Unsearchable Riches

A Bimonthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME LXXVIII

E. O. Knoch, *Editor Emeritus*
Dean H. Hough, *Editor*
Herman H. Rocke, *Translations Consultant*

CONCORDANT PUBLISHING CONCERN
15570 Knochaven Road
Canyon Country, CA 91351, U.S.A.

NEW YEAR'S HYMN

What is man, and who am I,
That Thou, O God, should notice me,
But one who daily may rely
On the living God, on Thee,
The Saviour of humanity?

What love is this, how rich and full,
That Thou, O God, should give Thy Son
To that cruel Place of the Skull
Where mankind's darkest deed was done,
But where our life and peace was won?

How long, O God, until that day
When sin and death shall all be gone,
And Thou alone shall be our Stay,
Our joy, our all, and in Thy Son
The endless "year" shall have begun?

D.H.H.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 1987
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME SEVENTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

BELIEVERS in a world of doubt and scorn, saved in the midst of sin and death, conciliated where all is tainted by enmity and warfare—such is our present lot. It does us a great deal of good to note the way in which the apostle Paul handled this seeming paradox. He went about the Roman Empire proclaiming the evangel of grace and peace and the celestial calling, but he never lost sight of the fact that he was part of mankind. His feet were solidly on the ground even though he was disposed to "that which is above, not to that on the earth" (Col.3:2). He recognized that we cannot "come out of the world" (1 Cor.5:10). There is "toil and labor" (1 Thess.2:9) facing us and our own individual loads to be borne (Gal 6:5).

God has made our trials part of this present life (see "God Makes Our Trials," p.27) at the same time that He unfolds the "untraceable riches of Christ" to us through Paul's writings (see p.21). This may seem hard, but it is for our good. God's power is perfected in our infirmity (2 Cor.12:9), and the glories of His grace are appreciated where there is a great need.

Brother Rocke has been recounting Paul's trials as recorded in Acts. The first thing we see the apostle doing on the island of Melita is helping his "barbarian" hosts tend the fire (see "Escape from Rampaging Waters" starting on p.12). He only sought to be helpful with the mundane requirements of the

situation and let the circumstances (arranged by God) direct him (*cp* Phil.2:23). This is what has made him useful to his Owner (2 Tim.2:21).

This pattern of humble practicality stands in contrast to Israel's relationship with the nations in Deuteronomy (see "Yahweh's Call for Obedience," p.36). Even our prayers are more inward and private, both as to place and posture (see Brother Knoch's study, "Posture in Prayer" starting on p.5). Our attitude and behavior toward "those outside" (1 Thess. 4:12) is one of patience and leniency (Phil.4:5). In relation to civil authorities we are to be subject, giving each its due (see p.45).

In adopting this pattern into our lives, we will be like Paul in that our lives will reflect our faith; ". . . it is not ours to wrestle with blood and flesh" (Eph.6:12), but rather we desire to manifest the fruit of the spirit toward all mankind: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Gal.5:22,23). This is not a popular way to go, but we may be sure it is the wisest and the best way to live our lives.

Although 1 Corinthians 11:26 is speaking of our testimony to each other in our assembling together, there is something here concerning our testimony to this world. Until Christ comes, we may be announcing His death by our giving and concern for others, even those who are unbelievers, or believers who oppose us, letting Christ's disposition be making its home in us (Phil.2:5). Paul is our example in this respect, and he writes, "Become imitators together of me, brethren, and be noting those who are walking thus . . ." (Phil.3:17). This will not make us wealthy or win us any fame among mankind, but it will be well pleasing to our God. To Him be all the glory! D.H.H.

POSTURE IN PRAYER

IN THE ORIENT much is made of conforming the body to the spirit in prayer. Most men grovel in the dust quite literally before some high and mighty potentate. Even the direction toward which they face is important. Daniel had his windows open toward Jerusalem (Dan.6:10). Today, in a Mohammedan mosque, there is always some indication of the direction of Mecca, and all pray facing toward the sacred city. I well remember a venerable and impressive-looking Moslem on the train from Jaffa to Jerusalem, who performed his prayers before a whole car full of passengers, at the prescribed time, and, as nearly as possible, toward Mecca. This was difficult to do, as the roadway is a series of curves, and he could hardly have been correct most of the time. Old as he was, he knelt and bowed clear to the floor, again and again. I could not help admiring his perfect indifference to the many eyes that watched him in his genuflections.

We are so accustomed to democratic manners that it does not strike us as the height of arrogance for the Pharisee to *stand* while presumably in the presence of his God, in the sacred precincts of the temple (Luke 18:11). He came quite close, but the tribute collector did *not* even dare to *lift up* so much as his eyes to heaven. Our Lord labelled as hypocrites those who were fond of "praying," *standing* in the synagogues and at the corner of the squares, so that they may be appearing to men. The good opinion of the audience

was all the reward they got from their prayers! It is quite helpful to note the posture of anyone, when this is specially mentioned in the Scriptures. It is usually an expression of his spiritual attitude as well. It is a mark of high dignity when anyone may stand in the presence of God (Rev.8:2). Those who are worthy will be rewarded by being stationed in front of the Son of Mankind (Luke 21:36).

