

Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS
WORD

VOLUME LXIX

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GOD'S GLORIOUS GOAL

God and Father of my Lord,
Let me revel in Your Word.
Let me see Your plan unfold,
Know the Secret long untold,
We to show to hosts above
All the wisdom of Your love.

O what love that You could see
Man brought near through enmity,
That You might Your heart make known.
Was the seed of hatred sown
To the end that all might know
Love is seen where sorrows flow?

We who have believed in Him
Have been justified from sin;
Now alive with Christ our Head,
Quickened with Him from the dead,
We shall be with Him above,
Spend the eons in His love.

And for those who died in sin,
Those who had no Light within,
At the consummation grand
Are brought near at Christ's command,
Roused and raised and vivified,
All for whom the Saviour died.

All is out of God, we read,
As the tree is in the seed;
E'en though sin makes creatures foes,
All creation through Him flows;
When the eons run their course,
All returns to God, the Source!

W. H. Breckenridge

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY, 1978
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-NINE

EDITORIALS

ENTERING a new year, we are thankful for the blessings received, as well as for the lessons learned from our disappointments. We also are thankful for the supportive encouragement from so many of the readers of *Unsearchable Riches*. We welcome, too, the criticisms—friendly, or otherwise—and the rebukes, whether gentle or ranting. Though these are not pleasant, they make us consider our ways. Perhaps we can share here a little of our care for the task assigned to the staff of the Concordant Publishing Concern.

It is quite a responsibility for anyone to be entrusted with carrying on another man's work. It is even more awesome when this work involves the Word of God. To misrepresent or nullify the positive accomplishments of a man's life's work would be a cause of sorrow. Perhaps such is even the normal state of affairs, judging from the musings of the author of Ecclesiastes (see 2:18-21). However, to twist or distort the Word of God would be a far greater tragedy. We wish to do neither, of course.

In one sense, the staff is working within a body of tradition—traditions established by our founder, A. E. Knoch. The Concordant method as a procedure for Scripture analysis can be described as a tradition. We believe that it is a sound tradition, using this system as our basic model for research. Yet we dare not presume

that A. E. K. sounded all the depths of the Sacred Scriptures. That is the very mistake he warned against. He demonstrated that close followers of certain of the Protestant reformers make just this error. Some seem to have willingly limited their minds so as to receive only as much light as was given to some vaunted teacher. Knowing how dimly illumined even the best human mind may be, we realize how unenlightening such a course could become.

We would dread such an occasion of having to choose between the man and the Word, but we pray for the courage to abide with the divine truth, whatever the price. It is our desire that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ grant us the grace and wisdom to see Him in Christ more clearly with each passing day. Lest we betray A. E. K.'s legacy in this way, we unashamedly solicit your continued prayers for guidance in bringing you another year of *Unsearchable Riches*.

J. D. Thompson

WE are often asked certain questions which we invariably answer by reference to articles in the back issues of *Unsearchable Riches*. We find that some recurring questions have already been dealt with so satisfactorily in the magazine that we can hardly improve on what was said. Now, it has occurred to us that perhaps many of our readers would profit from the publication of these discussions. The questions which come up most often are certainly on basic matters, and worthy of frequent review.

Hence we are beginning a new feature with this issue, or rather reviving and adapting an old feature, called "Questions and Answers." The questions come

from our readers. The answers are not whole articles, but are selections dealing specifically with the question, taken from various studies in the back numbers of the magazine or in our other publications. Generally they will be from articles by A. E. Knoch, and in some cases we will edit them slightly in order to make them more directly and briefly responsive to the question. (This is necessary, of course, since what was written was not originally in reply to a question.) In this issue we present two pairs of questions, one dealing with "the bride and body" and the other dealing with "forgiveness and pardon."

We hope this feature will be helpful and interesting to our readers, toward each one's edification. We will also welcome your further questions. D. H. H.

DISASTER IN INDIA

The tropical cyclones and tidal waves which struck in southeastern India on November 19, 20, were in the area served by the Concordant Scripture Mission, headed by Bro. Raju. As we prepare this report for publication we have not yet heard from Bro. Raju directly though we have attempted to communicate with him. According to the newspaper reports the storms were mainly centered in the Kristna River delta where thousands of people were killed and many whole villages destroyed. One city badly hit was Guntur where the Mission has two full-time workers. Bro. Raju lives about 90 miles northeast of Guntur in Rajahmundry along the Godavari River.

We have heard from Bro. Iype, who lives in western India, that even there they experienced extensive crop damage though without the loss of life and devastation of property experienced in Andhra Pradesh (State) where Bro. Raju's work is centered.

Our readers will want to join with us in prayer for our brethren there. We will be sending a large donation to their relief as soon as we are able to get in touch with Bro. Raju. Those wishing to join us in this assistance should make out checks to the Concordant Publishing Concern but with a notation that the contribution is for the Indian Mission Relief Fund.

KNOWLEDGE HELD IN HUMILITY

It is extremely trying for some of us to bear with those who we feel quite sure are teaching contrary to God's Word, and are demolishing that which has cost us much, and for which we have suffered so long, yet the trial comes from God, Who does not make a "way of escape" by separation, but gives us power to bear it by showing us the sequel. Some day we shall all be agreed. In the meanwhile we all need to be borne with and should bear with one another in love. Our chief fault is pride. The unity of the spirit can only be kept by the humble. Knowledge tends to puff us up, hence has been a fruitful cause of division. Not that we should have less of it, but it should be held in humility, and dissensions which arise from differences of opinion ought to be most humiliating to us, when we reflect upon the dishonor which they bring upon our blessed Lord, and how little they accord with the grace which He has shown to us.

A. E. K.

SUBSCRIPTION DATES

There will generally be several months' delay in recording changes on the address labels of the year that a subscription expires. If you have renewed your subscription since last November the chances are that this information will not be represented on your mailing label until the March issue. This will continue in a similar way, so that renewals received in January and February will probably not be indicated until the May issue, and so on. As announced before, all address labels should indicate how far each subscription extends, by the two numbers following your last name. Thus, for example, 78 means you have paid through 1978. The number 00 means you have a life-subscription.

THE FIRST SET OF APOSTLES

THE WORD OF GOD is a term which occurs about three dozen times in the New Testament. Its first occurrence is in Mark 7:13 (“... invalidating the word of God by your tradition”) where it stands for all that God declared in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. When explaining the parable of the sower, Jesus said, “The seed is the word of God” (Luke 8:11). And at the end of His earthly career the great Sower told His disciples: “The declarations which *I* am speaking to you, I am not speaking from Myself. Now the Father, remaining in Me, *He* is doing His works” (John 14:10).

Thus all the words and works of the Lord Jesus had their origin in God. When the apostles used the term “the word of God” after His ascension, it pointed to the fulfillment of Old Testament scriptures in Jesus Christ with special emphasis on His crucifixion, His resurrection and the necessity to repent.

In Acts 4:31 we read of God’s encouraging answer to the apostles’ fervent prayer for boldness so that they might continue proclaiming their message in spite of the threats by the Sanhedrin: “At their beseeching, shaken was the place in which they were gathered, and they are filled with holy spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.” What happened here is reminiscent of the events at Pentecost (Acts 2:2,4).

However there is a shaking of their meeting place instead of the violent blast which was followed by dividing tongues as if of fire. Again they are filled with the holy spirit, this time in order to speak the word of God in their mother tongue, even with boldness.

In Acts 6:2 the twelve apostles decided to devote their full time and attention to ministering the word and not to be distracted by charitable duties. "It is not pleasing for us to leave the word of God to be serving at tables." This certainly was a wise decision, and thus "the word of God grows, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem multiplied tremendously. Besides, a vast throng of the priests obeyed the faith" (6:7).

After Stephen's assassination, Saul was leading in the great persecution of the believing Jews in Jerusalem who "were all dispersed among the districts of Judea and Samaria . . . evangelizing with the word" (Acts 8:1,4). The ruling religious class had rejected the word of God on behalf of their people, the majority of which remained apostate. It is noteworthy, however, that the apostles did not have to leave the city. God was protecting them in a special way as long as their witnessing had not reached out to the limits of the land of Israel.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

There are just about a dozen occurrences of the term "the word of the Lord," beginning with Acts 8:25 where Peter and John are reported to have performed three different tasks:

(1) *Certifying* the word of the Lord by means of placing their hands on Samaritan believers who had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Thereupon "they obtained holy spirit" (Acts 8:17). Thus these believers acknowledged the jurisdiction of

the twelve apostles in Jerusalem to whom the Lord had said, "You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in entire Judea and Samaria . . ." (Acts 1:8). It was this last word of the Lord before His ascension (1:9), to which Peter and John certified.

(2) *Speaking* the word of the Lord by warning Simon the magician, "Repent then from this evil of yours and beseech the Lord if consequently the notion of your heart will be forgiven you" (Acts 8:22). Simon had offered money to Peter and John, saying, "Give me also this authority that on whomsoever I may be placing my hands, he may be obtaining holy spirit" (8:19). But the Lord had never entrusted Himself to anyone whose "faith" was founded solely on miracles (*cf* John 2:23-25). Hence the warning given by Peter and John had the same validity as a word of the Lord.

(3) They *evangelized* many *villages* of the Samaritans. Philip's activity prior to the arrival of Peter and John had been limited to the (capital) city of Samaria where he had heralded Christ to the throngs, who "with one accord heeded the things being said by Philip, on hearing them and observing the signs which he did . . . much joy came to be in that city" (8:5,6,8).

"Now the apostles in Jerusalem, hearing that [the capital city of] Samaria has received the word of God, dispatch to them Peter and John" (8:14). What still remained to be done was evangelizing the many villages of the Samaritans. Peter and John performed this task after having certified and spoken the word of the Lord in the city of Samaria.

It is interesting to note that the Samaritans had been baptized into the name of the *Lord* Jesus and not in the name of Jesus *Christ* (*cf* Acts 2:38 and 8:16). When speaking to a devout and God-fearing Gentile

(centurion Cornelius, 10:36), Peter declared with reference to Jesus Christ that "He is the *Lord* of all," thus implying that He is the Messiah of the Jews only, or as Paul put it in Romans 15:8, "that Christ has become the Servant of the Circumcision, for the sake of the truth of God, to confirm the patriarchal promises." Furthermore Peter's statement also implied that, since Israel's Messiah is Lord of all, believing Gentiles will also be blessed when the divine Kingdom is established, even though they can have no part in the royal priesthood of the holy nation (*cf* 1 Pet.2:9).

"While Peter is still speaking . . . the holy spirit falls on all those hearing the word." Hence Peter had them "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ," thus uniting them to the believing remnant in the nation of Israel, since these proselytes were also speaking in languages and magnifying God. Thereafter "the apostles and the brethren who are of Judea hear that the nations also receive the word of God" (Acts 10:44-11:1).

THE APOSTASY OF THE JEWISH NATION

Step by step, the apostles and those around them had been led by the Lord to carry the message outside Jerusalem, as far as the limits of the land of Israel. Peter had been prepared for bridging the wide gap between the ministry to his own nation and Paul's ministry to the Gentiles. Now the apostles had completed the commission given to them by their Lord before His ascension (Acts 1:8). From here on they do no longer enjoy divine protection as Luke illustrates in chapter 12.

During the three years when Judea was not governed by a Roman procurator (governor Pilate had been one of them), it was under the rule of Herod

Agrippa the elder. The latter had been appointed king (by emperor Gaius) over parts of the realm of his grandfather (Herod the Great). Judea was added to his kingdom when Claudius became emperor. Herod Agrippa had known both of them from his boyhood in Rome.

Luke reports that this "Herod the king put forth his hands to illtreat some from the ecclesia" (Acts 12:1), and he had James (the brother of John) executed with the sword. Thus this son of Zebedee had to drink from the same cup as Jesus and was baptized with His baptism as he had been promised (*cf* Mark 10:39). No succession of his apostleship was ever envisaged. Peter did not use his authority to initiate proceedings toward filling the vacancy and thus maintaining the due number of the twelve, as he had done before Pentecost when the lot fell on Matthias who "was enumerated with the eleven apostles" (Acts 1:26).

When Herod Agrippa perceived that the renewal of the persecution was pleasing to the apostate Jews, "he proceeded to apprehend Peter also" (12:3). Luke gives us a detailed report of the Lord's miraculous intervention Who delegated His messenger and extricated Peter out of the hand of Herod (12:11).

It is conceivable that Peter recognized the apostasy of the unbelieving Jews who preferred the yoke of Herod Agrippa to the Messiah which God had sent them (*cf* Acts 12:21-23). For the time being, the Lord would not restore the divine Kingdom to Israel (*cf* 1:6). No more witnessing of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus was necessary in the land of Israel, since the Jewish nation would not listen. Hence Peter, when he fled from Jerusalem, apparently acquiesced in the growing power of the Lord's brother and the elders, "James and the brethren" (*cf* 12:17b).

The last public statement made by Peter (as reported in Acts) is found in chapter 15 where he intervenes on behalf of Paul. At that time the administrative affairs of the ecclesia in Jerusalem were handled by James (of whom we hear again in Acts 21:18-25). After the events in 12:17, Peter seems to have devoted his full time to the believing remnant of the nation in accordance with the shepherd commission which he had received from his Lord, namely to *graze* His lambkins and His little sheep (to provide *spiritual food* for those weak in the faith as well as for the more mature) and to *shepherd* His flock (the lost sheep of the house of Israel, cf Matt.15:24; John 21:15-17).

When Luke says in Acts 12:24 that "the word of God grows and multiplies," he gives us to understand that the number of individual believers increased in the days to come. The Jewish nation as a whole, however, never did repent. A preview of the further events in Acts is found on page 198 of the *Concordant Commentary*:

"Jerusalem, in Judea, now gives place to Antioch, outside the land. The message now goes to the dispersion among the nations and to the proselytes and even to the nations themselves, and continues until it becomes manifest that the Jews outside the land refuse the Messiah, even as those in the land have done. The ministry is carried on by an entirely new set of apostles. The twelve have no part in it. Saul, or Paul, as he is now called, takes the place of Peter in this new apostolic group."

H. H. R.

(*To be continued*)

The tract entitled, "How Can a Man be Just with God?" is available once again. The price is one cent apiece.

SAVED IN GRACE

SALVATION as presented in Paul's epistles is firmly connected with grace. It is secure because it is *in* the realm of grace. We cannot lose a salvation which is given to us by God and is based on the finished work of Christ rather than upon our own behavior and efforts. Secondly we are saved *to* the display of grace. Hence there is purpose in our salvation, and that is that the grace of God might be made known among the celestials in the oncoming eons (Eph.2:6-10). Finally, every day of our lives we are strengthened *by* grace in the enjoyment of salvation and for the good works of salvation.

This is the first of three articles dealing with the evangel of our salvation, discussing its vital connection with the grace of God. We are saved in grace (Eph.2:5), saved to the display of grace (Eph.2:7,8) and daily saved by grace for good works (Eph.2:10). But before we consider the first of these points we need to clarify the meaning of the word "salvation," for it is a subject which is not as widely understood as it is mentioned.

WHAT IS SALVATION?

The Scriptures speak of different works of salvation. Noah constructed an ark for salvation from the flood (Heb.11:7). Paul and those with him on the ship going

to Rome were given salvation from storm, wreck and drowning (Acts 27:34). But we are concerned here with the good news of salvation from the effects* of our sins, from condemnation and indignation. This salvation is accomplished by the death and resurrection of Christ. The apostle Paul was commissioned to bring this evangel to us, and he develops it in detail especially in Romans and Ephesians. However, it is in 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, where he presents this message most succinctly: "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and . . . He was entombed, and . . . He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures."

In Ephesians 1:13 we learn that "on hearing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation" and on believing this message, we are sealed in Christ "with the holy spirit of promise." Not even those believers whose acts are unworthy of reward can lose this salvation (*cf* 1 Cor.3:15). Apart from this saving work of Christ we would have to face "indignation and fury, affliction and distress" (Rom.2:9) at the judgment. But because we have received and believed this message we are reckoned righteous and will be saved from indignation (Rom.5:9), and "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1).

We can trace this out in the book of Ephesians also. Prior to mentioning the evangel of our salvation, Paul wrote of "the deliverance through His [Christ's] blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us" (1:7).

*When we take up the subject of salvation by grace we will see that there is power in grace for salvation not only from the effects of our sins but from continuance in sins as well.

Similarly, in Ephesians 2:1-5, while leading up to the statement "in grace are you saved," the apostle tells us that we are dead to our offenses and sins. Unfortunately this passage has usually been incorrectly translated and thus misunderstood. To say that we are dead *in* our offenses and sins suggests that when we sin we are "spiritually dead"* which may or may not be true, but that is not Paul's point here. Nor does this passage teach that believers can be so constituted today that they will not sin or offend. The evangel of our salvation tells us that we are dead to condemnation and indignation. To be dead to something is to be removed from its effects. (Paul developed a similar thought in Romans 7:4 where we are told we have been put to death to the law.) Our offenses and sins can no longer be charged against us. Before this rescue "we were children of indignation" (Eph.2:3), but now since we are saved in grace we are dead to that sentence of condemnation and are vivified in Christ.

THE REALM OF SALVATION

The realm or environment of this salvation is grace (Eph.2:5). No place is left for works of man, nothing for us to do except to receive the favor of salvation from God. "If it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace" (Rom.11:6). There is no way to get around it. Salvation is graciously granted to us who believe, and it is wholly and entirely gained on our behalf by Christ (Rom.5:8; Eph.2:8,9).

Any requirement placed on us for our salvation will distort the evangel (*cf* Gal.1:7), diminish our need of Christ and dilute our appreciation of God's favor (*cf*

* an unscriptural term in itself.

Gal.5:4). Yet there are certain passages of Scripture which have often been seized upon as though opening up possibilities for human effort. Man reasons that it cannot be right that Christ paid the full price. There must be some requirements for us, and if not, perhaps we can find some "loopholes" for us to get in our contributions.

REPENTANCE AND BAPTISM

There is a baptism already provided for us when we believe the evangel (Rom.6:3-7), and repentance is a good work in response to the salvation we have received (*cf* 2 Cor.7:9,10), but what of Acts 2:38 where we read, "Repent and be baptized each of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the pardon of sins"? Here is a baptism which man must perform, and together with repentance it is required for the pardon of sins.

Yet we also read in Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:14 that we are having the forgiveness of offenses and the pardon of sins based on the blood of Christ*. Both statements, the one in Acts and the ones in Paul's epistles, are true, but they must be kept within their own contexts. One is from a message addressed to "Men! Israelites" (Acts 2:22), and the other is associated with the evangel of our salvation, addressed to "the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus" (Eph.1:1,13).

In the evangel of our salvation we find ourselves immersed in grace. Our sins and offenses are dealt

*We are not dealing here specifically with the distinctive use of the word "forgive" in Paul's epistles, though it is an important topic. We have justification which is more than pardon, but as a figure of speech the words pardon and forgive bring out the heart-attitude of God toward the believer (see the comments by A. E. Knoch on pages 37-39).

with entirely by Christ. Our acts, even the good and worthy work of repentance, are not *for* pardon but *because of* God's gracious dealings to us who are justified gratuitously (Rom.3:24). Let us not distort this glad message by applying a different message to ourselves which was clearly intended for Israel, and for another era of time. That was for then, "Yet now," the apostle Paul tells us in Romans 3:21,22, "apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing"

CONFESSION

But what of confession? Does not Paul himself say, "With the mouth it is avowed for salvation" (Rom.10:9)? Yet surely he is not telling us of salvation from indignation and condemnation all in the realm of grace in Romans 3-8 and then turning around in chapter 10 and telling us that this salvation cannot be complete unless we confess our sins! In one case he emphasizes "no works" even to the extent of having absolutely nothing to boast in (Rom.4:2), and now are we to suppose he sets up a prerequisite for us to fulfill?

No doubt "confession is good for the soul," but actually confession of sins is not even in view in Romans 10:9. The Greek word means "avow" as can be seen in its use in such passages as Acts 7:17 and 24:14. Consequently Paul is referring to an *acknowledgment* of the Lordship of Christ in Romans 10, not to a confession of sins.

Nevertheless, whether an avowal or confession, it is surely human effort "for salvation." The answer lies in discovering what kind of salvation is in view here, and for whom. Paul was longing for Israel's salvation (Rom.10:1) from being made vessels of indignation

(9:22) and stumbling on the Stumbling Stone which was Christ (9:32,33). A. E. Knoch noted that "There is here an allusion to the ancient custom, still in vogue in eastern lands, of the right of sanctuary. One who is in danger of death by the hands of the blood avenger, if he cannot reach a safe place in time, may invoke the name of some great and powerful person, and thus find salvation through his name. If the avengers of blood refuse to listen to his appeal, and take his life, it devolves upon the person on whose name he has called to take swift and summary vengeance. He gathers together all his friends and allies to assist him in punishing the outrage and in defending the honor of his name. For three and one third days he executes vengeance on all who were concerned in killing the one who had invoked his name. 'Whoever should be invoking the name of the Lord shall be saved.' When vengeance visits the earth, the only shelter will be the name of Jehovah. Therefore it will require not only heart belief, but the avowal of the mouth. Thus it is that Israel will be saved and all others who, in that day, will seek refuge in His name" (*Concordant Commentary*, p. 240).

As human beings we react to others in accord with what they are, or at least as they appear to be to us. We see some as enemies whom we despise or fear; we see them as unfeeling, cunning and downright corrupt. Others appear to be noble, sacrificing, brave and unselfish. But the fact that God chose Saul of Tarsus to bring this evangel of salvation in grace shows that God is not reacting to anything in man (*cf* 1 Tim.1:12-14). In fact, He is not *reacting* at all, but is rather *acting* solely on the principle of gratuity. He gives His favors as He desires and takes delight in freely granting His grace.

Certainly, the truth is that we are all in the same boat. We are all irreverent, selfish and in some way at enmity with God. The fact that some are worse than others does not change the fact that we are all bad and in need of salvation. Full salvation, all the benefits gained by the death of Christ on the cross, can never be received by man on the basis of his deserts.

Therefore, since salvation is gratuitously given, God chooses on the basis of His own will. He selects some who are the very worst of sinners, and often we see that this so affects them that they become, like Paul, the very best of believers. He selects others who are less irreverent, who are seeking Him out from their youth and are inclined toward unselfish devoutness. Yet they have no more cause for boasting than anyone else, for this salvation operates entirely in the realm of grace.

LIMITLESS SALVATION

There is another point that we should consider. If salvation is fully gained by Christ on our behalf and is also granted to us gratuitously, what are we to say about those who do not believe? Can grace leave out some? Christ has gained full salvation for all (1 Tim.2:6), and those who are now receiving it do not deserve it in the slightest. The unbelievers are not that much different, in themselves, from believers. There are honorable and noble people among them as well as the very wicked.

Some have reasoned that grace cannot be grace if everyone is to be saved. They say correctly that grace is a favor, and so they conclude incorrectly that it must be an exclusive favor. But grace is not a favor in the sense of privilege at another's expense. We are favored not in relation to someone else but in relation to

ourselves. Gratuitous grace is a favor given to someone who does not deserve it himself. It is still grace (and it is grace magnified) when favor is given to all, so long as all are undeserving.

In fact, if we are to accept the meaning of grace which Paul presents in the evangel of our salvation, we must believe in the eventual salvation of all. The favor is not a fully happy one if we are to be saved while our God and Father's will to save all mankind (1 Tim.2:4) is frustrated. Nor can the favor be truly satisfying while others, many of whom lived better lives than ourselves, are tormented or destroyed in the lake of fire "throughout eternity." There is nothing in grace which demands such a state of affairs. There is everything in grace which refuses such a fate.

Grace is limitless. Therefore, the salvation which is in grace will eventually be realized to its fullest extent. Not only will we come into the complete realization and enjoyment of salvation, but this will be true of all. What is gained by the blood of Christ's cross cannot be eternally lost. Someday all will know the Saviour and bow in the Name of Jesus (Jehovah-Saviour) and acclaim His Lordship to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:9-11). This is the consummation of the work of salvation in the realm of grace.

D. H. H.

1977 BOUND VOLUME

The bound volume LXVIII for *Unsearchable Riches* should be ready by the time this issue is out. The price is \$2.00, as usual.

Bound volumes XIV through LXVIII, except for XLVIII (temporarily unavailable), 54 volumes in all, can be purchased for the special price of \$95.00 per set.

There is considerable demand for copies of the early volumes or even scattered numbers of the magazine, issued prior to 1925. We urge anyone having copies of these which are not being used to get in touch with us concerning them.

“YOU ARE A TEMPLE OF GOD”

IN this series of articles on God's Dwelling Place, we have covered (albeit not exhaustively) the various temples so far erected, as well as the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and we have endeavored to show the connection between this and the divine service of the celestials. But before we move completely into the celestial realms, let us take note of another kind of temple—a temple in flesh.

When we say “a temple in flesh,” we do not mean a fleshly dwelling place of God, but rather a spiritual dwelling place embodied in flesh. We have this first mentioned by Jesus Himself. When the Jews demanded to know by what right He drove the traffickers and the money changers out of the literal temple, and said to Him, “What sign are you showing us, seeing that you are doing these things?” He answered and said to them, “Raze this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:18,19).

The Jews completely misunderstood His meaning. Their unenlightened minds were centered and concentrated in the things of the world around them, and of material benefit in this life, and could not ascend to take in spiritual matters. They thought only of the temple of stone, in the precinct of which they stood, and said, “In forty and six years was this temple

“Raze this Temple, and in three

built, and you will be raising it up in three days!” (John 2:20,21).

Our Lord had in mind His coming demise, and when later He was roused three days after His crucifixion, His disciples were reminded of what He had said, and it was a real stimulus to their faith (v.22).

OUR LORD'S WORDS DISTORTED

On the Jews, the statement of Jesus had an entirely opposite effect. Later in His ministry, false witnesses came forward to testify against Him by saying, “He averred, ‘I am able to demolish the temple of God and, during three days, to rebuild it’ ” (Matt.26:61). They were false witnesses because they twisted what Jesus actually had said. Jesus had never suggested that *He* would demolish the temple of God, but that, if *they* did it, He would raise it again in three days (John 2:19).

Again, they brought the same blasphemy against Him as He hung on the cross, and in a more subtle form, for they incorporated it in a challenge to Him to save Himself by descending from the cross. In this is clearly perceived the work of the Adversary, for this was his final chance (humanly speaking) to thwart the purpose of God. Of course, we know that he could not succeed; nevertheless, the test was a real one, intended to take advantage of the Lord's agony of spirit, and to offer a tempting and easy way out of His sufferings. “You who are demolishing the temple and building it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, descend from the cross” (Matt.27:40; Mark 15:29).

If Jesus had tried to save Himself in the way suggested, He would soon have found that He could not preserve the temple of His body, for His flesh

would have triumphed over His Spirit, and He would indeed have missed the mark Himself by failing to carry out the will of God. And certainly He would have been unable to save others, for God's purpose required Him to settle, through His death, the question of sin once and for all time. Without this settlement, God's Spirit could never find a permanent dwelling place within the hearts of His creatures.

However, such suppositions are purely hypothetical, since God's purpose was secure from the beginning because of the total and willing obedience of His Son—an obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. When Jesus said, as the hour of His agony approached, “Father, glorify Thy name!” a voice out of heaven could reply, with full confidence, “I glorify it also, and *shall be glorifying it again!*” (John 12:28).

The Jews, who taunted Jesus, would have been horrified at the thought of destroying the temple of God, though they had been quite prepared to defile it when it suited their gain. But they were quite oblivious of the true temple when the Lord appeared in their midst, and were more than willing to crucify Him, and thus destroy the temple of His body. (The *Concordant Commentary* on John 2:18 is very informative here).

Jesus was the One in Whom His Father invariably expressed delight. He was One in Whom God's Spirit continuously dwelt, for He and His Father were one. In that most intimate of conversations which Jesus had with His Father prior to the giving up of Himself in Gethsemane, He showed this oneness by declaring that “Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee” (John 17:21). Even while He was in the likeness of sin's flesh (though not knowing sin), the Spirit of God found its true home in Him.

THE SAINTS ARE TEMPLES OF GOD

God's Spirit can also find its home in us, for we, too, are declared to be temples of God, even while we are still in flesh. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, declares, "Are you not aware that you are a temple of God and the spirit of God is making its home in you? If anyone is corrupting the temple of God, God will be corrupting him, for the temple of God is holy, which you are" (1 Cor.3:16,17).

This remarkable statement takes on added significance when we realize that it occurs in that same chapter which begins by telling the Corinthians that they were still fleshly, and were walking, not according to God, but according to man (v.4), and that, because of this, Paul could not speak to them as to spiritual, but as to fleshly, as to minors in Christ. It comes after a passage in which Paul reminds them that, though they had all been given a solid foundation on which to build, some will have been building with flimsy materials—the wood, grass and straw of human philosophies and interpretations, all incorporating human endeavor, rather than the gold, silver and precious stones of the divine truths embodied in the Pauline evangel which declares all to be of God—and, in consequence, will be in danger of suffering loss in that day when each one's work will be tested by fire. But even in this picture, it is made clear that all concerned will be saved (v.15).

It is easy to see how Jesus, even while in flesh, could be a habitation of God's Spirit; it is not quite so easy to see how our bodies, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, can be; yet, quite clearly, they are, for Paul says again (in 1 Cor.6:19), "Are you not aware that your body is a temple of the holy spirit in you, which you have from

God, and you are not your own?" And yet again (in 2 Cor.6:16-18), "Now what concurrence has a temple of God with idols? 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. Wherefore, Come out of their midst and be severed, the Lord is saying. 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, says the Lord Almighty."

The fact is that these bodies are merely "earthen vessels," covering a treasure within (2 Cor.4:7). They are "terrestrial tabernacles" in which we are groaning, longing to be dressed in a more worthy habitation which is out of heaven (2 Cor.5:1,2). They are "bodies of humiliation," waiting to be transfigured, to conform them to the body of Christ's glory (Phil.3:21). They are "mortal bodies" (Rom.6:12), waiting to be changed in that day when "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality" (1 Cor.15:53).

There is a most apt comment in the *Concordant Commentary* on verse 19 of 1 Corinthians 6, which perhaps we may be permitted to quote in full. It reads, "Wherever God dwells is the temple of God, and is hallowed by His presence. It was not the stately buildings or the sacred ritual or even the sacrifices which hallowed the sanctuary, but the presence of the glory of God in the holiest of all. The very ground of the desert was holy where Moses met Jehovah (Ex. 3:5). So our body, whatever its physical appearance or condition, has become a temple by virtue of the divine Spirit which indwells us. It is no longer ours, but His, and like the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple in Jerusalem, should allow nothing that defiles to

enter its precincts. God does not dwell in temples made with hands, but in the bodies of His saints. Holy conduct and loving acts are the ritual."

To which comment we may perhaps add that it was not Moses, but God, Who chose the spot where they were to meet and the time of the appointment; it was God, and not man, Who designed both the tabernacle and the temple; and it was God, and not we, Who chose us to be His temples. But we noticed, in the comment, the phrase, "the presence of the glory of God *in the holiest of all.*" This brings us immediately to another point.

TWO DIFFERENT WORDS

Two different words are used in the Greek to describe the temple. First there is the word *hieron* which is translated "temple" 71 times in the King James Version, but is invariably rendered *sanctuary* in the Concordant Version. This word is used to portray the temple building itself, together with all the surrounding area into which the people, as well as the priests, might enter. Its first occurrence is in Matthew 4:5, where we read that the Adversary took Jesus "into the holy city and stood Him on the wing of the sanctuary." Other clear examples of its usage occur in Acts 3, where the word appears no less than six times between verses 1 and 10 in describing the incident of the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate.

Second there is the word *naos* also translated *temple* in the King James Version 45 times, and once translated *shrine* (Acts 19:24), but consistently rendered *temple* in the CV. This refers to the sacred edifice near the center of the sanctuary, the holy places, and, in particular, the most holy of all, where the presence of God was to be found.

It is instructive to note that the former word, *hieron* (sanctuary), does not occur after the book of Acts, except once in 1 Corinthians 9:13, "Are you not aware that the workers at the sacred things are eating of the things of the sanctuary? Those settling beside the altar have their portion with the altar." Apart from this one instance, all references to the temple by Paul, and all by John in the book of the Revelation are to the inner sanctuary, and this adds greatly to their significance.

The distinction between the two words is also shown in passages we quoted earlier. In John 2:14, Jesus found those selling oxen and sheep and doves in the *sanctuary* (*hieron*), and cast them out of the same, but in verse 19 He said, "Raze this *temple* (*naos*) and in three days I will raise it up."

So the temples of our bodies are the figurative equivalent of the inner sanctuaries of the tabernacle and of the temple—the places made holy by the presence of God. We cannot emphasize too often that it is God Who sanctifies us, even as it is He Who chooses us and Who calls us to His service. He sanctifies us by His Spirit.

THE HOMING OF GOD'S SPIRIT

This sanctification of our bodies by the Spirit of God was dealt with many years ago in an article in "*Unsearchable Riches*" by Brother A. E. Knoch ("*Spiritual Blessings*," Vol. XVIII, p.263). With permission, we cannot do better than requote the paragraphs under the heading, "The Homing of the holy Spirit" (XVIII, p.272).

"Up to the end of Acts the spirit is found *on* the saints; from Romans through Paul's epistles, God's holy Spirit makes its home *in* the members of the body of Christ The figure of the temple is transferred

to our bodies by the apostle, 'Are you not aware that you are a temple of God and the Spirit of God is making its home in you?' As the presence of Ieue sanctified the temple, so we are holy because we are His home. This is the true basis and power of holiness. It is not in ourselves, but in Him Who homes in us.

"The homing of God's holy Spirit is set forth most fully in Romans 8:9,11. There we read, 'Yet *you* are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that God's spirit is making its home in you Now if the spirit of Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead is making its home in you, He Who rouses Christ Jesus from among the dead will also be vivifying your mortal bodies because of His spirit making its home in you.' This is the marvelous continual miracle of God's holy Spirit in this administration; it gives life to the dead. We should be in constant enjoyment of this resurrection power, which makes the body of sin, though dead, the instrument of righteousness.

"The spirit, homing within us, not only hallows our mortal frame and gives it life, but also guards that which He has committed to us. Paul charged Timothy, 'The ideal thing committed to you guard through the holy spirit which is making its home in us' (2 Tim.1:14). These three passages fully set forth the present place of the holy Spirit of God in contrast with its place in the past. Then its presence was occasional and extraordinary; now it is the normal experience of all saints. Then God dwelt in temples, now He homes in those whom He has hallowed."

OUR LOGICAL DIVINE SERVICE

These facts should not leave us unmoved. On the contrary, they should surely fill us with a deep sense of humility, coupled with a desire to be pleasing to the

God Who hallows us. This is beautifully expressed by Paul in Romans (12:1,2). "I am entreating you, then, brethren, by the pities of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service, and not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for you to be testing what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and mature."

These bodies of ours, made holy by God's indwelling Spirit, should be kept free from prostitution (which was Paul's complaint against some of the Corinthians) and from the worship of idols. Both physically and spiritually they should be kept apart for the service of God. We are bought with a price. By all means we should be glorifying God in our bodies (1 Cor.6:18-20).

Paul's entreaties as to our conduct are continued in 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, where we read, "Do not become diversely yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness? Or what communion has light with darkness? Now what agreement has Christ with Belial? Or what part a believer with an unbeliever? Now what concurrence has a temple of God with idols? 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. Wherefore, Come out of their midst and be severed, the Lord is saying. 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, says the Lord Almighty. Having, then, these promises, beloved, we should be cleansing ourselves from every pollution of flesh and spirit, completing holiness in the fear of God."

SONSHIP

The homing of God's Spirit within us brings us into a wonderful relationship with our heavenly Father. We find this stated quite plainly in Romans 8. We pick up again at verse 11, and read through to verse 14. "Now if the spirit of Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead is making its home in you, He Who rouses Christ Jesus from among the dead will also be vivifying your mortal bodies because of His spirit making its home in you. Consequently, then, brethren, debtors are we, not to the flesh, to be living in accord with flesh, for if you are living in accord with flesh, you are about to be dying. Yet if, in spirit, you are putting the practices of the body to death, you will be living. For whoever are being led by God's spirit, these are *sons of God*."

This is in line with what the apostle says in Galatians 4:6, "Now, seeing that you are sons, God delegates the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba, Father!' So that you are no longer a slave, but a son." The passage in Romans continues, "For you did not get slavery's spirit to fear again, but you got the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!' " (Rom. 8:15).

So we have not only the Spirit of God dwelling within us, but the Spirit of Christ as well. This is an added bonus. What kind of a spirit is this? It is a spirit of obedient sonship, described even more fully in Philippians 2:5-8. "For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He

humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

ABBA, FATHER

"Abba, Father" was the expression used by Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, just prior to His crucifixion, when He said, "Abba, Father, all is possible to Thee. Have this cup carried aside from Me. But not what I will, but what Thou" (Mark 14:36).

This was a true expression of obedient sonship. It acknowledged first the supremacy of God. It witnessed His ability to do all, even to carry aside the cup which God had prepared for Jesus to drink. It admitted the distastefulness of the trial before, but above all, it acknowledged, and acquiesced in, the paramount necessity for the will of God to prevail.

This should be our attitude in prayer. We may desire certain things in life to be removed from us, but our prayer must always be, not what we will, but what Thou. If we pray thus, we shall always be in line with Christ's Spirit, and will have the support of God's Spirit; even when we are not quite sure what to pray for, the Spirit of God will plead for us with inarticulate groanings (Rom. 8:26). When our hearts are too full for words, the Spirit within them can still reach God, for "He Who is searching the hearts is aware what is the disposition of the spirit, for in accord with God is it pleading for the saints" (v.27).

It must be, seeing that it is God's own Spirit dwelling within.

THE WALK OF THE SAINTS

We close this particular section of our study with a few more words from the notes of Brother Alan Reid.

"The consciousness that we are—*each*

individually—the *temple*, the *dwelling place*, the *home of holy spirit*, should provide to each one of us the most powerful and enduring incentive to a *walk* that is:

worthy of the *calling* with which we were called (Eph.4:1),
 the *evangel* of Christ through which we were called (Phil.1:27),
 the *Lord* into Whom we have been called (Col.1:10), and of
 our *God*, Who, in His grace, called us into His own Kingdom and glory (1 Thess.2:12).

“*Walk in spirit* (Gal.5:16) in recognition of the truth that we are *temples of God's Spirit*.”

Dwell in my heart, O God,
 Let it Thy temple be,
 That songs of praise may ever rise
 Out of its depths to Thee.

Live in my life, O God;
 Thy Spirit grow in me,
 That every day and every hour
 May be in tune with Thee.

John H. Essex

LETTER FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Brother Isidro Oguimas from Initao Misamis Oriental, Philippines, has received a letter from brethren in Malaybalay Bukidnon thanking him for his recent visit and ministry in their area. They continue, “Brother, we invite you to conduct a fellowship gathering here. We want more messages on the topic of universal reconciliation and also how to correctly divide the subjects of law and grace in the Scriptures.”

ARE WE THE BRIDE OF THE LAMB?

There is nothing in the two figures of bride and body which makes it impossible that both should not be used of us. Paul could compare the Corinthians, who certainly were one body, to the betrothal of a pure virgin, in order to picture their *singleness* toward Him, not their *union* with Him. But, as a matter of fact, Paul *never mentions* either a *bride* or a *lamb*, nor is this ever connected with the nations in the Word of God.

In 2 Corinthians 11:2 Paul himself interprets the figure. As a virgin is single and pure toward her betrothed, so they should be to the Lord. At one time, although I had taken a course in rhetoric and was supposed to understand figures of speech, I used this text for awhile to prove that the church was the bride of Christ, yet in reality, if it could be used in this way, it proves the opposite, for the figure is that of a *virgin*. When I discovered that redeemed Israel is the bride, I used this passage *against* the idea that the church is the bride. But I soon saw that this would not do, for, if so, was it not also against the truth of the body? How can the church be both the betrothed and the body of Christ? This gradually opened my eyes to the limitations of figures of speech. I saw that I had abused them and dragged them far beyond their boundaries under the pretense of being "spiritual" in my interpretation.

The difficulty lies in our failure to keep each figure within proper bounds. We fail to recognize that the ecclesia is UNlike a chaste virgin in all points not particularly mentioned. The church is *not* sexed. It is not composed only of females. There is *no* likeness in this regard. The Corinthians are not to be married to Christ later. So we might go on indefinitely, but enough has been said, we hope, to show that in *only two* aspects is there a likeness to be drawn—those of *singleness* and *purity*. We can be single and pure toward Christ like a betrothed virgin without altering our sex or in any other way resembling a virgin.

But, it is objected, Paul uses this figure in Ephesians in speaking of the relations of a man to his wife, as follows (Eph.5:25-33): "Husbands, be loving your wives according as Christ also loves the ecclesia, and gives Himself up for its sake, that He should be hallowing it, cleansing it in the bath of the water (with His declaration), that *He* should be presenting to Himself a glorious ecclesia, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that it may be holy and flawless. Thus, the husbands also ought to be loving their own wives as their own bodies. Who is loving his own wife is loving himself. For no one at any time hates his own flesh, but is nurturing and cherishing it, according as Christ also the ecclesia, for we are members of His body. For this 'a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh.' "

If the present ecclesia were the bride of the lamb, this would be the place to bring it in. Then all that would be needed would be to say that men should love their wives as Christ loves the church, His bride. Why, then, say that husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies? Why say, he who is loving his

wife is loving *himself*? Why say, seeing that we are *members of His body*? Why bring in the mystery of marriage in order to show that a man and wife are *one flesh*?

All of these questions can be answered only on the ground that the ecclesia is *not* figured by a bride or wife at all, but that marriage, making two *one* flesh, has a certain resemblance to the figure of the one body of Christ, hence the *one body*, not the bride or wife, is the basis of this exhortation. This is a much closer union than marriage. No one hates his own flesh. Can we say that no one ever hated his wife? The intensity of Christ's love for us is far beyond that figured by the marriage tie. Once we realize the inevitable constancy and unlimited devotion figured by our feeling for our own bodies, we will lose all desire for a tie of lesser preciousness, which is suited to the earth, but has no place in the heavens.

WHO IS THE BRIDE?

The faithful in Israel are often found under covenant relationship with Jehovah. In the realm of feeling and affection this is figured by the marriage bond. Israel was the wife of Jehovah. Those who receive the Messiah are the bride of the Lambkin. As God's supreme aim is to unite His creatures to Himself by links of love, this may be considered as the highest aspect of Israel's relationship to their God. He uses the transient experience of earth's highest bliss to figure the permanent felicity of His people.

Not only was Israel brought into the bondage of the law at Sinai, but she also was bound to Jehovah as His wife. He became her Husband (Jer.31:32). Then it was that He put upon her His comeliness (Ezek.16:8-14).

Not only did they break the law in minor matters, but they failed in the very first commandment. Instead of loving Him with all their hearts and souls, they forsook Him and sought solace with His enemies (Hos.2:6-13). This is what led to the divorce (Deut.24:1-4) which caused them to go into captivity. According to the law, they forfeited all right to be His again. But the law of love is higher than the law of Sinai. That was given partly because of the hardness of their hearts. Jehovah's heart is not hardened by the failure of His people. Even though divorced, He invites her to return to Him (Jer.3:1).

He not only gave His word to wait for her, but promises to do far more than that. In her inconstancy she is liable to be drawn after anyone who will comfort her sorrowing soul. So He engages to keep her for Himself until she becomes His again in the latter days. Jehovah will not marry another, nor will He allow Israel to do so. They are betrothed from of old. "Thou shalt not be for another man, so will I also be for thee" (Hos.3). This troth, plighted by Jehovah, not only for Himself, but also for her, must find fulfillment. He will not break His word. He cannot take a wife to Himself from the nations. To make them the bride would be a breach of promise more dreadful far than the defection of His people. His character would suffer beyond repair. His word would be worthless. The nations do not usurp the place of faithful Israel. We have no part in the new Jerusalem.

When our Lord came, the nation as a whole was faithless. They were not only a wicked but an *adulterous* generation, for they had forsaken Jehovah. Only those who received Him were restored to their former relationship. They became, not merely the *wife* of Jehovah, but the *bride* of the Lambkin. It is not a

renewal of the old legal bonds, a sad reunion in old age of those who have been long estranged, but a new and fresh relationship, with youth regained. John the Baptist introduced the bride to her Bridegroom when he told his disciples, "He Who has the bride is the Bridegroom." The twelve apostles were the nucleus of that goodly company of faithful Israelites, who, with all her saints of former times, will be united with the Lambkin in the coming eons, under the figure of the marriage covenant (Rev.21:2,9).

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS OF OFFENSES?

The forgiveness of offenses (Eph.1:7) seems to be so far below the sphere of truth in the Ephesian epistle that those who are most enlightened are tempted to look askance at the phrase and wonder if it is well founded in the ancient text. They have learned that pardon, or forgiveness (it is the same word) is probational. It belongs to the proclamation of the Kingdom. Many who gained pardon, like the ten thousand talent debtor (Matt.18:23-30), lost it through misconduct.

Paul, meanwhile, has heralded a far higher, a far greater grace than the *pardon* of sins through repentance and baptism. He has set forth justification by faith, through the unforced favor of God, which leads us into a sphere where condemnation no longer exists (Rom.8:1). It is absolutely without admixture of words, either before or after it is received. It cannot be forfeited by aught that we can do. Having this, shall we go back to pardon, even if it is in Ephesians?

