted in some of the examples already given) is *rich* (pronounced long *e*, Scotch *ch* as in German *riechen*). As it occurs about fifty times, we will not copy all the occurrences. It is the Hebrew word translated by "savour" in the Authorized Version, though it is occasionally rendered "smell." Very often it is a sweet *savour* in Leviticus and Numbers. In the Song of Songs it is applied to the odor of ointments, and spikenard, and vines, and mandrakes.

A study of these passages will reveal the common underlying thought of *air in motion*. This is far clearer, however, in the usage of *ruch* as a noun, which, though usually translated "spirit," is also rendered, *air, blast, breath, cool, tempest* and *wind*. The last is its undoubted literal meaning in many passages. As this is its primary sense and is the natural phenomena to which God appeals to convey to us the idea of spirit, let us first of all assure ourselves that this is indeed true by reviewing the passages in which this occurs. The following are most of the texts in which *ruch* refers to actual *air in motion*, or WIND. The list is well worth reading. We give the familiar Authorized renderings. Practically all should be translated *wind*.

ruch, WIND, spirit

Gen.	3: 8	walking in the garden in the *cool* of the day
	8: 1	God made a *wind* to pass over
Ex.	10:13	the Lord brought an east *wind*
		the east *wind* brought the locusts
	19	a mighty strong west *wind*
	14:21	the sea to go back by a strong east *wind*
	15: 8	and with the *blast* of Thy nostrils
	10	Thou didst blow with Thy *wind*
Num.	11:31	and there went forth a *wind*
2 Sa.	22:11	he was seen on the wings of the *wind*
	16	at the blast of the *breath* of His nostrils
1 Ki.	18:45	heaven was black with clouds and *wind*
	19:11	and a great and strong *wind* rent the
		the Lord was not in the *wind*
		and after the *wind* an earthquake
2 Ki.	3: 7	ye shall not see *wind*
	19: 7	I will send a *blast* upon him
1 Chr.	9:24	In four *quarters* were the
	6:26	the speeches of one that is desperate (which are) as *wind*
	8: 2	and like a strong *wind*
	21:18	as stubble before the *wind*
	28:25	to make the weight for the *winds*
	30:15	they pursue my soul as the *wind*
	22	Thou liftest one up to the *wind*
	37:21	but the *wind* passeth
	41:16	that no *air* can come between them

Psa.	1: 4	like the chaff which the *wind* driveth away
	11: 6	and an horrible *tempest*
	18:10	he did fly on the wings of the *wind*
	15	the *breath* of Thy nostrils
	42	small as the dust before the *wind*
	35: 5	as chaff before the *wind*
	48: 7	the ships of Tarshish with an east *wind*
	55: 8	hasten my escape from the *windy* storm
	78:39	a *wind* that passeth away
	88:13	as the stubble before the *wind*
	103: 6	the *wind* passeth over it
	104: 3	walketh upon the wings of the *wind*
	107:35	raiseth the stormy *wind*
	135: 7	He bringeth the *wind* of His treasuries
	147:18	He causeth His *wind* to blow
	148: 8	stormy *wind* fulfilling His word
Prov.	11:29	He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the *wind*
	25:14	clouds and *wind* without rain
	23	the north *wind* driveth away rain
	27:16	Whosoever hideth her hideth the *wind*
	30: 4	Who hath gathered the *wind* in His fists
Ecc.	1: 6	the *wind* goeth toward the south
		the *wind* returneth again
	5:16	he that hath labored for the *wind*
	11: 4	he that observeth the *wind*
Isa.	7: 2	trees of the wood are moved by the *wind*
	17:13	as the chaff . . . before the *wind*
	26:18	we have brought forth *wind*
	27: 8	stayeth His rough *wind*
	32: 2	an hiding place from the *wind*
	41:16	and the *wind* shall carry them away
	29	their molten images are *wind*
	57:13	the *wind* shall carry them all away
Jer.	2:24	a wild ass . . . that snuffeth up the *wind*
	4:11	a dry *wind* of the high places
	12	a full *wind* from those places
	5:13	the prophets shall become *wind*
	10:13	bringeth forth the *wind* out of His treasuries
	13:24	by the *wind* of the wilderness
	14: 6	they snuffed up the *wind*
	18:17	I will scatter them as an east *wind*
	22:22	the *wind* shall eat up all thy pastors
	49:32	I will scatter into all *winds* them
	36	upon Elam will I bring the four *winds*
		will scatter them toward all those *winds*
	51: 1	I will raise up . . . a destroying *wind*
	16	bring for the *wind* out of His
	52:23	ninety and six pomegranates *on a side*
Lam.	4:20	the *breath* of our nostrils
Eze.	1: 4	a whirl*wind* came out of the north

5: 2 thou shalt scatter in the *wind*
10 will I scatter into all the *winds*
12:14 I will scatter toward every *wind*
13:11 and a stormy *wind* shall rend it
13 I will even rend it with a stormy *wind*
17:10 when the east *wind* toucheth it
21 scattered toward all *winds*
19:12 the east *wind* drieth up her fruit
27:26 the east *wind* hath broken the
42:16, 17, 18, 19, 20 *side*
Dan. 8: 8; 11:4 toward the four *winds* of heaven
Hos. 8: 7 they have sown the *wind*
12: 1 Ephraim feedeth on *wind*
Jonah 1: 4 the Lord rent out a great *wind*
4: 8 God prepared a vehement east *wind*
Zech. 2: 6 the four *winds* of the heaven
5: 9 and the *wind* was in their wings

A.E.K.

(*To be continued*)

"SUCCESS"

Let us not gauge our service by apparent results or so-called success. By that standard the later ministry of our Lord was a failure. Fewer followed Him as He went on unfolding His sufferings. But surely this phase of His earthly service, culminating in the cross, was most appreciated by His God and Father. Paul also went from service to suffering. But shall we say that the aged apostle, in his chains, rejected by the saints in Asia, forsaken by his friends, was not a success? Then it was he wrote his greatest epistles and, in his infirmity, really accomplished far more than all the rest of the apostles put together.

It has always been God's way to reserve a remnant in the midst of apostasy. Such there is now. We cannot stay the tide of evil. That is in fulfillment of His Word. But we can accomplish a work in the midst of it far more pleasing to God than is possible at any other time.

A.E.K.

A DAVIDIC PSALM

24 **Ieue's** is **the earth and** that which **fills it,**
The **habitance and** [7]**all**[0] **dwelling in it.**
[2] **For on** the **seas, He´ founds it,**
And on the **streams, He is establishing it.**
[3] **Who shall ascend in**to the **mountain of Ieue?**
And who shall rise into **His holy place?**
[4] The **innocent** in **palms, and** the **pure** in **heart,**
Who does **not lift** up **his soul to futility,**
And does **not swear to deceit:**
[5] **He shall bear blessing from `Ieue**
And righteousness from the **Alueim of his salvation.**
[6] **This** is the **generation of** those **inquiring** of **Him,**
Those **seeking Thy face,** [7]**Alueim of**[cs] **Jacob!**
Interlude
[7] **Lift** up, O **gate**ways, **your heads!**
And be lifted up, **portals eonian!**
And enter shall the **King of 'glory.**
[8] **Who** is **this King of 'glory?**
Ieue, strong and masterful!
Ieue, the **Master of war!**
[9] **Lift** up, O **gate**ways, **your heads!**
And be lifted up, **portals eonian!**
[10] **And enter shall** the **King of 'glory.**
Who is **He, this King of 'glory?**
Ieue of hosts, He is the **King of 'glory!**
Interlude

THE KING OF GLORY AND HIS ASSOCIATES

Psalm 24 is a praise set for the days of the Kingdom. It sings of the people who shall dwell in its capital city, and of the King of glory Who will reign there. Jerusalem will be the capital city, situated upon Mount Zion, and it it will be the holy habitation of the Alueim. Into it will enter the innocent, those declared so by the great Judge Himself, and those pure of heart, cleansed in the blood of the Lambkin. They shall bear blessing from Ieue to all who dwell upon the earth, and dispense righteousness from the Alueim of their salvation. They are the generation inquiring of Ieue and seeking His face.

To this city of the millennial Kingdom will come the King of glory. The gateways will be ready to receive Him. For long generations they have bowed their heads in shame and humiliation and have been burned, ravaged and occupied by their enemies, but when the King comes they will lift up their heads in readiness to receive Him. This fine figure of personification addresses the gateways as if they were living things.

The gateway which the King will enter in that day is the eastern one facing toward the Mount of Olives on which Christ will stand when He returns to the earth in His glory (Zech.14:4). He will enter the city through its portal, and thereafter the gate will be locked. David the prince will sit in it later eating bread before Ieue (Ezek.44:1-3).

Can we visualize the scene? Christ the King, resplendent and glorious, seated, not on the foal of an ass, but on a conveyance suited to the glory of the occasion. His entourage will follow Him, splendid and

glorious to match His presence. We shall be there, for has He not promised that we shall always be with Him? Melody and music will fill the air and much rejoicing, and this Psalm will at long last find its true and proper setting.

The habitance . . . For on the seas, He founds it

The word *habitance* occurs in both the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, though in the Concordant Version of the latter it is given as "inhabited [earth]" in the hope that in time *habitance* would be acceptable. It is, in scriptural usage, that part of the earth's surface which is habitable. Its numerous (36) contexts in the Hebrew make quite clear what is to be understood by the word. The AV uses the term "world" in most contexts, though "habitable part" once. However it must be distinguished from *world* (Greek: *kosmos* SYSTEM) which relates to the systematic arrangement and operation of all that is on the earth: man, animals, vegetation and minerals. *World* emphasizes the way society acts and reacts in its various spheres. It is the order and arrangement of all that is on the earth. The *habitance,* however, is that part of the earth's surface which is indwelt (Isa.18:3) and has cities (Isa.14:17). The *vigor* of God was involved in making the earth, and His *wisdom* in preparing the habitance (Jer.10:12).

The habitance is clearly not identical with the earth for we read of the habitance of His earth (Prov.8:31). It is part of the earth's surface and excludes the seas. Only about one third of the earth's surface is dry land and even this lesser part is not all habitable.

The wise of the world might scoff at the statement that the habitance is founded on the seas and established on the streams, but it is in reality a statement

of truth and real knowledge. The habitance is founded on the seas, for from the seas come all the waters of the earth. All the streams drain themselves into the oceans of the world, and were they not replenished by rainfall which originates in the clouds formed by moisture sucked up from the sea by the sun, they would drain themselves dry. As the writer of Ecclesiastes puts it:

All the watercourses are going to the sea,
Yet the sea is not filling.
To the place from which the watercourses
are going,
There are they returning to go.

It is a ceaseless round. Truly the habitance and all that is in it is founded on the seas, for from them comes water without which man and beast cannot live. This is true wisdom, the deepest of philosophies.

The innocent in palms

Only the innocent can ascend into the presence of Ieue, and rise into His holy place. And such are we, for we are justified. Innocent are we of any charge that may be leveled against us by man or spirit, by terrestrial dweller or tabernacler of the heavens. "Innocent" is the sweetest of words to the one burdened by a sense of failure and depravity. Guiltless we are. No court of earth or in heaven can sustain a charge against us. The great white throne, at which all will be present, will be for us an occasion for the display of our glory and innocence. There the Lord of glory will be admired in us.

He shall bear blessing from Ieue.

This is true of us also, for are we not blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in order that we might bear these blessings to the limits of the

universe? So great is the burden of blessings that has been lavished upon us that Paul speaks of them in seemingly extravagant terms as "the transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory." So munificent and bountiful is our God in His pouring out of His blessings upon us that language has to be strained to express the superabundance of their outflow. And they are heaped upon us that they may be multiplied through bestowal upon others. Our salvation is not ended in ourselves. We are burdened with blessing that we might share it with others—with those who inhabit the heavens. Over them shall we reign, and to them bear blessing from Ieue. To every star in every constellation and galaxy we shall take the name and share the knowledge of the One Whose we are and Whom we shall represent throughout the vast areas of the heavens.

Gateways

The gateways of the cities of old were a most important feature. The elders sat there, as also did the judges and superintendents of Israel. There the king sat on special occasions. In the millennial city David will sit in the eastern gateway and eat bread before Ieue (Ezek.44:3). Such was their importance in Israel that gatekeepers were appointed by name by Solomon to keep the gateways of Jerusalem. The Jerusalem of David's day had many gateways, named in the Scriptures. In the Jerusalem of the millennium there will be twelve, each named after one of the tribes of Israel (Ezek.48:31), three gates facing toward each point of the compass. In new Jerusalem on the new earth there will be twelve gates, but these are named after the twelve apostles. The portals themselves will be splendid and magnificent beyond anything that has been

before, for each will be a single great pearl. The gateways will match the glory of the city of that day of glory.

The King of Glory

We have in these days of democracy almost lost a sense of the dignity, power and glory that attaches to kings as they are portrayed in the Scriptures. In those days (as in the days of the Kingdom to come) their power was great, their authority absolute, and the splendor, dignity and honor attaching to their person unique to them. In their wealth and the glory of their environment they were distinguished above their people. Solomon was one of the greatest of Israel's kings in the zenith of his reign, and pictured the greater King, the King of glory, Whose Kingdom during the final two eons will be one of surpassing glory. His power, splendor and honor will be such that the earth and the heavens also will not previously have seen its like. Pomp and ceremony there will be, and all will see and be impressed by the Majesty of His presence and the glory of those who will be about Him. For He will not be alone. Such will be the vast size of His Kingdom, comprising the earth and all the stars of the heavens, that He will need others, His associates, to administer His far-flung realms. He anoints other kings to rule upon the earth and in the heavens also. David and chosen sons of Israel will reign in the kingdom of the heavens, and He has chosen us for His celestial kingdom, anointing us for the tasks that will occupy us for the eons of the eons. We also shall be kings!

Ieue of Hosts

This is the first occurrence of this title in the Psalms,

though it appears many times elsewhere. It is full of deep truth. Ieue of Hosts is the One Who has millions arrayed to fulfill His every wish (103:21). He does not dwell in solitary isolation. His court throngs with messengers, ministers, hosts of most powerful beings whose life is in doing His will. His hosts are all who serve Him in the heavens. Donald G. Hayter

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MISSION WORK IN INDIA

We are much encouraged by the work in southeast India carried on under the direction of M. P. S. Raju, and we join with Brother Raju in giving thanks and praise to God for the continuance of this mission effort despite many troubles and tensions. There are 11 full-time workers and 37 part-time workers associated in this ministry who seek to bring the evangel for today to more than 150 villages and towns. At the end of each month all the workers gather at the central headquarters in Rajavaram for three days of prayer, Bible study and review. Each month Bro. Raju tries to visit the various mission centers and to conduct one or two missionary tours of his own.

A number of our publications have been translated into the native Telugu language and will be printed as soon as funds are available. These include "The more Excellent Way," "The Divine Calendar," "The Gospel of our Salvation," "The Ages," "What is Death?" and "What is the Soul?" This need for sound literature in their own native language seems to be uppermost on the hearts of these mission workers. As it is here, so also in India the truth is opposed. The evangel given through the apostle Paul for us today is not readily received, but we rejoice to see these efforts being made. May God's Word race and be glorified in the hearts and lives of many in that crowded and needy land.

MID-WEST FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE

The dates and hosts for the early 1975 Fellowship Gatherings in Michigan and Ohio are as follows: Feb. 22, Guy Marks; March 29, B. A. Baker; April 26, Clint Tenniswood; May 31, Ray Van Dyke; June 18-20, John Patterson. Write Lloyd Hibberd, Box 84, Baldwin MI 49304 for further details.

A DAVIDIC PSALM

25 To Thee, Ieue, I am lifting my soul.
2 **My Alueim, in Thee I trust.**
I must not be shamed.
My enemies must not be glad >**over me.**
3 **Moreover, all stretching toward Thee**
shall not be shamed.
Shamed shall be [7]**all**[0] **the treacherous empty** ones.
4 With **Thy ways, Ieue, acquaint me,**
Teach me Thy paths;
5 **Cause me** to **tread in Thy truth**
And teach me,
For Thou art the **Alueim of my salvation.**
[7]**And**[cs] **toward Thee I stretch, the entire day.**
6 **Remember Thy compassions, Ieue,**
And Thy kindnesses, for they are from the **eon.**
7 The **sins of my youth and my transgressions**
Thou must not remember.
[as]**According** to **Thy kindness remember Thou** > **me,**
On account of Thy goodness, Ieue.
8 **Good and upright** is **Ieue,**
Therefore will He direct sinners in the **way.**
9 **He will cause** the **humble** to **tread** [i]**with judgment,**
And He will teach the **humble His way.**
10 **All** the **paths of Ieue** are **kindness and truth.**
To the **preservers of His covenant**
and His testimonies.

[11] **On account of Thy name, Ieue,**
Pardon also > my depravity, for it is **much.**
[12] [a]**Who** is **this** man who **fears Ieue?**
Him He will direct in the **way he is choosing.**
[13] **His soul will be lodging in good,**
And his seed will be tenanting the **land.**
[14] The **deliberation of Ieue** is **for** those who **fear Him,**
And His covenant for acquainting them with it.
[15] **My eyes** are **continually** toward **Ieue,**
For He´ will [c]bring forth my feet from the **net.**
[16] **Countenance > me and be gracious** to **me,**
For lonely and humble am **I.**
[17] The **distresses of my heart are widened,**
From my constraints Thou [c]bringest me forth.
[18] **See my humiliation and my toil,**
And bear >with all my sins.
[19] **See my enemies for they are multitudinous**
And hate me with a **violent hatred.**
[20] **Keep my soul and rescue me.**
I must not be shamed, for I take **refuge in Thee.**
[21] **Flawlessness, and uprightness are preserving me,**
For I stretch toward Thee.
[22] **Ransom `Israel, O Alueim, from all their distresses.**

SPECIAL NOTE ON PSALM 25

This is one of the "Acrostic Psalms." The first letter of each verse in the Hebrew begins with a different letter in the same order of the Hebrew alphabet. However, one letter is missing (corresponding to our letter "q") and the preceding letter (corresponding to "r") is used twice. In addition the letter corresponding to our "u" is missing from the Masoretic Text, but it is supplied at the beginning of the last line of verse 5 by the Syriac and other manuscripts. This letter stands for our word "and," which is supported by the Septuagint Version and which we have inserted into our translation.

THE WAYS OF IEUE

David in this Psalm sees all his experiences as being from the Lord. He looks upon them as the path along which He was guiding him. Even his sins, depravity and transgressions are all part of the way, for Ieue is directing sinners in the way, regulating their course and disciplining them by their own evil and correcting them by their own backsliding (Jer.2:19). He is the Alueim of his salvation and will teach him His paths and cause him to tread in His truth. There are enemies and they hate him with a violent hatred, but David's eyes are continually toward Ieue and his prayer is to Him for rescue, so that he might not be shamed. Distresses and constraints are met, also humiliation and toil, but these are all part of the path prepared for him by Ieue in order to teach him. Thus is it for us. Every step of the way to glory contributes toward our training for kingship. If we endure we shall reign!

David knew that the ways and wisdom of the Lord were perfect. *He* was able to use evil and the crucible of humiliation to train a man and teach him His ways.

There is much in this Psalm which is most appropriate for us, and to the way we are being led. This prayer Psalm and expression of faith can be ours. We have enemies, not human, but invisible among the celestials, whose target is our faith, and whose purpose is to distract our eyes from our future allotment and glory. And how effectively they have achieved their purpose! They hate us with a violent hatred because we shall take over their territory and sovereignty. David's bitterest enemy was Saul because David had been anointed king in his stead and had supplanted him in the kingdom, though he was many years in the wilderness before actually being seated upon the

throne. Just so we are anointed by God to reign among the celestials and supercede those who are in authority there now.

There are many precious pearls of comfort and instruction in this Psalm, starting with an expression of the true essence of prayer, a lifting of the soul to the Lord Ieue, Who is the God of circumstance and occurrence. Prayer is the direction of all the senses (that is the soul) toward Him. Our whole sentient being is concentrated on Him. We look upward to the Lord in the heavens; we taste and know the deliciousness of His presence, and offer up the aroma of our ascent offering of praise and worship to Him. Prayer is a practical demonstration of our conviction that He is our All. David expresses it in verse 15, "My eyes are continually toward Ieue." All his attention and his words are directed toward Him. O that the focal point of our existence was the Lord Christ continually, that we could echo Paul's words, "For to me to be living is Christ."

"Cause me to tread in Thy truth," David prays. Such a prayer can be echoed and should be, in our hearts. Truth should be our constant desire, our sincere love. We shall only find it in its absolute purity in the Sacred Scriptures. It is not a dogma or creed or even a doctrine. This is but a *portion* of the truth. To think otherwise is the cause and curse of sectarianism, for it chooses particular doctrines and sets them up as *the* truth, and so shuts itself off from progress and even from a proper realization of the doctrines it favors. Truth is not the prerogative of any group or person. It is a thing of many parts and great complexity, though simple in essence. Truth is all that relates to God and His Son. It is the sum of what He is. It is reality as it resides in every aspect of His works and

words. Truth is what *is*, in contrast with what seems to be. It reveals to man what he is and his place and purpose in God's ways and most particularly his relationship to God Himself. Truth resides in every blade of grass and every living thing, but above all in the Word of God.

The deliberation of Ieue

Deliberation is associated with counsel. Counselors deliberate in deciding a course to be taken. It is careful consideration with a view to a decision. Ieue's deliberations on behalf of those who fear Him are of the ways He will bless them in the eons to come. Then will be lavished on them His kindnesses. Then will be seen by each of us that every step of our way was an essential element of our preparation for the era of His blessing. There are no truly false steps on the road we tread, for even our stumbling progress is an essential part of the pathway to glory. The pattern of the tapestry of our lives is the result of wise deliberation by our Father.

Lonely and humble am I.

Loneliness has always been the lot of the faithful, if not as to the number of their associates, then more poignantly, as to fellowship with like minds and faith. David when he fled the face of Saul had the company of about 400 men (1 Sam.22:2) but few, if any among them, shared his faith, and some were even worthless characters and a source of painful experience to David. Often in the Psalms he speaks as a man solitary, oppressed by enemies and associates and even by his family. Ieue alone was his Refuge; to Him he spoke and addressed his meditations and soliloquy.

We should not be surprised at loneliness today. If we tremble at the word of the Lord and love truth, sincerely seeking to understand and take its message to our heart, we shall assuredly be lonely. Truth seekers are ever lonely figures. The way of truth is a narrow, constricted and rough path, leading through arid and stony country. There is little true fellowship of the spirit to be found in the religious communities of Christendom, where sectarianism has spoiled love for truth and propped up error and doubtful doctrines with false expressions, familiar to the ear, but none the less deceptive and untrue. Severance from such must lead to loneliness, but there is a great recompense in freedom of thought and faith, and fellowship with God and Christ Jesus our Lord. Use of the Concordant Version, a version distinctive and unique—a version different from all other versions of the Scriptures—inevitably leads to some loneliness, for its principles and singular value set it apart from other versions, hence set apart also those who are convinced as to its exceptional virtues. This is not to say that there are not many beloved saints of God among the orthodox and other religious groups of Christendom, but rather to say that, as regards fellowship of the spirit, it is limited indeed, for such sweet fellowship can only be enjoyed by those who delve deeper into, and hence live closer to, the realms of truth.

Donald G. Hayter

BIBLE WEEK FELLOWSHIP

We have recently received a report from Brother Ewald Degen of Medicine Hat Alberta, Canada, that a week of Bible study was held there, October 12-20. The theme was "God's Masterplan for all Humanity." The speakers included Bro. Jacob Forster of Brantford, Ontario and Bro. J. W. Goerzen of Edmonton, Alberta.

GOD'S EONIAN PURPOSE

All of God's handiwork is harmonious and symmetrical. Nature and revelation are both perfectly poised. If we have before us a chart but crudely representing the grand outlines of universal history, it must reveal its innate beauty and comeliness.

The Scriptures point to *five eons* in the eonian times, punctuated by four great physical and moral cataclysmic judgments. We wish, however, to press the fact that the CROSS, and the tragedy enacted there, is the *crisis* of all the eons. It stands in the very center of "the present wicked eon," which is bounded in the *past* by the Deluge and in the *future* by the Day of Wrath.

An eon farther on either side, we have the "disruption" (Gen.1:2) in the *past* and the "great white throne judgment" (Rev.20:11-15) in the *future*. These are also the boundaries of the present earth. In one case *water destroyed it*, and in the other it will be *transformed by fire* (2 Pet.3:6,7).

Then going an eon farther on either side, we have the "beginning" in the *past* and the "consummation" in the *future*. The "beginning" inaugurates what the "consummation" concludes. These are the limits God has been pleased to reveal. Beyond, we cannot go. Thus we find the eons of the Scriptures symmetrically grouped and pivoted upon the cross. *To it* all things converge: *from it* all blessings flow.

God is all in Christ now. He will be all in His chosen ones when we are made alive at His presence. He will be All in all when death is abolished at the consummation.*(Selected from the newly reprinted book,* GOD'S EONIAN PURPOSE, *by Adlai Loudy. See the announcement on our inside front cover.)*

WHAT IS THE ECCLESIA?

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

That the ecclesia has been assigned a very important role in the purpose of God is evident from the above scripture, for obviously that which is to give glory to God "for all the generations of the eon of the eons" cannot be brushed aside as insignificant, especially when its mention is placed before that of Christ Jesus. Clearly it should be a profitable line of inquiry for us to examine in detail what this role is—to ask ourselves, in fact, what is the place of the ecclesia in God's purpose? This will be our aim in this series of studies.

But first we must be clear in our minds as to what ecclesia we are referring, for more than one ecclesia is mentioned in the Scriptures.

VARIOUS ECCLESIAS

The word "ecclesia" occurs some 115 times in the Greek Scriptures. Strikingly, only three of these occur

in the four accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and these are all in Matthew, two of them being in one verse (see Matt.16:18 and 18:17). Sometimes the word has a local application, as in eighteen occurrences in the book of Revelation. There the word is used of individual gatherings in various localities—the ecclesia in Ephesus, Smyrna, etc. The same is true of some usages of the term in the book of Acts, and also in the Pauline writings, many of which are addressed to individual ecclesias; for example, "the ecclesia of the Thessalonians," "the ecclesia of God in Corinth" and "the ecclesias of Galatia." But clearly in our study we are not concerned with individual ecclesias as such, but only insofar as they are part of "the ecclesia" in its widest sense.

In Acts 7:38, we have a reference to "the ecclesia in the wilderness," but the context shows that this clearly refers to the out-called ones from Egypt, the nation of Israel under Moses, condemned to a period of wandering in the wilderness because of their lack of faith in God. Leaving this application of the term to one side, we find that the Greek Scriptures use the term "ecclesia" in connection with two distinct companies of people. First, there is the company of circumcision saints who followed the Lord, and were ministered to by the twelve apostles of the Lamb. This ministry received a great impetus with the witness beginning at Pentecost, when the circle of twelve was reestablished after the defection of Judas, and the holy Spirit came upon them with power. Such was the activity of the apostles at this time that about three thousand souls were added to the ecclesia in one day (Acts 2:41). The ministry had as its basic theme, "Repent and be baptized each of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the pardon of your sins, and you shall be obtaining the

gratuity of the holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). It continued until the circle of twelve was again broken by the killing of James by Herod (Acts 12:2), though the Jews had already signified their rejection of the message of the Kingdom through their stoning of Stephen. The ministry will be resumed when the circle is restored by the resurrection of the Twelve at the coming of the Lord to establish His Kingdom; until then, the promises concerning this ecclesia are in abeyance.

But there is still an ecclesia to which Paul and his companion apostles ministered, described by him as "the ecclesia," "the ecclesia of God" and "the ecclesia which is Christ's body" (1 Cor.12:27,28; 1 Tim.3:5; Eph.1:23). It is this ecclesia which we wish to discuss in these studies. The message proclaimed by Paul is not "repent and be baptized" in order to be saved, but "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). In his evangel, the obedience of faith takes the place of repentance, and justification takes the place of pardon. Works are set aside, for salvation is by faith apart from works (Rom.3:28). Human endeavor is shown to be vanity, and salvation is seen to be dependent upon God alone, for the evangel is declared to be His power for salvation (Rom.1:16). Its basis is "the word of the cross" which again is declared to be "the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18). Its standing is in the terms of a new creation, in which the former creation is regarded as "primitive" and "passed by," and all has "come new" (2 Cor.5:17), and not in the terms of a new birth, as suggested by Jesus to Nicodemus (John 3:7), for in such the new is born of the old; witness Peter's application in 1 Peter 2:9 of the promise made to Israel before Sinai (Ex.19:5,6).

But before we proceed further, let us obtain a definition of the word "ecclesia."

DEFINITION OF "ECCLESIA"

The Greek word *ekklesia* consists of two components; the prefix *ek*, meaning "out," and the root part of the word *klesia*, meaning "called." It thus means "a called-out company."

In many versions, it is generally translated by the word "church," but this word has, in the minds of most people, lost its true significance for three reasons, namely:

1. It is most frequently applied to a building rather than to the occupants of a building. The same is true of the word "school;" the correct terms for the buildings should be "churchhouse" and "schoolhouse" respectively, but the former seldom, if ever, appears as a dictionary word.

2. The word "church" has been appropriated by almost every sect and denomination to denote its own particular form of worship; thus we have the "Roman Catholic Church," the "Anglican Church," the "Baptist Church," the "Methodist Church" and many others. The Word of God knows no such distinctions.

3. The word "church" does not indicate, in itself, the two components that are inherent in the word "ecclesia," therefore the full import of its meaning is lost, and it comes to be regarded as simply a company of worshipers, rather than a body of "called-out" ones.

It is essential that we keep in mind the two components of the word "ecclesia," for the fact that a "calling-out" is involved shows that there must have been a choice. That choice must have been of God, for it is He Who does the calling, that His purpose may remain as a choice, not out of acts, but of Him Who is calling. Though this statement is applied in Romans 9:11 to the case of Esau and Jacob, it underlines a principle which remains true until God's purpose is

consummated. God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), and His purpose is ever in line with this fact.

GOD'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

As soon as we perceive that a calling-out is involved, it becomes apparent that there must be some who are not included in this choice. To many this may seem an injustice, but to think in such a way would be in accord with the spirit of humanity, which often talks of "fairness" and "unfairness," and thinks that all should have equal chance. If God's purpose depended, even to a slight degree, upon chance, there might be some justification for thinking in this way.

But as we have just pointed out, we are thinking in terms of One Who is operating *all* according to the counsel of His will, and Who consequently is "telling from the beginning, the hereafter, and from aforetime what has not yet been done" (Isa.46:10). We are also thinking of One Who has the *right* to choose, and the *right* to prefer one over another, and the *right* to allot to each whatsoever He wills. Therefore, if we are speaking of those whom God has chosen, it must always be in full acknowledgment of His *right* to make such a choice.

We should never question either the right or the wisdom of God in any of His choices. We can be satisfied with His decisions, even though we may feel that we are specially favored by being among His chosen ones, because we know that the precedent blessing of such is a means to an end, the end being God's glory, to be achieved by the eventual reconciliation of all to Himself. In other words, we acknowledge the preferential steps of God's purpose as being a necessary prerequisite of the ultimate in which all,

without exception, will share. For the final goal of God's purpose is that He may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28).

It is for this reason that the called ones of any ecclesia should not consider themselves as intrinsically better than their fellows, but should always remember that the reason for their choice is that they may be used by God for the blessing of those who are not thus chosen. The reason for their preferential treatment does not lie within themselves, but in God Who prefers them. This is why those in the ecclesia of today are entreated by Paul to be "working for the good of *all*, yet specially for the family of faith" (Gal.6:10).

Paul, in Romans 9:21, shows how God is able, of the same kneading, to make one vessel to honor and one to dishonor. The clay is the same in both cases; the difference between the resultant vessels lies in the action of the Potter, Who alone is able to decide the form and the purpose of the vessel He is making. The illustration is an excellent one. Apart from the nimble fingers of the Potter, we would be undeveloped clay, unable to fashion ourselves into anything of use to anybody. But in God's hands we are made what we are, and if so be we are chosen by Him to be of His ecclesia, let us rejoice in this with all humility and thankfulness. If we are to boast at all, let it *never* be in ourselves, but *always* in the Lord.

HOW GOD EXERCISES HIS RIGHT OF CHOICE

Through His prophet Isaiah, God told His people, Israel, that their devices and ways were not as His, but rather His were more lofty than theirs, even as the heavens were more lofty that the earth (Isa.55:8,9). This is clearly evidenced in His choice of Israel themselves, for He did not choose them because they

were the most numerous of peoples, for they were the fewest of all people, but because He loved them and would keep the oath which He had sworn to their fathers (Deut.7:6-8).

Deuteronomy is the first book of the Scriptures which speaks directly of the love of God. Its first reference is in chapter 4, verse 17, where God, through Moses, speaks of the love which He had for the fathers. Out of this love was born the nation of Israel. Who but God would have called an idolater (Abram) or a circumventer (Jacob) to be the forbears of the people of His choice? Yet this is what He did, and He turned the idolater into "the father of all who believe" and He changed the circumventer into the one who was Upright-with-God (Israel).

Abraham, though promised a seed by God, could not of himself provide the one in whom that seed should be called. Ishmael, the son of the maid, was begotten according to flesh, and flesh is in bondage to sin; the child of bondage could never be the child of promise. It was not until Abraham recognized his own incompetence and acknowledged the all-sufficiency of God, that Isaac was born. Thus was the impotence of the flesh made evident, and this was confirmed in the sign of circumcision, which involved a cutting off of the flesh.

This impotence of the flesh is likewise evident when we come to examine the criteria by which the chosen ones of this present time are measured, for we find that they are not in accord with human values, but just the reverse. We find these criteria set forth in 1 Corinthians 1, verses 26 to 29, which we quote:

"For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh; not many powerful, not many noble, but the stupidity of

the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise, and the weakness of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the strong, and the ignoble and the contemptible things of the world God chooses, and that which is not, that He should be discarding that which is, so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight."

This method of choosing is in accord with the word of the cross, which is "stupidity indeed to those who are perishing, yet to us who are being saved it is the power of God." It is a method designed to insure that no flesh at all shall be boasting in God's sight. The flesh fulfilled its main function when it became the means by which the Firstborn of every creature was crucified. In this, the flesh accomplished the purpose for which God had created it, but how could God take pleasure in that which willfully murdered the Son of His love? From the very beginning the flesh has followed the way of Cain, which sought and encompassed the murder of righteous Abel, and Abel, though dying, continues, by his very name which means "Vanity," to testify to the worthlessness of all fleshly endeavor.

Inherently, the flesh possesses features which provoke enmity. Even the flesh of the Lord Jesus, without sin though it was, had such an effect, for it constituted a barrier between Israel and the nations, the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision (Eph.2:11-18). The word of the cross removes this barrier and destroys the enmity, for on the cross the flesh is seen as crucified. Thus peace is effected. If we regard ourselves as "being crucified together with Christ" (Rom.6:6; Gal.2:20), then we shall no longer be knowing Him "according to flesh" (2 Cor.5:16), but ac-

cording to spirit where fleshly distinctions cannot obtain (Gal.3:28).

The eighth chapter of Romans presents the present position quite clearly, and puts the flesh in its proper place. It is "sin's flesh" (v.3), and "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit."

The apostle then goes on to explain the difference between flesh and spirit, showing that the former, having a disposition which is at enmity to God, produces only death, while the latter produces life and peace. Those who are in the flesh are not able to please God, but those who are being led by God's Spirit, these are sons of God, and enjoyers of an allotment from God, and joint enjoyers of Christ's allotment.

Though God's method of choosing those who are to be of His ecclesia may seem stupid to worldly minds, we should have no fears or doubts about His wisdom. One of the hymns we sometimes sing begins, "I know not why God's wondrous grace to me He has made known." The answer lies in the wisdom of God, which decrees that no flesh should be able to boast in His sight, and in the provision which He has made to make up our deficiencies. For we of God "are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance, that according as it is written, He who is boasting, in the Lord let him be boasting" (1 Cor.1:30,31).

The point should now be quite clear in our minds that the ecclesia of which we are writing is not of the flesh, although it may be chosen from those who were at one time in the flesh (Eph.2:1-3). In Christ all

fleshly designations vanish, for in Him "there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:28).

THE ECCLESIA IN EPHESIANS

Thus the way is prepared for the Ephesian revelation of the ecclesia as the body of Christ, with its further definition as "the complement of the One completing the all in all." For in this epistle, the ecclesia is chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world, that is, before ever the flesh came into being at all, and before sin existed. Therefore it cannot in any way be a product of "sin's flesh," since it is quite distinct from both components of this phrase—sin and flesh. On the contrary, its characteristics are righteousness and spirit. It is holy and flawless in God's sight.

The ecclesia, in Ephesians, is seen to be an essential factor in the outworking of God's purpose, being designated beforehand "for the laud of His glory." It is initiated into "the secret of His will," namely, "to have an adminstration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that in the earth." It is made aware of the fact that its lot was cast in Christ; that is to say, that wherever Christ is, the ecclesia will be found to be associated with Him. This was hinted at in Paul's earliest letters, those to the Thessalonians: "Thus shall we always be together with the Lord" (1 Thess.4;17). It was enlarged upon in the middle letters: "Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall be living together with Him also" (Rom.6:8). But only in the prison letters does the thought blossom into full fruitage: "In Him in Whom our lot was cast also,

being designated beforehand according to the purpose of the One Who is operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will, that we should be for the laud of His glory, who are pre-expectant in the Christ" (Eph.1:11,12).

The allotment of the ecclesia in Christ is clearly of a celestial nature. That is why we are blessed "with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ" (Eph.1:3). "Our realm is *inherent* in the heavens" (Phil.3:20). It belongs there. Hence we should "be disposed to that which is above, not to that on the earth" (Col.3:2). Our future work will be among the celestials, for it is among them that we shall be displaying God's grace in the oncoming eons (Eph.2:6,7). Even now we are in the process of being used to make known "to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials . . . the multifarious wisdom of God," and this, be it noted, is "in accord with the *purpose of the eons*" (Eph.3:10,11).

Thus we see that God's "purpose of the eons" is definitely linked with the ecclesia, for this is the only occurrence in Scripture of this phrase. What part, then, does the ecclesia have in the purpose of God? We hope to pursue this theme in later studies, and to show that the role of the ecclesia in this purpose of the eons is secondary only to that of Christ Himself, to which it is complementary.

In the meantime, let us remember that it is the purpose of One Who is operating all according to the counsel of His will. Seven times in Ephesians is the ecclesia linked with the glory of God, Who Himself has an allotment among the saints (Eph.1:18). The outworking of His purpose will most certainly assure Him of lasting glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus. Amen.

John H. Essex

GOD'S PROVISION FOR TROUBLED TIMES

"GOD GIVES US, not a spirit of timidity, but of power, and of love, and of sanity. You may not be ashamed, then, of the testimony of our Lord, nor yet of me, His prisoner, but suffer evil with the evangel in accord with the power of God, Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian . . . " (2 Tim.1:7-9). Here we have the spirit which should characterize our ministry in the last days. Second Timothy is particularly important for the Lord's slaves in this era, for it is especially adapted to these times. This passage, and others in this precious epistle were burned into my heart during my earliest ministry, and they have influenced my course powerfully ever since.

God has given us a spirit of *sanity*. Perhaps no quality is so absent in the teaching of Christendom today, or in the popular interpretations of the Scriptures. Even advanced saints feel that a divine revelation must be veiled in mysticism, and faith consists in a credulous acceptance of hazy superstitions which violate the instincts of a sane mind. Fanaticism has taken the place of faith. Sanity demands a careful

comparison of "faith" with the written records God has given, for all faith is false which is not based upon them. Let us reject every spirit which conflicts with the utmost sanity. This is not reasoning. It is simply mental health, the rejection of the fanciful, the fictitious, and the false.

God has *not* given us a spirit of *timidity*. This is a difficult lesson for some of us to learn. Being constitutionally timid, we hesitate and fear to take a bold stand in our testimony for God. We ask ourselves, Is it not presumption, and contrary to the spirit of love? Will it not be mistaken for self-assertion, and perfectionism, and absolutism, and arrogance? Undoubtedly it will. Even our fellow-slaves will tell us that it is not the spirit of Christ. But we must distinguish between our walk in general and our testimony to the truth. If we testify concerning ourselves we may well be backward. But if we hold aloft the banner of God's Word, we have every reason to be confident and courageous. With joyous assurance let us do like Peter, who has recently denied his Lord three times, when he charges his fellow countrymen, "*Ye* denied the holy One . . . . " If we look to ourselves we will be timid, but if we look to Him, timidity will be transformed into fearless faithfulness.

God has given us a spirit of *power*. Weakness has its place, but it is in the flesh, not the spirit. Many of us have our thorn, our infirmity, and it is the gift of God, but it is not in our spirits. The joy of the Lord is our strength. We exult in a God Who is able. And we become partakers of His power. God is working and accomplishing His purpose, and He has given us a part in it. We need not fear for His truth. It will prevail! Perhaps we may have to wait. Indeed, for the present, we expect it to be opposed, and rejected and

despised. Such is its due in this evil day. But let us not lose heart. Every power on earth and in heaven will yet yield to the power of God's Word. We have nothing to fear. The victory is ours! Let us never be timid in the proclamation of the truth. Timidity is the child of error. It does not come from God.

God gives us a spirit of *love*. To many of us power and sanity are incompatible with love. Its quality has sunk down to a simpering sentimentalism. Instead of a deep desire for another's weal, and his actual good, we prefer to be pleasant and spare our fellows passing pain. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. God's love is of a better quality. We know that He loves us, yet He does not shield our souls from every experience of evil. But He gives us no unnecessary anguish. So love will give no needless pain to anyone, and will avoid offense when possible. But it will not shun to proclaim the crucifixion of mankind because men do not like it. It will not cease exposing the apostasies of the saints because they resent it. On the contrary, it will not be timid in the least in maintaining a sane and powerful testimony which tears off all the hypocritical subterfuges of Christendom, which have clouded the revelation of God's wisdom and power and love. A.E.K.

SIGNE SOMERS

We feel we could liken our beloved Sister Somers to Lydia of old who opened her house to the saints once the Lord had opened her heart to the faith (Acts 16:14,15). Always seeking to share the glorious message of universal reconciliation, staunchly supporting our own work here and ever encouraging others to stand firm in the truth, Mrs. Somers served her Lord well, and her reward will be great in that day. She died on November 29 at the age of 96. All of us who knew her will miss her very much but also have the consolation and joy of knowing we will meet her again in that glorious morning.

"THERE IS A NEW CREATION"

(2 Corinthians 5:16,17)

GOD'S THOUGHTS are so beyond our thoughts that language must be stretched to its utmost heights in order to communicate them. Consider the Psalms for instance, where a single idea is repeated in many ways, often line after line, so that every nuance of meaning might be expressed. Even more difficult, then, is it for the transcendent revelations given to us in the present era to be voiced in human terms, especially in these days when language is being deteriorated and understanding dimmed. To Paul was given the task of unfolding "that which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of man did not ascend" (1 Cor.2:9). How could something so far outside our experiences and even beyond our imaginations as, for example, the word of the conciliation be revealed? How could it be expressed?

It is by the application of this message to many ordinary experiences of life and by the use of carefully selected comparisons and figures of speech that we are led into an acquaintance with this truth in 2 Corinthians. Suppose we had to describe snow to someone else who had always lived in the equatorial regions. We might say, "Snow falls with the softness of feathers and is as white as the highest clouds." But to

speak of the coldness of snow we might have to refer to many experiences such as the chill of the night or the depths of a flowing river. Yet this is not enough either, and we may have to speak of more figurative sorts of coldness in order to communicate the idea of snow, such as "It is cold like the rejection of a friend or like fear or hunger."

In a similar way Paul describes the gift of conciliation in 2 Corinthians. It is the consolation which comes in the midst of affliction when we remember the sufferings of Christ on our behalf. It is the comfort that enters into our spirits when we hear God's "peace to you." It is the security in the realization of God's rescue. It is the "yes" in God's promises in Christ Jesus, the triumph of His operations. It is like the ratification of love to a brother who has suffered for his wrongs. It is like finally meeting Titus after a long and painful separation and hearing of the Corinthians' love after many months of doubt and sorrow. It is so full of light and brightness that it may be compared to the glory Moses saw when he stood before Jehovah in the mountain, but it is even more brilliant, for there is no veil in between. It is like life, but so much beyond life as we know it that it must be compared to the life of Jesus in resurrection. It defies the confines of common speech, and so Paul must often turn to poetic expressions such as "transcendently transcendent, eonian burden of glory" and "that the mortal may be swallowed up by life."