KNEELING IN PRAYER

To KNEEL, *brk* in Hebrew, also means to *bless*. Abraham's servant, when he came to the city of Nahor, in Mesopotamia, caused his camels to *ebrik* (Gen.24:11), which may mean either *cause to kneel* or *cause to bless*. We have lost the significance of this act, but Israel was always reminded of it by their language. So the very attitude of prayer, as a rule, signified the first requirement, that there must be blessing in the heart of the petitioner. We seldom read of this in the Hebrew Scriptures. Psalms 95:6, A.V. "Let us kneel before the Lord," may be the only other occurrence, yet the word is rendered *bless* hundreds of times. In Chaldee, however, we have one other example. When Daniel knew that the decree was signed that forbade him to make any petition to God for thirty days, he went into his house, his windows being open toward Jerusalem, and he *knelt* on his knees three times a day (Dan.6:10).

Our Lord seemed to take it for granted that, if anyone fell on his knees to Him intuitively, that one was well disposed, and He, on His part, blessed him. The first occurrence in the Greek Scriptures is the man whose son was an epileptic (Matt.17:14). The second was when the soldiers of the governor mocked His kingly crown with a wreath of thorns (Matt.27:29;

Mark 15:19). Besides, there was the leper, whom He cleansed (Mark 1:40), and Peter, after the miraculous multitude of fishes (Luke 5:8). Only the rich man did not receive a *blessing* from his *kneeling* (Mark 10:17). He wished to know what *he* should *do* in order to acquire eonian life. Doing is deadly, and does not lead to life, even when he *seemed* to come in the attitude of blessing. If *he earned* life by *doing*, why should he bless the *Giver* of life eonian?

Only once do we read of our Lord kneeling in prayer (Luke 22:41). This was the time when He approached nearest to us in our infirmities, and the ordeal before Him seemed insupportable. Then it was that he cried, "carry aside this cup from Me." But, both before and after, He abased Himself by making all subject to the two great operative principles that must ever characterize the true Deity—His intention and His will. Christ did not set Himself up as a rival Deity, with a purpose and a plan which is irrevocable. Rather, He took His place in acquiescence to the Father's intention and will. He bowed the knee to Him, and made no move to overrule Him when their wills did not coincide. He is always subject, and will be even at the consummation, after He has brought back the universe to God, the Father's, heart (1 Cor.15:28).

Twice we have kneeling associated with the Circumcision in Acts. First we read of Stephen. When he was stoned he knelt and prayed for blessing on his assassins (Acts 7:60). Saul of Tarsus saw this. Peter knelt when he prayed and revived the body of Dorcas (Acts 9:40). This was followed by the housetop vision which led to the blessing of Cornelius.

Paul speaks of kneeling and blessing more than anyone else in the Scriptures. Twice we find him

kneeling with the saints at the sea shore, a type of the boundary between Israel and the nations. Why did he send to Ephesus for the elders instead of going there? Their spiritual position was the sea, so they had to come down to Miletus. Kneeling with them all he prayed (Acts 20:36). Later, they received all the blessings of the so-called Ephesian epistle. Again, when he was about to leave Tyre, they knelt on the beach, presaging the blessing of the nations (Acts 21:5,6).

Bowing the knee is a fine figure indicative of blessing, either as desired or as appreciated. We have lost its significance in the western world, and think of it as a token of reverence or submission. It will, of course, include these qualities, but submission, in the Scriptures, is more clearly and picturesquely shown by placing the foot or the hand on the scruff, the nape of the neck (Gen.49:8). Reverence is really a far deeper emotion, and demands more than genuflection. Abram fell on his *face* when God spoke to him (Gen.17:3,17). Daniel even fell on his face before Gabriel. The prone position is the lowest that a mortal can take, and is specially fitting when in the presence of the Deity, for then the spirit is also prostrate. In my own experience, in the most agonizing of my prayers, I unwittingly bury my face and lie prostrate. Unless this is done naturally, from the heart, it is a mockery. But it may express the deepest reverence of which our spirits are capable.

On four occasions Paul uses the phrase "bow the knee." Not realizing its proper import, most of us lose the full weight of these words, and make them a mere symbol of unwilling, forced surrender. That this is very far from its force may be seen when Paul uses it of himself (Eph.3:14). He bows his knees to his *Father,*

asking for *blessing* for the saints. If Paul was *compelled,* it must have been the compulsion of love, for his whole petition is replete with his desire for supernal blessing for the saints.

Bowing the knee to Baal was also done in order to receive blessing. Baal means POSSESSOR, and was used freely for a woman's husband (Gen.20:3) or owners of animals or houses or land. Those who bowed to Baal hoped to come into the blessings he possessed, instead of seeking them from the hand of Yahweh (*cf* Rom.11:4).