Ephesians does not deal with the pardon of *sins*, but the forgiveness of *offenses*. It is not in the sphere of government or of the courtroom, but of the home. It

has reference, not to God's rule, or His righteousness, but His *feelings*. We are not forsaking justification for a lower benefit. We are going on to a higher, even if one of the terms is borrowed from the lower. We have not only sinned and are justified, but we have offended God, and are forgiven.

This forgiveness, however, is not measured by the mercy shown to the Circumcision. That, as we have seen, was comparatively stunted and probational. It sprang from pity rather than love. It was temporary because its term depended on its possessor instead of on God. This forgiveness is *according to the riches of His grace*. It were wise never to leave off this phrase.

WHAT IS PARDON OF SINS?

According to Colossians 1:13 we are rescued out of the jurisdiction of Darkness and transported into the kingdom of the Son of God's love, "in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of sins." In anticipation of the coming Kingdom of God upon the earth, when the race shall be freed from the thralldom of its spiritual despotism, the believers, and they alone, are rescued from the realm of darkness and transported to a different allegiance, that of God's Son. To complete the picture, our sins are pardoned, and we have deliverance, as will be the case in the new earth. Let us not confuse this with other figures, such as justification, or acquittal. That belongs in the courtroom, and has to do with our relationship to the judgment, which will take place before the new creation. Now it is a question of entrance into a kingdom, and, as it is a figurative kingdom, we can enter it only by means of a figurative pardon.

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

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

A. E. K.

CATALOGUE AND ORDER BLANK

Our new 1978 catalogue as well as our order blank should be ready by the time you receive this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*. Most of our publications have risen in price because of added costs in publishing and mailing.

A DAVIDIC PSALM

- 64 Hear, Alueim, my voice in my meditation.
From being afraid of the enemy
Thou art preserving my ⁼life.**
- 2 Thou art concealing me
from the deliberation of evildoers,
From the foregathering of the contrivers
of lawlessness,**
- 3 Who whet their tongue as a sword;
They tread their arrow—a bitter word—**
- 4 To shoot the flawless [']from concealment.
Suddenly shall they shoot at him and not fear.**
- 5 They are holding fast an evil word for themselves,
They are rehearsing to bury traps,
They say, “^aWho will see [>] ^{Mus}?””**
- 6 They are searching iniquity.
⁷They^c come to an end of a thorough search,
And the man within and the heart is deep.**
- 7 ⁺Yet Alueim will shoot an arrow at them.
Suddenly smittings ^bcome on them.**
- 8 And they are stumbled by it,
^{on}Against them is [>] their own tongue.
Everyone seeing ['] them is flitting;**
- 9 And every human is fearing,
And they are telling Alueim’s contrivance
And ^cmaking intelligent His handiwork.**
- 10 The righteous one is rejoicing in Ieue,
And takes refuge in Him.
And all the upright of heart will boast.**

[>] *Permanent*

THIS psalm may have been composed by David at the time of the plots against him recorded in 2 Samuel 16:20-17:4. It is a psalm of prayer for deliverance from malicious enemies and conspirators. In verses 3 and 4 the psalmist presents their tongues as swords and arrows—implements of war. (The actual wording here is *their tongue*; in such cases, Hebrew often uses the singular when the topic is common to a number of persons involved in a particular action.) In verse 3 the treading or bending of the *bow* is figuratively associated with the arrow. The entire figure is subsequently interpreted as *a bitter word*. (Compare Psalms 7:12, 11:2 and 37:14; especially note 58:7 where the same usage of TREAD OCCURS.) In verses 5 and 6 the enemies are said to search into the depths of iniquity, encouraging each other in their dark designs—searching deep into their own hearts. Jeremiah wrote that “the heart is crooked more than anything” (Jer.17:9). Yet Ieue investigates the heart and knows it thoroughly (Jer.17:10). The psalmist confidently relates how their own weapons will be turned against them by Alueim. He will shoot an arrow at them (v.7), setting their own tongues against them (v.8).

J. D. Thompson

Meditation is often associated with bitterness, distress and drooping of the spirit, for it can be a brooding within of the circumstances of life, a turning over in the mind and heart of that which weighs us down (see 1 Sam.1:16; Job 7:11; Psa.55:2,17; 77:3 and 142:2). It is also, of course, a pondering within us and a subjection of the mind to other matters more congenial (Psa.104:34) on the practices and contrivances of Ieue and His marvels (77:12; 105:2; 119:27) on His sayings (119:148) and His words (145:5). But all our meditations are known by Alueim.

Donald G. Hayter

A DAVIDIC PSALM A SONG

- 65 To Thee ⁷behooves[?] praise, Alueim, in Zion,
And to Thee shall be paid the vow ⁷in Jerusalem^o.
- ² Hearer of ⁷my^o prayer!
Unto Thee all flesh shall come.
- ³ Matters of depravity master ⁷us^o.
Our transgressions, Thou' wilt make
a propitiatory shelter for them.
- ⁴ Happy is he whom Thou art choosing
And art making near;
He shall tabernacle in Thy courts.
We shall be satisfied ⁴with
the goodness of Thy house,
The holiness of Thy Temple.
- ⁵ Fearful in righteousness, Thou wilt answer us,
Alueim of our salvation,
⁷The^o Trust of all the ends of the earth
And of the sea afar,
- ⁶ Establishing the mountains ⁴by His vigor,
belled ⁴with mastery,
- ⁷ Causing the tumult of the seas ⁷to cease[?],
The tumult of their billows,
And clamor of the folkstems.
- ⁸ And the dwellers of the ends shall fear
⁷because of Thy signs.
The farings forth of the morning and evening
wilt Thou cause to jubilate.
- ⁹ Thou dost note the earth and wilt irrigate it;
Much wilt Thou enrich it.
The rillet of Alueim fills with water.
Prepare wilt Thou their grain,
for thus Thou wilt prepare it.

- 10 Its furrows Thou dost soak to settle its slashes;
 'With showers wilt Thou dissolve it;
 Its sprouting wilt Thou bless.**
- 11 Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness,
 And Thy rounds will drip sleekness.**
- 12 Drip will the oases of the wilderness,
 And with exultation the hills shall be girded,**
- 13 Clothed with butting rams of the flock.
 And the vales will droop with cereals.
 They shall shout! Indeed, they shall sing!**
- > *Permanent*
-

THIS psalm is a song of praise for Alueim's blessings to man, and for his providential care for the earth. Verses 2 through 4 describe His spiritual blessings: the Hearer of prayer, He makes propitiatory shelter for transgressions, satisfying His people. All flesh shall come to fear Him (*cf* verses 2 and 8).

Matters (or words) of depravity stresses the particular instances of depravity. The psalmist, on such occasions, could almost cry with Cain, "Too great is my depravity to bear" (Gen.4:13). Yet He will make a propitiatory shelter for him, as well as those of His nation (*cf* 37:24). It is He Who draws one near to Him (*cf* 32:1-2).

The reference to mountains and seas (verses 6 and 7) may be intended more as a statement of Alueim's control of peoples than of nature. Isaiah speaks of seas and waters in this way in Isaiah 17:12-14. *The farings forth of the morning and evening* (v.8) is parallel with *dwellers of the ends* [of the earth]. These "exit places" of the sun are the uttermost east and west, truly the ends of the earth. He will cause even the peoples of these regions to fear Him (*cf* 64:9) and rejoice because of Him.

A SONG A ^MDAVIDIC^s PSALM

66 Shout to Alueim, all the earth!

² Make melody for the glory of His name!

^DPromulgate the glory of His praise!

³ Say to Alueim, "What fearful doings are Thine!

In the vastness of Thy strength,

Thine enemies shall dissimulate to Thee.

⁴ All the earth shall worship Thee

and shall make melody to Thee.

They shall make melody to Thy name."

Interlude

⁵ Go and see the contrivances of Alueim;

Fearful is the practice on the sons of humanity.

⁶ He turns the sea to dry land.

In the stream they shall pass 'on foot.

There let us rejoice in Him.

⁷ Ruling 'by His mastery for the eon,

His eyes shall watch 'among the nations.

The stubborn must not exalt > themselves.

Interlude

⁸ Bless our Alueim, ye peoples,

And announce the sound of His praise!

⁹ Who places our souls 'among the -living

and does not allow our feet to slip.

¹⁰ For Thou dost test us, Alueim.

Thou dost refine us as the refining of silver.

¹¹ Thou dost bring us into a fastness;

Thou dost place pressure 'on our waists.

¹² Thou dost cause a mortal to ride over our head.

We come 'through fire and 'through water,

And Thou dost cbring us forth to satiation.

- 13 I will come to Thy house ^lwith ascent approaches.
 I will pay to Thee my vows,
 14 which my lips opened wide,
 And my mouth spoke in my distress.
 15 Ascent approaches of marrows
 will I ^cbring up to Thee with the fumes of rams.
 I will ^dprepare the beeve with he-goats.

Interlude

- 16 Go, hear, and I will rehearse to all who fear Alueim,
^wwhat He does for my soul.
 17 To Him with my mouth I call,
 And exaltation is ^uon my tongue.
 18 If I see lawlessness in my heart,
^sIeue^{ph} will not hear.
 19 Surely Alueim hears;
 He attends ^lto the sound of my prayer.
 20 Blessed be Alueim,
 Who does not ^ctake away my prayer,
^{+nor His kindness from `me.}
 > *Permanent* ^lWith Accompaniments

THIS psalm seems to have been intended for use in the temple worship.

The subscription *With Accompaniments* and the recurring *Interlude* both indicate that this was the case. The emphasis throughout is on glorifying Alueim's mighty deeds.

The first section (verses 1-4) is a call to *all the earth* to praise and worship Alueim. His fear-inspiring strength and works are said to be such that His enemies will come cringing in feigned submission—this is the force of *shall dissimulate*. The following section (verses 5-7) is an exhortation to examine more

closely His *fearful practice*, which is not merely a temporary action, but a manifestation of *His mastery for the eon*.

The section composed of verses 8-15 changes from a congregational tone to an individual's song—the *we* becomes *I*. Though Alueim puts His people through tests of oppression by rulers of the nations, He gives them a satisfying outcome, for the fiery trial is but a refining process (verses 9-12). Verse 11 speaks of oppression. The *fastness* refers to captivity in an enemy prison. The phrase, *pressure on our waists*, has reference to carrying burdens—a task common to subjected peoples in those times. The individual response to deliverance is the thankful payment of vows (verses 13-15).

The last section (verses 16-20) is addressed to all *who fear Alueim*. The psalmist is sure that his prayer is heard, for it is not a hypocritical one. J. D. Thompson

ROSENA BROGDEN

A staunch supporter of the faith since the 1920's when she first believed the evangel under the ministry of Bro. Adlai Loudy, Sister Brogden was put to repose, December 1, at the age of 89. She was a registered nurse and lived for many years in Wagener, South Carolina, though she moved to California about 20 years ago, where she established a nursing home in Brawley.

ARTHUR R. WHITING

We have received word of the unexpected passing of our agent in New South Wales, Australia, Bro. Arthur R. Whiting. In his last letter to us, dated September 29, he mentioned that he had spent several weeks in the hospital and remained weak. Before him, his father, E. J. Whiting, had been our agent in the Sydney area. We are grateful for the loyal and diligent service he performed and look forward to the time when we will all be together with the Lord.

THE SECOND VISION

FOURTEEN months after the first vision described in chapter 1, Ezekiel is caught up in a second appearance, beginning with chapter 8. This time, however, he is taken in spirit to the city of Jerusalem where he sees some startling sights. The idolatrous sins of the people are described in chapter 8, and the judgment for these sins in chapter 9. The vision continues through chapters 10 and 11 with the glory of Ieue leaving the temple and the city, but not without a promise of a new spirit and a firmer establishment of the nation of Israel in the future when Ieue "will become theirs for an Alueim" (11:20).

Chapter 9 accounts the execution of Ieue's judgment on the idolators in Jeusalem. It is accomplished by six "mortals" (who were not mortals at all, but are described as such because they appeared as human beings) who smite all who are not ashamed of the abhorrences done in the city. However, there is a seventh "man" in their midst who places a mark on the foreheads of all those who are "sighing and groaning" over the idolatry.

This seventh messenger is most important. He is clothed in linen (*cf* Dan.10:5; Rev.15:6) and represents salvation from the judgment. The Hebrew word for "mark" is essentially the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet ("taw") which in Ezekiel's day was written either as an X or as a cross. In this we see that behind the fury and indignation of Ieue lies a secret purpose of deliverance centered in the cross of Christ.

This deliverance is given here only to those who were sorry for the idolatry in Israel, but later in Paul's epistles we learn that it is intended for all, even for those who were not spared in Ezekiel 9. Reconciliation and peace are established through the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20).

TEXTUAL NOTES

According to our chronology based on the Septuagint (LXX) the year mentioned in 8:1 is 4925 from Adam. (8:1) **month** is inserted from the LXX; compare 24:1. (8:2) for **human** the Hebrew reads **fire** which is similar in spelling to **human**; the word **sparkle** literally means **EYE**. (8:4) we have added **Ieue** from the LXX. (8:8) **do** represents the word **pray** in the sense of "please." (8:10) **all around** literally reads **around-around**. (8:11) **Jaazaniah** means **GIVING-EAR-will-BE-ing**, and **Shaphan** means **SECRETE**. (8:16) the Hebrew word for **backs** is literally **AFTERS**. (8:17) the Hebrew has **their** rather than **My** as supplied by the Sopherim. (8:18) we have inserted "with **them**" from the LXX; the word **loud** ((also in 9:1) is a translation of the Hebrew word **great**. (9:2,3,11) the LXX insertion **robe** and a **girdle**, is given some support from parallel readings in Dan. 10:5 and Rev.15:6. (9:5) while the Hebrew reads **on** rather than **must not**, the two words are spelled much the same, and **must not** is the reading in the margin of the Hebrew text and is also verified by the LXX, Syriac and other manuscripts. (9:6) the word **any** means **all**. (9:9) we have the words **depravity** and **uncleanness** incorrectly marked. The Hebrew text has the word *mte* here which belongs to a family meaning **STRETCH-OUT**. A change to the Hebrew word *tma*, or even *tme*, would agree with the LXX reading of "uncleanness." But the word **depravity** is purely an insertion from the LXX and should be marked 7 . . . 0. Only the word **uncleanness** should be marked 7 . . . ? since it is a conjec-tural change in the Hebrew based on the LXX.

CROSS-REFERENCES

(8:3) 1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16; Acts 8:39. (8:5) 2 Kings 21:7; 23:6. (8:10) Isa.66:17. (8:11) Ex.24:1; Num.11:16; 2 Kings 22:3,8; Jer.26:24. (8:12) Eze.9:9. (8:14) Isa.17:10,11. (8:16) Deut.4:19; 2 Kings 23:5,11; Job 31:26-28. (9:4) Rev.7:3; 9:4. (9:6) 1 Pet.4:17.

D. H. H.

EDITORIAL

THE FAST CHANGING and often startling events in the Middle East easily catch our attention. The place of Egypt in recent months especially stirs our interest as we recall the words of A. E. Knoch written over thirty years ago: "A change in the status of Egypt is probably one of the first indications to look for among the nations, if we wish to see signs of the end. The gradual rise of Egypt in the last decades may be in preparation for the part it will play in the closing scenes of man's day" (*Concordant Studies in the Book of Daniel*, p.376).

These words are particularly impressive in light of the low position in world affairs which Egypt held at that time. It is significant too that Brother Knoch referred to Egypt's rise as "gradual" over a period of decades. So it has been, and even now we realize that Egypt is not a rich and powerful country. They lack the wealth of oil which the Arab lands possess, and in fact their greatest effort toward "progress," the Great Aswan Dam, seems to have caused more problems than it has solved and is accounted by some to be a colossal failure.

Nevertheless, in the latter times of this eon there will rise a "king of the south," and surely Egypt will at least be included in that center of power and influence to the south of Israel. We cannot say what is ahead for Egypt—perhaps many reverses and advancements yet to come—but eventually great political power will be

centered there before the man of lawlessness out of the north finally defeats the southern king (*cf* Dan.11:40-42).

Yes, these matters do easily catch our attention, but we are reminded by Paul that we also have "eyes" of our heart for spiritual perception (Eph.1:18). What we see with our outward eyes assures us that God is operating in the affairs of man, but with our inward eyes we may come to see "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" (Eph.1:18,19). We are praying, therefore, that all of us who are believing may perceive more fully, not so much the outlook for Egypt, but the expectation of God's calling of us from out of Jew and Gentile; not so much the place of the king of the south, but the allotment which God has endowed upon us; not so much the political influence of an earthly power, but the transcendently great, spiritual power which is available for us. Indeed, that which concerns the Middle East is interesting, but that which concerns the joint body of Christ and our place among the celestials in Christ is *vital*.

This celestial calling, this spiritual allotment and this transcendent power available to God's people have long been stressed in the pages of *Unsearchable Riches*. We touch on these themes in the present issue and hope to continue stressing the wealth of revelation given through the ministry of the apostle Paul. The neglect of these matters stirs our hearts to pray more diligently the prayers of Paul such as this one in the first chapter of Ephesians, for we need to perceive these blessings and grasp this power more and more in our lives today.

D.H.H.

RISE AND GO!

IN THE INTRODUCTION to his first account, Luke assures us that, in composing his narrative, he accurately followed the reports given to him by eyewitnesses and deputies of the word. And he adds that he wrote all down *consecutively* (Luke 1:1-3). He seems to have had at least one source of information about John the Baptist, and another one concerning the Boy Jesus (probably Mary herself, the Lord's mother).

OVERLAPPING TIME ELEMENTS

In those days it was the normal practice of a compiler of historical events, to narrate from one source until he came to a convenient stopping point, and then to continue from another source until he found it suitable to pick up his first source again. Luke follows this method of ancient historians by reporting at length about John the Baptist, from the time he was born "till the day of his indication to Israel" when he was an adult man in the wilderness (Luke 1:80).

The next verse (2:1) begins with the words, "Now it occurred in those days" Here Luke draws from another source of information, for the day of John's indication to Israel was about *thirty years after* what occurred in *those days* (i.e. the registration and the birth of the Babe Jesus). The second chapter where the Boy Jesus is the central figure, ends with the summary: "Jesus progressed in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (2:52).

Chapter 3:1-20 deals with John the Baptist from the

time God called him in the wilderness until the day when Herod the tetrarch locked him up in jail. In the next verse (3:21), however, Luke goes back to the time *before* his arrest and then starts to report consecutively "concerning all which Jesus begins both to do and to teach until the day on which He was taken up" (Acts 1:1).

There can be no doubt in our minds about the chronological sequence of events in these three chapters of Luke, since the power of the Most High had overshadowed Mary before John was born to her relative Elizabeth. When the two mothers met, the unborn babe John rejoiced in the presence of his Lord (Luke 1:35; 39-44). Once we know that John was just a few months older than Jesus, we are able to correlate the various narratives with their overlapping time elements.

SEVERAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION IN ACTS

Luke's narrative about the Lord's ascension, the day of Pentecost, and the progression of the ecclesia in Jerusalem is an orderly presentation of facts in chronological sequence, up to the death of Stephen (7:60). In the first seven chapters Luke obviously benefits from the combined reports of many "eyewitnesses and deputies of the word" about events which were common knowledge among the members of the Jerusalem ecclesia.

The fact that Luke is drawing on various sources, becomes apparent in the following chapters where he reports on activities in Samaria, the Gaza road, the Damascus road, Joppa, Caesarea and Jerusalem, to name just a few.

Philip was the only eyewitness of the meeting with the Ethiopian eunuch, just as nobody except Saul and

Ananias was knowledgeable about the details of the various visions which these two had had. Since Philip brought the evangel to "all the cities" on his way north, we have no way of ascertaining when he finally arrived in Caesarea where he took up his residence (*cf* Acts 21:8). The way from Ashdod (Azotus, Acts 8:40) near the seacoast of Judea (not far from Gaza in the south) to Caesarea in the north of Samaria was about half as long as the road from Jerusalem to Damascus.

The report about Philip ends in 8:40. Beginning with the next verse (9:1) Luke takes up another source of information, concerning Saul. The latter's trip from Jerusalem to Damascus was certainly completed within a matter of days. It is conceivable that he arrived there before Philip reached Caesarea.

THE RIGHT OF EXTRADITION

The villages and cities of Samaria where Peter, John and Philip had evangelized, were not under the jurisdiction of the chief priest in Jerusalem. Hence those Samaritans who believed did not have to fear any persecution. For centuries the Judeans had been regarding the inhabitants of Samaria as racial and religious half-castes, ever since those days when the upper classes of them were deported to Assyria. There was inter-marriage between the foreign settlers who took their place and the remnant of the native population. Their offspring worshiped on Samaria's sacred mount Gerizim where the Samaritans had a temple of their own (*cf* John 4:20). It was destroyed when the Judean, John Hyrcanus I, conquered Samaria. He was one of the priest-kings of the Hasmonean dynasty to whom Egypt had granted the right of extradition of Jewish lawbreakers if they escaped to the countries of Egypt and their allies in the Near East.

From what Josephus reports in his *Antiquities*, Julius Caesar seems to have confirmed these special privileges of the chief priest in Jerusalem. Hence Saul was able to get a commission in order to demand the extradition of any Jewish believers from Jerusalem and Judea who had fled to Damascus, as well as their sympathizers who lived in that city (*cf* Acts 9:2,14).

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF EXTRICATION

In Acts 9:1-30 Saul is the central figure, and the events reported in these thirty verses cover a period of at least three years. Most of this time Saul seems to have spent in Arabia (Gal.1:17) in a kind of religious retreat, as we would call it today. When he first entered Damascus, still blinded from the heavenly apparition, God had just unveiled His Son in him (Gal.1:16). The risen Christ in His celestial glory had given him a divine commission and thereby repealed the other commission which he had received from the chief priest. These are the words of the Lord:

“Rise and stand on your feet, for I was seen by you for this, to fix upon you before: for a deputy and a witness both of what you have perceived and that in which I will be seen by you, *extricating* you from the people and from the nations, to whom *I* am commissioning you, to open their eyes, to turn them about from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, for them to get a pardon of sins and an allotment among those who have been hallowed by faith that is in Me. Rise and go into Damascus, and there you will be spoken to concerning all which has been set for you to do” (Acts 26:16-18; 22:10).

Saul's call on the Damascus road was even more impressive than Peter's housetop vision (Acts 10:9-20). Saul received a most personal lesson about the

limitless grace of God to which he should bear witness before the nations. In this light we can see that Saul's murderous career which preceded his call, was necessary and can be justified from the divine standpoint. Had Saul not been the foremost of sinners, he could not have become a pattern of those who were about to believe (1 Tim.1:15,16).

A CHOICE INSTRUMENT OF MINE

Members of his escort led Saul by the hand through the gate of Damascus to the house of Judas in the street called "Straight" where, as it seems, arrangements had been made for him to stay. Saul was a blind man of ill fame in a strange city, and unable to establish contact with the Jewish believers there. His leading role in the persecution of those "who are of the way" (Acts 9:2b) was common knowledge, and his plans to continue his nefarious career in Damascus was no secret either. Hence the Lord Himself introduced him to the brethren in this city. For this purpose Saul had another vision in which he saw "a man named Ananias entering and placing his hands on him so that he should be receiving sight" (9:12).

At this time, Ananias too had a vision in which he recognized the Lord giving him directions to go and see Saul who was expecting him. Ananias was "a pious man according to the law, being attested by all the Jews dwelling there" (Acts 22:12). Since he was aware of the sinister purpose of Saul's journey, the Lord allayed his apprehensions by telling him what had happened to Saul on the road outside the city, and He advised him of the field and scope of Saul's future ministries: first and foremost to the nations, later to kings, and meanwhile to the sons of Israel among the nations. What must have impressed Ananias most,

were the Lord's words that Saul was "a choice instrument of Mine" (Acts 9:15).

Ananias obeyed and went to the house as an authorized prophet, a spokesman of Christ. What he said were just the words which the Lord had put in his mouth. Ananias laid his hands on Saul, but it was the power of Christ Himself that in the same moment restored vision to the blinded eyes and filled Saul's heart with holy spirit.

In those days this manifestation of the holy spirit depended on the authorized imposition of hands. However, the sequence in Saul's case (the filling was prior to water baptism) deviated from the rule as laid down by Peter, when the gratuity of the holy spirit had to be preceded by compunction, repentance, and baptism (Acts 2:37,38). No such works were required from Saul in order to be filled with holy spirit. The eyes of his heart having been enlightened on the road three days before (when he had not even asked for it), his physical eyesight restored now, Saul was sure to remember Christ's words, "from darkness to light." As the Lord had opened his eyes (both spiritually and physically) he was now *ready to bear witness* of what he had perceived.

The Lord Himself had prepared the circumstances for Saul so that Ananias could vouch for the former persecutor and introduce him to the Jewish believers in Damascus. Thus Saul was going to enjoy fellowship with those whom the Lord had called before him. He could tell the brethren how the risen Christ had met him outside the city, and Ananias was able to corroborate his story in some of the details which he himself had learned from the Lord in his own vision. We can understand that Saul's baptism in water, as a symbol for spirit baptism, had been necessary under

the circumstances, so as to substantiate the cleansing of his former conduct, thus ensuring the unity with those who had been cleansed before him.

Saul decided to face the unbelieving Jews of the city "immediately;" he stayed "with the disciples in Damascus some days and . . . in the synagogues, he heralded Jesus, that He is the Son of God" (9:20,21).

RISE AND GO!

Correlating the narratives in chapters 8 through 11 of Acts with their overlapping time elements is not as easy as it was in Luke's first account (chapters 1-3). Hence, here in Acts, we should not so much emphasize the chronological sequence of events, but rather the divine trend which is unfolded in them:

Philip on the Gaza road, Saul on the Damascus road, and Peter on the housetop in Joppa, these three received similar divine commands, "Rise and go . . ." (Acts 8:26). "Rise! Go . . ." (9:11). "Rise! Descend and go . . ." (10:13,20). Even though the three divine commands are reported in different chapters, it is well conceivable that they occurred within a relatively short period of time.

After believing Samaritans (who were ceremonially unclean in Jewish eyes and despised as outsiders from a mixed race) had been united to the believing remnant of Israel, a proselyte to Judaism (a non-Jewish man from Ethiopia) believed, and so did Cornelius, a God-fearing Gentile (a proselyte of the gate). In order to reach other Gentiles who had no contact to Judaism, Saul was called outside the land and was given the commission to bring the word of the Lord to the nations who had never heard the word of God.

H.H.R.

(To be continued)

A DAVIDIC PSALM A SONG

67 Alueim will be gracious to us and bless us.

Enlighten `us will His face.

Interlude

**² Known in the earth is Thy way,
Among all nations Thy salvation.**

**³ Acclaim Thee shall the peoples, Alueim!
Acclaim Thee shall the peoples, —all of them!**

**⁴ Rejoice and jubilate shall the folkstems,
For Thou shalt judge the peoples with equity,
And the folkstems in the earth, Thou wilt guide them.**

Interlude

**⁵ Acclaim Thee shall the peoples, Alueim!
Acclaim Thee shall the peoples, —all of them!**

**⁶ The earth gives its crop.
Bless us will Alueim, our Alueim.**

**⁷ Blessing us is Alueim.
And fear `Him will all the limits of the earth.**

Permanent

THE opening verse of Psalm 67 is an echo of the blessing that the priests were commanded to give to Israel: "Ieue shall bless you and keep you, Ieue will light up His face toward you, and will be gracious to you" (Num.6:24,25).

This psalm further develops the thoughts expressed in the preceding three psalms. The fear and acknowledgment of Alueim is not restricted to Israel, but will extend to all peoples. James D. Thompson

A DAVIDIC PSALM A SONG

- 68** Rise will Alueim! Scattered shall be his enemies!
And those hating Him shall flee from His presence.
- 2** As the whisking away of smoke
shall ⁷they^c be whisked away;
As the melting of wax from the face of a fire shall
the wicked perish from the presence of Alueim.
- 3** +Yet the just shall rejoice;
They shall be glad before Alueim,
And they will be elated ⁴with rejoicing.
- 4** Sing to Alueim! Make melody ^Mto⁹ His name!
Heap up a highway for the Rider in the gorges,
by Ie, His name,
And joy before Him.
- 5** A Father of orphans and an Adjudicator of widows
Is Alueim in His holy habitation.
- 6** Alueim is causing the lonely to dwell at home,
^cBringing forth the bound into successes.
Yea, the stubborn tabernacle in a glaring land!
- 7** Alueim, in Thy faring forth before Thy people,
In Thy marching in the desolation:
Interlude
- 8** The earth quakes, indeed, the heavens drop,
⁷at the presence of Alueim.
⁷Stirred is⁷ Sinai ⁷at the presence of Alueim,
the Alueim of Israel.
- 9** A liberal downpour art Thou waving, Alueim,
over Thine allotment.
And when it tires, Thou' dost establish it.

- 10 **Thy living ones dwell in it.**
Thou art preparing, in Thy goodness,
for the humble, Alueim.
- 11 **^SIeue^{ph} will give the saying;**
The women who bear tidings are a vast host:
- 12 **Kings of hosts, they are flitting!**
They are flitting!
And she, who is in a homestead house,
is apportioning the loot.
- 13 **Should you lie between the hearthstones,**
it is as the wings of a dove, overspread 'with silver,
And her pinions 'with greenish gold dust.
- 14 **'When He-Who-Suffices spreads kings in it,**
It is as causing snow 'on Zalmon.
- 15 **A mountain of Alueim is a mountain of Bashan;**
A lofty mountain is a mountain of Bashan.
- 16 **Why are you looking askance lofty mountains?**
At the mountain Alueim covets for his dwelling?
Indeed, Ieue will tabernacle there permanently.
- 17 **The chariots of Alueim are myriads**
—repeated thousands.
^SIeue^{ph} is among them 'in^o Sinai in the holy place.
- 18 **Thou dost ascend to the height.**
Thou dost capture captivity.
Thou dost 'apportion' gifts among humanity,
And, indeed, the stubborn are for a tabernacle
of Ie Alueim.
- 19 **Blessed be ^SIeue^{ph}.**
Day by day will He lade > us with good,
The Al of our salvation.
- Interlude*
- 20 **Our Al is an Al >of =salvation.**
And to Ieue, my Lord, >belong the exits from death.
- 21 **Yea, Alueim will transfix the head of His enemies,**
The hairy scalp of him walking in his =guilt.

- 22 **Says ^SIeue^{ph}, From Bashan will I restore;
I will restore from the swamps of the sea,**
- 23 **That you may ⁷wash^{cs} your foot in blood;
The tongue of your curs has its assignment
of the enemies.**
- 24 **They see Thy goings, Alueim,
The goings of my Al, my King, in the holy place.**
- 25 **Singers precede, after them the players;
In the midst are damsels, playing the tambourine.**
- 26 **Bless Alueim in the assemblies,
^SIeue^{ph} from the fountain of Israel.**
- 27 **There is inferior Benjamin holding sway over them,
The chiefs of Judah, their pelters,
The chiefs of Zebulon, the chiefs of Naphtali.**
- 28 **Instruct, ⁷Alueim^c, Thy strength.
Be strong, Alueim, in this that
Thou contrivest for us.**
- 29 **Because of Thy temple ^{on}at Jerusalem,
To Thee kings shall fetch an indemnity.**
- 30 **Rebuke the animal of the reeds,
The crowd of the sturdy among the calves
of the peoples,
Each one stamping down others
for [?]accepted[?] silver.
Dissipate the peoples who are desiring to attack.**
- 31 **Envoys shall arrive from Egypt;
Ethiopia shall run his hands to Alueim.**
- 32 **Kingdoms of the earth, sing to Alueim!
Make melody ^Mto^s ^SIeue^{ph},**
- Interlude*
- 33 **To the Rider in the heavens of heavens aforesime;
Behold! He will give ^lwith His voice, a strong voice.**
- 34 **Ascribe strength to Alueim.
Over Israel is His pride,
And His strength is in the skies.**

³⁵ **Feared** is **Alueim** /because of ⁷**His^o** sanctuary.
The Al of Israel, He' gives strength
And staunchness to ⁷His^c people.
Blessed be Alueim!

> **Permanent**

^{on}**Concerning Elations [Anemones]**

NOTES ON PSALM 68

The majestic victory of Alueim over the world is the theme of this psalm. It was composed in the style of the song of Deborah and Barak in Judges 5. The victorious strain continues throughout this song, and the divine name and titles occur in abundance in proclaiming the various aspects of His power and might. References to processions abound, one of which was quoted by Paul in Ephesians 4:8 in reference to Christ. "Thou dost ascend to the height. Thou dost capture captivity. Thou dost apportion gifts among humanity" (verse 18)—this is the passage Paul adapted for his exposition. The Masoretic Text has *take* where we have *apportion*, though it may be that Paul's use of the word *give* reflects an earlier variant reading of this text, for there is a targum rendering which uses the Hebrew word *apportion*. However, there are no known Hebrew manuscripts which preserve such a reading. Some other references to a triumphal procession are found in verses 7, 24, 25 and 33.

There are several problems with translation and interpretation in Psalm 68. One passage deserving special mention is verses 13 and 14. The late E. H. Clayton suggested that the first phrase of verse 13 be

considered as part of the preceding sentence, with the remainder of the verse referring to the *image* (*Zalmon* could be translated *image*) of verse 14. If this were the case, *wings of a dove overspread with silver* and *greenish gold dust* refer to the appearance of an idol. As it is translated here, however, verses 12-14 may then refer to the condition of Israel at peace after war. The *in it* of verse 14 would refer back to the *it* of verse 9, that is, *Thine allotment*—Israel. The women at home divide up the portion of loot coming to them, so that Israel at peace (lying *between the hearthstones*; cf Gen.49:14) is likened to a dove which has the appearance of *silver* and *gold dust*.

Another interesting feature of this psalm is its use of the word which we have translated *Interlude*. In verses 7 and 32 it seems to occur in mid-sentence (cf Psa.55:19). This may indicate that it is a connecting link, not merely a break in the singing with the instruments continuing, which is what *interlude* may suggest. E. W. Bullinger, in his book *The Chief Musician* (1908), wrote: "In every case it answers to our 'N.B.' (*nota bene*), *note well*. It bids us look back at what has been said, and mark its connection with what is to follow." However, the LXX does translate the Hebrew word with *diapsalma*, "interlude" (more literally, *through-psalm*).

As do many of the psalms, this one looks expectantly to the future, confident that the time will come when all the wicked will be appropriately dealt with, the nations will sing to Alueim with rejoicing, and the earth will know universal equity. James D. Thompson

A new printing of the Concordant Version of *Genesis*, entitled "In a Beginning," has now been prepared (\$1.00 each).

DAVIDIC

- 69 ^cSave me, Alueim, for waters come unto my soul!
2 I sink in the mire of a swamp,
and there is no standing.
I come into deep waters, and the surge overflows me.
3 I am weary in my calling; hot is my throat.
Finished are my eyes, waiting for my Alueim.
4 Multiplied more ^tthan the hairs of my head
are my gratuitous haters.
Staunch are those who efface me, my false enemies.
What I have not pillaged, I will then restore.
5 Alueim, Thou' knowest [>] my folly,
And my guilt, from Thee is not suppressed.
6 They must not be shamed ^tby me,
those expecting Thee,
my Lord, Ieue of hosts!
They must not be confounded ^tby me,
those seeking Thee, Alueim of Israel!
7 For on Thy account I bear reproach,
Confounding covers my face.
8 I became an alien to my brothers,
And a foreigner to the sons of my mother.
9 For the zeal of Thy house devours me,
And reproaches of those reproaching Thee
fall on me.
10 And I am lamenting ^tby fasting my soul,
And it becomes [>] a reproach to me,
11 And I ^smake my clothing of sackcloth,
And I am becoming [>] a proverb to them.
12 Meditating ^tabout me are those sitting
in the gateway.

**And I am the accompaniments of the drinkers
of intoxicants.**

¹³ **+ Yet I—my prayer is to Thee, Ieue,
in a season of acceptance.**

**Alueim, in Thy great kindness,
answer me in the truth of Thy salvation.**

¹⁴ **Rescue me from the mud; + I must not sink,
I will be rescued from those who hate me,
and from the depths of the waters.**

¹⁵ **The surge of the water must not be overflowing me,
And the swamp must not be swallowing me up,
And the well's mouth must not be hampering me.**

¹⁶ **Answer me, Ieue, for good is Thy kindness,
^{as} According to Thy many compassions,
countenance > me.**

¹⁷ **And Thou must not be concealing Thy face
from Thy servant,
For distress is mine. Hastily answer me.**

¹⁸ **Come near to my soul ⁷and^o redeem it;
On account of my enemies, ransom me.**

¹⁹ **Thou' knowest my reproach and my shame
and my confounding.**

In front of Thee are all my foes.

²⁰ **Reproach breaks my heart, and I am mortal,
And I expect one to condole, and there is none,
And to comfort, + yet find none.**

²¹ **And they are ^gputting poison in my repast,
And for my thirst they are causing me
to drink vinegar.**

²² **Their table shall become > a trap before them,
And to those at peace, > a snare.**

²³ **Dark shall be their eyes, kept from seeing.
+ Cause their waist to totter continually.**

²⁴ **Pour out Thy menace upon them,
And cause the heat of Thine anger to overtake them.**

- 25 **Their domicile shall become desolate.**
 There must not come to be a dweller in their tents,
 26 **For one whom Thou dost smite, they persecute,**
And to the pain of Thy wounded, they will 'add'.
 27 **Bestow depravity on their depravity,**
And they must not come into Thy righteousness.
 28 **They shall be wiped out from the scroll of life,**
And with the righteous they must not be written.
 29 **And I am humbled and pained.**
Thy salvation, Alueim, is making me impregnable.
 30 **I will praise the name of Alueim 'with a song,**
And I will magnify Him 'with acclamation.
 31 **And it will be better to Ieue 'than an ox,**
a young bull, horned 'and^{cs} hoofed.
 32 **The humble shall see 'and^{cs} they shall rejoice.**
'Inquire' unto Alueim, and your heart shall live.
 33 **For hearkening to the needy is Ieue.**
And 'His bound ones He does not despise.
 34 **Praising Him are the heavens and the earth,**
The seas and all that moves in them.
 35 **For Alueim will save Zion,**
And build the cities of Judah,
And they shall dwell there and tenant it,
 36 **And to the seed of His servants shall they allot it,**
And lovers of his name shall tabernacle in it.

> Permanent

In verse 26, **add** (a variant of GATHER) was taken from the LXX, as well as from a conjectured emendation of the Hebrew text. The Masoretic Text (MT) has NUMBER, but by dropping the final letter "r" the Hebrew text corresponds to the LXX. The reading **add** seems to fit the context better than **number**.

There is evidence from the Syriac version and the Targums which indicate that the proper reading of verse 22 may be **And > their peace offerings, > a snare.**

SAVED TO GRACE

GRACE IS THE REALM of the believer. We have been saved to this position. This is where we are as God's chosen ones; we are in grace.

In our first study of this series on the evangel of our salvation we discussed some of the features of this position of being *in* grace. Everything about our salvation is connected with God's favor, wholly based on the work and faith of Christ. It is apart from our doings and our deservings. In this article (and the next) we will consider not so much the idea of being *in* this realm of grace, but more concerning the purpose God has in view for placing us in this realm. Hence we use the key word *to* which points toward the object of salvation.

THE DATIVE CASE

The word *grace* in Ephesians 2:5 and 2:8 is in the dative case^o which most characteristically answers the question *Where?* That is why we use the word *in* (in lightface type) so often with nouns in the dative case in our translation. Yet, in the English sublinear of the *Concordant Greek Text* we use the preposition *to* for words in the dative case because it expresses the sense more exactly. The question which the dative case answers might more fully be given as *Where to?*

^oSee the article, "In Grace and Out," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 31, p. 131.

This corresponds somewhat to what we call the "indirect object" in English. Often a word in the dative case indicates for whom or in whose interest the action is performed. We may say that Ephesians 2:5,8 tells us that salvation is given in the interest of grace.

The King James Version uses what is called the "instrumental dative" here in translating the phrase as "saved *by* grace" and the Concordant Version uses the "locative" sense in rendering it as "saved *in* grace." There is truth in both instances, for being saved *by* the means of grace and being saved *in* the realm of grace serve to stress the fact that our salvation magnifies the glory of God's grace. Our salvation is *to* this end, not only that God's grace might be enjoyed, but that it might be made known.

The expression, "saved to grace," is awkward in English, but it may be useful to us in grasping more of the vast riches in God's work of salvation. It corresponds harmoniously with the immediate context of Ephesians 2:8. We are saved to a position in which we will be used to display God's transcendent grace and in which we will walk (and may now be walking) in good works which God has prepared. It is in the interest of these goals that we are saved.

In the first edition of the *Concordant Version*, Ephesians 2:8 was rendered as follows: "for you have been saved through faith for grace." Later this was changed because it was felt such a translation appeared to lay too much stress on the future. Although there is a future aspect in verse 7 concerning this position of grace to which we are saved, we find in verse 10 that there is a present aspect as well. Hence we do not want to suggest that our salvation to grace is wholly centered in the future. In fact, even the future aspect has very significant bearing on our present

lives. The more fully we grasp the fact that God has saved us in order to bring us to this display of the transcendent riches of His grace during the oncoming eons, the more we also will be showing forth His grace today. Our expectation affects our present walk, just as our faith in God's gracious dealings toward us affects our dealings toward others (Eph.4:32). The truths of the first three chapters of Ephesians are all applied in a practical way to our present lives in the last three chapters, and indeed unless there is practical value to a revelation of God there seems little purpose for that revelation.

THE ONCOMING EONS

It is a mistaken idea to think that God's purpose is consummated at the end of this age. There is much yet to be carried out on the earth, and also, as we see in Ephesians, God has much yet to do among the celestials. There He seats us together with Christ; to this position He has saved us in order to display the transcendent riches of his grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:6,7). If God's people could grasp this tremendous revelation more fully what a difference it would make in spiritual progress, in walk, in prayer and in praise!

Some of the flavor of this undeserved, unexpected and joyful position to which God has saved us was brought out by A. E. Knoch in the following comments: "The mother of Zebedee's children could form no greater wish than that her two sons might sit, one on His right, the other on His left, in His Kingdom. He could not promise that. But suppose this, the highest earthly honor, were given to a gentile cur! How excessive were such grace! Even as the heavens are higher than the earth, so also is His heavenly

throne exalted above His earthly sovereignty. And this, the loftiest place in all the universe, is reserved for an election out of the nations as well as a remnant out of Israel! Surely they will have the honor of His right, and we shall revel in a place subordinate at His left. Not so! We are peers in these celestial dignities! We are not merely members of His body. We are *fellow* members. It is a *joint* body. This is the secret! This is the truth that God concealed from previous generations! As members of the joint body of Christ, the believers among the nations are of equal rank with those out of Israel who are chosen for this high honor" (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 62, pp. 195,196).

There is much knowledge of God among the celestials, but still there is great ignorance concerning His heart. The celestial beings have some concept, perhaps, that God is gracious, for they are aware of His choice of Israel and His choice of us as His special people, and certainly they must marvel at God's gift of His Son Who died on our behalf. But they have seen very little of the fruit of this grace, nor do they realize how central it is to God's entire eonian purpose. How much will grace accomplish? How far will it extend? The transcendent measure of its quality and quantity will be put on display in the eons to come, and we have been saved to have a part, and a most vital part, in this display!

TRANSCENDENT RICHES

To what end are we saved? To the display of the transcendent riches of God's grace. Yet this is not the final end, the final consummation which God has in view. Beyond this display is the full appreciation of the glory of God both on earth and among the celestials. Concerning humanity we read that God

“wills that all mankind be saved *and come into a realization of the truth*” (1 Tim.2:4). And concerning the celestial beings we read “. . . that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God . . .” (Eph.3:10). This is so that all will be headed up in Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth (Eph.1:10).

God has a place for us. He has made us useful to Him. In doing this He has not so much set before us an awesome task but has rather granted us an awesome gift. We are saved to grace.

With such an expectation before us we are strengthened and encouraged for our day-by-day living. The corresponding section in Ephesians to this portion in chapter 2 is 5:21-6:9 where we find that Christ’s love for us in presenting us to Himself as a glorious ecclesia in the oncoming eons is the basis for our relationship with other people, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and slaves. What He has prepared for us in the future is power and guidance for us in the present. How great a salvation! How transcendent God’s grace!

D.H.H.

FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCES

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA: Fred T. Belcher has announced that the second annual Richmond Fellowship will be held at the Virginia Inn in that city on May 5-7. Inquiries can be sent to: Miss Jean Bishop, 4120-H Townhouse Road, Richmond VA 23228.

BALDWIN, MICHIGAN: The Baldwin Summer Fellowship will be held August 2-6 with the theme, “God’s Revelations through the Apostle Paul.” Reservations should be sent to: Pastor Lloyd Hibberd, Box 84, Baldwin MI 49304. This is the twenty-first session of this instructive conference.