Certainly man's heart has never ascended to such a thought as this, that God, Whom he has always avoided and feared, sent His beloved Son to the cross to die on his behalf, and then having done this God now *entreats* humanity to approach Him in peace and confidence! Not only did Christ die for our sins, but

He brought us life of such a victorious and comforting nature, so full of joy and peace, that it nearly defies description.

A NEW CHANGE

We have reached a critical point in this epistle. Paul has just written of the love of Christ which has such a powerful effect on the one who accepts it in faith that he no longer wants to live for himself but to Christ Who died and was roused for his sake. A great change has come about, first in the life of the believer, but also in the world and its history.

How can this change be expressed in words? How can we describe this accomplishment of God which so transcends all that has previously occurred in human experience? Under the inspiration of God, the apostle writes, "So that we, from now on, are acquainted with no one according to flesh. Yet even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer. So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is a *new creation:* the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new!"

NOT ACCORDING TO FLESH

It will be no help in understanding this change and in appropriating it into our lives to compare it with the experience of any son of Adam. It transcends in nature the life of Enoch or Noah, of Abraham or Moses or David. It will not do to liken it to the model lives of Joseph or Daniel or Job. Even the life and ministry of Christ according to the flesh, when He walked among His people in the land, cannot serve to parallel what God has prepared for us.

A. E. Knoch once wrote, "To those in Christ *all* is of God today, a new creation, in which the primitive has passed by. We no longer know anyone, not even

Christ according to the flesh (2 Cor.5:16,17). Yet how few of these fully favored ones really enjoy the grace given to them! How many cling to the old, in which flesh has the predominant place!" (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 44, page 158).

Some have identified this "new creation" with the Lord's message to Nicodemus concerning being "begotten anew" (John 3:1-8). But there are essential differences. John 3:7 is a demand placed upon the human, "You must be begotten anew," while 2 Corinthians 5:17 is a proclamation of God's accomplishment, "There is a new creation." The terms laid down for Nicodemus were impossible for him to meet in the flesh. There are no terms laid down for us except to be "in Christ" which is a spiritual identification made by God long before we came into existence (Eph.1:4,5). All the priorities set forth in our deliverance were met by Christ Himself when He became the sin offering for our sakes. There is nothing for the flesh to do in contributing to this new creation, for it is the achievement of the Creator.

In addition we need to distinguish the differences in the words "birth" and "creation" if we are to appreciate the depths of grace provided for us. "The figure of birth is not radical enough to denote the great change. Just as, after the day of the Lord, heaven and earth will be recreated, so is the spiritual change which took place at this juncture. There is a new creation. Paul never connects the new birth with his teaching to the nations. It suffices to figure the change necessary for the sons of Israel and their proselytes, fitting them for the earthly millennial sphere. For us, far more is needed. Like Adam, we are not a mere renewal in kind, but an entirely new creation" (*Concordant Commentary*, page 271).

A NEW CREATION

"If anyone is in Christ there is a new creation." With these words we are taken back to the very beginning of the eons and taken ahead to the very last times, the day of God, when there will be new heavens and a new earth. Only such momentous operations of God can serve to picture the present outflow of His grace and peace.

In the past God brought forth an entire universe of worlds, adorned and fitted out, each for its own purpose. The A.V. reads, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." But if this is not misleading it is at least inadequate. When a person becomes a believer it is not so much that he becomes a new creature, but that God presents him with a new world. Just as God brought a myriad of wonderful things into existence when He first created the heavens and earth, so also does He bring forth a myriad of blessings into our life once we are identified with Christ. Our whole world changes. Life takes on an entirely new character. Of course we, as individuals, change too, though perhaps not so much that we are no longer recognizable. But we change only because God has changed our environments, our outlooks and our relationship with Him, by instituting a new creation in spirit.

As the old physical creation was made up from a certain number of basic chemical elements such as hydrogen, nitrogen and oxygen, so is the new creation composed of certain basic spiritual elements, the most important of which are grace and peace. We now live in a world where we recognize God's love and are aware that He is operating all things together for the good. We live in a new state of affairs where we are confident and have peace, knowing and appreciating

the truth that God was in Christ conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them.

Perhaps the most significant change that occurs at this juncture (when 2 Corinthians was written) is that the privileges which the Circumcision enjoyed in their relationship with God are no longer recognized. These privileges were based on the flesh, but now "the primitive passed by" (2 Cor.5:17). The course of history is changed, and now all, without distinction, can enjoy the blessing of full fellowship with God in spirit. Like the heavenly elders we would fall down before Him and sing in praise of His creating powers (Rev.4:11),

> Worthy art Thou, O Lord, our Lord and God,
> To get glory and honor and power;
> For thou dost create all,
> And because of Thy will they were,
> and are created.

LO! THERE HAS COME NEW!

However, the major comparison here in 2 Corinthians 5:17 is with the future physical new creation of new heavens and a new earth. Peter would hurry the presence of that day of God, "hoping for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness is dwelling" (2 Peter 3:12,13). But for us, in spirit, it is already here. "This type of the present is most remarkable in a number of ways. First, unlike almost all other types, it comes over a thousand years *after* its antitype! This is in vital concord with the truth conveyed by it. *The spirit is much faster than the flesh.* The glories of the future new creation on *earth* are great, indeed, but the present *celestial* luster far transcends it in glory. The one is spiritual, the other

soulish and soilish. But apart from these great differences, the pattern is the same . . . .

"Perhaps the principal parallel lies in the conciliation, which is so closely associated with the spiritual new creation introduced in Paul's epistles (2 Cor.5:16-21). If a Jew and a Gentile passed from the preceding 'day of the Lord (Ieue)' into the day of God, in the new creation, the greatest difference would be the attitude of the Deity toward them. In the preceding period Israel had the precedence over the other nations religiously. Ieue is the God of Israel and could be approached only through them and their priests in the temple in Jerusalem, which was in their midst. The other nations were far off. In contrast to this, there is *no temple* in the Jerusalem of the new creation, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lambkin are its temple, for God tabernacles with *all humanity. They all* will be His people, for the *former things passed away* (Rev.21:1-4)" (*Unsearchable Riches,* vol. 44, pages 169,170).

THE NEW HUMANITY

It may help to bring out further values of the new creation if we distinguish it from another feature of Paul's evangel, "the new humanity." The two are not the same, though indeed they are related.

We read in Ephesians 4:22-24 that we should put off the old humanity and be rejuvenated in the spirit of our mind, "and to put on the new humanity which, in accord with God, is being created in righteousness and benignity of the truth." Here we are given a pattern for our personal behavior, while in 2 Corinthians 5 the apostle is speaking of God's operations. The new humanity is to be put on. It refers

to something we should do. The new creation comes to us "of God" (2 Cor.5:18). It refers to something God has done (or made).

The new humanity develops moment by moment in individual believers, not always in an even or regular manner, and it is never fully brought to perfection in this life. In 2 Corinthians 4:16 Paul has described this as being renewed day by day. But the new creation is God's accomplishment and is given in perfection. It is a full and finished work. "There *has come* new!"

Yet the two subjects are connected, for the new humanity is a manifestation of the new creation. It is because of the new order of things based on such spiritual elements as grace, mercy, love and peace that believing human beings can be maturing and growing spiritually, themselves walking in love and light and peace. We would be unable to put on the new humanity apart from the influence of the new creation.

That which is new is not associated with the flesh nor with any work of man. It is a change instituted by God and enjoyed by those who believe. We have found that the way is now open to full fellowship with God, and it is not a matter of what we must do, but of what God has done in Christ Jesus. The sons of God, we learn in the book of Job, shouted for joy when the foundations of the earth were laid. Let us revel with joy and rely on our God with peace and confidence as we contemplate this great achievement. The primitive has passed by. Lo! there has come a new creation!

D.H.H.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH, 1975
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-SIX

EDITORIAL

Paul was longing to visit the brethren in Rome; hence he asked them to struggle together with him in prayers to God for him that he may be coming to Rome with joy *through the will of God* and should be resting with them. The apostle believed that somehow, sometime, at length he would be prospered *in the will of God* to do the right thing—perhaps not this month and not this year, but sometime, at length. Ways and means may be different from what he himself would have planned, but he would be prospered, somehow. So he prayed, and solicited others to pray with him.

Paul wrote in his First Thessalonian letter: "Now may the Lord cause you to increase and superabound in love for one another and for all . . . to establish your hearts unblamable in holiness in front of our God and Father . . . walking and pleasing God . . . you may be superabounding yet more . . . *For this is the will of God: your holiness.*"

The apostle wrote to the Corinthians in his second epistle: "Having then these promises, beloved, we should be cleansing ourselves from every pollution of flesh and [every pollution of] spirit, *completing holiness in the fear of God.*" Devotion to a cause, a movement, or a church, certainly is not holiness. God claims all who are in Christ Jesus, for Himself. Completing our holiness is done by reckoning ourselves to be dead to Sin and self, yet living to God

in Christ Jesus, our Lord, the same way as He is living to God.

Holiness has two aspects: First there is the holiness which we have in Christ Jesus so that we are holy and flawless in the eyes of God. He calls us saints since we are set apart for Him and His use. Then there is another aspect of holiness which results from the personal presentation of our lives to God in response to His claim: "Present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy One of God, is the only and perfect example of both aspects of holiness. He Who subsisted in the form of God, was hallowed by His Father and dispatched into our world where He was distinguished from all others as Son of God according to the spirit of holiness. We too are hallowed by God and dispatched into a world where we are, at least in His sight, distinguished from all others. We too are designated for the place of a son of God according to the spirit of holiness while attaining to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the sonship. We got the spirit of sonship in which we are crying, "Abba, Father!"

Sometime, at length, we too may be prospered to do, or to say, the right thing which is in the will of God, as long as we are completing our holiness in the fear of God. The right time may not be tomorrow and not next week, but sometine, at length. The opportunity may be quite different from what we have been waiting for. But we will be prospered, somehow, while increasing and superabounding in love for one another and for all, while establishing our hearts unblamable in holiness in front of our God and Father.

H.H.R.

DAVIDIC

26 Judge me, Ieue, for I´ in my flawlessness go,
And in Ieue I trust; Not tottering am I.
2 Test me, Ieue, and probe me;
Refine my kidneys and my heart.
3 For Thy kindness is >in front of my eyes,
And I walk in Thy truth.
4 I do not sit with the death-doomed of futility,
And with the 7iniquitous? I am not entering.
5 I hate the assembly of evil doers,
And with the wicked I am not sitting.
6 I am washing my palms in innocency
And am going around `Thine altar, Ieue,
7 To announce 'with the voice of acclamation
And to rehearse all Thy marvels.
8 Ieue, I love the 7pleasantness? of Thy house,
And the place of the tabernacle of Thy glory.
9 Thou must not gather my soul with sinners
+Or with bloodthirsty mortals my life,
10 In whose hands is mischief,
And their right hand is full of a bribe.
11 +Yet I´ in my flawlessness will go.
Ransom me and be gracious to me.
12 My foot stands 'on a level place;
In the assemblies will I bless 7Thee0, Ieue.

Judge me, Ieue.

Because of our faulty ideas of what judgment is we may be somewhat startled to read David's opening words of Psalm 26, "Judge me, Ieue . . . " especially as he continues and speaks of his flawlessness. This too might cause us to wonder how David can write of being flawless when in the previous Psalm he talks of his "depravity, for it is much," and of his sins. Here again it is a matter of understanding the meaning of a word as used in the Scriptures.

Most of us need to be enlightened, and to broaden our ideas, as to the significance of the word "judge." It is understandable that the subject is obscure to most, for the Hebrew *shpht,* which has the standard JUDGE in the Concordant Version and is so translated in most of its more than six hundred contexts, has more than 32 different words used for it in the AV including judge, and judgment, in some 474. The CV reduces the alternative words to three, the others being required because of idiom. To judge is to assess a person or matter. It is to arrive at a decision as to the true merits of a subject in dispute or to decide on the truth regarding anyone or anything. David often prays to Ieue to judge him, not that he might be condemned, but that the true worth of his actions might be revealed to him. We should judge ourselves, deciding within ourselves the merits and worth of our thoughts and actions. The translation "judgment seat" instead of *dais* in Romans 14:10 is an incorrect translation, but it has in it something of truth, for at the dais our deeds and teachings will be assessed for their worth, and we shall receive requital or loss. In this sense it is a time of judging.

Ieue is loving judgment (Psa.37). It is the very foundation of His throne (89:14). It must not be identified with condemnation, which might be the result of judgment (37:33). Judgment can also lead to honor (149:9). It is as much concerned with favorable decisions as with adverse ones. Judgment is an impartial, just assessment of the facts regarding any matter. A judge discerns between good and evil and deals out a corrective for the evil, demonstrating by his judgment the excellence of the good and the vileness of the evil. Solomon's prayer to Ieue was for a hearkening heart to *judge* His people and to discern between good and evil (1 Kings 3:9).

Judgment is not necessarily to be feared. We should love Ieue's judgments (48:11). They are just and founded on His kindness (101:1). This is why David could pray with sincerity, "Judge me, Ieue."

The judgment of the Great White Throne will be a setting right of all wrongs and the establishment of a proper relationship between God and every man. The wrongs will become apparent, and what is true and ideal will be made evident. The attributes and power of God will be clearly demonstrated for all to understand. The wrong will be condemned, highlighted by a display of what is right. It will be a time of fear and affliction and distress, but in it all the love and kindness of the Judge will be present. His power and wisdom will be displayed then for all to perceive and know.

Flawlessness

David could speak of his flawlessness in truth, for it was his motives, his heart which he had in mind. His desires were right. He was sincere and pure in his wish

to walk correctly. His heart was right with his God and thus he was flawless. He did not claim that his every act and thought was perfect, but that his whole being was directed toward his Lord—thus he was flawless. So may we be also. As it is written in Philippians 2:15, "All be doing without murmurings and reasonings, that you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse." Murmurings and reasonings are the spoilers of sincerity and pureness of motive. Flawlessness is the prerogative of a heart which finds its all in God.

Refine my kidneys and my heart

It is simpler to understand the reference to the heart here than to the kidneys. The heart is the mainspring of all our thoughts and actions. To refine it is to take away all extraneous and devious motives and desires. The spiritual sense of the kidneys relates to its practical place in our bodies. It is the organ that cleanses the body of impurities, taking out of the system that which would poison should it remain. The refining of the kidneys in a spiritual sense means the intensifying of our sensitivity to evil, error, depravity, and all that is contrary to the life of faith. The kidneys are referred to in the Greek Scriptures in Revelation 2:23, where the spiritual significance is similar to that in the Hebrew. There are five references to the kidneys in the Psalms. They are tested and refined. They discipline David. They are acquired by Ieue and in David's depravity they are vacillating (73:21) that is they fluctuate in opinion and resolution.

Donald G. Hayter

DAVIDIC

27 **Ieue** is **my Light and my Salvation.**
f *a*Whom **shall I fear?**
Ieue is the **strength of my life.**
*f*Of *a*whom **shall I be afraid?**
2 *i*When **near to me** draw **evil** doers
to devour `my flesh—
Near **to me my foes and my enemies—**
They´ stumble and fall.
3 **If encamping** *on*against **me is** a **camp,**
My heart shall not fear.
If rising *on*against **me is** a **fight,**
In this I will **trust.**
4 **One** thing **I ask from `Ieue;**
`For **it am I seeking:**
That **I dwell in** the **house of Ieue**
all the **days of my life,**
To perceive Ieue in pleasantness,
And to make a **quest in His temple.**
5 **For He will seclude me in His booth**
in the **day of evil,**
He will conceal me in the **concealment of His tent.**
On a **rock will He exalt me,**
6 **And now exalted is my head over my enemies round about me.**
And I shall sacrifice in His tent
sacrifices of shouting,
I shall sing and make **melody to Ieue.**
7 **Hear, Ieue!** With **my voice am I calling;**
Be gracious to **me and answer me.**

8 **To you, my heart, He says, "Seek My face."**
9 **`Thy face, Ieue, will I seek.**
Thou must not conceal Thy face from me.
Thou must not turn aside Thy servant in anger!
My Help Thou becomest.
Thou must not abandon me,
And Thou must not forsake me,
Alueim of my salvation!
10 **For my father and my mother forsake me,**
+Yet Ieue will gather me.
11 **Direct me, Ieue,** in **Thy way**
And guide me in a **straight path**
on account of those **regarding me.**
12 **Thou must not give me** up **[t]o** the **soul of my foes,**
For false witnesses rise [a]gainst me
And breathe out violence.
13 **I believe to see [i]** the **goodness of Ieue**
in the **land of** the **living.**
14 **Be expectant** toward **Ieue!**
`Be steadfast and He will [c]make your heart resolute.
And be expectant toward **Ieue!**

IN THE SANCTUARY

Every one of the Psalms is a treasure trove of divine consolation and teaching. In them all are scintillating statements whose brilliance enlightens our path and vivifies our heart. These gems of truth shine the brighter because of the darker portions in them concerning our foes and failures.

Such a Psalm is this one. Its brightest parts are concerned with the presence of the Lord. David's longing was toward Ieue, to dwell continuously in the light of His face. From all his needs and wishes he singles out one that dominates his prayers. *One* thing he asks of the Lord and for this he was seeking—to dwell in the house of Ieue all the days of his life. In its pleasantness he would luxuriate in the Lord's presence and perceive Him there, and make a quest there for a fuller knowledge of His glory. The Lord responds, "Seek My face." And David instantly answers "Thy face, Ieue, will I seek." Should Ieue conceal His face, where else would come his help and rejoicing? He knew no other source. Though he were forsaken by those closest to him, his father and his mother, yet he was confident that Ieue would never forsake him. Rather would He take him to Himself and direct and guide him along a straight path, which led to a known and desired haven. His faith was resolute and he was sure that he would see the goodness of Ieue in the land of the living.

He ends with a phrase which sums up a fundamental principle of life and expresses the pith and marrow of experience, "Be expectant toward Ieue." So vital is the message that he repeats it, "And be expectant toward Ieue." This is a word appropriate to every season in life, and should be indelibly inscribed on the tablets of our hearts. If we expect nothing, nor look for an answer to our prayers and aspirations we are not walking in spirit. Expectation is the heart and substance of faith. If we believe then we expect. He is able and He will withold nothing that is for our good. He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, be graciously granting us all. All we have and are is His

bounty, and if we need more He can and will supply it if it suits His purposes of blessing for us. If expectancy is lacking in our prayers, then as they ascend to God they will lack some of the sweet aroma that delights Him in our stretching out toward Him.

What a lovely spirit was David's! So much did he love his Lord that he related all to Him. There was no step in his way but that he found in it something to prompt praise, acclamation and prayer. He saw the Lord always before him and near him. He was his All. Nothing did he desire more than to be near Him. His chief ambition was to be where He tabernacled. He wished to dwell near Him and to praise and seek Him continually.

Our Lord is not now in any special building on earth. We, His saints, are His temple, for His Spirit is making its home within us. But His physical presence is in the heavens above, until He descends into the air to assemble us there. He now dwells in the celestial Jerusalem in the true and perfect tabernacle there, in the presence of His Father. There we may enter in spirit. We may in spirit look upon His face and see in it the effulgent glory of His God. We are even seated there. This is transcendent grace indeed, for to be seated in the presence of the Most High is reserved for the highest and noblest of those who can approach Him. Even the mighty messengers stand there. But we are seated. There we seek the face of our Lord. Thy face, O Lord, will we seek!

Donald G. Hayter

The little envelope-size pamphlet entitled, "God's Perfect Plan," is once more in print (five cents). This was written many years ago by our late brother, Ted Silva.

THE ORIGIN OF THE ECCLESIA

IN STUDYING A SUBJECT, it is well to begin at the beginning. We have to go back a very long way indeed to find the beginning of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ.

In Ephesians 1:3, Paul tells us that we were chosen "in Him before the disruption of the world." This is the only time that Paul uses that phrase, "the disruption of the world," and he does it in order to place the origin of the ecclesia before it. This is something that we hope to examine in more detail later in this series.

In his second letter to Timothy, however, Paul takes us even further back when he writes, " . . . God, Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus *before times eonian.*"

This is as far back as it is possible for our minds to travel. The Scriptures refer to no time prior to this. Even such absolute expressions as "All is out of God" lie within the concept of the phrase, "before times eonian." If we think of "God alone"—a stupendous thought—before creation came into being, we are still "before eonian times." What then is the meaning and significance of this phrase? An answer to this double question will throw much light upon the origin and designation of the ecclesia.

The eonian times are specifically related to the purpose of God. In Ephesians 3:11—a supremely important passage—we have the expression, "the purpose of the eons." The eons thus define the limits of the purpose of God, which, like the eons, has both a commencement and a consummation. They were created in order to confine His purpose within set bounds, for it could not be left free to come to no conclusion in the boundlessness of eternity. That is why it is wrong to speak of an *eternal* purpose of God, as the King James Version implies, but rather of an *eonian* one.

Anything that is "before eonian times" is therefore antecedent to God's purpose. In saying this, we do not necessarily mean that it is prior to His purpose being determined within the recesses of His own mind, but it is certainly prior to its being put into operation. And this is of prime importance in the case of the ecclesia, for, as we hope to show as this series of articles proceeds, God's purpose is made to depend upon the special relationship which exists between Christ and His ecclesia. It requires both to bring about its glorious fulfillment. For if Christ is the *means* by which God achieves His ultimate goal, the ecclesia is the *medium* through which He achieves it. Hence Paul prays that God may have glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus throughout all the generations of the eon of the eons. Amen!

The gift referred to in 2 Timothy 1:9 is not a general one made to all creation, or even to all humanity, but is specifically given to "us in Christ Jesus," and the "us" is defined in the earlier part of the verse as we who are called "with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times

eonian." Now a gift cannot be made unless there is someone to receive it, and it is made abundantly clear that the gift is to "us in Christ Jesus" and *not* to "Christ Jesus on our behalf." Therefore we, that is, the ecclesia, must have been in existence before the eons began, though this existence was not as a separate entity, but as perceived by God in Christ Jesus.

This second letter to Timothy is the last of Paul's recorded epistles, written when the period of his dissolution was imminent (4:6). It is instructive to observe a progression of thought as we move through his writings.

In his earlier letters, he sees believers as those who have been baptized *into* Christ Jesus; we are baptized *into* His death (Romans 6:3). We are chosen from that which is not, that God should be discarding that which is, so that no flesh at all should be boasting in His sight (1 Cor.1:28,29). In Ephesians, the first letter of the prison group, we are chosen *in* Him before the disruption of the world. By the time we come to the end of his writings, we are seen as having been in Christ before times eonian.

How do we reconcile all these positions? Let us go right back to the beginning and trace the matter through.

THE SON OF GOD'S LOVE

The very beginning of all is *God*. There was a time when He was alone, for out of Him is all. At some point in the dim and distant past, His vast love—that feeling which was the essence of His very self—longed for love responsive. It yearned for someone to return His own feeling. Out of that intense longing and yearning was created the Son of God's love (Col.1:13).

That Christ is a created Being is made clear from several scriptures. Revelation 3:14 speaks of Him as "the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, and *God's creative Original.*" 1 Corinthians 8:6 declares, "Nevertheless for us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him." In this passage the distinction between God and Christ is made clear. God is before Christ, and all is *out* of Him. All is not *out* of Christ, but *through* Him. Christ Himself is out of God, for He is God's Complement.

This distinction is again made clear by comparing Romans 11:33-36 with Colossians 1:12-17. In the former scripture, which speaks of God, we read that "out of Him and through Him and for Him is all." In the latter, which speaks of Christ as the Son of God's love, we learn that "all is created through Him and for Him," but not *out* of Him.

This description of Christ as the Son of God's love is most profound and most illuminating. God's Son is the evidence and the expression of the full outpouring of the Divine affection. God's love desired a response, and found a complete satisfaction in the One He brought forth. And latent in this One, Who now added His sublime splendor to the glory of His Father, lay the Divine concept of the ecclesia, which in turn was to become the complement of Christ.

When God wishes us to understand the spiritual, He often gives us the natural as an illustration—in this case the relationship between the first man and the first woman. When humanity was created, we are told, "And creating is the Alueim humanity in His image. In the image of the Alueim He creates it. *Male and female* He creates *them.*" Again, in Genesis 5:1,2 we

read, "In the day the Alueim created Adam, in the likeness of the Alueim He made him. *Male and female* created He them. And blessing *them* is He, and calling *their* name Adam in the day they are created." Thus from the very moment of Adam's coming into being the woman was associated with man in the Divine purpose. She was a reality in God's operations.

The same is true of Christ and the ecclesia. The ecclesia is as long existent as is Christ Himself. Though concealed in the Son, it was sufficiently a reality as to be the recipient of a gift of grace in Christ Jesus.

THE MEANING OF GRACE

Grace has two distinct aspects in Scripture. We generally think of it as favor bestowed on one who deserves the opposite. This is how it is used in Ephesians 2:5,8. "In grace are you saved." This is how it is applied to each of us individually. But this is not the meaning of the word as used in Philippians 2:9, "Wherefore, also God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name." There is no suggestion here that Christ deserved any other appellation than that which God bestowed upon Him; the word "wherefore" discounts this.

The basic meaning behind the word *charis*, translated "grace," is "joy." The Greek word *chara* actually means "joy," and *charoo* is the verb form meaning "rejoice." So *charis* (grace) is defined in the *Keyword Concordance* as "an act producing happiness," and this is its first meaning. "A benefit bestowed upon one who deserves the opposite" is a secondary, though immensely important, meaning of the word.

As a result of Christ's obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, God graces Him with a name which is above every name, and the resultant happiness is made evident in the words that follow, "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" (Phil.2:10). In this particular bestowal of grace by the One Who is in all things Supreme, there ensues a special happiness to Christ Himself, for by His exaltation with its accompanying acclamation by all creation, He is assured of the wholly satisfactory outcome of His toil and travail on the cross.

There also ensues a happiness to every creature in the universe, for it is in the name of *Jesus* that every knee shall bow, and the word "Jesus" implies salvation (Matt.1:21). But above all, a special happiness accrues to God Himself, for through this bestowal of grace on His Son, the universe, temporarily estranged from its Creator and Sustainer, is brought back into reconciliation with Himself, peace having been made through the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20). Thus the whole operation is "for the glory of God, the Father."

Now, when the gift of grace was bestowed upon the ecclesia before eonian times, this too was in the nature of "an act producing happiness." It is not, in this connection, "a benefit bestowed on one who deserves the opposite," for nothing had occurred at that time to evoke estrangement or opposition to God. And the happiness that this gift produces is not confined to the ecclesia itself, for as we shall see in later studies the ecclesia is designed to be the medium through which the reconciliation of all will be completed (Eph.1;23).

Thus we have so far reached a situation in which we are able to assess that the ecclesia was originally created in Christ as a result of God's love desiring to express itself, and was given a gift of grace as a consequence of God's longing to bring happiness to all His creatures. What a privileged position!

But if this is so, where has the ecclesia been throughout all the period covered by the Hebrew Scriptures—indeed, throughout half the period covered by the eons—the part prior to the cross?

ADAM'S COMPLEMENT

We can best answer this by again looking at our natural illustration, and noting the sequence of events in Genesis 2:18-25.

"And saying is Ieue Alueim, 'Not good is it for the human for him to be alone. Make for him will I a helper as his complement.' And furthermore Ieue Alueim, having formed from the ground . . . ." We pause for a moment and ask, What did God form from the ground?

Was it a woman that He formed? The answer is, No. We continue, " . . . having formed from the ground all field life and every flyer of the heavens, He is also bringing it to the human to see what he will call it." We may ask, Whatever has this to do with finding a complement for Adam? But wait. Let us read on. "And whatever the human living soul is calling it, that is its name. And calling is the human the names for every beast and for every flyer of the heavens, and for all field life. *Yet for the human He [God] does not find a helper as his complement.*"

Now do we see the force of this scripture? That out of all which had been created, there was not one that could be found to be a complement for man. All could

be brought to him to be named, and the names that he gave them could be associated with them for perpetuity, but there was no one to which the name of complement could be given. Why? Because all these were external and of different species, and the one that was to be his complement must come from within, and be of the same kind. The word "complement" means "that which fills up," and there could be no filling up if the place were not first made vacant. Adam, before the woman was taken from him, was complete in himself; afterwards, the woman made him complete.

CHRIST'S COMPLEMENT

Now this teaches us a very great scriptural truth with regard to Christ and His ecclesia. The analogy is the same. Our Lord, we know, created all things; He was God's Executor; without Him not one thing came into being which has come into being. Everything received its name and its character from Him. And yet, in all the magnitude of creation, among all the hosts of heaven that inhabit the vastnesses of space (and heaven is not short of inhabitants) there were none who could rightly be termed His complement. There were none of the same kind. No, His complement too must come from within, and that is why we have it, "chosen *in* Him before the disruption of the world."

This is the aspect of the ecclesia which is ever before the eyes of God. He sees it preeminently, not as a multifarious conglomeration of individuals, chosen from without, to be brought *into* Christ (although, from another aspect, this is indeed a fact), but God views it as a single entity, holy and precious, and chosen from within.

It is on this "within" aspect of the ecclesia that we desire to ponder. It is this "within" aspect that entitles it to be called, "the ecclesia which is *His body*," and which gives it an absolutely unique position in the whole universe. It is the most exalted position that can be held by any of God's creations apart from Christ Himself; it is also the most intimate position in its relationship to God. The standing of the ecclesia before God is influenced and determined only by the standing of the Son of God's love in the eyes of His Father. The relationship of the ecclesia to Christ, the bond that exists between them, and the strength of the love which Christ has for His complement are things that can only be appreciated, even faintly, by those whose minds are constantly dwelling on things above.

THE COMPLEMENT NOT A BRIDE

If only believers in general understood the true relationship between Adam and the one who was made his complement, they would much better understand the nature of the tie which exists between Christ and His ecclesia. *Adam never had to seek a bride.* He never had to woo anybody. Indeed, as we have seen, there was no one among all creation that could be found as suitable for his complement. It was left to God to find one for him, *and God did not form another being from the soil of the ground.* Such a one might have become a companion for Adam, but could never have functioned as his complement. No, God provided Adam with a true complement, taken from within himself.

And so it is with Christ. To find the ecclesia, which is His body, the Lord never comes to earth as a Bridegroom seeking a bride. He never comes to seek a

complement from without: He leaves it to God to provide one from within.

If, as we say, believers in general only understood this, they would not sing such a hymn as "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord," without, among other things, altering the lines, "From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride." It is good poetry, and a favorite hymn, but it is simply not true in connection with the ecclesia which is His body.

It is correct, of course, that the Lord is pictured in the Scriptures as a Bridegroom, but that is in connection with His relationship to the nation which He served when He came to earth. The faithful in Israel will be the bride, and ultimately the wife, of the *Lambkin*; there is no such term as "the Bride of *Christ*" in the Word of God. The position of the ecclesia about which we are writing, is infinitely closer and more gloriously connected to its Lord and Head than ever the Israelitish bride of the Lambkin can be.

How then did Adam obtain his complement if he did not go forth to seek her? The answer is given in Genesis 2:21 and 22. "And falling is a stupor on the human, caused by Ieue Alueim, and he is sleeping. And taking is He one of his angular organs and is closing the flesh under it. And Ieue Alueim is building the angular organ which He takes from the human into a woman, and bringing her is He to the human. And saying is the human, 'This was once bone of my bones and flesh from my flesh. This shall be called woman, for from her man is this taken.' "

Who did this? Who performed this miracle? Ieue Alueim. Adam was quiescent throughout the whole operation. And so, for a similar reason, we find Paul saying, in Ephesians 1:3, "Blessed be the *God and*

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as *He* chooses us *in Him* before the disruption of the world."

And so, to answer our earlier question, all down the centuries covered by the Hebrew Scriptures the ecclesia was hidden, as it were, in Christ, oblivious of the passage of time, oblivious even of its existence, unknown and unseen by anyone. It was, however, from the very beginning a great reality in the mind and purpose of God. In due course, God caused a deep stupor to fall upon His Son, the stupor of death. For three days He lay in the tomb, and was then roused by the mighty power of God, and from that time, in God's sight, the ecclesia began a separate existence—a glorious celestial existence to accord with the status of her risen Lord, for its realm is "*inherent* in the heavens" (Phil.3:20)—and she is to be presented to Christ, without spot or blemish, as His complement—that without which, even in His highest exaltation, He would not be complete.

CHRIST'S LOVE FOR HIS ECCLESIA

Adam's sleep was for his own sake, it is true, that he might have a companion, but in a special sense it was for the woman, that she might have a conscious and separate existence. Christ's death was, as we know, for all, but in a very special sense indeed it was for the ecclesia, that it, too, might have a conscious and separate existence. And so we read, "according as Christ also loves the ecclesia, and gives Himself up for its sake . . . that He should be presenting to Himself a glorious ecclesia"—an ecclesia in which, through its union with Christ, God Himself would be able to find

glory throughout all the generations of the eon of the eons. Amen!

Thus, not the least of the blessings accruing to Christ as a result of His being obedient unto death is the fact that He now has a complement, the ecclesia, which He dearly loves (Eph.5:25), and which should be reciprocating that love.

We close this section of our study by quoting Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14.

On this behalf am I bowing my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after Whom every kindred in the heavens and on earth is being named, that He may be giving you, in accord with the riches of His glory, to be made staunch with power, through His Spirit, in the man within, Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, having been rooted and grounded in love, should be strong to grasp, together with all the saints, what is its breadth and length and depth and height—to know, besides, *the knowledge transcending love of Christ*—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God.

John H. Essex

(To be continued)

SIMPLE TESTS FOR FALSE TEACHING

Does it glorify God or magnify man? Does God become All in all, or man all in himself? Is it the exceeding riches of His grace, or the futile efforts of self-sufficient sinners? Is it Christ' sacrifice or man's works that save? Is blessing in Him or in ourselves? Does it apply in this secret administration, or is it in place only in other dispensations? Is it national or individual? Is it for Israel or for the nations? A.E.K.

UPON REFLECTION

IT IS ONE of the peculiarities of the English language that it contains a number of words, similarly spelled and pronounced, but nevertheless having dissimilar meanings.

It is a peculiarity which often has a charm all its own, and in quite a number of such cases there can be discovered an affinity between these words, not always immediately obvious, but which provides a link between the diverse meanings.

Such a word is *reflection*, which is primarily defined as a property or ability of certain substances to throw back the rays of light or heat which may strike them, and in some cases to reproduce the likeness or a corresponding image of the source of their reflection.

But *reflection* can also mean "to consider in the mind," to become thoughtful, usually in regard to things of the past or of the absent. And the affinity between these meanings is clear enough, the first denoting a physical phenomenon—a bending back of rays—while the second comprises a mental similarity whereby thought is thrown back on itself for attentive consideration and meditation.

We must not overlook a third way in which this word is sometimes used, a much more unfortunate way, one that is inherent in the phrase "to cast reflections" upon someone or something. But here the af-

finity still remains of "throwing back," even if that which is thrown back is censure or discredit.

Each of these meanings of *reflection* has a real application in the life of the individual believer, and to employ the second of its meanings it would be profitable for us to reflect upon these meanings and their applications. What do we reflect? And what do we reflect upon? And upon whom (and why) do we sometimes cast reflections?

Writing to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul declares: "*Now we all, with uncovered face, viewing the Lord's glory as in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image, even as from the Lord, the spirit*"(2 Cor.3:18).

Quite evidently, the apostle expects every believer to reflect, and to reflect a glory, even the Lord's glory. But in order to do this we have to view that glory; otherwise we cannot mirror it. Earlier in the same chapter Paul has much to say about glory for he speaks about Moses and the glory which was reflected from his face as he descended from Sinai. It was a reflection from the glorious God with Whom he had been conversing, even though the law was a dispensation of death by letters chiseled in stone. Israel could not look intently into the face of Moses by reason of this glory, but although the glory shone forth from him while he was speaking, when he had finished he covered his face so that they might not observe that the glory was vanishing.

It was a fading glory, a fading reflection, because the words which he had to announce were themselves not of a lasting nature. Israel still looks at that law through a covering, not on the face of Moses, but one which lies on their own hearts, for they never were able to realize that any glory the law once had, has

been entirely outshone by Him Who became the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes in Him.

Only individuals in Israel were able to reflect Jehovah's glory; the remainder, even in the remote years, suffered from that covering on their hearts, which persisted even when Messiah appeared in person, although some, like the apostle John, beheld His glory, a glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

It is also our unspeakable privilege in this day of grace to see that glory as in a mirror, and be transformed into the same image.

If the Lord's glory shines upon us, it follows that we must reflect that glory, in a greater or lesser degree, to those around us. The phrase is used deliberately, for the reflective power of the individual must vary from person to person. It is an established law of optics that "the angle of reflection is equal to the angle of incidence;" in other words, that any reflective surface gives off its reflection at the equivalent angle to that at which the light strikes it. It follows from this that if we are to present our Lord's true reflection, our standing and relationship to Him must be such that we can offer a full and accurate image of Him.

In spirit, we bear a relationship to Him of such exquisite quality and accuracy that when God looks upon us He sees, not the poor specimens that we are in ourselves, but the reflection of His Christ, for He has placed us in Christ, to His everlasting praise. And that image we reflect is one which is working in us, even now, to transform us into a true similarity to Him Who is our Light.

But in flesh, where so many limitations still have us in thrall, the image we reflect around us must be

equivalent to the angle at which we look upon and understand the truth as it is in Him Who is not only the Light, but the Truth also. Any distortion in our concept of the Scriptures will be reflected—literally—in the reflection we offer of the God of the Scriptures. To use the word in its other sense, we should reflect upon the responsibility that is ours in this particular capacity.

Living in the solar system, we are dependent for everything physical upon the light of the sun. Not only is it the source of all energy and sustenance, but it is also the source of all light and color. We are often told that we live in a universe of color, but in nature nothing has any color of its own; the colors which we see are merely the reflections of the light which falls upon an object, and every object absorbs and reflects light according to its own atomic structure. And naturally the reflections vary with the source and kind of light, as any woman will confirm who has taken a garment to the door of a shop to discover what its real (daylight) color is. The source of the light is all-important in the natural world. It is no less significant in the spiritual realm. Beware, said our Lord, lest the light that is in you be darkness! He knew all there is to know regarding light, for, as He said, "So long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the World."

A familiar feature of popular amusement parks is the distorting mirror, the source of much hilarity among children. With these there is no fault to find regarding the source, for the distortion is caused by the construction of the mirror. It is fatally easy for a believer to reflect like one of these in the spiritual sense, and it is something which all of us should constantly guard against. Is the God Whom we reflect *really* the God of the Scriptures? Could He not often

be something out of our own imaginings? The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ cannot possibly be reflected as a tyrant who condemns the majority of His creatures to endless torment, yet by the distortion caused by some who claim Him as Father, He is so purported to be. There are many other and subtle ways in which we as believers can misrepresent and distort the image of our Lord (He is so caricatured and distorted in many of today's religious movements) that we must endeavor to avoid anything of that nature by all the means within our power. As the early disciples reflected Him, so that the Jews "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus," in the same way should we be so assured and informed in God's Word that we do indeed present a true picture. It simply will not do to adopt the attitude of "Do as I say, never mind what I do," for precept and practice are indissolubly united in the Christ, hence they should be likewise in those who wish to reflect Him. This is a very challenging but inescapable conclusion.

All through Scripture can be traced the implication that the follower after God has a duty to reflect, accurately, the One in Whom he believes. Not only does Moses mirror the glory of God as he descends from Sinai, but other individuals all through the inspired records indicate in one way or another that their duty is to set forth a true picture of Him Whose Name they invoke. Our Lord Himself was always insistent that everything He said or did was to reflect in the eyes of men the words and the deeds of His Father. In our lesser way, and in accordance with the light we have, we should do no less. We should take to heart Paul's words, and be imitators of him, even as he was an imitator of Christ.

The apostle writes, "We have the mind of Christ." And to return to our remark regarding the other interpretations of the word, the more we reflect upon the revealed mind of the Lord the more are we likely to act as reflectors of Him. The writer of Proverbs says (27:19) "As in water face answers to face, so the mind of man reflects the man." And just as we, as in a mirror, behold the glory of the Lord, and are thereby being transformed into that same image, so may we reflect that glory to others, and thereby magnify that glory. What a glorious privilege! Cecil J. Blay

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PERILOUS PERIODS

In a recent letter from our missionary friend, Antonio Oblenda (of the Philippines), we read about civil unrest, reminding us of Paul's words in 2 Timothy 3:1, "Now this know that in the last days perilous periods will be present." Brother Oblenda writes of rebels, "Muslims and Christians alike" who threaten both life and peace in many areas of his country. His work in Kolambugen was halted due to these hostilities, and in December and January there were mass evacuations to his home area and other more secure regions.

Yet perhaps the most significant statement of his letter was this reaction to these troubles: "Being luminaries in the world we are to be doing all without murmurings and reasonings, becoming blameless and artless, children of God . . . ." This also reminds us of Paul's conclusion about "the last days" in 2 Timothy 3. "Now you fully follow me in my teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings . . . ."

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WHAT IS SPIRIT?

PART TWO

THE GREEK WORD FOR SPIRIT

We leave the Hebrew word at this point in order to establish the fact that the Greek word for spirit has practically the same force, though slightly different in its derivation and more precise in its form. The word is *pneuma.* It enters into many English words, such as *pneumatic,* all of which have to do with air or spirit. The verb, *pneœ,* signifies BLOW, and is usually spoken of the wind, as will be seen in the following list, which has all of its occurrences. The concordant renderings are given, as some distinctions are absent from other translations.

pneō, BLOW, breeze

Mt. 7:25, 27 And the rain descended, and the torrents came, and the winds *blow*
Lu. 12:55 whenever *it is blowing* from the south
Jn. 3: 8 The blast *is blowing* where it wills and you are hearing the sound of it
6:18 The sea was roused by the *blowing* of a great wind
Ac. 27:40 hoisting the foresail to the *breeze*
Un. 7: 1 that the wind may not *be blowing* on the land, nor on the sea, nor on any tree

A glance over this list will show that the basic idea is almost identical with that of the Hebrew *ruch.* It refers to the *movement of the atmosphere.* Usually the wind is mentioned. But the usual word *wind* is not derived from this root in Greek. It is a special term *anemos.* Hence we have rendered BLOWING by *breeze*

in Acts 27:40. These occurrences are all literal, and should give us a vivid impression from which to form an idea of the operations of spirit. It is an invisible, intangible force, at times gentle, at other times of terrific power.

The noun derived from this verb, *pnoê,* occurs only twice, yet in both passages there is so close a connection between the material and spiritual that they will repay consideration.

pnoê, BLOWing, blast, breath

17:25 giving to all life and *breath* and all
Ac. 2: 2 There came out of heaven a blare even as a violent carrying *blast*

The blast accompanying the manifestations of the spirit at Pentecost was the physical counterpart and symbol of the spiritual power which was present. It was a day of signs and sensational evidences to unseen realities. For our present purpose it is sufficient for us to note that "a violent carrying blast," a powerful and sustained current of air, was the apt emblem of the spirit's operations. Paul, at Athens, gives us a different picture. The intake of air is a necessity for physical life. The breath is the symbol of the spirit, just as the blood, which is the combination of the breath with the body, stands for the soul. Later on we will consider the close relation between the breath and spirit in mankind.

The word *pneuma,* which is translated *spirit* hundreds of times, comes from the same root as the words we have just considered. Hence the underlying thought is connected with BLOWING. But the special ending *-ma* denotes the *effect* produced. Hence we may translate it BLOW-*effect.* It seems to suggest the *energy* of the moving atmosphere. It is seldom used in

a literal sense. Once (Heb.1:7) we have the couplet,

> Who is making His messengers *blasts,*
> And His ministers a flame of fire.

As the corresponding member, "a flame of fire" is literal, we are forced to render *pneuma* likewise. Otherwise the parallelism is marred. In John 3:8 we read of the *sound* of *pneuma.* Hence it also is literal, for spirit cannot be heard.

DEFINITIONS OF SPIRIT

We may now venture to formulate a general definition of *spirit,* depending on our further investigations to verify, amplify and correct our understanding of it. We will follow the general definition by four secondary and more specific explanations, each of which forms a division of the subject. These definitions are from our *Keyword Concordance.*

Spirit is the invisible, intangible power of action, life, and intelligence. It is an intelligent principle of action (Luke 9:55; 2 Cor.12:18), as the spirit of meekness (1 Cor.4:21), of prophecy (Rev.19:10), of faith (2 Cor.4:13), of sonship (Rom.8:15), of power and love and sanity (2 Tim.1:7), of slavery (Rom.8:15), of stupor (Rom.11:8), and of the world (1 Cor.2:12). It is used of the life principle common to animals (Ecc.3:21), and mankind (Gen.6:17). It is also applied to metaphysical beings (2 Chr.18:20) without flesh or bones (Luke 24:39), which are usually unclean or evil (1 Tim.4:1), as well as demons (Luke 4:33) and messengers (Rev.4:5).