The two other occurrences in Paul's epistles have much in common. They look forward to the time when *every* knee shall bow, either to the Lord God (Rom.14:11) or in the name of Jesus, for it will be the name above every name, seeing that it presents Him as the *Saviour* (Phil.2:10). In the future few things will so pitilessly expose the hardness of the human heart, as the orthodox perversion of these precious passages. Those who have already been blessed in Christ Jesus should exult to learn that, in the future, there will be bliss for *all,* not only for themselves. Above this, they should revel in the thought that God will not lose anything by the tragedy of the eons. Rather they are the needed background for that future bliss, which will enable all His creatures to enjoy the blessings which were stored in His heart from the beginning.

In contrast to the glorious Pauline evangel, we read of the paralyzed knees of those of the Circumcision who hoped for the coming of the kingdom (Heb.12:12). By basing blessing partly on themselves, their conduct and continuance, they forfeited the bliss that comes only from God, apart from human interference. May we never do this! May our knees never be paralyzed by building our bliss on our

behavior, rather than on the exclusive, unfathomable, all-victorious grace of God!

PRAISE AND PRAYER IN THE ECCLESIA

Our Lord told His disciples, "Where two or three are gathered in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt.18:20). If that was true of them, how much more so of us, in each of whom God's spirit homes! This He said to them in reference to requests in which several are agreed. The members of the present ecclesia have much more in common than they had. Fellowship in praise and worship, especially in the recollection of the Lord's death, as well as mutual edification by teaching and exhortation is a very precious privilege none of those should forego who are vitally united by the same spirit. To join with others in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Eph.5:19; Col.3:16), making melody in our hearts, and voicing it with our tongues, is a form of worship which warms the heart of God and His Anointed.

One reason why the praise and prayer in our "churches" is so soulish or insincere is because the ecclesia as a whole, as evident in its local expressions, is so ignorant of the riches of His grace, and fails to appreciate the wealth of His favor. That is why, in these days, a teaching ministry should be encouraged. The prime object of such a service should not be an accumulation of facts, or mere knowledge, but such a revelation of God's grace and love as will bring the saints into constant fellowship with God in prayer and fill the hearts with overflowing praise for His grace. Teaching should bear fruit for God in worship and adoration.

As an ecclesia we have unutterably more for which to praise and adore our Saviour and our God than

Israel ever had or ever will have. The blessings of the Circumcision on the earth cannot compare with our spiritual blessings among the celestials. Our praise should far exceed theirs in its fervor and elevation. Let us give it full expression when we gather together. Let us not make the mistake of the Corinthians (1 Cor.11:20-22) of debasing the spiritual fellowship we should have as saints into a soulish and selfish feast.

The place of meeting of an ecclesia or the posture of its members is of little consequence today. God probably gets more worship from a few handfuls in halls or homes than He receives from all the great congregations in our churches and cathedrals. And the broken utterances of a humble heart that feels free to stand before Him in Christ's worthiness is much more coveted by His heart than an oratorical invocation accompanied by deep genuflections and prostrations. Approach to God is not a matter of place or posture in this dispensation of spirit, when the outward and material is eclipsed by the inner essence. Place and posture play no part in our praise and prayer today, either alone or in the ecclesia, for God is spirit, and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. A.E.K.

HAROLD T. HANSEN

Brother Harold Hansen died on November 21, after a lengthy illness at the age of 93. Survivors include his wife Myrtle, his sister, Elaine Anderson and his son, Fred Hansen. Harold was a United States Navy veteran of World War I. Years ago he became interested in the ministry of the Concordant Publishing Concern. He worked for the Concern on a part-time basis for a number of years following his retirement. Harold is asleep in Christ, and so is among those who will be rising first in that glorious day when we will all meet the Lord in the air, ever to be with Him.

ESCAPE FROM RAMPAGING WATERS

"AND, BEING SAFELY THROUGH, then we recognized that the island is called Melita. Besides, the barbarians tendered us not the casual philanthropy, for, kindling a fire, they took us all in, because of the imminent shower and because of the cold" (Acts 28:1,2).

In the original Vaticanus text, the name of this island is given as Melitênê. (Elsewhere it is spelled Melitinê and Melêtênê.) However the shorter reading, Melitê, in the Codices Alexandrinus and Sinaiticus (also in three other uncials and 24 papyri) is generally accepted as genuine; the Latin form Melita is more familiar to us from our Bibles.

Since the Greek geographer Ptolemy had mentioned an island called Melitênê (= Meleda or Melida) in the Gulf of Venice, some expositors have supposed that this island off the Dalmatian coast (i.e., the coast of ancient Illyricum) had been the scene of the shipwreck. This idea was due to the misinterpretation of the name "Adria" (Hadria, Acts 27:27) as the modern Adriatic Sea. (Actually all of the central Mediterranean was called "Hadria" in those days.)