ARTHUR AND AILEEN LAMB

Our good friend and senior teacher, Arthur Charles Lamb, was put to repose on February 9, 1978, seven weeks after the death of his wife, Aileen, on December 22, 1977. They were both 86. Brother Lamb's ministry and Sister Lamb's loyal support began and ended in Pasadena, California, and in the meantime had centered for many years in Denver, Colorado and Fort Pierce, Florida. Arthur had contributed several articles to *Unsearchable Riches* (the most recent one appearing in last September's issue) and had also prepared many volumes of typed notes on various scriptural themes. He often said that he was not an original thinker but rather preferred to compile together the thoughts of others which were in harmony with the Word of God, and this he did in an effective and systematic way. Feeling that many of his Bible class studies would be helpful to others we have set up a fund in memory of the Lambs for the purpose of publishing many of these notes in the form of leaflets for group studies. Those wishing to contribute to this fund should remit to the Concordant Publishing Concern. We will announce the publication of these studies as they are prepared.

NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

We are pleased to announce that Brother Donald Osgood of Eastwood, New South Wales, has agreed to serve as our new agent in that area of Australia. His address is now given on the inside front cover of the magazine. Subscriptions and orders formerly placed through Brother Arthur R. Whiting should now be handled through Brother Osgood.

We have received further details concerning the death of Brother Whiting, October 8, 1977, at the age of 73.

He was born in England and migrated to Australia at the age of 21. He served the Lord in many ways, in work among alcoholics at the Sydney City Mission, in preaching in mission churches, in Sunday School work, in personal work, and in a life that put Christ first and testified continually to the truth of the Word of God. It has seemed fitting to the family to mark the grave with the words of Paul in Philippians 3:20,21, for they sum up very well the expectation of Arthur Whiting.

Questions and Answers

CONCERNING 1 CORINTHIANS 15:22

Does the context require that the "all" be taken to mean "all believers" rather than "all humanity"?

Does the context restrict the meaning of "vivify" to "resurrection" only?

The answer to these two questions depends on a thorough analysis of the whole context. Once we see the progression of Paul's thought from the *One* to the *all* and from *rousing* to *resurrection* to *vivification* we can see that there are no restrictions in this passage to the truth of universal vivification. The following selection from the March, 1941, *Unsearchable Riches* is extremely helpful in understanding this passage:

As a marvelously concise, exact, discriminating and comprehensive summary of rousing, resurrection, and vivification is given us by the apostle Paul in the context of this passage, it may be of great help to us if we seek to get a clear grasp of it with our minds and allow it to get a firm hold of our hearts. 1 Corinthians 15 is usually supposed to deal simply with "resurrection," hence the companion truths of *rousing* and *vivification* are usually overlooked. As the Authorized Version seldom distinguishes rousing from resurrection, and renders *rouse* as *raise* in this very passage, thus obliterating one of the distinctions which are so helpful, we will quote the statements we wish to study from the *Concordant Literal New Testament*.

Christ has been roused from among the dead
the Firstfruit of those who are reposing.

Through a man came death,
 through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead.
 Even as, in Adam, all are dying,
 thus also, in Christ, shall all vivified.
 Yet each in his own class:
 the Firstfruit, Christ;
 thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence;
 thereafter the consummation.

THE THREEFOLD SCOPE

The scope of these assertions varies as much as can be. It goes from *One* to *all*. A *single One*, Christ, was *roused*, but *all* will be *vivified*. In between we have the resurrection of the dead. This cannot include all, for all do not die. Those of us who survive until the Lord's presence (1 Thess.4:15) cannot be included. We will be *changed*, not raised (1 Cor.15:52). This mortal will put on immortality. Only the dead, who have gone to corruption, will put on incorruption. Those in Israel who will be alive when He comes to them will not die. To them He is not only the Resurrection, for the dead, but the Life, for the living (John 11:26). Everyone who is living and believing in Him should not die for the eon.

Besides this there is the vast multitude of saints who will be born during the thousand years and in the succeeding eon, in the new earth. The leaves of the trees along the banks of the stream that issues out of the millennial temple will keep them in health (Ezek.47:7,12), and in the new creation there will be the tree of life restored (Rev.22:2). These trees would be needless had these saints been vivified, and were they in possession of immortality. The millennial saints will live to its end and enter the new earth. Death will have no place in the new creation on the earth, so no one will die. None of these can be included in Paul's statement concerning the resurrec-

tion, because they do not die. He does *not* say that, as *all die*, so shall *all be resurrected*. That is not true of resurrection alone. The *omission* of the word *all* is inspired. Let us leave it out.

THREE DISTINCT RELATIONSHIPS

Christ is the *Firstfruit* of those who are reposing. Resurrection is *through* Him as the second Man. *In* Christ comes vivification.

He is the earliest Example of those who will be *roused* from repose. These are, as it were, God's harvest, which must surely follow. This seems to refer especially to the *saints*, for the term *repose* seems to be used only of them (1 Thess.4:14,15,etc.). Paul has been speaking of those who are put to repose in Christ (1Cor.15:18). He has gone before us, a part of the same crop. If He has been roused we may rest assured that we will follow in due time, unless we are vivified before. We are *associated* with Him so closely that our souls must share with His the awakening of that day.

But resurrection is different. There, as a *Man* (not as Christ), He is the *Channel*, the *Means*, by which the bodies of the dead will be resurrected. This is not confined to the saints, for it is not Christ, but a *Man*, and we know that *all* who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and there shall be a resurrection of judging as well as a resurrection of life (John 5:28,29). Just as the first man was the *channel through* which death comes to his posterity, so the second Man, the Lord from heaven, is the *channel through* which comes resurrection of the dead. There will be two kinds of resurrections, one of *judging*, before the great white throne, and one of *life* at Christ's presence, limited to those who are His, who are *vivified* also, as the word *life* implies.

These are strange and striking figures, for all resurrection involves *life*. The fact that one is a resurrection of life, in contrast to another, shows that the resurrection of judging lacks life in some sense. The figure is corroborated and confirmed when we read that the *dead* stand before the great white throne (Rev.20:12). The life that they have is not to be compared to the immortality of the resurrection life. It is not *in Christ*, but rather it is only *through* the second Man.

In Christ is the only relationship that brings *vivification*, incorruption, immortality, deathlessness. The resurrection of life is included in it, but it goes far further, for it is the portion of *all*, even those who do not die, and even those who take part in the resurrection of judging and enter the second death. All of these were *in Adam*, and therefore experienced the dying *process* which is common to all of his posterity, even if they do not actually enter the death state. The same *all*, we are told will be vivified, that is, experience the reverse of the process of dying. They receive immortality, *in Christ*.

At the present time *in Christ* is limited to those who are His by faith. But when death is abolished this marvelous position will be extended to include all who have been *in Adam*. To be *in Christ* now is a gracious privilege and depends on faith. But this is not essential at all times, as we can see from our place in Adam. We have that without faith or anything of ours. As the last Adam, Christ must have *all* humanity *in Him*. Being a life-giving or vivifying Spirit (1 Cor.15:45), all who are in Him must be vivified. Just as the living God is the Saviour of all mankind, *especially of those who believe* (1 Tim.4:10), so Christ is the Vivifier of all, especially of those who believe, for these will be made alive at

His presence, at the great crisis between the evil and the good eons, while the unbeliever will need to go through the great white throne judging and the second death before he is vivified at the consummation.

The character in which our Lord is presented is worthy of our closest attention in the interpretation of any passage of Scripture. He fills many functions, which are conveyed to us by the name or title which He bears. In this passage it is of vital value that we distinguish between Him as the *Firstfruit*, the *Man* and the *Christ*. The relationship is further clarified when we see that we are *associated* with Him as the Firstfruit, that He is a *channel* as a Man, and that all will be *in* Him as the Anointed.

In connection with rousing and resurrection no classes are given, no time is set. It is clear from other scriptures that these apply to every case of resurrection until the rest of the dead are raised at the great white throne. But now a new element enters, because the vivification is *in Christ*. Those raised for the great white throne judgment are not in Christ. Christ Himself has been vivified. Those who are His will be vivified at His presence. The third class needs much explanation, which is given in the passage that follows. The time given is the *consummation*, which is carefully fixed by many details, such as the abolition of all authority and power, the subjection of the Son when He gives over the kingdom to God, and *the abolition of death*. This does not follow the resurrection of all at the great white throne, for the second death follows. The last class, composed of all who are held by the last enemy during the last eon, will be given life in Christ at the consummation of the eons.

We cannot reason that, in parallels like these, the earlier statements must limit and define the later. We cannot say that vivification is the same as resurrection, and has the same scope, just because resurrection appears in the first members of a parallel. In fact it would be far more logical to reason that vivification must mean *more* than resurrection, for *this* is usually the case in such parallels. Consider the following (Luke 1:33):

He shall reign over the house of Jacob for the eons,
And of His kingdom there shall be no consummation.

Will the eons have no consummation? Such reasoning would rob us of one of the greatest truths in the Scriptures, that is, that the eons are limited, and not endless. Parallels of this kind do not merely restate a thought. The second member may be similar, but it uses the first as a stepping stone to some greater and higher revelation.

We commend this passage to students of the Scriptures who wish to get a clear understanding of these great distinctions. Few seem to realize how great are the differences between rousing, resurrection, and vivification in actual application, in God's dealings with his creatures. Hence there is a tendency to merge them all into one and call it resurrection. This is one reason why the great truth of universal vivification has been lost and is now denied and decried. Let us hold fast to the great fact that *all* will be vivified, though all will not be roused or raised. And let us insist that the final vivification will not take place until the consummation, when death shall be abolished, and God becomes All in *all*. May God raise up witnesses to this marvelous revelation who will make it known in the face of the fiercest opposition, to the glory of His great Name!

A. E. K.

A DWELLING PLACE IN SPIRIT

THE saints of today are indeed temples of God, in which His spirit and that of Christ both dwell. This is an individual status; each one of us is such a temple, and we should be aware of that fact, to the extent that it should have a constant bearing on our lives. This was the theme of our last study.

But there is also another aspect of the matter. Individually, we are each a member of that ecclesia which is the body of Christ, and each of us has his (or her) own function within that body (1 Cor.12:12-31), yet collectively we all form that one body, the complement by which He is completing the all in all (Eph.1:23). Are we then collectively a temple of God? Is it true to say that His spirit dwells within the ecclesia as a whole? To be sure it is. The supporting scripture is to be found in Ephesians 2, verses 19-22.

“Consequently, then, no longer are you guests and sojourners, but are fellow-citizens of the saints and belong to God's family, being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the capstone of the corner being Christ Jesus Himself, in Whom the entire building, being connected together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord: in Whom *you*, also are being built together for God's dwelling place, in spirit.”

To get the full meaning of this, let us go back to the first chapter of this epistle, and note particularly when we were chosen for this honor. Beginning at verse 3, 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.”

THE CHOOSING OF THE ECCLESIA

There are only two passages of scripture which describe the choosing of the ecclesia, yet the contrast between them could hardly be greater.

The one in 1 Corinthians 1, verses 26-31 describes our individual calling, and is certainly not flattering to us as human beings. For we are called from among the stupid, the weak, the ignoble, the contemptible and that which is not—five terms in descending order of worldly value—in order that no flesh at all should be boasting in God’s sight. We are left so completely denuded of personal worth that we need something from outside of ourselves to make us fit for the calling with which God calls us. God Himself finds the answer to our deficiencies, for he makes us to be in Christ Jesus “Who became to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance.” By doing this, He takes away from us all right to vaunt ourselves, but gives us the right, if we must be boasting, to boast in the Lord. Paul himself exercised this right in Romans 15:17, when he said, “I have, then, a boast in Christ Jesus, in that which is toward God. *For I am not daring to speak any of what Christ does not effect through me.*”

The other scripture describing our choosing is the

one under notice in Ephesians 1:4. "According as He [God] chooses us in Him [Christ] before the disruption of the world."

He chooses us in Christ. No word here about our merits or demerits. But can we think of anything in Christ as being "stupid, weak, ignoble, contemptible or what is not"? The very suggestion could itself be described by any, or all, of those five terms. That which is chosen in Christ is immensely precious in God's sight, because of the love which He bears to the Son of His love. And it is in love, so we read, that He designates us beforehand for the place of a son for Him. From the very first the ecclesia is seen by God to be holy and flawless, and is very precious to Him, firstly because it is the complement of Christ, through which He is to complete the all in all, and secondly because it is in the ecclesia, and in Christ Jesus, that He is to obtain glory throughout all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen! (Eph.3:21).

BEFORE THE DISRUPTION

The ecclesia was chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world. The disruption is that event which is referred to in Genesis 1:2, where we read that "the earth became a chaos and vacant, and darkness was on the face of the submerged chaos." This was before man was created; hence we were chosen in Christ before any of our acts, or indeed the acts of any of humanity (including Adam himself) could have any bearing on the matter, and certainly long before anybody could be classified according to flesh as "stupid, weak, ignoble, contemptible or that which is not." We were chosen on the same principle as Jacob was chosen, for "not as yet being born, nor putting into practice anything good or bad, *that the purpose of*

God may be remaining as a choice, not out of acts, but *of Him Who is calling*" (Rom.9:11). The One Who calls is the One Who has first made the choice, and nothing that happens as a result of the disruption can in any way affect the original choice or the calling that ensues.

The God Who chooses us is the God Who chose Israel to be His people, and of that choice it is written, in Romans 11:25-32, "For I am not willing for you to be ignorant of this secret, brethren, lest you may be passing for prudent among yourselves, that callousness, in part, on Israel has come, until the complement of the nations may be entering. And thus *all Israel* shall be saved, according as it is written,

Arriving out of Zion shall be the Rescuer.

He will be turning away irreverence
from Jacob.

And this is My covenant among them

Whenever I should be eliminating their sins.

"As to the evangel, indeed, they are enemies because of you, yet, as to choice, they are beloved because of the fathers.

"For unregretted are the graces and the calling of God. For even as *you* once were stubborn toward God, yet now were shown mercy at their stubbornness, thus these also are now stubborn to this mercy of yours, that *they* also may be shown mercy. For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all."

"Unregretted are the graces and the calling of God." If salvation is assured to all Israel, in spite of all that nation's stubbornness toward God, then it is certainly assured to all members of that ecclesia which is chosen in the Son of His love.

But the fact that they were chosen before the disruption of the world has an added force. Seven matters are described in Scripture as being *from* the disruption of the world; only three are described as being in existence *before* the disruption of the world. They are (1) the love which God had for His Son (John 17:24), (2) God's foreknowledge of Christ's sacrifice (1 Pet.1:20), and (3) the choosing of the ecclesia. These three indicate the motive behind God's purpose, the means by which it is carried out, and the medium through which its end is attained.

God's purpose is centered around the Son of His love. Christ is God's Executive, carrying out that purpose for His Father. Since all is for Christ (Col.1:17), it is clear that the motive behind God's purpose was the love He bears for His Son, and, through Him, the love He bears for all creation. Clearly His purpose was conceived before the disruption, and since He knows the end from the beginning, the disruption must have been an element in His purpose.

Hence the foreknowledge of the Lambkin, slain *from* the disruption of the world (Rev.13:8) but foreknown *before* it (1 Pet.1:20).

And hence, too, the choosing of the ecclesia *before* the disruption, that it might be holy and flawless, completely free from any contamination or other defects brought about as a result of the disruption. The ecclesia was chosen in Christ before any suggestion of an Adversary became apparent to creation. Because of its unique position—antecedent to rebellion in its choice in Christ, yet suffering the effects of rebellion because of its choice out of humanity—the ecclesia is especially well endowed to fulfill God's role for it in the display of His grace to all creation. So clearly established in God's mind was this

role of the ecclesia that the gift of grace was given to it, in Christ, even before eonian times (2 Tim.1:9).

Whether we regard the choice of the ecclesia as being made in Christ before the disruption of the world, or whether we regard it, in its individual aspect, as being chosen in the main from the lower strata of mankind, *the choice is of God*. The two pictures are not contradictory, but complementary to each other. The one in Ephesians is how God sees the ecclesia—holy and flawless in Christ; the one in Corinthians is how humanity would value its members, seeing them only through eyes of flesh, and being unaware of the calling to which they are called. God's wisdom is as different from man's wisdom as is the picture in Ephesians from that presented to us in Corinthians.

ISRAEL'S PRE-EMINENCE IN FLESH

The choosing of the individual members of the ecclesia from the ranks of humanity brought with it, however, a different problem, which had to be resolved. In the flesh, all privileges were the property of the nation of Israel. Paul, in Romans, asks, "What, then, is the prerogative of the Jew?" and he replies, "Much in every manner. For first, indeed . . . they were entrusted with the oracles of God" (Rom.3:1,2). Later in the epistle he tells us that theirs "is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the divine service and the promises; whose are the fathers, and out of whom is the Christ according to flesh, Who is over all, God be blessed for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.9:4,5).

The Gentile nations, on the other hand, enjoyed no such favors. Their position is aptly described by Paul in Ephesians 2:11,12. "Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations, in flesh—who are termed 'Un-

circumcision' by those termed 'Circumcision,' in flesh, made by hands—that you were, in that era, apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world."

The Greek word translated "without God" is the plural *atheoi* (UN-PLACERS). Those referred to here were the true "atheists" of Scripture, in that they had no access to Israel's sanctuary (beyond the court of the Gentiles; cf Concordant Commentary, p.290).

Yes, Israel was the nation of God's choice, so much so that He declared, "But you do I know of all the families of the ground" (Amos 3:2). Yet the vast majority, though not all, of the members of the present ecclesia are from the nations outside Israel. How could they be the chosen of God?

Paul answers this question for us in 2 Corinthians 5, verses 14-17. Before we quote this passage from the Concordant Version, let us quote verses 15 and 16 from the King James Version—we have a special reason for doing this. There we read, ". . . and that He died for all, that they which live should not *henceforth* live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore *henceforth* know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now *henceforth* know we Him so no more." Note the triple use of the word "henceforth." Whenever a word, or an idea, occurs in Scripture three times in quick succession, it is *very important*, like the threefold use of the word "create" in Genesis 1:27 (this shows the importance of humanity as a creation) and the threefold use of the word "work" in Genesis 2:2,3, which shows the completion of God's work at that time, and the effectiveness of His stopping.

HENCEFORTH

The word "henceforth" occurs nineteen times in the King James Version of the New Testament and is used to translate several Greek expressions, which are variously rendered in the Concordant Version. Each of these occurrences indicates a point of demarcation, that is, a point at which circumstances or conditions change. We are all used to such points of demarcation; we have several in our own lives. At a certain age we become liable to go to school; at a later date, we are considered to be adult and are allowed to vote in elections; later still we may reach a time when we are entitled to a pension. At each of these points, we could insert the word "henceforth," meaning "from now on."

Many of the scriptural usages of this word (or its CV equivalent) are very familiar, for example, those in Matthew 23:39; 26:29; John 1:51; 13:19; 14:7; Rev. 14:13. Acts 18:6 indicates a vital turning point in Paul's ministry. "From now on [henceforth] I shall go to the nations."

There are other instances besides these. All are important, but surely especially so when we find three within the space of two verses, though again we mention that the three Greek expressions are slightly varied, which explains why the Concordant Version renders them differently. The CV is quite correct in doing so, and indeed could hardly do otherwise and remain true to its principles, but in this particular case the King James Version does bring out the point that there is a *threefold* demarcation here.

Let us now quote the passage in full from the Concordant Version, but insert [in brackets] the word "henceforth" where it occurs in the King James Version, so that the three lines can easily be picked out.

Beginning then at verse 14, we read, "For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died. And He died for the sake of all that those who are living should by no means still [henceforth] be living to themselves, but to the One dying and being roused for their sakes. So that *we*, from now on [henceforth], are acquainted with no one according to flesh. Yet even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now [henceforth] 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!"

In this passage, the three points covered by the demarcation are:

1. Those who can count themselves as living, no longer live to themselves, but to Christ.
2. We are acquainted with *no one* according to flesh.
3. No longer do we know Christ according to flesh.

THE DISCARDING OF THE FLESH

It is clear from a reading of the whole passage that we have come to a crisis point in Paul's teachings. This crisis is one where the flesh is completely discarded by those who are in Christ. Paul has been gradually building up his thought to this position through his two Corinthian letters. These letters are the earliest writings of Paul (apart from his two epistles to the Thessalonians, in which there is no mention of the flesh and therefore no conflict between flesh and spirit). The conflict begins in first Corinthians, and is discerned against a background of division and discord, in the preaching of the cross. For on the cross the flesh (in the person of the incarnate Son of God) was crucified. Indeed, we may well say that, in the

crucifixion of Christ, the flesh fulfilled the main purpose for which it was created, for humanity was created in order to provide a form in which God's Son could appear and give His life for the universe—the flesh, in fact, being a form of creation subject to death (*cf* Heb.2:6-9).

Let us then briefly note how, in these two letters to the Corinthians, there is a steady and progressive disparagement of the flesh until it is discarded altogether in the passage we are considering. We quote a few successive scriptures to establish this trend.

“Not many wise according to the flesh . . . God chooses” (1 Cor.1:26).

“So that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight” (1 Cor.1:29).

“The soulish man is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God, for they are stupidity to him” (1 Cor.2:14).

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to fleshy, as to minors in Christ. Milk I give you to drink, not solid food, for not as yet were you able . . . you are still fleshy. For where there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshy and walking according to man?”

Chapters 5 to 11 continue to deal with matters pertaining to the flesh, in conformity with Paul's statement that he could not speak to the Corinthians as spiritual, but must continue to regard them as fleshy, and address them accordingly. Only in chapter 12 does he begin to speak of spiritual endowments.

But in chapter 15 we come across a very significant passage, beginning at verse 45, “If there is a soulish body, there is a spiritual also. Thus it is written also, The first man, Adam, ‘became a living soul;’ the last

Adam a vivifying Spirit. But not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual. The first man was out of the earth, soilish; the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. Such as the soilish one is, such are those also who are soilish, and such as the Celestial One, such are those also who are celestials. And according as we wear the image of the soilish, we should be wearing the image also of the Celestial."

Here we have the first intimation of a new humanity (to be described in more detail in later epistles). As the old humanity, begun in Adam, was soulish, so the new humanity, begun in the last Adam (Christ) is spiritual. And the two will not mix, for in verse 50 Paul avers that "flesh and blood *is not able* to enjoy an allotment in the kingdom of God." Thus the way is being paved for the final discarding of the flesh in 2 Corinthians 5.

This is done in a series of quick statements. First, the apostle establishes that *One* died for the sake of *all* (v.14). The use of the word "One" emphasizes the unique standing of Christ as the "One not knowing sin" (v.21) in contrast to the "all," who have missed the mark.

Next, Paul deduces that, if One died for the sake of all, then all died. This is a piece of divine logic. Though in men's eyes, the old humanity might continue for many generations, in God's sight it had fulfilled the main object for which it had been created in Adam, and should now be regarded as dead in order that Christ might be the Head of a new humanity, begun in Himself.

From this it follows that "those who are living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One dying and being roused for their sakes" (v.15). Living to oneself implies attachment to Adam

and the old humanity; this must give way to living to Christ.

The next fact is the logical outcome of all this. It is that we who are Christ's, are acquainted with *no one* according to flesh (v.16), for there is neither present nor future for anyone in that which God regards as dead. From this, the startling conclusion is drawn that, even if we have known Christ according to flesh (and who is more deserving to be known in this way?), from now on we know Him so no longer. That is to say, we are no longer to look upon Him as the incarnate One (in which case He would still be a Jew, ministering primarily to Israel), but rather to see Him in His present glorified existence as the risen and ascended Lord, a vivifying Spirit, rejoicing in the full power of resurrection might and God-given authority, Who will fill us with His spirit, so that we, too, may be rejoicing in newness of life.

THE NEW CREATION

Now we are ready for the *complete break* with the flesh. "So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is *a new creation*: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new!"

The former humanity is now seen to have been a primitive phase—a temporary tabernacle existence created only to be demolished when the time came for it to make way for a new humanity, created in Christ. *That time has now come*, though it is apparent only to those of faith, who see the old humanity as having been destroyed at the cross. Though it may seem to continue to exist, it is scripturally regarded as dead (cf Rev.20:12). It has no power within itself to please God. "For" says Paul, "I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh)," and

again, "The disposition of the flesh is death" and "Those who are in the flesh are not able to please God" (Rom.7:18; 8:6,8).

The new creation, of which the new humanity in Christ is a part, is not a development of the old. It would not be a *creation* if it were. The new heavens and new earth of Isaiah 65:17 do not bring forward anything of the old; on the contrary, it is stated that "the former shall not be remembered, nor come upon the heart." Again, in Revelation 21:4, "The former things passed away." In 2 Corinthians 5:17 it is, "the primitive passed by" (*ta archaia*, the primitive things).

To Paul, the new creation meant that the world was crucified to him, and he to the world; there was no longer any living connection between them. The privileges of the flesh (as typified by circumcision) meant nothing (*cf* Gal.6:14,15). Indeed, in Christ all fleshly distinctions vanish; there is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal.3:28).

It is in the new creation that the ecclesia is seen as God's dwelling place in spirit, for that which would have confined God's blessings to Israel has been passed by. We hope to look into this further in our next study.

John H. Essex

(*To be continued*)

AID TO INDIA

For the aid of our brethren in Andhra State in India, who were victims of the fierce cyclones last November, Brother Raju has purchased building materials, food grains, clothing and utensils. We trust that these materials have now been distributed, and on behalf of the Concordant Scripture Mission in India we want to thank all who helped make this emergency aid available.

THE DEPARTING GLORY

WHEN the temple, built under Solomon, was dedicated, it is said that the glory of the Lord so completely filled the house that the priests could not stand to perform their service (1 Kings 8:11). It was like a cloud, no doubt one of radiance and fire such as Ezekiel saw (Ezek. 1:4, 25-28; 8:2). This shining splendor is one of the most impressive and expressive representations of the greatness of God in the Old Testament. However, it is only a representation. The real glory of Ieue is His power to save and bless, causing the unworthy and useless to become a source of blessing. This is what was being manifested (though not in fullness) with Solomon, the son of David and Bathsheba, with helpless Israel in the wilderness and other times when the "glory" shone most brightly.

The movement of the glory of Ieue in Ezekiel 10 and 11 represents a reality which had already occurred among the Israelites. The people had turned from dependence on Ieue and rested on their own devices, looking to their political leaders and their diplomatic efforts for deliverance from the dangers they were in. Ieue's true glory, His power and faithfulness, was not being recognized. Consequently, the symbol of that glory began to depart.

THE CLOUD

The principal symbol of Ieue's glory is a cloud which filled the temple and the court with a bright light

(10:4). It moved from above the cherubim to the sill of the house, then back to the cherubim in the court (10:4,5,18). As these cherubim moved eastward to the eastern gateway of the temple the glory moved above them (10:19). Finally it rose up over the city and was last seen standing over the mountain (Mount of Olives) to the east of the city (11:22,23).

THE CHERUBIM

The animals which Ezekiel saw in chapter one are now identified as cherubim (10:15,22). This is appropriate since the Lord communed with Israel (through Moses, and later through the priesthood) from between the golden cherubim of the mercy seat (or "propitiatory shelter") on the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies (*cf* Ex.25:17-22). The ark (or "coffer") was another symbol of the glory of Ieue in relation to His protection of and provision for Israel as can be seen in 1 Samuel chapter four.

E. H. Clayton has provided us with some useful information concerning the cherubim in his article on "The King of Tyre" (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 36, pp. 21-34). The following excerpts from that study are of interest here:

"In Ezekiel the cherubim are perhaps more prominent than in any other section of the Scriptures. Doubtless there is good reason for this This prophet is much concerned with the evil in Israel, and with its restraint

"It would seem that the cherubim are the prime agents in God's government of the earth. God has supreme and effective control of it, which is carried out by manifold agencies, but we see only the instrumental aspect, as when one nation overthrows another, and the Scriptures reveal it to be of God.

When we read about the cherubim in visions, then we see God's throne in operation, and the cherubim take part in His government. They are related to the authority of God as displayed in directing the affairs of the earth, and hence, because of the way which earthly matters take, this directing usually issues in judgment. The cherubim thus are employed to check the powers of evil, for they are the divinely constituted delegates of the earth, over and above the human. The cherubim forward essential good and frustrate evil, for they are always subservient to the fiat of God"

Consequently, we see that the movements of the cloud and of the cherubim in Ezekiel 10 and 11 represent governmental operations of Ieue over Israel, especially in this instance, the removal of His protection and guidance of that nation from the center of the temple and the city of Jerusalem.

THE RETURN OF THE GLORY

These two chapters present one of the saddest scenes of Israel's history. There is to be delay in the manifestation of Ieue's glory on the earth. And even though the Light of the World (John 8:12) did appear, yet it was as the suffering Saviour and not yet as the glorious Prince of peace. He also ascended from the Mount of Olives to the east of Jerusalem (Acts 1:9-12). Yet He will return to that mountain (Zech.14:4), and Isaiah's prophecy (60:1) will be fulfilled:

Light up! Light up, Jerusalem!
For come has your light
And the glory of Ieue over you is radiant.

This return of the glory to Jerusalem and the future temple is described in Ezekiel 43:14; 44:4. Once again it will fill the entire house, but far greater than ever before, for it will enlighten the earth itself!

JUDGMENT

Along with these movements of departing glory, in chapter eleven we are given an illustration of what this loss will mean to Jerusalem. Ezekiel is shown twenty-five chiefs of Israel who are "devisers of lawlessness and counselors of evil" (11:1,2). They had been assuring themselves that the destruction of Jerusalem was not near and that they were protected in the city just as flesh is protected from the fire by the pot (11:3). Yet Ieue will remove them from Jerusalem and execute judgments among them (11:7-10). Jerusalem and the presence of the temple will not prove to be a protection to the people dwelling there (11:11).

At this point one of the twenty-five chiefs, named Pelatiah, dies (11:13), a sign of what was going to come upon the city in association with the departing glory. Without the glory there is no protection.

A LITTLE SANCTUARY

The death of Pelatiah so impresses Ezekiel that he cries out to Ieue in despair, "Thou art making a finish of the remnant of Israel" (11:13), but Ieue responds that though the temple would be destroyed, yet He Himself will become a little Sanctuary to the scattered exiles of Israel in other lands (11:16).

And even beyond this He promises to convene Israel once again and establish a new covenant with them (11:17-20; cf 36:24-30; Jer.31:31-34). This preview of the return of the glory of Ieue to Israel in their own land is a touching reminder of Ieue's mercy as well as an encouraging reminder of His faithfulness.

In the meantime we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials in Christ so that we may rejoice in and sound forth the laud of the glory of God's grace. This glory does not dim nor will it

depart from us since it is based solely on the work of the cross and not on our acts and achievements. Because of this grace our pathway continues to be "from glory to glory" (2 Cor.3:18).

TEXTUAL NOTES

(10:2,6,7) the Hebrew reads simply **the linen** while the LXX has **the robe** in 2 and **the holy robe** in 6 and 7. (10:9) **sparkle**=eye. (10:22) the phrase **under the glory of the Alueim of Israel**, taken from the LXX, is based on Ezekiel 1:25-28 and 10:19. (11:1) **Azur**=Helper; **Pelathiah**=Deliverance-Ieue. (11:3) **It**=she (refers to city). (11:7) the Hebrew reads **He will bring you forth** in the last line, but the substitution of **I** for **He** is well supported by the LXX, Syriac and other manuscripts. (11:12) **customs**=judgments. (11:13) **loud**= GREAT. (11:15) instead of **deportation** the Hebrew reads **redemption**, but the two words are similar in appearance, and Ezekiel uses **deportation** often (e.g. verses 24,25) but not **redemption** which hardly fits in this context. (11:19) the Hebrew reads **will I bestow within you**, but the evidence for **them** is very strong, both in the context and from other manuscript readings. (11:24) **Chaldeans**=As-demons.

CROSS-REFERENCES

(10:1) Ex.24:10; Ezek.1:22,26. (10:3) Num.9:15-22. (10:4) 1 Kings 8:10,11. (10:18) Ezek.43:1-7. (11:8) Jer.42:16; Ezek.5:17. (11:10) 2 Kings 25:18-21; Jer.52:24-27. (11:13) Ezek.9:8; Jer.4:27; 5:10,18. (11:16) Isa.8:14; Jer.30:11; 31:10.

D.H.H.

HERBERT MELVIN WARREN

We belatedly announce the death of Brother Warren of Napa, California, on March of last year at the age of 88. He had been a friend of our work for over 30 years and introduced it to others whenever he had opportunity. We will meet in that day ahead to which we are saved.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY, 1978
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

CRITICISM against the *Concordant Literal New Testament* (CLNT), or against the Concordant Method of translation, oftentimes seems to show a lack of understanding about what A. E. Knoch attempted to do. Reference is made to the fact that uniform word-for-word translation from one language to another is impossible; then it is stated or implied that since the CLNT is an attempt to do just that, it is a worthless piece of work—if not dangerous. Yet a glance at the entries in the *Keyword Concordance* shows that a great many of the Greek words are rendered by more than one English word. Since the Version was to be “idiomatic,” A. E. K. did not wish to carry concordance to ridiculous extremes. “All *versions* must be idiomatic, but the Concordant Version endeavors to keep idiom under control, so that the translators cannot introduce their own interpretation under the guise of idiomatic language” (Introduction to *Isaiah*, p.10). Dr. Eugene Nida of the American Bible Society (ABS) wrote the following concerning concordance:

In attempting to reproduce consistency in word usage, an F-E translation [Formal-Equivalence] usually aims at so-called concordance of terminology....Such a principle, of course, may be pushed to an absurd extent, with the result being relatively meaningless strings of words, as in some passages of

the so-called Concordant Version of the New Testament. On the other hand, a certain degree of concordance may be highly desirable in certain types of F-E translating. For example, a reader of Plato's Dialogues in English may prefer rigid consistency in the rendering of key terms....so that he may have some comprehension of the way in which Plato uses certain word symbols to develop his philosophical system. An F-E translation may make use of brackets, parentheses, or even italics (as in the King James Bible) for words added to make sense in the translation, but missing in the original document" (*Towards a Science of Translating* [1964], p.165).

This quotation illustrates the opening statement of this editorial. Dr. Nida is a highly respected Linguist and Bible translator, and we do not want to reject his contributions simply on the basis of his criticisms of our work. In fact, we welcome suggestions for improvements or corrections for consideration in future revisions of the CLNT. However, we object to this criticism of the CLNT.

It is noteworthy that in regards to translating Plato, Dr. Nida suggests that some readers may prefer a uniform vocabulary in the translation of key words. There surely is value in a translation of the New Testament which similarly maintains a "rigid consistency in the rendering of key terms" with a special typeface to indicate "words added to make sense in the translation, but missing in the original document." The CLNT does this. Certain important words such as *psuchê* ("soul"), *nomos* ("law"), *zoê* ("life") and *aion* ("eon") are translated uniformly throughout the NT. Though this may have been done to a greater extent than Dr. Nida meant by "a certain degree," we feel there is good justification for this. A.E.K. had the conviction that the unlearned, but earnest, student of the Scriptures is both willing and able to put forth the extra effort required to use a concordant translation.

One of the motivations behind the development of Bible Societies was the belief that the "common man" had the *right*, as well as the ability, to read the Scriptures for himself in order to discern what the Word had to say to him. The aim was to avoid the intermediary interpretations of the established church authorities and to put the responsibility for interpreting the Bible into the hands of the individual reader. A case could be made for saying that the ABS is returning to a similar state of affairs as prevailed then. In their efforts to produce an easily read English Bible, a large degree of interpretation is involved.

Since the TEV [Today's English Version] is a dynamic equivalence translation, it is recognized that, in keeping with the principle of clarity, the translation will reflect a single interpretation of passages where scholarship has offered more than one. The Committee is not to evade decision of interpretive questions by resort to a formal correspondence translation" ("The Good News Bible Translation Principles," *Practical Papers for the Bible Translator*, [Oct. 1977], p. 409).

The CLNT, on the other hand, seeks to retain the wording of the Greek, thus minimizing the translator's interpretation.

We will not go to the opposite extreme to say that the *Good News Bible* is without worth. Yet there are believers who wish to determine first what the Bible *says* (literally), before deciding on its appropriate interpretation. These would find the CLNT more suited to their needs than the *Good News Bible*. When A.E.K.'s method and purpose are well understood, the CLNT, as well as the *Keyword Concordance* and the *Concordant Greek Text*, can be recognized as the valuable study tools that they are. In all that we do, we desire (along with the ABS) to foster individual study of the Sacred Scriptures for the spiritual growth of the body of Christ.

James D. Thompson

GOD'S WILL AND MAN'S WILLINGNESS

Does God force His will on man?

God's will is sourced in Himself, and is determined by what He is. As He is essentially Light and Love, it is His will to reveal Himself, especially His affection. As no other motives can change this, His will is constant and His purpose immutable. As He has all power, nothing is able to thwart His will. But, as He has all wisdom, and revelation is best accomplished by the use of opposites, He uses darkness to reveal the light, evil to give the knowledge of good, and hate to impart a comprehension of His love. These temporary intentions seem to oppose His will, but must eventually serve in fulfilling it. Then there will be no night and no more doom, and all will be reconciled to God.

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

forced. His greatest power lies in the weakness and suffering of the cross. Through that He will gain the adoring allegiance of men's hearts.

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

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

The consummation of all at the close of the eons calls for *subjection*, which has conquered stubbornness. But it does not, therefore, denote apathy. What a world that would be, filled with indifferent, impassive, callous, will-lacking automatons! That is a sign of serious disease even in mortals today. Surely the Son will not take such a supine and abject place!

He will also be subject, but, at the same time the center of universal acclamation (Phil.2:11). We also will be *voluntary* subjects, who have such a regard for God's will that our own will will be completely attuned to His.

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

Is the subjection of all described in Philippians 2:9-11 an unwilling acclamation, forced upon man?

Certainly the word "graces" introduces us into an atmosphere of grace, ill suited to the thought of judgment. It is used once before in this letter. "To you," says the apostle, "it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29). The saints have the privilege of suffering at the hands of His enemies; the Saviour has the higher privilege of effecting their salvation. All, we are told, will *bow* the knee. This is a sign of fealty and worship. In one of the darkest days of Israel's defection God reserved seven thousand men who had not *bowed the knee to Baal*

(Rom.11:4). It is clear from this that this is no mere perfunctory performance, but that it involves a hearty homage. If He spared those who did *not* bow the knee to Baal, how much more will He save those who bow the knee to the Saviour of His selection? And this is vastly strengthened by the preposition here employed. It is not merely "at," but "*in*." The Revisers were right in making this correction. Its meaning is manifest in the opening of the chapter: "If there is any consolation *in* Christ." And again in verses 19, 24, 29. "In the name," has the force of "by virtue of the name," "in the power of the name," as is evident from its other occurrences, (*cf* Matt.7:22; 10:41; 18:5-20; 21:9; 24:5-9; John 2:23; 5:43; 16:24-26; Eph.5:20; Col.3:17). This gives us the key to the passage, which is the divine declaration (Rom.14:11; Isa.45:23):

"Living am I, . . .
For to Me shall be bowing every knee,
And every tongue shall be acclaiming God."

When this august oath is fulfilled it will be found that it was only by virtue of the name of a *Saviour* that every knee shall bow and tongue acclaim.

The name "Jesus" signifies "Jehovah the Saviour." Hoshea, the Son of Nun, had his name changed to Jehovah-Hoshea, Joshua, as a token that salvation was not in man, but in God. The Christ was given this ineffable name because "He shall be *saving* His people from their sins" (Matt.1:21). Never is it used alone in connection with judgment, but always in relation to salvation. To bow in this name can indicate but one thing, the acceptance of Him as their Saviour and all the benefits which that involves.

A concordance will show that a simpler form of the word acclaim, *to avow*, is always used in a voluntary avowal without the least suggestion of constraint.

Those who avow Him before men He will avow before His Father (Matt.10:32). The Jews had agreed to put out of the synagogue anyone who should avow Christ (John 9:22). Even some of the rulers believed, but did not avow Him (John 12:42). But a most conclusive passage is that where we are assured that if Jesus is avowed as Lord, salvation results (Rom.10:9). The word in Philippians, however, is the strengthened form which occurs when we read of the confession of sin (Matt.3:6; Mark 1:5; Acts 19:18; Jas.5:16). And yet it comes so close to worship that twice it has been rendered "Thank" in the King James Version (Matt.11:25; Luke 10:21), while the Revisers suggest "praise." That it is by consent, not constraint, is notably conceded when the Revisers render (Luke 22:6) "he consented." It never denotes a forced confession in the Scriptures. And this is confirmed by the fact that *every* knee and *every* tongue are included in these acts of adoration. It must include saints as well as others. They, at least, have already bowed the knee and confessed to God in His name. How unlikely that they should ever need compulsion! But this is inevitable if these words have any such force. There is no distinction between believer and unbeliever in this passage at all. How beautiful to see that His exaltation detracts nothing from the glory of the Father, but rather is the means of its display! But how can God's *Fatherhood* be revealed in crushing God's creatures beneath His heel? Would a *Father* be glorified in grinding his enemies into subjection? God, as Father, has no relation to retribution or wrath. As Father He may chide His children, but the exaltation of Jesus here enforced must be established on grace and its gifts, for it leads to God's recognition as a Father and glorifies that phase of His effulgence.

A DWELLING PLACE IN SPIRIT

(Part Two)

IN OUR last article, we attempted to show how Paul established a firm line of demarcation between flesh and spirit, and came to a point in his teaching where he completely discarded the former in favor of the latter. This was in 2 Corinthians 5:14-17. The moment that he declared the fact of a new creation, the former was once and for all passed by.

In this study, we wish to enlarge upon a few of the points mentioned in the last (which were of necessity abbreviated for reasons of space), and in particular show the wideness of the gulf which exists between flesh and spirit, and which forms the theme of much that occurs in the Roman epistle. Always let us remember that, in spite of the order of the epistles in God's Word, the two letters to the Corinthians, as well as the one to the Galatians, were written *before* Romans. Thus, when Romans was written, Paul had already passed the line of demarcation represented by the three *henceforths* (KJV), or their CV equivalents, of 2 Corinthians 5:14-16. He could write Romans in the knowledge that he had already spoken of a new creation. It is important that we should realize this when studying Romans.

FLESH VERSUS SPIRIT IN GALATIANS

The same conflict between flesh and spirit occurs in the argument of the Galatians letter. Chapter 5:16-18

reads, "Now I am saying, Walk in spirit, and you should under no circumstances be consummating the lust of the flesh. For the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh. Now these are opposing one another, lest you should be doing whatever you may want. Now, if you are led by spirit, you are not still under law."

There follows a comprehensive list of the works of the flesh—adultery, prostitution, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, enchantment, enmities, strifes, jealousies, furies, factions, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkennesses, revelries, and the like of these—and Paul adds that "those committing such things shall not be enjoying the allotment of the kingdom of God."

Let us not think for a moment that, because some of these things sound so horrible, that we are above them. *These are the natural works of the flesh*, and if we are delivered from them, it is only because of the abiding Spirit of God within us. And that Spirit can only abide within us because *God* counts us as being *a new creation* in Christ, a creation in which the flesh has no part.

In contrast to the works of the flesh, we have a description of the *fruit* of the spirit—a single fruit (*not* fruits, but a composite one), made up of nine elements: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control. Against such things there is no law, for law operates against the flesh, not against God's Spirit. Then Paul adds, "Now those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts."

The conflict between flesh and spirit is carried forward into the next chapter. In verses 7 and 8 we read, "Be not deceived, God is not to be sneered at, for

whatsoever a man may be sowing, this shall he be reaping also, for he who is sowing for his own flesh, from the flesh shall be reaping corruption, yet he who is sowing for the spirit shall be reaping life eonian." And the whole matter is summed up in verses 11-16. The subject is so important that Paul writes in large letters in his own hand, so that there shall be no mistake, and, as we quote further, let us note that in verses 14 and 15, we have reached the same conclusion as in 2 Corinthians 5:14-17, namely, a new creation.

"Whoever are wanting to put on a fair face in the flesh, these are compelling you to circumcise only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ Jesus. For not even they who are circumcising are maintaining law, but they want you to be circumcised that they should be boasting in that flesh of yours. Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation. And whoever shall observe the elements by this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and on the Israel of God."

THE FLESH CONDEMNED IN ROMANS

The line of demarcation between flesh and spirit is expressed (as we have seen) in both the Corinthian letter and the Galatian one by the term "a new creation." In Romans, it is expressed by the term, "being justified," and the break occurs, with great abruptness, in chapter 3, verse 24. Notice the two phrases which come next to each other at this point, "For all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" and "Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus."

Justification paves the way for conciliation, and peace; this is a favor which is agreeable to the thought of the new creation, where the old, with all its enmity, is passed by.

From Romans 1:18 to 3:20, Paul deals with the malpractices and inherent evils of the flesh, and leaves it defenseless (2:1). Although the Roman epistle is concerned with an evangel which has, as its basis, the righteousness of God, this particular portion commences with the revelation of His indignation against a fleshly humanity, which deserves nothing better, seeing that, though men have a knowledge of God, not as God do they glorify Him or thank Him (1:21). Because of this, God ceases any longer to enlighten them, but allows their unintelligent heart to become darkened. Three times in the ensuing verses God "gives them over" to the evil propensities of the flesh (the lusts of their hearts, dishonorable passions, a disqualified mind—1:24,26,28), and the result is depravity and wickedness consequent upon their allowing full rein to the desires of the flesh—the uncontrolled soulishness of their carnal selves.