Its highest use denotes the divine power as manifested in His invisible, intangible operations (John 4:24), the Spirit of God, that holy Spirit (Matt.1:18; John 3:8; Acts 13:2) which comes on men

for power (Acts 1:8), baptizes for cleansing (Acts 1:5) and unifying (1 Cor.12:13), filling for utterance (Acts 2:4; Eph.5:18), sealing for safety (Eph.1:13), and homing (1 Cor.3:16) for permanent fellowship.

IMPERSONAL SPIRITS

In studying such a difficult metaphysical theme, it will help us to segregate the usages of the word spirit, and group those of the same kind together. The first great distinction that suggests itself is that of *personal* and *impersonal.* Though spirit is usually used of intelligent beings, it also denotes the inward moving force, that which animates and controls action. The widest view of this is presented to us in the following contrast:

1 Co. 2:12 Now we obtained, not the *spirit* of the world, but the *spirit* which is of God

We cannot well make the spirit of the world a personality. It is the *zeitgeist,* the trend of the times, the undercurrent which is carrying the world on its course. So also, there is a counter current, closely associated but not identified with the holy Spirit, which is of God.

Other more specific instances in which the spirit is the impelling power, the actuating motive, will be of interest.

1 Jn. 4: 6 By this we are knowing the *spirit* of truth and the *spirit* of deception.
1 Pt. 4:14 the *spirit* of glory and power, and that of God has came to rest on you
Eph. 1:17 a *spirit* of wisdom and revelation
Ro. 8:15 you get the *spirit* of sonship
2 Co. 4:13 the same *spirit* of faith
Heb.10:29 outrages the *spirit* of grace
1 Co. 4:21 in love as well as the *spirit* of meekness
Ga. 6: 1 in a *spirit* of meekness

In contrast with these are the following (the first has already been quoted).

1 Jn. 4: 6 the *spirit* of deception
2 Ti. 1: 7 God gives us, not a *spirit* of timidity
Ro. 11: 8 God gives them a *spirit* of stupor
15 you did not get slavery's *spirit* again, to fear
Lu. 13:11 a woman having a *spirit* of infirmity

Not only is the kosmos or world characterized by a special spirit, but the times of the eons are distinguished from the preceding and succeeding times by the "eonian spirit." It is associated with sin and redemption. Hence we have the notable expression,

Heb. 9:14 Who, through the eonian *spirit*, offers Himself

The term spirit is used to denote the true inward urge or motivating force, in contrast with outward appearance; the actual intent or meaning rather than the letter.

Ro. 2:29 But that which is hidden is the Jew, and circumcision is of heart, in *spirit*, not in letter
7: 6 slaving in newness of *spirit* and not in oldness of letter
Ga. 5:25 in *spirit* we may be observing the fundamentals
2 Co. 3: 6 a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the *spirit*
Eph. 4: 23 be rejuvenated in the *spirit* of your mind
Un. 19:10 the testimony of Jesus is the *spirit* of prophecy

Time or place is usually known to us by means of our bodily sensations. To receive impressions apart from the body just as if it were in another place or time, is indicated by *in spirit*.

Un. 1:10 I came to be, in *spirit*, in the Lord's day
4: 2 immediately I came to be in *spirit*
17: 3 And he carries me away, in *spirit*, into a wilderness
21:10 And he carries me away, in *spirit*, on a mountain

Much that exists is formal, and sometimes empty. Such was the ritual of divine worship given to Israel.

God, being Spirit, desires its force rather that its form. He craves the invisible, intangible reality of which the outward is but the counterpart.

Jn. 4:23 true worshipers will be worshiping the Father in *spirit* and truth
Ph. 3: 3 we are the Circumcision, who are offering divine service to God in *spirit*
Eph. 2:22 built together for God's dwelling place, in *spirit*

That which has no physical basis or occasion, which is metaphysical, is associated with spirit.

Mt. 5: 3 happy, in *spirit*, are the poor
22:43 How then is David, in *spirit*, calling Him Lord,
Ro. 15:30 through the love of the *spirit*
Co. 1: 8 make evident to us your love in *spirit*
Ga. 5:25 If we may be living in *spirit*
1 Pt. 4: 6 should be living according to God, in *spirit*
Eph. 6:18 be praying on every occasion, in *spirit*
1 Co. 14:16 if you should be blessing, in *spirit*
Eph. 5:18 be filled with *spirit*
Ga. 5:16 Be walking in *spirit*
18 if you are led by *spirit*
1 Co. 14: 2 in *spirit* he is speaking secrets
Ga. 5: 5 We are awaiting, in *spirit*, the expectation of righteousness by faith
Eph. 3: 3 in *spirit*, the nations are to be joint enjoyers

Unity, in Israel, was attained by physical relationship. They had a common ancestry. Now, however, unity between the Lord and His own, and that between saints is based on the possession of a common spirit. They are energized by the same vital power which impels them in the same direction.

1 Co. 6:17 he who is joined to the Lord is one *spirit*
12:13 in one *spirit* we all were baptized into one body, . . . and all were made to imbibe one *spirit*
Eph. 4: 4 one body and one *spirit*
2:18 access, in one *spirit*, to the Father
2 Co. 12:18 walk we not in the same *spirit*?
Ph. 1:27 standing firm in one *spirit*, one soul

In many cases it seems impossible to draw a distinct line between spirit "personal" and "impersonal."

Indeed, this distinction is forced upon us by the philosophy of men rather than the Word of God. It is often very difficult to decide. For example, in connection with the human spirit, we will give a list in which flesh and spirit are contrasted. Perhaps these passages should be listed as "impersonal." The human spirit is certainly "personal" in the accepted sense, yet, if we do so, the contrast demands that we make the flesh "personal" also. Some who insist on the personality of the human spirit, do not care to extend it to the flesh. It is the flesh *of* a person. And it is the spirit *of* a person. The "personality" consists in their intimate relationship to a person, not in a distinct personality of their own. Our next study will consider the relationship of the spirit and the flesh to the human beings who possess them.

A.E.K.

THREE BODIES?

We wish to state distinctly that we do not believe in three bodies, or three faiths. There is only *one* God, *one* Lord, *one* spirit, for all saints today. There cannot be two, no matter how immature some of us are, or how little we know. In the same sense there is only *one* faith, *one* expectation, and *one* body. We earnestly desire to repudiate the teaching that there is one body for the initiates into the mystery, another for those who know less, and another for the mass of believers. The spirit has made us *one* body. Those who really understand the mystery will keep this unity. The division into three classes is the exact opposite of the truth of the mystery—that it is a *joint* body. A.E.K.

THE UNIVERSAL REVERSAL

Inclusion and reversal are the keys to universal history. *All* was *in* God in the commencement, and He will become All *in all* at the consummation. All was *created in* the Son of His love and will be *recreated in* His Anointed, the Christ. *All* mankind was *lost in* Adam, through whom death and sin entered. This was countered on the cross by the Son of Adam and thus was *reversed* the course of events, so that *all* are *restored* in Him. By this means God's immanent love is revealed, and He receives the worship and adoration for which His heart hungers. God was the Origin and is the Object of all. Christ, His Son, is the Mediator of all, in the past and in the future. Creation is the beneficiary of all and mankind the means of blessing all.

This method of divine operation may be seen throughout God's written revelation as well as in the structure of all animate creation. There are always two complementary parts. Once this is grasped it is a marvelous help to comprehend His Word. Many a text in the Hebrew Scriptures has been restored by noting the parallelism. The inspiration of the Scriptures by the Creator of all the living forms on earth is apparent from their structure. Physical forms of life on earth are the same as spiritual formations that are lifegiving in His Word. May He give us grace to revel in all that He has done, and glorify Him for it.

A.E.K.

GOD'S WORK OF CONCILIATION

(2 Corinthians 5:18,19)

EVERYTHING THAT EXISTS and all that happens has always been and always will be *out of God.* This truth, however, has rarely been appreciated, though Job acknowledged it when he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away," and again, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job 1:21; 2:10). David also praised God saying, "All things are Thy servants" (Psa.119:91). However it is in Paul's evangel for today that this truth that all is of God truly comes to the forefront. The afflictions and burdens mentioned in the first chapter of 2 Corinthians were out of God just as much as was the earnest of the spirit. Both the tears and the triumph of chapter two were out of God as well as the false accusations against the apostles mentioned in chapters three and four. It was also out of God that the believers were being led from glory to glory. Both the old creation and the new creation are out of God. The primitive things are out of God as well as that which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of man did not ascend. Everything is out of God.

Now in 2 Corinthians 5:18,19 we find that every aspect of the evangel is out of God. This is made apparent in the achievement of conciliation. All the action in these verses is on God's part. God conciliates,

and the world is conciliated. God gives a dispensation, and the believer receives it. In and through the death and resurrection of Christ, God moves, ceasing to reckon the offenses of humanity to them, and thus the world benefits. Finally, it is God Who places this word into our hearts, establishing us as ambassadors.

GOD CONCILIATES US

The first fact concerning God's work of conciliation is that He conciliates *us*. God conciliates the believers to Himself. The literal meaning of conciliate is DOWN-CHANGE. In this case there is a change from estrangement to access and from enmity to peace, and it is *God* Who has produced this change. We were like all mankind, *avoiding God* (Rom.3:12), and most of us being Gentiles were *far off* (Eph.2:12,13). Yet now even a believer who is an Israelite according to the flesh enjoys *boldness and access with confidence* (Eph.3:12), and entrance to God's presence far more favorable than that enjoyed by Abraham, Moses, David or Daniel.

We criticize the world for the way it abuses the privilege of conciliation, and yet how fully do we ourselves appreciate its blessings? Many of us approach God as though this glorious change in relationship had never occurred: burdened by guilt, full of dread and apprehension. It is necessary of course to recognize that we have erected and are still erecting barriers of enmity between God and ourselves because of our offenses. But having acknowledged that let us now concentrate on what God has done about it. God has graced us in the Beloved, "in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood, *the forgiveness of offenses* in accord with the riches of His grace" (Eph.1:7). To continue to dwell on our short-

comings is to make us more self-centered and self-conscious. We are to enjoy the accomplishment of God Who has changed this situation by removing the barriers and closing the distance. In this way we will become more God-centered and God-conscious and consequently more useful to Him.

This is what God wants for us. The good news of the conciliation tells us that God has fully effected the change from enmity to peace, drawimg us away from ourselves to Him. Indeed, it brings with it a calmness and contentment which is full of strength and which nourishes us toward maturity.

Many years ago Brother A. E. Knoch wrote of this in his own distinctive style, as follows: "The feeble flicker of faith sometimes lights up His Word, and [the believers] rejoice to find their sins are gone. But how often, in times of stress, they plunge into darkness and despair. O, that they would leave their sins and feelings and all that hinders fellowship with Him and enter into *His* peace! God Himself entreats even His own to receive the Conciliation. Justification is but one of His gifts. It should lead to an acquaintance with the great Giver" (*The Mystery of the Gospel,* page 165).

GOD GIVES A DISPENSATION

It is unfortunate that the word dispensation has come to imply a period of time. The basic idea is not time, but *service.* The work of dispensing a truth, of course, will appear in a specific time period and will characterize that period at least as far as the dispenser and receiver are concerned. But the primary sense of the word is "work done, or that which is given out, for the welfare of others" (*cf Keyword Concordance,* page 266).

It is seldom that a person enjoys the full satisfaction and contentment of knowing that his life has meaning and is useful. Yet this is a fundamental need for us all. God has made us this way, and the glory of it is that God has also filled this need for the believer by supplying the dispensation of the conciliation. We are given an assignment, a job to do, something which God wants done. We dispense (or give out) to others the glad message that God has conciliated the world to Himself.

Let us not imagine that this work of dispensing is our accomplishment. God is the One Who has established peace. He did it in the only way it could be done, through the sacrifice of His Son. Can we measure the love, wisdom and power in the words, "God was in Christ" (2 Cor.5:19)? Does it not indicate that He also suffered? The hurt and wounds which lay in this offense penetrated deep into God's own heart of love, yet now in the conciliation He does not reckon that offense, or any offenses, against mankind.

God is also the One Who reveals this message to us. All we do is receive the privilege of giving it out to others. "All is of God! This is the key to real evangelism. Here we have, in brief, the heart of the true evangel for the world in this administration of grace. The keynote is *conciliation*. Not the sinner conciliating God by penance or prayers, but God conciliating the sinner. The sinner may be most offensive and insulting, but God does not reckon these offenses against him. Let this be clear. God is not charging men with their sins, for Christ died for sins. He is not pressing their offenses, for He is bent on conciliation. The evangel is not concerned with the sinner at all but with God's attitude toward him and with the sufferings of Christ. He has placed in us, not the message of judg-

ment, but the word of conciliation" (*Concordant Commentary,* page 271).

GOD CONCILIATES THE WORLD TO HIMSELF

It has become a cliché to speak of our world as "troubled." Optimism seems to have gone out of style, and we live in days where even "worldly" people prophesy doom and destruction.

Certainly it is true that there will be terrible conditions at the end of this eon and also that today "wicked men . . . wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13), but in this era none of these troubles represent responses from God to the offenses of man. The truth is that God was there at Calvary, "in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them." Therefore, there is a sense in which the world is far better off than was true before this evangel was revealed. As far as the activities of man are concerned we live in a troubled world. But as far as the activities of God are concerned we live in a conciliated world.

Some think that God is inactive. They fail to see His powerful work of conciliation. The powers He performed in the days of Elijah or when our Lord walked the hills of Galilee cannot be compared to this present operation of peace. The real problem is that man is so preoccupied with his own activities (none of which have ever gotten him anywhere except into deeper trouble) that he fails to recognize the most significant accomplishment of our times, God's work of conciliation.

Some also think that God is silent. Again this is likely due to man's own excessive noise. God is not silent, but what He is saying today is so calm and comforting that the harsh and blaring sounds of our world

tend to drown out the message. God is entreating man with these words through His faithful ambassadors: "For Christ's sake be conciliated to God," but what is generally heard is everyone shouting at everyone else about the terrible shape the world is in.

The fact is, however, that God has granted a tremendous blessing to the world. Of course the conciliation does not mean that God has delivered the world from the natural consequences of its sins nor even less that the world is "saved." Sin and lawlessness continue to reign, and God in His indignation upon irreverence and injustice continues to give men over to their dishonorable acts and to the "retribution of their deception which must be" (Rom.1:18-27). The good news of the conciliation is not concerned with man's wicked acts but with *offenses.* Here is where the "change" comes in. Here is where the world differs in this present era from the world of previous times. God is not taking account of the wounds against His feelings. He is not imputing against mankind the hurt which we hurl upon Him. Rather He speaks forth a message of grace and peace, beseeching man to be at peace with Him. What a blessed day this is!

At least we ourselves as believers should recognize the benefits of living in these times. In no other era since Adam was expelled from the Garden of Eden has there been such free access to the heart of God.

GOD PLACES THE WORD IN US

We did not dream up this message of conciliation. It is certainly not the product of human longing, for we do not even care especially for a work which leaves no room for human assistance. We would prefer to propagate the philosophy that "God helps those who

help themselves." But God has made the peace, and God has placed this word of peace in us. He has done the work, and He has given the message.

Several years ago a young student at a Bible Institute told one of his instructors that he wanted to follow Paul in his teachings. The instructor replied, "Take care that you do not end up with Paul, bound in Jerusalem." The young man thought for a moment and then said, "I may not end up in Jerusalem, but I will not be ashamed to be bound with Paul."

It is strange that this good news delivered through the apostle Paul should not be well received. Yet the apostle had to write to Timothy, "You may not be ashamed then, of the testimony of our Lord, nor yet of me, His prisoner, but suffer evil with the evangel in accord with the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8). And in Ephesians he calls for special prayer to speak this message of conciliation, "that to me expression may be granted, in the opening of my mouth with boldness, to make known the secret of the evangel, for which I am conducting an embassy in a chain, that in it I should speak boldly, as I must speak" (Eph.6:19,20).

The word of the conciliation lies at the heart of the evangel for today, and God has placed that word into our keeping. The false traditions of men and the unsound expressions of theology may seem to hem us in and restrict our ministries, "but the Word of God is not bound" (2 Tim.2:9). May we be vigilant in prayer and faithful in proclamation to this happy message of conciliation. May we come to appreciate the privilege of announcing it to the world. And may we be growing in realization of the God Who has made it possible and has given it to us to share with others: the God out of Whom and through Whom and for Whom is all. To Him be the glory for the eons! Amen! D.H.H.

IS PUNISHMENT EVERLASTING?

PART ONE

THE *grand truth concerning the eonian times, now recovered from the Scriptures, will relieve the minds of many noble men.* So said a trained theologian, after having spent seventy years of his life without ever hearing it mentioned. No normal human being desires to believe in everlasting torment, even for his worst enemy. Some of its strongest and noblest advocates have expressed their profound sorrow that they were compelled to teach it, and declared that God Himself would have it otherwise, were it in His power. Those who gloat in it and enjoy preaching it, expose the baseness of their own hearts. The fact that the Bible teaches it may demand acquiescence, but it cannot command heartfelt accord.

The fact that everlasting torment is contrary to God's revealed character and clashes with every human instinct does not disprove it. *If God's Word teaches it, it is true.* But the fact that it is repugnant, not merely to the nature we have by creation, but especially to the spirit we receive as a seal of God's salvation, should lead us to investigate the grounds on which it rests. The original Scriptures are infallible, but the Bible we have is only a translation, into which a measure of human fallibility is mixed. Does the Original teach endless punishment?

A thorough investigation of the terms translated *eternal, everlasting, for ever, for ever and ever,* etc.,

show that the usual versions have entirely missed their import. The *eonian times* is a definite period, with a beginning and an end. It consists of five distinct eons or ages [*evers!*]. All revelation, except a few statements of the apostle Paul, finds its place within these limits. "For ever" is eonian, age-lasting. It reaches up to the last eon. "For ever *and* ever" includes the last eon. *In no case are they endless.* This completely revolutionizes the future outlook in God's Word.

Perceive that "for ever" ceases at the new heavens and new earth, and "for ever *and* ever" last only one eon longer, and closes at the consummation, and we have a new Bible. Almost all the dark, despairing, unreasonable, deranging difficulties vanish. In their place is a righteous God Who brings His creation through awful judgments to its glorious goal by means of the Mediator He has appointed, Christ Jesus. Instead of being defeated, He is triumphant. Instead of a failure, He is a success. Instead of being a heartless fiend, He becomes an affectionate Father. In a word, *He is a real God!*

Nevertheless many oppose this glorious truth and even invoke the Scriptures themselves to support their position. In this article we want to consider the principal passages usually employed in a refutation of our teaching on this subject of punishment, together with our reply. The crucial question is, What does God's Word teach regarding the judgment of the wicked?

We begin with Psalms 9:17 as translated in the Authorized Version, a passage often used to support the orthodox doctrine of "Hell."

> The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

"Hell" is a most confusing and misleading theological term. It is used of hades, which means the *imperceptible,* the unseen. It is used, in Scripture, not merely of the realm of the dead, but of all that cannot be perceived by the human senses, including the powers of darkness. All go there at death, saint and sinner alike. Our Lord went there after He had finished His sacrificial sufferings. Surely *He* did not suffer in "hell!" The parable of the rich man and Lazarus must be interpreted by the other Scriptures, not contrary to them. Gehenna is the vale of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, which was used as an incinerator of the city refuse even in this century. Its fires will burn during the coming Kingdom. Comparatively few criminals will be cast into it. It is not imperceptible. It is as unlike hades as can be. The lake of fire is still another concept. It is never called "hell" in the Bible, for those who come out of hades are cast into it. It should never be confounded with Gehenna, or with the unseen. The word "hell" has become so corrupted by human error that it no longer has any claim to a place in the divine vocabulary. Perhaps no more striking example can be given of its misuse and of the constant effort of our translators to hide the real meaning of the words *sheol* and *hades* than the quotation above. The word *turned* is *shub* in Hebrew, and *always* means *re*turn, as in Genesis 3:19, "till thou *re*turn to the ground." Hundreds of passages might be given to substantiate this. The AV mistranslates this *turn.* Rotherham's Version has *return.* The American Standard Version has *turned back. The wicked came from the unseen. They will return thither.* If one insists on using the term "hell," they came from "hell" and to *that* "hell," where they were before, they

return. This shows that the literal meaning, the *imperceptible,* gives the true significance of the term.

Perhaps the most widely used passage on this subject is Matthew 25:46

> And these shall go away into everlasting punishment but the righteous into life eternal.

It is possible to prove anything by the Bible if we may take texts out of their contexts. We are practically sure of the truth if we keep each passage in its proper place. In Matthew 25:46 the time is limited to the glorious advent of Christ. Have we any right to apply it to all time? That is one of the worst sins that can be committed against God's revelation. It reduces it to inextricable confusion. Let us follow out this idea. We will wrongly suppose that this is "the final judgment of the wicked." Then the Jews will not be judged at all! There are no Jews in this judgment. Only the nations are judged according to their treatment of His brethren. Then "the final judgment" does not deal with all the sins of men, but only with their treatment of the Jews! Then "the final judgment" will not include the dead at all! These nations are not raised from the dead. The context clearly shows that this cannot be the final judgment in any sense.

Preceding our Lord's return in glory to the earth to establish the Kingdom, the Jews will be persecuted as never before. When He comes, Christ will judge the living nations, who survive the terrors of that time, to determine their place in the Kingdom. That will depend entirely on their treatment of His brethren, during the time of Jacob's trouble, not on their other sins. This judgment is not *final.* Matthew deals with the *Kingdom.* The chapter deals with the time of its es-

tablishment. Eonian chastening is here limited to the nations who will not succor the faithful of Israel in their time of sore distress. It has no bearing on the sins of individuals.

We protest against the translation "punishment." *Kolasis,* everywhere else in Greek, denotes corrective chastisement, and is used of *pruning.* Lexicographers rightly reason that it cannot keep this meaning if it is *everlasting.* They therefore change it to suit. "Everlasting" is itself wrong, so they change *kolasis* to correspond with the wrong translation everlasting, making both wrong. Instead, they should have reasoned that *kolasis* was corrective, therefore eonian cannot be endless. Those who do not succor the Jews are given agelong, or *eonian chastening,* not everlasting punishment. The proper Greek word for *punishment* is *timœoria. Kolasis* occurs only twice in the Scriptures, and never of the final judgment. God speaks of the *judgment,* not the punishment of the wicked.

A.E.K.

(To be continued)

ELEANOR J. WRIGHT

December 20, 1974, marked the passing of our sister in the Lord, Mrs. Arthur Wright. She had not been feeling well for some time, and died in her sleep. Born January 30th, 1910, Sister Wright was the wife of Bro. Arthur Wright, who preceded her in death a number of years ago. Bro. Wright was an ardent student and supporter of the Concordant Version, and served as leader of the group in Denver, after Bro. Arthur Lamb moved away.

We extend our sympathy to Marvel Morris, her sister, who survives her. There were no children. One day, perhaps very soon, our sister will be united again with her beloved Arthur, whom she missed so much.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 1975
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-SIX

EDITORIAL

JUSTIFICATION is the first and fundamental fact of salvation, fundamental also to the whole Pauline revelation. Paul alone preaches justification by faith. We are delivered not only from condemnation which was impending but we are delivered from any doubt as to God's righteousness.

The manifestation of divine righteousness was made possible by the faith of Jesus Christ. Our faith in God is rooted in His faith, a faith brought to its supreme and complete expression at the cross. Christ believed that God would save Him out of that unique death under the curse of the law and from that sin which He was made on our behalf. That salvation is completed and made manifest by the fact of His risen life. His faith that God would save Him out of death, made Him the Inaugurator of salvation (Heb.2:10; 5:7).

Justification is the precise antithesis of condemnation. It does not cause righteousness, nor is it a regenerative power. It does not mean that though you were wrong you are pardoned. Neither in classic nor sacred Greek literature has an example been cited where the verb *to justify* means to make righteous. It is always *to account righteous*. This is a theme for a volume and not for brief, disconnected notes such as these.

Righteousness is reckoned to us who are believing. Neither God nor man is deceived as to the character of

the one who is justified. It is the character of the Justifier and His Gift that counts; He maintains that He is justifying the irreverent (Rom.4:5). Nothing is said of any transfer to us of Christ's merits so as to make us meritorious. God reckons a believer in Christ to be what he is not and to be what Christ is.

It is noteworthy that the exclusion of boasting should be mentioned as the first consequence of justification by faith. For, like the Jew, all religious men are inveterate boasters, and even true believers mar their testimony and influence when they boast a superior knowledge and spirituality (Rom.2:17-20; 3:27). Human pride, so offensive to God, vanishes in the presence of grace that justifies sinners as those who are still personally irreverent and unjust.

In Romans we are said to be justified by *grace* (3:24), justified by *blood* (5:9), justified by *faith* (3:28). The grace of God, made possible to sinners through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, is the source of our justification. And grace is the principle on which God justifies sinners in whom He can find no righteousness whatever.

The ground, or the efficient cause, of our justification is the blood of Christ, and blood in the Mosaic institutions means death applied. It was not merely the death of the passover lamb that sheltered Israel in Egypt but the blood, and that only when applied to the door posts of their houses. Only believers are justified by blood.

Justification is by faith because this is the only principle of blessing that is consistent with grace. God's grace is the source of justification, Christ's blood is the ground, faith is the means by which it is received. By faith we have met God as Saviour at the cross of Christ.

Geo. L. Rogers

AMONG THE CELESTIALS

HAVING EXAMINED at some length the origin of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ, we now come to consider the sphere of its activities, and in this connection, one particular phrase in the Scriptures comes prominently to mind. It is the one which heads this study, *among the celestials.*

This is the concordant translation of *en tois epouraniois*, which occurs only in Paul's Ephesian epistle, where, in fact, it appears five times. What a remarkable phrase to be the peculiar property of one letter! Of course, the word translated *celestial* (or heavenly in other versions) occurs in other parts of Scripture; it is the particular form, *en tois epouraniois*, among the celestials (in heavenly places, or in the heavenlies) which is the special property of the Ephesian letter, introduced indeed so early into the epistle as to establish the setting for all that follows.

Let us then briefly note all the five occurrences of this expression before proceeding to discuss them in detail.

The first appearance of the phrase is in Ephesians 1:3, where we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in

love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved."

Among the many points of interest in this sublime introduction to this wonderful epistle, let us merely note now that we are straight away placed right in the midst of the heavens. No longer are we to think of them as something distant and unattainable; on the contrary, we are to see ourselves as being in the heavens, surrounded by celestial hosts, just as the earth itself is a sphere in the midst of a universe of heavenly bodies. As Paul puts it in Philippians, "Our realm is *inherent* in the heavens"—that is to say, *it belongs there.*

The second occurrence of the words *among the celestials* is in verse 21 of this same chapter, where we read, in reference to Christ Himself, that the might of God's strength is "rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him at His right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending." Here we have a glimpse of the heights to which Christ has ascended, and which are described as being among the celestials.

Then, in the second chapter, verse 4, we read that God, "being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus." No wonder Paul feels it necessary

to repeat the expression, "In grace are you saved!" Who could possibly imagine such an exaltation, who conceive of such Divine favor, were it not so specifically set forth in this wonderful letter?

In the third chapter, from verse 8, our expression is found again in a truly inspiring passage, where we are told that to Paul, who describes himself as "less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Thus the reason for our appointment to a standing among the celestials is that we may be used of God, not only to display His grace but also to make known His wisdom, even to the sovereignties and authorities among those celestials. What an honor! What a privilege! How can we fail to be amazed every time we think of the wonderful objectives of our calling!

But, lest we should form a false impression of conditions prevailing among the celestials, we are given, in the twelfth verse of the last chapter of Ephesians, a sight of the other side of the picture with the fifth and final occurrence of this phrase. There we learn that "it is not ours to wrestle with blood and flesh, but with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world-mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials." From this it is evident that all is not at present in full harmony and reconciliation with God even among the celestials.

There is wickedness among them, just as there is upon the earth, only that the wickedness in those higher circles is probably more potent and virulent that human wickedness.

THE SIGNIFICANCE LOST IN FAULTY TRANSLATIONS

It is evident from these extracts from the epistle that it takes us into realms far outside of the earth. In the Authorized (King James) Version, instead of "among the celestials," we have "in heavenly places"—at least, we have that in three occurrences out of the five. On the second occasion, referring to Christ, we have "in *the* heavenly places" and on the fifth occasion, we find the rendering "in *high* places." It would almost seem that the translators, having suggested a particular *location* to which our Lord had been exalted, and in which we were to be found in Him, were loth to admit the presence of spiritual wickedness in the same quarter. And so, in Ephesians 6, they modified the expression, and spoke of spiritual wickedness "in *high* places."

Now it is quite apparent that identical Greek words in the same letter should be translated into identical English expressions; it is inconceivable that the apostle would give so important a phrase two different meanings. By ignoring this point, translators not only do damage to the truth which the apostle was trying to bring out, but also conceal the significance of the fivefold occurrence of the same words. Difficulties are made when we insert our own ideas into translations; in the Authorized Version, the word *place* is in italics, thus indicating that it is not in the original Greek.

We are not submitting that spiritual wickedness is to be found where Christ is seated at God's right hand, but we are convinced that much spiritual wickedness

is to be found among the celestials. When considering this phrase, we should not think so much of a particular location—a *place* to which we may be going (which is the popular conception of heaven)—but rather of a condition, a state of existence among beings and things which are outside and utterly beyond the confines of earth. To us, the phrase *among the celestials* seems to cover all those beings and bodies that inhabit the universe, even extending to the right hand of God Himself. And the reason for our exaltation to a position among them is that we may be used of God to further the fulfillment of His purpose among those who occupy the celestial realms. And it is in conformity with this that we are even today being "blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials."

In a beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. By far the greater part of the Scriptures deals with the earth and God's relations with humanity. In the prison letters of Paul, commencing with Ephesians, we find God taking up the story of the heavens, with their celestial inhabitants, and telling us how He purposes to include them in the ultimate reconciliation of all to Himself.

THE PHRASE EXAMINED WITHIN EACH OF ITS CONTEXTS

As we come to examine the significance of the expression *among the celestials* in all its five contexts, we find that each occurrence throws light on a different aspect of the status, experiences or function of the ecclesia as determined by God. Again we take them in order.

The first occurrence connects the ecclesia (under the pronoun *us*) with the source of all its blessings, namely, God Himself. "Blessed be the God and Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ." In the verses that follow, it is made quite clear that God is not merely the Origin of the ecclesia, but the One Who determines its composition (according as He chooses us in Him), its quality (we to be holy and flawless in His sight), its designation (in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him), the motive behind its conception (the delight of His will) and the reason for its existence (for the laud of the glory of His grace). In all this, God is seen to be Supreme—the sole Planner, the sole Purposer, as is indeed indicated later in the chapter (according to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will). And the glory and the honor and the thanks are to be given to Him (Blessed be the God), to Whom will be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!

This first usage of our phrase also connects us with our Lord, for it is "the God and Father of our *Lord Jesus Christ* Who blesses us," and our blessings are declared to be "*in Christ.*" Thus an unbreakable bond is immediately established—a bond between Christ and the ecclesia, which is maintained all the way through the succeeding verses. And yet it is not until the last verse of this first chapter that we come across the word *ecclesia* in this epistle, and this is in connection with the second appearance of the phrase *among the celestials.* Let us now note this and see how the relationship between Christ and the ecclesia is suddenly and dramatically enhanced.

The second part (from verse 15) of this first chapter of Ephesians is an impassioned outpouring of prayer

on behalf of the apostle for our spiritual perception. He wants us "to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength, which is operative in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him at His right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending: and subjects all under His feet . . . ."

Here the exaltation of Christ, following upon His rousing from among the dead, is detailed; it is in conformity with Philippians 2:9-11 and Colossians 1:18. Brought about *by the might of God's strength*, His exaltation is complete. Seated as He is at God's right hand, among the celestials, all is made subject to Him. And then comes a remarkable phrase. God "gives Him, *as Head over all*, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all."

The status of Christ is now *above all* (excluding only God Himself), and it is in this rank that He is given to the ecclesia which is His body. O that we might realize the grandeur of this gift! For it raises the ecclesia to His own rank. Christ remains "Head of the body, the ecclesia" (Col.1:18), but the body, to be His body, must also be exalted to conform to the status of its Head. This is why we read in Philippians 3:20,21, "For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, *to conform it to the body of His glory*, in accord

with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself."

These are tremendous facts, as is also the truth of "the transcendent greatness of God's power for us who are believing," for this is "*in accord with* the operation of the *might of His strength*" which has exalted Christ to the position of *Head over all*, and overcome for all time the opposition of "every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named," not only those that exist at the moment but also any that may arise during this eon or the next. We exclaim again, O that we might realize the nature of the power that is operating on our behalf!

The third mention of the phrase *among the celestials* (Eph.2:6) shows how the ecclesia is to be used by God in the oncoming eons. For having been vivified together in Christ, and roused together and seated together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, we find that it is in order that "in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus." Notice how it is emphasized in this context that it is in grace that we are saved, and that we are God's achievement; it is *His* grace that is to be displayed, and the celestials will be made to see that the grace which has been bestowed on us to make us God's achievement, is available for them too, and will indeed be used on their behalf to a similar end.

THE ECCLESIA AND GOD'S PURPOSE

The fourth mention of our phrase (in Eph.3:10) is a very important one, for it connects the ecclesia fundamentally and irrevocably with the purpose of God, which is here described, for the one and only time in Scripture, as *the purpose of the eons*. Thus the pur-

pose of God is unmistakably placed in a celestial setting, and we should cease to think of it as something primarily concerning the earth and mankind, though men, as God's instruments, play an important part in its outworking, and are included in the ultimate reconciliation of all. In the Pauline letters written prior to Ephesians (and these include the first letter to Timothy), revelation is confined to the salvation and conciliation of *all mankind* (see Rom.5:12-21; 1 Cor.15:22; 2 Cor.5:18-21; 1 Tim.2:4 and 4:9,10). In the prison letters, however, the revelation is expanded to embrace the heavens, which are, in fact, seen to be the major feature, for they are nearly always placed before the earth (see Eph.1:10; 3:15; Phil.2:10; Col.1:16). The earth is placed first in Colossians 1:20; this is perhaps to emphasize the special need of reconciliation for those on earth, the sons of humanity, who first betrayed and then crucified the Lord of Glory.

The purpose of God is made in Christ Jesus. As Colossians has it, "all is created through Him and for Him, and *He* is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him" (1:17). "In Him the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily. And you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of every sovereignty and authority" (2:9,10).

In Ephesians 1:10, it is revealed that God purposed in Christ "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." But then comes a very significant phrase, "—in Him, *in Whom our lot was cast also*, being designated beforehand according to the purpose of the One Who is operating all, in accord with the counsel of His will, that we should be for the laud of His glory, *who are pre-expectant in the Christ.*"

From this passage we see that, when God first conceived His purpose for the universe, He built it upon the basic unity of Christ and the ecclesia, and the calling with which He now calls us is "*in accord with His own purpose* and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9). The place of the ecclesia in God's purpose is intrinsic and inherent; without the ecclesia, as without Christ, the fulfillment of His purpose cannot be entertained; both are essential, Christ as the Head and the ecclesia as His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all. In Him our lot is cast, and we are complete in Him. O that we could grasp the intensity and vitality of our union with Christ as an essential basic fact of God's purpose!

THE OPPONENTS OF THE ECCLESIA

The last occurrence of our phrase is in the second half of the letter, the part that deals with the deportment or conduct of the saints. There it is declared that "it is not ours to wrestle with blood and flesh, but with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world-mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials" (Eph.6:12). Though this passage is advising us regarding our behavior while still in the flesh, it nevertheless informs us who our real opponents are, and no doubt there will be considerable opposition to our ministry even in the eons to come, for those most in need of God's grace are often those most opposed to its bestowal upon themselves.

This last usage of the words *among the celestials* is in sharp contrast to their first appearance. Then it was a case of our being blessed "with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ." Here it is con-

cerned with "spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials." We cannot have the blessings without the opposition. When Abraham was given the land of Canaan, he was given the original inhabitants with it. We read in Genesis 12:6 that the Canaanite was then dwelling in the land, and succeeding generations of Canaanites opposed the descendants of Abraham for centuries. Our realm is inherent in the heavens, but to many of the present inhabitants of the celestial realms, we shall be regarded as interlopers, especially as we come to be exalted above them. Yet our ministry is to be one of conciliation—of displaying the grace of God—until even the most implacable is reconciled to Him.

When Abraham entered the land that had been promised to him, it was not long before he found a famine there. He fled temporarily to Egypt to escape it. There are no famines awaiting the ecclesia, for we are blessed with every spiritual blessing, and that includes all the spiritual food that we may require. May we even now recognize that it is there for the taking, and have the grace and the desire to assimilate it, for in this way we may truly perceive "what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing." John H. Essex

(To be continued)

CONCORDANT NEWSLETTERS

In order to save time in replying to letters we are once again issuing a monthly newsletter which reports on our activities. We will not maintain an address list but will continue to send out this sheet only in answer to correspondence received.

DAVIDIC

28 To Thee, Ieue, am I calling!
My Rock, Thou must not be deaf *f* **to me!**
Lest Thou shouldst hush *f* **to me,**
And comparable am I with those **descending**
to a **crypt.**
2 **Hear** the **voice of my supplications**
In my imploring to Thee,
f **When I lift** up **my hands to**ward **Thy holy oracle.**
3 **Thou must not be drawing me** away **with** the **wicked,**
+ **Or with contrivers of lawlessness,**
Those **speaking peace with their associates,**
+ **Yet evil** is **in their heart.**
4 **Give to them** *as* **according** to **their contriving**
And *as* **according** to the **evil of their actions.**
as **According** to the **doings of their hands give to them.**
Reverse their requital to them.
5 **For they are not understanding** > the **contrivances**
of Ieue
+ **Or** > the **doings of His hands.**
He will demolish them and not build them.
6 **Blessed** be **Ieue**
For He hears the **voice of my supplications.**
7 **Ieue** is **my Strength and my Shield;**
In Him trusts my heart and I am helped.
And joying is my heart,
And *f* **with my song am I acclaiming Him.**

8 Ieue is strength for 7His peoplecs,
And the Stronghold of salvation of His anointed is He.
9 Save `Thy people,
And bless Thine allotment,
+ Graze them,
And assist them unto the eon.

THE STRENGTH OF IEUE

The strength of Ieue is a recurrent theme in the Psalms, and particularly as it is available to the saints. "Ieue is the strength of my life," David exclaims in the previous Psalm. "Of whom shall I be afraid?" he continues. Enemies he had many, who hunted his soul through many years. He found the strength and resolution for the conflict in Ieue. "Alueim is our Refuge and Strength, a Help especially found in distresses" (46:1).

The Psalms are full of comfort for the tried saint. Not only in our physical ills, but in the spiritual conflict that must be with us till we are with the Lord. We have many enemies. If only we realized this and understood and perceived their stratagems and the reason for their enmity. For this conflict we need to be invigorated in the Lord and in the might of His strength. This is the prime requisite, before even we take up the panoply provided. Without faith in the superior strength of the Lord we will flounder and fall to the foe. We can with David acclaim the One Who is

our Strength and our Stronghold. He sings of the strength of Ieue (59:16). He urges, "Ascribe strength to Alueim" (68:34). Many happinesses has the man whose strength is in Thee (84:5). Only by relying on the strength of the Lord can we be free of worry and anxiety. "Inquire of Ieue and be strong, Seek His face continually" (105:4). Herein is the link that puts us in touch with the divine strength—inquiring of Him and seeking His face. Prayer and learning His glories in His Word endues us with this spiritual power and enables us to stand in the midst of spiritual conflict.

The contrivances of Ieue

"Contrivance" is a word which is perhaps unique to the Concordant Version among versions. It is certainly not used in the AV which uses words for the Hebrew *phol* which are more appropriate to other Hebrew words as commit, do, make, work, act and deed. But it is a word that is needed and is used consistently in the CV; *phole*, which is a member of the same family of words as *phol* calls for "wage," but the thought association is clear, for a wage is the requital for what is contrived.

A contrivance is something more than an act or deed, and it has a different emphasis to that in the word "work." A contrivance calls for wisdom, inventiveness and skill. Benaiah, one of the masters of David's host, was a man of many contrivings (AV acts, RV deeds). As he was a man of war his contrivances were deeds of valor, the slaying of a lion, the killing of an Egyptian 7' 6" tall and the killing of two strong men of Moab. The carving of the carpenter is a contriving (Isa.44:15), the work of a potter also (45:9). Thus it is clear that a contrivance is a work calling for more than usual skill, effort and craft.

The contrivances of Ieue are His marvels and achievements in creation and salvation. All in the universe is His contriving. Elihu in Job spoke the truth as to *God* when he said, "*Al* is contriving all this" (33:29), and he later speaks of God as "his Contriver" (36:3). Solomon utters a similar thought in Proverbs (16:4), "Ieue contrives all for His response." He it was Who formed Adam from the soil, making him exactly as He purposed, with all the potentials for failure and sin, for he was needed thus to fulfill his role in the purpose of God. The contrivances of Ieue are so wise and deep that we can understand but the fringe of their marvel. The past, the present and the future is all His contriving and it all contributes to the end He has in view for the universe—blessing for all. What a salvation has He contrived for us! Every detail of it is marvelous beyond our comprehension. Let us endeavor to know and seek to understand the contrivances of our God, for therein is true wisdom. Like the Psalmist we should soliloquize on all His contrivances (77:12, 143:5), rejoicing in them (92:4).

Donald G. Hayter

MRS. CLAUDE G. BECK

Our sister in the Lord, Josephine Robinson Beck of El Cajon, California, passed away April 3, at the age of 78.

Sister Beck was the wife of Dr. Claude G. Beck, who preceded her in death. For many years, they lived in Denver, Colorado, and attended the meetings of the Ecclesia there. Both were staunch and loyal supporters of Concordant principles, and gladly helped in its compilation by doing some of the drudgery which was required in the preparation of the Concordant Version.

There were no children to mourn her passing, yet Sister "Jo", whom we have been privileged to know personally for a long time, will be missed by the saints in El Cajon, where she had lived for the last thirteen years.

E.O.K.

A DAVIDIC PSALM

[7]AT THE FARING FORTH OF THE TENT[0]

29 Grant to Ieue, sons of alim,
Grant to Ieue glory and strength.
2 **Grant to Ieue** the **glory of His name,**
Worship [>] **Ieue in** the **honor of** [7]**His**[0] **holiness.**
3 The **voice of Ieue** is **over the waters,**
The **Al of glory thunders,**
Ieue is **over many waters.**
4 The **voice of Ieue** is [t]**with vigor!**
The **voice of Ieue** is [t]**with honor!**
5 The **voice of Ieue** is **breaking cedars!**
[+] **Breaking is Ieue** [`]**the cedars of** [']**Lebanon**
6 **And causing them to dance as** [wt] a **calf,**
Lebanon and Sirion as [wt] the **young of uruses.**
7 The **voice of Ieue** is a **hewing** [=]**blaze of fire!**
8 The **voice of Ieue will cause** the **wilderness** to **travail,**
Ieue will cause the **wilderness of Kadesh** to **travail;**
9 The **voice of Ieue will cause** the **hinds** to **travail**
And will [c]**make** the **wildwoods bare.**
And in His temple everyone is saying,"Glory!"
10 **Ieue** [>]**at** a **deluge will sit,**
And Ieue sits King for the **eon.**
11 **Ieue, strength to His people will He give,**
Ieue will bless His people with peace.

[7]*Permanent*[0]

At the faring forth of the tent

It is not easy to conclude what occasion David has in mind when he refers to the faring forth of the tent. It is unlikely to have been the faring forth of the tent in Moses' days, for David calls upon the sons of alim to grant Ieue glory and strength, an appeal he would make for an event in his own day or one that was future. Is it the tent of the tabernacle of Moses which David had pitched in Gibeon and where Solomon offered one thousand sacrifices (2 Chr.1:3)? The divine service was offered in a tent in David's days; he had put the coffer there and the furnishings (1 Chr.6:32). It seems that he pitched another tent in Jerusalem itself to which he had the coffer of the covenant transported (2 Chr.1:4). He had brought up the coffer from Kirjath-jearim and had placed it in this tent in Jerusalem. Ieue speaks of coming from tent to tent (1 Chr.17:5), which seems to support the point that there was more than one tent in which He dwelt.

But what is the faring forth referred to in the superscription to this Psalm? No mention is made of such a special occurrence in the history of David. Much is made of the occasion of the faring forth of the coffer of the covenant from the home of Obed-edom to Jerusalem. Then there were great rejoicings and much celebration. Could this faring forth of Psalm 29 be a future event? It seems to be indicated by the Psalm itself. The voice of Ieue is a dominant theme. He sits King for the eon, and His people have strength and peace. The Psalm is set in the day of the Lord. The explanation of the phrase, "At the faring forth of the tent" must therefore be sought in a future period, in the eon of the Kingdom of Christ upon earth.