Yet the Venetian Meleda could not possibly be reached with the gale blowing so as to drive the ship toward the quicksand of the African Syrtis (27:17); and there is no reason to think that the gale changed

its direction and drove the vessel so far to the north. To reach the Venetian Meleda they would have had to pass many islands on the way as if by a string of miracles; and the soundings would have been different from those reported by Luke in Acts 27:28. (The latter agree absolutely with those at St. Paul's Bay on Malta.) According to nautical authorities, the direction and the rate of drift may very well have brought them from Cauda (27:16) to the channel between the Maltese mainland and the tiny island of Salmonetta within approximately two weeks. But they would never have reached the Venetian Meleda in fourteen days. And their subsequent journey from there to Rome would have been mostly overland, an entirely different route from the one described in Acts 28:11-14 (Malta, Syracuse, Rhegium, Puteoli, Rome).

Doubtless many of the sailors had been at Malta before, since it lay in the usual path of navigation from Egypt to Italy. Another Alexandrian ship had wintered at Malta (28:11), for its Grand Harbor (today's Valetta) was the normal port of call for grain ships on the way to Rome. On a clear day our sailors would have recognized the coastline right away. But in the dark night they had missed the deepwater harbor of Valetta and had run ashore farther to the northwest at the entrance to a smaller bay (now known as St. Paul's Bay). The latter is remote from the Grand Harbor, and possesses no marked features by which it could be recognized from their anchorage near the narrow channel of Salmonetta (27:41).

A NARROW ESCAPE

All who sailed with Paul were saved; so it is with us today in a spiritual sense. Apart from the apostle and his companions (27:2) there were probably not many

among his shipmates who thanked God for their salvation that He had promised to Paul (27:24). Presumably most of them were too exhausted from a hairbreadth escape from drowning, as they saw it. Others may have praised their heathen gods.

A WARM WELCOME

Obviously the inhabitants living near the place where the ship was wrecked soon found out; they came rushing down in spite of the rain and the raging storm and received the 276 voyagers with warm and sincere hospitality. They lit a fire for them (probably in a large cave), so that they were able to dry and warm themselves, drenched and shivering as they were from the shower and the cold. Luke mentions that the inhabitants "took us *all* in," showing unusual kindness. It made no difference to these friendly people whether those from the stranded ship were passengers, soldiers, sailors, or prisoners.

Luke calls the inhabitants "barbarians;" this term was applied by the Greeks to all people who did not speak the Greek language, regardless of their civilization and culture. These inhabitants were civilized and friendly; their kindness toward the shipwrecked folk made it clear that they were far from barbarous or savage.

ESCAPE FOM RAMPAGING WATERS

The "barbarians" who met the voyagers at the beach spoke a Phoenician dialect. Their Phoenician ancestors had been trading in Malta for 1500 years, long before king Solomon built his fleet with the assistance of the Phoenician king Hiram of Tyre (1 Kings 9:26). In the storms of the Mediterranean many a Phoenician ship may have found *refuge* in the

Grand Harbor of the island; hence they had called it *Malet*, meaning *shelter*. This Phoenician term belongs to the same Semitic word family as the Hebrew verb *mahlat*, escape. We may be sure that Paul realized the meaning of "Malet" or Melita, and he may have thought of some lines in the Psalms, such as the following:

"Happy is he who is acting intelligently . . .
In a day of evil, Yahweh shall effect his *escape*."
(41:1)

"Then the waters, they would have overflowed
upon us.
The watercourse, it would have passed
over our soul;
Then there would have passed over our soul
The rampaging waters.
Blessed be Yahweh,
Who has not given us as a prey to their teeth.
Our soul, like a bird has it *escaped*
from the snares of the trappers;
The snare has been broken, and *we* have *escaped*."
(124:4-7)

PICKING UP SERPENTS

"Now at Paul's twisting together a certain quantity of kindling and placing it on the fire, a viper, coming out of the warmth, fastens on his hand. Now, as the barbarians perceived the wild beast hanging from his hand, they said to one another, 'Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, whom, being safely through out of the sea, Justice lets not live.' He, indeed, then twitching the wild beast into the fire, suffered nothing evil. Yet they were apprehensive that he is about to become inflamed or suddenly fall down dead. Yet, after much apprehension, and beholding nothing

coming to be amiss with him, retracting they said he is a god" (Acts 28:3-6).

Paul was especially active in looking after his shipmates. He sympathized with their misery and did what he could to alleviate their sufferings. Obviously unmindful of his own fatigue, he helped to keep the fire going that the inhabitants had started. When a poisonous snake fastened on his hand, they expected to see him fall dead. Was he a murderer who had escaped the sea and was now executed by the goddess of justice? Yet after he had shaken the reptile into the fire and had felt no ill effects, they thought he was a god.

This event reminds us of our Lord's words in the creation commission: "They will be picking up serpents" (Mark 16:18). When dealing with Colossians 1:23, Brother A. E. Knoch referred to this commission with these words: "It is quite possible that he [Paul] and others completed the heralding to the creation according to the closing words of Mark's account. It will be our special privilege to herald this evangel to the hosts of heaven when we are glorified. But now our special task is to dispense it on earth, among men, especially among believers. Our future ministry will be carried out in power and glory. Our present work is often associated with infirmity and suffering."*

Yet His grace is sufficient for us, and His power is being perfected in our infirmities. Let us be glorying in our infirmities, so that the power of Christ should be tabernacling over us. H.H.R.