The second chapter truly shows man to be without defense; in whatever way he judges another he invariably judges himself, and he is continuously hoarding up for himself indignation in that day when the just judgments of God will be revealed, when He will be paying each according to his acts. With God there is no partiality, and the Jew, in spite of his prerogatives, is not to be privileged, for both Jews and Greeks are seen to be all under sin (Rom.3:9), even as it is written that "not one is just, not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God."

In these words, and those which follow, Paul is condemning the flesh. In verse 19, he continues, "Now

we are aware that, whatever the law is saying, it is speaking to those under the law, that every mouth may be barred, and the entire world may become subject to the just verdict of God, because, by works of law, *no flesh at all* shall be justified in His sight, for through law is the recognition of sin.”

At this point we have reached an impasse. There is no way, humanly speaking, by which man can be justified. Without law, the flesh, left to its own devices, turns against God, and fulfills the conditions of Romans 1:26-32. This was evident before the deluge of Noah's day, when there was no law; in that second eon humanity had become so corrupt and violent that God saw fit to destroy them all apart from Noah and his family. The law later given to Israel was a restraining influence, but it could not change the nature of the flesh, and thus could only bring about the recognition of sin. That is to say, the flesh, by works of law, could not become justified in God's sight, because of its own inherent inability (through its souliness) to keep the law; thus the law only made its sinfulness apparent. Thus, without law or with law, *every mouth* is barred before God—no excuses can be offered—and the *entire world* becomes subject to His just verdict.

THE IMPASSE BROKEN

It is at this precise moment, when all seems to be irretrievably lost, and the prospect utterly hopeless, that the apostle makes a most remarkable declaration, beginning with the arresting connective, “Yet now” (Rom.3:21). (In passing, note how this connective is used in 1 Corinthians 15, verse 20. From verse 12 to verse 19, we have a mounting despair, based on the tentative supposition that Christ is not roused from

among the dead—in such a case, our faith is vain, for we are still in our sins; even those who are put to repose in Christ are perished, and we are more forlorn than all men because our every hope is shattered. But what a difference the "Yet now" makes! "Yet now Christ has been roused," and this means that beyond any doubt all who have died in Adam will be made alive—vivified—in Christ, to Whom all will be made subject; that all enemies shall be put under His feet, that death itself will be abolished, and that God will be All in all. From utter abandonment in death to the highest sphere of living, with the glory of the ever-indwelling presence of God within each one of us—this is the extent of the impetus given to God's purpose by the "Yet now has Christ been roused." The rousing of Christ makes the consummation inevitable, and this is made clear in these verses.)

If the "Yet now" of 1 Corinthians 15 is God's answer to the problem of death, then the "Yet now" of Romans 3 is His answer to the question of sin. "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing."

This sounds marvellous, as indeed it is—"a righteousness of God for all, and on all who are believing"—yet the next phrase brings us back to reality with a bump. For lest any, who are believers, should think that because of their belief they have some merit which might entitle them to some preference in the matter of justification—some benefit not shared by others—Paul emphasizes that "there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God."

How then are any of us to attain to this righteousness, if we cannot contribute anything of

ourselves? The answer is declared unequivocally in an expression which incorporates all the majesty, all the wisdom and all the love of God, and which expresses in a phrase all the provision of a caring Creator for His erring creation, which He has never once allowed to slip out of His grasp—"Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus."

Notice here the succession of terms indicative of human helplessness: *Being justified*—requiring to be made right with God; *gratuitously*—without a cause, without anything in oneself that would give God reason for doing this; *in His grace*—purely as a favor; unearned; *through the deliverance*—requiring a rescue act; *which is in Christ Jesus, Whom God purposed*—not in oneself, but in the One Whom God appointed.

By this means of deliverance, ordained and executed by God, all boasting is debarred (v.27). The flesh is excluded.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NEW CREATION

This deliverance is the portal to the new creation, for it is "in Christ Jesus," and "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation." With justification, our standing with God is completely changed. We may be having peace towards Him because of the conciliation He has effected through the death of His Son. He sees us now as righteous in Christ, and our knowledge of this should be reflected in our whole attitude to life. So radical is this change that Paul can declare that "nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. Not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit, for the spirit's law of

life in Christ Jesus frees you from the law of sin and death”(8:1,2).

The flesh does not lightly relinquish its claim upon us. On the contrary, it will seek to maintain its hold until the very moment that we are changed (1 Cor.15:51). Chapters 6 and 7 of Romans look at the struggle between flesh and spirit and discuss it in some detail. The spirit sees the flesh as dead. The passage in 2 Corinthians 5:14,15 has a correspondence with Romans 6:8-11. If we believe that Christ died for the sake of all, and that consequently all died, then we should also be reckoning ourselves to be dead to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

The highest spiritual observance imposed upon the flesh was the law of God, which was holy and just and good. Yet all of those who strove to keep it failed because of the dominance of sin in the flesh. In the minds of men, the only alternative to law is anarchy. Yet anyone, in this era of grace, who still wishes to be under law, will become conscious of his own inability to attain the ideal, and will experience the conflict between body and mind as described in Romans 7. In verses 18-20 Paul says, “For I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not. For it is not the good that I will that I am doing, but the evil that I am not willing, this I am putting into practice. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin which is making its home in me.”

The succeeding verses show that, in such a conflict, the flesh will always come out on top; the war in our members, warring against the law of our minds, will lead us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. One thing alone saves us from such

wretchedness as this condition implies, and that is grace. For this rescuing agent, Paul thanks God through Jesus Christ, our Lord, and so, too, should we. It is God Who supplies this grace, which operates to secure our initial justification (“Being justified gratuitously *in His grace*”) and attends us in every stage of our journey through life. Because of His grace, we can, indeed, be counting ourselves as dead to sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

NOTHING CONDEMNS, NOTHING SEPARATES

In the eighth chapter of Romans, we have a series of arguments gathering momentum as the subject progresses. The chapter opens with the word “Nothing” (in the absolute—*not one thing*) “is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus” and closes with a *tenfold nothing* (equally absolute)—“neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.”

In between, we have the clarification of our position and status as participants of a new creation in Christ. We are not walking according to flesh, but according to spirit, for the spirit’s law of life in Christ Jesus frees us from the law of sin and death. God, by sending His own Son in the likeness of sin’s flesh and concerning sin, has condemned sin in the flesh that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us. Nothing that the law might require is beyond fulfillment by those who walk in spirit. Though they are not bound by the law to obey its letter, as were Israel in the flesh, grace leads them to act far beyond its spirit.

In the next few verses, the gap between flesh and

spirit is shown to be wide and, indeed, unbridgeable. Those who are in accord with flesh are disposed to that which is of the flesh, yet those who are in accord with spirit are disposed to that which is of the spirit. The disposition of the flesh is death; that of the spirit is life and peace. The disposition of the flesh is enmity to God; it is not subject to God's law, for (as we saw earlier) it is not able because of its own soulish nature. (It was this inherent soulishness which caused man to sin in the first place, and has caused all to sin ever since—it cannot be erased from the flesh.) Thus we are led to the absolute statement, "Now those who are in flesh are not able to please God."

This brings us to the points raised in earlier studies in this series. We are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that God's Spirit is making its home in us. And if we are being led by God's Spirit, then we are sons of God, and able to cry "Abba, Father." And, more than that, the spirit itself is adding its witness to our own spirit that we are children of God. "Yet if children, enjoyers also of an allotment, enjoyers, indeed, of an allotment from God, yet joint enjoyers of Christ's allotment, if so be that we are suffering together, that we should be glorified together also."

This is a far cry from the existence enjoyed by God's people in the flesh. Truly God dwelt with Israel when the tabernacle was in their midst, but He was hidden from their fleshly eyes, and only the chief priest was allowed to enter into His presence on their behalf, and that only once a year, and with blood. But we, living in the spirit of the new creation, where soulish flesh has no place, are granted free and unrestricted access to God, the blood of Christ having opened the way; and God Himself, through His Spirit, dwells within us, both individually and collectively. He has an

allotment among the saints (Eph.1:14), in whom He will find glory "throughout all the generations of the eon of the eons" (Eph.3:21).

What we have been endeavoring to do in this particular study is (as mentioned at the beginning) to show the complete gulf that lies between flesh and spirit. It is foolish to try to mix them, or to try to carry over any aspirations or works of the flesh into our spiritual lives. We should be living in the spirit of the new creation, where our former state is regarded as being "passed by," and where we have the assurance that we are, indeed, sons of God, inhabited by His indwelling Spirit.

John H. Essex

CYRIL PECK

We mourn the loss of Brother Cyril Peck of Northampton, England, who was put to repose on the 5th of February, aged 87. As a master printer he produced most of the literature issued from Sheffield, including the magazine, *Charisma*. From the first issue of *Unsearchable Riches* he was a whole-hearted supporter of our work. It was one of his greatest joys to study God's Word, concordantly rendered. Anyone doubting the effectiveness of God's ministry of grace should notice the life of this one. Those who were close to him will miss his wise counsel and deep love of the holy Scriptures. We extend to his wife Betty and daughter Kathleen our love and sympathy in the loss we share with them. The service was conducted by Brother Frank Orton. By request of Sister Peck, gifts were made to *Unsearchable Riches* funds instead of flowers. We thank God at every recollection of him.

JOSEPHINE RYBICKI

We are sorry to learn of the death of Sister Rybicki from the Detroit ecclesia, on March 1. A native of Poland, she loved to sing of her Lord in her native tongue, which she was doing with a group of fellow, senior citizens when she died. Pastor B. A. Baker brought the message at her funeral on March 4.

DAVIDIC COMMEMORATIVE

- 70 Alueim, come to rescue me!**
Ieue, hurry to my help!
- 2 Those seeking my soul**
shall be ashamed and abashed.
Those desiring my evil
will be turned away backward and confounded.
- 3 They shall turn back**
^{on}in consequence of their shame—
Those saying ⁷to me^{cs}, Aha! Aha!
- 4 All seeking Thee**
shall be elated and rejoicing in Thee.
And those loving Thy salvation
shall say continually, Great is Alueim!
- 5 +Yet I am humble and needy;**
Alueim, hurry to me!
My Help and Deliverer art Thou;
Ieue, Thou must not be delaying!

This commemorative psalm is essentially the same as Psalm 40:13-17. It was probably inserted here in order to complete the literary structure of this portion of the Psalter. Here the title **Alueim** often replaces the name **Ieue** found in Psalm 40, except in verse 5, where **Ieue** replaces **Alueim**. The content of the psalm is quite similar to the preceding one. It is the cry of one suffering persecution.

James D. Thompson

⁷DAVIDIC⁰

**⁷The sons of Jonadab
and the first of the captives⁰**

- 71 In Thee, Ieue, I take refuge.
I must not be ashamed for the eon!**
- ² In Thy righteousness wilt Thou rescue me
and wilt deliver me.
Stretch out Thine ear to me and save me.**
- ³ Become mine for a Rock,
a ⁷Stronghold^{cs} to come to, continually.
Thou dost instruct to save me,
for my Crag and my Fastness art Thou.**
- ⁴ My Alueim, deliver me from the hand of the wicked,
From the palm of the iniquitous and ⁷violent[?],**
- ⁵ For Thou art my expectation, my Lord.
Ieue is my trust from my youth.**
- ⁶ Upon Thee was I supported from the belly;
From the bowels of my mother didst Thou shear me.
In Thee is my praise, continually.**
- ⁷ As a miracle I become to many,
And Thou art my strong Refuge.**
- ⁸ My mouth shall be filled with Thy praise—
The entire day, with Thy beauty.**
- ⁹ Thou must not fling me away
>at the era of my old age.
^{as}At the conclusion of my vigor,
Thou must not forsake me.**
- ¹⁰ For my enemies commune >against me,
And observers of my soul consult together,**

- 11 > **Saying, Alueim has forsaken him,
 Pursue and grasp him, for there is no rescuer.**
- 12 **Alueim, Thou must not be far from me!
 My Alueim, hurry to my help!**
- 13 **The adversaries of my soul
 will be ashamed and finished.
 Those seeking my evil
 will be muffled with reproach and confounding.**
- 14 **And I am continually waiting,
 And I add ^{on}unto all, Thy praise.**
- 15 **My mouth is rehearsing Thy righteousness—
 The entire day, Thy salvation,
 for I do not know their number.**
- 16 **I will come in the mastery of my Lord;
 Ieue, I will mention Thy righteousness—Thine alone.**
- 17 **Alueim, Thou dost teach me from my youth,
 and hitherto am I telling Thy marvels.**
- 18 **And, moreover, till old and greyhaired,
 Alueim, Thou must not forsake me,
 Till I shall tell of Thine arm to a generation,
 To every one who is coming, Thy mastery.**
- 19 **And Thy righteousness, Alueim, is unto the height,
 Who doeth great things.
 Alueim, ^aWho is as what Thou art?**
- 20 **Thou Who dost show ⁷me^c distresses, many and evil,
 Thou wilt return.
 Thou wilt preserve ⁷me^c alive.
 And from the submerged chaos of the earth
 shalt Thou restore,
 Thou shalt ^cbring ⁷me^c up.**
- 21 **Thou shalt increase ⁷Thy^o greatness,
 And Thou shalt surround and comfort me.**
- 22 **Moreover, I will acclaim,
ⁱwith the zither instrument, Thy truth, my Alueim;
 I will make melody to Thee ⁱwith the harp,**

Holy One of Israel!

- ²³ **My lips will jubilate,
for I will make melody to Thee,
And my soul, which Thou dost ransom.**
- ²⁴ **Moreover, my tongue, the entire day,
shall soliloquize of Thy righteousness.
For they are ashamed,
for those seeking my evil are abashed.**
-

Franz Delitzsch, in his commentary on the Psalms, attributed the authorship of this psalm to Jeremiah. The most interesting piece of evidence for this is to be found in the superscription given in the LXX. The part in question reads, from the Greek, "of the sons of Jonadab, and of the first being led into captivity." The sons of Jonadab are mentioned in Jeremiah 35. These are the Rechabites, a Kenite tribe, proselytes to Israel from the time of the wilderness sojournings following the exodus (Num.10:29; Judg.4:11; 1 Sam.15:6; 1 Chron.2:55). Jonadab (or, Jehonadab) was an aid to king Jehu (2 Kings 10:15,16,23). Jeremiah held the Rechabites up as an example of how Israel should have behaved.

This is the song of a mature servant of Ieue who has been faithful from his youth (verses 5,17). He has often been saved by Him from the schemes of wicked men, so that his survival seems miraculous (verses 7,17). As his faculties begin to fail with age, he looks forward to the time when he is old and greyhaired, and implores his God to be with him then, as in the past. In verses 12 and 13 the theme of Psalm 70 returns. Alueim gives him many evil trials, but He also provides salvation from them (verse 20). J.D.T.

SOLOMONIC

- 72** Alueim, Thy judgments to the king dost Thou give,
And Thy righteousness to the son of the king.
- ² He shall adjudicate Thy people 'with righteousness,
And Thy humble 'with judgment.
- ³ The mountains shall bear welfare to the people,
And the hills ' righteousness.
- ⁴ He shall judge the humble of the people;
He shall save > the sons of the needy,
and shall crush the extortioner.
- ⁵ They shall fear Thee with the sun
And before the moon, generation after generations.
- ⁶ He will descend as rain on the mowing,
As showers, drenching the earth.
- ⁷ Righteousness is budding in His day,
And much welfare till the moon fails.
- ⁸ And He will hold sway from sea unto sea,
And from the stream unto the limits of the earth.
- ⁹ Before Him His 'foes' shall bow,
And His enemies shall lick up the soil.
- ¹⁰ The kings of Tharshish and the coastlands
shall restore an approach present.
The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer levy.
- ¹¹ And all kings shall worship > Him,
All nations shall serve Him.
- ¹² For He will rescue the needy one who implores,
And the humble one,
+when there is no helper for him.
- ¹³ He will be a refuge ^{on}for the poor and needy one,
And the souls of the needy will He save.

- 14 From fraud and from violence
will He redeem their soul,
And their blood will be precious in His eyes.**
- 15 And he shall live,
And He shall give to him Sheba's gold,
And he shall pray about Him continually.
The entire day shall he bless Him.**
- 16 The plentitude of cereal in the earth shall come to be
'at the summit of the mountains.
Its fruit, as Lebanon, shall quake,
And they 'of the city shall blossom
as herbage of the earth.**
- 17 His name shall come to be for the eon.
Before the sun shall His name be propagated.
And 'all the tribes of the land^o
shall bless themselves in Him;
All nations shall call Him happy.**
- 18 Blessed be Ieue, Alueim, the Alueim of Israel,
Doing marvels for Himself alone.**
- 19 And blessed be His glorious name for the eon!
And filled with His glory shall be `the entire earth!
Amen and Amen.**

The prayers of David, son of Jesse are finished.

NOTES FOR PSALM 72

Solomon, son of David, is the concern of this psalm. Dr. E. W. Bullinger suggested that it may have been written by David for Solomon at the time of his second investiture recorded in 1 Chronicles 29:23. The psalm itself is a prayer to Alueim for Israel's king. It foretells

of a just, long and prosperous reign; the king's treatment of the poor and downtrodden will be compassionate and abundantly generous. The land will flourish and kings will offer him their tribute. Solomon's reign was characterized by these very things, but it eventually failed, as the king's own spiritual condition deteriorated. His reign suffered the same dolorous debility as has afflicted all human government. By an ancient doom they are all bound to failure.

But this is not the whole story. This psalm has long been considered a Messianic one. The Targumic rendering of the first verse speaks of "the King Messiah" (F. Delitzsch, *Commentary*). [The *Targums* are ancient Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Scriptures.] Israel still looks for the consummate fulfillment of this portion of Scripture, when the King Ieue will rule all the world, and universal peace and blessing will extend through His entire dominion. Indeed, this lofty song closes with a twofold "blessed be" to Him.

This psalm concludes the second of the five books of the Psalter. These divisions were apparently designed to correspond with the five books of Moses. The "Amen and Amen" is the mark of the conclusion of these divisions (found also after Psalms 41, 89 and 109).

James D. Thompson

FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCES

BRAMCOTE, ENGLAND: Again this year a special two-day United Gathering is scheduled to be held on the grounds of St. Johns College in Bramcote, September 2 and 3. Write to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Orton, 58 Moor Lane, Bramcote, Nottingham, England.

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IN GRACE YOU ARE SAVED

AS WE READ Paul's letters to the believers of his day, we cannot but be impressed by his clear citation of salvation in grace. *In grace.* That is the central thought and keynote of his writings.

Note how he stresses it in the Ephesian epistle. There, in a marvelous sequence of thought, we see its character and import. Its source and channel, and stupendous range, is unfolded as never before. And in such a way that we should never tire of giving it expression.

Grace, and its companion, peace, are "from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." And it is God Who chooses us in Christ. *He chooses us in Him*, and, wonderful thought, is, "in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus." Then we see that every blessing in keeping with such a choice, is "in accord with the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us." And the purpose of it all is "that we should be for the laud of His glory." In such thoughts we perceive God's rare choice of us in a past our thought could never reach back to. It is too staggering for human comprehension, did we not see it clearly delineated in God's spirit-breathed Word—even the Word of His grace. Our present position, too, in accord with such divine favor, is gloriously high, even "among the celestials," as Paul goes on to show.

And what contrasts are brought to our mind! We are led to see our utter unworthiness for such exaltation, being reminded of our walk "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." And the closing expression could not be stronger—"even as the rest." For we are all under sin.

"Not one is just—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God" (Rom.3:11). A sweeping statement, yet all too true. Yes, even we ourselves were as the rest. How this phrase fixes and completes the picture, for all indeed are under sin. But now we come to that finest touch, as revealing our God, the Father of glory. For, in spite of what we once were, "in the lusts of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of the comprehension," we read on as follows: "Yet God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us, vivifies us together in Christ, rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the on-coming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus."

Yet God. What meaning these words hold in contrast with the former description of ourselves and others! How God confronts our hearts with the magnitude of His mercy and the vastness of His love! Mercy, which so divinely effects the good it speaks. And love, so immeasurable and far-reaching.

Its streams the whole creation reach,

So plenteous is the store.

Enough for all, enough for each,

enough for evermore.

And we are taken up in this great love, this inexpressible kindness of God so displayed in Christ

Jesus, because on Him forever descends the Father's love, and so upon all in Him. "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."

In grace are you saved. Once we realize this, we would never have it otherwise. It centers our thought upon God Himself, Who not only purposed but provided in full measure our great salvation. God's approach present indeed—His own free will offering. Therefore, nothing is asked of us but glad acceptance, and life-long appreciation. Blessing indeed, supremely and altogether of God. And why should it not be so? God loves to give, and such giving is in accord with the delight of His will. It is also in keeping with "the evangel of the glory of the happy God," with which Paul was entrusted.

God is greatly moved in giving, for is He not the happy God, "the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers" (1 Tim.4:10)? He is not like some humans who give ostentatiously, and that, perhaps, in a perfunctory manner.

Some years ago, a gentleman was in Carnegie's house when the famous ironmaster made his great gift of money to the cause of peace. "It is a great thing to do, Mr. Carnegie," said the gentleman. "Your heart must be thrilled this day. What a wonderful thing it is to have both the desire to give, and the money to gratify that generous desire!" Then Mr. Carnegie confessed that there was no thrill in the giving. "I sign my name to this piece of paper," he said, handing his visitor the paper containing the official statement of his gift. "It is taken from this desk, handed to a man who removes certain securities I have never seen from a vault I have never visited, to some other vault. I shall

never know that I have given anything. There will be no change in my living. I shall have to go without nothing as a result of what you are pleased to call my generosity. In giving I go through a ceremony that does not stir the heart."

How unlike God's wondrous giving! For He gives, not only munificently, but as the Father of glory, and the God of grace. And His grace is shown in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. Yes, God is moved, and continually moved, in His compassions that fail not. We would then, rightly appraise His great oblation, His incomparable giving. It meets our case so completely. For what works can we do of sufficient value to achieve such a goal as God desires?

It is just here where so many creeds lamentably fail. They overstress man's side of the question to the under valuation of God's lavish giving. To believe that God is the great philanthropist in the matter, and that choice is altogether of Himself, is most desirable to see and acknowledge. For, it is "not of works, lest anyone should be boasting." Even if one should boast of the highest virtues and services, it is of no avail.

Salvation has been once for all revealed, laid bare in the infinite worth of the Son of God, in Whom we have all that is meant by the great word *salvation*. It is then in Him, in the Beloved, we are accepted, and, being accepted, are brought near. What an acceptance, what nearness!

It is as a golden thread revealing itself again and again in a harmoniously designed tapestry. the vivid words: *In grace are you saved!* William Mealand

"The grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:14).

GRACE AND GOOD WORKS

OUR SALVATION from God's indignation and condemnation is accomplished *by* grace. It is the work of God in giving His Son for our sakes. Yet grace is not only the means of salvation but also an object of salvation. We are saved *to* the display of the transcendent riches of God's grace which is for the laud of the glory of His grace (Eph.1:6; 2:7). Such is God's favor to us that He alone offers the gift or approach present (which, in fact, He alone *can* offer) which gives us the access to Him in peace (Eph.2:8-18), and this He does through the death and resurrection of Christ. Because this deliverance from condemnation into a position where we are useful in displaying God's grace and bringing glory to Him is all of God, we can now appreciate what it means to be saved *in* grace.

Many of God's people have come to realize this blessed truth. They rejoice in God's great achievement at Calvary, and they stand firm in the conviction that salvation is *not* out of human *works*. This is a great step forward in faith.

However, not so many of us have recognized what the Scriptures mean when they declare in Ephesians 2:10, "For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them." Having seen that our works are to be separated from the gaining of salvation (verses 8 and 9) we are tempted as well to separate the good works here in verse 10 from grace. This will not do. The good works

are a favor from God just as much as salvation itself. They do not gain us salvation (that was gained by the good and obedient work of Christ on Golgotha), but they are a further extension of the grace of salvation. If we are walking in these good works it is God's achievement, and it is of grace.

GOD'S ACHIEVEMENT

The subject of the believer's works is very important, but it is generally approached from the wrong direction. We usually concern ourselves with what we should be doing for the Lord rather than stress what He has done for us. The place of priority in Ephesians 2:10 is not given to man but to God. Paul does not say first of all that we should be walking in good works; that comes at the end of the verse. Rather he begins with God. We are God's achievement. We are not reforming ourselves but are being created (anew) by God. We do not plan and develop good works for us to do, but instead God makes the good works ready ahead of time for us to walk in.

Good works are a favor from God, and they lead to His delight. In Philippians we have the truth of Ephesians concerning our salvation repeated in action. We see Timothy, Epaphroditus, Paul and the Philippians themselves saved in grace and carrying that salvation into effect by walking in the favor of good works. These examples are introduced with the following words: "So that, my beloved, according as you always obey, not as in my presence only, but now much rather in my absence, with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:12,13). Here is salvation effected in our daily lives, and this is

accomplished *by God!* He operates in us to will as well as to work *for the sake of His delight*. The origination of our service is God's operation, and the goal is God's delight.

How wrong it is, therefore, to think of works as beginning with human responsibility and ending with human rewards. Yet we continue to speak in terms of what we are supposed to do for God so that He will do such and such for us, or even worse we speak of what some man-made organization requires of us for its advancement. The more we can align our thoughts with the sound expressions of the Scriptures the more we will find that we are walking in good works. This is another way of saying that the more we appreciate the fullness of grace the more we will be disciplined and trained by grace. Let us put it just one more way: the more we begin with God in our thoughts and actions the more we will end with bringing delight to His heart.

WILLING AND WORKING

A. E. Knoch's thoughts on Philippians 2:12, 13, in his article, "The Will in God's Word" (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 41, p. 209), are most enlightening and should be of help at this point. We can understand how God operates in us to *will* to serve Him. This is because the believer continually experiences this will. It develops in him from within. But how about the *working*? Brother Knoch wrote:

"Willing is *not working*. This should be abundantly clear to the humblest saint, not only from the seventh of Romans where the wretched man *wills* to do the ideal, yet *cannot do* what he wills, but from his own experience. What a gulf there is between the two! Those in whom God's Spirit dwells are most willing to

please Him, but until they are *energized by His grace* they are unwilling captives of the law of sin. Will is in contrast to work. They are by no means the same. That is why Paul, in his perfection epistles, keeps them separate, and, after exhorting the saints to carry their own salvation into effect, assures them that God is operating in them *both* to will and to work."

Just as surely as God operates in us to will to bring glory to Him, so does He operate in us to walk in good works, carrying our salvation into effect. Let us note, however, that this energizing comes from within. It is *by God's grace*. Ephesians 2:10 must be kept in the same compartment as Ephesians 2:8, and indeed even here in Philippians we see that Paul founds this obedience on the evangel itself as stated in 2:5-11.

WE SHOULD AND WE SHALL

Responding to God's Spirit within us we shall be carrying our salvation into effect. There is no way to escape it (not that we would ever want to escape this grace)! When God prepares something it is carried to its completion just as we read in Philippians 1:6 concerning the *good work* He began among those believers.

Some have taken the word "should" in Ephesians 2:10 to suggest the possibility of failure. As a matter of fact, very few of us are so responsive to God's operation within that we can be compared with Timothy or Epaphroditus or Paul. But that does not mean that the good works which God has prepared for us will never be performed. The "should" here is the sign of the future subjunctive verb form, and the only point of contingency is whether or not God has made these good works ready beforehand. And that is settled by the blood of Christ. The only difference between

“should” and “shall” in this case is that the “should” makes us look back at the point of contingency to see how solid it is. Rejoicing in what God has accomplished on our behalf becomes a start in our experience of His further operation within us to lead us in good works. If some believers are not walking in these good works now it does not mean that they shall not; it only means that the grace of God is not yet operating in them as it will.

HARD WORK AND GOOD WORK

Not only do we often fail today to walk in the good works which God has prepared for us, but many times we also get good works confused with hard work. Good works certainly may often involve sweat and labor in this life just as they did for Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus. But not all hard work is good work in God's sight. The criterion is not the amount of physical and mental energy which goes into the work but whether or not the work is sourced in the grace of God and brings Him delight.

In Thessalonica Paul toiled and labored, “working night and day so as not to be burdensome” to others (1 Thess.2:9). This was ideal work because it involved the heralding of the evangel as well as the reflection of the evangel daily in consoling and comforting the believers. But it was not the work itself which made it ideal, not even the heralding of the evangel or Paul's diligence in comforting the Thessalonians in their struggles, but it was the fact that these good works arose from God's operation within. The apostle reminded the Thessalonians of this source of good works when he wrote, “And therefore we also are thanking God unintermittingly that, in accepting the word heard from us, *from God* you receive, not the

word of men, but according as it truly is, the word of God, *which is operating also in you* who are believing” (1 Thess.2:13).

Nevertheless, in His grace, God often uses the efforts of those who are working from the wrong motive and for the wrong goal! Many who try to operate under the law and do not realize they are saved in grace alone, still may believe that Christ gave Himself up for them as a sacrifice to God for a fragrant odor (Eph.5:2). Generally they are zealous workers, yet such service can bring no delight to God because it is founded on legal requirements and not on His grace. Yet if Christ is being announced, even from the wrong motives, God may use that announcement in calling out others of His chosen into faith, and we, like Paul, may be rejoicing in this also (Phil.1:15-18).

We certainly tend to judge too much from what we see with our eyes. We say a work is successful if it attracts followers and more workers. Again the true criterion is not a matter of appearances but a matter of God's operation within. From all appearances Paul's labors were in vain as he wrote the book of Ephesians from a prison cell. No great fame has come down to us in history concerning the efforts of Timothy and Epaphroditus, though legends of praise abound concerning the so-called "church fathers" who lived a few centuries later. Shall we say that Timothy was without good works because his service was of a meek and gentle nature, and he was sometimes despised by man (Phil.3:19-24; 1 Tim.4:12)? Epaphroditus was distressed not because he was close to death but because he was concerned that the Philippians would worry about his illness (Phil.2:26-30). Such labor can only be judged by whether or not it came forth from the Spirit of God within the believer. Although God

may humble us by using other kinds of work in more spectacular ways, the work He delights in is that which stems from the cross.

TOWARD MATURITY

The mature concept of the evangel is to see that we are saved in grace. So also the works of maturity arise from the grace of God. May we all be responsive to this spiritual direction within, which is centered on the evangel. First of all we should realize the fact that good works are prepared by God, that they are a grace which He provides on the basis of Christ's obedience even to the death of the cross. This is a matter for prayer, that we be filled full with the *realization* of God's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Without this realization of God's part in giving His Son on our behalf, in making ready good works through this sacrifice, we will fail to reach the worthy walk for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work (Col. 1:9,10).

That is why we begin with Ephesians in discussing the subject of good works. It presents the facts of the case. It tells us where the good works come from and what they are for. They come from God in His grace, and they are for the laud of His glory. Philippians builds on Ephesians and develops its various themes, but all truth for our faith and walk begins with the evangel, the good news that while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes. We cannot stress this message enough. Christ died for our sins and was entombed and has been roused the third day. Whether we realize the full significance of this revelation or not it remains the truth. It is the source and means of our gracious salvation *and* of the matchless favor of good works.

D.H.H.

SIGNS AND SAYINGS

EZEKIEL'S first vision (chapter 1) was followed by signs (chapters 4 through 7), and his second vision (chapters 8 through 11) was also followed by signs which the prophet acted out. These are given in chapter 12 which we are considering in this brief article. In the "Skeleton Index of Ezekiel," which we provide starting on page 165 of our translation, we note that these first twelve chapters, encompassing these two visions (appearances) and two groups of signs, deal with "the desolation" which was to come upon Israel and especially upon Jerusalem. Balancing this whole section are chapters 35 through 48, entitled "The Restoration."

In chapter 12 Ezekiel acted out the attempt of the leaders of Judah to escape Jerusalem, described in 2 Kings 25:1-7 and Jeremiah 39:1-7. He prepared his luggage by day and dug through a sidewall (probably of his house) by evening, covering his face so he could not see. So it came about that Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, tried to flee from Jerusalem but was captured, and his eyes were put out. Then he was taken to Babylon where he died (12:13; cf Jer.52:11).

As the first sign dealt with the "upper class" of Jerusalem, so the second sign was concerned with the common people. The prophet was to eat his small ration of bread with quaking and drink his water with anxiety (12:18). This, as explained in verses 19 and 20, pictured the stress and fear which was about to come on "the people of the land." These were the dwellers

in Jerusalem who are identified as "those on the ground of Israel," that is, the poor of Jerusalem.

PROVERBS

The people were putting their hope in false proverbs, two of which are considered in 12:21-28. The first was a denial of Ezekiel's prophecies: "Prolonged shall be the days. And perished has every vision." They thought that visions never came to pass and that things would continue as they were. To this Ieue replied, "Near are the days, and the matter of every vision." *Matter* represents the Hebrew term *word*, and refers to the "idea" or "theme" of the visions. This was to be realized in experience very soon. The second proverb, rather than denying the fulfillment of the visions, stated that it was far in the future: "The vision which he perceives is many days off." Ieue replied, "Not protracted further shall be any of My words."

WHERE IS THE GLORY?

There is something missing in chapter 12. It is the glory of Ieue. It had already departed, and the people of Jerusalem, both rich and poor, were facing captivity and destruction. From now on in Ezekiel it is as though we are descending into a dark pit, and we do not begin to ascend again until chapter 35. There are only glimmers of hope here and there along the way, pointing to the future glory.

It is important, therefore, that we do not forget the opening vision where the storm was replaced by the rainbow-like brightness of the throne (1:28), or the preview of the new covenant given in 11:19,20. These must be our "lanterns" for some time in this book. In chapter 12, for example, they must illuminate the

Lord's repeated words: "Then they shall know that I am Ieue."

There are many steps to the revelation of the glory of Ieue. First of all it must be made absolutely clear that man's efforts and wisdom will not succeed. The attempts of Zedekiah and his associates to escape must be stopped, and the false proverbs of the diviners must fail. It is Ieue (not Nebuchadnezzar) Who takes Zedekiah into blinded captivity, and it is He (not the Babylonians) Who brings destruction on Jerusalem. Yet this revelation of Ieue's indignation against wickedness and irreverence is a means to a glorious end. It is not an end in itself. Israel will come to know Ieue in His wrath, but in the end they and all the nations will know Him for His faithfulness and goodness (36:22-30).

TEXTUAL NOTES

(12:13) **Babylon**=IN-DISINTEGRATION; **Chaldeans**=As-Demons. (12:19) the Masoretic Text reads **its** rather than **their** before the word **land**. (12:20) the LXX **their** replaces the Masoretic reading **the**. (12:23) **matter**=**word**; **any**=**ALL**. (12:24) **sons** from the LXX, Syriac and other manuscripts replaces the Hebrew **house**. Other readings indicated in this chapter are insertions from the manuscripts indicated and do not replace readings of the Masoretic Text. (12:28) **any**=**ALL**.

CROSS-REFERENCES

(12:1) Ezek.2:1,3. (12:11-13) 2 Kings 25:1-7; Jer.39:1-7; 52:11.
 (12:14-16) Ezek.5:12-17. (12:15) Lev.26:31-33; Deut.4:27; 28:64.
 (12:24) Lam.2:14. D.H.H.

MICHIGAN: Monthly gatherings are held at various centers throughout the state. For details write to Grace and Truth Chapel, Box 84, Baldwin MI 49304.

JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

DAMASCUS is a very ancient city. To the west, the snow-covered ranges of mount Hermon separate it from the coastal region (today known as "Lebanon"), and to the east there is the seemingly endless desert where the river trickles away after having completed its course down from the mountains through the very middle of the town. Damascus was known in the days of Abram who went as far as Hoba (north of the city) when he pursued the hostile kings in order to rescue Lot whom they had taken prisoner; and Abram's foreman Eliezer was from Damascus (Gen.14:15; 15:2). We read in 2 Samuel 8:5,6 that king David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus after having slain 22,000 Syrians. In the days of Solomon, Damascus was the capital of independent Syria and was hostile to Israel. Later Jehovah Himself commissioned Elijah to anoint Hazael to be king over Syria (1 Kings 11:23-25; 19:15).

Damascus has survived its conquerors, such as Nineveh, Babylon and Memphis, cities whose history goes back to remote antiquity; it has profited from French rule between World War I and II and is now the capital of the sovereign state of Syria. During the past few decades the number of Jewish residents in Damascus has decreased from over 50,000 to a bare 5,000 who want to stay. They try to keep a low profile, they speak French to Syrians and other Gentiles, and they read their Scriptures in Hebrew when they meet

in the privacy of their fourteen synagogues, to them reminders of a happier past.

SAUL IN DAMASCUS

When Saul came to Damascus, many more Jews lived in this city than today, probably well over 20,000. (Josephus reports that between 10,000 and 18,000 Jews lost their lives during a massacre in Damascus when the Jewish insurrection began in 66.) Hence it is conceivable that there were many synagogues in the city when Saul stayed "some days" with the disciples of Damascus, "and immediately, in the synagogues, he heralded Jesus that He is the Son of God" (Acts 9:19,20).

The Lord had prepared the circumstances for Saul, so that he was to face the unbelieving Jews of Damascus *immediately* after having visited with the disciples. We know from Ananias' reply to the Lord (9:14) that Saul was expected to appear as the plenipotentiary of the chief priests in Jerusalem in order to punish believing Jewish men and women. If they would not blaspheme the name of Jesus (Acts 26:11), he was authorized to arrest them and take them before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem for trial and possibly capital punishment (26:10). If the risen Christ in His celestial glory had not stopped Saul outside the city, the young Pharisee would have presented his credentials to the synagogue authorities and would have demanded the extradition of Jewish believers.

We may well assume that Saul, weakened by three days' fasting, and seeing his Pharisee creed shattered, was still unable to correlate and harmonize the word of the Lord on the Damascus road fully with the traditional interpretation of the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms. It does not seem likely that,

at this early date, he was in a position to argue with unbelieving Jews.

GOD'S SON UNVEILED IN ME

Saul made the rounds through the local synagogues presumably on a single sabbath which fell in the short period of "some days" (*cf* Acts 9:19). He came as the bearer of a divine commission when he made his short announcement that Jesus is the Son of God (9:20). There was no time to go into any details; however he may have added, "It delights God to unveil His Son in me" (*cf* Gal.1:15,16).

No more words were necessary to emphasize the fact that Saul had completely severed his ties with the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, than this reference to the divine Sonship of Jesus Christ; for the chief priests and the elders had condemned Him to death because He had claimed to be the Son of God (Matt.26:63,64). Saul repeated this divine statement wherever he went in the Damascus synagogues and thus identified himself as a follower of the same Jesus Whom he had persecuted in the past. "Now amazed are all who are hearing, and they said, 'Is not this the one who, in Jerusalem, ravages those who are invoking this Name? And for this had he come here, that he may be leading them bound to the chief priests'" (Acts 9:21).

Saul's public confession was unexpected. The Jews who heard him, were dazed and bewildered; hence no swift action was taken against Saul locally, though they might have reported to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem that its plenipotentiary had defected.

IMMEDIATELY

As we have seen, Saul began heralding Jesus immediately after his recovery, without consulting any

of the twelve apostles in Jerusalem, without waiting for Peter's or any other man's sanction. Under the circumstances, there was no time for Saul to take any steps in this direction, nor was there any necessity, since he had received a personal and direct commission from Christ in His celestial glory: to bear His name first and foremost to the nations, later to kings, and meanwhile to the sons of Israel among the nations, such as in Damascus, outside the holy land (*cf* Acts 9:15). When we compare Saul's commission with Peter's or John's, we will find that the difference is quite obvious (*cf* Matt.16:15-19; John 21:15-23).

NOT IMMEDIATELY

The adverb "immediately" in Acts 9:10 reminds us of another occurrence in Galatians 1:15-17. "Now when it delighted God, Who severed me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me that I may be evangelizing Him among the nations, I did not *immediately* submit it to flesh and blood, neither came I up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me For I am making known to you, brethren, as to the evangel which is being brought by me, that it is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it [by any man], but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal.1:11,12).

WAITING FOR THE WORD OF THE LORD

Saul had felt that it was his first duty to disassociate himself immediately and publicly from the hate campaign against the believers, thus making himself available to his celestial Lord for additional revelations. Over the years, he received them in various ways; God, in all wisdom and prudence, was making known

to him the secret of His will, as Saul had been promised on the Damascus road. The word of the celestial Lord had been unmistakably clear (Acts 26:16); he was to become an eyewitness and deputy of the word, both of what he had perceived on the road and what he was going to learn from Christ in the future. And the Lord had added, "Go into Damascus, and *there* [i.e. in Damascus, and not in Jerusalem] you will be spoken to concerning all which has been set for you to do" (Acts 22:10).

SAUL HERALDED JESUS

Luke is very careful in using the correct term in Acts 9:20, so as to indicate that Saul made just an *announcement* and nothing more when he went through the many synagogues of the city; "he heralded Jesus . . ." means that he proclaimed His divine Sonship. Saul did not discuss the truthfulness of this proclamation, nor did he try to present evidence from the Scriptures. Time was limited, and besides this, Saul was not yet qualified to participate in any intense debate about the authenticity of his announcement.

Just a few days before Saul had met Christ in His celestial glory. The word of the Lord had shattered his life-long perspective of the Scriptures which he had adopted from his teachers, namely that Messiah would throw off the Roman yoke and reign over free Israel. Saul had shared the view of his fellow Pharisees that the Man Who humbly walked the dusty roads of Palestine and was a friend of tribute collectors and sinners, the One Who gave up His soul unto death and was counted with transgressors, could not be Israel's glorious King!

But then the Lord Himself had gently spoken to him, "I am Jesus Whom *you* are persecuting" (9:5).

Hence there was something definitely wrong with the traditional *assumptions* in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Saul would need time to ascertain the divine *facts*, and to correlate everything said about Christ in the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms. Only then would he be able to defend the divine Sonship of Jesus and to discuss with Jewish objectors all the aspects of the divine mission of Messiah as thoroughly as once Stephen had done.

FROM SUFFERING TO GLORY

When Jesus, toward the end of His earthly career, had told His disciples "that He must be coming away into Jerusalem and to be suffering much from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and the third day to be roused . . . Peter began to rebuke Him, saying, 'Propitious be it to Thee, Lord! By no means shall this be for Thee'" (Matt. 16:21,22). Earlier, Simon Peter had made the distinct statement, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (16:16). The glorification which his Lord should have was incompatible with humiliation and suffering and death, Peter assumed.

In Mark 8:31 we read that Jesus began to *teach* His disciples about the rejection by the religious rulers in Israel. Obviously He *explained* the necessity of His imminent suffering and death to them in detail. Even then they were unable to understand His teaching, for they were "not disposed to that which is of God but to that which is of men" (8:33). Their minds were not disposed to divine facts but rather to traditional human assumptions, such as the common expectation "that He is the One about to be redeeming Israel" (*cf* Luke 24:21).

It was at this juncture that the Lord told His dis-

ciples and the crowd around Him (Mark 8:34,38): "If anyone is wanting to come after Me, let him renounce himself and follow Me. . . . For whosoever may be ashamed of Me and My words . . . the Son of Mankind also will be ashamed of him whenever He may be coming *in the glory of His Father*." However, the disciples could not grasp the divine plan and purpose in His giving up His soul unto death prior to His coming in glory.

In addition (8:35-37) our Lord advised His followers that they too must taste some of His sufferings. Whosoever wants to save his soul, i.e. to safeguard his present life style (comfort, nourishment, apparel, Matt.6:25; Luke 12:19,22), will shrink from renouncing himself, from picking up his cross and following Christ. Whosoever seeks every delight of the soul now, will lose the happiness of his soul in the coming Kingdom, for he will not be admitted.

It seems that this word of the Lord was not fully understood by His disciples. Hence, just before being arrested, He spoke again of His imminent departure (John 13:33; 16:28), of their sufferings (15:20; 16:2,33), and of His own glorification (17:4,5).

However, the divine sequence of suffering and glory was beyond their grasp. Hence the Lord, after His resurrection, had to explain this truth in more detail to Cleopas and his companion on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:25-31).

A little later our Lord opened up the minds of the eleven just as He had enlightened Cleopas and his companion before. "Beginning from Moses and all the prophets, He interprets to them, in all the scriptures, that which concerns Himself" (24:27,45). If these elder apostles needed a special word of the Lord in order to understand how all was fulfilled that is

written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms concerning Jesus, how much more was Saul in dire need for a divine interpretation of the Word of God.

We should keep in mind that the young Pharisee, on the Damascus road, had suffered an unexpected and prostrating shock. He would need time to recuperate his shattered mental powers, to coordinate his way of thinking, to harmonize the new revelation and his old biased ideas on the Old Testament Scriptures. In order to become fit for service under the new commission, Saul would need more, much more than just three days of pondering on the sight of Christ in His celestial glory and His gracious words of love.

H.H.R.

CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT

The 1966 "Memorial Edition" of the *Concordant Literal New Testament* is now out of print. The 1976 hardback edition with the *Keyword Concordance* remains in good supply, but we have felt the need to prepare an inexpensive edition of the Version without the concordance to replace the 1966 paperback. Hence we are preparing to issue the New Testament only with a flexible "kivar" cover (similar to the 1966 paperback) in mid-summer, 1978. The regular price will be \$4.00 or three copies for \$10.00.