Is there any hint in the Scriptures that there is a tent

in the Kingdom prior to the time when the temple of Ezekiel is completed? For this takes some years to build. Solomon took seven years to build the magnificent structure which was the dwelling place of the Alueim during his reign, and it seems possible that the temple of the millennium will take as long. The Lord comes as predicted in glory to set up His Kingdom, descending to the Mount of Olives. The faithful are gathered and the Kingdom is inaugurated. David will be king over them (Ezek.37:24). But after this the nations will plot against Israel (this is before the temple is finished). And a confederacy, Gog and Magog, go up against Israel to the land. They are decimated by Ieue, and for seven years their implements of war are burned up (Ezek.39:9). For seven months the bones of the vanquished are buried (39:12). So it is possible that during the period of seven years the worship of Ieue is carried on in a tabernacle tent till the temple is consecrated. David's first concern after his resurrection would be the provision of a place for his Lord and for the divine service, and until the temple was completed a tent would provide a temporary center of worship. This then could be the background to Psalm 29.

The faring forth of the tent, preparatory to pitching it in Jerusalem (for where else would David establish a place for the worship of Ieue?) would be a time of acclamation of Ieue and worship, for there was evidence of His presence. His voice would be heard and His strength be apparent throughout the world. All creation would respond to His voice. The tent would be a temporary expedient until the temple was built; but until the day that it was consecrated the tent would be the center of the Kingdom, the heart of all worship and rule.

Sons of alim

This rare title must be distinguished from Alueim. The Alueim are the To-Subjectors, that is all those in whom is the spirit of the One Supreme Al, and who subject others to Him. Alim lacks the Hebrew letter which gives the meaning *toward.* The alim are subjectors. It would seem that others are subjected to them.

Moses in his great song asks, "Who is as Thou art among the alim, Ieue?" (Ex.15:11). Ieue is a Subjector, but He is the Alue, the To-Subjector Who subjects all others to His Father. But He is also an Al. In his song Moses compares Him with other alim (alim being the plural form of al). He is more noble, fearful and praiseworthy than all other alim, though they are among the greatest in the heavens.

In Daniel 11:36 the Supreme Al is termed the Al of alim against Whom the king of the last days will speak and magnify himself. There are clearly other alim to justify the use of such a phrase as this, just as there are many alueim, for we read in Deuteronomy 10:17, "Ieue, your Alueim, He is Alueim of alueim and Lord of lords, the Al, great and masterful and the fearful."

The phrase "sons of alim" is used twice, Psalm 29;1 and 89:6. We also read of "sons of the Alueim." But a distinction must be drawn between the two. It is evident the alim have sons, just as the great Al has a Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and many other sons, us whom He has chosen and called to this high honor.

Donald G. Hayter

The annual summer Fellowship held in Baldwin, Michigan, is scheduled this year for July 25 through August 3. The theme will be the second chapter of Ephesians. We certainly urge our readers to attend these spiritually invigorating meetings if at all possible.

THE HUMAN SPIRIT

THE SPIRIT and the body of a human are distinct entities that may exist apart from each other, while the soul has no existence apart from their combination. Man has both a spirit and a soul, that is, he has *life* and *sensation.*

In studying the spirit of mankind, and, indeed, all animals, in the sacred records, especially the Hebrew Scriptures, we find it closely associated with the breath. The spirit is the link between breath and life. This is hidden from the reader of the Authorized Version. In speaking of the scope of death by the flood, it reads "all in whose nostrils was the breath of life" (Gen.7:22). It should read, "Everyone which has the breath of the *spirit* of the living in his nostrils."

We all know by experience that our life depends on breathing. To "expire" means death. But we also know, from the Scriptures, that the *spirit* is the only source of life. Hence it is easy to see how logical is the order of the terms in this notable phrase, "the breath of the spirit of the living," for the air we breathe, combining with elements in the body, produces the power or spiritual energy on which *life* depends. Breath is used in the Scriptures as synonymous, in some sense, with spirit. As the presence of one involves the other, and breath is a cause of which spirit is the effect, there is good ground for their association. Let us consider some of the passages in which they appear.

First, however, let us note the arrèsting fact that *spirit is not mentioned in the account of Adam's creation.* Not only that, but he is distinctly said to be formed of the soil from the ground (Gen.2:7). *That* is the *man.* It is useless to oppose this, as many do, who insist that man is essentially spirit, with a material husk or shell. Such is not God's inspired account. "*The first man was out of the earth, soilish*" (1 Cor.15:47). Into this human frame God blows the breath of the living. As we are still breathing the breath of the living, we should not miss the meaning of this statement. When God formed Adam, the human organism began to function after the inflation of the lungs. Then, with studied avoidance of the next link, which is spirit, we are told that the human became a living soul.

The reason for this is not far to seek. Adam is not the only man in view. The Second Man, the Last Adam, is so preeminently spiritual, that, for the sake of contrast, the spirit must be suppressed in recording Adam's creation. As to fact, he must have had a spirit. As to truth, he is merely a living soul, made of the soil and atmosphere, a mere flame, fed by the material elements of earth. We are like him. Only as we come into contact with the Lord from heaven, the life-giving Spirit, do our spirits become paramount.

There is little danger of being too materialistic as regards the constitution of the human race. The tendency today is to deny the plain assertions of the Scriptures. Elihu's words to Job show how, in death, mankind is but inorganic matter, such as is trodden beneath our feet (Job 24:14,15):

> If He places His heart on him,
> He will gather to Himself his spirit and his breath,
> All flesh will expire together,
> And humanity will return to soil.

Dissolution is a chemical process. Organic substance returns to inorganic. It is the reversal, after death, of the formation of Adam, before life. Life also is a chemical process, using food and the oxygen of the atmosphere. The power generated is the spirit, which unites with the body to give life and sensation, or soul.

As only the oxygen of the atmosphere seems to combine with the substance of the body to carry on its vital functions, we have a strong inclination to make it the "breath" which produces spirit. There seems to be a similar analogy between the soil of the ground and the oxygen of the atmosphere, for the Hebrew word soil (not "dust"), which is used of man, does not include all the surface of the earth, but only such portions of it as have been oxygenated and are able to support plant life. It almost seems that the energy resulting from the intake of oxygen is the spirit of soulish humanity. But such passages as Job 37:10, "The breath of Al gives ice," seem to show that the word breath itself is not restricted to oxygen, even though it seems to be the essential factor in human vitality.

The spirit in man may therefore be considered as the vital force resulting from a combination of earth's substances, solid, liquid and gaseous, under the creating and sustaining hand of God. The gas may be used as it is, but the solid substances must first be pulverized and aerated into soil. This was used at creation. Since then it must be further organized into living plants before it can enter into the animal organism, and be assimilated by the body as food. In the lungs the atmosphere comes into contact with the blood. The breath, it seems, undergoes a chemical change, which may be compared with combustion. As the air rushes into a fire and transforms the coal into heat and energy, so the breath combines with the sub-

stance of the body to form spirit, the energy which is evident in action, in life, and in intelligence.

As my subject is the human spirit, it is far from my purpose to deny that man *has* a spirit. But I do wish to press the point that man *is not* a spirit. He is essentially soil, and his spirit is not a separate personality from his flesh, but a force generated by the combustion of the breath and the body. I believe that there are spirits without bodies. I know that they can enter and control the human body by overpowering the human spirit. But I can find no warrant for supposing that the *human* spirit is of this kind. The body of man is not merely a home of the spirit, but an essential factor in the production of his spirit. He can have no human spirit without a body and breath.

There are many kinds of spirits. The human spirit is certainly distinct from all others. "For is any of humanity acquainted with that which is human except the spirit of humanity which is in it?" (1 Cor.2:11). We cannot understand other spirits and they cannot understand us. Our spirits cannot understand the Spirit of God apart from the reception of His Spirit. Let us not, then, distort our study of the *human* spirit by confusing it with others. A spirit being has not flesh and bones (Luke 24:39), but a human spirit is dependent on flesh for its existence. For that reason it is subordinate to the soul and the flesh in the old creation.

We, of course, rely on the Scriptures alone to prove this position. Yet, as each of us has this human spirit of which we are speaking, all of us have seen the truth put to a practical test. We cannot create life, but we have seen it destroyed. How do men dispose of the spirit, on which life depends? They cannot touch it. But they can stop the breathing, and they can pour out the blood, or destroy the body so that it cannot func-

tion. By doing these they effectually eliminate the spirit and cause death. Life is dependent on the functioning of the body, especially the lungs. The link between breath and life is the spirit, which vanishes with the breath. It is impossible to perceive a human spirit apart from its two necessary causes, body and breath.

Perhaps a parallel in another realm will help to clarify our thoughts. Electricity is, in some ways, comparable with spirit. We have often compared a human being to an electric lamp, in which the filament is the material body, the electric current the spirit, and the light the soul. If the current is stopped the light, like the soul, goes to the "unseen." The filament remains. The question is, how to stop the current if we have no switch to turn it off. All we can do is to go to the power house and put out the fire. We can stop the supply of fuel, but it would be far easier to shut out all the air. We could strangle it or choke it. When the fire is out there will be no electricity and no more light. Our bodies are miniature power plants for the production of vital energy. The breath is essential to spirit, to life and sensation.

While we know that spirit is the immediate cause of life, we cannot determine its presence by any of our senses. We must fall back on the breath, which causes spirit, or on the soul, which is a product. If a person is breathing he is alive. If he has consciousness or sensation or motion, he still lives. When we see an illuminated bulb, we reason that there is an electric current to cause it. Conversely, if the light is gone, the current is absent. When we see a corpse, without motion, unresponsive to any sensation, with no respiration, we may be quite sure that the spirit is no more.

What becomes of the spirit in death? We may as

well ask, What becomes of the electric current in darkness? Both the breath and the spirit are presented to us as a gift from God. The Deity, being Himself Spirit, is, in a very special sense, the God of the spirits of all flesh (Num.16:22; 27:16). Isaiah, reminding us of His creative acts, tells us how He sustains His creatures on the earth (Isa.42:5):

> Who gives breath to the people upon it.
> And spirit to those going in it.

At death He takes back these gifts. The air we breathe, just as the food we eat, is due to His bounty. Having no need for these in death, they revert to the Giver. So it is with the spirit. According to Ecclesiastes (12:7):

> The soil shall return to the earth as it was,
> And the spirit shall return to Alueim Who gave it.

LIFE BY SPIRIT

Life, in its various aspects, is always a manifestation of spirit. As we have seen, the body, apart from the spirit, is dead (Jas.2:26). In order to make the image of the wild beast speak and act, the false prophet gave it a *spirit*. It has been suggested that this will be some electrical robot, fitted with sound devices along the lines of the radio. We have known radios which needed only the proximity of a human form to start them. All that was necessary was to walk toward them, and the "capicity," so-called, of the body would tune them to some distant station. But this is only speculation. The point is that the image will act as if alive, and a *spirit* is given for that purpose. It may be that the image is given an evil spirit being for its operation.

The two witnesses, left dead in the city of Jerusalem for three and a half days, are made alive by the en-

trance of the spirit of life from God (Rev.11:11). All of this goes to prove the general rule that "the *spirit* is that which is vivifying" (John 6:63). This was true even of our Lord Himself. Indeed, He was put to death in (or by) flesh, yet made alive in (or by) spirit (1 Pet.3:18). His death included His spirit as well as His flesh for He commended it to His Father. But the flesh was the *means*, or *instrument*, by which He was put to death. So also the spirit is the *means* by which His body was recalled to life.

THE BELIEVER'S SPIRIT VIVIFIED

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

The spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus frees us from the law of sin and death (Rom.8:2). The law of Moses was for the flesh: this do, and live. As all have failed, it has become a law of death. Not so with life in Christ Jesus. The law for life in Him is quite the opposite. It is for those who do *not* do, but believe (Rom.4:5). It is not a wage, but a gift. This life is not for the flesh, but for the spirit. This is what frees us from all condemnation. In spirit we fulfill the just demands of the law,

though we do not walk according to its fleshly commands. The disposition of the flesh is death, that of the spirit is life and peace (Rom.8:6).

The impartation of life to our spirits by the Word is the great miracle which transforms sinners into saints. It is the vital point in the two figures which are used to illustrate their entrance into life. Human beings receive life by creation or generation. Adam and Eve were created. All the rest are born. Those who enter the Kingdom do so by being begotten of the spirit (John 3:5). As those who share in the celestial allotment are not sufficiently equipped for the new sphere by regeneration, they are made a new creation, with added powers and capacities to enable them to function when away from the earth. They will not be turned into spirits, but they will receive spiritual bodies in place of their present soilish bodies (1 Cor.15:47-49).

SPIRIT AND FLESH

A point of great importance, in this connection, has been lost in the looseness of our common translations. It is this: We have never been *raised* together with Christ. We have been *roused* (as to our souls) and *vivified* (as to our spirits), but never *raised* (as to our bodies). The figure of resurrection is never applied to our present place in Christ because our bodies are not directly affected by the present operations of the Spirit of God. There is an indirect reaction, through the spirit and the soul, but no direct effort to save the body. Hence the believer dies just as readily as the unbeliever from causes which affect his physical frame. The contentment, the consolation, the joy, the exultation which comes to us through the Word of God, as well as the restraint from destructive sins against the

body, ought to react for the health and longevity of the flesh. Its vivification, however, awaits the resurrection.

At the Lord's presence His saints will be vivified. Superabundant life will be theirs, in flesh as well as in spirit. Now, however, life is imparted only to the spirit directly. This causes the clash between flesh and spirit which characterizes the experience of the saints. "The flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh" (Gal.5:17). "The disposition of the flesh is death, yet the disposition of the spirit is life and peace" (Rom.8:6). "The spirit, indeed, is eager; yet the flesh is infirm" (Matt.26:41). We "are not in flesh, but in spirit" (Rom.8:9). We should not be "walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:4). "He who is sowing for his own flesh, from the flesh shall be reaping corruption, yet he who is sowing for the spirit, from the spirit shall be reaping eonian life" (Gal.6:8). "Undertaking in spirit, are you now being perfected in flesh?" (Gal.3:3).

This is in accord with the freshly recovered truth that sin, in mankind, is a by-product of the death process. Our spirits, having been animated by the Word of God, are not dying. Our bodies are. Adam did not pass on a "sinful nature" to his posterity. He transmitted mortality. "Death passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned" (Rom.5:12). Mankind sins because it is dying. Our flesh does the same because it has not yet been made alive by God's Spirit. Our spirits, however, are not dying. Hence they run counter to the flesh and should curb it. We should not walk in accord with the flesh but in harmony with the spirit. By the spirit we should put the practices of the body to death.

SPIRIT AND SOUL

Since the soul, which consists of the sensations or feelings which we experience, is the effect of flesh as well as spirit, it also is out of harmony with the spirit. They are, in practice, exceedingly difficult to separate. Only the keen sword of the Word of God can part the soul from the spirit (Heb.4:12). Indeed, much, if not most, of present day spirituality is really sensuality, using that word in its highest sense. Feelings and emotions are popularly confused with spiritual power. Almost the whole machinery of modern evangelism seems constructed to captivate the soul of the sinner, rather than to vivify his spirit. Meetings and men are judged entirely by their effect on the feelings. The soulish has taken the place of the spiritual. Indeed, the very vocabulary of the "soul-winner" shows that, both in teaching and practice, the soul has driven out the spirit in modern religious efforts.

In the resurrection our bodies will be changed from soulish to spiritual (1 Cor.15:44). Like Adam, we are now living souls. We have a spirit, but it is submerged beneath the urge for pleasant and comfortable physical sensations. Our bodies are soulish. The popular idea that the soul is the spiritual in man merely shows how far we are astray. A concordance will soon show that the soul drags us down to our carnal desires, while the spirit leads us in the path of God's appointment. Let no one mistake exalted feelings for the spirit. Feelings follow, but they may be unpleasant and painful. If happy emotions come, as they should, take heed lest they are merely exuberance of soul. To be exultant in the midst of pain or suffering however, is a true test of the spirit's power.

The graces which are ours now, in Christ Jesus,

are all in spirit. Indeed, on three occasions the apostle prays that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with our *spirit* (Gal.6:18, Phil.4:23, Philemon 25). In accord with this, the present adminstration makes no appeal to the soul or to the flesh. In Israel there was a magnificent temple and a marvelous ritual and a promise of physical blessings. We find this imitated in apostate Christendom, but it is contrary to God's purpose. Our peculiar treasures come to us through a few brief epistles. Take Paul's letters from us and what would all our ecclesiastical systems and buildings be worth? All that is vital and valuable is deposited in our spirits.

The divine service which was performed by the priests and Levites in the tabernacle and the temple is not continued in this present era. Our eyes are not engaged with the golden walls, the costly colored curtains, the majestic architecture of God's dwelling made with hands. The apostle's substitute for this is the evangel. He offered God divine service *in his spirit* in the evangel of God's Son (Rom.1:9). This is the reality of which the ritual was but a shadow.

It is only in our spirits that we are aware of our relationship to God. The spirit which we receive from God joins its witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom.8:16). We have no physical link with a divinely chosen nation, such as Israel had. We have no evidence in our flesh that we are in touch with the Deity. And it is the bane of the believer's experience to seek for assurance in the state of his soul. Our feelings do not affect our place in God's family. We know God and His grace only through *words*—God's words—which charge our spirits with divine vitality, and assure us of our place in His purpose. Happiness is not salvation, nor is misery

reprobation. They are mere emotions of the soul, dependent on the flesh and spirit. Only by faith can we make contact with God's Spirit. And this can be done only by our spirits.

A glimpse of the vast gulf between the soulish and the spiritual will save us from many deceptions which afflict Christendom today. Almost all religious literature gives the soul the place which God reserves for the spirit. The soul is strictly limited to the physical senses. It uses the various bodily members to function. It feels and sees and hears and tastes and smells. It is consciousness and sensation. It yearns for physical pleasure and carnal comfort. It dominates the human body now, before it is vivified by spirit. The joy and satisfaction which are ours in Christ do not come through sweet smelling incense, or fulsome food, or solemn, stirring music, or majestic cathedrals, ornate without and beautiful within, or even through moving emotions in great mass meetings. It comes through the still small voice of revelation, striking the strings of the spirit, engaging it with the delicious thoughts divine, energizing it by the Living Word.

Paul, who speaks of salvation more often than all the other writers put together, never even mentions the salvation of the soul. That is reserved for Peter (1 Pet.1:9). He ministers to the Circumcision, who receive a foretaste of millennial bliss, in which the souls of Israel's sons will be satisfied, as well as their spirits renewed. Then they will be saved from all unpleasant sensations. No weakness, no disease will afflict their flesh. They will not die. Pain and misery will be banished. Such a salvation is not ours today. The salvation we have leads our spirits into conflict with the flesh and counter to the world. Suffering will be rewarded. Weakness is a special gift to those who

receive the transcendent revelation. Our blessings are spiritual.

An understanding of what the human spirit really is delivers us from much that is false in modern religious thought. It is proper and right to emphasize the superior place of the spirit in God's gracious operations in this economy, but it is a fatal error to make out all mankind to be self-existent, immortal spirits which are temporarily trammeled with a physical frame. Humanity is essentially soil, not spirit. All that was added to organized soil at its creation was breath. No other constituents were taken from without at its creation. The spirit was not a special entity, imparted by God, besides the soil and the breath. It is the outcome of their combination. Take away either one, and the spirit vanishes. Such is the *human* spirit. It has no conscious existence apart from the body and the breath. In this it differs from other spirits. A.E.K.

(To be continued)

D. WILLIAM SCHILDHOUSE

April 3, 1975 marked the passing of Bro. Schildhouse at the age of 61. He was the editor of Scripture Studies, and was a staunch advocate of the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ, and of the reconciliation of all.

His combined efforts as a teacher and writer brought many believers to a deeper knowledge of God's Word.

He was a member of the Bible Fellowship Church of South Holland, Illinois. His survivors include his wife Grace, two daughters, two sons and four sisters. H.V.

The following brief mimeographed reprints taken from old issues of *Unsearchable Riches* are available free: "*Imperceptible* or *Eternal?*" and "Tithing," both by A. E. Knoch; and "The Structure of the Book of Acts," by H. W. Martin.

THE SIN OFFERING

(2 Corinthians 5:20,21)

WE BELIEVE that the conciliation is "the secret of the evangel" referred to in Ephesians 6:19. It is not a second evangel, but an aspect of the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ, a gracious feature of the evangel which had been hushed up in previous times (Rom.16:25). That Christ was to be the sin offering was known before, being pictured in the Old Testament sacrifices and foretold by Isaiah (53:4-10). The benefit of justification was prefigured by Abraham (Gen.15:6) and prophesied by Habakkuk (2:4). But the further truth that God would remove the barriers of enmity between mankind and Himself because of the sacrifice of Christ was not known. That was a secret, not a secret evangel but the secret *of the* evangel.

We must never separate the secret of the evangel from the basic evangel itself. In 2 Corinthians 5:20,21 the apostle Paul joins the word of the conciliation ("For Christ's sake be conciliated to God") firmly with the word of the cross ("For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him"). There could be no conciliation without the sacrifice. All our blessings are based on Christ's finished work, the shedding of His blood, and the victorious resurrection from among the dead. And the conciliation is no

exception; it too is firmly founded on the gratuity of Christ in becoming the sin offering for our sakes.

EVANGELISTS AND AMBASSADORS

All ambassadors of Christ, heralding the conciliation, *must* also be evangelists because this message is so firmly based on the evangel. On the other hand we can only say for those who claim to be evangelists, that they *should* also be ambassadors of peace. The sad fact is that the majority of those who are heralding Christ crucified have little to say about the benefits of the conciliation. Like Paul we can rejoice whenever Christ is being announced (Phil.1:18), but we cannot but be disturbed when the evangel concerning Christ becomes distorted or remains incomplete. The anathema associated with such a ministry (Gal.1:8,9) is twofold: there is a present despoiling and lack of spiritual progress and growth for such messengers (Col.2:8; 2 Tim.2:16) and there is the loss of reward at the dais of Christ (1 Cor.3:12-15).

Nevertheless there seems to be little of the word of the conciliation in present-day evangelism. Men are told they must entreat God for His favor. Yet the evangel says, "For Christ's sake . . . are we ambassadors, *as of God entreating* through us . . . ." God is not the tyrant, acting impulsively and unfairly, which so many imagine Him to be. Not at all. In fact, once we appreciate the conciliation and its basis in the sin offering we will see God as He truly is, having a righteous purpose which He is carrying out in love and power. In no time prior to the present era has His heart of love been so fully revealed. He is entreating the world to come to Him freely and in peace, and yet how few have heard or heeded what He is saying through His ambassadors.

Another false view of God which can be best corrected by the word of the conciliation is that He is merely doing "the best He can." In other words, He wants to make peace but cannot. He is pictured as having to wait on man and man's decision to make peace with Him. But no, God has already acted and has established the conciliation. He is not *waiting* (in uncertainty) for something to be done but rather He awaits (in expectation) man's response to what He has accomplished on our behalf.

Religious books have suddenly become very popular. Paraphrased Versions of the Bible are distributed by the millions. And yet the message of conciliation is seldom heard. When is it broadcast on radio or television? How often even is it heard from the pulpit? People ask, "What is our commission for today?" and a thousand voices compete with a thousand different answers, but how few point to 2 Corinthians 5:20, "For Christ then are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching: 'For Christ's sake be conciliated to God!' "

This after all is our "great commission" if we must use such a term. It is true that it is not a popular message because it leaves so little for man to do, but that does not affect the truth of the conciliation nor our responsibility to make it known. Like Paul, but in a more figurative way, we may feel that we are "conducting an embassy in a chain" (Eph.6:20), since the usual means of communication seem to be blocked off to this truth, yet we should remember the results (which God brought forth) from that embassy Paul conducted.

We do not need to compete *against* the frenzied activity of organized religion. But we do need to pray for boldness, expression and vigilance in making known

the truth (Eph.6:18-20), "competing *together* in the faith of the evangel" (Phil.1:27). It is our privilege and responsibility to serve as good ambassadors and share the message of conciliation with others; it is not our responsibility to *make* men hear. Our embassy may be only a "still small voice" in comparison to the general din about us, but God will make the seed planted "grow up" (1 Cor.3:7).

WE ARE BESEECHING

Hence we are telling others about peace. We are telling them that when Christ died as the sin offering He died for their sakes. It was for their salvation and for justification, and it was also for conciliation. We are telling the world that when Christ became the sin offering God was there in Him conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses against them. This is our work, our commission, as ambassadors of Christ.

"But what is the sense of being an ambassador if nobody will listen?" Nobody? We are too concerned about numbers and ways and means of making converts. An ambassador is in the service of the government he represents. It is not his place to manipulate the lives of others but rather to present the views of his country's leaders. The world says that if your message doesn't seem to be getting across you should change your message. "Let them hear what they want to hear." But as faithful ambassadors of Christ we have no choice (and should desire none) except to tell others about the sin offering and its results. It was through one of His ambassadors that God has revealed the message of conciliation to us, and He also will use us to bring it to others as He wills.

The message we have received is a very simple one. It is that peace has been established through the

sacrifice of Christ. God has removed the barriers of enmity and opened up the gates of fellowship and access to Himself. Now He is entreating the world through us, "For Christ's sake be conciliated to God."

With these words God is asking the world to recognize and enjoy the peace He has made. The major reason the world does not like this message is that it leaves so little for the world to do. The world would prefer to make its own peace with God in its own way on its own terms. It would like to establish peace through toil and asceticism so that it could have something to boast in. To the world it is not religious enough just to accept what He has done.

GOD AND THE SIN OFFERING

"For the One not knowing sin, He [God] makes to be a sin offering for our sakes . . . ." These are perhaps the most solemn words in all of the gospel. Christ was perfect in every way and deserved nothing except life and glory. Instead, for our sakes, He experienced death and shame. This was wrong, and yet it was the wrong which made all wrongs right. This is certainly a mystery to our feeble minds, almost beyond our ability to grasp. But perhaps we can see this much at least, that what occurred there at the cross was the result of God's own actions. God *made* Christ to become the sin offering. This also connects with the statement in verse 19 that "*God was in Christ*, conciliating the world to Himself . . . ."

Where was God when Christ was crucified? He was in Christ Whom He made to become the sin offering for our sakes. Let us not be afraid to face this truth. God had foreknown the shedding of Christ's blood before the disruption of the world (1 Pet.1:20) having purposed its gracious and glorious results. He was not

taken by surprise. His hand was upon each step, and nothing occurred outside His own counsel. This is vital, for otherwise there could be no certainty and assurance that the purpose of the cross had been gained.

THE WORK OF AN AMBASSADOR

In today's world ambassadors generally are diplomats and negotiators. They seek benefits for their own countries and often must use crafty means in order to achieve their ends. We are to be ambassadors of a different sort. We have nothing to negotiate, for the conciliation has already been established, and it is now in effect. Instead of negotiating a peace we are informing others of the peace God has already made. We do not seek benefits for ourselves, for God blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials in Christ. Rather we seek this rich enjoyment of peace and security for all. We ask nothing except that others recognize and receive the benefits of the conciliation.

We are to tell others of what our God has done for them. Our "portfolio" bulges with the reports of His favor. But it all centers around this one supreme and astounding fact, that God was there when Christ became the sin offering. He was there effecting not only our salvation and that of all mankind, but He was destroying the barriers erected by our offenses, and making peace. We have been appointed as ambassadors of Christ to deliver this message of grace. How honored we are! To God be the glory!

D.H.H.

We are glorying in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we now obtained the conciliation. *-Romans 5:11*

IS PUNISHMENT EVERLASTING?

PART TWO

Yet it is claimed that since the life spoken of in Matthew 25:46 is everlasting then the punishment must also be everlasting. This seems unanswerable. But however logical it seems on the surface, the conclusion is unscriptural. *Whenever our reason leads us into direct contradiction to God's Word we may be sure that our logic is at fault.* We know that *death will be abolished* (1 Cor.15:26). Not many believe this, but God has said it. Death is the last enemy. This abolition will be accomplished by God making all alive (1 Cor.15:22). This will be done at the end of the eons, or ages. The believer has eonian life. He lives until there is no death. Hence he *practically* has "everlasting" life. But such is not the statement of the Scriptures. They are concerned with the eons. They do not promise us life thereafter, because *all* receive it then. The believer receives the life of the ages, not eternal life.

The unbeliever receives eonian, or age-abiding, judgment, ending in the second death, *until death is abolished.* Then both believer and unbeliever receive "everlasting" life. The Greek words *aiœn* (age or eon) and *aiœnios* (age-abiding or eonian) *are never* used of endlessness. Scripture speaks of the "eonian times" (2 Tim.1:9; Titus 1:2). All intelligent Bible scholars know that "the end of the *aiœn*" is not the end of the

world, but of this age. Each eon has a beginning and an end. Eonian life is limited to the eons. The "everlasting punishment" of Matthew 25:46 lasts for that eon, little over a thousand years. The eonian life of the believer lasts for two eons. How can anyone have *eonian* life after the eons are past? All then have life, for death is also past.

What saint, whose mind has been sanctified by contact with the Word of God, will rest satisfied with the judgment foisted upon the Bible by its translators in this passage? Faith is good. Let us always believe God, even if we cannot understand Him. But let us not allow it to degenerate into credulity. Let us make sure that God has indeed spoken when He seems to sanction what is contrary to truth and righteousness. In their hearts all will agree that there is something wrong with the sentence of everlasting punishment for failure to help the Jews, while entirely ignoring all the other sins and crimes committed by each individual in the chastened nations. Make it *eonian*, age-lasting, and all is clear even if it seems severe. Then each one will later stand before the great white throne to answer for his other delinquencies. We stand for more judgment, not less, but always scriptural and just, not unscriptural and irrational.

O, the sordid selfishness of soulish saints! We would sink untold billions into endless woe just to be sure that we will be happy, when the basis of blessedness is blessing others! Yet *this passage does not assure us eternal life!* It is not written concerning us at all! When did we succor the Jews in their distress? When did we feed and clothe and visit them? As this "eternal" life is only for those who have done this, the passage, if applied to the majority of the saints today, actually proves that *we* are destined to everlasting

punishment! How can a sentence passed on nations in the coming eon, or age, be applied to us without violating every principle of justice and intelligence?

The time is always vital to any interpretation. Apply this passage to the present and it probably will prove that a believer who has not visited the Jews in jail, is threatened with "everlasting punishment!" Personally, though I have often helped those in jail, I do not remember that one of them was a Jew. Does that doom me to everlasting punishment? It is not a question of faith in Christ here. It is works, and only such as affect the saints of the coming Kingdom.

Many have pointed out the fallacy of interpreting all the good things in the Old Testament as for the church, and all the bad for Israel. Yet these same teachers seek to fasten on all unbelievers what is spoken of a very few, and apply to all the righteous what is written of a small class. They commit a double felony. They rob the righteous for their own happiness, and pervert the judgment of the ungodly to bolster up their own lack of faith in God. If the possession of "eternal" life depends on this it is precarious indeed. We do not need to rob others. Our life is *hid with Christ in God* (Col.3:3). We will be roused incorruptible and immortal (1 Cor.15:54). Will a millionaire commit petty larceny? This is worse.

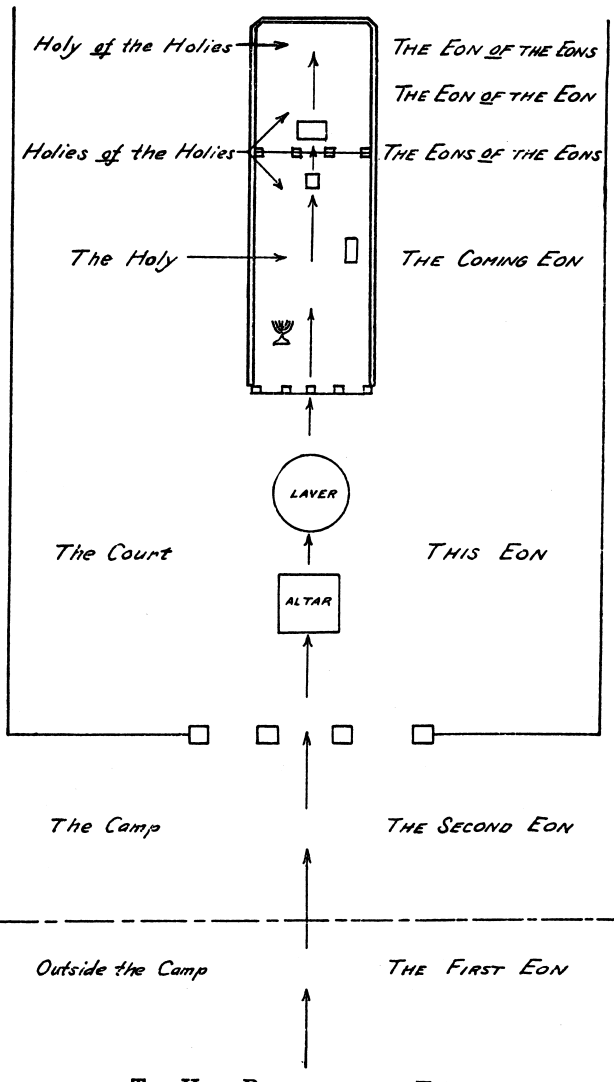
We now turn to two passages in Revelation said to describe the endlessness of hell.

> The smoke ot their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name (14:11).
>
> The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (20:10).

Let us be intelligible in discussing these awful themes. It may mean little to us whether billions upon billions of human beings suffer for eternity, but it means much to them and far more to God. Such illogical explanations of these passages as the following show irrational prejudice which ought not to be present in so solemn a discussion. "Those who enter the lake of fire shall suffer *unto* the ages of the ages, or, in other words, for a countless succession of ages . . . ."

If "the ages of the ages" means a countless succession of ages there should be some evidence for it in the languages of inspiration. Even in English we have no parallel. We might seek to express such a thought by "ages *upon* ages," "ages *after* ages," but never by the genitive, "ages *of* ages." There is no ground for giving it such a meaning in English. In the inspired Originals we have exact parallels. These determine its force for us. It surely is not blind prejudice to intelligently compare this phrase with others of the same kind rather than force upon it a meaning which is dictated only by our desires. Show us a single parallel in Hebrew or Greek in which the genitive plural follows the plural in order to denote infinity in any sense, and we will consider it.

Readers of the Bible are familiar with a similar phrase in connection with the tabernacle of Israel. Everyone knows of the holy of holies, and the preceding holy place. These are called "the holies of holies" in Hebrews 9:25, in the best manuscript (corrected Sinaiticus). It gives us an exact parallel in space corresponding to "the eons of the eons" in time. In fact the whole tabernacle system has a remarkable correspondence with the eonian times, as shown on the accompanying diagram. There are five divisions in each. The two inner holy places are related to the



THE HOLY PLACES AND THE EONS

court, the camp and the world without, just as the last two eons are related to the previous eons. Both show the way to God, one in space, the other in time.

Are "the holies of holies" in the tabernacle a countless succession of holies? The idea is so incongruous that it needs no refutation. This form of speech does not multiply the holy places. It relates them to the others. The holy *of* holies brings before us *one* holy place as the outcome of and superior to other holy places. The holies of holies are confined to the *two* holy places in the tabernacle as related to the court and the camp. This is the usage of the Hebrew, followed by the Greek and also by English. None of these languages will tolerate the thought of infinity. Not a single genuine example can be given without changing *of* to a different connective.

No one who will intelligently consider the correspondences between the tabernacle arrangement and the eons, will fail to be convinced that the likeness is essential rather than accidental. The five zones, from the great world without through the camp, the court, the holy place, to the holiest of all, have many features in common with the five eons. The great central fact of all, the cross of Christ, is represented by the brazen altar, in the third space and eon. The holy place is an apt figure of the coming eon, and the holiest of all, with its shekinah glory, finds its counterpart in the new earth, where the glory of God displaces the light of the sun.

We have repeatedly suggested that no explanation of "the ages of the ages" is satisfactory which does not also explain the difference between it and "the *age* of the *age*" and "the *age* of the *ages*." A countless succession of ages absolutely obliterates any possible distinction. On the other hand, the exposition we offer

fully accounts for all the facts. The last eon is "the eon of the eon," and "the eon of the eons" in the same sense as the most holy place is the holy of the holy and "the holy of holies." Every explanation which ignores these three phrases thereby proclaims its own inadequacy. These expressions are inspired by God, and are true tests of that which conforms to His revelation.

A most subtle argument is often made at this point to appeal to a passage such as Revelation 15:7. If "the ages of the ages" spoken of there are not eternal, does this suggest that God could not be eternal?

Such a statement as this shows the careless, hardhearted indifference with which good men corrupt the Word of God in order to consign all His enemies to eternal torment. What are the facts? Torment for the eons of the eons, in the Scriptures, is limited to the wild beast, the false prophet and the Adversary (Rev.20:10).

"The *fumes* . . . ascending for the eons of the eons" (Rev.14:11) is a figure of speech similar to the one used in Jude 7, "a specimen . . . the justice of fire eonian." When sulphur and fire rained from the heavens on Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them, the inhabitants were killed and the fumes ascended from the land (Gen.19:28). This event is well remembered. The Israelitish worshipers of the wild beast are the supreme sinners of mankind. They have no rest day and night while they are worshiping the wild beast and its image and shall be tormented until they die (Rev.14:9-12; 16:2,8,9; 18:8), some of them by the blade (19:21). Their fate will be remembered through the eons of the eons.

Let us appeal to the illustration we have already used and apply it to the tabernacle. The high priest is in the holies of holies. Does this prove that he is *con-*

fined there? It states a very pregnant fact, full of significance. It does not hinder him from going into the court or the camp or even the world around. It is not logic, it is not reason, which makes negative inferences from positive statements. God says He lives for the eons of the eons. The three in the lake of fire (Rev.20:10) are tormented that long. We thoroughly believe that *the length of time is the same.* Thereafter death is abolished, as God has said (1 Cor.15:26). If God lives until there is no death, is it reasonable to infer that He will be annihilated? It would be silly for God to insist that He will live when death has been abrogated.

When God asserts that He lives for the eons of the eons (not *to* the ages of the ages), it is the height of absurdity to infer that He lives at no other time. There was a time before the eons (1 Cor.2:7). Was He living then? During the Lord's day and the succeeding day of God, He will be in vital contact with the earth in a sense which is impossible at present. His life will be evident everywhere, in power, not hidden, as now. In this way He will live for the eons of the eons. Compare the phrase "resurrection of *life*" (John 5:29). The resurrection of judgment also restores to temporary life. Life is used in an intensive sense. A.E.K.

(To be continued)

CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT

Our stock of the 1955 edition of the *Concordant Greek Text* is nearly depleted, and a new edition is now being printed. This 735 page book will match up with *The Greek Elements* in page size but of course will be considerably thicker. It will sell for $10.00.

We expect to receive this new printing by mid-June. Anyone ordering the book before July 1, 1975, may have it at the special pre-publication price of $5.00.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY, 1975
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-SIX

EDITORIAL

"For if we have become planted together in the likeness of His death, nevertheless we shall be of the resurrection also, knowing this, that our old humanity was crucified together with Him, that the body of Sin may be nullified, for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin." *(Rom.6:5,6)*

THE IDEAS of unity, likeness, and identity are quite distinct. Two persons who are utterly unlike may be united in marriage, in business, or in some other way. Two persons who are not united in any special way may be so much alike as to be mistaken for one another. Likeness is not unity, nor is it sameness. Two eggs may be similar in appearance, but they are not identical. If I am in Christ Jesus, I have been united with Him by spiritual baptism, yet I am not identical with Him, and in some respects I am most unlike Him. He is one Person, and I am another, a very different person. Because I am in Him I am united with Him in the likeness of His death and of His resurrection. I have not actually died His death nor am I resurrected yet. I never can die the same death or experience the same resurrection as His. He was unique in His person and His work. But from the moment of my spiritual baptism into Him I do share the likeness and reap the benefits of His death and resurrection. The spirit and life He imparts to His members are not merely like His; they are *identical* with His. "Now he who joins the Lord is one spirit [with Him]" (1 Cor.6:17). And He, the life-giving last Adam, imparts His own life to all the new humanity.

Planted together, or joint growth, is another figure of union with Christ. Union by growth gives us the likeness of His death and resurrection. *We have become* so spiritually coalescent with the likeness of Christ's death to sin that we ourselves are truly said to be dead to it. Verse 5 is intended to prove that we should and can walk in newness of life. If we are joined to Christ in one respect we are joined in all respects. It is impossible to share the likeness of His death without the likeness of His resurrection also.

Our old humanity was crucified together with Him. Christ took it to the cross. His crucifixion was ours. Man intended to crucify Him only: God crucified man together with Him. Christ left His glory that He might take up humanity and carry it under the curse of the cross and so righteously dispose of it. He assumed its sin, accepted responsibility for it, endured the just penalty it deserved, and put it into the discard. He personally accepted at God's hand the death blow given to currupted humanity, and His responsibility to account to God for it was then ended. It is not that Christ as the Head of creation ceased to sustain the old humanity and indeed all the old creation; but it is that by the cross He has stripped off the old humanity and its sin from Himself and is dead to its sin and released from accountability to God for it.

The old humanity brought Him to the shameful cross, but it can do so no longer. He and those in Him are justified from sin. Believer and unbeliever alike share one common humanity, the old one; but only the believer who is in Christ has a part in the new humanity. Thus, as a matter of fact, the two humanities exist and act side by side, unless the believer puts off the practices of the old.

Christ, by submitting the old humanity to crucifixion, gave an example which teaches us to strip off the old humanity (Col.3:9) which is corrupting in accord with its seductive desires (*cf* Eph.4:22-24). This putting off is to be performed "as regards your former behavior." Because of the crucifixion of the old humanity at Golgotha, those who are in Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts. Which means that they accept God's word of the cross concerning the old humanity and all that belongs to it. As alive from the dead they cannot allow the evil activity of that which God has crucified. The practical result of reckoning ourselves to be dead to sin by crucifixion is to keep the cross between us and the activity of the old humanity. Thus we put it off.

Christ suffered the shameful and accursed death of the cross. Those in Him share the likeness of His crucifixion, for the shame and curse was properly ours. From the human side the cross was the most monstrous injustice ever inflicted by the hands of men on an innocent Individual; but from the divine side the cross was God's infliction, not on the Individual, but on collective humanity. Hence Christ must be related to humanity as its responsible Head before He could take it to the cross. Humanity would never have voluntarily gone there. The second Man voluntarily accepted the divine sentence and its execution. He could not possibly deserve the death of the cross, for He knew no sin. But humanity deserved nothing less than crucifixion.

At the cross God treated the old humanity as the criminal which it is. He does not expect anything good of it. The only righteous thing He could do with it was to crucify it. As far as its sentence and execution is concerned, humanity was ended at the cross. Christ left it

there. And in the reckoning of faith we also who are in Him must leave it there.

How blessed to know that our old humanity which so greatly grieves us, and of which we would fain divest ourselves, has already been under the divine sentence and penalty at the cross! Hence as we obediently reckon ourselves dead by crucifixion we may in actual practice endorse God's infliction of the cross by putting off the sinful passions that remain in us.

The crucifixion of our humanity is a distinctive feature of the Pauline revelation; no others ever speak of it. It is an essential of *the secret of the evangel* which Paul alone proclaimed: *the conciliation of the world.* It was achieved by the death of God's Son: One died for the sake of all, consequently all died (2 Cor.5:14). But a still deeper fact is that One was crucified for humanity, consequently humanity is crucified, and those who are in Christ are by that crucifixion justified from the depravity that clings to our old humanity and manifests itself as a law of sin in our members.

The word of the cross is much more than a record of the tragedy on Golgotha. When it is seen that the cross disposes of the old humanity, with all the distinctions to which it so tenaciously clings, we understand why Paul uses the word of the cross in his controversy with rationalists and ritualists. First Corinthians and Galatians are often called the epistles of the cross. In them God is dealing with the wise according to the flesh and with those termed the Circumcision, in flesh, made by hands. Neither can endure the word of the cross, for it is incompatible with any boast in the flesh.

God's design in crucifying our old humanity is twofold. It is *that the body of Sin may be nullified,*and

also that we should be emancipated from our slavery to sin. These are possible because, having died with Christ, we are justified from Sin. The body of Sin is not the same as our old humanity. There is a difference between the thing aimed at and the means employed. The body of Sin is practically made inert by obedience to the command in Romans 6:12,13, while the way of freedom from servitude to Sin is shown in verses 16-23. But before these deliverances can be experienced the believer must know of his death by crucifixion and the consequent justification from Sin. When he is confident that he has a legal title to reckon himself dead to Sin (verse 11), even though it remains as a law of sin in his members (*cf* 7:23), he can be assured of his position before God, and thus he has authority and can avail himself of God's power to deal with indwelling sin as God enables him.