(To be continued)

**Unsearchable Riches*, vol.71, p.103; see also THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, pp.108-112.

THEREFORE THROUGH ONE MAN

ADAM AND CHRIST are contrasted in Romans 5:12-21 according as they affect the entire human race. The one man Adam was the channel of sin and condemnation for all mankind. So also the one Man Jesus Christ becomes the Channel of righteousness and life for the whole of humanity.

It is only here in all of Romans (and but once more in Paul's letters, namely, 1 Corinthians 15) that Adam is presented this way, as a type of Christ. Yet Paul has well prepared us for this discussion in Romans 5, and the word "Therefore" that introduces verse 12 is both logical and appropriate. The thought of conciliation in 5:10,11 reminds us of that period of peace and fellowship with Yahweh Elohim that Adam enjoyed in the garden. But more than that, the connecting word "therefore" tells us that Paul has been concerned all along with the fate of everyone and is now ready to show how the evangel he is presenting affects each and every descendent of Adam. The ground has been laid in Romans 1:18-5:11, and now we come to a conclusion. How does the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ affect us all? Is it anywhere near as all-encompassing as the effects of Adam's disobedience?

The theme of Romans is the evangel concerning Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:1-5). The theme is not simply the justification of the believer, or the conciliation of the world, or our distinctive calling in com-

parison with God's work with Israel. These subjects are certainly discussed, but they are all related to the central theme developed around the death and resurrection of Christ.

Because the letter is addressed to and written for believers, there is a great deal more said about us and how the evangel relates to us. But Paul does not confine himself to this concern. We are part of the human race, although we have been called out for special favor. In speaking of our special allotment, Paul never loses sight of God's purpose for all mankind. This is because he is presenting the evangel *concerning* Christ. It is not *concerning* the ecclesia or *concerning* Israel, but it concerns the One Who came into the world to save sinners. It relates to His work, and God's achievements in this work, and it results in glory worthy of His name and work. *Therefore* what Paul reveals must eventually embrace all mankind, and even all creation.

So it is that Romans is addressed to those who are "called [to be] saints" (1:7), but Paul was also eager to tell "both Greeks and barbarians" and "both wise and foolish" (1:14) about God's good news. This evangel relates to all of humanity because all have participated in "irreverence and injustice" (1:18) and all experience the fate of being given over to this misery of the human condition (1:24,26,28). Romans 2:1 is addressed to mankind: "Wherefore, defenseless are you, O human!" Jews, Greeks, nations, Circumcision, Uncircumcision—these are groups out of the whole, being considered in 2:10-3:9, but the apostle makes it clear that the problem of unrighteousness is worldwide. "Not one is just—not even one" (3:10); ". . . for all have sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (3:23).

The traditional concept of an eternal dichotomy between believers in heaven and unbelievers in hell fails utterly to harmonize with the evangel concerning Jesus Christ. The problem of sin and death is race-wide, and Paul makes that perfectly plain in the early chapters of Romans. It is inconceivable that the apostle would emphasize this fact so frankly and then conclude that the evangel of Christ fails to meet this pressing need for deliverance. It is impossible that the evangel would be based on a universal need and present a Saviour for all but conclude with the majority (or even any) of mankind being assigned to everlasting torment.

As a matter of fact, Paul does present the evangel of Jesus Christ as fully meeting every need of the entire human race. The righteousness of God that is manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ is "for all" (3:22). It is "on all who are believing," but it is also "for all," and it must of necessity be "for all" since "all sinned."

With the exception of some remarks on the relationship of Christ's faith to Israel (in 3:25-30), Paul spends the rest of chapter 3 up to 5:11 in discussing the effects of Christ's faith on believers. But he has not forgotten humanity as a whole. We all have sinned, yet Christ was faithful to the death of the cross. Paul's insistence in Romans is that there is nothing but good news, and this is to the widest possible extent, in the death and entombment and resurrection of Christ. Those who believe are being justified gratuitously and receive the conciliation. But this is not the only conclusion stemming from the premise concerning Christ's faith and obedience. A further conclusion is begun in Romans 5:12. *Therefore* . . . it is through one just award that all mankind will receive life's justifying.

All that Paul has written in Romans from 1:1 to 5:11 *compels* the conclusion of 5:12-21. Far from being an insertion that more or less relates to the subject at hand (as some have claimed), this section of Romans is an essential development of the theme, the evangel of God concerning God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the One Who brings justification to all. Even as Adam has been the channel of woe for all mankind, so also Christ becomes the triumphant Channel of justification for all mankind. D.H.H.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The first new title is actually an old one that has been out of print for many years: the Concordant LEXICON AND CONCORDANCE (originally published in 1930). For ordinary reference use, our KEYWORD CONCORDANCE will prove to be more convenient and useful. However, when used in conjunction with the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT and its uniform English sublinear, where technical and grammatical information is desired, our LEXICON AND CONCORDANCE can be very helpful. Since entries appear according to English STANDARDS and their ELEMENTS, cross referencing is frequently required. Though the work is in need of a great deal of revision (for omissions, misclassifications and typographical errors), it is still of great value. We only have a small stock on hand of this volume which was recently reprinted by our brethren in Holland (378 pages, hardback; $15.00).