The pre-publication price is \$2.00 each. We hope that many will take advantage of this offer not only because it will help us cover the immediate costs, but also because our storage room is very limited, and we have contracted for 15,000 copies.

OLD TESTAMENT SETS

We are offering a set of the following three Old Testament books (Concordant Version), recently published, for \$2.00: *Genesis, Isaiah* and *Ezekiel*.

A set of all our Old Testament translations now available (*Genesis, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel* and *Daniel*) can be had for \$5.00.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 1978
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

EACH volume of *Unsearchable Riches* is headed by the dedication: "For God and His Word." Our prayer is that we might be "growing in the realization of God" (Col.1:10). We want to become better acquainted with Him, His Word and His grace. Otherwise God is not glorified, and we remain in darkness and confusion concerning the issues of life which press on us so heavily. What are we? Why are we here? Where are we going? What does God have to say to us, and where do we find it in His Word? These questions cannot be answered satisfactorily without taking the God of the Scriptures into account, especially as He is revealed in the ministry and writings of the apostle Paul.

For this reason we have given much attention to God's eonian purpose in Christ, and to the gratuitous gift of grace for the believer today in justification, conciliation and reconciliation. If we have concentrated on matters of destiny and God's goal of becoming All in all, it is not only because this important revelation has been neglected by others, but also because it is vital to our appreciation of God and for our happiness and peace.

We need to build on the foundation which Paul laid (1 Cor.3:10,11), concentrating on the position and allotment graciously granted to us in Christ Jesus.

Some have felt that our articles are too repetitious, always dwelling on "the same old things." But we do not apologize for these themes. Like the theme of joy in Philippians, they are our security (Phil.3:1).

Our desire to present God's Word accurately is reflected in A. E. Knoch's comments on "Two Greek Words," and in our work on the Psalms and Ezekiel also discussed in this issue. The development of Paul's apostleship in the book of Acts is being traced in the series, "The Word of God and of the Lord," by Bro. Rocke. The present study can be especially helpful to us as we note how God's Word *invigorated* this apostle sent to us, who became a pattern for us in faith and behavior (1 Tim.1:16; 2 Thess.3:9).

A new feature is the series of "Scripture Class Studies" based on the notes of our late Brother Arthur C. Lamb. We hope our readers will find these articles helpful and stimulating for spritual growth.

God's purpose in becoming All in all is approached in the series on "God's Dwelling Place," which is being continued in the article, "The Ministry of the Ecclesia," by Bro. John H. Essex. Here the special, transcending grace given to members of the body of Christ today is brought to our attention. Finally, all of this grace leads to the *glory of God*, which is the subject of a new series beginning with this issue. As we grow in appreciation of God's grace to us, we also grow in realization of "God as God." We began our life of faith with an acknowledgment of God's saving work in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet we are led to consider Him afresh, day by day, as we perceive His works more clearly. Each unfolding of truth manifests our God in brighter light, so that we say with ever increasing conviction, "to God be the glory!"

D.H.H.

THE MINISTRY OF THE ECCLESIA

IN our last few studies, we have been showing how Paul differentiates between flesh and spirit, and how the flesh is gradually discarded in favor of the spirit. We have also been trying to show how the ecclesia, which is the body of Christ, is being made the home of God's Spirit—this both individually and collectively.

We are now ready to consider the question of "God's dwelling place in spirit" from the level of the Ephesian epistle—the letter in which this phrase actually occurs.

THE SCOPE OF THE EPHESIAN EPISTLE

The epistle opens with a statement of the writer's credentials—"an apostle [one commissioned and sent forth] of Christ Jesus [the risen Lord Who is ascended to the right hand of God] through the will of God" [through the desire and direction of Him Who is the Supreme Being in the universe]. These credentials give Paul the authority to proclaim the wonderful truths of this epistle. No less authority than this would be adequate to give credence to the revelation contained in its teaching.

Having established his own position in relation to the letter, Paul then clarifies the position of those to whom it is addressed. It is sent "to all the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus."

Note the words, "who are also believers" and especially note the phrase, "in Christ Jesus." This letter is not for minors; it is for mature saints, who have a firm belief in the Christ of glory (as distinct from a belief in the Jesus of His humiliation on earth). Such believers have a special status in Christ, as we shall see presently. For the moment, let us just say that the truths, which Paul will reveal in this letter, will require much faith on our part if we are to accept them, for he is going to take us away from the confines of earth altogether, and to transport us mentally and spiritually into the celestial regions. This is a sphere in which the flesh cannot possibly have any part, firstly because it is physically tied to the earth, and secondly because it is mentally incapable of discerning the things of the spirit. These can only be revealed to us by God's Spirit (1 Cor.2:10-16), and the most astounding fact is this, that God's Spirit will search the very depths of Himself in order to reveal His truth and His purpose to us. In the Ephesian letter, we are taken not only into the depths, but into the breadths and lengths and heights as well. That is why Paul needed to state his credentials, for what he tells us in this epistle is far beyond the knowledge, perception and inventive power of even the most gifted of men.

The letter plunges us, without any delay, right into the midst of the celestial realms, thus: "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."

THE HEAVENS IN RELATION TO THE EARTH

The reference to the disruption of the world immediately connects this epistle with the first two verses of Genesis. There we learn that, "in a beginning" God created the heavens and the earth; but, after this brief statement, little more is said about the heavens. Rather the Scriptures concentrate upon the earth. "The earth became a chaos and vacant" All through the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures, and the greater part of the Greek Scriptures, too, the earth is the scene of subsequent action, and the heavens are mentioned only as something "above the earth."

Now we know that, in reality, the heavens *surround* the earth, which is a revolving ball in space, hanging, as it were, upon nothing, as Job 26:7 would indicate. The heavens are *above* the earth only in the sense that they appear from the earth to be above it. Further, if we except the Deity, the inhabitants of the heavens are revealed on occasions, but nearly always in reference to earthly happenings, as when messengers appeared to Abraham to announce the destruction of Sodom and foretell the birth of Isaac, or when a multitude of them were manifest at the birth of Jesus.

Thus, throughout all the Scriptures (apart from the prison epistles of Paul), the earth, as the stage upon which God's purpose is being enacted, is the center and focus of all the activity, and the heavens are, in the main, above and outside of the action. The occupants of the heavens may be directing the action (as in the case of God and the Lord Jesus), or they may be obstructing (as in the case of Satan); they may be praising God by obeying His will (like Gabriel and Michael), or they may be rebelling against Him (like those who form the "spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials" of Ephesians 6:12).

In this Ephesian epistle, Paul abruptly, and without warning, transfers the scene of action from the earth to the heavens, and makes no apology for doing so. On the contrary, he infers that our blessings are greatly increased as a result of this, for he declares that God is blessing us "with *every spiritual blessing* among the celestials." Five times in this letter he is to use the phrase, "among the celestials," *en tois epouraniois*, which clearly indicates that he is speaking of beings outside of earth's inhabitants. What actually happens is that God is revealing through Paul how He is to deal with affairs that are extraneous to this earth. He reminds us that He has a creation which occupies a realm outside the confines of this planet—a creation which is in view when the word heavens is used in Genesis 1:1—and (marvel of marvels) He incorporates us, members of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ, within that primeval creation. For we were chosen in Christ *before* the disruption of the world, and this was at a time when only celestial beings were in existence.

Humanity speculates today as to whether there are other beings in the universe besides those on earth, and tentatively comes to the conclusion that there is probably some other planet (or planets) revolving round some distant sun, with inhabitants possessing some measure of intelligence like ourselves. Its whole conception is, of necessity, vague, because it has no proof, having, in the main, turned its back on the only volume, the Word of God, which could supply an answer to the question.

Well, the Scriptures assert quite plainly that there are inhabitants of the celestial realms, but they are not made of flesh and blood, but are spirit beings of infinitely greater powers of perception than humans.

These extra powers, however, have not made them immune from sin and rebellion. As we saw earlier, Ephesians 6:12 tells us that there are "spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials." Moreover, the letter to the Colossians makes it clear that reconciliation has to be effected with both those on earth and those in the heavens (Col.1:20).

Everything in the book of Ephesians must be considered with the celestials in mind. It is from their numbers that we must find those whose original rebellion against God brought about the disruption. The disruption (with its accompanying darkness) is the scriptural indication that rebellion has taken place, and that is why it is such a line of demarcation in God's Word. Things may date from the disruption, in which case they suffer from the effects of the disruption, or (in three cases) they date from *before* the disruption, in which case the disruption makes no impression upon them. One of these last is the ecclesia, chosen "in Christ" before the disruption of the world.

THE STATUS OF THE ECCLESIA AS CHRIST'S COMPLEMENT

The fact that the ecclesia is chosen "in Christ" gives it a status of power and authority in the universe; the fact that it is chosen before the disruption gives it a quality of "holiness and flawlessness" which it will ever preserve. It is a quality which is consistent with its being the complement of Christ, for He, when He came to present Himself at Golgotha, was the "One without sin," an Offering without spot or blemish of any kind. The ecclesia, as the body of Christ, must be at all times like its Head—it is inconceivable for it to be otherwise, for it was created in Christ.

We have shown the analogy before, how man and his complement, woman, should parallel the

relationship that exists between Christ and His ecclesia (see the article, "The Origin of the Ecclesia" in *Unsearchable Riches*, Vol. 66, page 69). It should be clear in our minds that God gave a command to Adam to multiply and fill the earth, but Adam could not do this until his complement, woman, had been taken from him and presented to him. Then he was able to fulfill God's intentions *through the one who was his complement*, and ever since then generations of women have maintained "the form of humanity" as originally created by God in Adam. (Note, the original creation of humanity incorporated both sexes—see Genesis 1:27 and 5:2).

In exactly the same way, God's oath to Himself that He would be the only Saviour and that He would not rest until every knee should be bowing to Him, and every tongue acclaiming Him (Isa.45:22,23)—this could only be fulfilled through the One Who is His Complement—Christ. That is why Christ, as well as God Himself, is called the Saviour. In Titus 2, both God and Christ are referred to by this term, in verses 10 and 13 respectively.

It is similar with regard to Christ and His complement, the ecclesia. Until His work on the cross was fulfilled the ecclesia was (figuratively speaking) latent in Christ. But, like Adam, the Lord went into a deep stupor (in His case, death), and from the time of His resurrection onward, the ecclesia became a separate entity, to be presented to Him as His complement just as the woman was presented to man in Eden. This is the meaning of Ephesians 5:23-32.

Christ gave His life for the whole world—indeed, for the whole universe—but in a very special sense He gave it for the ecclesia. For if Christ had not given Himself up for us, there would have been no ecclesia.

This is a thought which should be very precious to us all. And equally precious should be the thought (most wonderful as it is) that, without the ecclesia, Christ could not fulfill the purpose of God. That is why God is to have such glory in the ecclesia as well as in Christ throughout all the generations of the eon of the eons. Amen!

We have indicated how woman, the complement of man, has throughout many generations maintained the form of humanity as first created by God. This was the role appointed for her, for the "seed of the woman" was to bruise the head of the serpent, and that Seed must be in the likeness of humanity. So, too, will the ecclesia, as the complement of Christ, maintain the form of the ministry ordained for it by God "before the eons began." For our calling is "in accord with His own purpose, and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before eonian times" (2 Tim.1:9). It is the grace of God which is the basis of all the ministry of the ecclesia; its members will, in fact, display His grace "among the celestials" in the eons to come (Eph.2:7).

THE ROLE OF THE ECCLESIA IN GOD'S PURPOSE

But that passage in 2 Timothy 1:9 also refers to the fact that we have been *saved*, and the first chapter of Ephesians also speaks of our "having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us" (verses 7, 8). This brings out another, and quite different, aspect of the ecclesia. As members of that composite whole, the body of Christ, we are seen by God to be "holy and flawless," and this we have been "in His sight" since the moment of our choice *in* Christ before the disruption of the world. But as in-

dividuals, chosen *out of* humanity, and needing to be brought *into* Christ (Rom.6:3), matters are quite different.

As members of humanity, we once walked in offenses and sins among the sons of stubbornness and "behaved ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh, and were, in our nature, children of indignation, even as the rest" (Eph.2:1-3). Why was this? Why were we, who were predestinated to be sons of God and participants in an allotment that is holy and flawless, ever permitted to walk in accord with the eon of this world, and even in accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air?

The answer lies in the fact that grace has two aspects. It is either an act producing happiness, or a benefit bestowed on one who deserves the opposite. In the first aspect, it is exemplified in Christ, for God "graces Him with the name that is above every name" (Phil.2:9). Even before this, while He was on earth, Jesus was "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). But the second aspect of grace can only be displayed to the full by the members of the ecclesia, and for them to be able to display it, they must have deserved the opposite. Hence the reason for their being chosen from the sons of humanity.

It was necessary for the ecclesia to share the experiences of humanity, even as it was necessary for Christ to do so, though the reasons are different. The complement cannot be greater than its Head. Christ came to be in the likeness of humanity in order that He might be able to condemn and crucify sin; the ecclesia came to be in the likeness of humanity in order that it might display grace.

The work of Christ, as God's Complement, is to implement the promise of life, made in Him before

eonian times, and therefore before God's purpose of the eons went into operation (2 Tim.1:1; Titus 1:2). The work of the ecclesia, as the complement of Christ, is to display God's grace in accord with the gift of grace, which also precedes eonian times (2 Tim.1:9).

It is a tremendous thought that the ministry of the ecclesia, like that of the Lord Jesus Christ, was fully determined by God, and provision made for its accomplishment, before He put any other part of His purpose into operation. Indeed, these two ministries—that of Christ and that of the ecclesia, which is His body—are thus complementary to each other, and form the basis upon which God's whole purpose is established. That is why God will find glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons.

The work of Christ, as God's Complement, brings life and peace to the universe; the work of the ecclesia, as Christ's complement, is to bring about a gracious acceptance of what Christ has done. The ecclesia is the complement by which Christ is completing the All in all, and thus make the whole universe (which is being headed up in Him) a worthy habitation of God's Spirit. For if God is All in all, then every creature becomes part of His dwelling place in spirit.

THE GLORY OF OUR ALLOTMENT IN CHRIST

The prospect that lies before the ecclesia, in its being used so effectively to display His grace is one that can only fill us with amazement and wonder. Adjectives are quite inadequate to express the glory of it. How can it be considered even remotely possible that we, chosen from sinful humanity, can ever be for the laud of God's glory? Yet it is so, and we have a pre-expectancy in Christ (Eph.1:12).

And there is no possible way in which we can be thwarted of our expectation, for the apostle (in verses 13 and 14) goes on to tell us that, once we hear the evangel of our salvation and believe it, we are sealed in Christ with the holy spirit of promise, and this is an earnest, or a pledge in kind, to us that the eventual enjoyment of our allotment is secure. It has already been procured, and the spirit of promise seals it firmly against any attempt to deprive us of it. This, again, is for the laud of God's glory.

Before we conclude this series, we hope to give further thought to the tremendous issues involved in the expression "God's dwelling place, in spirit," into which we are even now being built together. For the moment, let us remind ourselves of the words of Paul in Ephesians 1:15-23 (one of the two momentous prayers in this epistle, the other being in chapter 3, verses 14-21). The apostle realized that we shall need all the wisdom and understanding that our loving Father is able to give us if we are to grasp and enjoy the glories of the expectation that is ours. He prays that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of revelation in the realization of Him, the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you 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" Note again the emphasis on believing; the epistle is for the saints, who are also believers.

All that God is doing in regard to the ecclesia is in accord with the tremendous power which He used in rousing Christ from among the dead, and exalting Him to a position of authority above all others in

heaven and earth, whether they be sovereignties, authorities, powers or lordships—whatever they are, none are now above Him, but rather He is over them—and it is in this sovereign capacity that He is given to the ecclesia, which is His body, the complement by which He is completing the All in all. Thus there is no power in the universe which can prevent the ecclesia, operating in the power of Christ, from carrying out its function in the eons to come, or can deny God the glory which He has purposed to obtain through its ministry.

God is dwelling in Christ and in the ecclesia today; when the work of the ecclesia is finished, He will be dwelling in all His creatures, for the All in all will be completed.

John H. Essex

LITERATURE IN THE PHILIPPINES

Brother Antonio M. Oblenda from the southern Philippine Islands has published a 48 page pamphlet in his native dialect entitled, "If God is Love, Can He Afford to Torment the Majority of His Creatures Eternally?" These have been distributed widely among ministers and laymen at Mission and Church conferences throughout the region. These gatherings are generally of a more political and social nature than spiritual, but perhaps because of this Bro. Oblenda's efforts are welcomed since he ignores that side and concentrates on scriptural matters exclusively. At one meeting where missionaries were protesting government policies Bro. Oblenda stood up and read Romans 8:17-23 from the Concordant Version, and asked, "Shall we understand this for us to suffer...as God wills...and then after all this we shall all be delivered from these vanities unto the glorious freedom of the children of God?"

At present Bro. Oblenda is preparing a translation of our publication, "The Ages" in the native dialect. The response to his literature distribution has been good, and we want to encourage this effort.

SCROLL THREE

An Asaphic Psalm

- 73 Yea, good to the 'upright is Al,[?]
Alueim, to the pure of heart.
- ² And I—almost are my feet turned aside,
As if nothing, my =progress is poured out.
- ³ For I am jealous 'of the boasters
When I am seeing the welfare of the wicked.
- ⁴ For there are no hindrances up to their death,
+Yet plump is their folly.
- ⁵ They are not in mortal's toil,
Nor 'with human affairs are they being touched.
- ⁶ Wherefore pride is their necklace;
Violence is draping > them as a burnoose.
- ⁷ Their eye is protruding from fat;
They surpass the pictures of the heart.
- ⁸ They are 'profound,[?] +yet are speaking ' evil;
From a height they are speaking extortion;
- ⁹ They set their mouths in the heavens,
And their tongue is going in the earth.
- ¹⁰ Wherefore 'is He satisfying them with bread,[?]
And full waters are being 'found^{cs} for them?
- ¹¹ And they say, How does Al know?
And is there knowledge in the Supreme?
- ¹² Behold! these are wicked and at ease 'for the^o eon.
They ^cmake huge their estate.

- 13 **Yea, I purge my heart for nought,
And I am washing my palms in innocency,**
- 14 **And I am coming to be touched
by contagion all the day,
And my correction is for the mornings.**
- 15 **If I say, I shall rehearse likewise,
Behold! to a generation of Thy sons
am I treacherous,**
- 16 **+Yet were I reckoning to know of this,
Toil were it in my eyes,**
- 17 **Till I will come to the sanctuaries of Al.
Then I shall understand > their hereafter.**
- 18 **Yea, in slick places art Thou setting > them;
Thou dost cast them down to =futility.**
- 19 **How they become > a desolation as in a moment!
They are swept up;
They come to an end from decadence.**
- 20 **As a dream ^fat waking, ^sleue, ^{ph}
ⁱWhen rousing, Thou wilt despise their image.**
- 21 **For my heart is souring,
And my kidneys ⁷are^o vacillating.**
- 22 **And I am brutish,
And I am not knowing.
As the beasts become I with Thee.**
- 23 **+Yet I am continually with Thee.
Thou dost hold me ⁱby my right hand.**
- 24 **ⁱBy Thy counsel art Thou guiding me,
And afterward to glory wilt Thou take me.**
- 25 **^aWho is mine in the heavens?
And, with Thee, none do I desire ⁱon earth.**
- 26 **Finished are my ⁷flesh⁷ and my heart.
The Rock of my heart and my Portion
is Alueim for the eon.**
- 27 **For behold! those thrusting Thee afar,
they will perish.**

**Thou dost efface everyone prostituting
away from Thee.**

**²⁸ And I—to be near Alueim is good for me.
I set my refuge in my Lord, Ieue,
To rehearse all ⁷Thy praises?
⁷In the gateways of the daughter of Zion.⁰**

NOTES FOR PSALM 73

The third book of the Psalter begins with Psalm 73; it corresponds with the third book of the Torah, Leviticus. The unifying theme of this collection is that of the Sanctuary, with Psalms 73-83 dealing with the relation of the Sanctuary to man, and with Psalms 84-89 dealing with its relation to Ieue. ("Sanctuaries" in verse 17 is singular in the LXX and Syriac versions.)

Psalm 73 describes the overcoming of the temptation to turn aside from the wholehearted worship of Ieue. At times it appeared to the psalmist as if those living wickedly prospered, while he worshipped in vain. The solution to this predicament is to be found in a visit to His sanctuaries: "Then shall I understand their hereafter." "Hereafter" refers to the last period of their lives, and does not have the "next-life" connotations that this English word has in general usage. It is the same word translated "last" or "latter" in the KJV in the phrase "in the last days" (cf Gen.49:1; Isa.2:2). Despite the appearances, the psalmist takes it

as a matter of fact that the wicked will receive just recompense for their apostacy (*cf* verses 11 and 27) from the Supreme. The only sure course for him is "to be near Alueim."

There are several suggested textual emanations made here for this psalm. In the first verse, "upright is Al" is "Israel" in the Hebrew text (MT); it would be read "Yea, good, to Israel, is Alueim." In verse 10, the conjectured "He is satisfying them with bread" reads "His people are returning hither" in the MT. Taking the witness of the LXX and Syriac versions, we have replaced the MT "squeezed" with "found." The Hebrew phrase translated "when rousing" could also be rendered "in the city." The MT of verse 21 reads "And my kidneys am I vacillating." "Thy praises" replaces the Hebrew "Thy works." The last line occurs only in the LXX, though a similar phrase is found in the same context in Psalm 9:14.

James D. Thompson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Baldwin Summer Fellowship will be held August 2-6. The theme is "God's Revelation through the Apostle Paul." This will be the 21st session of the Baldwin conference, and it promises to be a most instructive and joyful one.

Another conference was scheduled for June 30—July 4 in Sedgwick, Colorado, sponsored by our friends at Shekinah, Box 147, Sedgwick CO 80749. Ernest and Alberta Knoch planned to attend these meetings, and Dean Hough and Jim Thompson hope to be at the Baldwin meetings.

Our new printing of the *Concordant Literal New Testament* is scheduled to be available by the end of July. It will be a paperback, but with a sturdier and more flexible cover material (called "kivar") than the 1966 edition, which is now out of stock. The page size will be somewhat larger with more margin space, but the book will be thinner because of a lighter weight paper.

Concordant Version of Psalm 74

Intellectual Asaphic

- 74 Why, Alueim, hast Thou cast off permanently?
Is Thine anger smoking
 ⁱamong the flock of Thy pasture?**
- 2 Remember Thy congregation
 which Thou didst acquire aforetime.
Thou didst redeem the tribe of Thine allotment,
Mount Zion is this, Thou didst tabernacle in it.**
- 3 Exalt Thy footsteps
 [>]at the permanent ⁼devastations:
Everything ^chas the enemy smashed
 in ⁷Thy⁰ holy place.**
- 4 Thy foes roar within ⁷Thine⁰ appointed place;
They ^pset their signs as signs.**
- 5 [?]They were hewing[?] as if wielding upward
 hatchets in a thicket of trees.**
- 6 And now [?]Thine[?] engravings altogether,
 ⁱWith crowbars and bills are they hammering.**
- 7 They send into the fire Thy sanctuary;
Down to the earth they violate the tabernacle
 of Thy Name.**
- 8 They say in their hearts,
We will tyrannize them together.
They burn all the appointed places of Al in the land.**
- 9 Our signs we do not see;
No further is there a prophet,
Nor [`]with us one knowing what is further.**
- 10 Till when, Alueim, shall the foe reproach?
Shall the enemy spurn Thy Name permanently?**

- 11 Why art Thou reversing Thy hand?
And Thy right hand from within Thy bosom?
 [?]Interlude[?]**
- 12 +Yet Alueim is my King from aforetime,
Contriving salvations within the earth.**
- 13 Thou' dost quash the sea in Thy strength.
Thou dost break the heads
 of the monsters on the waters.**
- 14 Thou dost bruise the heads of the dragon,
Thou art giving it as food to a people,
 to those in arid places.**
- 15 Thou' dost rend spring and watercourse.
Thou' dost dry perennial streams.**
- 16 Thine is the day. Indeed, Thine is the night.
Thou' dost establish the luminary and the sun.**
- 17 Thou' dost set up all the boundaries of the earth.
Summer and winter—Thou' dost form them.**
- 18 Remember this: the enemy reproaches Ieue,
And the decadent people spurn Thy Name.**
- 19 Thou must not give to an animal
 the soul of Thy [?]acclaimer,^{cs}
The life of Thy humble ones,
 Thou must not forget permanently.**
- 20 Look to [?]Thy^c covenant,
 for full are the dark places of the land
 with oases of violence.**
- 21 The crushed must not return confounded!
The humble and needy will praise Thy Name.**
- 22 Rise, Alueim! Contend Thy contention!
Remember Thy reproach from the decadent
 all the day.**
- 23 Thou must not forget the voice of Thy foes!
The tumult of those rising against Thee
 is ascending continually.
 > Permanent Thou must not ruin**

NOTES FOR PSALM 74

The razing of the Temple produced the anguished questions which begin this psalm. It appeared as though the Chosen were utterly forgotten by their God. Enemies had hacked, smashed and hammered the sanctuary in their unholy vandalism, and then set it afire. This last item suggests that the events which provoked this prayer are those recorded in 2 Kings 25:9, where Nebuzaradan captured Jerusalem, deported its inhabitants, burning the Temple and surrounding palaces.

The psalmist then (verses 12-17) considers Alueim's actions in the past, as well as His provision for the creation. The monster (verse 13) is a symbol of Egypt in Ezekiel 29:3 and 32:2, and may well have the same connotation here. These thoughts give the singer some comfort, assuring him that Ieue will hear his prayers and not cast off His people permanently.

The main textual difficulty is verse 5. The conjectured "they were hewing" replaces the Hebrew "he is being known." "Thine" in verse 6 replaces the Hebrew "its." The "Interlude" (verse 11) is a conjecture replacing the Hebrew "conclude," or "finish"—an imperative.

James D. Thompson

WILLIAM THURMOND KIRKLAND

Our brother died suddenly the evening of May 4, 1978, at the age of 74. He came into the faith through the ministry of Bro. Adlai Loudy in the area of Wagener, South Carolina, and the funeral service was conducted in the Pauline Church of Christ which Bro. Loudy established. The message was brought by Bro. Randall Grandy.

Concordant Version of Psalm 75

An Asaphic Psalm A Song

75 We acclaim > Thee, Alueim! We acclaim!

And near is Thy Name.

Thy marvels rehearse it.

² For I am taking the appointment,

I' with equity am judging.

³ Dissolved are the earth and all its dwellers.

I' regulate its columns.

Interlude

⁴ I say to the boasters, You must not boast!

And to the wicked, You must not exalt the horn!

⁵ You must not exalt your horn to the height;

You are speaking 'with a shifty neck.

⁶ For not from the sun's coming forth,

+or from the west,

Nor from the wilderness is exaltation.

⁷ For Alueim is judging.

This one He is abasing, and this one He is exalting.

⁸ For a cup is in the hand of Ieue,

and the wine is turbid.

Full is it of a blend,

and He is spilling from this ⁷to this.^c

Yea, its lees are they squeezing!

All the wicked of the earth are drinking!

⁹ +Yet I' will ⁷exult⁷ for the eon.

I will make melody to the Alueim of Jacob.

¹⁰ And all the horns of the wicked shall I hew down.

The horns of the righteous will be exalted.

> Permanent 'With accompaniments

NOTES FOR PSALM 75

In answer to the dismal conditions described in Psalm 74, this one following opens with thankful acclamation. It is clear that He is nearby; so the people acclaim Him and rehearse His marvelous works of power. Alueim Himself answers directly in verses 2-6: all is under His control. *He* judges with equity and *He* regulates earth's columns (*cf* 1 Sam.2:8; Job 48), that is, the stability of both earth and law are dependent on Him. He is the One Who exalts one and abases another (verse 7). In verse 9, after describing the judgment to come, the singer promises further praise. He looks forward (verse 10) to the time when he will be instrumental in bringing Alueim's judgment upon the haughty enemy.

The symbol of the *horn* (verses 4,5,10) is often used to represent strength in the Hebrew Scriptures. The wine cup imagery in verse 8 also is often found in the Scriptures, and is used several times in the book of the Unveiling of Jesus Christ (see Rev.14:10; 16:19).

James D. Thompson

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MESSAGES FOR ISRAEL

TO THE FALSE PROPHETS (13:1-23)

A TRUE PROPHET speaks the words of God, but a false prophet speaks from his own heart and his own spirit (Ezek.13:2,3), while claiming the support of God in what he says (13:7). This is a great sin because it misrepresents God and misleads the people. We need to take care that we hold fast to the "prophetic scriptures" (*cf* Rom.16:26) given to us today, rather than speak from our own imagination and heart.

Unlike Jeremiah and Ezekiel himself (*cf* Jer.1:6-10; Ezek.2:1,2) the false prophets show no lack of self-confidence and willingness to speak. The people readily listen to them and are beguiled by their words (verse 10). The message of peace given to us (2 Cor.5:20) is far different from the message of desolation given to Ezekiel, but it is no less popular than Ezekiel's words in his day. The principle remains the same. True prophecy will clash with the spirit of humanity by focusing attention on God and what He is doing, rather than on the human servant who speaks.

False prophets are good at covering up the truth with something that looks well but will never stand the test. They also are good at trying to dominate others.

Here in Ezekiel 13 we have two symbols illustrating these two characteristics. The men who prophesied were like plasterers who built a wall of untempered plaster (13:10-16) which covered up the true situation. The women who prophesied evidently tried to control others by some kind of magical cushions and kerchiefs, perhaps like the voodoo rites among some peoples today (13:17-19). The true prophet will simply speak the word of God whether popular or not, and will desire to help the people—never manipulate and control them to their hurt.

CONCERNING ELDERS OF ISRAEL (14:1-11)

In this section a group of elders comes before Ezekiel, and the prophet has to speak in a way he would not have chosen himself. The message is a harsh one. We have seen in chapter 13 that the hearts of the prophets were directed to personal ambition, to establish followers by beguiling words or ritualistic spells. Here we find that the hearts of these elders were directed to the worship of idols (14:3,4,7).

But the heart's desire of Ieue is to grasp Israel "by their heart" (14:5) and restore them to Himself "for a people" (verse 11). We are startled to learn that He Himself enticed these false leaders (14:9), but in the whole context of this prophecy we can see that the season of estrangement was necessary in order that Israel may return to Ieue voluntarily in joy, *from their heart* (14:5,6).

CONCERNING THE LAND (14:12-15:8)

The land itself is to be devastated by four "evil judgments" (14:21): famine (14:13), evil animals (14:15), sword (14:17) and plague (14:19). Not even Noah, Daniel or Job, widely renowned for their

righteousness, could prevent this from happening (14:14,20). The reference to these three men is interesting in that neither Noah nor Job was of the nation of Israel, and Daniel (if this is Ezekiel's contemporary) was in exile away from the land. Yet even if they were all actually together in the land at this time, the total influence of all their righteousness could not stop the desolation from coming about.

The only "comfort" for Ezekiel is an ironic one. Some of those taken captive from Jerusalem will join him in exile, and judging from "their way and practices" Ezekiel will realize that Ieue had good reason for doing what He did (14:22,23). What a contrast with the comfort given to us today! The judgment then was "not gratuitously" given, but we have received the "gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ" (Rom.5:15) to the end that "nothing . . . is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1).

Ezekiel 15 continues the theme of judgment against the land, this time in symbolic language. As in Isaiah 5, Israel is referred to as a grapevine, ordinarily a symbol of joy. But no fruit is mentioned here—only the woody stem. Apart from the fruit of joy there is little value to the grape plant. The vine itself cannot be used in making implements. It is good only as fuel, a fitting picture of the situation in Jerusalem.

TEXTUAL NOTES

(13:5) the Masoretic Text has **you** where we have inserted **they** from the LXX. (13:6) **confirmation**=RISE. (13:9) **register**=writing. (13:10,16) **peace**=welfare. (13:11) the LXX and Syriac manuscripts support the reading, **I will make**, in place of the MT reading, **ye**. (13:20) the MT has **bud** (*phrch*) where we have conjectured the word **scatter** (*phrd*); the LXX omits the first oc-

currence and supports this conjecture in the second. (14:1) the MT has a singular verb and plural subject, but various manuscripts support the probable reading, **are**. (14:4) **Each**=MAN. (14:6) **turn**=RETURN. (14:14) **Noah**=STOP; **Daniel**=Adjudication-is-AI; **Job**=Enemy. (14:22) the words **from it** and **the evil** are taken from the LXX and do not replace any words in the MT. (15:2,3) **any**=ALL. (15:4) **fit**=**prosper**. (15:4,5,7) **devour**=EAT. (15:6) in the MT a singular **tree** is referred to, but the LXX, Syriac and other readings indicate the plural: **trees**.

CROSS-REFERENCES

(13:2) Jer.5:31; 27:14; 28:8,9. (13:7) Jer.23:21,32. (14:8) Gen.17:14; Lev.7:20,21,25,27; 17:4,9,10; 19:8. (14:10) Ex.28:38; Lev.5:1,17. (14:13) Lev.26:26. (14:15) Lev.26:22. (14:17) Lev.26:25. (14:19) Lev.26:21. (15:3) John 15:6. (15:6) 2 Kings 25:9.

D.H.H.

AGNES VAN ALSTYNE

We have received notice of the death of Miss Agnes Van Alstyne of Binghamton, New York, in January of this year. She would have been 95 years old this June. A loyal and liberal supporter of our work, she always looked forward to receiving the U. R. and rejoiced in any opportunity to share the glorious evangel of our deliverance in Christ and the eventual reconciliation for all. When she entered a nursing home because of deteriorating health in 1972 she wrote, "While we are awaiting the Chief Messenger to sound the trumpet, God is still wonderfully providing for all our needs, and we are day and night rejoicing with all joy and peace in believing and superabounding in expectation."

NELLIE B. MYERS

Mrs. Charlton E. Myers passed away June 12, 1978, at the age of 93. She and her late husband were active supporters of our work for many years and faithfully attended the class in Washington D. C. Now in repose they both await the shout of command which will raise them for God's display of grace in the oncoming eons.

TWO GREEK WORDS

*Should not the Greek word **aionios** be translated eternal in 2 Corinthians 4:18 where it is contrasted with things measured by time?*

Whenever we wish to know the meaning of a word in the Scriptures, we should *get it for ourselves* from the contexts. We should use a concordance! The following are all the occurrences of the Greek word *proskairos*, which the A.V. translates *temporal* in 2 Corinthians 4:18:

Matt. 13:21 but *dureth for a while*

Mark 4:17 and so *endure but for a time*

2 Cor. 4:18 the things which are seen are *temporal*

Heb. 11:25 to enjoy the pleasures of sin *for a season*

It is a most interesting and instructive exercise to study these passages in this way. The first two refer to the seed sown on rocky places. It sprouts, springs up, but lasts only a little while. The time is *short*. The same is seen in Hebrews. The temporary enjoyment of sin did not appeal to Moses because it was *short*. Sin gives pleasure, but, at the same time, it shortens our life term. These passages have no point unless the time is *short*. They may be rendered *temporary*, but we utterly destroy their force if we render them *temporal* (during the course of time), as in the other passage.

Then, according to the rule laid down, the same Greek word is used of the stony-ground-hearer as of the things that are seen (2 Cor.4:18). The contrast is not between time and eternity, but between *short, temporary*, visible things and those which last for a whole eon or for all of the eons. The contrast does *not* call for endlessness. The longest time period known in Scripture fully satisfies it, without any need of extending it beyond the limits of the eonian times.

This is the way the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT renders the same passages:

Matt. 13:21 he . . . has no root in himself, but is *temporary*

Mark 4:17 they have no root in themselves, but are *temporary*

2 Cor. 4:18 what is being observed is *temporary*, yet what is not being observed is eonian

Heb. 11:25 preferring rather to be maltreated with the people of God than to have a *temporary* enjoyment of sin.

It is clear that the word eonian is *not* “contrasted with *things measured by time*.” Should we put these words in the other passages we will immediately see how silly they sound. He has no root in himself, but *is measured by time!* Moses preferred evil to the enjoyment of sin *during the course of time!* It is sometimes difficult to express clearly just why a word is wrong, but if we will try it out in this way it will be much easier to detect doubtful renderings.

What is the sense of the Greek word, katargeo, translated nullify in 1 Corinthians 15:24 and abolish in 1 Corinthians 15:26?

It is the office of Christ, God’s Anointed, to bring about the subjection of all. It is astonishing to note how this is to be done. The method is entirely negative

and consists in making certain things *inoperative*. The word used to express this is most important, and it is both interesting and suggestive to consider the parts of which it is composed, for the idiomatic meaning is quite in accord with its elements. Its chief root is *erg*, which occurs frequently in the family denoting *action*. To this is prefixed the Greek letter *a*, denoting UN-, *a-erg*, which combines, the *a* swallowing the *e*, making *arg*, which is the root for UN-ACT, *idle* (2 Pet.2:3). To this is further prefixed the connective *kata*, DOWN (dropping the last *a*), *kat-a-rg*, DOWN-UN-ACT, DOWN-idle, make inactive, or inoperative. Idiomatically it is most difficult to translate this word, for English requires several terms to denote this where Greek uses but one. In this passage we use *nullify* with sovereignty and *abolish* with death, but the basic meaning is *make inoperative*.

It is usually supposed that the universe is so essentially wrong that it requires *positive* corrective acts to set it right. From this revelation, however, it appears that what is needed is the negative abolition of activity in two distinct directions, the cessation of all subjecting powers over and *outside* of man, and the stopping *in* man of the force which subjects him to sin. In other words, man is now subject to other men and to the operation of death within him. Make these activities inoperative and he will be subject to God. Man was made by his Creator for subjection to the Deity. This is his normal condition, to which he returns as soon as alien restraining influences have been removed. Add to this negative removal the positive experiences which were his while insubordinate, and we have all that is necessary to make the creatures of God not only obedient, but adoring children of the Father, to whom He is Everything.

Death is the last enemy to be made inoperative. To many the inclusion of death in a discussion of subjection seems strange and misplaced. This arises from the mistaken idea of death which prevails. Not only do men make the death state one of life, but they fail to grasp the fact which appears at the very forefront of revelation, that death is operating in every descendant of Adam during this life. He is dying. Moreover, that great truth, that *death* is transmitted (*not sin*), so that we sin because we are dying, has been obscured by translators and is unknown to theology (Rom.5:12). But once we understand that all of our insubordination is due to the immanence of death in our members and that we cannot be normally subject so long as it operates in us, then we are prepared to give death the place accorded to it in this discussion, and can appreciate the significance of 1 Corinthians 15:26.

If we stop the activity of death in humanity it cannot be insubordinate of itself, for it was not only created out of God but *for* Him. I once wondered why death was the *last* enemy. Now I know that it must be so, for its abolition by itself would remove all the rest, were they not already abolished. If death (and, as a consequence, sin, which is its fruit) should be made inoperative at the beginning of the thousand years, there could be no reign and no rebellion, for insubjection would be absent. Where all are subject to God all other forms of subjection must vanish. Subjection to anyone but God is abnormal. That is what brought in sin. Its gradual abolition in the eons to come will lead mankind up to the consummation. Make death inoperative and the last vestige of insubjection vanishes. It must be the last enemy because its abolition (when it is made *inoperative*) completely subjects all to God.

INVIGORATED IN THE WORD

IT IS CONCEIVABLE that the two different portrayals of Saul in his Damascus service are years apart. In Acts 9:19-21 we find him apparently still weakened by three days' fasting, but somewhat strengthened after a meal, so as to be able to go with Ananias, visiting with the disciples and immediately making the rounds of the synagogues in town.

Saul amazed his audiences by heralding the divine Sonship of Jesus; this was his public confession of faith in the despised Nazarene Whose followers he had persecuted heretofore. Saul's physical and mental condition at that time allowed no other effort during the "some days" of his first stay in Damascus. Because of his early departure no action was taken by the unbelieving Jews against the defector from the faith of the fathers.

THE OMISSION IN LUKE'S NARRATIVE

We know from Galatians 1:16, 17 that the young Pharisee did not go to Jerusalem right away, but first into Arabia and then back to Damascus. It was three years after God had revealed His Son in Saul, that he came up to Jerusalem to relate his story to Cephas (*cf* Gal.1:18).

Luke does not mention the time in Arabia specifically; but it is obviously included in the "considerable number of days" (Acts 9:23).

We have to bear in mind that Luke's first account has *Israel* as its background, and covers our Lord's earthly life, His death and resurrection. This narrative is continued in his second account to Theophilus (Acts 1:1). Its main topic is the disciples' question about the date of "restoring the kingdom to *Israel*" (1:6). The Lord had replied, "Not yours is it to know . . ." (1:7). Throughout this account the readers are kept in suspense as to the date, just as the twelve's expectation was held in abeyance by the Lord's reply.

Hence the "Acts of the Apostles" is primarily concerned with the ministry of the twelve, and that aspect of Paul's activities which had some relation to *Israel*. This is why Luke omitted Saul's sojourn in Arabia which was in preparation for the latter's service to the Gentiles rather than to the Jews. The Arabian retreat has no bearing on the narrative of Acts.

SAUL IN ARABIA

Where in Arabia Saul went is not revealed in Galatians 1:17 or elsewhere. The reference to King Aretas in 2 Corinthians 11:32 may suggest that Saul spent these years somewhere in the Nabatean kingdom which, under his reign, was less of a desert than it is today. There were many settlements, surrounded by irrigation systems and protected by military forts. Damascus, in the northwestern corner of this kingdom, was not under Roman sovereignty in Saul's day.

We do not know exactly how long Saul stayed in the Arabian retreat, presumably less than 36 months, according to customary counting in those days (possibly a part of a year, and a full second year, followed by a fraction of the third). Idiomatic inexactitudes similar to this one occur in some modern languages as well,

such as when we speak of eight days while we have in mind just a full week.

Also we are not told in so many words what Saul actually did during those “three years” in Arabia. Did he choose the wilderness for the same reason as John the Baptist did, or the men of Qumran and similar groups who expected divine enlightenment? Did he follow the example given by Moses and Elijah in the early days?

We do not know where Saul spent these months of his Arabian retreat, whether it was in a lonely tent far from civilization, or in one of the Nabatean settlements where he did not have to bother about “sustenance and shelter” (*cf* 1 Tim.6:8). However, it is conceivable that he spent much of his time studying the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms so as to ascertain for himself that all the divine promises pertaining to the coming of Christ had been fulfilled in the Risen One Who had called him into His service.

In the solitude of the Arabian retreat the memory of the divine apparition on the Damascus road would transcend all human influences, be it from Jewish tradition, Phariseean scholarship, or Greek philosophy. Intensive study of the Scriptures while praying unintermittingly (*cf* 1 Thess.5:17) would provide him with divine interpretation of the Word of God.

THE MORE INVIGORATED IN THE WORD

What we do know about these three years is the fact that Saul came back to Damascus with a rich spiritual harvest: he “was the more invigorated” (Acts 9:22). The meaning of this term is quite different from the statement in verse 19 where he was “strengthened” after “obtaining nourishment.” A fifth century

manuscript* and a few others have the reading, “the more invigorated in the Word.” This is essentially what is in view in Acts 9:22 as a short survey about the use of the term “invigorate” will show.

The concordant standard assigned to this verb (*endunamoō*) is “make-IN-ABLE.” There are only eight occurrences of this expression in the New Testament, one here in Acts 9:22, six in Paul’s letters, and another one in Hebrews.

In Romans 4:19-21 we hear of Abraham that he was not “infirm in faith,” that “the promise of God was not doubted in unbelief, but he was *invigorated by faith*, giving glory to God, being fully assured also that what He has promised, He is able to do also.”

In Ephesians 6:10 we are admonished: “For the rest, brethren mine, be *invigorated in the Lord* and in the might of His strength.” We may be sure that Saul had a similar experience during the months of his Arabian retreat.

In Philippians 4:11-13 the apostle states that he learned to be content in every situation: “For all am I strong in Him Who is *invigorating me—Christ!*” This is why Paul was glorying in his infirmities, so that the power of Christ should be tabernacling over him (*cf* 2 Cor.12:9).

To Timothy Paul writes, “Grateful am I to Him, Who *invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our Lord*, for He deems me faithful, assigning me a service.” “You,

*The original text of this manuscript was almost obliterated when the vellum was scraped clean and was used for a copy of the writings of one of the Church Fathers, the Syrian Ephraem who had died in 373. Tischendorf painstakingly deciphered the Greek script of Old and New Testament texts on this Codex Ephraemi between 1840 and 1843 in Paris. A year later he discovered the first few sheets of the Codex Sinaiticus in the monastery at Mt. Sinai.

then, child of mine, be *invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus.*” “The Lord stood beside me, and *He invigorates me*, that through me the heralding may be fully discharged, and all the nations should hear” (1 Tim.1:12; 2 Tim.2:1; 4:17).

When Luke wrote Acts 9:22, he was well aware of the Pauline usage of the word “invigorate,” and he used it the same way in order to indicate that Saul was invigorated both in the Word of God (the law of Moses, the prophets, the psalms) and in the word of the Lord Who, on the Damascus road, had promised Saul additional revelations.