The body of Sin is the human body over which Sin and death reign. Sin and death came in and took possession of the old humanity with its body, and made this body the seat and instrument and slave of Sin. It is a body in which Sin reigns (6:12), in the members of which a law of sin operates (7:23); it is a body of death (7:24), which has practices which must be put to death (8:13). Sin is not inherent in the human body; it was not found in Adam's body till he transgressed. Though our body is mortal and doomed to death it will be redeemed and transfigured. Even the mortal body may be presented to God for His use. "Are you not aware that your bodies are members of Christ?" and "that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our body" (1 Cor.6:15; 2 Cor.4:10,11).

There is a change of masters and of service; the body must no longer act as Sin's possession, but as Christ's member. The new humanity cannot employ a

body of Sin, though it does use a mortal body. Having died to sin by the cross, we are free to present our bodies to God. The further purpose in God's design in crucifying our old humanity is *for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin.* Because we are under the mastery of Grace, Sin shall no longer master us. It is in the power of His resurrection that full deliverance is found, yet before resurrection we must be united in the likeness of His death. Righteousness demands the death of the cross, and Grace reigns through righteousness (5:21).

"We" is a third term in Romans 6:5,6 which we must distinguish from our old humanity and the body of Sin. They must be put away; yet we survive because we are saved. The collective old humanity cannot survive because it has been condemned; the mortal body must die and cease to exist as the body of Sin; but we, the persons whom God has made, each distinct and individual, are even now God's freedmen. It is we who reckon ourselves dead to Sin and alive to God. It is we who share the likeness of His death and of His resurrection, we who present ourselves to God as alive from the dead, we, who are delivered not *from* the death of the cross, but *through* it.

When Christ died, there was no question of the eradication of sin from Him or from us, but of God's condemnation of it. By His death Christ released us from the divine indignation against it. As I more and more discover in myself deeper depth of depravity, my heart condemns me and conscience accuses. Then I am ready to receive and rejoice in this part of the evangel (6:5,6). Every glance of faith at Christ crucified pacifies my conscience, fills my heart with joy and my mouth with praise. Geo. L. Rogers

SPIRIT BEINGS

WE have studied spirit as a motive power and as it is seen in mankind. Now we wish to consider briefly another manifestation. Spirit is used as the name of a class of beings which possess some of the attributes of humanity, but lack others. Negatively, we cannot do better than to begin with our Lord's dictum: a spirit has not flesh and bones (Luke 24:39). Not having flesh, and not being connected with the soil, these spirits must obtain their energy and vitality from some other source.

This may be difficult for human beings to conceive, but a few considerations will show the possibility of such a source of life and give us a measure of understanding how they may manage to exist. Speaking broadly, most of the power present on the earth comes to us from the sun. Mankind could not exist here without it. Our spirits, through the sun-soaked soil, are dependent on it. The sun radiates this energy in all directions. It is present, not only on other planets, but in the vast voids of interstellar space. Why should not spirits be equipped to utilize it by more direct means than man? These are only speculations, yet they receive some slight support from the doom of the messengers whose bonds seem to be gloom (Jude 6; 2 Pet.2:4), as though separation from a luminary curtailed their power and confined their movements.

It was a part of the apostasy of the Sadducees that they denied the existence of these spirit beings (Acts 23:8). When Paul wished to distract attention from himself and create confusion among his opponents, he brought in his heavenly revelations. The Sadducees could not receive such a testimony, while the Pharisees made it the occasion of fighting for their belief in spirits (Acts 23:9).

The influence of spirit beings over mankind is far more marked than most men imagine. It was through an evil spirit that sin entered this scene (Rev.12:9). Satan continues his sinister operations in the sons of stubbornness (Eph.2:2) all down the wicked eons, until he is bound during the millennium. The authority of darkness has a well nigh universal kingdom now. Only the saints are rescued out of it. The rest of mankind are ruled by forces of which they are not aware. Whatever the outward form of government, from democracy to autocracy, there is always a power invisible, unknown, that moves mankind against its own instincts.

A good illustration of this is the question of peace and war. The most of mankind want peace. They do not even want to prepare for war. But there is a current carrying them on to conflict which they are unable to resist. There is no reasonable explanation for human history, unless we acknowledge the influence of supervising spiritual forces.

This is brought before us very vividly in the book of Revelation. At the time of the end earthly government is symbolized by a seven-headed monster. At the same time Satan's power is symbolized by a duplicate of this, a seven-headed dragon. When Adam sinned, he handed over the control of earth's affairs to Satan, and evil spirits have been shaping the affairs of their

human dupes in order to bring about the worldwide apostasy which is fast approaching. The present irruption of spiritism is a premonitory warning that the spirit world is not satisfied merely to overrule. They want mediums in order to have a direct hand in the worship of mankind. In the wild beast and the false prophet they will be able to attain supreme control.

Then, if war is wanted, there will not be the need of going through futile political forms. The spirits of demons will be sent to the kings of the earth, and they will mobilize the armies of the nations for the battle of the great day of God Almighty (Rev.16:14). The closer we view the springs of human action, the more we will be convinced that men are instruments in hands that reach through darkness, directing their vaunted "self-determination."

Christ, because He is the Son of God, is supreme in the world of spirits also. He often manifested His authority, and exemplified His ability to bring about the emancipation of the race from their clutches, by casting out spirits which had taken possession of human beings. The apostles rejoiced that the spirits were subject to them (Luke 10:20), though they were not always successful. He cast out the spirits with a word (Matt.8:16). His power over them arose from the fact that He had more than a human spirit. He had been generated by God's Spirit. Hence He knew them and was able to deal directly with them.

The human spirit may be dominated and displaced by another spirit. This takes place in some measure when the will or opinion of one man is imposed on his fellows. Hypnotism seems to be a voluntary surrender of the spirit of one person to that of another. I have known of cases where the hypnotist only needed to *think* a command, which was immediately executed

by the subject. Alien, non-human spirits may obtain such complete control over human bodies that they act in response to the intruder. The will is suspended, and displaced by a stronger influence.

UNCLEAN SPIRITS

As an example of such obsession let us consider the case of the boy whom the disciples could not cure (Luke 9:37-43). Unlike the proper human spirit, which causes men to act normally and rationally, this spirit, when it attacked him, led him to cry out, tearing and convulsing him, with frothing at his mouth, and left only after crushing him. This seems to be characteristic of such spirits. They are not "disembodied" human spirits, as some suppose, for they are never at home in a body, however much they desire to use and abuse the body they obsess. It is not a return to their normal state, but an unlawful entrance upon a territory which belongs only to the human spirit.

The usual descriptive term for such spirits is "unclean." We may suppose that they have no such means of sensation as the human soul. Just as the human spirit combines with the flesh to give sensation, or soul, so, it is likely, these alien spirits are able to unite with a human body to produce a species of feeling. In other words, the whole object of the unclean spirits is sensuality. They crave to sense things as we humans are wont to do. They do not seem to be very successful in their endeavors if they feel at all as a human soul would in their place, for their victims seldom have enjoyable sensations. Rather, the unnatural union induces suffering and agony.

Men were amazed that our Lord enjoined the unclean spirits with authority and power, and they came out (Mark 1:27; Luke 4:36). The spirits prostrated to

Him, when they beheld Him (Mark 3:11). He charged them to come out (Luke 8:29). He cured those who were annoyed by them (Luke 6:18). He rebuked them (Mark 9:25; Luke 9:42). He was Sovereign of the spirit world, and they obeyed Him, whether they were in a little girl (Mark 7:25), a grown man (Mark 1:23), or the violent demoniac who dwelt in the tombs (Mark 5:2). His apostles also healed many molested by these intruders (Acts 5:16; 8:7), for He had given them authority so to do (Matt.10:1; Mark 6:7).

Our Lord had the holy Spirit of God without measure, as was manifest from His mighty acts, His life-giving words, and His holy conduct. Still, because He had authority over the spirits, and men did not wish to acknowledge His divine power, the scribes go to the fearful extreme of claiming that He also had an unclean spirit, more powerful than the rest, so that He could make them obey Him (Mark 3:28-30). As His testimony to Israel was based on the outward manifestations of the holy Spirit, their assertion absolutely repudiated all that He did. This is the so-called "unpardonable," or eonian sin, which cannot, from the nature of it, be pardoned for the eons.

WICKED SPIRITS

On other occasions the spirits are called "wicked." This is probably but another aspect of the same beings, intent on harming others rather than gratifying themselves. It is usually associated with disease (Luke 7:21; Acts 19:12) and infirmity (Luke 8:2). The best example of such a spirit's action is brought before us in connection with the seven sons of Sceva. Some of them exorcised a man with a wicked spirit, only to be badly beaten for their pains (Acts 19:13-16).

DUMB AND DEAF-MUTE SPIRITS

In some cases the spirit's power seems to lead to permanent disability of some of the victim's organs. The little boy who had the dumb and deaf spirit could not be healed by the disciples of our Lord (Mark 9:14-29). His infirmity, doubtless, was a picture of the apostate nation and the fact that Israel was under the power of the Adversary so that they could not hear or speak God's word. This incident shows us that, even though the evil spirits seem to have humanity at their mercy, they are themselves subject to the overruling hand of God.

A PYTHON SPIRIT

The maid of Philippi was possessed by a "python" spirit. The name is the same as that applied by the Hebrews to the cobra, one of the largest of the snakes. In later times it was applied to the fabled serpent slain by Apollo, or to the spirit of the Delphian oracles, or even to ventriloquistic predictions. This is probably the form affected by the maid who followed Paul and was forced to acknowledge the superiority of the spirit which inhabited him even before he used his power to cast out the python (Acts 16:16).

DECEIVING SPIRITS

One of the most important and practical of all the passages which deal with evil spirits is the prediction that some will be withdrawing from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons (1 Tim.4:1). In the early days wicked spirits were cast out by the saints; now they are invited in. Great religious movements, ostensibly under the guidance of the holy Spirit of God, are ably organized and wrought up into a frenzy of soulish manifestations under the leadership of deceiving spirits. With many these pass

for great spiritual awakenings, because there is sufficient spirituality, along with what is probably accounted as such, to deceive those of the saints who do not test the spirits and their manifestations by the Scriptures.

Those who are familiar with the modern revival of spiritism (usually called Spiritualism) find many of the same manifestations there as those which are supposed to be the work of the holy Spirit in believers who claim a special enduement. There have been occasional sensational movements among God's people which, at first, were taken as extraordinary operations of God's Spirit, but later turned out to be controlled by deceiving spirits. Too much stress cannot be laid on the *character* of these spirits. They do not appear to be evil. On the contrary, they seem to be superlatively good. They pretend to be intensely evangelical, and often clinch the deception by predicting the soon coming of the Lord. They are pre-eminently *deceptive.*

Very solid and saintly men have been thoroughly taken in by them. A godly saint like the elder Baxter found himself on one occasion inspired to make a most remarkable and eloquent sermon, not only apparently scriptural, but filled with a strange and subtle power which mightily moved his audience. At another time the "power" within him was so uncontrollable that he had to gag himself with a handkerchief for fear his bellowings would be heard by his family. At first it seemed the height of impiety to doubt that this was indeed the mighty power of God. To think otherwise would border on the unpardonable sin. It would be ascribing the works of God's Spirit to the Adversary. But no one is safe who does not test the spirits, no matter how closely they seem to conform to the holy Spirit of God.

Let us always guard against the deceiving spirits which abound today under the garb of the holy Spirit. We may expect them to produce power and spectacular manifestations. The main condition for the reception of a false spirit is *passivity*. We would solemnly warn our friends to *refuse all waiting and yielding*. God's Spirit cooperates with our wills. It does not demand blind, hypnotic control of the members of our bodies. It does not make them act without our volition. The moment you find your body making movements without your conscious consent it is time to repudiate the power which possesses you and to escape from its clutches. Abnormal physical contortions of all kinds are not in accord with the present operation of God's holy Spirit. They are due to those deceiving spirits by which many must be deceived that the Scripture may be fulfilled.

The Welsh revival was in its most popular phase a notable outburst of deceiving spirits. This is acknowledged by those chiefly used in it. It resulted in the compilation of a text book on the work of deceiving spirits among the children of God, which goes into the matter with much detail. It is called "War on the Saints," though it is largely concerned with an analysis of the experience which accompanies possession by evil spirits and the way of escape, rather than the wrestling with spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials, which should be the constant conflict of all saints who have entered their allotment by faith. This aspect of the work of evil spirits comes before us more fully in the later unfoldings of Ephesians (Eph.6:10-17).

For many years I have lived at the very center of the latest outburst of spirit manifestations and have had ample opportunities to learn their methods and to

judge the results. I have heard the experiences of those who were possessed and of others who were able to escape. The movement as a whole, being supposedly under the immediate control of the holy Spirit, should have given us the most blessed example of unity and love since the days of the apostles. Yet it has led to even more disputation and division than others. Perhaps the greatest lack has been edification. Such immediate revelations should have brought great light. Instead, it has sometimes led to a slighting of God's written Word in favor of spirit messages, which, with hardly an exception, are out of full harmony with the inspired text.

GOOD SPIRITS

There is a striking difference between the relation of the spirit world to us and to the Circumcision. Because of our spiritual nearness to God we do not need the mediation of good spirits to minister to us. They have no place in Paul's presentations. We are at war with evil spirits, but we do not need the protection of good ones.

Hebrews was not written by Paul. It is not for the nations, but for the Circumcision. Their salvation is in view when we read, "Are they not all ministering spirits commissioned for service because of those who are about to be enjoying the allotment of salvation?" (Heb.1:14). The deliverance of Israel during the era of the end is largely in the hands of messengers. Seven spirits are before the throne (Rev.1:4; 3:1), represented as torches of fire (Rev.4:5), or as the seven horns or seven eyes of the Lambkin (Rev.5:6). At that time will the great chief messenger (archangel) Michael, who stands for the sons of Israel, war on their behalf (Dan.12:1).

During the Pentecostal era spirits were used as

messengers of the Lord. Is it not striking that, while Paul receives his directions directly from the Lord, a spirit instructs Philip (Acts 8:29) and snatches him away in a miraculous manner after his message to the Ethiopian eunuch? So, also, a messenger delivers Peter from his prison (Acts 12:5-19), and his Gentile guards were slain because of his escape. Paul at Philippi not only is freed without the help of a spirit, but he goes forth boldly, having brought salvation to his Gentile keeper.

Spirits were intensely active during our Lord's first advent. Their present activity among the spiritists, who are increasing greatly in number and influence, is one of the signs of Christ's return. A far surer sign is the reception deceiving spirits have been accorded among some sections of Christianity where the holy Spirit is displaced by deceiving spirits. The only test, the only power capable of dispossessing these intruders is the written Word of God used in the power of His holy Spirit. No evil spirit will fully acknowledge that Word or the lordship of Christ. Let us therefore cling to God's Word as written, and obey the Lord that it reveals.

Man may be spoken of as a spirit, just as we call him a "soul" or a "body." This, however, is not literal, for man is not a spirit and never can be. It is not our destiny to become "angels," without material frames. Not only will our spirits be made alive, and our souls roused, but our bodies will be raised at the presence of Christ. They will be changed from soulish bodies to spiritual ones. Our present soulish body is not made of soul, but is controlled by it. So our future, glorious body will not be made of spirit, but will be dominated by it. We will remain human, and will not become spirit beings.

While the saints of the celestial destiny are blessed preeminently in spirit, let us remember that one of the chief figures of our felicity is that of the human body. It is based on the fact that our Lord has a literal, material frame. In spirit we are joint members of Christ's body. It is one of the glories of God's grace that the physical frame which distinguishes and characterizes humanity and which has been debased into the dust of death, should become the symbol of the highest spiritual organism in the universe.

God has separated the world of spirits from the world of mankind. Evil spirits seek to break down the barriers, to reverse the process and make man a spirit, either now or in the future. Let us avoid both of these errors by according to each the place which God has given them. In Christ, Who is a Man, we are supreme, above the spirit hosts of which He is the rightful Head.

A.E.K.

(To be continued)

CHARLTON E. MYERS

We are saddened by the loss of another of our loyal supporters from the earliest days of this Concern. Brother Myers was an elder and teacher in the Washington D.C. class for many years, having been introduced to our work through the efforts of the late F. H. Robison. He died on May 22 at the age of 88 and though weakened in hearing and eyesight he continued with active interest in spreading the truths he loved so much. We received a letter from him written on May 16 in which he speaks of presenting a Concordant Version to a minister in his neighborhood who received it with considerable pleasure. Our sincere sympathy goes out to his family, especially to his wife, Nellie, who survives him. We remember Paul's comforting words to the Romans: "For for this Christ died and lives, that He should be Lord of the dead as well as of the living."

A PSALM
Dedication Song of the House
Davidic

30 I am exalting Thee, Ieue,
for Thou dost draw me out
And dost not make my enemies rejoice >over me.
2 Ieue, my Alueim, I implored > Thee,
And Thou art healing me.
3 Ieue, Thou hast [c]brought up my soul from the unseen.
Thou dost preserve me alive from those descending
to a crypt.
4 Make melody to Ieue, His kindly ones
And acclaim for the remembrance of His holiness,
5 For [7]disturbance[7] is in His anger,
=Life is in His acceptance.
In the evening, lodging is lamentation,
+Yet for the morning, jubilation.
6 And I, I say in my ease,
"I shall avoid slipping for the eon."
7 Ieue, in Thine acceptance
Thou [c]makest > my [7]honor[cs] stand strong.
If Thou concealest Thy face, I become flustered.
8 To Thee, Ieue, am I calling,
And to my Lord am I supplicating.
9 What gain is there in my blood,
'When I descend to ruin?
Acclaiming Thee is the soil?
Telling is it Thy truth?

[10] **Hear, Ieue, and be gracious** to **me.**
Ieue, become Thou a **help to me.**
[11] **Thou turnest my wailing to fluting for me.**
Thou dost **unloose my sackcloth**
And art belting me with **rejoicing,**
[12] **That melody may** be made to **Thee** by [7]**my**[c] **glorying**
and shall not be still.
Ieue, my Alueim, for the **eon will I acclaim Thee.**
Permanent

LIFE IS IN HIS ACCEPTANCE

Though the evangel of conciliation had not been revealed in David's day these words in Psalm 30 reveal its message in as succinct a way as is possible. Faith in the evangel of conciliation clears away every barrier and hindrance to the fullest enjoyment of God's love. It bestows a future eonian life, but for the present, a life now which can be lived in the blissful awareness of His constant smile. Life in its fullest sense can only be enjoyed in the conviction that we are accepted and approved absolutely in Christ, that no self-imposed cloud of sin can dim or obscure His smile of acceptance. The purest source of joy and exultation is a conviction of His favor, not based on what we are as to birth or personal achievement, but solely on what we are in spirit, in Christ, Who is all perfection. We anticipate the morning of the consummation when His smile will be for all His creation, and each part will exult in His acceptance.

Acceptance and approval by God is that which satisfies. It is as the night mist on herbage that encourages life and growth (Prov.19:12). With it comes a filling with the blessing of Ieue (Deut.33:23). And who among all the saints down the generations can compare with us who are blessed with *every* spiritual blessing among the celestials?

Those whom Ieue accepts enjoy the inestimable boon of basking in the light of His countenance (Psa.44:3), enjoying a knowledge of Himself and sweet fellowship with Him. His acceptance of us is part of His salvation, and He Himself makes us fit to merit His approval. He beautifies with salvation those whom He accepts (149:4). We are accepted in Christ. He Himself is the One accepted by His God: He is His Servant, His Chosen One (Isa.42:1). And we too are chosen, the choice ones of our God upon whom He smiles. He will not smite us in wrath, even though we should deserve it, but in His acceptance of us have compassion and deal in mercy and kindness with all our failures (Isa.60:10).

However though we are accepted and approved by our God in Christ, we must not forget that it is as true today, as in every era, that whom the Lord is loving He is correcting, and that He gives at times pain to the son whom He is accepting (Prov.3:12). Discipline is an essential element of the life of faith and each experiences it (1 Cor.11:32). If He accepts us as His sons then He disciplines us. But in it all is His love.

My life is in Thy favor,
My joy is in Thy smile,
To Thee of Christ I savor,
Though in myself so vile.

Donald G. Hayter

RECEIVING THE GRACE OF GOD

(2 Corinthians 6:1-13)

THE GRACE OF GOD is the summation of all we have received in the evangel. Our hearts are overwhelmed as we contemplate God's gifts of justification through the blood of Christ and salvation from indignation through Him (Rom.5:9) and now even more so, for we have caught a glimpse of the benefits of the conciliation through the sacrifice of God's beloved Son as the sin offering. Yet we have only begun to measure the supply of His grace with these topics, for Paul takes us from glory to glory even to the untraceable riches of Christ unfolded in Ephesians and Colossians.

However, we are now considering 2 Corinthians and the welcome word of the conciliation. Have we received this grace? Have we become aware of God's establishment of peace? Or do we still think and act as though God is reckoning man's offenses against him as was true in former eras? We should receive none of God's grace for naught. By no means, therefore, may we be receiving for naught this particular grace which transforms the present era into the most acceptable time of this eon! How foolish it would be to despise or ignore the very gift which would grant us peace and enlighten our days. The word of the conciliation proclaims that "Now is a most acceptable era!"

FORMER ERAS

In past eras, before God conciliated the world to Himself through the sacrifice of Christ, it was a fearful thing to be His enemy. Those nations who possessed the land of Canaan in Joshua's day were strengthened in enmity by God and experienced His indignation in the fullest of measures. "For from Ieue it comes to fortify their heart to meet Israel in battle that they may be doomed, to avoid grace coming to them that they may be exterminated, as Ieue instructed Moses" (Josh.11:20).

There was no grace for them to receive, for Ieue avoided its offer and fortified their hearts against Israel. The result was extermination. There was no conciliation then. Today, however, things are vastly different, not only for us who believe, but for all the nations, whether or not they oppose Israel, and whether or not they offend the heart of God. In fact, because of the situation allowed by the conciliation many nations show themselves to be enemies of God and still seem to prosper.

We could add many examples from the Old Testament of the lack of conciliation between God and those nations which opposed Him. Nor did Israel itself escape His anger when they forgot Him and turned to other gods. "My people are rising to be an enemy," He complained in Micah 2:8. Therefore He had said, "Behold Me devising against this family an evil whence you shall not remove your necks" (2:3).

Even in the days of our Lord's ministry the lack of conciliation was made manifest. Jesus told His disciples, "You should not be inferring that I came to be casting peace on the earth. I did not come to be casting peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). It is true that He had also said, "Love your enemies, and pray for

those who are persecuting you" (Matt.5:44), but that was in reference to the coming Kingdom when the law of love will be written on their hearts. (For us, however, this disposition of concern not only for enemies but for all mankind, already is very much in order.)

Again, although the cross made the conciliation possible, the effects of the conciliation were not made evident even during the time covered by the early portion of the book of Acts. Annanias and Sapphira, for example, were struck dead for lying to God (Acts 5:1-10), and Herod too was smitten with disease for appropriating God's glory to himself (Acts 12:23).

The word of the conciliation was announced through the apostle Paul. He said of the nations that "God was in Christ conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:19; *cf* Rom.11:15). Though the nations may continue to offend God, He is not taking account of these wounds against His heart. Paul also wrote of us that "being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son" (Rom.5:10). This is grace. The nations who have not received it cannot enjoy its supreme blessings of peace. But we who have received it should receive it *not for naught.* We should be reclaiming the era (Eph.5:16; Col.4:5) as Paul advises us, fully recognizing and enjoying its most acceptable benefits.

A BROADENED HEART

"Has your heart broadened?" Paul asks in 2 Corinthians 6:11. The word of the conciliation is a message calculated to broaden our hearts toward one another and toward all mankind. The disposition described in Matthew 5:44 (referred to above) is

reflected in 1 Timothy 2:1-4, where we read, "I am entreating, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanksgiving be made for all mankind, for kings and all those being in a superior station . . . ." This is the disposition created by the grace of conciliation. And when it is received it transforms our era into a "most acceptable" time, even as is suggested in 1 Timothy, " . . . 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."

Paul's heart was broadened by this evangel of peace as shown by our passage in 2 Corinthians 6. The bitter fruit of raging anger and hate shriveled and died in the heart of Saul of Tarsus when he received the conciliation. He no longer saw the despised Gentiles as enemies, but rather he toiled fervently to bring them the truth of grace. It is not Saul the Pharisee, but Paul the apostle to the nations, who speaks of "working together" (v. 1) with these Greeks and barbarians (*cf* Rom.1:14). It is not the proud Hebrew of Hebrews who defends his actions to those far off from God, in 2 Corinthians 6:3-13, but rather it is their brother and apostle who seeks their welfare through afflictions, necessities, distresses, blows and jails and turbulences, in toil, in vigils, in fasts and patience and love unfeigned. It is no narrow-minded Benjamite whose heart is broadened to the immature failing Corinthians. Instead we witness the conciliated Paul, the sinner saved by grace, who endures defamation and the accusation of deception (v. 8) with patience and peace.

He was living in a most acceptable era, a day of salvation, and so his days had become completely

different to him than they had been before. Once he had led others to death, his every breath filled with threatening and murder (Acts 9:1), and had no rest and no happiness. Now he faced death himself, continually, and lo! he was living (v. 9). Once he struck out against others and was miserable. Now he himself was disciplined, but it could not kill the spiritual vitality surging within (v.10). Once he brought physical sorrow and poverty to others, yet now while the tables were turned, he found he could ever rejoice and find peace and satisfaction in enriching many (v. 10). The former days could not compare in value to these most acceptable times when the peace of God ruled and overruled in his life. He had not received the grace of God for naught.

A DAY OF SALVATION

The subject of salvation, like all scriptural topics, must be defined by its context. We mention this particularly because the term has acquired a generalized meaning in people's minds which tends to obscure the truth. There are many facets to salvation, such as our future salvation from this wicked eon (Rom.5:9), our present, daily salvation from weakness and ignorance (1 Cor.1:18) and the secure state of salvation from condemnation and the second death which we receive upon believing the evangel (Eph.1:13). Here in the context of 2 Corinthians 6, however, the salvation is referring specifically to the times in which we live. The days we live in are not only days in which a message of salvation from weakness, indignation, fear and death is offered, but this very message of salvation *saves the times* and transforms them from seasons of despair to seasons of refreshing. The days themselves are saved.

Hence the apostle Paul borrows a notable expression of victory from the book of Isaiah (49:8). There the Lord spoke of the restoration of Zion in the Kingdom, a season acceptable and a day of salvation. In that context, too, the very times are saved. From 2 Corinthians 6:2, therefore, we ought to see that the spirit of deliverance and peace which is to characterize the Kingdom is transferred to our own times because of the grace of conciliation.

This is admittedly different from the traditional interpretation of this passage. The phrase, "this is a day of salvation," is often presented as though it read, "this is *the* day of salvation," and is intended to suggest that the offer of salvation (from "Hell") is confined to the present. Such a concept is basic to the religious system which presents salvation as somehow dependent on man's decision and action rather than on the grace of God, the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of saving our days from turmoil and despair, this teaching adds to our distress and burden. We are never really certain that our decision or our conversion has been genuine enough to be acceptable with God. With such a message we can have no peace concerning ourselves and our salvation, let alone that of our loved ones and the world at large. The frantic "missionary zeal" which is created by the feeling that we must get the world saved, "or it will be too late," is far different from the apostle's zeal described here. Paul knew distresses and dishonor, but in the midst of it he displayed patience, kindness and love unfeigned. He had received the grace of God for the wealth that it was. It encouraged him to share the message with all, wherever he was, but he knew that salvation, justification and conciliation were the work of God. This helped reclaim Paul's days and implanted within him

a disposition of solicitude without worry, and concern without fear.

By all means, let us be missionaries, or rather, more correctly, let us be ambassadors for Christ. May we give "no one cause to stumble in anything" (6:3). Let us herald "the word of truth" with "the power of God, through the implements of righteousness of the right hand and of the left" (6:7). But let us recognize what it is that will enable us to do this. We cannot display this disposition without receiving the grace of God. We will have no power to be serving God ideally apart from a recognition of what He has accomplished in Christ. We will have no inner peace or fund of patience and kindness apart from an acceptance of the word of the conciliation. It is this which makes our era "most acceptable" and our day "a day of salvation."

D.H.H.

FROM THE FIELD

The interest in our work has been growing lately. We are encouraged to hear that new Bible classes have commenced in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Richmond, Virginia.

Much of this growth is due to the interest shown by The Foundation for Biblical Research, P.O. Box 928, Pasadena CA 91102. Our readers might want to write to them and ask for their list of publications, most of which deal with the defense of grace and reconciliation against legalistic religious systems.

Bro. Obong from Nigeria has sent us some articles on scriptural subjects which he has prepared for his ministry. We have selected portions of these for a brief mimeographed report of mission activities which is freely available to those requesting it.

Two studies by our late Bro. E. H. Clayton have been made available by the British brethren in pamphlet form. We have received a small supply of these, entitled *The Cross and Wisdom* and *A Vivifying Spirit*. They are free for the asking in limited quantities.

A DAVIDIC PSALM

31 **In Thee, Ieue, I** take **refuge.**
I must not be shamed for the **eon.**
[2] **In Thy righteousness deliver me.**
Stretch out to me Thine ear.
Hasten! Rescue me!
Become Thou mine for a **Rock Stronghold,**
For a **house of fastnesses to save me,**
[3] **For my Crag and my Fastness** art **Thou.**
And on account of Thy name art Thou guiding me and conducting me.
[4] **Forth art Thou** [c]**bringing me from this net** which **they bury for me.**
For Thou art **my Stronghold.**
[5] Into **Thy** [7]**hands**[?] **am I committing my spirit.**
Ransom `**me** dost **Thou, Ieue, Al of truth.**
[6] **I hate the observers of futile vanities,**
[+]**Yet I, I trust in Ieue.**
[7] **Exulting am I and rejoicing in Thy kindness,**
Thou Who seest `**my humiliation.**
Thou knowest that **in distresses** is **my soul,**
[8] **And** didst **not lock me** up **in** the **hand of** the **enemy.**
Thou standest my feet in a **wide** place.
[9] **Be gracious** to **me, Ieue, for distress** is **mine.**
Done for [t]**by vexation** are **my eye,**
my soul and my belly.
[10] **For they finish** [t]**by affliction my life**
And my years [t]**with sighing.**
Stumbling in depravity is **my vigor,**
And my staunchness is **done** for.

11 /Of all my foes I become the reproach,
And to my neighbors especially.
And afraid >are my acquaintances,
Seeing me in the street, they flit from me.
12 Forgotten am I from the heart, as the dead.
I become as a vessel that is lost.
13 For I hear the muttering of many.
Shrinking is / round about.
In their deliberation together over me they plan to take my soul.
14 +Yet I, on Thee I trust, Ieue.
I say, "My Alueim art Thou."
15 In Thy 7hands? are my seasons.
Rescue me from the hand of my enemies and from my pursuers.
16 Light up Thy face over Thy servant.
Save me in Thy kindness.
17 Ieue, I must not be shamed, for I call on Thee.
Ashamed shall be the =wicked.
They shall be silent >in the unseen.
18 Mute shall be false lips,
The speakers on against the just are shifty 'with pride and contempt.
19 How vast is Thy goodness, 7Ieue8, which Thou secludest for those who fear Thee!
Thou dost contrive for those taking refuge in Thee, in front of the sons of humanity.
20 Conceal them wilt Thou in the concealment of Thy presence from the coalitions of man.
Seclude them wilt Thou in a booth from the contention of tongues.
21 Blest be Ieue, for marvelous is His kindness to me in a besieged city,
22 +Yet I, I say, in my nervous haste,
"7Snatched? am I from in front of Thine eyes."

Surely Thou hearest the voice of my supplications in my imploring to Thee.
[23] **Love `Ieue, all His kindly ones.**
The faithful, Ieue is preserving
+Yet is repaying [on]with a surplus the proud doer.
[24] **Be steadfast and He will [c]make resolute your heart,**
All 'those waiting for Ieue.

The most probable background to Psalm 31 is the incident in the life of David which is recorded in 1 Samuel 23. The episode starts with David hearing that the Philistines were attacking the city of Keilah and robbing the threshing sites. David and his force of six hundred men went up against the arrays of the Philistines, and routing them, saved the city from their hands. After this the citizens of Keilah took David and his men to themselves, and they made their home there. But Saul heard of this and exulted that David had (he thought) been sold into his hands, locked up in a city having doors and bars. So, he summoned his army to besiege Keilah, with a view to wrecking it and slaying David.

David hears of Saul's plans and takes his problem to his Lord, asking Ieue whether, if Saul attacked the city, the citizens would surrender him into Saul's hands. The Lord answered, "They will surrender you." So David flees from Keilah and dwells thereafter in the wilderness and in a mountain.

The main clue that leads to the assumption that this is indeed the background of the Psalm lies in verse 21 where David blesses Ieue for His kindness, which was marvelous to him in a besieged city. David's stay in

Keilah is the only instance recorded where Saul planned to besiege a city in which David was concealed.

With this incident in mind many of the statements in the Psalm become clearer. It was probably written after he escaped and had fled to the wilderness and to the mountain where Ieue would be his Rock Stronghold and be as a house of fastnesses, a Crag and Fastness. David took refuge in Ieue and exulted in the fact that He would contrive for him. He it was Who guided and conducted him, though it was in a way of distress, humiliation and vexation. In the midst of all the troubles that oppressed his spirit he committed it into the hands of his Al, for toward Him was his trust. His Lord saw his humiliation and knew the distresses of his soul. He had stood his feet in a wide place (in the wilderness) instead of locking him up in a city, in the hand of his foes. He had become a reproach to them and to his neighbors in Keilah. His acquaintances there were afraid of him, for because of him the city was in danger from Saul. They shrank from him and sought to forget him, treating him as a lost thing. They planned to take his soul, delivering him up to Saul, but he trusted in Ieue, for he knew that every incident in his life was part of the will of God for him. "In Thy hands are my seasons" he wrote; both good and evil were in God's purpose for him. The coalitions of man he speaks of in verse 20, refer to the strategy to deliver him up to Saul as planned by the inhabitants of Keilah. But Ieue was kind to him in this besieged city and heard his supplications and his imploring.

He ends with a word apt for every faithful one from Abel to the last one called to a place in the ecclesia of today, "Love Ieue, all His kindly ones." The end and purpose of all life and creation is to love God. All is

planned to achieve this in every heart. Nothing less will satisfy God, and the consummation will see its realization for all. But now we, His chosen and recipients of His kindness, can anticipate that day and love Him now with our whole heart. Only thus can we be established and hold fast to the truth that God has placed in our hearts. Thus will our hearts be made resolute.

Donald G. Hayter

MAURICE J. YODER

May 25th marked the passing of Bro. Yoder of Murrieta, California, at the age of 81. He had been gradually failing in health for the past several months, after a very active life as a grain grower.

We rejoice to learn from his wife Anita, to whom he had been married for 57 years, that, even as he lay in his bed, seemingly almost in a coma, he would repeatedly praise the Lord. How wonderful! Even in his semi-conscious state, praise and thanksgiving to his Lord and Saviour were uppermost in his mind. He really believed and *lived* Paul's admonition to "rejoice in the Lord always."

To the Yoders, who became acquainted with the work of the Concern in its very early years, and who were personal friends of its founder, Bro. A. E. Knoch, we owe much. They were staunch supporters, not only in a financial way, but they also held meetings in their home, and pursued hospitality by entertaining the brethren in their home many times. In fact, it is not saying too much to declare that, without their help and support, the property which we bought in Canyon Country, upon which the office is now located, could never have been acquired.

Although we shall miss the wonderful fellowship we always enjoyed with Bro. Maurice, and of course his wife and family will miss him, too, for death is indeed an enemy still, yet we praise Him that the parting may be a very, very short one. For there are so many indications that the Lord will soon come for His own. The night is far spent! The dawn approaches in the east. Surely we will all want to emulate our dear Bro. Yoder, and praise Him, and use what time remains for us to witness for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in doing that very thing.

Ernest O. Knoch

HOLY AND FLAWLESS IN HIS SIGHT

IN our last study we considered a phrase, "among the celestials," which is peculiar to the Ephesian epistle. In conjunction with its first occurrence is another phrase, which appears altogether ten times in the Greek Scriptures, but only once in the writings of Paul—"the disruption of the world." We must now consider this as it affects the ecclesia.

THE DISRUPTION OF THE WORLD

The expression "disruption of (the) world" *(katabolê kosmou)* occurs in two forms; seven times it is "*from* the disruption of the world" and three times, "*before* the disruption of the world." These two prepositions establish the phrase as an important line of demarcation in God's activities, and we should be careful to distinguish between that which is *before* the disruption and that which is *from* the disruption. For that which is *before* the disruption is obviously unconditioned by that event, while that which is *from* the disruption may well have come about in consequence of it.

In one instance, the same feature of God's purpose is described as being both before and from the disruption of the world, and this has relation to the death of Christ. Let us look at the two scriptures, and see how they differ.

Peter (in 1 Pet.1:19,20), writes of "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 . . . ." John (in Rev.13:8), speaking of those who will be worshipping the wild beast, adds "everyone whose name is not written in the scroll of life of the Lambkin slain *from* the disruption of the world."

In these two scriptures, we have a progression of facts concerning the same event; foreknown *before the disruption*, slain *from the disruption*, manifested *in these last times.*

The normal person, looking at the death of Christ, sees it as a crime committed by men somewhere around the year 33 A.D. This is how the four accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John present it, although even in these there are suggestions that it was not entirely controlled by men. For example, Jesus spoke of the manner of His death before it occurred (John 3:14 and 12:32), and also of the fact that no one had the power to take His soul away from Him, but that He would be laying it down of Himself (John 10:18). No one could stretch out his hands against Him until the hour spoken of in Luke 22:53 had arrived, and He permitted Himself to become submissive to the jurisdiction of darkness.

Now the jurisdiction of darkness finds its origin in the disruption, for darkness then covered the whole of the submerged chaos that the disruption had caused (Gen.1:2). In the book of Revelation, the slaying of the Lambkin is actually dated from the disruption, and this takes us back to a time before humanity was created, thus absolving men from any responsibility for predetermining this event, though not from their accountability to God for their part in bringing it about.

The Lambkin is said to be slain from the disruption

of the world because the disruption, with its accompanying darkness, both physical and spiritual, was the prior evidence of rebellion against God which must have taken place in the celestial realms since, as we have just said, man had not yet been created. We note that the phrase speaks of the disruption of the *world,* or *kosmou,* and not the disruption of the *earth.* The earth was undoubtedly disrupted, but so were the heavens; hence the need for the creation of a new heavens as well as a new earth (Isa.65:17; 2 Pet.3:10-13; Rev.21:1), and for the reconciliation of all in the heavens as well as on the earth (Col.1:20).

But if the Lambkin was slain from the disruption of the world, the slaying was not something planned as an afterthought because of the disruption, for Peter declares that the precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, was "foreknown, indeed, *before* the disruption of the world." This is the same expression that Paul uses in Ephesians, and it speaks of a time antecedent to those circumstances that brought about the disruption. In short, the slaying of the Lamb was not a consequence of anything attributable to Satan, who will never be allowed to claim that he was able to change God's designs—it was not an improvisation to correct something that had gone awry in God's plans—but was an integral and predetermined feature in His purpose. And so too is the ecclesia, for it also was chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world, when God's counsels were unchallenged and His love unquestioned.

Just as God purposed every feature of the matters surrounding His Son, even to the giving of Him up, and was constrained by nobody, not even Satan, so too He has purposed every feature concerning the ecclesia which is the body of Christ, and will not be deviated

one whit from His intentions. Certainly not by Satan; he cannot interfere.

It is interesting to note the other usage of the expression, "before the disruption of the world." It is in John 17:24, and tells of the love which God had for His Son. The full verse reads, "Father, those whom Thou hast given Me, I will that, where I am, they also may be with Me, that they may be beholding My glory which Thou hast given Me, for Thou lovest Me before the disruption of the world."

BEFORE THE DISRUPTION

These three usages of the phrase, "before the disruption of the world," bring out three vital aspects of the Deity of God.

First, there is His love, concentrated primarily in the Son of His love, and passed on through Him to all His creation (Col.1:13-17).

Second, we see His foreknowledge of events before they come to pass. This is because He, and He alone, is able to operate all according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), which means that He can designate beforehand what He wills in accord with His purpose.

Third, His prerogative to choose whom He wills for whatever place He wills is shown. Only He can do this, and He chooses us, the ecclesia, "for the place of a son for Him" (Eph.1:5).

These three usages of our phrase also cover three aspects of God's purpose. Its *motive* is to be found in the love which God has for His Son—all is for Him (Col.1:17). The *means* by which His goal is achieved is the death of Christ, for He makes peace with all through the blood of His cross (Col.1:20). The *medium* through which all in all is being completed is the ecclesia, which is Christ's body (Eph.1:22,23).

HOLY AND FLAWLESS

Now there can be no doubt that the love which God had for Christ was, and is pure and spotless—completely unadulterated; equally it is clear that the blood of Christ was that of a pure and unspotted sacrifice. Significantly, therefore, it is stated of the ecclesia that it was to be "holy and flawless in His sight." As the complement of a holy and flawless Christ, it surely must be holy and flawless in itself. And *in God's sight* it always is!

The verb in the phrase, "we *to be* holy and flawless in His sight," is in the infinitive form, and does not indicate a finite time. Though the infinitive may sometimes point to the future, as in a phrase like "I hope to be here tomorrow," it can equally well refer to the present, as in "I am glad to be here today," or even to the past as in, "I was glad to be here yesterday." So it is really timeless. In the hymn, "Take time to be holy, speak oft with the Lord" the second line runs, "Abide in Him *always*, and feed on His word," and the whole theme of the succeeding lines lies within present experience.

And so it is with the expression, "We to be holy and flawless in His sight." In the context of Ephesians 1, this is a status for all time, not something only to be attained in the future. (In the context of Ephesians 5:27, a different aspect is being presented, which we will look at in a later study.) Here, in Ephesians 1, we are looking at the ecclesia as it is seen by God, chosen by Him in Christ before the disruption of the world—that is, before anything occurred to mar or to spoil, or to entice away from God. The ecclesia is not the child of a rebellion or the offspring of sin, and none of the consequences of the disruption—the sin and death that have entered into the world—can destroy the perfect

status of the ecclesia in the sight of God. To Him, it is ever holy and flawless, in accord with His predesignation of it for the place of a son for Him.

It is true that there is a different aspect of the ecclesia, in which its members are seen to have been descended from Adam, chosen from out of the old humanity with all its faults and failings, offenses and sins. Again, we will look at this more fully in a later study, but for the moment let it be noted that when one is reckoned to be of the faith of Jesus, he is immediately justified (declared righteous) gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24-27), so that Paul is able to declare, in Romans 8:1, that "*Nothing*, consequently, is *now* condemnation to those in Christ Jesus," and to ask, later in the chapter, questions that have no answer: "Who will be indicting God's chosen ones?" "Who is the Condemner?" If God will not indict, and Christ will not condemn, who else dare stand up to challenge the righteousness of those whom God has chosen?

In 2 Corinthians 5:16,17, Paul speaks of our life in the flesh as something that is passed by. From now on, we should be acquainted with no one according to flesh,not even Christ, Who did not sin while in the flesh. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new! In Ephesians 2, Paul speaks of our behavior, while in the flesh, as something of the past, no longer operative. Notice how the apostle *twice* makes the point that we are *dead* to the life of the past (verses 1 and 5), just as he *twice* stresses that in grace are you saved (verses 6 and 8). The one expression perfectly complements the other.

The words *holy* and *flawless* are not synonymous: they do not mean the same. The word *holy* describes

that which is in touch with God, or that which is set aside for His use. Its first occurrence is in Exodus 3:5, when God instructed Moses to take off his shoes because the place on which he stood was holy ground. Now what had made that ground holy? In what way was it any different from the surrounding earth? Intrinsically, it was no different; the soil did not undergo any sudden change, either actual or apparent. What had made the ground holy was that God had, at that moment, set it aside for His own use. He had chosen that particular spot in the wilderness to demonstrate, through the illustration of the bush which burned fiercely but was not consumed, the present and future experiences of His people, Israel. Though the nation might be persecuted to the limits of endurance, it would not be destroyed, but would remain a people. Its continued existence would be guaranteed by God Himself, Who later, through the prophet Isaiah, declared Himself to the "Holy One of Israel." What does this last phrase mean? Simply that, having chosen Israel to be "a holy nation, a procured people," set apart for His service, He would set Himself apart to watch over them and direct them.

The ecclesia which is the body of Christ is declared to be holy. It was set aside for God's service long before Israel came on the scene. Even long before humanity was created, the ecclesia was assigned a special function in the purpose of God, being designated beforehand for the laud of His glory—we, who are pre-expectant in the Christ. In that future great and glorious administration of the complement of the eras, when all in both heaven and earth shall be headed up in the Christ, we have a vital part, for our lot was cast in Him (Eph.1:10-12).