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES for the years 1910-1912 (volumes 2 and 3 combined) is due to be shipped to us from the printer around February 1. This combined work is quite large (over 600 pages) and is filled with valuable articles on things of consequence. The writings are primarily by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff (paperback; $9.00).

CHRIST TRIUMPHANT (or The Larger Hope Asserted) by Thomas Allin, is also due to be shipped to us around February 1. The book was first published in London in the 1880's. Through the gracious deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, by His saving work at Calvary, death will finally be abolished, and *all* will be made alive, that God may be All in all (267 pages, paperback; $5.00).

THE UNTRACEABLE RICHES OF CHRIST

(Ephesians 3:8-13)

To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations . . . (Eph.3:8).

The expression "less than the least of all saints" should not be taken as polite modesty on Paul's part, but as a summary of his true feelings. It can be compared with his other statement in 1 Corinthians 15:9,10, "For I am the least of the apostles, who am not competent to be called an apostle, because I persecute the ecclesia of God. Yet in the grace of God I am what I am." And again it may be compared with his other claim, to be the "foremost of sinners," in 1 Timothy 1:15,16. This latter is also set against the background of Paul's earlier life, when, as Saul of Tarsus, he had "inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it." Let us read from verse 12 of 1 Timothy, chapter 1. There Paul declares, "Grateful am I to Him Who invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our Lord, for He deems me faithful, assigning me a service, I, who formerly was a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager: but I was shown mercy, seeing that I do it being ignorant, in unbelief. Yet the grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome, that 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."

As Saul of Tarsus, Paul had been the greatest enemy of Christ, persecuting His followers beyond measure. It was on one of these persecuting missions that he had been suddenly arrested on the way to Damascus. Worthy of God's indignation, he received nothing but grace instead. As the subsequent dispenser of the evangel of God's grace, he became as dust before his Maker. All must henceforth be of God; nothing of himself. The "foremost of sinners" becomes "less than the least of all saints." Such was Paul's appraisal of himself, shown again in the Philippian letter, where he expresses his determination to regard all as forfeit that he might gain Christ, and be found in Him (Phil. 3:8,9).

Paul was commissioned to bring the evangel of the *untraceable riches* of Christ to the nations. These riches concern Christ's celestial glories. They are not to be found elsewhere in God's Word. They are indeed "untraceable" outside of the Pauline letters. Others reveal Christ's earthly glories as Israel's Messiah and King: Paul alone reveals His celestial eminence. For example, note the three special descriptions of Christ, embracing this wider conception, in Ephesians 1, Philippians 2 and Colossians 1. In each case, both heaven and earth are specifically mentioned (Eph. 1:10; Phil.2:10 and Col.1:16,20). In Ephesians, it is as "Head over all" that Christ is given to the ecclesia, which is His body; in Philippians, it is with "the name that is above every name" that He receives the homage of the universe; while in Colossians, we find "that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell."

. . . and to enlighten all as to what is the ad-

ministration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all . . . (Eph.3:9).

The secret of Christ is concerned with an administration. This is described in Ephesians 1, which we considered in earlier articles. Briefly, it involves the heading up of all in the Christ, both that in the heavens and that on the earth. The ecclesia is privileged to play a great part in this, for we are to be for the laud of God's glory. We are the complement of Christ, through which the All in all will be completed.

This was concealed from the eons in God. What a profound statement that is! *Concealed in God!* Not concealed in His Word, where by earnest searching it might have been discovered, but concealed in God Himself where it was impossible for anyone to probe. But we read 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.*" God's spirit is able to delve into the innermost recesses of His being, and disclose that which is dear to His heart, and which He has kept secret for so long.

"Concealed from the eons"—this implies that it was not merely concealed from humanity, but from the celestials as well, for man was not in existence in the first eon. God alone knew the secret of Christ, and He kept it entirely to Himself. As God was the Creator of all, He could control all, and could therefore choose His own time for its revelation. As we consider these matters, well might we exclaim, as Paul did in Romans 11:33-36, "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!"

. . . that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord, in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, through His faith (Eph. 3:10-12).

This is one of the most stupendous statements of scripture. The multifarious (many and varied) wisdom of God—the Divine discernment in all its manifold aspects and intricacies—is even now being made known to the very highest among the ranks of the celestials through the ecclesia. Let us be careful here! It is not being done *by* the ecclesia, but *through* the ecclesia. We can claim no credit for this. Nevertheless, it is surely reward enough for us merely to know that God is making use of us to reveal to this higher creation the greatness of His wisdom. It is knowledge which they could gain in no other way. They see a creation (humanity) inferior to themselves, and they see chosen out from this creation many whom neither they nor the world would consider worthy. Moreover, they see these being prepared for an exaltation to the very highest rank among the celestials, and equipped for a ministry which will be the means of effecting their own reconciliation to God. It will not be easy for them to accept this fact, but accept it they will, for they will come to realize that there is no other way. It is the way that God devised when He formulated His purpose, and not a solution imposed upon Him by any action of theirs. Ours will be a ministry of conciliation

in accord with the grace given to us in Christ Jesus before eonian times (2 Tim.1:9). All this is in accord with "the purpose of the eons," which God makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