It is possible that Saul, during the months of his Arabian retreat, had a similar experience as the one described in Acts 22:17 when the Lord actually spoke to him. Even if this was never the case, Saul was not infirm in faith, the words of his Lord were not doubted in unbelief, but he was invigorated by faith, in the might of His strength; he was fully assured also that what the Lord had promised, He will be able to do. In a figure of speech, the Lord stood beside Saul when he discarded the traditional assumptions in the interpretation of the Scriptures and ascertained the divine facts in the Word of God.

In Hebrews 11:33, 34 the term “invigorated from infirmity” is preceded by such words as faith, righteousness, and scriptural promises. Hence the overall impression we get from this short survey is the spiritual quality of this divine invigoration, pertaining to faith on God and in Christ Jesus (*cf* Heb.6:1; Col.1:4), faith-obedience and faithfulness (*cf* Rom.1:5; Gal.5:22), as well as the body of faith, i.e. our belief of the whole realm of truth, such as the efficacy of Christ’s blood shed at Calvary’s cross, and all that His death and resurrection has procured.

These are all words and phrases from the apostle's vocabulary; and we may well assume that Saul was parleying these thoughts in his heart (*cf* Luke 2:51), at least to some extent, during the months of his Arabian retreat. Thus he became invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus and was able to evaluate everything he had learned about the Scriptures since his childhood days, and to correlate each of the Messianic promises with the established fact that Jesus Christ had arrived in Israel and had fulfilled all that is written about Him in the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms.

When Saul returned to Damascus, he was sufficiently prepared to argue with unbelieving Jews, "deducing [from the Scriptures] that this One is the Christ" (Acts 9:22). Contending for the faith among Gentiles would be a different matter; we may assume that Saul was trusting in his Lord Who, in due time, would be giving him understanding in it all (*cf* 2 Tim.2:7).

ANCESTRAL FAITH IN NEW PERSPECTIVE

The introductory summary to the Roman epistle may provide us with an outline or résumé of the truth such as Saul had realized during his sojourn in Arabia:

"A slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for the evangel of God (which He promises before through His prophets in the holy Scriptures), concerning His Son (Who comes of the seed of David according to the flesh, Who is designated Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead), Jesus Christ, our Lord, through Whom we obtained grace and apostleship for faith obedience among all the nations, for His name's sake...."

DESIGNATED SON OF GOD

Christ Jesus is not just “declared to be the Son of God” (AV), but rather designated, i.e. “made clearly visible to the mind” as explained in our Keyword Concordance.^o

And He is designated Son of God in *power*, which means that He has not only the authority, but also the *ability* to accomplish what God has planned.

“According to the flesh” shows Christ’s relationship to David; “according to the spirit of holiness” emphasizes all that is derived from God, His Father.

When Jesus Christ came in flesh (2 John 7), He emptied Himself of all the prerogatives of His previous status in the form of God, apart from His spirit of holiness which distinguished Him from mankind.

As descendants of Adam, we should continually be cleansing ourselves from every pollution of flesh and from every pollution of spirit as well (2 Cor.7:1). This did not apply to Jesus during His earthly career. There was not the slightest sin in Him, He never missed the mark, nor did His flesh become polluted even though He had participated in blood and flesh (Heb.2:14). But His spirit remained distinct from ours: His was a spirit of *holiness!* Every deed and thought of His was consecrated to the Father Who hallows Him and dispatches Him into the world (John 10:36).

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

We do not know whether these words of Jesus (John 11:25) were familiar to Saul in those days. But he would never forget that he had met the *risen* Christ on

^o cf page 282, specify, designate, *horizō*. The noun “horizon” belongs to the same Greek word family.

the way to Damascus. The apostle affirms this fact in 1 Corinthians 15:8, "Last of all . . . He was seen by me." If there was any doubt in the minds of others, they should consider, "If Christ has not been roused, vain is your faith—you are still in your sins! . . . If we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we" (15:17,19). Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, and through the risen Christ comes the resurrection of the dead. The resurrection of all is guaranteed because of His divine sonship; it is accomplished by the power of the spirit of holiness.

CLEARLY VISIBLE TO THE MIND

We may take it for granted that these and many other divine facts were "made clearly visible to the mind" of Saul during the long months in the Arabian retreat when he was studying the Scriptures and praying for spiritual understanding, and the Lord stood beside him and enlightened the eyes of his heart. It was here in Arabia that Saul started his life-long practice of fostering himself with the Word of God and the words of his Lord.

H.H.R.

(To be continued)

FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

Two recent Fellowship Gatherings at opposite ends of the country proved to be times of edification and refreshment in the Word. The meetings in Richmond, Virginia, May 5-7, centered principally on the grace of God and the evangel for today, with some attention given also to the advantages to the student in using the Concordant Version. In Seattle, Washington, another weekend of meetings was held on June 2-4 with the theme of "transcendent grace."

To God be the Glory

GOD AS GOD

THAT which is known of God, Paul writes, is apparent among us (Rom.1:19). And yet, although mankind can know God through the creation, nevertheless "not as God do they glorify or thank Him" (verse 21). It is one thing to read the signs in "nature," in the patterns of the universe, and know that there is a God and that He is far greater than we are. But it is another matter to recognize Him *as* God.

The man in the street, the philosopher, the unbeliever and even the atheist, all know something of God, though not all will acknowledge it. Now this is an important first step: the awareness that God exists and is superior to man. However, only the believer has the means to search out God *as* God and so to thank Him and glorify Him for what He truly is. The evidence of God in creation is not sufficient to reveal the full character of God, the disposition of His heart and the purpose of His ways. It is our growing desire as believers to get to know God as God, to test Him, as Paul puts it, so as to have Him in recognition (Rom.1:28).

THE MESSAGE FROM CREATION

The message which creation gives concerning God is perplexing. It is such a mixture of good and bad, of

pattern and seeming chaos, of life and death. We try to change the world for better, but it does not budge from its ways. Pleasure always gets mixed with pain and hope with discouragement. Creation and life as it is, gives us a very confusing picture of the God Who made the world and all that is in it (Acts 17:24). Why are there earthquakes and storms and mosquito bites? Why make a world where man sins and suffers, and creatures prey upon each other? Why is there pain? Why do our lives get all mixed up? What does all this say about God?

TESTING GOD

If we are ever to understand what is going on, both inside and around us, we will need to consider God's place in it all. It will not do to make excuses for God and the way things are. This is the same as avoiding God (Rom.3:12). Again in that significant first chapter of Romans we read this charge against man: "And according as they do not test God, to have Him in recognition, God gives them over to a disqualified mind . . ." (1:28). It is right to test God! Our failure to put Him to the test is a fault!

Job was a man who suffered perhaps more than any other man, save the Son of Mankind Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ. But while his associates pointed their fingers at Job as having secret sins for which God was judging him, he pleaded with God in his perplexity and agony. He even ignored Satan who was so obviously involved. Job indicated that if it was God Who was operating behind and through his sufferings (and Job believed it was), and if God had a purpose in them (Job was uncertain about this), no matter what it was, or whether or not he understood it, then he would be at peace. Job was putting God to the test, and even-

tually he learned that God was a God, not of power only, but of purpose even in the face of evil. Then Job exclaimed, "By the hearing of the ear I had heard of Thee, yet now my eye has seen Thee" (42:5).

What did Job possess which allowed him to see God better than his associates? He had received a revelation from God that He knew what He was doing! The wild animals, the birds, the storms, the stars, everything in creation was directed by the hand of God. Nothing was without purpose.

We have much more revelation from God than Job had because we have the word of the cross; we have received the conciliation; we are pre-expectant in the Christ. These must all be taken into account as we test God, searching out His ways so that we might glorify Him and thank Him as God.

THE EVANGEL

The nation of Israel was given an extra aid for getting to know God. They had something beyond the testimony of creation, for they were given the "oracles of God" (Rom.3:2). Theirs was "the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the divine service and the promises" (Rom.9:4). But none of this was sufficient to search into "the depths of God" (*cf* 1 Cor.2:10). If we are to make progress in knowing God as God we must focus our attention on the evangel brought by Paul. Neither natural science nor the law will lead us to glorify and thank God as God simply because they fail to reveal Him in His purpose of becoming All in all.

When we say that the evangel is needed in order to make God truly known we are actually saying that we need Christ. For He alone is the Image of the invisible God (Col.1:15). And it is the evangel which takes us

into these depths of God already mentioned as discussed in 1 Corinthians 2:9,10: "That which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of man did not ascend—whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him. Yet to us God reveals them through His spirit, for the spirit is searching all, even the depths of God."

The whole section of Romans 1:18-3:20 prepares us for Paul's presentation of the evangel starting in 3:21. In no mistakable terms the early portion of Romans shows us where we stand without this evangel. Mankind in general can only know of God from the testimony of creation and conscience. Israel can learn a little more because of the "oracles of God," but acquaintance seems to stop at the unrelenting view of God as Judge in Romans 2:6-10 and the inescapable indictment given in 3:9-20. At this point we are ready to hear the evangel and see how it deals with the dilemma.

Hence we read: "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing" (Rom.3:21,22).

Now this evangel is significant not only because it reveals the way of justification, but beyond this it is vitally important because it enables us to see and understand God in His righteousness as we never could have otherwise. It is a fundamental revelation of God as God. Here we enter into the depths of God's righteousness. And this is made possible by the faith of Jesus Christ.

So also, as the evangel develops, we find that each aspect of our Saviour's work and faith brings forth new light concerning God. The revelation of God as God in

perfect *righteousness* is manifested through the faith of Christ. The introduction to God as God in His vast *love* is made known through the death of His Son on our behalf (*cf* Rom.5:5-11; 8:33-39; Eph.2:4). The appreciation of God as He is in His gracious giving of life is made possible by our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection (Rom.6:23; 8:31,32). Our acquaintance with God as the God of purposeful power and wisdom for final good is firmly bound in with the saving work of Christ (Rom.9:1-11:36). The pities of God (Rom.12:1) and the will of God for our lives (12:2) are both matters we could never appreciate apart from the evangel. All these qualities of God, and many more developed in Paul's epistles, are made apparent only through the evangel concerning the death, entombment, resurrection and exaltation of Christ.

IN SEARCH OF GOD

We have heard much recently about the "search for Noah's ark," and in the early part of this century there was an influential, theological movement which centered around the "search for the historical Christ." Our search, however, is for the genuine God of the Scriptures. In this series of studies we will be concerned with God as He is made known through the work and faith of Christ. In this way we feel we must be involved with the qualities of God, such as His righteousness, His power and His love, as they are made known, not in creation, in history or in the law, but as they are manifested in the evangel.

We have entitled this series "To God be the Glory" because all that is revealed about God by this means is for His glory. In fact, this is a good test. If what we think is so does not glorify God we should be suspicious. Something is wrong.

The key to knowing God as God lies in the death and resurrection of Christ, and the glory that results. To search for God in this welcome message from His Word will open up our appreciation of God in creation and history and in the experiences of our lives to His praise. "O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!"

D.H.H.

(To be continued)

PRESENT TRUTH FOR PRESENT PROBLEMS

Many questions arise in our daily walk which cannot be settled by a definite passage in God's Word. Then it is that we can obey Paul's injunction, "Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children" (Eph.5:1). If we are fully aware of God's present plan in this secret administration of transcendent grace, we will never be at a loss for light to guide our steps aright. Those who pick up a passage at random in any part of the Bible will, alas, be led astray by the very torch in which they trust. We should be so suffused with the spirit of God's present operations that we intuitively act in harmony with them. This should show the immense practical value of a clear and correct knowledge of present truth. It is especially important to grasp the heights and depths of God's *grace*, for it alone can give us the power to turn it into practice.

A. E. K.

THE EVANGEL FOR TODAY

Our Lord's ministry recorded in the four accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John was to the people of Israel, and not to the Gentiles (Matt.10:5, 6). The book of Acts is concerned with the question, "Lord, art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:7).

But with his severance from the other apostles Paul began to herald a message of grace which was to the nations as well as the sons of Israel. He had been called through grace (Gal.1:15) and was given over to the grace of God (Acts 14:26), laying a foundation centered on grace (1 Cor.3:10). He heralded the evangel that a man is justified in grace (Rom.3:24), saved in grace (Eph.2:8) with all offenses forgiven in accord with the riches of God's grace (Eph.1:7).

It is important that we see that this evangel (or good news) stresses the work of God in man, which brings glory to God, whereas the message of law-keeping involves the efforts of the flesh and exalts man. The evangel of grace centers in God's achievement through the faith and obedience of Christ.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

After his severance in Antioch Paul's first distinctive message of good news was concerned with justification (Acts 13:39). This message is developed in Romans

3:21-4:25. This is what he termed "the evangel of God" in Romans 1:1. It was "promised before" through the prophets as is shown by the quotations from Old Testament scriptures in Romans 1:17; 4:7, 8, 9, 16-22, but it was not heralded before in this complete form. Justification is always based on the blood of Christ, but the means by which it is given is faith alone in the evangel for today. There is no place for works as Romans 4 clearly shows. We are justified gratuitously (freely, or without a cause in ourselves) in God's grace (favor).

THE WORD OF THE CROSS

Paul's teaching concerning the cross of Christ is unique. He showed that the cross ends all fleshly privileges and allows no place for the achievements of man. Today, too many are occupied with the terrestrial (earthly) things, and even believers are often enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil.3:18-20), by which we are crucified to the world and the world to us (Gal.6:12-14). Note that it is not "enemies of Christ" but enemies of the "cross of Christ." Christendom claims friendship to Christ even as Israel did, but not the cross of Christ with its shame and humiliation.

The cross is the dividing line between the world, the primitive creation, and the new creation in which the flesh has no place (Gal.6:15; Phil.3:3).

Paul suffered much for the sake of the cross of Christ and for the ecclesias (churches) he established (Col.1:24). Suffering is the avenue through which God leads all His own to Himself by the cords of affection. Christ suffered on the cross, and as His own we long "to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, conforming to His death" (Phil.3:10).

THE SECRET OF THE EVANGEL

In Romans 16:25-27 Paul speaks of a secret which was hushed in times eonian, yet manifested now. This secret concerns the removal of the barriers of enmity between God and mankind and the opening up of the way of access to God in peace (Rom.5:2). The key word is conciliation (Rom.5:10, 11; 2 Cor.5:18-21), which refers to the change from estrangement to peace.

Again, "all is of God" (2 Cor.5:18); man had no part in the opening of the approach. It was all of God, through Christ. The work of Adam had closed the approach. The work of God's Son on the cross opened the gates of peace.

THE GLORY OF THE HAPPY GOD

Since the evangel which we receive centers on God's achievement and not man's, it leads to His glory. "The evangel of the glory of the happy God" (1 Tim.1:11) is a message that tells us God will not be frustrated in His will to save all mankind (1 Tim.2:4). Man cannot eternally oppose his Creator's will, especially when this will is based on the blood of the cross of God's beloved Son (Col.1:20). God has a secret of His will which gives Him delight (Eph.1:9) and that is to head up the universe in the Christ (Eph.1:10). He cannot be defeated in this happy purpose.



We see in this brief review of some of the highlights of the evangel for today that the message does indeed go "from glory to glory" (2 Cor.3:18). In the next class study we will take up one of these highlights in more detail, under the title: "Justification by Faith."

CLASS PROJECTS

1. Look up the word **grace** in the *Keyword Concordance* and consider especially the references listed under the heading **Paul** (bottom of second column, p.132, and first 7 lines of first column, p.133). What is the significance of grace to Paul's ministry?
2. Discuss the difference between the "basis" of justification and the "means" by which it is given to us today.
3. Examine the contexts of Galatians 6:12-14 and Philippians 3:18-20 to test the statement that "the cross ends all fleshly privileges and allows no place for the achievements of man."
4. Find where the phrase "the secret of the evangel" appears in the Scriptures. Does the context accord with the message of conciliation in Romans 5:1-11 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-21?
5. Outline the subject of The Will of the Happy God in Ephesians 1:3-12 under the three headings: The Delight of God's Will; The Secret of God's Will; The Counsel of God's Will.

Arthur C. Lamb

 PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

The preceding article based on notes by Bro. Arthur C. Lamb will be available as a pamphlet for Bible class use. This has been paid for by friends of Arthur and Aileen Lamb who have contributed to the Concern in their memory. We would like to prepare a series of these lessons and so are pricing these at five cents each or 25 for a dollar in order to maintain a fund for this purpose.

We have recently reprinted the pamphlet entitled, "What is Death?" and the tract, "God's Love Changes Lives."

 CONCORDANT FELLOWSHIP DIRECTORY

The 1978 edition of our Fellowship Directory is now in print. It has been mailed out to all those who are on our Newsletter list. Let us know if you wish to receive a copy and also if you wish to receive the Newsletters which are issued on the months when *Unsearchable Riches* is not published. Both the Directory and the Newsletter are free upon request.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES for SEPTEMBER 1978
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

“THE WHOLE is greater than the sum of its parts.” This is a saying we have all probably heard. It is especially true in relation to those Sacred Scriptures we call “the Bible.” In our efforts toward “correctly cutting the word of truth” (2 Tim.2:15), it would be well for us to consider the Scriptures as a whole, and not as a dissected (and therefore, conquered) specimen in our laboratories of reason. This is an inherent danger in the “higher criticism” applied to the Bible, where identifying the source materials underlying, for example, Matthew’s account of Jesus Christ’s career becomes so very important that the Message—Christ—is neglected. The Word is then no longer “beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness” (2 Tim.3:16), for it becomes only an object of scrutiny that no longer speaks to our hearts. It is then an idol of the study.

The Scriptures, as a whole, give a revelation of God. Some parts are a bare glimpse, compared to Paul’s completing revelations, yet they concern God nonetheless. From the very first line in Genesis, His transcendence is asserted, for He is not Himself a portion of the heavens and earth He made—unlike the contesting gods of the corresponding creation myths of the nations surrounding Israel. Certainly, recognition of Scriptural distinctions is *essential* in using that two-edged sword aright. However, unless we attempt to grasp the Bible in its entirety—and that means reading it clear through, from time to time—we cannot realize that greater Whole.

J.D.T.

THE EVANGEL OF GOD

“God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes” (Rom.5:8). While this good news (evangel) is spoken of believers it is true of all mankind. Christ died for the sake of sinners. This is something that is desperately needed in the world in which we live.

We live in a world where, according to “Murphy’s law,” if anything can go wrong it will. That is something we all understand and can relate to. It agrees with our experience, and we have come to accept it as best we can.

However, the really bad news is that “Murphy’s law” is not bad enough. It is not a matter that things *can* go wrong, but they *will* go wrong. Paul tells us “all have sinned and are wanting of the glory of God” (Rom.3:23). “God’s indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of men....God gives them over, in the lusts of their hearts, to the uncleanness of dishonoring their bodies....God gives them over to dishonorable passions....God gives them over to a disqualified mind....Wherefore, defenseless are you, O man!” (Rom.1:18,24,26,28; 2:1).

“The God Who makes the world and all that is in it” (Acts 17:24) also planned all things in accord with a purpose (Eph.1:11; 3:11). What we observe as “laws” of nature or probabilities are, therefore, actually say-

ing something to us about God. And this is what makes for such confusion. How can things go wrong when God is in control? And, conversely, how can God be in control when things go wrong?

GOOD NEWS

We can never even hope to grasp the full truth about God if we refuse to go beyond the bad news which is so obvious. God cannot be revealed as God apart from the *evangel of God*. The book of Romans begins, "Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for the *evangel of God*...." This is where we also must begin in our search for God.

What we observe and experience in the world is that things go wrong. But what we discover by faith in the *evangel* is that "God is operating all together for good" (Rom.8:28). In other words there is a law at work which is radically different from "Murphy's law" which says that whatever happens (no can's or if's or but's about it) will go well.

This *evangel* is the good news of God. It is not only *from* God, not only originating *in* God, but it is *of* God's very essence. It reflects God as He truly is, as no other message has ever been able to do, or no other action has been able to accomplish. If we do not find God here in this good news concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, we will never find God *as God*.

God has stepped into the midst of a situation where everything goes wrong ("while we are still sinners") and has changed the world around so that things are going in a new direction. This has introduced new "laws" into the universe. One of these, for example, is "faith's law" mentioned in Romans 4:27. This emphasizes that it is God Who established this new direction. It is He Who has brought about the good

news. All we "do" is believe, which cannot really be called a "doing" at all. Therefore, there is no boasting since all rests on God's achievement through the blood of Christ's cross.

Another new law is that given in Romans 8:2, called "the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus." This law also tells us that God is operating through Christ's obedience to the end that things go well rather than wrong. In this case He operates in the believer who rests on the finished work of Christ so that our walk is pleasing and honoring to Him.

The amazing thing about this new type of law is that it comes out of the greatest wrong of all time. The cross of Christ *looked at first* as though it were an unmitigated tragedy. And yet, out of this great wrong comes the revolutionary change, and though still hidden from the eyes of most observers of this world, this obedient act of Christ is producing results, all of which are good and to the glory of God. While "Murphy's law" sees apparently good things continually going wrong, this new "law" sees an obviously wrong thing making everything go right. This is some of what Paul was saying in 1 Corinthians 1:21, "For since, in fact, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom knew not God, God delights, through the stupidity of the heralding,* to save those who are believing."

NOT ASHAMED

Paul was not ashamed of this evangel. Although the wise of this eon consider it stupidity, he found it to be the wisdom and power of God. Man dislikes it because it excludes boasting; it is all of God. Man considers it

*The word *heralding* does not refer only to the act of proclaiming the truth, but to the message which is heralded as well.

foolish because it is based on something so abominable that he would rather forget the whole matter. But we must not be ashamed of this message “*for* it is God’s power for salvation to everyone who is believing...” and “*for* in it God’s righteousness is being revealed...” (Rom.1:16,17). This evangel presents God in an entirely new light.

In the old system (which is still with us, in the flesh) it was impossible to know God truly. Although sometimes His power was manifest in deliverance, such as the rescue of the children of Israel from Egypt, there was still the destruction of the Egyptians. This gave an incomplete picture of the significance of God’s power.

So also God’s righteousness could be partially seen, but only as retributive justice. And even today when people see the phrase “the justice of God” they tend to think of condemnation. There may have been some good coming to certain chosen ones in all those years before the evangel was made known, but even in God’s dealings with Israel things apparently kept going wrong. It was difficult (and without faith it was impossible) to see that anything good could ever come out of the great power, the unrelenting justice and the uncompromising wrath of God.

But even in considering the evangel of God we hit a snag in Romans 1:18. Something seems wrong, because in introducing this evangel and unfolding why he is not ashamed of it, the apostle Paul adds, “*for* God’s *indignation* is being revealed....” We have three matters relating to God here, all introduced by the Greek word *gar*, which we translate *for*. Are these the reasons why Paul is not ashamed of the evangel? Is he not ashamed because (for) the good news is involved with: 1. God’s power; 2. God’s righteousness; and 3. God’s indignation?

The relationships of God's power, righteousness and indignation to the evangel are not on the same level. God's power is related to the evangel in that the evangel *is* God's power for salvation. God's righteousness is related to the evangel in that it is revealed *in* the evangel. But God's indignation is not the evangel, nor is it revealed in the evangel, but it is rather from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of men. God's indignation is not *in* the evangel or even a part *of* the evangel. It is, in fact, a part of the old revelation, the old system of things (which still continues in the flesh). In a sense it is a scriptural stating of "Murphy's law," that things are going wrong.

The relationship of Romans 1:18 to the evangel of God, as indicated by the word *for*, is a relationship of *contrast*. Paul is not ashamed of the evangel because it is a message so much needed. Without it, all we have is power and righteousness involving destruction. Such a message does not bring glory to God.

The entire section of Romans 1:18-3:20 is a parenthetical interruption to the presentation of the evangel. God's power for salvation (not destruction) has been introduced in 1:16, and His righteousness "out of faith for faith" in 1:17, and then the subject of His righteousness is resumed in 3:21. The intervening thoughts regarding God's indignation are by way of contrast and underscore the need for the evangel.

THREE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Even though God's power, righteousness and indignation are not parallel characteristics of God in the evangel, it is true that there are three major attributes of God associated with the evangel of God. Two of these are first presented in Romans 1:16,17, namely God's power and God's righteousness. The

third is not God's indignation, but rather is something not introduced until Romans 3:24 and not developed until Romans chapter five.

This third, and completing, attribute of God is “His *grace*” or, as brought forward in Romans 5:8 (quoted at the beginning of this article) “this *love* of His to us.” God's *power*, *righteousness* and *love* are the three essential and basic characteristics of God found in the good news. Everything else in the evangel which reveals God as God is bound up with these three.

Furthermore, not one of these three dominates over the others. It is helpful to think of them like the sides of an equilateral triangle. Each side is equal in revealing God, and the whole of what God is cannot be appreciated apart from these three aspects of God's character. If we say that God is all powerful but His love is restricted, then we do not have the evangel, and we do not know God as God. If we say that God loves all mankind equally but is unable (lacking in power) to express this love and make it operative in everyone's life, then we do not have the evangel, and we do not know God as God.

Even in the Scriptures, in those portions where this evangel of God is not presented, we have an unbalanced picture. We can see God's power there, but not all of it is “for salvation.” Like Job we can accept God's righteousness, but it is not clear because it “passes over” the sins of the chosen while bringing on indignation for the rest. And God's love seems very limited indeed.

So also in modern theological thought we find one group emphasizing God's power and righteousness in salvation but restricting His love to the “elect.” On the other hand, we find another group emphasizing God's love for all but limiting His power in bringing

all into this salvation. It is tragic to emphasize one of these attributes at the expense of another. We have an evangel which magnifies each of the three to perfection. And as Paul was eager to proclaim it and was not ashamed of it, so also do we stand by it with all joy and peace in believing.

IN GOD'S GRACE

We have said that the third or completing attribute of God built into the foundation of the evangel is love. The way God manifests this love, or the doorway to this love, is *grace*. Grace is the heart of God's love. We read in Romans 3:24, when Paul has resumed his presentation of the evangel of God, that we are "justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus." God's love is a favor, even a gratuitous favor. This love is entirely an act and achievement of God, apart from our works and worthiness.

Hence we see that the evangel of God is all of God. What it says about God is that His power and His righteousness and His love are perfect and complete. Nothing ought to be added; nothing can be added; and nothing will be added. This is truly good news of which we are not ashamed. In the midst of a world where things go wrong, this alone "goes right." And it is certain of a final and complete victory to the glory of God.

D.H.H.

WILLIAM MONTEITH

We have received word of the death of Bro. Monteith of Lithgow, New South Wales, Australia on April 11. He was a Bible scholar and was used by the Lord in teaching others of God's great love.

FAITH-OBEDIENCE

IN THE PRECEDING ARTICLE of this series we had quoted Romans 1:1-5 as an outline or digest of divine truth such as Saul had been granted to grasp during the long months of his Arabian retreat. It was by faith-obedience (the highlight of verse 5) that he was able to see the ancestral faith in a totally new perspective. We may take it for granted that this obedience of faith (*hup-akoê pistecos*) had gradually grown in Saul since the day of his encounter with the risen Christ outside Damascus.

The Greek *akoê* means "hearing" and its prefix *hup-* is abbreviated from *hupo*, "under." Hence "faith-obedience" stands for the *subjection* of faith under that which is heard,^o namely the Word of God and of the Lord.

During the years prior to the sudden meeting with the Lord, the young Pharisee had been "ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish [his] own righteousness...*not subjected* to the righteousness of God." Saul had been unaware of the fact that "Christ is the consummation of law for righteousness to everyone who is believing" (Rom.10:3,4).

VOLUNTARY SUBMISSION

After Saul had heard the word of the Lord and had received his commission, he realized that his new faith

^oKeyword Concordance, pages 208,305.

was a ceasing of self-effort, a voluntary submission to the way of salvation for which he, Saul, was to become a pattern. Many years later he wrote, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, foremost of whom am I. But therefore was I shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ should be displaying all His patience, for a pattern of those who are about to be believing on Him for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:15,16).

It is conceivable that Saul realized very early in his service for the Lord that Christ was indeed the consummation of law for righteousness; hence faith-obedience is not evidenced by any virtuous acts and noble deeds. Faith-obedience is rather a figure of speech which means that obedience to the authority of the Mosaic law has been succeeded by faith in the words of the Lord which Saul had heard and was going to hear, while listening in voluntary submission as if saying, "What shall I be doing, Lord?"

BECOME IMITATORS OF ME

Since Paul is our pattern, we too are expected to subject our faith to the evangel of grace as it is expounded in his epistles. God's grace entrusted him with the apostleship and provided for him not only the capacity to absorb the full significance of the Word of God and of the Lord, but also the ability to teach others by leading them into the very same faith-obedience which had so completely changed his life-style, from a persecuting zealot to a choice instrument of God.

BY FAITH ARE WE WALKING, NOT BY PERCEPTION (2 Corinthians 5:7)

It should be noted that Pauline faith-obedience evolves from an encounter with the Lord, hearing His gracious words and accepting Him as one's personal

Saviour; this is faith in its aspect of subjection to the righteousness of God (*cf* Rom.10:3). This faith is sustained by the believer's personal *apprehension* of Christ which leads to thinking His thoughts, being governed by His motives and invigorated by His words.

Such faith-obedience, based on the continuous *apprehension* of divine *truth*, is in contrast to the *perception* of divine *achievements*, such as the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the spirit-filled day of Pentecost, the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Door of the sanctuary. Similar miracles and signs served to authenticate Peter's words at Pentecost and on later occasions when "on every soul came fear" (Acts 2:43) and "the Lord added those being saved day by day" (2:47), and even "a vast throng of priests *obeyed the faith*" (6:7), i.e. they accepted Peter's message of "Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, Whom *you* crucify, Whom God rouses from among the dead" (4:10).

Luke reports of the Jerusalem audience at Pentecost (2:37) that "their heart was pricked with compunction" over the crucifixion of their Messiah which they had endorsed. Peter had been able in convincing their minds and convicting their consciences of their *common guilt*, namely the culpability of all Jerusalemites together with their chiefs who had killed the Inaugurator of Life (*cf* 3:15). Hence the motivation of those who believed Peter's message and thus "obeyed the faith" was different from Saul's who called himself the *foremost of sinners* and who no longer sought to establish his own righteousness.

THIS ONE IS THE CHRIST

After having returned from his Arabian retreat, Saul

was "more invigorated" in the Word of God and of the Lord "and threw the Jews dwelling in Damascus into confusion, deducing [from the Scriptures] that this One is the Christ" (Acts 9:22).

More than two years had passed since those days when he had gone from synagogue to synagogue, heralding "Jesus, that *He* is the Son of God" (9:20), and by this public confession identifying himself as a follower of the despised Nazarene. During those few days Saul had not yet been in a position to argue with unbelieving Jews and to present irrefutable evidence from the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms "that this One is the Christ."

Saul in Damascus could not use Peter's line of argumentation which fitted the common guilt of the people in Jerusalem. Very few, if any, of the Damascene Jews had been among the crowd in front of Pilate's pretorium who had cried, "Crucify, crucify him!" (Luke 23:21). Hence Saul seems to have used the same approach as in later days whenever he entered a synagogue outside the land, such as in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-3), "where there was a synagogue of the Jews. Now, as was Paul's custom, he entered to them, and on three sabbaths he argued with them from the Scriptures, opening up and placing before them that the Christ must suffer and rise from among the dead, and that 'This One is the Christ—the Jesus Whom I am announcing to you.'"

It is conceivable that Saul (after his return from the Arabian desert retreat) started with this kind of thorough deduction and argumentation in the synagogues of Damascus. He deviated from the traditional interpretation of the law of Moses and the prophets, and revealed that the Messiah had to suffer humiliation and death before entering into His glory.

Since the risen Christ Himself had stressed this fact on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:26), Saul may have added this word of the Lord to numerous quotations from the Word of God whenever "Jesus Christ was graphically crucified" before the eyes of his audience (cf Gal.3:1). Saul may have cited words from Psalm 22:

"The congregation of evildoers encompasses Me,
As they dig into My hands and My feet...
They will apportion My garments among themselves,
And on My vesture they will cast the lot."

And he may have quoted from Isaiah 53:

"He was wounded because of our transgressions
And crushed because of our depravities...
Because of the transgression of My people
Was He touched by death.
And He was given His tomb with the wicked,
A cave from the rich, in His death."

Like Peter, Saul may have paraphrased David's words in Psalm 16 concerning the resurrection of Christ, that He was neither forsaken in the unseen, nor was His flesh acquainted with decay; and Saul may have added that the risen Christ was seen by over five hundred believers, apart from His own disciples.

FROM AMAZEMENT TO CONFUSION

Long, assiduous study of the Word of God with special emphasis on the Messianic promises had enlightened the eyes of Saul's heart to recognize the fallacy of misleading reasoning which had led to the traditional assumptions in the interpretation of the Scriptures. The objectors among the Damascene Jews were satisfied with visualizing their Messiah as the

coming Liberator from the Roman yoke Who was going to reign in glory over free Israel. Their attitude became extremely hostile as Saul went on deducing that this One is the Christ. Only those who were given a measure of faith-obedience were able to break with tradition and to believe the Word of God and of the Lord rather than to rely on the misinterpretation of the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms.

During the "some days" (Acts 9:19b), Saul's public confession of faith in Jesus, the Son of God, had resulted in *amazement* among the unbelieving audiences throughout the Damascus synagogues. Now, however, after the greater part of two years had passed, when he appeared to be in the best physical trim and mental acumen as well as invigorated in the Word, Saul's systematic way of deduction and argumentation from the Scriptures resulted in *confusion* among the same audiences. This new situation was similar to the circumstances described in Acts 6:10 where the Hellenistic Jews in their discussions with Stephen "were not strong enough to withstand the wisdom and the spirit with which he spoke."

SAUL'S FLIGHT FROM DAMASCUS

"Now as a considerable number of days were fulfilled, the Jews consult to assassinate him. Yet known to Saul is their plot. Now they scrutinized the gates also, both by day and by night, so that they may be assassinating him. Yet the disciples, getting him at night, let him down through the wall, lowering him in a hamper" (Acts 9:23-25).

Many years later, Paul referred to his flight from the Damascus scene in 2 Corinthians 11:29-33. "Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is snared and I am not on fire. If I must boast, I will be boasting in that which

is of my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, Who is blessed for the eons, is aware that I am not lying. In Damascus the ethnarch of Aretas, the king, garrisoned the city of the Damascenes, wanting to arrest me, and I am lowered in a wicker basket through a window through the wall, and escaped his hands.”

We have no extended account of Saul's address to the Jewish population of Damascus, nor any intimation if he had been able to lift the covering from some Jewish hearts (*cf* 2 Cor.3:14,15). We only know about the objectors whose apprehension remained calloused, even to the point of planning Saul's assassination.

Any assertion of the special privileges of Roman citizenship would have been of no avail since the Romans had ceded the jurisdiction over Damascus to the Nabatean king Aretas who had appointed an ethnarch as governor. The latter wanted to please the influential Jews, and a concerted effort was made to watch the gates in the city wall so as to arrest the deserter from the ancestral faith who deserved to be killed.

This was the end of Saul's first evangelistic campaign; there was nothing to boast of, but his own weakness. The young Pharisee may have remembered the Lord's word to Ananias, "I shall be intimating to him how much he must be suffering for My name's sake" (Acts 9:16).

Boasting and glorying is the same word in Greek (*cf* Keyword Concordance, page 35). Boasting in his weakness, glorying in his first major defeat, is the apostle's answer to Jewish self-righteousness which had driven him out of Damascus. The inversion from his former Pharisaic pride was complete when in later

years his faith-obedience would acquiesce and even coincide with the word of the Lord, "Sufficient for you is My grace, for My power in infirmity is being perfected." And the apostle added, "With the greatest relish then will I rather be glorying [or boasting] in my infirmities, that the power of Christ should be tabernacled over me. Wherefore I delight in infirmities, in outrages, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for whenever I may be weak, then I am powerful" (2 Cor.12:9,10).

H.H.R.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Bible Fellowship Church of South Holland, Illinois, will hold its 11th annual conference on October 6-8, 1978 with the theme of Ephesians 3:8-11. For motel reservations write or phone Mrs. Egbert Bohuis, 632 East 166th Pl., South Holland IL 60473.

The annual Scriptural Study Group Conference will be held in Melbourne, Florida, November 24-26. Write to Mr. Charles E. Bard, 2600 Pineapple Ave., A-4, Melbourne FL 32935, for reservations and further information.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

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THEOLOGICAL TERMS AND SOUND EXPRESSIONS

What is your answer to the charge that you “deny the deity of Christ?”

The ringing insistence of the Scriptures that there is only one God has been subtly undermined by the prevailing teaching concerning a “triune deity.” When we inquire into the relation of the three members of the “trinity” to one another, we are met by meaningless and incomprehensible, as well as unscriptural, phrases. As a rule, however, the explanation is evaded and shunned. It is evident that an honest inquiry is not desired, and always leads to heresy. But the Scriptures are written that we should know God and His Christ, and it is of utmost importance that we give to Each the place assigned Him in Holy Writ.

It has become the fashion to approach this subject by giving it various unscriptural names, and to frighten timid souls by warning them against any who deny these shibboleths. I am frank to say that I cannot subscribe to *any* statement not couched in the clear language of Scripture. Theological terms are not only too elastic, too indefinite, too enslaving, but they are an unintended slur on the Author of the Book, as though He could not pick the correct key words for His revelation. For instance, why introduce the phrase “deity of Christ?” No one knows just what it means. I

can honestly say that I believe in the deity of Christ, for God, and not man, was His Father. But I can also deny it if the phrase is stretched to mean that He is everything to God that God is to Him.

The revelation of God comes to us through two of our senses, sight and sound. His message is received through our eyes or our ears. We listen to it read or we look into its pages. We hear it expounded or we study its exposition in written form. Christ is the living revelation of God. When He is seen and heard we behold and hear the absolute Deity Whom He represents. Our ears cannot perceive the inaudible. Our eyes cannot view the invisible. In Christ, as the Image of God and as the Word of God, we see His likeness and hear His sayings.

The Scriptures definitely assure us that God is invisible and inaudible. This applies, of course, only to absolute Deity, not to those who are so called in a subordinate sense. It certainly does not apply to the Son of God, for He is the Image of the invisible God (Col.1:15). Paul, in writing to Timothy, concerning his own gracious call, bursts out into a doxology, "Now to the King of the eons, the incorruptible, *invisible*, only wise God, be honor and glory for the eons of the eons! Amen!" (1 Tim.1:17). Moses, we are told, deemed the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the fury of the king, for he is staunch, as seeing the *Invisible* (Heb.11:26,27).

There is no hint that this invisibility is due to human disability. It is true that human vision is very restricted. It covers only a small range. It is probable that some of the lower animals see more and further than humanity. Invisibility is one of the essentials of absolute Deity. He is Spirit. He pervades the uni-

verse. The moment we seek to visualize Him we constrict and contract Him to human proportions and He loses the transcendence which is exclusive to the Absolute. We shall never see Him, in a literal sense. Like Moses, we shall see the Invisible, in a figurative sense. The means provided for this is Christ. God is *absolutely* invisible, not merely in relation to our present powers. This is important, if we wish to appreciate the part that Christ plays in His revelation.

Many passages can be produced which seem to contradict the invisibility of God. There are two explanations which cover most of them. Men cannot understand any language that is not human. Hence the figure *anthropopatheia* is freely used, in which God is treated as a man. He is continually given human attributes and furnished with various members of the human body. Messengers behold His *face* (Matt.18:10). We read of His *eyes* (Psa.11:4), His *ears* (Psa.10:7), or His *nostrils* (Ex.15:8), His *mouth* (Deut.8:3), His *lips* (Job 11:5), His *arms* (Isa.62:8), His *hands* (Psa.8:6), His *feet* (Isa.66:1). Besides this He is given human feelings, even ignorance, and many other traits which humanize Him so that we may understand Him.

THE IMAGE OF GOD

In some cases, however, He is represented by His Image. Adam saw God in the garden, Abraham entertained Him in his tent, Moses met Him on the mount, Joshua encountered Him at Jericho. These were literal, tangible, material, visible visits of Him Who is the Image and the Word of God. They actually saw His appearance and heard His voice. This, says our Lord, is not possible of the Father (John 5:37). When Philip wished to be shown the Father, our Lord

directed him to Himself. "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:8-10).

In a few cases we have both the Son and the Father visible at the same time. This occurs only in visions. In the great opening vision of the throne in the Unveiling, Christ is seen as a Lambkin, while there is Another Who sits on the throne. We may be sure that this is not literal. It is a vision. Christ will never be actually metamorphosed into an animal, nor will the Supreme be turned into an august man. Visions are not made of visible objects. They are, essentially, a sight which has no substantial existence.

When men set up the worship of an invisible deity, they usually make an image to represent it. This is one of the charges against humanity: that their images degrade the Deity to their own level or below (Rom. 1:23). Hence the law forbade all graven images, and Israel, as a rule, has kept clear of them. But this widespread, almost universal, desire to have some tangible, visible representation of God is not wrong in itself. It is an instinctive, God-implanted longing, and God satisfies it by giving mankind a true and adequate Image of Himself in Christ.

Perhaps no other subject demands so insistently that we cleave fast to the pattern of sound words. If we start out with an unscriptural theological term, we can only hope to land in the misty mud in which theology is mired.

In order to clarify our thoughts, let us study a few occurrences of the word "image" in the Scriptures. He Who is God's Image, and Who spoke as no man ever spoke, used it in contending with the Jews. Taking a minted piece of money, a denarius, He asked, "whose is this image and inscription?" Their reply was, "Caesar's." He responded, "Be paying, then,

Caesar's to Caesar, and God's to God" (Matt.22:21). The image was probably like that on modern coins, possibly a head or bust delineated on the metal by indentations or embossing, which suggested the emperor to the mind. The whole point of the passage lies in the word *image*. The fact that they were using money minted by Rome indicated their subjection to Rome. They were under obligations to the one whose image appeared on their coins. This image was only a partial likeness. It was made of metal, not flesh and blood. It was only a miniature of the original. It probably depicted only a part of his body, and that in hardly more than two dimensions. Yet it symbolized all that he was, especially what he was to those who used the coin.

From this illustration, supplied by the divine Image Himself, we may readily deduce that, as the Image of God, He need *not* be of the "same substance," as the theologians assert, He need *not* be of the same dimensions, He need *not* reveal every phase of God's existence, but He *must* be a symbol of God's relationship to mankind—His love, His power, His wisdom, and His grace. A sight of Him should impress us with all that we could get by a vision of God.

While seeking thus to define and limit the exact thought which lies in the term *image*, let no one imagine that Christ is not more than this. He is the image *and glory* of God (1 Cor.11:7). The effigy of Caesar on the coin of the realm probably was not much to look at, much less to admire. But Christ is not a lifeless representation but a life-giving illumination. If our eyes are open, we see Him as He appeared on the mount, not with a halo above His head, but enveloped in an aura of glory, which is God's. In fact, the glory of the Deity is not within the range of human sight, so

He is the Effulgence, the radiant glory of the invisible Deity (Heb.1:3). He is all that an image ought to be, the ideal representation of the most marvelous Original. Seeing Christ, we see Him Whom no man has seen or can see. Instead of being stricken to death by the sight, as we surely would were it the absolute Deity, we are given life, and the power to look upon His glory, yea, we ourselves partake of it and become like Him.

THE WORD OF GOD

The scripture which instinctively rises in any discussion of this theme is the declaration of John's account, "And the Word was God." Standing alone, this text is very impressive, but considered in its context it becomes an enigma. It is flanked on both sides by the repeated assertion that the Word was *with* God. How the selfsame Word can be *with* God and at the same time *be* God surpasses all human apprehension. The translation, however, is quite free. A closer rendering may help us to an understanding of the entire passage and eliminate the apparent mystification.

But even more depends upon our attitude. If we approach it from the standpoint of philosophy, as though it were addressed to an audience unacquainted with any previous revelation, we will find in it formulas for endless discussion, but little profit. We should rather take the attitude of those to whom John wrote, who knew the Hebrew Scriptures and to whom John wished to demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God (John 20:31). He does not begin with an independent philosophical discussion, but shows the vital connection of the Son with all previous revelation, before the Expression became flesh.

It is of vital moment to us, whether we surround this

text with the haze of mystic philosophy or the aura of ancient revelation. The philosophical Logos is the source of insipid and unsatisfactory discussions which darken the intellect and harden the heart: the scriptural Expression mellows the affections and illuminates the mind, and is fruitful in the knowledge and appreciation of God.

While it is not vital, it will be helpful to use the word "Expression" in place of "Word." The theme of the passage is God's Expression—the means of His manifestation or revelation. God wishes to be known, to speak to His creatures. John commences by introducing us to this Logos, or Word, or Expression. Before John wrote, God had already manifested Himself, as revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures. John wishes to connect his further revelation with that which preceded it, so he introduces us to the One Who is the subject of both.

The connective *with* ordinarily signifies nearness and association. This is the thought usually found in the phrase "with God." However, this is not the case in the prologue to John's account. It is not that the Expression was near God or in association with God, but that it is directed *toward* God. In the third verse of the thirteenth chapter the same phrase occurs. It is the opposite of *from*. The Word came from God and went *to* (not *with*) God.

Can we not see the drift of this, even though our tongue cannot express it? To tell us that the Expression was *with* God does not seem suited to the thought which the Greek word, *pros*, conveys, but if we read that the Expression was *toward* God in the sense that It pointed to Him, it helps us to see that the real thought is not the nearness of the Expression to God but the directing of others toward God. And is not

this just what an expression is intended to accomplish?