The word *flawless* means "not having spot or

wrinkle or any such things" (Eph.5:27), or, as the Authorized Version has it, "without spot or blemish." Israel, as a royal priesthood, should have been a nation without blemish, but they soon demonstrated that, because of their own imperfections, they needed a priesthood to minister on their own account—to intercede between them and God. But the ecclesia never needs a priesthood to stand between it and God: it has direct access to the Father through Him Who is its Head (Rom.5:2; Eph.2:18; 3:12). In love, it was designated beforehand for the place of a son for Him, and its individual members, even while still on earth, are imbued with that spirit of sonship whereby they cry, "Abba, Father" (Rom.8:15; Gal.4:6).

IN HIS SIGHT

What we have in fact been suggesting is that the state and status of the ecclesia both remain constant in God's sight throughout all its history and in all its experiences. If it be argued that its individual members are still sinners while they are in the flesh, we would reply that from the moment of our being chosen, Christ became to us not only wisdom from God, but also "righteousness and holiness and deliverance" (1 Cor.1:30).

God does not see us as being in the flesh; He is able to "vivify the dead and call what is not as if it were" (Rom.4:17). We are regarded by Him as being righteous *now*; nothing, consequently is *now* condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. God, the Justifier, will not indict His chosen ones; He cannot, or His justification would be shown to be an unreality. Christ, Who died, will not condemn. On the contrary, by His being made to be sin for us, He has ensured that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him (2 Cor.5:21).

That is to say, that just as He, the One not knowing sin, became a sin offering for our sakes when He hung on the cross, that sin itself might be repudiated, so we, sinners as we were, become God's righteousness in Him. The two states date from the same moment, Christ's death on the cross. We judge this, "that if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). "Our old humanity was crucified together with Him" (Rom.6:6). Why? "That the body of Sin may be *nullified.*" And this is how it appears in God's sight.

In His sight—these are wonderful words! For there can be no higher estimation—no higher criterion of what is right and what is wrong, what is just and what is unjust. God must be just as well as the Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26).

"If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom.8:31). God is *for* us. *He* declares us to be righteous—this is the meaning behind justification. *He* accounts us to be holy and flawless. This was a condition established *before* the disruption, and nothing that has occurred as a result of the disruption can in any way impinge upon, or in the slightest degree affect, the standing of those who were chosen in Christ before that event took place. They are holy and flawless in God's sight, and must ever remain so.

How and why members of this ecclesia of God came to be chosen from among the sons of sinful humanity will be considered in our next study.

John H. Essex

The new edition of our *Concordant Greek Text* is now available. The regular binding (simulated leather) costs $10.00 and the genuine leather (divinity circuit) costs $20.00.

IS PUNISHMENT EVERLASTING?

PART THREE

Applying what we have read in Revelation 14:11 and 20:10 to all those who are cast into the lake of fire has led many to believe that all unbelievers will suffer continuous conscious torment. We quote from Revelation 20:13-15 (AV):

> And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.
>
> And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
>
> And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Indeed the fate of nearly all unbelievers is the second death. We are told that for them, "*physical* death is forever past. The death which they are suffering . . . is a condition of fiery torment . . . ." The proof is, "and they will be tormented day and night for the eons of the eons." Of whom is this written? The Adversary, the wild beast, and the false prophet, just these three. What right has anyone to alter this so that it includes all others?

The lake of fire is called the second death only in connection with those who have been previously raised from the dead. It is never so called in relation to

those three, for they have not died before, and are not dead in it. They are not like the bulk of mankind. The Adversary is not human. The wild beast has been given a superhuman life. The false prophet had power to give spirit to his image. To these the lake of fire is not the second death, and Scripture is careful to guard against any such inference. I know of no greater corruption of God's Word than to take their penalty and apply it to the billions upon billions of beings, men, women, children, infants, most of whom never heard of Christ or His salvation. Very, very few of these have committed any act which so fearfully affects God's character as this perversion of His Word, or is worthy of such a severe penalty.

The lake of fire is called the second *death* in order to distinguish the fate of those who stand before the great white throne, *who have been judged,* from those three who suffer in it, who sinned so publicly and atrociously that no trial was necessary. Those who go into the second death are those who came out of the first, to be judged. They return to the same state as that from which resurrection brought them. (The beast and false prophet are *living* in the lake of fire.) These are *dead.* Their resurrection was physical. Their death will be physical, for resurrection refers primarily to the body, as rousing does to the soul, and vivification to the spirit.

It is a marvelous thing to receive life for the eons, to be enjoyed in congenial surroundings. It would be a much greater miracle to give life to unbelievers to be preserved in the midst of the most deadly environment it is possible to conceive. No normal human being can live in a fiery lake. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged this in his day. But the miracle that preserved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego kept

them safe and unharmed. We are asked to believe that *for those who have been judged and have suffered in accord with their deeds before the great white throne,* the lake is a lake of *life,* in which they will be miraculously preserved in order to suffer infinitely. This in the face of God's plain declaration that, for them, it is the second *death,* a temporary place of oblivion until death is abolished and all are made alive in Christ, at the close of the eons.

Some have inferred that resurrection always leads into an eternal conscious state and quote a passage such as John 5:28,29 to support their doctrine of eternal torment.

> Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

The "everlasting punishment" of the twenty-fifth of Matthew is notable for the fact that it applies to *living nations* who have not been raised from the dead. Yet here we are asked to believe that this punishment is eternal *because* they are "resurrected beings!" If there really is force to the argument, it proves the opposite. We could retort that, since those to whom everlasting punishment applies are *not* "resurrected beings," therefore it is *not* endless. Both arguments are fallacious, for they have no scriptural premises. There is no passage to prove that a "resurrected being" must live endlessly. On the contrary, God speaks of a second *death,* not an endless life, for those "resurrected beings" who stand before the great white throne, whose names are not in the book of life.

Note the phrasing of the passage quoted. There is a "resurrection of *life*" and a "resurrection of

judgment." Why seek to prove that the resurrection of judgment is also a resurrection of life? The logical inference is the opposite. Those in the "resurrection of damnation" are *not* raised to life in the sense here used, but to the second death. *Resurrected* beings are not immortal or incorruptible. All of those who were raised from the dead in the past have died again, except the Firstfruit, Christ. The argument applies only to those *made alive*, or *vivified*, in the resurrection of *life*, not to those in the resurrection of "damnation." These cannot die. The others must die. They return to death, and, unless resurrected again, cannot be punished everlastingly. They are raised in order to be judged because there is no "punishment" possible in death.

In all of the passages dealing with the future the word *life* is used in a special, exalted sense. Those in the resurrection of judgment must have life in a subordinate sense, or they would not be resurrected at all. Those in the resurrection of *life* must have life in a superior sense. It will be incorruptible, beyond the reach of death.

The lake of fire is called the second death. In it only those three suffer torment. A hasty inference would make the second death the suffering of torment. But it is notable that the lake of fire is not called the second death until after those raised for judgment enter it. Those who are tormented in it, the wild beast, the false prophet and Satan *have not died before*. It cannot be the second death for them. Let us always keep separate what God has sundered. It is only to those who emerge from the first death that the lake of fire becomes the second. To them there is no more torment in the second death than there was in the first.

The monstrous, unscriptural idea that men are

tormented in death, before they are brought to judgment, is so revolting to every sense of justice that its absence from the Word of God is one evidence of divine inspiration. Even among civilized men a prisoner is not punished before he is judged. If the men of Adam's day have been tormented ever since and will suffer until the day of judgment, *when they will be tried*, then God's judgment is a farce, and there is no reason for a resurrection. There can be no "punishment" in death. That is why men are roused to be judged. They are "punished" *while raised*. Their "punishment" ceases when they enter the second death.

It is claimed that such passages as Luke 16:23-26 and Mark 9:43-48 describe the eternal punishment of the wicked, even though one passage speaks of Hades and the other of Gehenna and neither refer to the lake of fire.

> I am tormented in this flame (Luke 16:24).

We must be consistent in our interpretations. In Luke15-16 we have a five-fold parable, in which that of the Prodigal Son corresponds with that of the Rich Man and Lazarus. No one takes the Prodigal Son literally. "He spake this parable unto them" (Luke 15:3), includes all of the stories of Luke 15-16. "This my son was dead" refers to the time when he was in a far country yearning to fill his belly with swine's food. It is a picture of Israel at the present time, away from God, defiled among the nations. Just so also the rich man portrays Israel as descendants of the Pharisees, enduring persecutions, while the poor publicans, who once were glad to get a little of *their* spiritual wealth, are comforted by faith—in Abraham's bosom. The

death is figurative. Here we have the flames of anti-Semitism, not the so-called "hell" or the lake of fire. It is impossible to take such figures as Abraham's bosom literally. How unwise to use a misunderstood parable to contradict all that God had previously said concerning the death state! Even if taken literally, this has no bearing on the final state, for hades is cast into the lake of fire long before the consummation (Rev.20:14).

> their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:44).

Once more the Scriptures are wrenched. "Hell" is said to be a place where "their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." This is said of the vale of Hinnom, below Jerusalem, during the Kingdom. Worms will devour the city offal and the bodies of unburied criminals. Fires will be kept burning to dispose of this refuse. Why confuse this with the lake of fire? No worms can live in a fiery lake. And why confuse the life of the worms with that of its victims? Why take passages which are definitely limited by their contexts to a comparatively few criminals in the Kingdom and apply them to all mankind? Will this not bring the Word of God into contempt and ridicule? When God says Gehenna He means Gehenna and not the lake of fire. He has made a distinction with a difference. Who has a right to ignore it or obliterate it?

David was right when he preferred to fall into the hands of God rather than man. Should not we, though beyond the reach of condemnation in Christ Jesus, be very tender and considerate in judging those who deserve no sorer fate than we ourselves? We cannot take credit for believing, for salvation is wholly of grace. Instead of that we see Christendom, and those

who are teachers, and who suffer for God's truth, wresting passage after passage in order to pervert God's judgment of unbelievers. If this were done in order to mitigate their fate it might be understandable. God's just judgments are severe. I do not plead for any mitigation. But I do protest against threatening the whole world with the fate He has reserved for His three greatest enemies.

To sum up: All was created by the Son of God's *love*, and all will be reconciled by the *blood* of His *cross* (Col.1:13-20). This gives us the *origin* and *destiny* of all. The chastening judgments which occur during the eonian times deal with the *process*. They are all limited in duration and accord with the sin which they correct and the consummation God has in view. The judgment of individuals varies according to the deserts of the delinquents (Rom.2:6-10; Rev.20:13), hence it cannot be infinite. It must be inflicted in *life*, not in death, or there would be no resurrection of judgment. The death state is not endless. *Death will be abolished,* after it has served its purpose, by the vivification of all (1 Cor.15:22-28; 2 Tim.1:10). *Redemption* and *eonian* life are only for those who believe during the eons. At the great jubilee, the consummation at the close of the eons, those who have not been redeemed will be *delivered* and come into their own through the blood of Christ's cross. Thus God will become All in *all.*

A.E.K.

MRS. THOMAS WATTS

A faithful supporter of our work for many years, our Sister Watts of Fenwick, Ontario, died February 22 at the age of 89. She and her husband, who preceded her in death in 1961, had subscribed to this magazine since 1925. Her staunch faith and kindly spirit were an inspiration to all who knew her.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES for SEPTEMBER, 1975
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-SIX

EDITORIAL

In this year's May issue of *Unsearchable Riches* we reprinted an early article from the pen of our late senior teacher A. E. Knoch under the headline *The Human Spirit.* This essay ends in the keynote that the human spirit has no *conscious* existence in death when there is no more breathing and the body functions have been discontinued. As a follow-up on this topic we have been requested to reprint another article by A. E. Knoch, *The Modern Mind and Resurrection* which explains that the human spirit remains as a distinct entity: Human identity lies in its spirit which is received from God and which returns to God at death, yet comes back to a body in resurrection.

This statement may seem to contradict one of the closing sentences in the former article where it said that the [human] spirit was not a special entity, imparted by God, besides the soil and the breath. To clarify this line of thought we have to go back to the first few chapters of Genesis.

After God had formed the human frame from the soil of the ground, He blew into its nostrils the *breath* of the *living.* Through this unique divine act the *lifeless* human form became a *living* soul. And the first Adam was essentially soilish, out of earth, with just enough spirit to keep his body operating. Hence the term "spirit" is not even mentioned in Genesis 2:7. Later (in 7:22) this term is inserted between the words "breath" and "living" (breath of the *spirit* of the liv-

ing) so as to indicate the life-giving function of the spirit in the descendants of Adam as well as in the offsprings of the animals created before Adam. Under the creating and sustaining hand of God the spirit in man (as in beast) certainly is *the* vital force, the energy which imparts human (and animal) life.

In Genesis 7:22 the order of the key terms in the Hebrew is *nshmth ruch chiim* (breath of spirit of living ones). Since, in the divine record, the word "spirit" *follows* the word "breath of" there must be a reason for this. We admit that an explanation such as "breath creates, generates or produces spirit" (taken by itself) might lead to erroneous conclusions. Hence we will try to expand our three key terms into a full (and we hope meaningful) sentence by keeping the order of words as they appear in the Hebrew.

In pharmacy an inert substance is often used in a medicinal compound as a kind of vehicle through which an active agent can be administered to ailing persons so that they may recover and possibly live a little longer. In a similar way of speaking, *breath* may be regarded as the vehicle by which the *spirit* of the *living* is administered to men and beast so that they may live under the sustaining hand of God.

Since the divine record expressly speaks of this *combination* (breath of the spirit of the living), it may be said that "in the Genesis report, spirit was not a special endowment in itself, imparted by God, besides the soil and the breath. Their combination is necessary as a vehicle for the spirit which is the seat of life. When breathing ceases, the spirit of life departs. Such is the *human* spirit now; it has no *conscious* existence apart from the body *and the breath.* In the resurrection, however, only the body is needed for its permanent conscious existence, but no longer breath."

(In this way we are planning to rephrase the closing sentences of the May article when the complete series on *Spirit and Spiritual Blessings* will be published in booklet form.)

God is the Source of spirit wherever it is found, for He *is* Spirit. All life is dependent on the impartation of spirit by Him. And the measure, degree or intensity of this dispensation of spirit determines the nearness to Himself. Adam received a higher degree of spirit than the animal world; hence man can develop abstract thoughts, such as the apprehension of God's achievements in creation (Rom.1:20), or more specifically, the inscription on a pedestal in Athens: To an unknowable God (Acts 17:23).

There are additional allotments of spirit from God for His saints. Some we receive when we become believers, and even more comes to us when we experience the power of His resurrection while still in our mortal bodies (Phil.3:10). The Word of God is the vehicle for these two dispensations of spirit from Him. But the fullness of spirit is not ours until our vivification when Christ calls us to be with Him. In a figure of speech we may say that the increasing measure of Himself that God imparts to us, fits us now for our present station on earth and will be sufficient for our future place among the celestials. H.H.R.

MISSIONS

Let us not forget the continued labors of our missionary friends here and abroad. We ask for special prayers for Bro. Raju and his co-workers and for Bro. Iype in India as they labor under the present restrictions imposed by the government there. We are having difficulty maintaining communication with them. We are thankful to report that the work in the Philippines is continuing as well as the efforts in Nigeria, despite the hardships of the times.

THE HUMAN SPIRIT'S IDENTITY

The Modern Mind and Resurrection

WHAT IS NEEDED is a closer and more accurate contemplation of God's declarations. Our minds are callous, so that we receive no deep impressions from God's revelations. Death does not mean death, or life life. So we will once more review the terms used by God in His holy Word. The closest contemplation of these will suggest a solution for all of the difficulties of the "modern man."

We must not allow any difficulties from modern science to interfere with our search. Some would reason that the spirit is not given until birth, hence it is only a power, the same in all individuals, without any individuality. But neither Scripture nor science (if indeed, they handle the matter at all) can be cited for this idea. There can be no life without it, hence the spirit is imparted to each one long before birth, which is only a change in the mode of life. As soul depends on the union of spirit and body, identity cannot depend upon it. If identity is entirely dependent on the body, then the defects we now have will be essential to our resurrection bodies. It is supposed the memory is entirely dependent on the material substance of the brain because, when certain parts are removed, the memory is gone. This conclusion is not warranted, however. It is simply that the spirit has lost part of the

substance needed for full conscious existence. This does not prove that memory depends upon the continuity of brain substance. If it did then there is no use talking about *our* resurrection, or, indeed, of any. The Scriptures do not speak of "identity," memory," etc., for the simple reason that the term *rousing* is far better and includes all that these words convey, without the subtle insinuation of doubt with which all such words are tinged.

In most minds resurrection is a sort of new creation. God makes an entirely new body to displace the old. This is not God's thought. The word resurrection does not declare anything as to the *forming* of a body. It speaks of its *position*. A dead man falls. A live man *rises*. It is literally an UP-STANDing. It is not necessary that the body be disintegrated in order to be raised. Our Lord was raised, although His body never saw decay. Jairus' daughter, the widow of Nain's son and even Lazarus still had bodies, yet they were raised from the dead. Resurrection, in the Scriptures, is the impartation of power to a human organism which has ceased to function, so that it is able to overcome the force of gravitation, or *rise from* the dead.

Modern thought seeks to "*identify*" humanity with the physical substance of which the body is composed. This is "unscientific," to use one of their own much abused terms. Every bit of food we eat, every drop of water we drink, every breath of air we take changes the physical constitution of our bodies. Yet this does not alter our identity. We are the same persons before a meal as after it. Should we have our hair trimmed, or even lose a limb, we are still the same individuals. Even the vital organs change their physical constituency in the course of time. If our body substance gradually disappears and is replaced in the course of

approximately seven years, we are not different persons. In these cases the substance is not the essential identifying factor. This must not be confused with the fact that soil is essential to humanity. But no special particles *identify* the individual.

Modern ideas about the *rousing* of the dead hardly exist because the modern dead are afflicted with insomnia—they cannot sleep! How, then, can they be roused? This fact alone, that modern thought has no place for the rousing of the soul, should show us that modern conceptions are crude and unsatisfactory. They follow Plato when they quote from Paul.

"Making alive" is no more to modernism than resurrection. Being astray regarding the soul as the seat of consciousness, and regarding the spirit as the seat of life, modern thought concerns itself almost exclusively with "resurrection," and seeks to find everything connected with the return to life in this expression. Its problems may be solved by exploring the two realms of soul and spirit.

Spirit, not matter, is the identifying factor in humanity as well as in other realms. The same spirit which God gives to us returns to Him at death (Ecc.12:7). When the daughter of Jairus was *roused* her *spirit* turned back, and she *rose* (Luke 8:55). Here we have all three. The body was there. The spirit was gone, but turned back. United once more with the body the girl became conscious as to her soul, and she rose as to her body. Note that the spirit was a distinct entity. If her body had gone to corruption, it alone would have remained. Human identity lies in its spirit, which is received from God and which returns to God at death, yet comes back to a body in resurrection.

Spirit can have identity without a body. A spirit has no flesh and bones. God is Spirit. The Adversary is a

spirit. Demons are spirits. There are myriads of beings who are spirits. Unlike humanity, they do not need a body in order to be alive. The body, in humanity, is essential. Apart from it the spirit has no life or consciousness or knowledge of self. Before our spirits were united with our bodies we were nonentities. When it leaves us in death we become so again. Yet the identical spirit we now have will be ours, in which will be treasured up all the memories and experiences which compose our identity.

God is Spirit. He maintains His identity without material substance. Many of His messengers may also lack substance such as is essential to humanity. Why then cannot our identity be preserved, altogether apart from the material which composes our bodies? If we meet a friend after more than seven years separation, that which identified him in other days is still his, even if no part of his physical frame remains. In this domain the spirit is dominant. It alone determines identity. Under its molding power the body itself is shaped and preserved and suffers change.

The argument that identity demands continuity of consciousness is without any foundation whatever. It is denied by our daily experience, for we are unconscious in sleep. Although we may not have the least sensation for hours during the night, this does not disturb our identity in the least. We are the same person, with the same past and the same character as heretofore. The same will be true in the resurrection. When the dead awake there will be no more conscious break in their experience than in that of those who do not die, but are changed. This comparison is not a mere illustration of our choosing. Rather, it is the divine figure which God has chosen to aid us in understanding Him.

And, lastly, let us never reason that the spirit is alive in death. It is no more alive than the body, which decays. We are not spirits. There can be no living soul apart from the union of matter with spirit. And death is not something which may happen to either one alone (unless in figurative language). Death is the result of their separation. The body alone cannot die. The spirit alone does not die. The man as a whole dies. So also, the body alone is not raised nor is the spirit alone made alive, but *we*, who must have both, are raised, roused, and vivified.

A.E.K.

FELLOWSHIP

Believers need fellowship with one another, and although circumstances often restrict opportunities for this and may at times even make it impossible, the Lord continues to open doors here and there so that His people can share spiritual grace (Rom.1:11) and be built up together in love (Eph.4:16). The 18th annual Summer Fellowship was held in Baldwin, Michigan, July 25 through August 3. The friends at the Grace and Truth Chapel there, pastored by Lloyd A. Hibberd, served as hosts for approximately 100 guests, reveling in the vast love and transcendent grace of our God and Father as unfolded in the theme passage of Ephesians 2.

Further meetings were held, August 20-24, in Seattle, Washington, on the theme "Who is Your God?" These gatherings were hosted by Kenneth and Harold Jones.

The Bible Fellowship Church, 15400 South State Street, South Holland, Illinois, will hold its Eighth Annual Bible Conference October 3, 4, and 5.

For motel reservations or information, write or phone Mrs. Egbert Bolhuis, 682 East 160th Place, South Holland, Illinois 60473. Telephone (312) 331-3705.

Speakers will be Rex Grant, Wm. B. Hallman, and Keith McDonald.

IN GRACE ARE YOU SAVED

So FAR in our studies, we have been trying to see the ecclesia as God sees it. "In His sight" it is to be "holy and flawless," but now, in the second chapter of Ephesians, we come across statements like these, "And you, being dead to your offenses and sins, in which *once* you walked, in accord with the eon of this world, in accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness (among whom we also all behaved ourselves *once* in the lusts of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of the comprehension, and were, in our nature, children of indignation, even as the rest) . . . ." And again, in Colossians 1:21, "And you, being *once* estranged and enemies in comprehension, by wicked acts, yet *now* He reconciles by His body of flesh, through His death, to present you holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight" (see also Eph.5:27).

So it would appear that the members of the ecclesia were not always holy and flawless; are they, indeed, holy and flawless now?

We said in our last study that "nothing that has occurred as a result of the disruption can in any way impinge upon, or in the slightest degree affect, the standing of those who were chosen in Christ before that event took place. They are holy and flawless in God's sight, and must ever remain so." How can we harmonize this with the evidences of imperfections within ourselves, of which we are daily conscious? How, in-

deed, can we harmonize it with the injunctions as to the conduct of the saints, even in the prison epistles?

May we, at this point, repeat a statement made as an explanatory note to a previous series of studies (U.R. Vol. 64, p.256), under the heading, *The Ecclesia, which is His Body*?

"This ecclesia, which is the one specifically referred to in Paul's epistles, is presented to us in two distinct, yet related, aspects. They are like the two sides of the same coin. From whichever side we look, we recognize the coin, yet the two aspects are different.

"*Individually,* the ecclesia is composed of many members, each of which is foreknown, designated beforehand, called, justified and glorified (Rom.8:28-30). Each is brought *into* Christ through baptism *into* His death (Rom.6:3). Each is essential to the rest, and has his, or her, individual part to play in the upbuilding of the whole (1 Cor.12:12-31; Eph.4:11-14).

"*Collectively,* the ecclesia is a unified body, chosen *in* Christ from before the disruption of the world, and seen by God as holy and flawless, its realm being inherent in the heavens and its service among the celestials. As such, it is the complement of Christ by which all in all is being completed.

"It is in the individual aspect that members of the ecclesia were once sinners, all being by nature children of indignation even as the rest. This is changed when they come into Christ, for then they are 'a new creation' (2 Cor.5:17). But collectively, the ecclesia is always seen by God as being holy and flawless, for it was conceived in His purpose before the disruption which is the evidence of rebellion in the universe, and becomes a separate entity only after the question of sin has been settled once and for all on the cross."

GOD'S GRACE ON DISPLAY

It is fair to say that, as the ecclesia of God must be holy and flawless in His sight, it was not as members of that ecclesia that we walked in accord with the eon of this world. This is how we *once* walked, but now we are reckoned to be dead to those offenses and sins and lusts which fashioned our former conduct. Yet it is clear that every one of those who are chosen and called to be of that ecclesia must have passed through the humiliating experiences that are associated with participation of sin's flesh. Why is this?

The answer, in the shortest possible terms, lies in one word, "Grace." It is God's grace which is to be displayed in and through the ecclesia; that is why the expression is repeated, "In grace are you saved." The grace, which was given to the ecclesia before times eonian, has to be displayed in all its effectiveness and grandeur, not merely as an act producing happiness but also as a benefit bestowed upon one who deserves the opposite, and for this to be done, the members of the ecclesia have to be conditioned, first to receive its benefit themselves and then to display this to others.

Before pursuing this further, let us notice another reason why the ecclesia must pass through the medium of flesh. The servant cannot be greater than his Lord; the body cannot be greater than its Head; the complement cannot be greater than the One to Whom it belongs. Christ came in the likeness of sin's flesh; the members of the ecclesia are born into sin's flesh. There is, however, a basic distinction between Christ and the ecclesia.

Christ was the One without sin, yet He was made to be *sin* that God might be able to display His *righteousness,* in that He would be seen to be just as well as a Justifier of the one who was of the faith of

Jesus (2 Cor.5:21; Rom.3:26). We, designated beforehand to be holy and flawless in His sight, were made to be *sinners* in order that God might be able to display His *grace* in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:7).

Christ was made to be sin in order that sin itself might be crucified. From this point, all God-imposed barriers between Himself and His creation are removed; no longer is sin (missing the mark) an obstacle to His favor. The resurrection of Christ, with the consequent acceptance by God of His offering, means that God's purpose proceeds inevitably and inexorably to its grand and glorious ultimate, that He may be All in all (1 Cor.15:20-28).

God is now ready to be reconciled with all His creatures. The sacrifice of His dearly beloved Son has so conciliated God that He cannot, and will not, ever again ask for any further offering. His righteousness demands that He accept as full and final payment the sacrifice made by the Son of His love, and, as Christ is the Firstborn of every creature, it follows that there is no being in the universe that is outside of the scope of God's conciliation. The only barrier to complete reconciliation is the stubbornness of creation. This is where the function of the ecclesia comes into God's purpose.

We were sons of stubbornness; we ought to know what stubbornness means. We were once alienated from God through our being made to be partakers of sin's flesh. Yet, because our God is rich in mercy, we are saved in, and through, His grace, that we might be used by Him to display that same grace to others.

Let us here note an advancement in terms. We are saved *in grace;* we are granted the forgiveness of offenses in accord with *the riches of* His grace; we are

to be used by Him to display *the transcendent riches of His grace.* The value of grace is continually appreciating; there are no limits to its ultimate worth, for it is an expression of the love of God. Where sin increases, grace superexceeds—the principle was expressed in Romans. Grace is continually expanding till it embraces all. The transcendently transcendent burden of glory reserved for the ecclesia lies in its being used to display, in the eons to come, these superlative riches of God's grace. And how do we display these? By letting the rest of creation see how God has been so magnificently kind to us in transforming us from what we *were* into what we *are.*

Thus we are coming to see, are we not, that while (as a collective whole) the ecclesia was purposed from the beginning to be holy and flawless, and ever remains this in the sight of God—the complement of a sinless and flawless Christ—yet individually its members are drawn from a sinful humanity in order that the full grace of God may be displayed, and the ecclesia be enabled to fulfill the role in God's purpose for which it was designed, and to which it is specifically allotted.

This may at first seem paradoxical—a combination of contrary conditions—and yet it is in line with the dual aspect of the meaning of grace. Our place in Christ is "for the laud of the glory of God's grace." Let it be noted that, long before any prospective member of the ecclesia was made subject to the drawbacks of the flesh, the grace that was to rescue him from such was given to the ecclesia as a whole in Christ. So that rescue from this body of flesh is not something that has had to be put in motion as a result of Adam's transgression—it is not an improvisation to meet an unfortunate emergency—but rather something that

was purposefully planned before even the eons began.

These bodies of flesh are also termed 'bodies of our humiliation' (Phil.3:21), and again we note the point that the ecclesia is not greater than its Head. Christ first *emptied* Himself to come in the likeness of humanity, and then *humbled* Himself to become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:7,8). We were born empty; like Job, we came naked into the world. Our humbling comes in the wearing of these fleshly bodies, prone to sin and decay and the ravages of death. They are constantly subjecting us to indignities, for they are continually warring against the spirit that is within us, and are perpetually humiliating us. They are terrestrial tabernacle houses—temporary dwellings—in which we are groaning while awaiting transference to our permanent abodes—houses not made by hands, eonian in the heavens. For we are awaiting a Saviour, Who will transfigure the bodies of our humiliation to conform them to the body of His glory. Then will the ecclesia, whose realm is inherent in the heavens, be truly, and in every respect, like the One Who is its Head.

THE OPERATION OF GRACE

The workings of grace are scarcely perceived by many, even among believers, and are imperfectly understood by us all. The limitations to our understanding imposed by the weaknesses inherent in these bodies of flesh, will not be completely dispelled until these bodies are discarded. That is why we need to pray continually for increased perception in spiritual matters, and particularly in those things mentioned in Ephesians 1—"the expectation of His calling, the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and the transcendent greatness of

His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength." In the third chapter, the apostle prays that we, having been rooted and grounded in love, should be strong to grasp, together with all the saints, what is its breadth and length and depth and height—to know, besides, the knowledge transcending love of Christ—that we may be completed for the entire complement of God.

Again, in the fourth chapter, Paul speaks of our attaining "to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ." What does all this mean?

To answer this, we must define what we mean by "complement." The Greek word, *plêrœma*, is literally translated "filling," and so a complement is "that which fills up."

The earliest example of a complement, as brought to our attention in Scripture, is that of woman as the complement of man, which we discussed in an earlier study, when we noted that Adam, before the woman was taken from him, was complete in himself; afterwards the woman made him complete (U.R. Vol.66; p.66).

In line with this thought, we may note that a positive command was given to Adam (as well as the negative one about not eating of a particular tree). The positive command was as stated in Genesis 1:28, "Be fruitful and increase and fill the earth and subdue it." It will be readily appreciated that Adam could not fulfill this command except through the one who was his complement. But have we really considered the part that woman plays in this, and related it to the ministry of the ecclesia?

The original form of humanity was determined by

God when He first created it, but the continuation of that form in all subsequent generations is the function of the woman. This is her part in the ministry of expanding the human race. And the ministry which God has allotted to the ecclesia is that of maintaining and perpetuating the work of grace which God has begun in Christ Jesus. Christ Himself provides the power for this ministry—He is the continuing driving force behind it—but our role is to see that there is no deviation from the form which that ministry shall take. It is a ministry of grace, constant grace, perpetual grace, undiluted grace—for grace is the basis of salvation, and the path to reconciliation.

"In grace are you saved" is true of us now; it will be equally true of all creation eventually. All will be God's achievement, created in Christ Jesus. It is God's will to have an administration of the complement of the eras, in which all will be headed up in the Christ, both that in the heavens and that on the earth, and our lot was cast in Him, being designated beforehand according to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, that we should be for the laud of His glory, who are pre-expectant in the Christ (*cf* Eph.1:10-12).

We are *pre*-expectant, but we are not the only ones who are expectant. In Romans 8:19, we read, "For the premonition of the creation is awaiting *the unveiling of the sons of God.* For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, *in expectation* that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God."

In Colossians 1:20, Paul makes it clear that the reconciliation of all to God will include all in earth and all in heaven. It is the blessed privilege of the

ecclesia—those who are pre-expectant in the Christ—to herald and display the evangel of the transcendent riches of God's grace until the expectation of all is fulfilled, and all are ultimately reconciled to God.

This is what the apostle has in mind when he writes, "the complement by which all in all is being completed." The phrase "all in all" occurs here and in 1 Corinthians 15:28. There it is made quite clear that the second "all" admits of no exceptions apart from God Himself, Who is specifically excluded (v.27). The consummation of God's purpose is that He will be All in all, and this includes the whole of creation.

Similarly, in Ephesians 1:23, the ecclesia is the medium by which this consummation will be attained. "The complement of the One completing the all in all." O that we might indeed all attain to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ, that we may by no means still be minors! Our aim today should be towards the adjusting of the saints for the work of dispensing this wonderful evangel of grace, and we should be upbuilding the body of Christ to this end. We can best prepare ourselves for our future ministry by practicing its principles now.

THE PRESENT MINISTRY OF THE ECCLESIA

If our future ministry is to proclaim and display the grace of God in all its grandeur and richness, then surely we should be living our lives, while still in the flesh, as much as possible in accordance with this. Among ourselves, we should be dealing graciously, according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with us. Bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and

calumny should be absent from our relations one with another; malice should never be allowed to enter in, but we should become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate; in this way we shall be dealing graciously among ourselves. Let us walk together in love, and not cause sorrow to the holy Spirit of God by which we are sealed for the day of deliverance (*cf* Eph.4:30-5:2). Thus we become imitators of God and learn for ourselves, through practice, the real meaning of grace.

In the wider field of our activities, we should be working for the good of *all* (Gal.6:10). That the word "all" in this context has a wider application than those of the family of faith is indicated by the mention of the latter in the succeeding phrase, which is governed by the words "yet specially." The principle is quite plain; *as we have occasion* we work for the good of all, yet specially for the family of faith.

Our ministry at all times, whether inside or outside of the ecclesia, must be one of conciliation, to accord with the grace of God, which in Christ was conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them (2 Cor.5:20,21). We are ambassadors for Christ, as of God entreating through us. Our message is, "For Christ's sake, be conciliated to God." Why wait for the future when you can have peace with God now? Yet for those to whom this peace is delayed, our message will still go forth throughout the on-coming eons, as His grace is displayed in us, "Be conciliated to God!" The form of this message will be maintained by the ecclesia throughout all the generations of the eon of the eons, and God will find glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus as He sees the whole of His creation becoming reconciled to Himself.

John H. Essex

THE DIVERSE YOKE

To WALK in a way well pleasing to God in the midst of the present social, business, and political upheavals demands a very close reading of our instructions in His Word. It may seem that some of these overlap or are contradictory, but if we note accurately, precisely what is said, and the scope of the context, the seeming contradictions may dissolve and give place to more definite instructions and clearer directions. It is especially difficult, at times, to know how to conduct ourselves in relation to unbelievers, and to determine just where the line of demarcation lies between us and them. We cannot avoid all contact with them, or we would need to go out of the world altogether (1 Cor.5:10,11). Here, in fact, we are forbidden to commingle with *brethren* guilty of gross sins, but *not* those in the world who commit the same. How far may we go in contacting *them* in our social and spiritual life?

Not only in the world, but in some of the closest of social relations we may be compelled to live with unbelievers. The unbelieving husband or wife should not be put away (1 Cor.7:12-14). Strangely enough, in this case, a believer is not to leave, yet an unbeliever may do so. Nor may a believer forsake his father, his mother, or his brothers and sisters, indeed, any of his relatives on account of their unbelief, though, of

course, he cannot enjoy spiritual fellowship with them. Generally speaking, a believer is not excused from the obligations which the ties of flesh impose upon all mankind.

SUBJECTION

In some spheres the question of faith does not enter. The slave cannot choose his master, nor can the workman always select his employer. The relation existing between them is not one of cooperation, but of subordination. One alone is answerable. A slave or workman is not called upon to decide whether his master's course is right or wrong and to choose what he thinks most pleasing to God, but he must be subject, even when he is not sure that his work is according to the divine will. Of course he may seek to be free or choose other employment, but the rule holds good, that subjection is not communion, and does not demand separation.

This has a special application to the political sphere. The members of the body of Christ are destined to rule with Him among the celestials. Then we will demand unhesitating obedience from those under us. But this earth is not the scene of our authority, nor is this evil eon the proper era for our exaltation. How much confusion has arisen because this has not been recognized! Again and again the churches have desired the protection and support of the state. They wish to establish "the kingdom of God" on a material basis, and defend it with the weapons of the flesh. Paul, however, desired above all "the participation of His sufferings, conforming to His death" (Phil.3:10). He never was deceived by the error in which numberless believers are held today. In a world which did not elevate Christ on a throne, but on a tree, there

is no room for a church triumphant. "If we are enduring, we shall be reigning together" (2 Tim.2:12) is a word for us, but it applies only to a reign *with Christ*, and He has not yet taken His power on earth.

At this time God has committed the rule of the earth to men who carry out His ultimate intention, even though they are not doing His revealed will. God has set these in their place, and we must obey them because they are God's servants for our good (Rom.13:1-5). We should make it a matter of conscience to be subject. If we do so we are by no means yoked together with them. In a team two must pull *together*. The authorities are set *over* us, and are not in the harness with us. Yet God is above them, so we need not fear, so long as we do well. The evil which they do, or which may come to us, is in His hands, and is working out His intention in this evil eon, and cannot change our relations to those whom God has set over us.

But in all those avenues of life where we may choose, we should avoid the diverse yoke. The figure is a very realistic one. In the East one sometimes sees two different kinds of animals hitched before a plow. An ox and an ass were not to be yoked together, according to the law, because they had to pull together. We should not allow ourselves to be hitched up in this way, but sever ourselves from it whenever it lies within our power and does not conflict with our duty as elsewhere defined for us in the Scriptures.

In such a matter the smallest point may be important. So let us notice that we are not exhorted not to *be* diversely yoked, but rather not to *become* so (2 Cor.6:14). What we *are*, or what we have done in the past, cannot always be remedied, but there should never be any hesitation in our future course. In all the

vital activities of life we should not bind ourselves to unbelievers. That this is quite another matter than the Jewish idea of keeping entirely apart from unbelievers in all social relations is evident from the apostle's words, "If any of the unbelievers is inviting you [to a meal], and you want to go . . . " (1 Cor.10:27). Not social contact but mutual *bonds* are figured by the yoke.

QUESTIONABLE COMMUNION

It is remarkable that in detailing the various aspects the exhortation not to be diversely yoked is not repeated in the form of a command, but of a question. What partnership have righteousness and lawlessness? As if to say, Indeed, they *may* be partners but what a sorry union it will be! One good apple in a box of decayed fruit will not make a single one sound. But one decayed apple may spoil them all. In this world lawlessness may combine with righteousness and ruin it, but righteousness will hardly make lawlessness just. Contact we must have with the world, but what will come of it if we bind ourselves so that we are involved and answerable for their actions? We will be forced into a walk displeasing to God, and must answer for it.

The diverse yoke is elaborated for us in a series of comparisons, which will help us to understand what it involves in various relations. The words which indicate these different aspects are worthy of study. They are *partnership, communion, agreement, part, concurrence.* These are essential in any yoke, if two are to pull together. The unbeliever is going away from God, and should we be yoked with one, we will be drawn away from the path that pleases Him. The paths of those who are yoked together must be parallel. They cannot diverge. Yet divergence is called for at almost

every point. Lawlessness and darkness and Belial and the unbeliever and idols are incompatible with righteousness and light and Christ and the believer and the temple of God. They cannot go on together.

The word *partnership* (2 Cor.6:14), is literally WITH-HAVing. It seems to involve mutual possession and service. Peter had James and John for *partners* when he was in the fishing business on lake Galilee. This seems to be the practical, active, everyday, business aspect. The believer should be righteous in all his dealings. This we cannot expect of others.

Light has nothing in common with darkness. They are mutually exclusive. So are the saint and the sinner, so far as having a knowledge of God, on which all acceptable conduct must be based. The word *communion* comes from the Greek COMMON, belonging to all equally. Believers have much in common, in the light. Unbelievers have much in common, in darkness. It is necessary to leave the light to have common ground with darkness.

Christ cannot be in *agreement* with Belial (DISINTEGRATer). The saint should find all that he needs in the Anointed, hence cannot live in harmony with Belial, who breaks up coherence and destroys harmony. The life of the sinner is a feeding on wind (Ecc.1:14). The saint finds solid sustenance in Christ. There can be no agreement, no harmony, no *symphony* (TOGETHER-SOUNDing) between these two. One will have it *so*, and the other the contrary. Naught but discord should be expected from a union of the two.

A believer has no *part* with an unbeliever. Peter told Simon of Samaria that he had neither *part* nor lot in this matter, as his heart was not straight in front of God (Acts 8:21). We have a *part* of the allotment of the saints (Col.1:12). The unbeliever has no part in

this. The only part which the believer can have with the unbeliever is in a sphere to which he does not belong, and which is off the path of faith, apart from which it is impossible to please God.

In worship the contrasts are emphasized by the figure of the temple. God indwells each saint as once He tabernacled in the midst of Israel. What sacrilege would it have been to bring an idol into the sanctuary! How abominable will be the image of the wild beast, which is to be set up in the temple of the future! Can we imagine a combination of the temple of Jehovah and an idol shrine? Could we set up the image of Artemis in the courts on Mount Moriah? Yet so it is when a believer is associated with an unbeliever in drawing near to God. In His service there should be no association of God's people with those who know Him not, and whose hearts cannot provide the incense for His presence.

Perhaps the most enlightenment and help will come to us if we seek to realize the marvelous fact that God desires to be to us now what He will be to all in the consummation. He would be our *All.* He wishes to make His home in us and walk in us and be our God, so that we are His people. If this grips our hearts we will be very sensitive to that which is *diverse* and seek to avoid any yoke which conflicts with His presence.

On the negative side there may need to be severance from much of that which binds us to unbelievers. Unless compelled to do so by fleshly ties or the laws of the land, we should not associate ourselves with the organizations of this world. *Because* God is homing in us, He says, "Come out of their midst and be severed" "and touch not the unclean, and *I* will admit you, and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me" (2 Cor.6:17,18). This is

said by the *Almighty*, or *All-Sufficient*, for such a severance may involve suffering and loss, when we will feel the need of One Who is able to care for us.

The reward for severance is great. It brings us into active enjoyment of God as Father, and His acknowledgment of us as His sons or daughters. We are all *children* of God, quite apart from obedience of any kind. Sonship, however, involves far more. "As many as are being *led by God's Spirit, these are sons of God*" (Rom.8:14). There must be more than relationship. There must be likeness and representation. Those led by God's Spirit are like Him and will walk in His ways, and win His approbation. To them God becomes a Father in the full sense of the word. His eye is upon them at all times and His provision is sufficient for them. What earthly wealth can compare with being a son of the All-Sufficient? He is the Reward of all who sever themselves unto Him.

A.E.K.

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DAVIDIC

Intellectual

32 **Happy** he whose **transgression** is **lifted,**
Whose **sin is covered!**
2 **Happy** the **human to whom Ieue**
is not reckoning depravity!
+ **In his spirit** there is **no deceit!**
3 Seeing **that deaf am I, decay** do **my bones**
In my roaring the entire day.
4 **For day and night Thy hand is heavy on me.**
Turned is my freshness into **summer droughts.**
Interlude
5 **My sin am I acknowledging** to **Thee.**
And my depravity I do **not cover.**
I said, "I will confess *on*-**against myself**
my transgressions to Ieue."
And Thou´ dost **lift** the **depravity of my sin.**
Interlude
6 *on*-**Concerning this every kindly** one **is praying to Thee**
>**at** the **season** Thou art **to** be **found.**
But >**at** the **overflowing of many waters,**
they shall not attain to Him.
7 **Thou** art a **concealment for me.**
From distress art Thou preserving me.
With **jubilations of deliverance**
art Thou surrounding me.
Interlude

8 **"Intelligent will I [c]make you**
and direct you in this way you are going.
Counsel will I; My eye is on you.
9 **You must not become as a horse,**
As a mule in which there is no understanding,
[f]With bit and bridle [g]on[g] it to curb it,
Which avoids coming near to you."
10 **Many pains are for the wicked one,**
[+]Yet he who is trusting in Ieue,
kindness will be around him.
11 **Rejoice in Ieue and exult, ye righteous,**
And jubilate all ye upright of heart.

THE HAPPY MAN

The poet wrote, "O happiness! Our being's end and aim." And there is some truth in what he says, for the sum of all human activity is the pursuit of happiness. It is part of the Declaration of Independence of the U.S.A. as one of the inalienable rights of every human. It is pursued along every path and by every means available to the soul and spirit of humanity. It is man's normal condition but has been spoiled by transgression, sin and depravity. Get rid of the burdensome load of transgression; erase the black marks left by sin and be reckoned righteous instead of depraved—happiness will result. Happiness is essentially a spiritual blessing. It is not to be obtained from indulgence in any of the soulish pleasures. Nor is it to be found in the spirit apart from a realization of our righteousness in Christ. Real intelligence sees all this.