"The purpose of the eons" is a wonderful phrase, and a key scripture. God's purpose is allied to the eons. It is bounded by them. It is contained within them, and does not overspill them at either end. Whatever is described as being "before the eons"—the promise of life (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim.1:1), the gift of grace to the ecclesia in Christ Jesus (2 Tim.1:9), and the wisdom of God (1 Cor.2:6-10)—all these are in conformity with decisions made by God before He put any part of His purpose into operation. They are the great pillars of truth around which God's purpose is built. The promise of life will eventually be fulfilled in all; the gift of grace to the ecclesia ensures that the dominant factor in God's operations will be His saving grace, while His wisdom in the secret, which was concealed so long, shows, now that it is revealed, that His plan was determined to the very last detail before any part of it was put into operation.

This is the only passage in scripture that relates God's purpose to the eons. In fact, there are surprisingly few references to God's purpose in His Word, and all of these are by one writer, Paul, and even he is very sparing in his mention of it. In his thirteen letters, there are only five occurrences of the noun "purpose" in relation to the Divine program. It is mentioned twice in Romans (8:28 and 9:11), twice in Ephesians (1:11 and 3:11) and once in 2 Timothy 1:9. In addition there are two usages of the verb form in Romans 3:25 and Ephesians 1:9. Because God's purpose is linked with the eons, it follows that it will be consummated at the completion of the eons. This

removes it from the idea conveyed in the King James Version that God has an eternal purpose. It is true that its effects may last for eternity, but God's purpose itself is not eternal but eonian, reaching its climax at the end of the eons when God will be All in all (1 Cor.15:28).

God's purpose is centered in and around the Son of His love, Christ Jesus, our Lord. When Paul introduced his evangel, it was "concerning God's Son" (Rom.1:3). Love for His Son (and, through Him, for all creation) is the motive behind all God's operations. Because of Christ's faith, and His obedience to God's will, even unto death on the cross, we have access to the Father with boldness and confidence. There is no barrier left to prevent this.

Wherefore I am requesting you not to be despondent at those of my afflictions for your sake which are your glory (Eph.3:13).

Paul concludes this part in parenthesis on a personal note. He does not want his readers to be despondent on account of whatever he may have suffered on their behalf. His Lord had suffered, and it had been intimated to Paul from the beginning that he, too, must suffer for God's name's sake. The pathway of grace is not one of fleshly ease and comfort. Paul's tribulations were for the benefit of the ecclesia. He develops the theme in Colossians, where he says, "I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and am filling up in my flesh, in His stead, the deficiencies of the afflictions of Christ, for His body, which is the ecclesia of which I became a dispenser . . ." (Col.1:24,25). There is such a thing as "the fellowship of His sufferings," and any one of us may be called upon to "be suffering together, that we should be glorified together also" (Rom.8:17).

John H. Essex

GOD MAKES OUR TRIALS

IT IS CERTAINLY CORRECT to say that God *makes* our trials, not merely permits them. For, "No trial has taken you except what is human" (1 Cor.10:13a). And, "A man [a "human"] cannot get anything if it should not be *given* him out of heaven" (John 3:27). "Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving you to be tried above what you are able, but, together with the trial, will be *making* the sequel *also,* to enable you to undergo it" (1 Cor.10:13b).

If a furniture maker were to say to us, "Together with the table, I will be making the chairs also," we would understand just what he meant. He would mean that he would be making both items of furniture, making them together, one as well as the other. Thus it is with God's making of our trials and their sequels, though He has no need to attempt the actual trying, or "probing" (*peirazō,* PROBize), and so has delegated that work to others who will ultimately benefit from the experience (e.g., Gen.50:20). Therefore, God brings us into trial (*cp* Matt.6:13; Luke 11:4), yet He Himself does not try us (James 1:13).

The standard PROBE accurately represents the central idea in the stem *-peir-,* from which we get *peirasmos,* PROBing, trial, and *peirazō,* PROBize, try. Its most elementary sense is shown in the passages that

speak of attempting to do something. Thus, Saul *tried* to join the disciples in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26); Paul and Timothy *tried* to go into Bythynia (Acts 16:7); Paul was charged with *trying* to profane the sanctuary (Acts 24:6). The essence of the term, then, points us to the idea of *attempting* to do something. And, in the nature of the case, the purpose of such an endeavor also involves the thought of probing. In some passages it is the essence of *-pier-* (to attempt) which is in view. In others, we are directed toward its purpose (to discover) and the means which it employs toward this end (probing, into the unknown).