What then, of the phrase, "And God was the Expression?" If, as we have seen, there was an Expression in the beginning which pointed *toward* God, Who was that God we read about in the Hebrew Scriptures? The answer is here. The God of that revelation was the Expression, the Same One Who becomes flesh and camps amongst His people, according to John's record.

THE MEDIATOR

In his book on the deity of Christ, Sir Robert Anderson sets down in simple words one of the mistakes which so warp the subject that it is impossible to consider it clearly unless they are exposed. He says, "With us, therefore, the issue is a definite and simple one, namely, whether Christ is God, or only man." This statement neither defines nor clarifies the theme, for the evidence is abundant on both sides. Moreover, this declaration definitely denies the unique glory of Christ as the Mediator. He is *neither* merely "God or only man," but the Link between them. The Scriptures are emphatic on this point. "There is *one* God, and *one* Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus . . ." (1 Tim.2:5). Those who refuse this truth and all the divine explanations of those relationships by which He bridges the chasm between us and God, must make Him either Deity absolute or merely human. Both are wrong and rob us of the Mediator, the Christ we need.

The point we wish to press is this, that the likeness of Christ to God, instead of incorporating Him into the so-called "Godhead," is itself the most satisfying evidence that He is not the Supreme. Nothing is similar to itself, except in a rhetorical figure. Likeness

disappears in identity. Nor can this be limited to "personality." Christ and God are alike apart from "personality." Their agreement consists in things. Images and expressions are not "personal." Furthermore, the acknowledgment of distinct "personality" precludes identity in other ways. Every word or phrase which has been invented, such as *essence* and *substance*, is utterly unscriptural and irrational if we allow distinctness of "personality."

Christ is the Image and Word of the Deity. Without any reasoning whatever, the spirit of a sane mind concludes that, therefore, He is not Himself the Deity. The statue of Christ high up in the Andes is not Christ Himself, though it is correctly called "the Christ of the Andes." The office of Mediator demands that our Lord be the God of our souls, a manifestation of the Deity in terms within the scope of our comprehensions, in sights and sounds suited to our sensations. *We must see God! We must hear God!* That is impossible absolutely. It is realized relatively in the One Mediator. In Him we see, *not Himself* merely, but His God. Through Him we hear, *not His words*, but His Father's. O, that men would not seek to tie their tinsel to His glory! No greater shame could be His than to reveal Himself, to speak His own words, to obey His own will, though these are the essentials of Deity. Though *like* the Deity, His essential excellence lies in self-effacement and subjection to His God and His Father. He is not a mere Man or absolute Deity, but the Mediator between them.

Do you deny the Personality of the Holy Spirit?

Again, 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,

the phrase "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.

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 forced inferences can be made which even seem to suggest that God and His Spirit are distinct "Persons."

A.E.K.

GEORGE ARTHUR GHENT

On July 31, 1978, two days before the Baldwin Summer Fellowship, our brother, "Art" Ghent, passed away. A native of Baldwin, Michigan, where he lived most of his life, he left two sons and three daughters besides many other relatives. Many from the Fellowship attended the funeral service on August 3, conducted by Pastor Lloyd Hibberd. Bro. Ghent was regular in attendance at the Grace and Truth Chapel, adding much to the meetings. He had helped prepare for the Fellowship before he was struck by a sudden heart attack. He will be greatly missed by all the friends in Baldwin as well as by his family. A quiet man, he lived his strong belief in our great God and in His plan for all His creation.

L.A.H.

THE NEW HUMANITY

THE PHRASE, "God's dwelling place, in spirit," occurs, as we have previously noted, in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, which at once puts it in a celestial context. (The Ephesian epistle is characterized by the five-fold use of the expression "among the celestials.") It comes at the very end of the second chapter, and immediately before the apostle's second prayer, which opens the third chapter. We remember, of course, that these divisions into chapters are no part of original inspiration, and therefore the two chapters in question run on, the one into the other, as is indicated by the words "on this behalf."

The second chapter of Ephesians truly and firmly defines the basis of the joint body referred to in the third chapter. This basis is the cross of Christ, which effectively kills all the enmity previously existent in the flesh. For in the flesh there is a barrier between those termed Israel and the nations. Let us note here and now that this barrier had been established by God. He it was Who had inaugurated the rite of circumcision and had insisted upon it being carried out by those who were His people.

This rite was originally introduced to teach the lesson that the flesh was unable of itself to produce the result which God desired, and a small portion was to

be cut off and cast away as a demonstration of the impotence of the rest. But Israel did not see it that way; to them it was a badge of distinction which separated them from other peoples. It is ever thus: the flesh cannot grasp the spiritual meaning of that which is of God, and it is in the inability of the flesh to do this that existent enmity is further provoked. The flesh even glorifies its own mutilation rather than admit its impotence.

This barrier between Israel and the nations was so firmly established and so clear cut that, not only did it confer on the former privileges denied to the latter, but it even made God "holy" (i.e., "wholly") to Israel while excluding Him from the nations. To Israel God said, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2), while of the nations it is written that they were "without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).

Thus, while ever this fleshly distinction lasted, God could not dwell among mankind as a whole; He must confine His presence to the nation of His choice.

CHRIST IN FLESH

THE SERVANT OF THE CIRCUMCISION

It was also true of Jesus that He was partial in His fleshly ministry. According to flesh, He was of the seed of David (Rom.1:3). He was not commissioned to serve any except the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt.15:24), and His disciples were equally restricted in their commission (Matt.10:5,6). He Himself was circumcised (Luke 2:21) and thus became identified with the Circumcision. As Paul says, in Romans 15:8, "Christ has become the Servant of the Circumcision, for the sake of the truth of God, *to confirm the patriarchal promises.*"

The promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been that their seed should be made into a great nation, and this was confirmed by God at Sinai, when He had declared that, if they obeyed His voice and kept His covenant, they should be a peculiar treasure unto Him above all people, for all the earth was His (Ex.19:5). There was thus an enmity in Christ's flesh towards the nations outside Israel, in that, in His flesh, He was bound to favor the people of God's choice, but this enmity (figured by the central wall of the barrier, which forbade people outside of Israel to enter the sacred places under pain of death) is completely eliminated at the cross (Eph.2:13-17). There a new humanity is created in Christ—a humanity which recognizes no fleshly distinctions, but one in which each of the former elements of mankind has equal right of access to the Father. Moreover, this is an unrestricted access, something which neither party had enjoyed before. The nations had had no access, Israel only a limited access in the person of their chief priest once every year.

In 2 Corinthians 5:16, Paul tells us that "we, from now on, are acquainted with no one according to flesh" and adds that "even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer." If we were to continue to recognize Christ according to flesh, we should still be faced with that enmity in His flesh, which requires Him to be the Servant of Israel only and to exalt that nation above all others.

Here, in Ephesians, Christ is portrayed as the Head of a new humanity, which is not in accord with Adam, but in accord with God, and which is being created in righteousness and benignity of the truth (Eph.4:24). In this new humanity, there are none of the distinc-

tions pertaining to the old humanity, for in it there is "no Greek and Jew, Circumcision and Uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but all and in all is Christ" (Col.3:10,11).

WHAT IS HUMANITY?

Perhaps at this point we should pause to ask ourselves, "What is humanity?" This may seem a peculiar, if not a superfluous, question to raise, seeing that we are all members of humanity. Nevertheless, we still persist in asking it, since we feel that few are really clear in their understanding of what humanity actually is, and why it has come into being.

The first occurrence of the word "humanity" is significant in establishing its meaning. This is in Genesis 1:26 which reads, "And saying is Alueim, 'Make will We humanity in Our image, and according to Our likeness. . . .'"

Let us put aside for a moment all thoughts of flesh and bones, of man being made from the soil of the ground, or of him being soulish (these details have their place in the second chapter of Genesis), and confine ourselves to the basic facts of the first chapter. Here the fundamental issue is that humanity was to be made in the image and likeness of its Creator. This is the prime concept which we should ever keep in mind when we are considering humanity. The fact that the word "create" is used no less than three times in verse 27 shows the importance of this development in God's operations, and shows, too, that nothing like this had ever been done before.

Celestial beings (excluding, of course, the Lord Himself) had not been created in the image of God, nor had the animals, though the introduction of soul life among creatures lower than humanity had also

been a special creation (see Gen.1:21). But humanity was given extra glory and honor by being created in the image and likeness of God.

So that no one may be in any doubt, the basic truth of Genesis 1:27 is repeated in Genesis 5:1. Moreover, it is not annulled by man's original disobedience, or by any later consequences of this, for after a judgment which had destroyed all mankind (save for eight souls), we read in Genesis 9:6, "The shedder of the blood of a human, by a human his blood shall be shed, for *in the image of Alueim has He made humanity.*"

We have thus established that humanity is a special creation, distinct from all else by its being in the image and likeness of God. Because of this, Christ (as God's true Image) could come to be in the likeness of humanity yet still be able to mirror the Father (John 14:9). And, to take the matter a little further, the ecclesia, which is the body of Christ, does not find its status jeopardized by its members being chosen from out of humanity, since humanity itself was created in the image and likeness of God.

Alas that that image has become sadly marred as a result of Adam's and subsequent transgressions, so tarnished and dulled that in humanity as a whole it no longer reflects the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Nevertheless, in spite of the blurring of its appearance, the form of humanity has not changed through numerous generations, for Jesus, when He became flesh, could truly be said to be "found in fashion as a man," (Phil.2:8; Matt.16:16; John 1:49). And we, too, can become sons of God, and reflect His image while in the form of humanity, though this will only be true as we regard the old humanity as being "crucified together with Christ," and put on the new in its place (Rom.6:6; Eph.4:24).

THE SOULISH AND THE SPIRITUAL

The second chapter of Genesis describes how God formed a human out of the soil of the ground, and made him into a living soul by "blowing into his nostrils the breath of the living." Thus the first man was made both soilish and soulish, so taking on the characteristics described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, beginning at the middle of verse 44, to verse 49.

"If there is a soulish body, there is a spiritual also. Thus it is written also, The first man, Adam 'became a living soul;' the last Adam a vivifying Spirit. But not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual. The first man was out of the earth, soilish; the second Man is the Lord out of Heaven. Such as the soilish one is, such are those also who are soilish, and such as the Celestial One, such are those also who are celestials. And according as we wear the image of the soilish, we should be wearing the image also of the Celestial."

"*Not first the spiritual, but the soulish.*" This again is a profound truth. It implies that the spiritual could not be fully appreciated without first an experience of the soulish. When we suffer the infirmities of the soulish, we should bear this great fact in mind.

That which came to be known as the *old* humanity was soulish, and because of its soulish tendencies, soon became marred in the hands of the Divine Potter. It is a fundamental divine principle that God never mends that which has become marred, but always makes it anew. Hence there is no future for the old humanity. Like the marred vessel in the potter's hand (Jer. 18:4), the old humanity is crushed out of existence, but out of the same lump is created a new humanity, bearing none of the marred features of the old, but retaining

its likeness to God. The old humanity was created in Adam, the new humanity is being created in Christ. The old was soulish; the new is spiritual. The head of the first was of the earth, soilish; the Head of the second is the Lord from heaven.

The old humanity is portrayed as being crucified together with Christ (Rom.6:6). It remains crucified for ever, that the body of Sin may be nullified. Though Christ Himself is resurrected, there is no resurrection for the old humanity. Instead it is replaced by a new (young) humanity, whose Head is Christ (not Adam), and in Christ there is "no Jew nor yet Greek...no slave nor yet free...no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:28). There is thus a complete rift between the old and the new; in no sense is the latter a development of the former. "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new" (2 Cor.5:17).

Thus we see that the two humanities, old and new, meet in Christ. As the Seed of the woman, Christ took the old humanity with Him on to the cross, and it was crucified with Him. With His rousing from among the dead, He starts the new humanity, through which God will achieve all that He purposed when He first created humanity in His own image and likeness.

THE JURISDICTION OF HUMANITY

But in what sense is humanity in the image and likeness of God? When God declared His intention to so make humanity, He explained what His new creation was expected to do, namely to have "sway over the fish of the sea, the flyer of the heavens, and over the beast, and over all land life, and over every moving animal moving on the land" (Gen.1:26,28).

Thus Adam was given dominion over the earth and over everything on earth that was of a lower order of creation than himself. In this respect he portrayed God and displayed His image. All that the animals could know about God was what they could see in humanity. This jurisdiction of humanity over the lower orders was confirmed when God brought every creature to Adam to be named and immediately endorsed the names which Adam gave them (Gen.2:19).

This jurisdiction was further confirmed in Psalm 8, where, after posing the question, "What is man?" David says, "All dost Thou set under his feet," and then elaborates this by adding, "Flocks and domestic animals, all of them, and even the beasts of the field; the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea."

But when the writer of Hebrews quotes from this Psalm, and gives his response to this question he says simply, "Thou dost place him over the works of Thy hands. All dost Thou subject under his feet." (Heb.2:7,8).

David defined that which was made subject to man, namely, domestic animals, beasts of the field, birds and fish. The writer of Hebrews omits this definition, for he wants to stress a different point. *All* was to be subject to humanity; nothing was to be left unsubject to him.

In the context of the old humanity, confined as it is by flesh and blood, it is obvious that this subjection must be limited to the lower creation. One of the reasons for the creation of the animals, birds and fishes was that the lesson of subjection should be taught. God Himself is a Subjector and Disposer, and Adam was made in the image and likeness of God that he might likewise be a subjector and disposer towards those placed under him.

In the context of the new humanity, that subjection is widened, and Christ (in Whom the new humanity has its origin) is presented to His ecclesia as Head over *all*, and that all includes the sovereignties, authorities, powers and lordships in heaven as well as on earth.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN HUMANITY

God's purpose in creating humanity was to effect the salvation and ultimate reconciliation of all. At the time of its creation, a whole eon had elapsed, during which God's purpose concerned only celestial beings. Rebellion among these higher creations had taken place, and must have been of great magnitude to bring about the event known as the disruption. It was a disruption of the *kosmos*, or system, obtaining at that time. Its effects spilled over into the earth, causing chaos and vacancy and darkness. The evidences of disorder on this planet were indicative of the spiritual chaos which must have pervaded the heavens. To an outside observer, if there could have been one, it would have appeared as though God's purpose had ended in utter ruin.

But no, for *before* the disruption God had made provision for a Saviour (1 Peter 1:20), Who would give *Himself* for the universe. That One must of necessity be the One through Whom all else had been created, otherwise there might be some left out of His rescue work. The Firstborn of *every creature* must become the Firstborn from among the dead. But how was this One to die? Only by assuming a form in which death could operate. But this form had to be created; hence the need for humanity.*

* See our booklet, "The Place of Humanity in God's Purpose" for further development of this theme.

But was the purpose of God in creating humanity completed in the cross? Was humanity created simply in order to provide a form in which Christ could come, and then be discarded as something that was of no further use? Thanks be to God that this is not the case.

GOD'S PURPOSE FULFILLED
IN THE NEW HUMANITY

God does not discard any of His creatures once they have served His purpose. If only we could *begin* all our considerations of God's Word with this profound truth in our minds, how different would be our thinking on many matters!

Sinful humanity crucified the Son of God, and thereby ensured its own destruction. But humanity itself is not abandoned at the cross. It is the *old* humanity which is crucified there. The basic conception of humanity—a creation in the image and likeness of God—is carried through into the *new* humanity. The old humanity was “corrupting in accord with its seductive desires;” the new humanity is “in accord with God” and is being created in “righteousness and benignity of the truth” (Eph.4:22-24).

Through the old humanity the death of Christ was accomplished; through the new humanity, the reconciliation of all will be effected. For it is in the ecclesia (chosen out of humanity), as well as in Christ Jesus, Who came to be in the likeness of humanity, that God is to find glory throughout all the generations of the eons of the eons (Eph.3:21).

Humanity is thus the vehicle through which God accomplishes all, yet not in its own power but in His, and not in the way that humanity decrees, but in the way that God determines. His thoughts are not our

thoughts, neither are His ways our ways. He can make the fury of men to acclaim Him. And even as He could use the sacrifices of animals to portray the supreme sacrifice of Christ, so He can use the "inferior" creation of humanity to point the way of reconciliation to those in the celestial realms. For do we not read that, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God is being made known to even the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials—that is, to the highest in the heavenly hierarchy (Eph.3:10)?

It is God's purpose to "head up all in the Christ, both that in the heavens and that on the earth—in Him in Whom our lot is cast also" (Eph.1:10,11).

We inferred earlier that the spiritual could not be fully appreciated without first an experience of the soulish. This is true, not just for those who once were soulish, but also for those in the celestials who are continuously watching what is happening on earth. The soulish nature is intrinsically at enmity with God; it is not capable of pleasing Him. Nor without the restraints imposed by His Spirit can it avoid sinking further and further into depravity. Its culminating offense was in crucifying the Son of God, an act calculated to bring the whole of the universe into chaos (though men would be unaware of this), seeing that it is in God's Son that all has its cohesion (Col.1:17). What must the celestials have thought when they witnessed this event? Did they see it as an absolute and irreparable disaster? But the Firstborn of every creature became the Firstborn from among the dead, and the First of a new humanity, which, in accord with God, is being created in righteousness. After Christ, the new humanity is represented in the ecclesia, which is His body; eventually it will include all mankind, for "as it was through one offense for all

mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

The old humanity is a demonstration to the universe of the extent to which rebellion against God can lead; the new humanity is a display to all of how God's grace can operate to bring creation back into harmony with Himself. The ecclesia is the advance installment of this new humanity, and is God's achievement at the present time (Eph.2:10). Eventually all humanity will be seen to be God's achievement, for He will personally wipe away all tears from their eyes, and will tabernacle with them (Rev.21:3,4). And the celestials, too, having learned of His grace through the ecclesia and having perceived God's kindness to those who were once "children of indignation, even as the rest," will also become His achievement.

Soulish humanity will have brought home to all the lesson of sin, with its frightful consequences. From the new spiritual humanity, all creation will receive instruction in the ways of righteousness. And when God's dealings with humanity, both old and new, are truly assessed, there will grow in all such an enhanced appreciation of His love as to awaken in them a true realization of Himself, which He so desires, and a devout longing to reciprocate His love, which will fulfill His heart's delight.

In such an atmosphere as this does God find His true dwelling place in spirit; first in His Son, then in the ecclesia, and ultimately in all, for at the consummation He must be All in all.

John H. Essex

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

Many of the features of the message brought by Paul are in contrast to previous revelations. One of the most striking of these, which clearly marks a new departure in God's ways, which had never been proclaimed before (even though it had been dimly pictured in a brief episode in Abraham's life), is justification by faith. This is a foundational revelation in the evangel of God which concerns God's Son and is to be heralded among all the nations for faith-obedience (Rom.1:1-5). It is based on the revelation of the righteousness of God (Rom.1:17; 3:21). Those who receive and accept its message are accounted just, "becoming God's righteousness" in Christ Jesus (2 Cor.5:21).

The apostle and exponent of this message is Paul after his severance from the other prophets and teachers in Antioch (Acts 13:1-3). In fact it was immediately after this that he first announced justification (Acts 13:38,39).

The basis for both the revelation of the righteousness of God and for justification is the blood of Christ (Rom.5:9). This is the means by which justification is *gained*. The basis or means by which it is *received* today is faith apart from works of law (Rom.3:21,22,28; 4:5). We are justified by faith alone. Let us examine each of these three points: *justification; faith; faith alone.*

JUSTIFICATION

The law could not vivify (give life) and therefore could not bring in righteousness. Only a limited justification in reference to particular acts and not involving a person's entire life could be given in the past. But justification *now* is through faith in the blood of Christ and gives us salvation and righteousness. In Paul's evangel the flesh recedes into the background; its true place is crucifixion; it meets its inglorious end on the cross.

Justification is the verdict: not guilty. It is not pardon or forgiveness though these terms are used figuratively in order to bring out the attitude of God's heart (Eph.1:7; Col.1:14). It is an acquittal which involves the additional blessing of fellowship and comfort. In Romans 4 we are taken back to Abraham as the example for the significance of justification. Here was the simplicity of a happy and free converse between God and His friend (*cf* Rom.4:17-21; James 2:23), which is a good picture of the standing of those justified.

BY FAITH

The faith through which we receive justification today is believing what God says to us. It parallels Abraham's example in Genesis 15 where God spoke, Abraham believed, "and it was reckoned to him for righteousness." God gives us His evangel to believe, which is that Christ died for our sins, was entombed, and has been roused the third day (1 Cor.15:3,4). In other words we put our faith in the blood of Christ (Rom.3:25), and so we receive the justification which His blood has purchased. This justification is reckoned to our account (*cf* Rom. 4:5).

BY FAITH ALONE

This justification by faith is entirely gratuitous (Rom.3:24). Faith itself is a gift (Phil.1:29), and there is no room for boasting in ourselves. It is not a faith which insists on visual evidence, such as Thomas demanded in John 20. It is that "happy" faith where we believe what God says to us, and where we are "not perceiving" (John 20:24-29). Also it is not a faith which requires works of us in order to bring it to perfection such as we read about in James 2:20-26. Paul brings the unique message in Romans 3 and 4 in which righteousness is given "apart from law" and "apart from acts" (Rom.3:21; 4:6).

There is no probation connected with this evangel. Our Lord's prayer on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they are not aware what they are doing" (Luke 23:34), led to the forty years of testing for the nation of Israel from the cross to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. But this is a settled justification based on the righteousness of God through the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can separate us from this position in Christ.

CLASS PROJECTS

1. List some major contrasts between the revelations to Paul and previous revelations. What do these mean to us today in terms of: a) our assurance, b) our attitude toward other people, c) our view of God?
2. Consider the differences between the *forgiving* in Matthew 6:14, 15 and the *justifying* in Romans 5:6-9.
3. Discuss the meaning of *justify* with reference to its usage in Luke 7:29; 18:14; James 2:24; and Romans 3:4. What distinct connotations are implied by this word in each of these passages? What root meaning can be carried over in all these passages?

Arthur C. Lamb

Concordant Version of Psalm 76

An Asaphic Psalm A Song

- 76 Known in Judah is Alueim,
In Israel great is His name.
- ² And in Salem His covert is coming to be,
And His habitation in Zion.
- ³ There He breaks the sirocco of the bow,
The shield, and the sword, and battle.
- Interlude
- ⁴ Enlightened art Thou,
nobler ¹than the mountain ranges of prey.
- ⁵ They are looted.
⁷All^o the sturdy of heart slumber their sleep,
Nor do ^{all}any mortals of valor find their hands.
- ⁶ From Thy rebuke, Alueim of Jacob,
Stupefied are rider and horse.
- ⁷ Thou—Feared art Thou!
And will anyone stand before Thee
from the ²'strength' of Thine anger?
- ⁸ From the heavens dost Thou announce adjudication;
The earth fears and is quiet
- ⁹ ¹At the rise for judgment of Alueim,
To save all the humble of the earth.
- Interlude
- ¹⁰ For the fury of humanity is acclaiming Thee,
The remainder of the fury is ⁷celebrating to Thee^o.
- ¹¹ Vow and pay to Ieue your Alueim;
All those around Him shall fetch an indemnity
to the fearful One.

¹² **He is restricting the spirit of governors;
Feared is He >by the kings of the earth.**

> **Permanent On Acclamation**

NOTES FOR PSALM 76

There are two main suggestions as to the event which prompted this psalm. The *Companion Bible* notes suggest the time of David's defeat of the Jebusites, conquering their stronghold, Zion (2 Sam.5; 1 Chr.11). The other view is that it was composed in response to the miraculous overthrow of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem as recorded in 2 Kings 19. In favor of this view is the LXX's additional superscription: "An ode to the Assyrian." Also verse 3 and Hosea 2:18 are very similar; Hosea was contemporary with Hezekiah.

Salem (verse 2) is the ancient name of Jerusalem. There is His covert, and His habitation is in Zion—for *there* (verse 3) He thoroughly negates the weapons of war. "The mountain ranges of prey" (verse 4) is a figure for the oppressive military nations. Mountains are often symbols of earthly powers in Scripture. The phrase regarding "mortals of valor" not being able to find their hands is parallel to "slumber their sleep," both referring to their demise.

Alucim's awesome might far and away exceeds that of the powers of earth. Though Zion is small in physical size, it is His habitation. His rebuke stupefies every warrior; the entire earth awaits His judgment, governors and kings included.

James D. Thompson

An Asaphic Psalm

77 My voice is to Alueim, and I am crying.

^MI am calling^s.

My voice is to Alueim, and He ^cgives ear to me.

² In the day of my distress, of ^SIeue^{ph} I inquire.

My hand at night is stirred up,

And is not torpid.

My soul refuses to be consoled.

³ Were I remembering Alueim

+then were I clamoring;

Were I meditating

+then my spirit is drooping.

Interlude

⁴ Thou holdest the keepers of my eyes.

I am agitated, and am not speaking.

⁵ I reckon the days from aforetime,

The years of the eons shall I remember.

⁶ ⁷I soliloquize⁷ in the night with my heart,

I will meditate and my spirit will search.

⁷ Will ^SIeue^{ph} cast off for the eons?

And will He continue to approve no more?

⁸ Does He permanently limit His kindness?

Does He lapse a saying

for generation +after generation?

⁹ Does Al forget to be gracious?

Should He shut, in anger, His compassions?

Interlude

¹⁰ +Yet I am saying, My ailment is this:

⁷Altered is⁷ the right hand of the Supreme.

¹¹ I will mention the practices of Ie,

I shall remember from aforetime Thy marvels.

- 12 And I soliloquize in all Thy ⁷contrivances^{cs},
And in Thy practices am I meditating.**
- 13 Alueim, in the holy place is Thy way.
Who is an Al great as ⁷our^c Alueim?**
- 14 Thou art the Al doing a marvel!
Thou ^cmakest known, among the peoples,
Thy strength.**
- 15 Thou dost redeem, ⁱwith ⁷Thine^o arm,
Thy people,
The sons of Jacob and Joseph.**
- Interlude**
- 16 The waters see Thee, Alueim!
The waters see Thee!
They are travailing!
Indeed, the submerged chaoses are disturbed.**
- 17 The thick clouds are stormed into waters!
The skies give a sound!
Indeed, Thine arrows are walking about!**
- 18 The sound of Thy thunder is in the cyclone;
The flashes lighten the habitance,
The earth is disturbed and is quaking.**
- 19 In the sea is Thy way,
and Thy trails are in great waters,
⁺Yet Thy heel prints are not known.**
- 20 Thou guidest, as a flock, Thy people,
ⁱBy the hand of Moses and Aaron.**

NOTES FOR PSALM 77

In a time of personal (and perhaps national) trouble, the psalmist looks back to former times when the

deeds of the Supreme made His might and righteousness known. The poet is continually in prayer at this time: even in the night, his hands are active during his callings on Alueim, for he is not allowed to sleep a wink. ("The keepers of my eyes" in verse 4 refer to his eyelids.) So he begins thinking back on times before, going deep inside himself in meditation and soliloquy.

Then fierce, tempting questions come to mind: Has He cast us off, limiting His kindness and forgetting His Own sayings? Doesn't He care anymore? It seems that the Supreme (verse 10) has changed His ways and is no longer a present aid. But he continues his meditations, coming to a realization of the previous deliverances and mighty deeds of his God—"our Alueim." He is the Marvel-doer Who *does* redeem His people. The singer then finds himself taken back to *the* deliverance of "the sons of Jacob and Joseph" from the Egyptians. The earth's elements were greatly disturbed at that grand theophany, from the skies to the deepest depths. Deep in the reveries of such marvels, he finds his comfort and ends his psalm.

James D. Thompson

FELLOWSHIP REPORT

"God's Revelation through the Apostle Paul" was the theme of the Baldwin (Michigan) Summer Fellowship this year. It was heartening to see the enthusiasm and interest of the overflow crowd in the "things of consequence." Special sessions for adults, children and young people were held in the afternoons and general sessions for all in the mornings and evenings. The speakers brought challenging messages on special features of Paul's teachings, and after the meetings and during meal times especially, there were many good opportunities for questions and exchanges of views in a spirit of unity and openness. All in all it was a memorable and edifying experience.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 1978
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SIXTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

Two articles in this issue make mention of Christ as "the capstone of the corner" (Eph.2:20). The concluding installment of Brother Essex's series on "God's Dwelling Place" (page 253), gives special attention to this phrase, while in my own study entitled, "Jesus Christ, our Lord," a connection is suggested with 1 Corinthians 3:11.

It is not unusual for us to find that, quite apart from our own plans, certain themes run through different articles in an issue of the magazine. But in this instance, though both studies give emphasis to Christ's position as the capstone of the corner, the two treatments of this figure of speech are quite distinct.

Brother Essex gives the interpretation of the phrase, in harmony with the context of Ephesians two and the subject of the ecclesia, the *body of Christ*. On the other hand I have borrowed the phrase, taking it out of its context for use on another subject: the *body of truth* which is revealed in Paul's ministry. One article gives a contextual interpretation; the other article uses the phrase (hopefully) as an appropriate illustration.

Does this not happen in the Scriptures also? In Paul's writings especially we find quotations and references to the Old Testament used in a variety of ways. It will help us greatly if we take time to determine the purpose of each citation.

The significance of some of Paul's references can be grasped without too much difficulty. For example, in 1 Corinthians 10:1-6 he himself explains his purpose

for outlining Israel's experience in the wilderness: "Now these things became types of us, for us not to be lusters after evil things." Surely this is not the whole meaning of the wilderness wanderings! It is not Paul's intent at all to unfold every point of significance in that event, but rather he is using it as a picture of what he wants to say to the Corinthians about their behavior.

Paul's quotation of Psalm 69:9 in Romans 15:3 is more complicated, yet here also the apostle explains what he is doing. He finds in David's cry, "The reproaches of those reproaching Thee fall on me," an application to Christ's experience. "Christ pleases not Himself" but endured the reproaches that men cast against God. This speaks to us who are willing to divert pain to ourselves to help spare others. "For whatever was written before, was written for this teaching of ours . . ." Moreover, such a passage is not only for our *teaching*, but also "that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures we may have expectation." We are strengthened and encouraged as we consider these old declarations, especially as we see how they may apply to Christ. As He endured all and was consoled because of the goal ahead, so also are we exercised in endurance and consolation.

However, not all of Paul's citations from the Hebrew Scriptures are so easily apprehended. Yet we may say that the great majority of such references in Paul's epistles are not interpretations of the original meaning within the original context. If there is an interpretation it is a new interpretation to accord with the transcendent truths given through the apostle. This does not mean that such an interpretation clashes with the original significance. Rather it delves into the

deeper meaning, the divine principle behind it, which has been somewhat hidden because of the limitations of the original context.

It was not until the evangel of grace was made known that the full significance of such a passage as Habakkuk 2:4 ("the just one by his faith shall be living") could be appreciated. And even then it was necessary not only to remove the statement from its context but also to delete the pronoun, "his," as Paul does in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11. Otherwise the centrality to justification of Christ's faith, rather than our own, is lost.

The glorious prophecy of Isaiah 45:23 foretells the future state on the earth. Nevertheless, in Romans 14:11 Paul adapts the passage for his description of the days of God, when we all will acclaim Him in giving an account concerning ourselves. Yet even more radical an adjustment is made in Philippians 2:10,11, where the scope of acclamation is universal. Here Paul unfolds "untraceable riches of Christ" which Isaiah could not perceive, and yet Isaiah's language contains appropriate parallels.

In a sense, such quotations are *adaptations* of earlier revelation to the later revelations. Such applications to the evangel for today do not abrogate the original promises. What was said to Abraham or David will be fulfilled for them even as it was originally declared. If there is no certainty of this for them there can be no certainty for us that the fuller meaning now revealed can ever be realized. It demands an effort on our part to treat the word of truth correctly (2 Tim.2:15), but we may be assured that God's Word is the word of *truth*, full of grace for endurance, consolation and expectation.

CHRIST AND RELIGION

The center of religion is man himself, his character, his work, his worth, his merit; it is I, I, I, myself from start to finish. The center of the life in Christ is the Lord Jesus Christ, His character, His work, His worth, His value; it is all Christ. Religion can and does exist without Christ; but the life in Christ cannot exist without Him. All religion claims for the present is mere morality, reform. The claim of Christ is a *new* creation.

The goal of religion embraces human betterment of all kinds, political, ecclesiastical, pedagogic, economic, hygenic. Christ is unique, singular. He has but one objective, and that is the glory of God. Religion is all kinds of forms of godliness; Christ is the fact of godliness.

Christ sets aside man's pride, man's ability, man's righteousness, man's goodness, and holds up once and for all the God of all grace. It is not even best to look through the Word of God to Christ, but through Christ, a Person, a living Person, to the Word of God; for the "Bible" can be made a religion, a ritualistic subject and object as well as anything else.

Not I, but Christ, be honored, loved, exalted;
Not I, but Christ, be seen, be known, be heard;
Not I, but Christ, in every look and action;
Not I, but Christ, in every thought and word.
Not I, but Christ, to gently soothe in sorrow;
Not I, but Christ, to wipe the falling tear;
Not I, but Christ, to lift the weary burden;
Not I, but Christ, to hush away all fear.
Christ, only Christ, e'er long shall fill my vision;
Glory excelling soon, full soon, I'll see—
Christ, only Christ, my every wish fulfilling—
Christ, none but Christ, my All in all to be.

—Selected from the writings of F. H. Robison

LAW AND GRACE

Are believers in Christ Jesus today supposed to keep the laws in the Old Testament?

There is a good deal said about the law in Paul's epistles, especially in Romans and Galatians. The attitude we should take toward the law is clearly set forth in these epistles and, of course, in some others also, showing that there is a tremendous difference between the evangels of the Circumcision and of the Uncircumcision (Gal.2:7) with regard to the law. Very few seem to grasp the great difference between the two evangels.

Let us consider the main points of distinction: In the evangel of the Circumcision we have law. It is *not* abrogated. As a matter of fact, the law continues throughout the millennium. Then Israel will still be under law. There will be a great difference in contrast to what was before, but nevertheless, the main object that God has in view continues right through that whole eon, with regard to the Circumcision. As far as God's actual purpose was concerned, the law was *not* given to be observed. It was *not* given that men should obey it and get a recognition from God, but to show them their *inability* to keep it (Rom.3:19-20; 5:20). That is why we have the long list of failures in Israel. The law given at Sinai was a great success from the viewpoint of God's *intention*. It showed that man is not capable of conforming to its standards. Jehovah's people had all sorts of special advantages. They are

given this law, and they excel only in making a failure of keeping it. That was God's *intention*, although it was contrary to His expressed *will*. This continues in the millennium, even though the law is written on their hearts. Perfection is not reached, even in that blessed era.

There are a few very simple things that most of us do not fully grasp in connection with the law. When I mention them, you will see what I mean. I want particularly to lay upon your hearts that *law is not God's way of dealing with humanity*. Yet that is the idea you get in Christendom and its publications. They insist that God has given us His law and that we must try to obey it.

To begin with, God left humanity without law for over two thousand years. He did not even give the law to Israel until they came to Mt. Sinai. Not only that, but *He did not give it to humanity at all*. The law is a very limited thing. God is using only a very small portion of humanity in this demonstration of the weakness and inability of the flesh. It is not for all mankind. God never intended it for the whole race. In time and scope it was *limited*. Not only that, but it is a *national* thing. It was given only to *one nation*, as such, not merely to individuals in that nation.

Christendom recognizes to some extent the impossibility of keeping it all, for they divide the law into the moral and the ceremonial, to evade some parts that they know they cannot or will not fulfill, such as going to Jerusalem every once in awhile. There are parts of the law which can only be fulfilled in the land of Israel, and if you are not in the land, you cannot fulfill the law.

Now I want particularly to point out to you that, when the truth for today is presented to us by Paul in

Romans, it is not based on law, but on the *failure* of law. The point here is that we have come to an *end* of the law. God has demonstrated that there is nothing in the law by which one may attain salvation or blessing. This is not so with the Circumcision. God still keeps on with the law in the kingdom eon in order to make His demonstration complete. God limited His law to only a small group of people. Later on He actually writes the law upon the hearts of His people, yet even that does not bring in perfection. When we come to the end of the dispensation of law—to the time when Paul begins to write—we have a *divine righteousness entirely apart from law*.

The law, instead of doing what a good many theologians think it does (that is, break the ground for the evangel) makes people's hearts callous. God never intended it to do anything else. God did not have to give the law in order to prepare people for salvation, but rather to demonstrate what was in the human heart—to put man in his place so that He, Himself, might be given His exalted position as the Saviour and Justifier of all.

Does not Romans 2:13 contradict your teaching that Christians are not required to observe the Old Testament commands?

In order to press the point that each passage *must be kept in its context*, let us consider the following statement in Romans 2:13: "The doers of the law shall be justified." Let us not read the context. In this demonstration we do not want the context. We simply read that the doer of the law will be justified. "But," one could say, "that is altogether different. In Romans 3:20 we have: ' . . . because by works of law no flesh at

all shall be justified in His sight.' Now you see how the Bible contradicts itself!" However, between these two passages, we read: "Not one is just—not even one." Instead of being a contradiction, it is simply a logical result. *If there are no doers* of the law, then it is very plain no one will be justified—no flesh shall be justified before God.

That is only one example. Another passage I want to bring before you is like it. In Romans 1:18 to 2:16 we read about those who are *not* under law. God will be paying each one in accord with his acts: to those, indeed, who by endurance in good acts are seeking glory and honor and incorruption, life eonian (2:6,7). Here we have a great statement of fact. All will acknowledge that it is true and we dare not contradict it. God must do the right thing to all His creatures. He must reward those who fulfill the conditions. But who is going to get this reward? Some claim that there are such people. *We* might imagine that such a character exists, even if we have never found one. But God has made it plain that not one is even *just*, let alone *good* (Rom.3:10). That should settle the matter.

I have made it clear now that there is no contradiction whatever, but that the argument requires first of all that God will be righteous and treat everybody according to this standard of righteousness. If we will go a little further in Romans, we will see that God does not reckon on anyone justifying himself. In the fifth of Romans we read: "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for *all mankind for condemnation . . .*" Thank God, there are no exceptions! It would nullify the work of Christ if a single soul should be able to work his way into salvation or justification or anything of that kind, either through law or apart from law.

What is the place of the Law in each of the two evangels?

As the law is not of faith, but of works, it is only a *limited, local and national* demonstration, for *one nation and one land and one religion*, not for all men in every land and every nation. The evangel of the Circumcision retains it; that of the Uncircumcision acknowledges the lesson it has to teach, *but never seeks to repeat the demonstration*. The law was not given until Israel came to Sinai. Even they did not have it before. It was never given to the nations. Not even Israel can fulfill it, in their dispersion. They must be in the land. It cannot be kept anywhere else, or by any other nation. How absurd it is for Christianity to leave faith, which is for them, and purloin the law, which is not theirs!

Law is not the foundation of God's dealings with the race. It only came in by the way (Rom.5:20). Its object was *not* to give men a standard of conduct by which they may walk to please God, but to transform *sin* into *offense*. It is only a temporary expedient in God's great demonstration, showing that man not only falls short of the glory of God, but is at enmity with Him. He not only *fails*, but *rebels*. The light of the law does not keep him from sin, but leads him on to offense.

The Circumcision evangel provides power to *fulfill* the law, but in the evangel of the Uncircumcision God's righteousness is manifested *apart from* the law (Rom.3:21). The early chapters of Romans review and restate the whole question of man's relation to God in order to clear the ground for a new foundation on which to rest a fresh revelation, quite distinct and different from the Circumcision evangel. It is not confined to the Circumcision and proselytes, but includes all mankind. It is not limited to the land. It does

not appeal to God's written revelation, but to the light of nature and conscience, which takes the place of law among the nations.

Strikingly different is the relation of the believer to the law today from that of the Circumcision. Their evangel is contained in the new covenant. Jehovah will not loose them from the law. Rather He will impart His laws to their comprehension and inscribe them on their hearts. They will be given an inward impulse and a divine power to carry out God's precepts during the thousand years. They will fulfill it in the strength which He provides. It will no longer be a ministration of death.

The very opposite is our portion, as well as of those of the Jews who, like Paul, received the evangel of the *Uncircumcision*. To them it *does* deal out death. They are caused to *die to the law* through the body of Christ. They are *exempted* from the law. They serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of the letter (Rom.7:1-6). Not the literal precepts, but the just requirements of the law are fulfilled in those who do not walk in accord with flesh, but in harmony with spirit (Rom.8:1-4).

Justification can never come through law-keeping. It came to Abraham long before the law was given. It comes to us who never received it. It comes to those under it only by means of death to it. Yet its righteous requirements are fulfilled only in those who, by having God's righteousness, not their own, are led by His Spirit. Let us praise and glorify our God Who finds in Himself and in His Christ all that is needed to make us just, so that He can reconcile us to Himself and glorify us in His Beloved Son!

THE LAW IN CONTEXT

YOU MAY tend to flinch every time you hear the word "criticism" used in reference to the Scriptures. However, "criticism" of the literary and textual sort has shed much light on the meaning of words, the original readings in the text and the historical context of the Bible. There is a specialized discipline known as "form criticism," a type of literary criticism that studies the format of a given writing. Form critics compare and contrast the form of a work with other writings of similar form written at the same period.

Form criticism has revealed that the form of the covenant between Jehovah and Israel has remarkable similarities with the official legal covenant documents in use during those days. The essential format for a covenant between a great king and his vassal nation was: history, laws, curses and promises, concluding ceremony—in that order. The covenant between Jehovah and Israel is found in Exodus 19:1-24:11. There we find, in order, history (19:4-6), laws (20:1-23:19), curses and promises (23:20-33), and a solemn concluding ceremony (24:1-11). Much of the book of Deuteronomy follows a similar structure.

For a more detailed discussion of the correspondence between ancient Near Eastern covenant documents, and the Old Testament, see *Ancient Orient and Old Testament* by K. A. Kitchen (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968), pages 90-102 and *The Book of Deuteronomy* by P. C. Craigie (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), pages 79-83.

The significance of this format for our purposes is this: the Ten Commandments are part of the legal document of the covenant. Exodus records the legal proceedings, but the Ten Words (Ex.34:28, Hebrew) were written on stone as a witness, or testimony, to this covenant (25:16). The usual teaching that the Ten Commandments are God's law for all mankind for all time is not supported by the books of Moses. Certainly, the Ten are moral, just and good. But as a legal requirement, they are not for believers today (2 Cor.3:1-11; Gal.2:15-21).

James D. Thompson

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The last two digits of the year in which your subscription expires are given after your name on our address labels. All subscriptions are carried through the November issue. We have had to use a new method of addressing the envelopes, and no doubt errors have entered in for some addresses. Please let us know of any such errors. We also appreciate early notification of any change in address since the postal charges on returned magazines keep increasing.

Renewal envelopes are enclosed with all magazines sent in North America, even where the subscription is paid ahead for many years.

SCRIPTURE CLASS STUDIES

The series of Scripture Class Studies now appearing in the magazine will be made available in leaflet form. These lessons are based on the notes of Brother Arthur C. Lamb. The first two lessons are now ready, and the third one will be prepared soon after this issue is sent out.

OLD PUBLICATIONS

Publications of the Concordant Publishing Concern made before 1935 are in demand. If you have any of these which you could spare, let us know. Of special interest are the "complete edition" of the Concordant Version, *Unsearchable Riches* prior to 1923 and our Lexical Concordance.

BREADTH AND LENGTH AND DEPTH AND HEIGHT

THAT GOD longs for a dwelling place among His creation has been made abundantly evident. It is natural that humanity, created in His own image and likeness, and Israel in particular, as His chosen people, should desire to provide Him with such a dwelling place. We saw this desire expressed in the song of Moses after the deliverance from Egypt (Ex.15:2). But what humanity did not realize was its own inability to provide a suitable habitation. God made it quite clear, in His instructions to Moses regarding the details of the original tabernacle and in His subsequent instructions to David regarding the building of the temple, that He alone was to determine the design of such a dwelling place.

Moreover, even with such a dwelling place in the midst of His people, access to His presence was severely restricted, owing to the necessity of keeping out that which was unholy. There was ever the threat of destruction hanging over those who violated the conditions of access. Clearly this could not be a final solution.

Equally clearly, the final solution could not be attained until all the spiritual barriers between God and His creation had been removed. Hence, all the ritual and sacrifices connected with the tabernacle and the temple pointed to the supreme Offering and Sacrifice made at Golgotha, where the One not knowing sin was made to be sin, that sin itself could be effectively destroyed.

The cross of Christ thus becomes the focal point of God's purpose, for here Christ, as Chief Priest, offered Himself as a sacrifice without spot or blemish for the whole of creation, of which He had been the First-born. After His resurrection, He ascended into the holy of holies, even heaven itself, in order to place His offering before His God and Father, and to present Himself as the Firstfruits of the new humanity. Then He returned to earth with the assurance that access to God's presence was established.

Before He ascended to heaven the first time, Jesus knew that His offering would be accepted. He knew it even while He was on the cross, by the fact that the light returned after three hours of darkness. With the return of the light, signifying the ending of God's turning from Him, He was able to declare, "It is accomplished." The rending of the veil in the temple, from top to bottom, at the moment of His expiring, was God's indication that the way of access to His presence was now opened.