This is why this Psalm is headed *Intellectual.* It makes us intelligent as to the source of true happiness, which we all desire. Ten Psalms have this as a superscription and one as a subscription. One Psalm (60) is headed "For teaching" which is a similar thought, for that which is for the purpose of teaching is to make us intelligent on the matter taught. The AV helps little towards an understanding of the word, for it merely transliterates the Hebrew in reading *Maschil.* Each of the Psalms so marked is written to give instruction and make us intelligent on some particular aspect of life and truth. That which is intellectual belongs to the intellect or understanding. Knowledge is concerned with the assembly of facts, intelligence with the understanding of what is known. A knowledge of truth is good and to be desired, but an intelligent understanding of what is known leads to realization, which should be our aim in all searching for truth. This is not the intelligence of this eon, which is not based on faith but on sight and supposition, but is the true intelligence, a spiritual understanding. This is what the Levites sought to impart in Nehemiah's day (8:8). They read the scroll of the Scriptures and then expounded it to make it intelligible to the people.

When David wrote this Psalm the evangel of grace in which God reckoned righteousness altogether apart from works had not been fully revealed. Not until Paul wrote Romans was it known in its full glory. David had not found this unadulterated happiness of which he wrote. Verses 3 and 4 do not record the condition of a happy man—roaring all the day, the hand of Ieue heavy upon him day and night, his fresh and flourishing state turned to the aridity of summer droughts. He foresaw the day when such a happy evangel of grace would be available to all mankind, but it was not for

him in his day. Well might he indicate a pause at this climactic point in his poem of praise by the word *Interlude,* so that the reader might linger and ponder on what he had said.

Another indication of the different era in which this Psalm was written are the lines following the next interlude. The kindly ones pray regarding their sins, transgression and depravity at a season when Ieue is to be found; but when the waters of affliction overflow them and their soul is surrounded by many troubles, their prayer does not seem to get through to Him—they do not attain to Him. We too are prone to judge the love of the Lord by the circumstances we encounter, instead of seeing His loving hand in all and giving thanks for every step we take and every happening that we meet on the way.

The Psalm ends with a promise that Ieue will make us intelligent as to the way He is leading us and direct us along it. Intelligence as to our course and conduct is as essential today as ever it was. We should understand what the will of the Lord is and be intelligent as to the path He wishes us to follow. This is a very practical matter. It is a source of great satisfaction to be convinced that where we are placed and what we are engaged upon is the Lord's will for us. If we are able to come to a realization of our place in the body of Christ and our function in that which concerns Him there cannot but be a sense of fulfillment and contentment.

Donald G. Hayter

Two more publications from England and now available from us in limited quantities (no charge): *God Justifies, Vivifies, Saves and Reconciles All* by E. G. Jones and *The Circle of the Twelve* by John H. Essex.

[7]DAVIDIC[o]

33 Jubilate, ye righteous, in Ieue!
Comely is **praise for** the **upright** ones.
[2] **Acclaim** [>] **Ieue** [i]**on** a **harp.**
[i]**On** a **zither of ten** strings make **melody to Him.**
[3] **Sing to Him** a **new song,**
[c]**Make good playing** [i]**with shouting.**
[4] **For upright** is the **word of Ieue,**
And all His work is **in faithfulness.**
[5] **Loving justice and judgment,**
The **kindness of Ieue fills the earth.**
[6] [i]**By** the **word of Ieue** the **heavens were made,**
And, [i]**by** the **spirit of His mouth, all their host.**
[7] **He collects, as** in a [7]**skin bottle**[7]**,**
the **waters of the sea,**
[g]**Bestowing,** as **into treasuries,**
the **submerged** [=]**chaos.**
[8] **All the earth will** be **fearful** [/]**of Ieue,**
And **from Him will shrink**
all the **dwellers of** the **habitance.**
[9] **For He´** [sa]**speaks and it is becoming,**
He´ instructs and it is standing.
[10] **Ieue annuls** the **counsel of** the **nations,**
He repudiates the **devices of** the **peoples**
[7]**And repudiates** the **counsels of** the **chiefs**[o]**.**
[11] The **counsel of Ieue shall stand for** the **eon,**
The **devices of His heart**
for generation [+]**after generation.**
[12] **Happy** is **the nation who** has **Ieue** for **its Alueim.**
And **the people He chooses**
[>]**as** an **allotment for Himself.**

[13] **From** the **heavens Ieue looks** down,
He sees `**all** the **sons of** 'humanity,
[14] **From His established dwelling**
He peers >**at all dwellers of the earth.**
[15] 'He is **forming altogether their hearts,**
'He is **understanding** > **all their doings.**
[16] **No** 'king **is saved** 'by **much valor,**
A master will not be rescued 'by **much vigor.**
[17] **False** is **the horse for safety,**
+**Even** 'with **its vast valor it will not deliver.**
[18] **Behold!** the **eye of Ieue**
is toward those who **fear Him,**
Toward those **waiting for His kindness,**
[19] **To rescue from death their soul**
And to preserve **them alive in famine.**
[20] **Our soul tarries for Ieue,**
Our Help and our Shield is **He.**
[21] **For in Him is rejoicing our heart,**
For in His holy name we trust.
[22] **Coming is Thy kindness, Ieue,** to **be on us,**
w**Even as we wait for Thee.**

This Psalm starts where the previous one ended, on an exultant, triumphant note. David's worship was an exuberant exercise. He was jubilating in his praise. He plays and shouts in the excess of his feeling for his Alueim. On one occasion he was reproved by his wife, and was despised by her, for his too public display of his jubilation when he gambolled and danced in the street from joy at the return of the coffer of Ieue. His feeling was deep and sincere for this evidence of God's presence and promises, and he could not restrain a

public expression of his feelings in leaping about in the exuberance of his feelings.

How dull and lethargic we are sometimes in the expression of our joy in the Lord! Praise and worship is a happy thing, telling forth in a forthright manner what is within us. David used music to accompany his praise, encouraging the use of every instrument available to add a joyous sound to his acclamation. Acclaim Him with the harp, he sings; make melody with the zither, he writes, and in his psalms he calls into being a symphony of sound to express his feelings for his Lord. Singing, music and even shouting are all used by the faithful to express their emotions in their love for the Lord. Our singing and musical ability may at present be but a wish and our performance fall far short of the joy we would like to express in such a way, but when we are with the Lord we shall without doubt make our thoughts and emotions known with uninhibited exultation in all sorts of music, in songs of praise, hymning the marvels of our Father God in the sweetest melodies and in words inspired by the spirit which will then fill our frames at all times.

The reason for David's jubilation in his Psalm and that which prompted his praise was the word of God and His doings. How lovely is the expression of his faith! There are no reservations, for Ieue is All to him. He speaks and it will come, He instructs and it will stand. Ieue is all powerful and majestic in His ability to merely speak and it occurs. Nations and peoples and chiefs are as nothing in view of His word. Before it they cannot prevail. He knows the hearts of all for He formed them. He understands all their doings and can anticipate them, for He sees into the hearts.

Donald G. Hayter

COMPLETING HOLINESS

(2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1)

UNLESS THE MEANING of holiness is grasped true holiness cannot be manifested. Those who suppose that it is sinlessness can only manifest despair and frustration, or perhaps hypocrisy. Holiness is not a state of perfection which is reached by man's efforts but is rather an achievement of God worked out in the life of the believer. We cannot create holiness; we can only receive it. However, we can *complete* it (2 Cor.7:1) by living in accord with what God has given us.

The word "holy" means "that which is consecrated or set apart" (*Keyword Concordance*, page 146). In the New Testament it is almost always used in association with God and His operations, which is why so many have confused the term with "perfection" and "purity." But what God has set apart may not be pure in itself as is shown by the use of this term in the Old Testament (e.g. Ex.28:38; 29:33,34; Isa.13:3). Our holiness is not some mysterious power of sinlessness placed within us. Rather it is first of all an external fact. God has set us apart *in His sight* from the rest of humanity and has brought us in touch with Himself through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is *in ourselves*, in our own actions and thoughts, that this holiness still needs completing (see the

Editorial in the March issue of *Unsearchable Riches*). The Greek word for holiness used in 2 Corinthians 7:1 is made up of two root words: *holy* and *together*. It refers not to the fact of our holiness which God has achieved but to the accompaniments which develop from this fact.

The citizens of the United States have received the freedoms given in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. These are facts of our citizenship. They were gained by our founding fathers. But these freedoms have no practical value to a citizen (even though they remain his) unless he lives in accord with them. If someone here is afraid to speak his mind concerning his religious convictions because he expects the government will fine him or imprison him for doing so, he is not living in accord with the privileges he has. The gift of freedom which he possesses has been completed, but it lacks the accompaniment of enjoyment. Its manifestation is incomplete because it does not carry over to his thoughts and activities. It is there, but it is not being used.

Similarly we have many gifts from God, including holiness. Paul had already addressed the Corinthians as "hallowed in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor.1:2). They were "hallowed" just as surely as they were "justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of God" (1 Cor.6:11). Nevertheless they were not acting like saints (hallowed-ones). Their holiness was incomplete because it was not enjoyed and displayed as well as it could and should have been in their lives.

This is likely true of us all. We may know that we are holy and flawless in God's sight, but we have not come to appreciate and manifest it completely. That is why Paul prayed in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 that the God of peace may "be hallowing you wholly."

SET APART

In hallowing us God has set us apart from the ways of unbelievers and from lawlessness and darkness. This distinctiveness is particularly associated with the conciliation, for we have been given insight into the unique and acceptable features of this era in which we live. We welcome the good news that God is not reckoning our offenses against us. This gives us a measure of peace and assurance which the unbeliever cannot possess. This also has broadened our hearts toward others to an extent quite different than is usually shown in the world. In truth we are set apart both in our attitudes and our goals in life, from the general ways of this eon.

The very fact that our hearts are broadened (2 Cor.6:11) proves that we are different (holy). We long to share the grace of God with others, but we will not join them in that which is unclean and degrading. We live among unbelievers, and if we are completing our holiness we will be dealing graciously with them, but we cannot become yoked with them in anything which is wicked or displeasing to God (6:14).

Holiness does not involve separation from the world but from the corrupting ways of the world. Removal to a cloister is not holiness. Religious seclusion is contrary to the word of the conciliation which transforms us into ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor.5:20).

But we should be set apart from the unrighteous activities of unbelievers. The matter of "The Diverse Yoke" is examined in another article in this issue. There, Brother A. E. Knoch discusses the effect our holiness has on our relationships with unbelievers. It also must have an effect on all our behavior so that we not only avoid partnership with unbelievers but with their acts as well. It is possible for two believers to be

business associates and deal dishonestly with others. That, too, is a partnership of righteousness with lawlessness. There is no holiness being manifested. On the other hand, it is possible for a believer to be married to an unbeliever and the believer to show patience and graciousness toward the unbelieving spouse (1 Cor.7:12-14). That is a true manifestation of holiness.

THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD

2 Corinthians 6:16 describes our new relationship to God since He has placed in us the word of the conciliation. In the Greek we read, "For you [plural] are the temple [singular] of the living God." This surely refers to the ecclesia which is the body of Christ (1 Cor.12:27). The many become one. We all are members of one body and all enjoy the benefits of justification and conciliation *together*. And one of the greatest of these benefits is that we are the new home where God dwells.

This astounding figure of speech points to a most holy truth. Nothing could be more unlike the general condition of life today. The spirit of this world is one of independence from God. Man desires to have his own way and go in his own direction. We do not open ourselves to others and do not really want to open ourselves to God.

We certainly are aware that there is pollution within ourselves. We are corrupt. Yet "God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, *not reckoning their offenses to them*" (2 Cor.5:19). This is a gift that wakes us up! Christ became the sin offering to rid us of all that offensive corruption we have been trying to hide. It is all gone!

Now God chooses to dwell within us and manifest

His grace and glory through us. This very truth is encouragement and strength for separating ourselves from the ways of the world. Bro. Knoch once wrote, "A due sense of the solemn fact that God is making His home in us is the best preventive from contamination with the pollutions of the world" (*Concordant Commentary,* page 271).

PAUL'S QUOTATIONS

The character of God does not change, and thus His language in one era may be fitting (with certain adjustments) for a later era. Paul was very familiar with the writings of the Hebrew Scriptures, and he often borrowed an expression used in one context for his own development of truth. God's promise to Israel that He would walk among them and be their God, and they His people (Lev.26:12; Jer.31:33; Zech.8:8) applies equally to our present happy condition. But there is this important distinction: in Leviticus the pattern is man's doing *followed* by God's promise, while in 2 Corinthians man's doing is *because of* God's promise to be dwelling within.

The adaptation of Isaiah 52:11 in instructing us not to touch the unclean is perhaps less clear in this regard. God has admitted us whether or not we touch the unclean, but Paul is thinking of our enjoyment of the fact that God dwells within. This can only be through the completing of holiness, the manifestation in our actions of what God has made us to be in Christ.

The most unusual application of on Old Testament passage to our needs here is that of 2 Samuel 7:14 concerning David's son, Solomon, and his greater Son, Christ. God has given us the place of a son, but it is only as we separate ourselves from the degrading acts of this eon that we show forth to the world that we are

God's "sons and daughters." The fact that Paul adds the word "daughters" here indicates that the reference is to our daily lives in the flesh, for in Christ Jesus there is no male or female (Gal.3:28).

POLLUTION OF FLESH AND SPIRIT

In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul had told them, "... you are bathed off... you are hallowed... you were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God" (1 Cor.6:11). This is true for all believers; it is God's achievement through the sacrifice of His Son. Nothing can annul or change this fact of holiness and cleansing. We are God's people, His temple, and have been made sons and daughters unto Him. These are the promises which we possess and which we may and ought to manifest. Nevertheless, the Corinthians (and how often we ourselves?) failed to show forth in fullness this wondrous work of God.

The promises are not dependent on our deportment, but the present enjoyment of them is. And more importantly, the ability to please God and the privilege of bringing glory to His name rests upon a worthy walk. We possess great and glorious promises from God which have been gained by the suffering He endured and the shedding of His blood. Now, in the fear of God, not the fear of condemnation (Rom.8:1), we would behave ourselves in conformity to what He has made us to be. This is the meaning of "completing holiness in the fear of God."

The world is corrupt in two major ways, in the pollution of flesh and in the pollution of spirit. "Now apparent are the works of the flesh, which are adultery, prostitution, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, enchantment, enmities, strife, jealousies, furies, fac-

tions, dissentions, sects, envies, murders, drunkennesses, revelries, and the like of these" (Gal.5:19-21). Less apparent perhaps, but no less destructive is the pollution of spirit. Basically this is unbelief, a refusal to accept God's declarations, and the substitution of ritual, superstition and philosophy for His Word. Elsewhere Paul speaks of "the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness" (Eph.2:2). Again he warns us, "Beware that no one shall be despoiling you through philosophy and empty seduction, in accord with human tradition, in accord with the elements of the world, and not in accord with Christ" (Col.2:8). Spiritual pollution includes demon worship and participation in the occult, but it is not confined to such obvious wrongs. In fact, as is shown above, "enchantment" is listed as one of the works of the *flesh*. The most dangerous deceptions of the spirit are far more subtle. In 2 Timothy 2:25,26, Paul indicates that antagonism to the truth is a trap of the Adversary.

The word of the conciliation has renewed our times and filled us with peace, consolation and assurance. We have been set apart from the general trend of the world and from its spirit of stubbornness. It is now our daily prayer that we may be completing this holiness by appropriating it into our lives and manifesting it to the world to the glory of our God and Father.

D.H.H.

ZOE E. KIRK

The Detroit Ecclesia mourns the passing of Sister Zoe E. Kirk who was put to repose August 2, 1975. Sister Kirk was a long-time faithful member, who was devoted to the Concordant truths and enjoyed attending our meetings. She will be sadly missed by the members for her sense of humor and the inspiration she provided.

Andrew Lonyo

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

GOD IS SPIRIT. God is Light. God is Love. His power, His effulgence, and His affection are revealed in speech suited to an infant's lips, yet so deep is its significance that all the sages cannot fathom it. Only to those whose hearts and heads bow before His illumined love does He reveal the simple secrets of His being. Only those who honor His Word and its microscopic perfections are initiated into the mysteries of the Deity. Love rejoices, light illumines, spirit vitalizes. Life, illumination and love are the heritage of all who have been vivified by His holy Spirit.

The following accurate translations manifest a difference between these marvelous statements concerning God which it is impossible to reproduce in current English. When we say that God is Light, it is clear that we are speaking figuratively. The light by means of which these words are visible is not God, but it is like God. It is a figure of God. God is not some bright sun-star, shedding its rays through the universe. The light of the sun and the stars together illustrate the great truth that He is Light.

In like manner, we may not take the truth that God is Love literally, for He is more than an abstract quality, though it is the most precious of all. The figurative force of these two truths is effectually manifested in the original text by the presence of the verb *is*. In Greek the verb *to be*, in its various forms, is not usually necessary to state a fact, but it

must be used to enforce a figure. Its omission tells us that we are to take the assertion literally.

In the Original these three statements appear as follows:

1 John	1: 5	THE GOD LIGHT IS
	4:16	THE GOD LOVE IS
John	4:24	SPIRIT THE GOD

The last statement differs from the others in omitting IS. It records a fact, not a figure. Hence we come to the definite conclusion that God is literally SPIRIT. He is not merely *like* SPIRIT, but *is* SPIRIT. When we reflect that this is probably the only actual definition of the Deity found in revelation, the momentous nature of this statement begins to be apparent. It is worthy of our highest efforts and most earnest endeavors to obtain some apprehension of its import.

We repeat, in order that we may enforce the statement, God [is] Spirit. This is the only actual assertion concerning His essence that we have. Light and love are figures; this is a fact. In the original Greek this distinction is indicated by the *absence* of the verb *is*. If it were a figure the Greek would read as in the figurative assertions that "God is Light" (1 John 1:5) and "God is Love" (1 John 4:8). Not so with spirit. This is no figure. The Greek has it "God Spirit." It is not one of His "attributes." It is not one of His assumptions. He *is* Spirit.

The absence of the verb IS cannot be expressed in translation. This is a lamentable weakness in the English language, for it leads to seeming contradictions in some of the most fundamental truths. One example will suffice. We are distinctly told that all [is] out of God (Rom.11:36). There is no verb here. Yet we

are just as definitely told that everyone who is not doing righteousness and who is not loving his brother (1 John 3:10) and those who are not hearing God's declarations are *not* out of God (John 8:47). He who is doing sin is out of the Slanderer (1 John 3:8). The verb occurs in the Greek in the latter passages. It is sheer human speculation to ignore the facts of the Original and say that the first is not a fact, but a hyperbole. It is intelligent faith to acknowledge rather that the first is an absolute truth, and the other statements are figurative. They are true only in a subordinate sense, which does not at all infringe on the only rational and revealed foundation of the universe—all out of God.

Let no one misjudge these assertions. These statements are based on the evidence of the Greek text, not on private opinion. When we say that "God is Light" is not literal, we do not wish to shock sensitive spirits, but to express what everyone really believes. They acknowledge it whenever they give the matter thought. When we enter a dark room and press the electric light button, the darkness is replaced by light. This is not God, but it is like Him. When the sun rises in the morning and sheds its welcome beams on the earth, we should not fall down and worship the light. But we should adore Him Who is like the light, and Who, by the bold figure of metonymy, calls Himself Light.

So also with that brightest and most blessed affirmation which can be uttered by the human tongue or inscribed by mortal pen. God is not literal love, a feeling, an emotion, though it is the happiest in human experience. Even as light pervades His whole creation, so love illumines all His creatures in varying degrees. We enjoy it and are delighted by it, but we do not deify it. We do not worship a quality. We do not adore

an abstract, impersonal thing. But we do adore Him Whom it reveals, Who is so like it that, in a forceful figure, He calls Himself by the delectable name of Love.

While the statement "God [is] Spirit" is a fact, there is a faded figure in the word "spirit." In both Hebrew and Greek it is used literally for a blast of air as well as for the invisible, intangible power of life, action, and intelligence, which is denoted by the word "spirit." The Hebrew *ruch* is often used of the wind. Yet it is translated hundreds of times "spirit" and occasionally mistranslated "breath." This tells us that air in motion is the best illustration, in the material sphere, of metaphysical spirit.

THE "PERSONALITY" OF HOLY SPIRIT

One of the greatest hindrances to progress in things divine is the use of an unscriptural or extra-scriptural vocabulary. One word, which intrudes into this discussion, finds no place in God's revelation, but it seems to be essential to theology. This is the term "personality." An orthodox creed must affirm "the personality of the holy Spirit." The statement in itself is quite correct, but, as is usually the case with human amendments to the inspired oracles, the implications are false. The holy Spirit is a Person, but it is not a *distinct* personality from God Himself. No other spirit has two personalities. God is Spirit. He is called by this appellation when attention is diverted from His deity to His operations in creation and salvation. But He is not two spirits.

There are many instances in which the Spirit of God is identified with the Deity in His operations. These may not always prove their identity, for an agent may be merged in the One for Whom He acts. There is one

example, however, which cannot be misconstrued, which clearly shows that the Father and the holy Spirit must be one and the same "personality." We refer to the generation of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The truly vital question, "What think ye of Christ—whose Son is He?" ought to find a clear and accurate answer from everyone who believes in Him. Yet Christendom is actually in a quandary on this important point. If we say, with Peter, "Thou art the Son of the living God," or tell, with John, of the Only Begotten of the Father, we seem to deny the explicit accounts of His birth by *holy Spirit*. Believing this, we seem to be continually at variance with a multitude of passages which proclaim Him in deed and in truth the *Father's* only Son.

How many Fathers did Christ have? We read that Mary was found pregnant by *holy Spirit* (Matt.1:18). Joseph is assured that that which is being generated in her is of *holy Spirit* (Matt.1:20). The messenger of the annunciation said that "*holy Spirit* shall be coming on you, and *the power of the Most High* shall be overshadowing you; wherefore the holy One Who is being generated also, shall be called the Son of *God*" (Luke 1:35). Is it not evident that, if generation by holy Spirit made Him the Son of God, then God and this holy Spirit must be a single "personality"?

The problem becomes more complex when we examine the formal statement of His generation more closely. It is in the form of a Hebrew parallelism. His conception was not only by spirit but by *power*. The power of the Most High overshadowed her. It is stated thus:

> Holy Spirit will be coming on you,
> And the power of the Most High
> will be overshadowing you.

As the Most High must be identified with the Father rather than the Spirit, we find that the most explicit announcement which we have of His paternity gives us to understand (if we hold the doctrine of the trinity) that He had two Fathers! But the divine deduction is different, for we read,

> Wherefore also the holy One
> Who is being generated
> shall be called the Son of God.

He is not the Son of Gods, but of God. He is not the product of three persons but of two. He had one Father, God, and His mother was Mary.

Hebrew parallelism is a marvelous literary device for preserving God's revelation to mankind. The meaning of many a word is fixed by its synonym in a couplet. The sense of scores of passages is saved by the presence of a parallel line. In the repetition before us, "coming on" is clearly equivalent to "overshadowing." Similarly, "holy Spirit" is "the power of the Most High." Here we have a definition of holy Spirit by God Himself. It is worthy of the closest consideration. The holy Spirit is not the Most High, but the *power* of the Most High. The relation between God and His Spirit is not that of two distinct personalities, but that of power to the one whose it is. Christ was begotten by power. That power was the holy Spirit of the Most High.

The discovery of a "discrepancy" in the sacred text is a great temptation to discredit the divine record and declare such of it as does not seem to suit our conceptions spurious and uninspired. But when we examine the manuscript evidence for these passages we find that there is not the slightest ground for discrimination. Not only are all the manuscripts and ancient ver-

sions agreed in retaining these statements as given, but the early fathers afford the fullest proof of their authenticity. If we would cut out the Spirit's place in His conception, we must also expunge the Father's.

How often do we read that *God* was His Father! He was the Only-Begotten from the *Father,* full of grace and truth (John 1:14). The Jews sought the more to kill Him because He said His own Father is God (John 5:18). Nothing is more readily proven than that the Deity is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, for those who read this treatise it is unnecessary to produce any evidence, for it not only pervades the Sacred Word but has been inscribed on their hearts. God and the holy Spirit are His Father, hence they are one "Person," and not two. The Scriptures know no dual deity such as exists in the minds of many who worship Him.

This does not deny "the personality of the holy Spirit." It establishes it. Yet why cling to such man-made phrases, made to frighten timid spirits into a forced assent to a theological speculation? Actually what is usually implied is that the holy Spirit is a *distinct* personality. The intelligent believer can see this is in direct conflict with the facts of Scripture and has not a single solid statement to support it. Only a few ignorant inferences can be found which even seem to suggest that God and His Spirit are distinct "Persons."

Strange as it may seem, this very absence of evidence has been appealed to as the strongest pillar to prop it up. We are told that it is one of those truths which must be apprehended, for it cannot be fully comprehended. It cannot be illustrated even from the Scriptures. All that can be done is to give the statements of God's Word and base our faith on these. But when these statements are set forth, we find that

our faith is not to be based on straightforward facts, but on futile inferences. Almost all the passages produced prove the deity of the holy Spirit or they prove His "personality," but not one of them shows that it is a *distinct* deity from God the Father.

From the human, philosophical standpoint, absolute deity is difficult to define. Only the Spirit of God knows God. We are entirely dependent on revelation for our information. The popular supposition that the possession of divine "attributes" distinguishes the deity is most deceptive. All of God's creatures have some minute measure of His qualities. These mark them as His, not Him. Take the single attribute of power. What living thing does not have it in some degree? He differs from them in the magnitude of His might; theirs is limited, His is infinite. So are all His attributes. His knowledge is uncircumscribed, His wisdom knows no bounds, His love no limits.

We are told that the holy Spirit is eternal (Heb.9:14). Of course, this should read *eonian*, but let us grant that it has its philosophical meaning of "without beginning or end." This is certainly true of God's own Spirit. Yet it is no proof that it is a distinct personality. Christ offered Himself flawless to God through this Spirit. We know that this was the will of *God*.

The "omnipresence" of the Spirit is another argument. Psalm 139:7 reads, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?" But there is far more reason to believe that there is only One Who is in all places, *by His Spirit*, than even to imagine that two distinct Persons are everywhere. There is nothing in the Scriptures to cause us to believe it. It is sheer credulity.

The "omnipotence" of the Spirit is given as a reason for a *distinct* personality. The passage produced is

Luke 1:35, in which "the Holy Ghost" is paralleled by "the power of the Highest." Why not go on and deduce the further fact that, under the circumstances, these must be identical? The holy Spirit *is* "the power of the Most High." As we have already shown, if these are distinct "persons," then we must face the absurd conclusion that Christ was begotten by two distinct "personalities."

We are told that the Spirit is "omniscient," for " . . . the Spirit of truth—it will be guiding you into all truth" (John 16:12,13). If we are to really *reason* out the *distinct* personality of the holy Spirit from this passage, we must prove that God is *not* "omniscient." Then indeed, there must be two persons. But, if they are One, as indeed they are, then this is an argument in favor of their identity.

In the same way, every passage which proves the deity of the holy Spirit also proves its identity with God. Ananias, in a single act, lied to the holy Spirit and to God (Acts 5:3,4). The holy Spirit was the active factor in creation (Job 33:4; Psa.104:30). It alone imparts life (John 6:63; Gen.2:7; Rom.8:11). It is the Author of the inspired Scriptures (2 Pet.1:21). All of this proves deity indeed, but in no case is there any call for a double deity. A.E.K.

The address labels on the envelopes used for mailing this issue were prepared by computer. No doubt there will be some errors made as we switch over to this new system, but it will eventually save us much time and labor besides being an improvement in appearance. Let us know if there are any mistakes in spelling and address information on your label. The Postal Service is becoming more particular that we use exact and up-to-date information on our addresses. Often magazines which have been delivered for many years with a slight error in the address are now returned to us (with a charge) for correction. Hence it is important that we have the right information.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 1975
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-SIX

EDITORIAL

CHRIST DWELLING in our hearts stresses the idea of *permanent* and *full* occupancy, as against merely being in a home, either temporarily, or sharing it with other guests. Since our heart is not only the seat of affection and love, but also of desire and thought, there may be ample room left for occasional or even permanent residence of cravings and ideas foreign to the spirit of His Son which God delegates into our hearts (Gal.4:6). Hence a believer may have Christ in the spirit of his mind, and God's spirit making its home in him, but Christ does not *dwell* yet in his heart.

Because of the presence of other guests in the heart, Christ cannot yet occupy all of it permanently, and really *dwell* in it; He has to share it with those transient guests. Even though they cannot change our status in Christ, we are nevertheless in constant danger that they will influence our thoughts and activities by giving a foreign impetus to our motives which is not in line with Christ's spirit. For there is no nobler motive for our functions and desires than the love of Christ which is pressing or constraining us (2 Cor.5:14). In order to displace and supersede other motives, let us pray both for ourselves and for the ecclesia that Christ, and *Christ alone*, may dwell in our hearts through faith, for the laud of the glory of God!

H.H.R.

THE SPIRIT WORLD

THE WORLD MIGHTS of this darkness, the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials, know quite well that we are destined to rule over them, hence they are intensely concerned about us, and are our real adversaries at the present time. Just as Israel was sporadically at war with the nations in the land of promise, so we are waging a defensive fight against these celestial hosts. Too often we wrestle with blood and flesh, not realizing that these are not our real adversaries, but only the necessary human tools of these spirit powers. God gives us these conflicts in order to acquaint us with their *stratagems*. We may rest assured that an especially clever plot to hinder God's work, which is camouflaged as an attempt to help it, is not of human invention, especially if it is accompanied by showers of burning arrows, which can only be extinguished by the shield of faith.

It is evident that, as in the case of Adam, the Adversary uses intermediaries to accomplish his ends. Those who are deceived by him and his hosts are the tools with which he works. Most saints shrink with horror at the idea that they could be used by Satan to hinder the Lord's work. Let such beware, for they are open to this very thing if they refuse to be on their guard. Judas was not the only one who was used by Satan. Even in his case we can see the strategy of the Adversary. He

could have found many men to betray our Lord, but how much better for his purpose to lure away one of those near to Christ, one of His chosen apostles! He works especially well within the ranks of accredited religionists.

Most Christians look for evidences of the Adversary's activity among the ranks of the immoral, the profligate, the worldly. But that is a mistake. A spirit, without a physical body, is not tempted by the pleasures of the flesh. Indeed, he cannot even apprehend such matters, as he has no means of experiencing them. Mankind is tempted from within to such sins and excesses. But Satan is primarily concerned with spiritual affairs, particularly those which affect the purpose of God and His Christ. Hence he seeks to turn aside the saints from the role of suffering and humiliation which will prepare them to cope with him in heavenly realms, and bend their energies to world betterment before God's time, and by means similar to those to be employed by Christ, but apart from His personal presence.

This can be camouflaged into a most meritorious and glorious crusade against the powers of evil, even if it is the reverse. Christendom will be convinced that their cause is just, that they are doing the will of God, when they attack and destroy the non-Christian religions and set up a messiah who will unite the world under their banner. The important point is to see that all will be so cleverly accomplished by the powers of darkness that nearly all will be convinced that they are on God's side and are working for the welfare of one world, while they are really carrying out the behests of the powers of darkness. They will be thoroughly deceived because they will abandon the ground on which this gracious administration is based and the

precious promises of Christ's return, and yield to the allurements of the Adversary to take His place and perform His work before He comes.

Judas was not the only one who was influenced by Satan. Peter, the chief of the twelve, also was deluded by him (Matt.16:21-23). He, too, wished to forestall God's time. Our Lord was revealing to His disciples that He must suffer and die. But Peter would have none of this. Many, if not all, of us would have agreed with Peter. Here was a Man Who had unlimited power. He could have set up the Kingdom at any time, and brought blessing to everyone. Yet now He speaks of suffering death! Peter seemed to have no inkling of God's purpose in it all, or of the part of evil in bringing about the humiliation of man and the glory of God. Satan always seems to be on man's side, and wants to do him a favor, as at the first in the garden of Eden. Peter did not want his Master to suffer. But our Lord has short shrift for such thoughts. He knew whence they came. So He calls Peter Satan and a snare.

As the present is preeminently a *spiritual* administration, and we are destined to reign in the realms of the spiritual forces of wickedness, we may rest assured that Satan is far more opposed to us than to the Circumcision apostles. Only occasionally do we read of the parts that evil spirits played in the history of Israel. A very small fraction of the accounts of our Lord's life even refer to the spirit world. But a large part of the closing chapter of Ephesians, the chapter of the present grace, is concerned with this phase of our conduct.

But we are not spiritists, who communicate directly with the spirit world by means of mediums, or ouija boards, or table rapping. Indeed, it is not a question of

communication but of *warfare*. And it is not a question of physical *force* but of spiritual *stratagems*. Yet it is carried on *through* blood and flesh, for it is only by means of physical, soulish members of the human race that the spirits can reach us. Paul warned the saints in Corinth lest somehow, as the serpent deludes Eve by its craftiness, it should be corrupting their apprehension also (2 Cor.11:3).

The conflicts among the saints often have the appearance of wrestling. Too often they are merely the efforts of the Adversary to oppose God's operations. We should look beyond the human instrument to the power behind it, as our Lord did with Peter. Is it not notable that He never called Judas Satan, so far as we know, but rather Peter, His loyal disciple? No doubt it was a great help to the chief apostle in his future service, to recall how ready he was to act the part of the Adversary. He wanted to *help*, not to hinder. Let us not imagine that such a sincere intention is a true test. It is through well-meant efforts to be of service that the Adversary works. The great apostasy of the end time will be purported to be a Christian crusade to further His cause. We should be wary and wise and test all as to its concord with God's times and seasons, His plan and purpose.

"Dissensions and snares beside the teaching" were present even in Paul's day for even then there were some who slaved for their own bowels and sought, through compliments and adulation, to delude the hearts of the innocent (Rom.16:17-20). The apostle does not instruct us to deal with them, but rather to *avoid* them. Then he gives the real remedy: "The God of peace will be crushing Satan under your feet swiftly." He recognizes that much of the misconduct among the saints, especially among the leaders and

teachers, is not due merely to their frailty, but to the influence of evil spirits.

In that day of illumination we will not need to contend with any deviation from the teaching. Adulation will be entirely ruled out. This will follow from the change from mortal to immortal bodies. But, far more than that, Satan himself, the instigator of human opposition and dissension, will be beneath our feet. Now he dominates the actions of many a saint. But then his place and power will be taken from him, and we will be above him, able to subdue and control the one who, next to our flesh, was the cause of most of our miseries.

Just as the enemies of Christ will figuratively find themselves a footstool for His feet, so will the greatest of all our enemies be placed beneath our power. But, best of all, we will not retaliate. We will not use our authority to further alienate and estrange him from God or from ourselves. We, to whom conciliation was first presented, will be conciliatory to all, and be able to bring back all our enemies into the circle of friendship and conciliation with God. Doubtless due to Satan's machinations, we cannot now even bring about peace among ourselves, but then all our own differences will have been dissolved, and we will be able to bring it to our ertswhile enemy in the spirit world, the Adversary himself.

A.E.K.

LEATHERBOUND GREEK TEXTS

In addition to the hardback edition of the recent reprint of our *Concordant Greek Text* we have received a small supply bound in leather. Unfortunately a number of these have slight flaws. As long as they last we are offering these defective leatherbound Greek Texts at $10.00 each, the same price as the hardback, which is a savings of 50%.

THE COMPLEMENT OF CHRIST

WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY suggested in this series of studies that the form the ministry of the ecclesia would take was determined by God even before the eons began; and that even as woman, as man's complement, maintains the form of humanity throughout all generations, so the ecclesia, as Christ's complement, maintains the form of the ministry of grace, which God has begun in Christ, so that God Himself shall find glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus throughout all the generations of the eon of the eons (Eph.3:21).

Christ Himself provides the power for this ministry — He is the life, the driving force behind it — but God has so ordained matters that it is our role to see that there is no deviation from the form that that ministry shall take. It is a ministry of grace — consistent grace, perpetual grace, undiluted grace — for grace is the basis of ultimate salvation and the path to complete reconciliation.

There are, in fact, two ministries which date from pre-eonian times: the ministry of Christ (as God's Complement) and the ministry of the ecclesia (as Christ's complement). The ministry of Christ is one of *life*, in accord with the promise of life made in Him before times eonian (Titus 1:2). Christ, as God's Complement, fulfills His promise of life, for all God's promises are "Yes" in Christ (2 Cor.1:20). He never deviates from His mission as a life-giver. The promise

of life is centered in Him. He is the Resurrection and the Life — the Way, the Truth and the Life — the Bread of Life. "As in Adam all are dying, thus also in Christ shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

From before eonian times, God determined that all should have life (for Him to be God of the dead is inconceivable; e.g. Matt.22:32), and He appointed His Son to be the means by which His promise of life should be accomplished. At Calvary, Jesus said, "It is accomplished." Even in His death He gives life. Indeed, life to all is now guaranteed; so much so that Paul, when he announces in 1 Corinthians 15:20 that Christ is roused from among the dead, can immediately go on to declare that God will be All in all (v.28). That is to say, once Christ is roused from among the dead, there is no power in the universe that can prevent God's ultimate from being accomplished, for all sovereignty and authority and power is made subject to Christ, and the apostle specifically excludes God Himself from this subjection in order to show that all else is included. Further, death itself is declared to be abolished, so effective and so complete is the ministry of Christ!

But God has also determined (again, from before eonian times) that the basis of ultimate salvation shall be His own grace, and not the works of the creature; and thus *the ecclesia is appointed, as Christ's complement to supplement the ministry of life which Christ is operating.* So, from Calvary onwards, God begins to display His grace — His absolute grace — first to the members of the ecclesia itself as they are called one by one from the sons of humanity, and then through the ecclesia to all creation. For it is a ministry not limited to the earth, but is to be displayed in the eons to come among the celestials.

THE MINISTRY OF GRACE

The ministry of the ecclesia — this ministry of grace — is not one suddenly conceived by God to take over where other ministries fall short, though in fact it does just that, as we shall see presently. No, it is the earliest projected ministry in the universe, apart from that of Christ Himself. It dates indeed from the time when only God was in existence, for when He brought forth His Son, as His own Complement, He conceived that Christ also would have a complement, the ecclesia; and so, in that sense, the ecclesia is as old as Christ, and has its ministry defined in the gift that was given to it in Christ Jesus before ever the eons began.

How wonderful it is that the whole future of the universe depends upon those primal decisions of God, to bestow life through His Son and to display grace through the ecclesia! It is just impossible for us to grasp, in full measure, the honor which God has bestowed upon us as members of that ecclesia!

But what is this ministry of grace? Can we define it further? To be sure we can, for it is clearly set forth in Ephesians 2, verses 8-10:

"*For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you: it is God's approach present, not of works lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we . . . .*"

This is the definition of absolute salvation. In this, the flesh has no place; law has no place; works have no place. All these were dealt with, and were shown to be at enmity with the evangel of grace, in the earlier epistles of Romans, Corinthians and Galatians. Indeed, in Romans 8:20, all creature effort is shown to be nothing but vanity. Here, in Ephesians 2, all is centered upon God's operations. Salvation is made to depend on Him, and Him alone. We become *His*

achievement, and we are to display the transcendent riches of His grace (which have already been bestowed upon us) to all creation so that the rest, too, may ultimately become His achievement, created in Christ Jesus.

NO LASTING ALTERNATIVE TO SALVATION IN GRACE

What is the alternative to this salvation in grace? There is none! Paul knew that in his *flesh* there dwelt nothing good; he knew that those *in flesh* could not please God (Rom.7:18; 8:8). He knew, too, that the perfect law of God, holy and just though it was, could not procure salvation, for by *works of law* could no flesh be justified (Rom.3:20). There is no getting away from sin if it is to be through the law, for the law only brought increasing recognition of sin. And any *creature endeavor* apart from God is just *vanity*, to which Paul declares the whole creation to have been subjected. Where, then, is the way out, the way to salvation? Does it lie in the Kingdom, to be set up in Israel under the Lord Jesus, the millennial reign of Christ? Many Christians think this to be the answer to all their problems and the goal of their desires. But the millennial reign of Christ ends in a vast rebellion as soon as Satan is loosed for even a little time — when he comes out "to deceive all the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to be mobilizing them for battle, *their number being as the sand of the sea*" (Rev.20:8).

And when we come to the new heavens and the new earth of Revelation 21, what do we find? Verses 7 and 8 of this chapter tell us that, while some will be enjoying this allotment, others, described as unbelievers, idolaters and the like, will find their part in "the lake burning with fire and sulphur, which is the second

death." This hardly sounds like universal salvation, and indeed in the book of Revelation, which is the final book of the Circumcision writings, there is no hint of a resurrection from the second death. Only from the writings of Paul can we deduce that there must be such a resurrection; though he does not mention the second death, he firmly declares that "in Christ shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

In passing, it is interesting to note the use of the word *peace* in Revelation. It occurs only twice: in the opening salutation, "Grace to you and peace from Him Who is and Who was and Who is coming" (Rev.1:4), and in Revelation 6:4, which reads, "And forth came another horse, fiery-red, and to him who is sitting on it is given to *take peace out of the earth,* and that they should be slaying one another. And a huge sword was given to him." There is no reference in this book to peace being restored to the earth. We have to look to Paul for this; peace is made through the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20).

THE ADVANCEMENT IN THE TEACHINGS OF PAUL

It has sometimes been suggested that the last verse of Ephesians 1 indicates that the ecclesia will be maintaining among the celestials the same work as that entrusted to Israel on earth, so that between the two the entire universe is brought under the administration of Christ.

Now there can be no doubt whatever that the sovereignty of earth is given to the nation of Israel, and that they will be used to bring the earth under the administration of Christ. Revelation 22:5 clearly states that God's slaves will be reigning for the eons of the eons, that is, for the last two eons.

But there are factors in the writings of Paul relating

to the earth as well as to the heavens — which are not mentioned in the book of Revelation, or indeed in any of the other writers of the Greek Scriptures — which seem to go outside and beyond the ministry of Israel. Where, for instance, is there any mention, outside of Paul, of conciliation and reconciliation? The peace that comes through reconciliation is made by the blood of Christ's cross, but where, outside of Paul's writings, is there any mention of the word of the cross? Or of immortality? Or even of a new humanity?

Where in the Greek Scriptures do we find God portrayed as the Saviour of *all* mankind? Only in the writings of Paul (1 Tim.2:4 and 4:10). Indeed, Paul is the only one who speaks of *all Israel* being saved (Rom.11:26). Where, outside of Paul's writings, do we find such themes as justification by faith apart from works and a new creation in Christ Jesus? These form part of the evangel of grace committed to Paul. They have no place in the Circumcision writings, or in any ministry of Israel based on those writings, but they are incorporated in the ministry of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ. When works and law and even the rule of the millennial reign of Christ fail to bring complete salvation, what is there left? Only the evangel of pure grace, which is both prior and superior to them all. For law and rule are imposed from *without*, and are effective only while they are imposed, whereas grace operates through God's Spirit, which is placed *within* the creature, and aims towards the ideal of God being All *in* all.

ALL IN ALL

The phrase "all in all" occurs both in Ephesians 1:23 and in 1 Corinthians 15:28. In the latter case, it is "that God may be All in all." Now it is apparent that

this can be said in three different ways, according to which word we desire to emphasize, and each way of saying it will react differently on our minds.

For example, if we wish to stress the greatness and glory of God, we will say, "That *God* may be All in all." By stressing the word *God,* we show that *He* is the One to Whom all will be reconciled, and thus we emphasize the absoluteness of His Deity.

But we could quote the passage, "That God may be *All* in all." In this case we emphasize the completeness of His indwelling in each of His creatures, leaving no room within their hearts for any other controlling factor.

Or we could put the emphasis on the last all, and say, "That God may be All in *all.* In this case, we stress the all-embracing nature of the consummation; no creature is left out of the final analysis; no creature is excluded from the ultimate blessing.

In exactly the same manner, it seems to us, we can express the last phrase of Ephesians 1 in three different modulations.

We can put the stress on the word *complement* and by doing this, we give the glory to Christ, our Head, and show that we are just the medium through which His work of reconciling all to God will be achieved.

Or we can stress the first *all,* which is literally *the* all. There is a definite article before this *all* in the Greek. By placing the emphasis in this way, we show that, when the ministry of the ecclesia is completed, there will be nothing left to be accomplished in any of those to whom, and for whom, we shall have ministered.

Or we can stress the last *all,* which includes all creation. In Ephesians 1:10, Paul declares God's intention to "head up *all* in the Christ — *both that in the*

heavens and that on the earth — in Him in Whom our lot was cast also, being designated beforehand according to the purpose of the One Who is operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will, that we should be for the laud of His glory, who are pre-expectant in the Christ."