GOD IS NOW CONCILIATED

That is why our message today is one of conciliation. God is conciliated to the world (*kosmos*) through the death of His Son. We should be beseeching, "For Christ's sake, be conciliated to God" (2 Cor.5:20). Christ went through all the harrowing experience of Golgotha to secure God's conciliation; for His sake, then, accept the friendship offered, and be conciliated to God. In other words, accept the preaching of the cross.

With the barrier of access to the Father removed, the way was opened for the presence and development of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ. But first the kingdom was reoffered to Israel, who showed their re-

jection of it by the stoning of Stephen. The immediate effect of the conciliation was to be seen in the call of Saul of Tarsus, who had officiated at this stoning. God was not holding any offense against him, but was choosing an enemy to be the official advocate of this new attitude. Saul was not only the first recipient of absolute grace, but, as Paul the apostle, became the chief announcer of it (1 Tim.1:11-16; Eph.3:7,8; Col.1:25-29).

When Paul wrote his early letters to the Corinthians, humanity was divided into three classes. To the Jews, absorbed in their religious practices, the word of the cross was a stumbling block. To the worldly wise, represented by the Greeks, the word was stupidity, since it did not accord with any of their philosophies. But to the third class, those who are saved, the word of the cross is the power of God and the wisdom of God, since *in it* they see the solution to all problems, and *out of it* they see coming into being a new humanity, headed up in Christ, which shall lead God's purpose into its glorious ultimate.

The ecclesia, which is Christ's body, is pre-expectant in the Christ. Through faith given to it by God (Eph.2:8; Rom.12:3), and by means of the indwelling influence of God's Spirit (Rom.8:9), we, its members, are able to perceive and appreciate the grace in which we are saved (Eph.2:8) and in which we now stand (Rom.5:2). With us, access to God becomes a reality (Eph.2:18 and 3:12); but note, this access is declared to be through Christ, Who is our Head. Through Him we can, even while still in flesh, pray direct to the Father, knowing that our prayers will be heard.

During this era of absolute grace, God is conciliated not just to the ecclesia, but to all. Not merely our

fellow believers, but our friends and neighbors as well, and, indeed, our enemies too, benefit from the overflow of God's grace showered upon us. But once the ecclesia is taken out of the world, then God's indignation against all unrighteousness must be permitted to run its course, resulting in a time of tribulation of such intensity as has never been known before, nor ever will be experienced again (Matt.24:21).

THE DAY OF THE LORD
AND THE DAY OF GOD

This time of tribulation ushers in the Day of the Lord, the millennial reign of Christ, with its restoration of the temple ritual (as outlined in Ezekiel's prophecy), all of which will be leading Israel to an acceptance of the truths contained in the book of Hebrews—a book which portrays the glories of Christ's priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek.

We should never minimize these glories, nor those of His kingly rule. Together they will be greater than anything ever seen on earth before, and will indeed be the means of "leading many sons into glory" (Heb.2:10). Through this kingly priesthood, in which Israel will be participants, they will learn the value and efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, and will be brought to the position where they will be able to accept the preaching of the cross (at present anathema to them, and therefore a stumbling block), and enter into the joys of the new creation, as represented by the new heavens and new earth of Revelation 21.

In passing, it is instructive to note the consistency of the holy Spirit, in that the word "create" is not used in Revelation, for it is a book which stops short of proclaiming the word of the cross, a doctrine preached

only by Paul. John, in Revelation 21:5, is inspired to use the word "make" of Isaiah 66:22 rather than the word "create" of Isaiah 65:17. Nevertheless, the latter scripture shows that the new heaven and the new earth are indeed a new creation.

The millennial eon, however, ends with a colossal rebellion on the part of humanity in general, as we read in Revelation 20, verses 7-9. This is followed by the judgment before the great white throne, in which those who have relied upon acts to justify them, are finally, but not irrevocably, condemned. For eventually (and in all our considerations of God's purpose, we must have the ultimate in mind)—eventually all who have died in Adam will be vivified in Christ, and God Himself will be All in *all*. Though the Scriptures do not actually speak (in so many words) of a resurrection from the second death, the wider implications of the two passages just referred to, in 1 Corinthians 15, as well as that in Colossians 1:20, certainly require it. In fact, they require no less than the vivification of all.

Meanwhile, in the last eon, the day of God, which follows the judgment of the great white throne, God will be dwelling with all mankind (Rev.21:3). The passage reads, "And I hear a loud voice out of the throne saying, 'Lo! the tabernacle of God is with mankind, and He will be tabernacling with them, and *they* will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them.'" The use of the word "tabernacle" indicates that this is not the final state. Just as the tabernacle in the wilderness gave way to something more permanent when the Israelites became settled in the land and the kingdom was established, and just as the patriarchs dwelt in tabernacles while they looked forward to the erection of something more permanent

(Heb.11:9,10), so God tabernacles with mankind (not just with Israel, but with all mankind) until the kingdom is completed, headed up in Christ, and is handed back to God. Then God will dwell, not *with*, but *in, all His creation*.

THE SPECIAL STATUS OF THE ECCLESIA

But now, in this interim period of absolute grace, we have a situation in which the joys of the ultimate are already being demonstrated. For even now God dwells in the heart of His Son (as, indeed, He always has done), and He also dwells in the hearts of those who are His. Both individually, and collectively, the members of the ecclesia are temples of God.

Figuratively speaking, God has always dwelt in the ecclesia as a whole, for it was chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world, that is, before anything happened to suggest that a barrier had arisen between God and any of His creatures. The ecclesia is (collectively) always "holy and flawless in His sight." Not only is it said to be chosen in Christ before the disruption, but it was (again figuratively speaking) latent in Him before even the eons began (2 Tim.1:9), and therefore before God's purpose of the eons was put into operation. But God can dwell in the hearts of *individual* members who are His and who put off the old humanity and put on the new, for the old humanity is irrevocably marred by sin, whilst the new is guaranteed continuous perfection through its association with Christ.

The new humanity, as we saw in our last study, is a new creation, which can only be enjoyed after the old has been "passed by"—disposed of on the cross (Rom.6:6). Hence there is no point in proclaiming the new humanity unless the preaching of the cross has

been made first, and this is done only in the writings of Paul. Nowhere outside of his writings are the values of the cross appreciated. That is why Paul carries us so much further than the other writers of Scripture, for without the preaching of the cross the purpose of God cannot be consummated. Paul completes the Word of God in every sense.

In similar fashion, the ecclesia, which is the body of Christ, completes the purpose of God. It is the medium through which Christ will complete the all in all (Eph.1:23). Without the ministry of the ecclesia the purpose of God again cannot be consummated; that is why God is to find "glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons" (Eph.3:21). It is for this that the ecclesia is pre-expectant in the Christ, its lot being cast in Him (Eph.1:11) and its life hidden together with Christ in God (Col.3:3).

A HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD

We now come to the wonderful passage in Ephesians 2, beginning at verse 19. In the previous verses (13-18), the barrier between Israel and the nations, existent in the old humanity, is broken down, and the verses conclude by stating that, through Christ, both those, who were formerly afar off, and those who were near, are given the same privilege of access, in one spirit, to the Father. This is an unrestricted access, far superior to anything ever enjoyed by Israel, the favored nation, in the past.

None in the ecclesia are now guests and sojourners (as they were before the barrier was removed), but all are fellow-citizens of the saints, and all are said to belong to God's *family*. This is the only occasion that this last word is used in Scripture in connection with

God. It comes from a root word (*oikos*) meaning "home." This is a family where each is at home with the others—not a family which is scattered, as earthly families often are. In particular, God desires and determines to make His home within this family, which is being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Notice how the metaphor is abruptly changed from a family to a building: ". . . being *built* on the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets, the *capstone of the corner* being Christ Jesus Himself, in Whom the *entire building*, being *connected together* [with the mortar of God's Spirit] is growing into a *holy temple* in the Lord; in Whom you, also, are being *built together* for God's *dwelling place*, in spirit."

The whole of God's purpose concerning His Son and concerning creation has been conceived, and put into operation, with the aim of achieving this result, namely, the building of a spiritual, holy temple, in which every kindred in the heavens and on earth is to be incorporated (Eph.3:15), and of which we, the ecclesia, are the prior and prime installment. It is the acme of God's desire, the pinnacle of His delight, the apex of His achievements—to have every kindred in heaven and earth *named in Himself*, that is, acknowledging Him as *Father*. Already the ecclesia acknowledges Him as both God and Father (1 Cor.8:6), but that perception is still far away from the rest of creation, and a lot of work has to be done through the medium of the ecclesia before creation as a whole comes into a full realization of God. But Paul's prayer, in Ephesians 3, verses 14-21, is for the ecclesia itself to have sufficient staunchness of faith to be able to grasp the tremendous dimensions—the breadth and length and depth and height—of the ministry for which it has been chosen, called and prepared.

The foundation of this ministry, as with all God's operations, is love—the love which could not be contained within the bosom of the Father, but needed to burst forth for the blessing of all His creatures. And how the Father has waited for that love to be reciprocated! Not in the case of His Son, for there the love of God found an immediate and everlasting response. But in our case, the response is tardy and inadequate—hence the need for the apostle's prayers. We should sharpen our responses to accord with the tremendous favors which are being lavished upon us, the riches of His grace (Eph.1:8).

Through the ecclesia, God is to display the transcendent riches of His grace in the oncoming eons, to the end that all may eventually grow into this holy temple in the Lord. The two Ephesian prayers of Paul are uttered with the desire and intent that we, as members of that ecclesia, should recognize (1) the nature of our calling, and its ultimate aim; (2) the riches of its glory; and (3) the transcendent greatness of the power operating on our behalf until that ultimate is attained. We are being completed for the entire complement of God; through us He is completing *the all in all*.

BREADTH AND LENGTH AND DEPTH AND HEIGHT

In his pamphlet, "Breadth and Length and Depth and Height," Brother E. H. Clayton writes of these four terms of extension: "Do they not figure the grandeur of God's dwelling place to which the saints are thus connected, and also intimate the inclusiveness of the ultimate results to God? Truly we are for the outcome of His transcendent love. The fruit of this economy, distinct as it is, is not merely for our blessing, but for God's glory in the universe. This

achievement God is fashioning by His power directed by His love.”

“The measurements of the physical dwelling places of God—the tabernacle, the temples, and also the holy city, are all given in finite terms, and are confined to breadth, length and height. Here, in describing this spiritual dwelling place of God, a fourth dimension is added. In no direction can we go to find exclusion from this dwelling place, nor is there any distance to which we can go to escape from it, since all the dimensions are now infinite—without any limits whatsoever. Not that any of God’s creatures will wish to escape from His all-embracing love, for God’s homing in each and all will bring them joy and gladness beyond measure, and fulfill the desires of their hearts as well as His.”

THE ULTIMATE ATTAINMENT: GOD’S DWELLING PLACE IN SPIRIT

The ecclesia, which is Christ’s body, is His complement by which the whole universe is to be served, and through which all in heaven and earth are to receive the blessings of the conciliation. In the glory of the new creation, and in the righteousness of the new humanity, the ecclesia will be functioning to display God’s grace to all, and all will come to realize the vastness of His love, and share in the right of access to His presence. The power that is, and will be, operating in the ecclesia is from the One Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, but it is a power that God will delight to employ to the uttermost, for it will bring glory to Himself throughout all the generations of the eon of the eons, and completely satisfying blessings to all His creatures.

In some notes on "God's Dwelling Place" (from which we quoted in an earlier study, and we cannot do better than to quote further), Brother Alan Reid writes,

"Staunchness with power and strength rooted and grounded in love to grasp the dimensions of God's dwelling place in spirit, are indeed required by each member of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ and His complement, for this is the ultimate which will embrace every kindred in the heavens and on the earth. There is an inclusiveness expressed in the terms used—every kindred, entire building and entire complement—that compasses not only the creatures of the earth, but also of the heavens. All is to be headed up in Christ, both in the heavens and on the earth (Eph.1:10).

"This is greater by far than the Israel of God and greater than the ecclesia within whose individual members God's Spirit now makes its home. This views even a wider range than God's tabernacling with mankind in the new earth. This is the reconciliation of the all through Christ,—whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col.1:20). This is God All in all (1 Cor.15:28), God's dwelling place in all, in spirit."

This is the goal of God's desires, in which is perceived the glory of His achievements, and the reason for all His operations in the furtherance of His purpose. This is all we know, and all we need to know, for this is the topmost pinnacle of Divine revelation.

John H. Essex

GOD'S DWELLING PLACE

The series by Bro. Essex, under the heading *God's Dwelling Place*, is completed with the article above. A set of the 18 back issues containing these enlightening studies is available (\$1.00).

A DRAMA OF JERUSALEM

THE HISTORY of Israel and Jerusalem is a strange and compelling tale. "Those who appreciate romance will find its elements in the love story of Jehovah for His people, Israel. There is the ardent wooing—howbeit through a middleman, as in Oriental custom—; the appreciative response on the part of the bride; the mighty deeds of valor done on her behalf by the lover-husband; the fruitful home prepared for her; the shadow side, the great triangle; villainy; faithlessness; tender compassion; faultless longsuffering; wantonness with strange lovers, until the husband's name and honor are dragged in the dust; disciplinary separations, and then divorce; the rewooing; the bitter spurning and putting to an open shame, as though He were the sinner and not she; the flouting of her independence by public scandal; her complete humiliation, repentance, forgiveness; magnanimous forgetting; indefatigable faithfulness; abiding understanding; the living happy ever after—all, all is there."^o

The long, sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel presents much of this drama, especially the dark side of Jerusalem's faithlessness. It also adds an account of the early history of Israel along the lines of a "Cinderella story" which goes wrong. Jerusalem (which stands for the entire nation) is pictured as a foundling abandoned by her parents (16:3-5). Ieue (Jehovah)

^oF. H. Robison, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 16, pages 141, 142.

Himself preserved the nation in its infancy (6,7). Then He takes them to Himself in marriage (8-13) so that they prosper (14). But from this point on the story does not continue along classic "rags to riches" lines. Israel deserts her husband and becomes like the basest of prostitutes by putting her confidence in other nations and gods (15-36). Consequently, in His indignation, Ieue brings the other nations against Jerusalem (37-52).

The glory of Ieue (which is the "happy ending") does not appear in this chapter except in the promises of the closing verses. Yet it is this climactic section (53-63) which remains with us. After all the shame and reproach, the Lord still remembers His covenant (60), and promises its renewal (62) when He will provide a propitiatory shelter for His people (63). The glory will never come by the efforts of Jerusalem. Even today this is the great failure of Israel, for they still seek to establish their own greatness among the nations rather than trust wholly on their God. However, the promise remains, and He Who loves them will make them His Own once again, and bless them, and make them a blessing.

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

(16:3,45) **Amorite**=**SAY**ite; **Hittite**=**Dismay**. (16:4) the conjectured word, **safety**, stands for a Hebrew term which appears only this one time. It does have similarity to the ordinary word for **safety**, which is the reading of the Vulgate translation; the LXX omits the word. The first **even**=**salt**; the second **even**=**swaddle**. (16:5,7,43,59) the textual changes indicated in these verses are additions and do not replace readings in the Hebrew. (16:8) **hem**=**WING**. (16:16) **you** replaces the Hebrew **it**. (16:27,57) **Philistines**=**Distinguished-settler**. (16:30) **treble** replaces the Hebrew word, **authority**. (16:36) the Hebrew has **as** instead of **by** in the closing line. (16:45) the Hebrew has **sister**

rather than the plural. (16:46,51,53,55) **Samaria**=**FOUND** ed. (16:46,61) **elder**=**GREAT**; **younger**=**SMALL**. (16:60,62) **set up**=**cause-RISE**.

Suggested cross-references for this chapter are as follows: (16:8) Ruth 3:9. (16:20) 2 Kings 16:3; Psa.106:37,38; Isa.57:5; Ezek.20:26,31. (16:38) Gen.38:24; Lev.20:10; Deut.22:22. (16:48) Matt.11:20-24. (16:50) Gen.19:25. (16:53) Deut.30:3.

D.H.H.

BRAMCOTE, ENGLAND

The "live-in" Fellowship at St. John's College in Bramcote, England, September 1-4, was so rewarding that plans are underway to repeat the gathering next year. As well as the excellent ministry from the platform, a very valuable personal ministry was carried on throughout the weekend. The theme, "The Untraceable Riches of Christ," was shown to be rich and unfathomable, to be grasped only by the aid of God's Spirit, and close attention to His words.

The welcome was given by John H. Essex. A panel, chaired by Frank Orton, discussed the subject, "The Recovery of Lost Truth of Holy Scripture." Addresses were delivered by Alan Reid, Ken Hutton and Jan de Jong. Others taking part in the ministry were M. Ritchie, Samuel Rickard, Andrew McLarty and Donald Fielding. There was a "lantern lecture" by Col. R. H. Rohde on Saturday evening and "breaking of bread" on Sunday morning.

KINGSTON, JAMAICA

We have received a report from Brother James Hemmings on the 21st annual General Holy Convocation held in Jamaica, August 6-13. The theme was "Unity and Peace," with a varied program for each day. Special times were set aside for the younger brethren, for the women, for exposition and teaching, for questions and answers as well as business and administrative matters. Special messages on unity and exhortations for practical needs were given on the last day, with a closing evangelical service.

MELBOURNE, FLORIDA

"The Doctrine of God" is the theme for this year's Scripture Study Group conference in Melbourne, Florida, November 24-26. The host is Pastor R. Clay Kent, and the director is Charles E. Bard, 2600 Pineapple Avenue, A-4, Melbourne FL 32935.

JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD

“GOD IS,” and believing this we “are seeking Him out” (Heb.11:6). To find Him as He is we must turn to His Word. In particular, we need to consider the good news (evangel) of God which He has sent to us through Paul. But as we seek Him in this manner we cannot but note another important requirement before we will be ready to appreciate the glories of our God. We will find God in the message He sends to us today, but this message (as well as that for Israel) concerns Jesus Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God (Col.1:15). If we are to become acquainted with God as He is, we will need to be focusing our attention on His Son.

The evangel of God, for which Paul was severed, concerns “Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Rom.1:1-5). The revelation of God in the evangel concerning God’s Son can be compared to the construction of a building. In a sense Paul makes this comparison in 1 Corinthians 3, as we will see. The foundation of this building has been laid, and we may even say that the capstone of the corner has been placed. In this article we are seeking God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ, our Lord. We will find that both the foundation and the capstone of the corner for this body of truth are fully concerned with Christ.

THE FOUNDATION

In 1 Corinthians 3:9 Paul speaks of the believers as “God’s building.” We are like a building, and we

belong to God. In verses 10-15, however, although the apostle continues the figure of a building, he changes the significance of the figure. In these verses he is writing about the message he is bringing for our faith. The body of believers is like a building of God, but the body of truth is also like a building. In presenting the evangel wherever he went, Paul was like a "wise foreman" laying a foundation for our faith.

This foundation is "Jesus Christ"—that is, everything Paul taught as he laid this foundation for faith was concerned with Jesus Christ. (We observe that as Paul builds on this foundation and takes us to maturity, he more and more refers to God's Son as "Christ Jesus" in order to emphasize the glories and exaltation of our Lord as shown by the title, *Christ*. But here, as to the foundation, the emphasis is on the *saving* work of our Lord, and so His Name, *Jesus*, which means "Jehovah-Saviour" is given first place.)

The foundation of truth for us today is so entirely centered on the finished work of our Saviour that Paul can designate this foundation as being *Jesus Christ*. If one recognizes "the grace of God" (1 Cor.3:10) and responds to what "the Lord gives" (3:5) then it is impossible to lay any other foundation. "For other foundation can no one lay [under these conditions] beside that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (3:11).

Indeed, there are many foundations laid, but we desire to build on the foundation which Paul has already laid. We are not laying a new foundation of our own, but rather are trying to recognize the one which was laid long ago, so that we can build on it. The foundation which Paul laid is the one which supports the truth concerning God, and in fact *is* truth concerning God. Therefore, we need to become acquainted with Jesus Christ as Paul presents Him.

THE CHANNEL

This can be determined as a principle of scriptural revelation: whatever is made known about God is channeled through His Son. "For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5). The typical word which Paul uses to describe this relationship of Christ to God is *through*. The manifestation of God's righteousness is "through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:21,22). Justification, salvation from indignation, conciliation, all of which reflect the character of God, come through the work and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom.5:1,2,9,11). "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" (1 Cor.8:6). He is the channel, not only of all the blessings we receive from God, but above and beyond this He is the channel of the revelation of God to our hearts and comprehensions.

THE CAPSTONE OF THE CORNER

This accords with the fact that the Son of God's love is the Image of the invisible God (Col.1:13-15). It is His highest honor and privilege that in all ways He perfectly reflects the Father. This holds true even as we go on toward maturity. Christ is always the center of revelation and always points us to God. In speaking of "God's family" in Ephesians 2:19-21, the apostle Paul refers to Christ Jesus as being the capstone of the corner. So also, Christ can be seen as the capstone of the corner when it comes to revelation of God's truth.

In the *Concordant Commentary* for Mark 12:10 we read, "The capstone of the corner is usually the most ornate on a building. The very finest block of stone would ordinarily be reserved for it. But the rulers in

Israel refused to give [Christ] any place in the edifice. He was rejected and despised. But when it is finished He will have the highest and most glorious position." As the capstone of truth we find also that Christ has the highest and most glorious position.

This carries us even beyond the foundation. Here we are concerned with other fruit of Christ's work besides the fruit of salvation—blessings heaped upon blessings, matters of reconciliation, celestial glories and transcendent grace. But the subject remains the same. Even as the foundation is *Jesus Christ*, so also the capstone of the corner is *Christ Jesus* Himself (Eph.2:20). The channel through Whom God makes Himself known remains the same One. Only the order of His designations changes so as to fit the particular truth being made known.

JESUS, THE SAVIOUR

The Name, Jesus, as we have noted, means "Jehovah-Saviour" (*cf* Matt.1:21). This designation is given first place in the foundation because our faith begins with the acceptance of the evangel of our salvation (1 Cor.15:3,4; Eph.1:13). Paul is not presenting the Jesus of His earthly ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt.15:24). Instead the apostle puts emphasis on Jesus in his foundational epistles in order to stress the saving work and faith of God's Son in dying for our sakes. It is this aspect of Jesus' career, as the obedient One (Rom.5:19) that is in the foundation. And this is fundamental to the revelation of God.

Since Jesus is the Saviour, and He reveals God to us, God is a God of salvation. The faithful obedience of Christ Jesus even to the death of the cross (Phil.2:8) tells us a great deal about God.

There is surely profit to us in knowing this. Humanity is in dire need of salvation. All the vitamins, medicines and drugs, all the work, games and thrills, all the running from one thing and place to another, will not cover up the fact that we are dying. With the creation itself we are "groaning and travailing together" (Rom.8:22).

It is the presentation of the Saviour in the evangel that tells us of God's concern for us in our misery. It is not merely that God *wants* to be our Saviour, but now that we are acquainted with what Jesus Christ has done, we can see that God *is* the Saviour, even of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10). It is our Lord as Jesus, the Saviour, Who shows this fact to us.

CHRIST, THE ANOINTED ONE

The glories of God's Son are most intimately associated with His title of exaltation, Christ. This is the Greek word for *anointed*, which in Hebrew is *Messiah*. The priests, kings and prophets of Israel were anointed with oil as a sign of their dedication to their work. God has anointed His Son "with the oil of exultation" beyond any other anointing (Heb.1:9), a divine consecration and empowering for His work.

Under this title we find Christ as the channel of conciliation (2 Cor.5:18) and of "every spiritual blessing among the celestials" (Eph.1:3). That future administration of the complement of the eras is for the heading up of all in the Christ (Eph.1:10). In bringing these "untraceable riches of Christ to the nations" (Eph.3:8), Paul was unfolding God's greatest glories.

Is it important to us that we become acquainted with God in this way—by seeing Him through the transcendent riches of grace which are in Christ Jesus? It is. Otherwise we are bound to be uncertain and

despondent when things appear to go wrong in our experience. So many of our fervent prayers seem to be left unanswered. Some sorrows and struggles seem to go on and on in our lives without relief. The unbelievers seem calloused to His grace and untouched as they go toward death and judgment. And we wonder, Why does not God do something about it?

This shows the value of considering Christ. He is the Anointed and Victorious One! Through Him God is bringing forth a great work of subjection and reconciliation. God is not inactive though He may appear silent, nor does He seem inactive when we view Him in Christ. God has a purpose for the eons, and He is making (that is, carrying out) this purpose in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Eph.3:10). It is by knowing the Anointed One that we can have this assurance about the operations of God.

OUR MASTER

The fact that Jesus Christ is our Lord, and this in a personal way (shown by the "our"), has much to say about God. It is the One Who suffered and died for us Who has been given to us as our Master—not some subordinate power, but the very One Who saves. But more than this, it is the One Who channels such great blessings to us, placed as Head of the body, anointed to the task of bringing God's purpose to completion, Who is our Lord. He is our own personal Lord for every need and problem of our life, and for every moment of every day.

Yet we remember again that He is the Image of the invisible God. As we experience the joy and privilege of having Him as our Master, to guide us all along the way, we are learning about God. It is significant, then, that we find God Himself referred to as "Lord"

in Romans 11:33-36 ("who knew the mind of the Lord?"), for here also we have Paul's great hymn of praise: "To Him be the glory for the eons!" As our Lord, He is wise and powerful and full of mercy and grace.

The creeds of the great church councils will not help us in knowing God as God. The complicated studies of theology, in volume after volume, will more often confuse than help. Even the declarations of creation, the "message of nature," keep Him hidden from our understanding. It is only in God's Word, and especially for us in this time, in Paul's writings, that we will find what we are looking for. It is good news, the evangel of God, and this concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. What we discover of Him and His work will reflect what is true of God. As we become acquainted with Him we will become acquainted with God. And through Him we will be led "with one accord, with one mouth," to be glorifying "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom.15:6).

D.H.H.

"YET NOT I"

I sought the Lord, and afterwards I knew
He moved my heart to seek Him, seeking me;
It was not I that found, O Saviour true;
No, I was found of Thee.

Thou didst reach forth Thy hand and mine enfold;
I walked and sank not on the storm-vexed sea;
'Twas not so much that I on Thee took hold
As Thou, dear Lord, on me.

I find, I walk, I love, but O the whole
Of love is but my answer, Lord, to Thee!
For Thou wert long beforehand with my soul;
Always Thou lovedst me.

-Anon.

Concordant Version of Psalm 78

Intellectual Asaphic

- 78 ^cGive ear, my people, to my law.
Stretch out your ear to the sayings of my mouth.
- ² I will open my mouth ^uwith a proverb;
I will utter problems from aforetime,
- ³ Which we hear, and we are knowing,
And our fathers rehearse them to us.
- ⁴ We will not suppress them from their sons,
to the last generation,
Rehearsing the praises of Ieue,
And His strength and His marvels which He does.
- ⁵ + He is raising a testimony in Jacob,
And He places a law in Israel,
which He instructs ^oour forefathers
to ^cmake them known to their sons,
- ⁶ that the latter generation may know;
Sons who are being born shall rise
and rehearse ^othem to their sons;
- ⁷ And they will place their confidence in Alueim.
And they will not forget the practices of Al,
And His instructions will they preserve.
- ⁸ And they will not become as their forefathers,
A generation stubborn and rebellious,
A generation that does not prepare its heart,
nor is its spirit faithful ^uwith Al.
- ⁹ The sons of Ephraim, bow-armed archers,
turned in the day of attack!
- ¹⁰ They do not keep the covenant of Alueim,
And in His law they refuse to go.
- ¹¹ And they are forgetting His practices
And His marvels, which He showed them.
- ¹² In front of their forefathers He did a marvel,
In the land of Egypt, the field of Zoan.

- 13 He rent the sea and is passing them over
 And is setting up the waters as a waterspout;
- 14 And He is guiding them 'by a cloud by day,
 And all the night 'by the light of a fire.
- 15 He is rending the rocks in the wilderness
 And is giving 'them^o to drink,
 as from great submerged chaoses.
- 16 And He is ^cbringing forth floods from a crag,
 And He is ^cbringing down the water as streams.
- 17 + Yet they are continuing further to sin [>]against Him,
 To rebel against the Supreme in an arid land.
- 18 And they are probing Al in their heart,
[>]by asking food for their soul.
- 19 And they are speaking 'against Alueim; they say:
 Is Al able to arrange a table in the wilderness?
- 20 Behold! He smites a rock, and water is gushing forth,
 And the watercourses are overflowing!
 However, is He able to give bread?
 'Or is He preparing meat for His people?
- 21 Wherefore Ieue heard, and He is enraged,
 And a fire is ignited 'against Jacob.
 And, moreover, anger ascends 'against Israel,
- 22 For they do not believe in Alueim,
 Nor do they trust in His salvation.
- 23 And He is instructing the skies above,
 And the doors of the heavens He opens;
- 24 And He is raining on them manna to eat,
 And the grain of the heavens He gives to them.
- 25 Each one eats the bread of the sturdy;
 He sends provision to them, to satisfaction.
- 26 He is causing an east wind to journey in the heavens,
 And He is leading a south wind 'by His strength.
- 27 + He is raining meat upon them as soil,
 And the winged flyer as the sand of the seas,
- 28 And He is casting them within His camp,
 around [>] His tabernacles.
- 29 + They are eating and are surfeited exceedingly:

- And their yearning is He bringing to them.
30 They are not alienated from their yearning,
While their food is in their mouth;
31 And the anger of Alueim ascended 'against them,
And He is killing among their stout ones,
And the choice ones of Israel He 'cut off'.
32 In all this they sin further,
And believe not in His marvels.
33 +Then He is concluding their days, in vanity,
And their years, in fluster.
34 Whenever He killed them, +then they inquired of Him
And returned and sought Al early.
35 +Then they are remembering that Alueim is their Rock,
And Al, the Supreme, is their Redeemer.
36 +Yet they are enticing Him 'with their mouth,
And 'with their tongue they are lying to Him.
37 And their heart is not established with Him,
Nor are they faithful in His covenant.
38 +Yet He, compassionate,
is making propitiatory shelter for depravity.
And He is not ruining;
And increasingly > reverses His anger.
And He is not rousing all His fury,
39 And He is remembering that they are flesh,
A wind going and not returning.
40 How often they were defying Him in the wilderness!
They were grieving Him in the desolation!
41 And they are turning back and are probing Al,
And the Holy One of Israel they 'set as a mark.
42 They do not remember `His hand:
The day in which He ransoms them from distress,
43 Who places in Egypt His signs,
And His miracles in the field of Zoan.
44 And He is turning their waterways to blood,
And their flowings, so that naught are they drinking.
45 He is sending among them a mixture of flies,
and it is devouring them,

- And the frog, and it is ruining them.
- 46 And He is giving their crop to the beetle,
And their labor to the locust.
- 47 He is killing their vine 'with hail,
And their sycamore-fig 'with rime.
- 48 And He is enclosing their brutes to hail,
And their cattle to the siroccos.
- 49 He is sending among them the heat of His anger,
Rage and menace and distress;
A sending of messengers of evils.
- 50 He is pondering a track for His anger;
He does not keep back their souls from death,
And their animals He encloses to the plague.
- 51 + He is smiting every firstborn in Egypt,
The beginning of virility in the tents of Ham.
- 52 And He is 'making His people to journey as a flock;
And He is leading them as a drove in the wilderness.
- 53 + He is guiding them trustingly, and they are not afraid,
And the sea covered `their enemies.
- 54 And He is bringing them to the boundary
of His holy place;
This mountain, His right hand did acquire.
- 55 And He is driving the nations out from their presence,
And is casting them 'by line for an allotment.
He is 'making the tribes of Israel tabernacle
in their tents.
- 56 + Yet they are probing and are defying `Alueim,
the Supreme.
And His testimonies they do not keep.
- 57 And they are turning away
and are treacherous, as their forefathers;
They are warped as a deceptive bow.
- 58 And they are vexing Him 'on their fane heights,
And 'with their carvings are they 'making Him jealous.
- 59 Alueim hears and is enraged,
And He is rejecting exceedingly in Israel.
- 60 And He is letting the tabernacle of Shiloh go,
The tent He tabernacles 'among humanity.

- 61 And He is giving His strength to captivity,
 And His beauty into the hand of the foe.
 62 And He is enclosing His people to the sword,
 And 'with His allotment is He enraged.
 63 Its choice ones, fire devours,
 And its virgins are not ⁷mourned^o.
 64 Its priests fall ⁱby the sword,
 And its widows are not lamenting.
 65 +Then ^sIeue^{ph} is awaking as a sleeper,
 As a master jubilating from wine.
 66 And He is smiting His foes back;
 An eonian reproach He gives to them.
 67 And He is rejecting in the tent of Joseph,
 And in the tribe of Ephraim He does not choose.
 68 +Yet He is choosing `the tribe of Judah,
 `Mount Zion which He loves.
 69 And He is building His sanctuary as heights;
⁷In^{cs} the land He founds it for the eon,
 70 And He is choosing ⁱ David, His servant,
 And is taking him from the folds of the flock;
 71 From following the unweaned He brings him
 To graze ⁱ Jacob, His people,
 And ⁱ Israel, His allotment.
 72 And he is grazing them ⁷in^{cs} the flawlessness of his heart,
 And ⁱby the understanding of his palms is he guiding them.

Here the psalmist gives a commentary on portions of Israel's history. Three periods are selected as being typical: the time in Egypt, in the wilderness and in Canaan. The first eight verses tell the purpose of this recital. He hopes that the generations to come will remember the failure of their forefathers, and avoid such stubbornness themselves. The phrase "stubborn and rebellious" is the same one used in Deuteronomy

21:18, where a law is given that such a son is to be stoned, so that all Israel would hear and fear.

Verse 2 is cited in Matthew 13:35; the first line is from the Septuagint translation, while the second line is adapted to fit Matthew's narrative. The psalmist (Asaph, presumably "the prophet" in Matt.13:35) calls his own writings "a proverb" and "problems from aforetime." His intention is to give the moral lessons to be learned from Israel's past. Matthew takes this passage as prefiguring Jesus' use of parables.

Verses 9-11 deal with Israel in Canaan. Ephraim is specifically mentioned because that was where idolatry was introduced again into the land (Judges 17); the reference to their turning "in the day of attack" may refer to the incident recorded in Judges 12:1-6. They had forgotten Jehovah's marvels, especially those in Egypt (verse 12). Verses 13-42 recount the deliverance from Egypt into the wilderness, but also relate how they rebelled even at that time. The Lord had given them manna and fowl for food, but they were inciting His wrath even while they chewed this miraculous fare. Their rebelliousness was a continual thing; when He slew some of them, the rest would seek Him out, and would remember Him as their Redeemer—for awhile (verses 34-37). Their memory was not very good (verses 35,36,42), in contrast to God's faithful remembrance (verse 39).

In verses 42-53, the commentary returns to the wonders the Lord performed in Egypt. In the Concordant rendering, as given here, much of the narrative is given in the present tense, though the events related are history. The Hebrew language did not have different tenses as modern languages do; it was the context that told the reader or listener when an event happened, rather than the tense of the verb.

Once again, the narrative returns to the time when Israel dwelt in the promised land (verses 54-64). Because of their iniquity, God allowed the ark of the covenant to be captured by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4-5). But this state of affairs was not permanent. Though Ephraim disqualified himself as the leader of the nation, Judah, under the leadership of David, was chosen. Jehovah established Zion as His dwelling, and allowed righteous David to guide His people.

In verse 31, the conjectured "cut off" replaces the Hebrew "causes (to) bow." The Hebrew has "praised" in verse 63 where the LXX reads "mourned." And in verses 69 and 72 we have taken the reading of the LXX, Syriac and other manuscripts, "in," where our Masoretic Text has "as."

James D. Thompson

CONCORDANT VERSION

A number of format changes are being made in the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament* as we plan for the day when a complete edition will be produced. One readily noticeable change is that of type size. The smaller size used above for Psalm 78 is required if we are to have a manageable volume when finished. Another change affects the translation itself. Normal Hebrew syntactic patterns are now being matched with corresponding normal English syntactic patterns; in other words, the Version is being made more readable on a principled (concordant) basis.

At present we are working on the *Minor Prophets*. We hope to have them ready by the end of the year. They will be printed in the new type size. In addition, footnotes will be added, explaining all textual emendations, as well as alternative translations of difficult or ambiguous lines.

We have recently purchased a new typesetting disc for the computer used by the Pacesetting Services (Albert and David Knoch). This disc contains all the symbols and typefaces needed for the Version work. It also contains the Greek and Hebrew alphabets. We plan to change the Version typeface from that of Times Roman to Caledonia, the style now used in *Unsearchable Riches*.

THE WORD OF THE CROSS

The death of Christ on the cross is the basic truth of the evangel (1 Cor.15:3). It is the great corrective that will eventually lead to:

1. Repudiation of sin (Heb.9:26)
2. Inactivation of death (2 Tim.1:10)
3. Inactivation of Satan (Heb.2:14)
4. Justification of mankind (Rom.5:18)
5. Subjection of enemies (1 Cor.15:25)
6. Reconciliation of all (Col.1:20)
7. Vivification of all (1 Cor.15:22)

These are glorious accomplishments and goals, but in the meantime the cross has a meaning to us which is quite sobering. The phrase, "the word of the cross" (1 Cor.1:18), is not speaking directly of the historical fact of the cross, nor even of the great accomplishments of the cross, but rather of the *manner* of Christ's death. It speaks of the humiliation and shame.

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST

It was necessary for the sinless One to become the sin offering (2 Cor.5:21), to forsake the place of blessing for the place of the curse (Gal.3:14). He was:

1. Rebuked, reproached and reviled by enemies
2. Scoffed at by criminals
3. Betrayed by one of the twelve disciples
4. Denied by another, His most loyal supporter
5. Forsaken by God.

According to the law, the death meted out to a criminal was stoning (Lev.24:13-17). In the wilderness, a man gathering sticks on the sabbath was stoned (Num.15:32-36). When Achan coveted and stole a Babylonian garment and money, he and his sons, daughters and all his livestock were stoned to death (Josh.7:20-26). Even an innocent victim, such as Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, was stoned (2 Chron. 24:20,21).

But Christ was killed in accord with a law of an alien nation, Rome, by its most hideous method. Its shame is great; its suffering horrible.

Yet it requires the shame and sufferings of the cross and the humiliation of the Son of God's love to bring creation into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Justification, too, is based on the blood, and there is no shedding of blood in stoning. Because He stooped so low, the universe will eventually be led into the joy of grace and the peace of reconciliation.

STUPIDITY TO THOSE PERISHING

The word of the cross involves the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil.3:10), which is stupidity to those who are perishing (1 Cor.1:18). The unbeliever considers it foolishness that to us "it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29).

But more than this, the unbeliever can see no wisdom in the message "Christ crucified." How can victory come through shame? How can life come through death?

TO JEWS, A SNARE

All the promises to Israel were based on flesh. The covenant made with Abraham in Genesis 17:1-14 es-

establishes this fact. Circumcision in flesh was the seal of the covenant, and whoever did not submit to this seal would be cut off from the people. They had broken the covenant.

On the other hand, the cross of Christ speaks of the end of the flesh, and this was a stumbling block to Israel. We of the body of Christ must reckon ourselves crucified together with Christ (Rom.6:6-11; Gal.2:20). With the flesh goes its boasting and its pretensions.

The Jews were told of the "word of the kingdom" (Matt.13:19) with all its millennial glories, but Paul proclaimed the word of the cross which gives no place for the flesh.

THE WISDOM AND POWER OF GOD

"The word of the cross . . . heralding Christ crucified . . . Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor.1:18,23,24), this is the message to us today. Paul, the apostle of the nations, brings this evangel, showing us its significance for the race of mankind. This *word* distinguishes between the old creation and the new creation (Rom.8:19-23; 2 Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15), and between the old humanity and the new humanity (Rom.6:6; Eph.2:15). It obliterates and discards all the features of the old creation, with all its divisions (such as Circumcision and Uncircumcision) and pride.

The old must be put away. It cannot be reformed; it must be put to death. Through the cross the old humanity was crucified, and the new humanity finds its foundations.

Some do not want to be "persecuted for the cross of Christ Jesus" (Gal.6:12), but faith seizes this message with joy, knowing that the new is far better than the old which was nailed to the cross.

CLASS PROJECTS

1. Provide scripture references for the five steps in the humiliation of Christ given at the beginning of this study.
2. Give possible reasons for Christ's death being by crucifixion rather than by stoning.
3. If man had God's power how would he go about saving the world? Map out a typical human strategy for betterment.
4. Look up the ten occurrences of the word "cross" in Paul's epistles. What special significance does Paul give to the term?
5. Discuss the differences between the "word of the kingdom" and the "word of the cross."

Arthur C. Lamb

THE PEACE OF GOD

All of the saints have some consciousness that Christ died for their sins and that they are saved, but they may still be afraid of the Deity. Some have gone further and have peace *with* God by receiving the conciliation, and are reconciled to Him through the death of His Son for His enemies. Beyond that are those who enjoy justification as a result of His resurrection. But few, indeed, have entered into the peace *of* God, that tranquillity which is His because He is guiding all to His predetermined goal, and uses evil as well as good in the course of His operations.

Once we see that *all* is of God, sin as well as success, and that He is using *all* to bring about that perfect consummation, with not a single deviation from the preordained plan, we will be able to understand that He, at least, is at perfect peace, so far as the course of the universe and the creatures in it are concerned. *This is the peace of God. This may be ours.* This will enable us to refrain from worry and to pray with thanksgiving. In the midst of the warring factions of this world it will guard our hearts like a garrison of soldiers. Even when our minds fluctuate and vacillate with the vicissitudes of existence, this peace will rise superior to every change.

A. E. K.

ALL IN ALL

THE blood of Christ is the basis of all blessing. The purpose of God determines human destiny. It does not depend on our deserts. The plan or process of God during the eons or ages must be distinguished from His purpose, which will not be fully accomplished until the eons are past. Herein lies the difference between the teaching of the Scriptures and the accepted creeds of Christendom. Sin and suffering, condemnation and death, endure for the eons, not "forever."

The believer suffers in the current era because of sin, but will be released in the resurrection at the presence of Christ. The unbeliever will have affliction and anguish and death for his sins, in the judgment, but he also becomes reconciled to God at the consummation, through the blood of Christ's cross (Col. 1:20).

The translations "forever" and "everlasting" and "never" are human perversions which could never have deceived us if they had been consistently rendered. They denote definite divisions of time called ages or eons. All together they form a distinct portion of time called eonian times. Much in our common creeds is true if confined within the eons, but it is most malignant error when forced beyond the eons.

This makes it possible for us to believe *all* the Word of God. Those who cling to the creeds, and "eternal"

torment must deny certain passages in Paul's epistles which clearly and unequivocally teach the salvation of all mankind (1 Tim.2:4; 4:9,10) and the reconciliation of the universe (Col.1:20). They reject these portions of God's holy Word because they cannot be true if torment is eternal. If, however, judgment is not eternal, but eonian, then we have the happy and exultant privilege of believing all the solemn threats of death and condemnation without the least reservation, and still accept God's grand goal to which all His labors lead.

Our God has foretold the blessed era when He shall be All in *all* (1 Cor.15:28). How can that be? Are there not some too calloused to bend to His omnipotence? Let each one who knows Him as their All give answer thus: "He Who has broken my stubborn will and brought me to His feet can lead the most obstinate to Himself." His will is more than a match for any man's. Were it His decree to become their Doom, they could not stop Him. But as it is His will to become their All (which is a far nobler, greater goal) their All He shall become. His indignation may destroy for the eons, but His love will last endlessly.

He will be All in *all*. As each class is delivered from the domains of Death, God's great purpose becomes more and more apparent. When Christ arose from among the dead, the great Firstfruit, He was the Herald of a universal harvest. For in His future presence, all who are His will be "conformed to His body of glory," to reign with Him. But so long as He rules there must be insubjection, there must be those who do not find in God their All. Yet so perfect does the rule of God's Son become, so potent are His judgments, that at the consummation all are in perfect subjection. Death, the last enemy, is abolished, all are

“made alive” and the last flicker of opposition has been snuffed out. Christ has accomplished the work His God had given Him to do. The Son of God has effaced all disaffection from the universe. And still God is not fully satisfied. He is not All in all.

His Son has brought the universe to His feet. His Son rules until sovereignty itself has become obsolete. Is not His Son eternally entitled to the dignities He has won? He would never have it so! For when He has attained the zenith of universal glory and dominion He lays it all at His Father's feet! He remains the humble One He ever was, as witness Bethlehem and Calvary. And humility will be the brightest halo on His blessed head for all eternity. For He steps down from His high place and prestige to present His God with the prize for which His love had longed and labored. He presents Him with a universe subject to His will, satisfied with His wisdom, thrilled with His love, and takes His place at His Father's feet. Thus only can His God be

ALL IN ALL.

The preceding is a selection from the new, expanded edition of ALL IN ALL, by A. E. Knoch. This 222 page book should be ready by the end of the year. The price is \$3.00.

W. N. GLOVER

A faithful supporter of the Concordant Publishing Concern, Brother Glover of Creswell, Oregon, was put to repose on August 18. The poems, “Why” and “The Weaving” as well as our pamphlet, “Life and Peace,” were used at the memorial service. We extend our sympathy to his widow, Brooky Glover, and all his friends and family.

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