To head up all in the Christ, both that in the heavens and that on the earth. It is as Head over all (both that in the heavens and that on the earth) that Christ is given to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement by which all in all (both that in the heavens and that on the earth) is being completed.

Is it not the case that all creation is included in this last *all*, and that all creation, whether in heaven or in earth, needs in some way to benefit from the ministry of the ecclesia? Is not the *entire creation* groaning and travailing together until now, awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God (Rom.8:18-22)? The message of grace cannot reach any of them until the ecclesia is completed, and manifested — shown forth — to display that grace. While it is true that our ministry is primarily among the celestials (for they are the greater creation), is it not also true that the gratuity in grace, namely righteousness, is "for all mankind for life's justifying" (Rom.5:16-19)?

The apostle Paul is the one who completes the Word of God (Col.1:25). He completes it in every sense. Only in the writings of Paul do we find vivification for *all* mankind, and reconciliation to God for all in both earth and heaven (Col.1:20). Only in Paul's writings is God declared to be All in all.

Paul completes the *Word of God.* The ecclesia, as the complement of Christ, completes the *purpose of God*, the "All in all." When the ministry of the ecclesia has run its full course, God will be "All in all."

HOLDING THE HEAD

Finally, it is of supreme importance that each individual member of the ecclesia should recognize and acknowledge Christ as his Head, for it is as Head over all that He is given to us. Colossians also confirms Him as our Head: "and He is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead" (Col.1:18).

By acknowledging Christ as our Head, we are counteracting the work of the Adversary. The original rebellion among the celestials, which led to the disruption, was, we are sure, against the headship of Christ. It is fascinating to consider that, when Christ brought into being the one who was to be the Adversary, He would know that He was creating a challenger to His own headship of the universe, and the one who would temporarily deprive Him of it. Yet He would also know that He still retained within Himself that which would consistently glorify Him as Head, namely, the ecclesia which is His body. The ecclesia, chosen before the disruption, *has never denied His headship*; rather, it has sustained it, though individual members may possibly from time to time be upbraided for not holding the Head. *The ecclesia is the God-given pledge to Christ* of His continuing headship; as His complement, the ecclesia maintains the headship of Christ throughout all generations until all is headed up into Him, for in Him every kindred in heaven and earth is being named (Eph.3:15).

The ecclesia, we repeat, is the pledge given to Christ (before ever He began to put God's purpose into operation) that His Headship over all would be restored and acknowledged. For not only does the ecclesia maintain a perpetual display of grace, but it also maintains an unbroken witness to the headship of

Christ. These are the two aspects of the function of the ecclesia as the complement of Christ — two concurrent and continuous features of its ministry that are completely satisfying in their effects and in their outcome. The one glorifies God, the other exalts His Son.

We close this series of studies on the place of the ecclesia in God's purpose with the prayer of Paul in Ephesians 3:14-21.

"On this behalf am I bowing my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after Whom every kindred in the heavens and on earth is being named, that He may be giving you, in accord with the riches of His glory, to be made staunch with power, through His spirit, in the man within, Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, having been rooted and grounded in love, should be strong to grasp, together with all the saints, what is its breadth and length and depth and height — to know, besides, the knowledge transcending love of Christ — that you may be completed for the entire complement of God.

"Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, *to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!*"

John H. Essex

CONCORDANT NEWSLETTERS

Starting in 1976 we are planning to send our monthly newsletters and other mimeographed reports and selected articles on a regular basis to all donors as well as those friends who specifically request them. This will be one way in which we can express our thanks to our many loyal supporters without whose prayers and gifts this work could not continue.

FAITH'S FIRM FOUNDATION

"FAITH has not the least merit. We do not deem it meritorious to believe an honest man. It is no effort. It is not work. It is the simplest, easiest, freest channel God could choose to convey His righteousness to us" (*Concordant Commentary,* page 234). Yet from the day we first believe we ponder long on the meaning of *faith* and its implications as used in the Scriptures. What is faith, and what is its special value to us today?

This is our subject for contemplation: *faith.* It is a most gracious gift and a most practical gift, to be used to the well-pleasing of God. The Son of God came to give life, light and truth, and these are inseparable from faith. It is no wonder then that Paul the apostle speaks of faith over one hundred and forty times, and in other areas of the New Testament this word appears another one hundred times or more. Its verbal counterpart, "believe," which comes from the same Greek word family, likewise is found some two hundred and forty times. While these words are not restricted to the New Testament, they are intimately related to the revelations of life and light in the Son of God which are found in this portion of God's Word.

BELIEVING WHAT GOD SAYS

Perhaps the simplest definition of faith is that given by the apostle Paul in Romans 4:17 where he describes Abraham as believing "the God Who is vivifying the

dead and calling what is not as if it were." Abraham's faith was an acceptance of what God had said to him. God's declaration was the firm foundation of Abraham's faith, and so it is for us today, who are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead (Rom.4:24).

True faith is associated with the Word of God. "Faith is out of tidings, yet the tidings through a declaration of Christ" (Rom.10:17). Timothy, born of a Greek father and a Jewish mother, was acquainted with the Sacred Scriptures which were able to make him wise for salvation *through faith* which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim.3:15). Undoubtedly he had been brought up under the instruction of his mother and grandmother, and through the Spirit of God faith, light and life came into his heart. So also Paul reminds us that a strong faith requires the use of the sword of the spirit "which is a declaration of God" (Eph.6:17).

FATHER ABRAHAM

It is the patriarch Abraham, however, who becomes the great example of faith in the Scriptures. Let us consider how it was that he became known as "the father of all those who are believing" (Rom.4:11). He was born in Ur of Chaldea, an area steeped in idolatry, but the fact that he left that land is not his great work of faith. Coming to Charan (Haran) where he remained until he was seventy-five years of age, Abram was then called by God to go out to a land which had been promised to him. His response to this did not display pure faith either, for he had been instructed to leave his relatives behind, yet he took Lot, his nephew, with him and came to Bethel. It is interesting that even here at a place called the "House of God" Abram's faith faltered, and he journeyed to

the south into Egypt because there was a famine in the land (Gen.12:10). (Is there not always a famine when we are out of the will of God?)

It took many years of varied testings and vicissitudes, including those difficulties involving Lot, before Abram reached the point where he could be called the father of those who believe. In fact, even after this point his faith is seen to fail, for it is only in this single instance in Genesis 15:6 that Abram was asked to do nothing more than believe God. Here there were no added requirements. He was not asked to leave any place or anyone. He was not asked to go any place or do any thing. God simply told Abram what *He Himself would do* for him. "And Abram believes in Ieue Alueim, and He is reckoning it to him for righteousness."

Abram did nothing except believe this declaration which came from the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were. It is faith, above all else, which God *was* yearning for and still *is* yearning for. This is one of the reasons why God sent His Son, so that faith could be truly exercised, and so that belief in what God says might become the catalyst between God and His creation, resulting in reconciliation. The fathers and the prophets foretold and attested to this great truth. It is profoundly stated regarding Abraham that "the promise of God was not doubted in unbelief, but he was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God . . ." (Rom.4:20).

LIVING BY FAITH

God longs to have us believe what He says to us, and this is not to be only when we first accept the evangel, but is to be exercised daily. It pleases God to have obedience based on faith alone, not on signs or

evidence which appeals to the soul and senses. Let us be speaking, thinking and acting in the right way because we believe God's Word to us and accept the pattern of love and grace laid down in the evangel.

The prophet Habakkuk begins with the question, "Oh, how long shall I cry?" "And Jehovah answered . . ." (2:2), "The righteous shall live by his faith" (2:4). The outcome is Habakkuk's victorious declaration, "Jehovah is my strength" (3:19).

Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4 twice (Rom.1:17; Gal.3:11), and the writer of the book of Hebrews also reminds his readers of this divine principle (Heb.10:38). These Hebrew believers, much as the people of Judah in Habakkuk's time, in a very real sense were undergoing a severe testing, both they and their faith. The writer of the book was endeavoring to build them up and to establish them so that they would understand what had occurred.

The key for living by faith is in believing what God has said to us. Those addressed in the book of Hebrews expected the Kingdom and all of its glory to be set up immediately, but their hopes had been dashed when they became scattered and persecuted. Hence the writer strove vigorously with all of his mind and spirit to cause them to understand thoroughly the issue, to rest in the promises, awaiting the coming of Christ with all patience, endurance and faith. This was their firm foundation.

May we also place our faith in the Word of God and find in it continuous encouragement and strength for patience and endurance.

How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He has said,
You who to the Saviour for refuge have fled?

R. T. Ramquist

THE "PERSONALITY" OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE "PERSONALITY" of the holy Spirit of God is usually based upon the *gender* of the original Greek, whether it is *he, she,* or *it.* But this is done in a very queer way by theologians, so that ordinary folk will find it very difficult to follow them, or to straighten out the tangles that they produce. Some points may seem strange to one who knows only English, but we will try to show by examples how little reliance can be placed on the usual arguments to prove the holy Spirit of God to be a distinct and different "personality" from God Himself.

From the standpoint of English the matter should be very simple. All the *she's* and *he's* are "personalities" and the *it's* should not be. According to this, God and Christ, being masculine, are "personalities," but the holy Spirit, being *neuter* in Greek, is not. The Authorized Version, having been made by men who were pledged to support the teaching of the church, usually managed to evade this fact in their renderings, but even they translate Romans 8:26: "the Spirit *itself* maketh intercession," notwithstanding that, in this passage, the spirit is actually personified as an intercessor, pleading for us with inarticulate groanings, which can be true only of a person. The word *spirit (pneuma)* is *not masculine* in Greek, but neuter.

If gender proves personality, then the Spirit of God cannot be a person, for, in Greek, it is always called *it,* never *he* or *she.*

But, we are told, the holy Spirit is called a "comforter," and this is *masculine* in Greek, hence we must refer to the Spirit as *He.* Various figures are used of the spirit, yet nowhere else do we transfer the gender like this. The spirit descended on our Lord as a *dove* (Mark 1:10). It actually assumed the bodily appearance of a dove (Luke 3:22). But the word *dove* is *feminine!* So, according to this reasoning the spirit must be called *she* in this place! Other figures support this. In Romans 8:10 we read that the spirit is *life,* which is feminine, and in 1 John 5:6 we are told that the spirit is *truth,* which is also feminine in gender. So that we have three times as much evidence that the spirit should be *She* rather than *He,* if we ignore the fact that the Greek word spirit is neither one. Besides if *comforter* and *dove* are sufficient to prove "personality," we can also take *life* and *truth* to prove the opposite.

If gender proves "personality," then all sorts of things, in Greek, are endowed with it. We will list a few *female* nouns first, taken at random from the early pages of our concordance: *Achaia, operation, air, allegation, aloe, Antioch, pagentry, manifestation, pretense,* etc., are feminine personalities! Here are some *male* personalities: *Christian* (no women!), *back, stone dyke, beach, beam,* etc. Here are some *things* without personality: *acquisition, beast, vocation, alabaster, anemone, ankle, phantom,* etc. From these few examples it should be clear that *Greek gender proves nothing as to personality.* Many *things* are feminine or masculine. Even if the word *spirit* were masculine that would not prove that it refers only to

persons. A *beam* of wood is not a person even if it is masculine gender in the Greek.

But does the fact that *spirit* is neuter, or, rather, *indefinite*, prove that it cannot be a "personality"? By no means! A *beast* is hardly a *thing*, yet the word is neuter. And the Scriptures certainly introduce us to many spirits which have "personality," or, rather, *individuality*, which is a more correct expression for what is meant in modern English, for we can say that a certain individual has no "personality," that is, has nothing to distinguish him from others of his class. "Personality" is a non-scriptural, unsound, misleading expression, and should never be used or countenanced by anyone who desires God's truth. Indeed, it always indicates that there is a departure from God's revelation and a dependence on man's misrepresentation of Him. When men denounce others for not "believing in" the "personality" of the holy Spirit, when God has not used the term at all in His Book, we may be sure that those who insist on the term are in error and need this expression in order to impose their apostasy on others. We should always demand that truth be clothed in the words of inspiration.

As is shown in our *Keyword Concordance*, page 282, the word *spirit* has quite a variety of usages. It is applied to metaphysical beings, generally unclean or evil (1 Tim.4:1), including demons (Luke 4:33) and messengers (Rev.4:5). On the other hand it is used of what might be termed a principle of action, especially when followed by the genitive of a thing, as the spirit of *love*, of *grace*, of *truth* (1 John 4:6 — in contrast to the spirit of *deception* — John 14:17,15:26,16:13), of *meekness*, of *sonship* (Rom.8:15), of *sanity* (2 Tim.1:7), etc. The spirit of a *thing* cannot have "personality" or individuality. Everyone who is a son

of God has the spirit of sonship, yet they harbor no person who is related to sonship. Sonship is not merely a theory or a doctrine with us. It is a *vital power* in our lives. This the Scriptures call the *spirit* of sonship, for it enables us to speak and act like sons of God.

Besides these two usages of the word *spirit* there are others which are usually confused with them. All *living* things, especially animals and mankind, have a spirit, which is merged with the individual. It may be said to have "personality" in humanity, as it is the spirit of a person, but it has no individuality distinct from the person. The reader of these lines has a spirit, but this has no separate life or experience which he does not share. A man can give some of his spirit to others; so, also do Christ and the Deity. There is no "personality" involved at all. Let us consider this matter in other relationships, where there is no theological bias to warp our thinking.

"The mouth of Jehovah [Ieue] speaks!" (Isa.1:20). Were we to reason from this statement as is usually done in regard to the *Spirit* of God, we would insist that there is another person in the Godhead, for Jehovah's *mouth* must be a *person!* Only a person can speak! So also with His *arm* and His *ear*. Only a person can save and hear. Isaiah tells us (59:1):

> Behold! the *hand* of Ieue is not too short to save!
> And His ear is not too heavy to hear!

Throughout the Scriptures we find this figurative language. Usually it is understood, when there is no false tradition or theology to hinder the student. The mouth of Jehovah, or His hand or ear, cannot be distinct personalities, so we understand them to be picturesque and powerful figures. Moreover these are compound figures, since God has no literal mouth or

arm or ear. God is Spirit, so it is a much simpler figure to ascribe His acts to His Spirit, if we were not hindered by the creeds, which ignore this figure in order to split the one God of the Scriptures into the trinity of Christendom.

Just as in the case of His mouth and His arm and His ear, *everything done by the Spirit of God in figure is done by God in fact.* In some cases it is absolutely impossible to make two individuals of them. God *works* by His Spirit, just as He *speaks* by His mouth. Christ was generated by the holy *Spirit,* yet He claimed that *God* was His Father. Did He have *two* Fathers, or one? So all *operations* of the Deity may be ascribed to His holy Spirit.

THE "COMFORTER"

A "comforter," in English, may be *he, she* or *it.* In Greek only *he* or *she* is used. Either a person or a thing may comfort us. A kind of quilt covering has been given the name "comforter" in some parts of the English speaking world. So, in English, we want to know *who* or *what* comforts, before we are able to say that *he* or *she* comforts, or that *it* comforts. In Greek we could not do this. We would be compelled to say that the comforter, *he* or *she* is warm, because all comforters, even when composed of *things,* are either masculine or feminine. In translating, then, if we come across a passage saying, "The woolen comforter, *he* is warm," we would be compelled to change it to "*it* is warm." No one would object to this because it does not touch a sore spot in theology. If it did, we would be compelled to say "he is warm" (though woolen), or suffer the anathemas of the church.

There is a case like this in John 14:16, which reads as follows in the CV: "And *I* shall be asking the

Father, and He will be giving you another consoler, that it, indeed, may be with you for the eon — the spirit of truth, which the world cannot get, for it is not beholding it, neither is knowing it. Yet *you* know it, for it is remaining with you and will be in you." Now, ordinarily, we think of a consoler as a person, but here we told *what* (not Who) this consoler is. It is the *spirit of truth.* This is the (neuter) spirit of a *thing* (truth). To be sure, *truth* is *feminine* in Greek, but that does not make it a person. And even if it did, *even the spirit of a person is a thing.* Consider the following list of things, all of which have a spirit. Is it not clear beyond all question that *the spirit of a thing* (no matter what its gender in Greek may be) *must be a thing?* The spirit of truth is the vital power resident in truth, the energy it imparts, truth living and acting in us. This is closely associated with the spirit of God, but is by no means identical with it.

The following is a list of the phrases found in the Scriptures, in which spirit is followed by the genitive of a thing. Besides spirit of truth (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6) we have spirit of infirmity (Luke 13:11), spirit of holiness (Rom.1:4), spirit of sonship (Rom.8:15), spirit of stupor (Rom.11:8), spirit of humanity (1 Cor.2:11), spirit of meekness (1 Cor.4:21; Gal.6:1), spirit of wisdom (Eph.1:17), spirit of timidity (2 Tim.1:7), spirit of grace (Heb.10:29), spirit of glory (1 Pet.4:14), spirit of deception (1 John 4:6), spirit of life (Rev.11:11), spirit of prophecy (Rev.19:10).

Notwithstanding the plain statement that the consoler, or "Comforter" is distinctly said to be *a thing of a thing,* the spirit of truth, scholars and translators object when we turn this into English, and refer to the thing as *it,* or even *that,* a pronoun which may be used of persons as well as things. Moreover, once we grasp

the fact that Christ has sent the holy spirit of truth to take His place in the world, especially for Circumcision saints, all that is spoken of this spirit will be much clearer. It is the truth that consoles the saints. It is a spirit which the world cannot receive so long as it is under the influence of the deceiver. It is the truth that exposes the world (John 16:7-11). And it is the power of this spirit that guides the saints into all truth. It informs them as to what is coming, and glorifies Christ.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

In the ancient prophets, the Spirit of Christ acted as a "person." It testified beforehand to the sufferings pertaining to Christ and the glories after these (1 Pet.1:11). I suppose no one separates the Spirit of Christ from Christ Himself, as is often done with the Spirit of God. Indeed, immediately after the apostle says "if anyone has not Christ's Spirit, he is none of His," he adds, "if Christ is in you," and thus identifies Christ with His Spirit (Rom.8:9,10). It is *Christ's spiritual presence.* We all recognize the fact that Christ Himself is not present in flesh. That is reserved for the future. That will vivify our flesh. Since the Spirit of Christ is not a distinct "personality" from Christ, and as it operates in closest accord with the Spirit of God, there is no valid ground for dividing God and His Spirit into two distinct deities.

We realize the power and presence of God's Spirit (making its home in us) in all that we do. Having Christ's Spirit means that Christ is in us (Rom.8:9,10). God's Spirit gives us power over our dead bodies, and Christ's Spirit gives us communion with Him.

A.E.K.

(To be continued)

DAVIDIC

[i]When he [7]altered[7] `his discretion before Abimelech and he is driving him out, and he is going.

34 I am blessing `Ieue in every season.
Continually His praise is in my mouth.
2 **In Ieue my soul is boasting.**
Hearing are the humble and rejoicing.
3 **Magnify > Ieue `with me,**
And we will exalt His name together.
4 **I inquired `of Ieue and He answered me,**
And from all my shrinking He rescued me.
5 **Look to Him and beam,**
And [7]your[0] faces must not be abashed.
6 **This humble one calls and Ieue hears,**
And from all his distresses He saves him.
7 **The messenger of Ieue camps**
around > those who fear Him,
And He will liberate them.
8 **Taste and see that Ieue is good.**
Happy is the master who is taking refuge in Him!
9 **Fear `Ieue, ye His saints,**
For there is no lack to those who fear Him.
10 **Those who were abounding are destitute**
and famishing,
+Yet inquirers of Ieue will not lack any good.
11 **Go, sons! Hearken to me!**
The fear of Ieue will I teach you.

12 [a]**Who** is **the man** [d]**desiring** [e]**life,**
Loving days, to see good?
13 **Preserve your tongue from evil,**
And your lips from speaking **deceit.**
14 **Withdraw from evil and do good.**
Seek peace and pursue it.
15 The **eyes of Ieue** are **to**ward the [e]**righteous,**
And His ears are **to**ward **their imploring.**
16 The **face of Ieue** is [f]**against doers of evil,**
To cut off **from** the **earth their remembrance.**
17 **Cry** do [7]**the righteous**[c] **and Ieue hears,**
And from all their distresses He rescues them.
18 **Near** is **Ieue to** the [e]**broken of heart,**
And [h]the [e]**crushed of spirit He will save.**
19 **Many** are the **evils** to the **righteous** one,
[+]**Yet from them all will Ieue rescue him,**
20 **Guarding all his bones,**
Not one [f]**of them is broken.**
21 **Evil shall** put the **wicked** to **death,**
And haters of the **righteous** one **shall be guilty.**
22 **Ransoming** is **Ieue** the **soul of His servants,**
And not guilty will be all [d]**tak**ing **refuge in Him.**

SPECIAL NOTE ON PSALM 34

Like Psalm 25 this has an "acrostic" arrangement in Hebrew. That is, the first letter of each verse begins with a different letter in the same order as the Hebrew alphabet. Also like Psalm 25 the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, corresponding to our "u" is represented only by the word "and" in beginning the last line of verse 5, and the seventeenth letter (corresponding to our "p") not only appears at the beginning of verse 16 but is repeated in both Psalms at the beginning of verse 22 in the Hebrew word for "ransom." This repetition emphasizes Ieue's ransoming work.

The incident referred to in the inscription to this Psalm is that recorded in 1 Samuel 21. After David had fled from Saul he sought refuge with Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. Abimelech, referred to in the inscription, seems to have been the title of the kings of Philistia, as Pharaoh was for the kings of Egypt.

David, when he arrived in Gath, was exceedingly afraid, for his reputation as a warrior had come through to the people of Gath, and they recognized him as the anointed king of Israel, their enemies. He was saved by his feigning madness, raving in their presence and conducting himself as a demented man. Because of this supposition that he was mad they spared him, and he went his way, escaping to the cave of Adullam. There gathered to him his father and mother and their household and also about four hundred men noted for their discontent, men oppressed and under constraint, men to whom credit was due, and men bitter of soul because of their circumstances. It is this record which gives the background to all that David has written in this Psalm, and in the light of this we must interpret and understand it.

He starts by asserting that he is blessing Ieue in every season, whether it be good or evil. He had just gone through a season of distress and evil in which he had been deeply humiliated. He shrank from the experience, but from it Ieue had rescued him. He had saved him from all these distresses. It was the messenger of Ieue encamping around him who had rescued him. He took refuge in Ieue and was happy. He had implored Ieue for help and He had heard his call. He was broken-hearted and crushed but Ieue was near to him. He does not count himself to have been guilty of any sin in his subterfuge and deception of Achish for he was taking refuge in Ieue, and this was

the method of his deliverance. It was the motive of his actions which was important, not their superficial appearance.

He addresses those with him, the four hundred men and his father and mother with their household, "Magnify Ieue with me, and we will exalt His name together;" and "Your faces must not be abashed." He addresses them as sons, "Go, sons, hearken to me, The fear of Ieue will I teach you."

As in all the Psalms certain lines have a particular appeal to our spirits. Here are a few from this Psalm that especially appeal to the heart.

Look to Him and beam.

Beaming is a lovely word. We use it in the sense of smiling radiantly, which is close to its meaning here in verse 5. Literally a beam is a stream of radiant light. There is a fine passage in Isaiah 60:5 where the word occurs. The setting is the future Kingdom and the glory of Ieue which would be radiant then over Israel, "Then you shall see and beam, and awed and wide will be your heart." We should not look to Ieue with dark and overcast features, but with a radiance streaming from our hearts toward Him. Exultation, thanksgiving and rejoicing should accompany all our prayers. Our spirits should be radiant and beaming forth our hearts' appreciation of His love.

Taste and see that Ieue is good.

How can we taste if we do not believe in His ever present goodness to us? He is good to us at all times and in every circumstance. Savor the deliciousness of His love and kindness in His word. There is a word for every season, especially in these lovely portions of divine inspiration, the Psalms.

The Hebrew word for taste is in a family of words given the standard TARRY in the CV. The connection of taste with tarry is clear on reflection, for to get the full flavor of food, that is to taste it, we dally over each mouthful, allowing the palate to savor it to the full. This thought is used in a delightful figure in Psalm 119:103, "How dulcet (or savory) to my palate are Thy sayings! More than honey to my mouth!" Solomon uses the same figure in Proverbs 8:7 when he writes, "For my palate is soliloquizing truth." To really savor the deliciousness of truth, we need to ponder and meditate upon it, turning it over in our minds, examining its every facet till its beauties captivate our hearts and set them attune with praise to Him Who is Truth.

Near is Ieue to the broken of heart.

What consolation there is in these words for a soul crushed beneath a severe blow. Many are the evils befalling the righteous, but Ieue will rescue from all of them. Is our heart bursting to the breaking point because of some evil circumstance — the Lord is near in a special way. Be consoled by this.

Donald G. Hayter

SYSTEMATIC STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

We have received, gratuitously, the literature prepared by Bro. Adlai Loudy under the title, "Systematic Studies in the Scriptures." The arrangements for this transfer of 14 booklets and 1 chart were made with the Truth Research Fellowship, Inc. of Minneapolis, Minnesota, which lists the following reasons for this change: "First, it will make the lessons more widely available. Secondly, it will provide a greater degree of continuity. Thirdly, it appears to be prudent and timely and within God's purpose to join with the Concordant Publishing Concern in a common effort of presenting the Word of Truth to every earnest truth-seeker."

DAVIDIC

35 Contend, Ieue, `my contention,
Fight `those **fighting me.**
2 [c]**Hold fast** the **shield and targe**
And rise [m]**to**[s] **my help.**
3 + **Unsheath** the [7]**sword**[?]
And enclose to meet my pursuers.
Say to my soul, "Your salvation am **I."**
4 **Ashamed and confounded shall be** those
seeking my soul.
Turned away backward **and abashed shall be** those
devising evil for **me.**
5 **They shall become as trash before** the **wind,**
+**When** a **messenger of Ieue** is **impelling** [7]**them**[c].
6 **Their way shall become dark and slick** surfaced,
+**When** a **messenger of Ieue** is **pursuing them.**
7 **For gratuitously they bury their net for my ruin.**
Gratuitously they delve for my soul.
8 **Coming to him is devastation** which **he will not know,**
And his net, which he buried, shall seize him.
[i]**With devastation shall he fall in**to **it.**
9 +**Yet my soul is exulting in Ieue.**
It is elated in His salvation.
10 **All my bones are saying, "Ieue,** [a]**who** is **as Thou** art?
Rescuer of the **humble**
from one **more steadfast** [f]**than he,**
And the **humble and needy from his pillager."**
11 **Rising are witnesses** speaking **wrong.**
What I do **not know they are asking me.**

[12] **They are repaying me evil instead** of **good**
[7]And[0] bereavement to my soul.
[13] **Yet I — [i]when they** were **ill**
My clothing was **sackcloth.**
I humbled my soul [i]with fasting,
And my prayer, on my bosom, is returning.
[14] **As** with an **associate, as** with a **brother of mine,**
I walked with them.
As a **mourning mother, somber, prostrate am I.**
[15] **+Yet [i]at my limping they rejoice and are gathered.**
Gathered [on]against me are smiters,
And I did **not know** it.
They tear into me **and are not still.**
[16] **[7]They reproach me[?], deriders of [7]derision[?],**
[7]They[0] gnash at me with **their teeth.**
[17] **[s]Ieue[ph], how art Thou seeing?**
[c]Restore my soul from their devastations,
My only **one from** the **sheltered** lions.
[18] **I will acclaim Thee in** the **vast assembly;**
Among a **staunch people will I praise Thee.**
[19] **They must not rejoice [>]over me,**
my enemies who are **false;**
Those **hating me gratuitously are winking** the **eye,**
[20] **For they are not speaking peace.**
+ [on]Against the **lulled of** the **land**
Words of deceit are they devising.
[21] **And widening are they [on]against me their mouths.**
They say, "Aha! Aha! See does **our eye!"**
[22] **Thou seest, Ieue! Thou must not be deaf!**
[s]Ieue[ph], Thou must not be far from me!
[23] **Rouse and awake for my judgment,**
My Alueim and my Lord, for my contention.
[24] **Judge me [as]according** to **Thy righteousness,**
Ieue, My Alueim,
And they must not rejoice [>]over me.

[25] **They must not be saying in their heart,**
"Aha! [7]Aha! to[0] our souls!"
They must not be saying,
"We will swallow him [i]up!"
[26] **Ashamed shall they be and abashed altogether,**
Those **rejoicing** at **my evil.**
Clothed shall they be with **shame and confounding,**
Those **magnifying** themselves [on]**against me.**
[27] **Jubilating and rejoicing are** those
delighting in **my righteousness,**
And saying are they continually,
"Let Ieue be magnified,
Who is **delighting** in the **welfare of His servant."**
[28] **My tongue also will soliloquize Thy righteousness,**
Thy praise the entire day.

Permanent
To the servant of Ieue

THE SERVANT OF IEUE

David feared Ieue, loved Him and worshipped Him, yet he addressed Him in the most intimate and understanding way. He spoke to Him as knowing Him in a close and personal way; his whole being was absorbed by his Lord. So deeply implanted in him was his love for Ieue that he could say with truth, "All my bones are saying, 'Ieue who is as Thou art?' " So deep seated was his esteem for Ieue that it was part of the very marrow of his bones. He relied on Ieue with a childlike and simple faith that is a joy to behold in his

Psalms. He even gives the Lord words to say to him, "Say to my soul, 'Your salvation am I.' " He wanted as it were to hear from the Lord's own lips the assurance that *He* was his salvation and so provide an anchor for his soul in his crisis.

We learn much of the enemies of David from his Psalms, their motives and methods of attack. And this has a relevance to us for we may learn of our own conflict with our unseen, celestial foes from what is said of David's opponents. Ours are none the less real than his, and equally persistent in their hatred and opposition to us. Too easily do we forget them, and we know far too little of their aims and strategy in their warfare against us. This Psalm is subscribed, "To the servant of Ieue" and it is significant in this connection that David's enemies feature so prominently in it. It highlights the truth for this era that for the true servant of the Lord there must be contention and opposition all along the road to glory. Service and conflict are inseparable in every era. David was the servant of the Lord and had enemies throughout his life, and the Psalms reflect this fact.

Much of this Psalm echoes the essence of our conflict, as for example in verse ten where the enemy is referred to as a pillager. Is this not precisely what our celestial foes seek to do, and have in fact so done in the case of many of the children of God? They have pillaged our celestial allotment, keeping us from its enjoyment in spirit and in expectation. As for David, the Lord is our Rescuer and Strength in such a conflict. We must stand on our allotment and hold it, first learning what it is, then holding on to it with all the tenacity that our spirits are capable of.

Psalm 35, subscribed as it is to the servant of Ieue, has much in it that may be associated with chapter 11,

verses 23 to 33 of the second epistle to the Corinthians, where the hallmarks of the true servant of Christ are given. They are not success, public acclaim, fame, ease or freedom from trouble. Quite the reverse. Paul writes of weariness, jails, blows, deaths, flogging, stoning, shipwreck, dangers of every sort, toil, labor, famine, thirst, cold and nakedness. David writes of fighting, pursuit by his enemies, of those devising evil against him, humiliation, need, of those gnashing their teeth against him, of enemies full of falsehood and those hating him without cause. Servants of the Lord have all suffered a similar fate in varying degrees. Service cannot be judged by appearances or results now. The display of the true value of service and the reward lies in the future day at the dais of Christ.

David speaks of his righteousness in verse 27. His righteousness was his magnifying of Ieue, his love for Him and his faith in His word. These are the only truly righteous things that the servant of the Lord can at all times do. Nothing in life is more right than believing God, loving Him and magnifying Him and His achievements. Those who thus live are the truly righteous ones.

Donald G. Hayter

We are planning a new cover design for *Unsearchable Riches* starting with the January, 1976, issue. Our agents and missionaries will be listed on the inside front cover, but the various listings of Bible classes and meetings presently given on the back cover will no longer appear. However, an up-to-date listing of these local gatherings will be maintained here at the office and copies supplied to all who request them.

Any group which would like their meetings included in this list should let us know the particulars including a phone number where full information can be received.

THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF GOD'S LOVE

CHRIST is seated at the right hand of God, the highest political position in the universe. He outranks every sovereignty and authority, every power and every lordship. His peerless name has the precedence over every other in heaven as well as on earth. All must be subject to Him. *The marvel for us is that this supremacy, this headship over all, is His as Head of His body, the ecclesia.* We, as members of this spiritual organism participate in His political supremacy. We are His complement, the needed staff through whom He will administer His universal government. Just as in the earthly sphere, the chosen nation will be associated with Him in the rule of the whole earth, so we will be one with Him in His reign over the rest of the universe (Eph.1:20-23). In the joint body the Circumcision will have no preeminence, because the two are made into one (Eph.2:15; 3:6). The figure of the body remains, with members of different functions and gifts, but the rift between Jew and Gentile disappears.

Paul's epistle to the Colossians deals with Christ's headship in the heavens. In his prayer for the saints there, Paul gives thanks to the Father, who makes us competent for a part of the allotment of the saints in the light, Who rescues us out of the jurisdiction of Darkness and transports us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we are having deliverance, the pardon of sins, Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships,

or sovereignties or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him (Col.1:12-17).

At present we are subjects, under the jurisdiction of some political authority, which, being in line with God's mandate for this era of the nations, we are bound to *obey* (Rom.13:1-5). There will be no deliverance from it in this era, on the earth. But there is another, a spiritual jurisdiction, which we are to *withstand.* In Ephesians it is called "the world-mights of this darkness," and further defined as "the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials" (6:12). These now rule there as the sovereignties, or independent powers, and the authorities, who derive their position from them, and contest our right to our allotment, for they exercise the political power there at present.

Also quite apart from the human authorities which we are to obey, there is a spirit overlord now operating among men, called the chief of the aerial jurisdiction, who turns men against God during the eon of this world. As unbelievers, we were once under his evil influence and merited God's indignation. But now, by God's grace, we need be subjects of this sinister spiritual sovereignity no longer, but have been transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love. This is not a literal kingdom, but the spiritual parallel and predecessor of that which will be set up when Messiah returns and reigns in the eons of the eons. It is as *Son* that He is sovereign in this kingdom, not as *Christ,* whose members we are. So now we are *subjects* in it, not *associates,* as we will be in His celestial realm (Eph.2:2, Col.1:13).

Once we take our stand for God and His Word and withstand the Adversary's attempts to drive us from

the enjoyment of our allotment in the heavens, and we engage in such work as the restoration of God's revelation to His people, or aid in making it known, we will soon find our path filled with hurdles and traps to hinder and trick our feet at every step. Not only our foes, but even our friends will be used to discourage and destroy, little dreaming that they have been deceived by false appearances. Indisputable facts will be so handled as to give an impression the exact contrary to the reality. Unquestionable truth will be used to prove the reverse. We should not be ignorant of these things, lest Satan overreach us (2 Cor.2:11). Even as the saints are a small minority compared to the rest of mankind, so also very few of them are free from the toils of his messengers of seeming light. Almost all succumb to his stratagems. *Few even think of praying for the spirit needed to enjoy their own allotment!*

But our invisible spirit enemies will not be allowed to oppose us forever. At the end of this eon, the air will be cleared of wicked spirit powers. Michael will battle with the dragon, and so Satan, who is deceiving the whole inhabited earth, will be cast out of heaven (Rev.12:7-9). After he has raged down here for a short period, he will be expelled from the earth also, and bound in the abyss (Rev.20:1-3). But the time seems to be very near when, even before this, Satan will be crushed under our feet (Rom.16:20). When Joshua was conquering the land of Israel, he had his captains put their feet on the necks of five kings (Josh.10:24) in token of their defeat. So will we put our feet on the neck of the Adversary, and go on with our Joshua (which is the Hebrew form of Jesus), to take possession of our spiritual political allotment among the celestials. A.E.K.

FRUIT OF THE CONCILIATION

(2 Corinthians 7:2-16)

THE PEACE which God has established in the conciliation of the world (2 Cor.5:18-21) has changed our *days* from times of distress to a most acceptable era (6:1,2). Furthermore, as we have seen, it has motivated us to change our *behavior* from unclean and unrighteous acts to the walk of sons and daughters to God (6:3-7:1). Now in 7:2-16 we find this very same message of peace from God changing our *disposition* from discouragement to consolation and joy.

The events of life are not changed; it is only the way they affect us, or rather the way we respond to them, which has changed. The believer is afflicted, perplexed and cast down by the pressures of life no less than the unbeliever (4:8,9). In fact, it is likely that there will be more troubles for God's chosen ones than for others, especially if they stand firm for the truth. The change lies within ourselves. "For the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (4:6). "God . . . is also giving us the earnest of the spirit" (5:5). "For you are the temple of the living

God, according as God said, that I will be making My home and will be walking in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (6:16).

These revelations concerning God's presence within us are precious indeed. But what is the real significance of this fact? What does it mean for God to dwell in us? We are apt to think of the earnest of the spirit only as it relates to the spectacular. But in 2 Corinthians we continually find illustrations of the operation of God's Spirit upon the everyday problems of life, the mundane duties, the dreary sameness of our days. We find God producing ideal fruit in the lives of those who have accepted His Word. Let us note some of these unspectacular but no less miraculous operations of God's Spirit here in our present passage.

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD ONE ANOTHER

The apostle had been nearly sick with apprehension over the Corinthians. They had permitted harmful practices to continue uncorrected in the ecclesia. That troubled Paul so deeply that he had written them a strong letter of rebuke, exposing their dishonorable behavior (2 Cor.2:4). Then he was afraid that the letter had been too severe (7:8). All of this came on top of his continued solicitude for all the ecclesias (11:28) besides the many dangers listed in 11:23-27. It was too much for any man to bear.

Nevertheless, Paul not only endured all these burdens and afflictions, but he was able to write to these troublemakers, the Corinthians, "You are in our hearts to die together and to live together" (7:3). This was a manifestation of God's Spirit, which led him to add, "Much is my boldness toward you; much is my boasting over you. I am filled full with consolation, I am superexceeding in joy in all our affliction" (7:4).

This is remarkable! Here was a man who was pressed from all sides ("outside fightings; inside fears") who boasts about the good qualities of the very people who were causing him so much grief. In addition he was evidently doing this boasting to the Macedonians who were, above all the ecclesias, the most loyal, most liberal and most loving (8:1-5; 9:2).

What was it that enabled Paul to bear this fruit, to display such a disposition? It was the power which resided in the evangel (Rom.1:16; 1 Cor.1:18). This was no feigned politeness. That comes only where one expects some sort of gain, but Paul could not hope for much from the Corinthians in a personal way. Therefore, we must find this power in the spirit associated with the evangel, especially that which resides in the message of conciliation. God was in Christ conciliating *the world* (not just "the Christians" or "the church" or "the elect") to Himself. Hence Paul who accepted this message of peace found that God was also in him, producing a disposition of conciliation toward others, even those who troubled him.

This attitude is contagious. Once we see it in God it starts to work in us. We do not need to practice it and train ourselves to display this disposition as though we were children learning our manners. It is the logical development (Rom.12:1) of faith. It is the result of God walking in us. In Philippians 2:5 Paul entreats us to "let this disposition be in you which is in Christ Jesus also." And then he reviews the evangel so that we can accept what Christ has done in faith. The more we grasp of the word of the cross and the word of the conciliation and grow in a realization of God the more we will be displaying the inevitable results, the fruit of the spirit (Gal.5:22,23).

CONSOLATION

It is probable that in the statement that God consoles the humble (2 Cor.7:6) there is a reflection of the conciliation. The humble are the low, which is exactly what the world is whether or not man acknowledges it. Yet God draws the world to Himself in peace, no longer reckoning the offenses of lowly man against him.

Most of mankind, including the majority of believers, deny or at least ignore the conciliation, but Paul recognized its presence in every event of his life. The conciliation has truly been established! How can we tell? Like Paul we can observe it in the consoling and comforting ways in which God arranges the events of our lives. If we are troubled (and who is not?) we should watch for the outcome, the sequel of the trial (1 Cor.10:13) which will surely come. It will be like Paul's reunion with Titus (2 Cor.7:6,7,13-16) and will be soothing to the spirit.

Consolation is a recurring theme in 2 Corinthians (1:3-7; 2:7; 7:6-16), and this is fitting where the general theme is conciliation. If we deny the conciliation and look only at the surface of things, the cruelty and selfishness, the pain and distress, the hate and crudity, and refuse to accept the consolation God offers we cannot know much peace. It is very important for the believer to be recognizing the conciliation. It changes our attitude toward other people and toward the agonizing experiences of life. God was in Christ establishing peace. He made Christ to become the sin offering for our sakes. This is not theoretical; it is actual. It assures us that there is an undercurrent in life, an invisible operation of God, which is drawing His estranged creatures to Himself in peace.

We ought to become more conscious of this operation. Note how Paul savored each detail of God's consolation in our passage. The apostle found comfort in the presence of Titus and also in Titus' own consolation over the Corinthians (7:6,7). He also rejoiced in the report from Titus as well as rejoiced in the joy of Titus (7:13). He was conscious of the happy results of the letter he had previously written. He made note of the good effects this trial had on the Corinthians. "In everything" he was encouraged (7:16).

Like the nine lepers who failed to glorify God when they were healed (Luke 17:11-19) we often forget the trial as soon as God gives us the gracious outcome. But Paul rejoiced greatly in the sequel God provided here. A. E. Knoch described the issues involved as follows: "Titus seems to have been much concerned about the Corinthians, lest they should prove refractory, and his visit to them lead to dissension and disobedience. Paul was the more concerned to know of his reception on this account, and because he had sought to soothe his fears and had boasted of the outcome of his endeavors. Titus must have been much pleased to find his fears unfounded, but not nearly so much as Paul, who would have been disgraced for boasting without cause, and for sending Titus to them in spite of his apprehensions" (*Concordant Commentary,* page 272). The consolation God provided did not go unappreciated. It was received and enjoyed to the fullest.

REPENTANCE

Those who do not recognize the conciliation may tend to look upon repentance as a harrowing obligation. Is it sufficient? Is it genuine? Is it done correctly? How often must we repent?

However, when we recognize that God has made

Christ to become the sin offering for our sakes we are freed from such futile self-examination. Repentance no longer is a human work, but it becomes the natural result of God's grace operating in us. It is not something we are obligated to do in order to receive God's favor. Instead it is the operation of God within those who have already received God's favor.

The Corinthian man who sinned, and indeed the entire ecclesia, were made sorry to repentance by Paul's letter. Paul had not demanded their repentance, or even asked for it, but he had shown them the way which would naturally lead to such a result. Repentance is a change of mind (see *Keyword Concordance*, page 245). It means that we see things in a new light. Stubbornness is changed to harmony, and wicked thoughts are replaced by love. Since this change of mind was especially associated with sorrow in 2 Corinthians 7:9,10, we can see that the mind was changed from an obsession with pleasure and self-gratification to a sober and serious reflection on the believer's walk. This kind of repentance is the certain fruit of the conciliation.

It does indeed lead to an unregretted salvation, but not salvation from indignation and death. That was accomplished by God through the obedience of Christ. This change of mind produces a present salvation from the poison of selfish thoughts. It frees us from being burdened by our past failures and invigorates us to strive for that which is ahead.

The Corinthians were sorry over their careless behavior and for all the trouble this had caused, and now their minds were freed both from the corruption of their former attitude and from the load of guilt that had accumulated. Hence their minds were set at liberty to be dedicated (7:11) to diligence in service and

defense of God's Word, to resentment against the corruption of His truth and the fear of dishonoring their Lord, to a longing to see Paul and fellowship with the believers, to a zeal in announcing the evangel and even in avenging its distortion (this latter point cannot mean avenging men, for that is not our place according to Romans 12:19, but it is likely in reference to our use of the sword of the spirit against false teachings set forth through the influence of the spiritual forces of wickedness, as presented in Ephesians 6:10-17).

These are all proper changes in our attitude which will develop when the conciliation is appreciated and appropriated. It is a purity of mind in contrast to the pollution spoken of in the first verse of this chapter.

It is to be expected that the unbeliever who intelligently and thoughtfully faces his weaknesses and failures will become despairing or cynical in disposition. But this should not be so for the believer who is equally honest about the human situation. How unfortunate it is, however, that many of us remain self-centered and fail to see the true trend of God's operations because we ignore the conciliation. He consoles the humble and soothes the distressed with the assurance of a good and gracious sequel to every trial He gives. Through the experiences of our lives he makes the evangel more and more precious to us and more and more productive of a renewed mind and changed attitudes. May we not neglect the word of the conciliation and its ideal fruit.

D.H.H.

CONCORDANT ANTIQUITIES

Brief outlines under the above title, describing the development of the Concordant Publishing Concern, are available upon request. These are prepared by Ray Embry of our staff.

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