Though God may often "leave us to our own devices" (which are themselves ultimately the work of His hand), He will not be leaving us in such a way or to such a degree that we are tried above what we are able. He promises us power to endure our trials, not exemption from their consequences or a way to escape their grasp. He enables us to endure by giving us faith to believe that one day we will "step out" of all our trials, and will then enjoy their "sequel" (*ekbasis*, OUTSTEPPING). Therefore, "we may be glorying . . . in afflictions, having perceived that affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation" (Rom.5:3,4). Indeed, "Happy is the man who is enduring trial" (*cp* James 1:12a). And, "Lo! we are counting those happy who endure," for we have heard of the endurance of Job, and have perceived the consummation of the Lord, "for very compassionate and pitiful is the Lord" (*cf* James 5:11).

James speaks ideally when he says, "Let no one, undergoing trial, be saying that 'From God am I undergoing trial' . . ." (James 1:13a). He by no means, however, declares that the reason no one should be saying "From God am I undergoing trial" is because

(as most believe) He has neither made our trials nor given them to us. To the contrary, since God *has* made our trials and given us *all* that we have, it cannot be that James is hereby denying God's deity with regard to our trials. To the contrary, he explicitly tells us why he says what he says. We are not to be saying " 'From God am I undergoing trial,' *for* God is not tried by evils, yet* He is trying no one" (James 1:13).

Unlike ourselves, God is never tried by evils, in the associated sense of experiencing *perplexity* or *distress* due to suffering. In the face of evil, God is neither perplexed nor distressed, for He knows just what it will do, and that it will accomplish His purpose. Likewise, evils cannot probe into the untraceable ways of the Deity in order to put Him on trial or discover something about Him. They have no such ability, and have been given no such ministry. Our trials may consist of much that is evil, but in themselves they can teach us nothing. God, however, can teach us much through the experiences of evil which He wisely gives us (Ecc.1:13).

We are not to be putting God on trial (1 Cor.10:9), attempting to make Him prove Himself; we are to be believing His Word and trusting His promises. However, while confidently relying on Him, we are to be *testing* God (examining and testing out His ways) that we might have Him in recognition and discover

---

*"Yet" represents the particle *de*, "an adversative connective, yet, sometimes very slightly so; [it is] used as a resumptive, now" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.337, entry "yet"). *De* is sometimes idiomatically rendered "or" (e.g., James 4:13). Here, in James 1:13b, the sense is: The reason no one is to be saying, It is from *the Placer* that I am being *probed*, is because (first of all) God is not tried by evils; yet (another reason why no one should be speaking thus is because) He is trying no one.

the goodness of His ways (*cp* Rom.1:28; 12:2). But we must never be so foolish as to put Him on trial, to contend with our Maker out of our own unbelief (e.g., Ex.17:1-7).

It is true that we are not being *tried* by God, as if He were *trying* to discover something about us (for He already knows all; 1 John 3:20). Consequently, *in this sense and for these reasons,* when being tried, we should not be saying that "From God am I undergoing trial" (literally, we should not say, "From *God* [the *Placer*] I am being *tried,*" CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT sublinear, James 1:13). This is quite true. For the Placer does not "try" (attempt and probe), He *subjects.*

"Let us take the case of Job as a concrete example. Here we have both God and Satan. God undoubtedly *brought* Job into trial, but He did not try him. He left that to Satan. God knew Job and did not need to probe him to find out what was in him. Satan did not know Job and needed to be shown. And so it is in all other cases. Trial, probing, experiment is a thing God does not need for Himself, since He knows all. But His creatures need it, for they are here to learn, as Job, not only what is in themselves, but also what is in God (*cp* Job 1:6-12,21,22; 42:12-16).

"The meaning of *try* or PROBE involves ignorance. The outcome is questionable. Whenever the men of His day tried our Lord they manifested their own blindness as well as their lack of confidence in Him. Yet in the contrary instance, when Philip was tried by our Lord (John 6:6), it is immediately explained that He was aware what He was about to do. His words tried Philip. He practically brought him into trial. Once we see this essential element in the word "trial," which we have tried to express by the standard PROBE,

it becomes evident that God cannot *try* anyone, except in a figurative sense (e.g., Gen.22:1). The teacher in a classroom may "experiment" before the pupils, but that is a vastly different matter from the experiments of an inventor or investigator. God brings trials to demonstrate. This should be abundantly clear from the fact that with each trial He makes a sequel as well. He is like a novelist who determines first of all what the end of the tale is to be, and then brings on all the dangers and difficulties which will lead up to the sequel, but hold this back for the second volume."*

IF THE LORD SHOULD BE WILLING, WE SHALL BE DOING

Indeed, James' words in reply to those who boast in "the free will of man" concerning one's plans and achievements are among the most condemnatory in all Scripture against that position: "Come now, you who are saying, 'Today or tomorrow *we will* be going into this or that city and should be spending a year there, and *we will* be trafficking and getting gain'—who are not versed in that which is the morrow's, for what is your life? For a vapor are you, which is appearing briefly and thereupon disappearing—instead of your saying, '*If the Lord should ever be willing,* and we shall be living, we *also* will be doing this or that.' Yet now you are vaunting in your ostentations. *All* such boasting is wicked. Then to one perceiving how to be doing the ideal and not doing it, to him it is sin" (James 4:13-17).

This scriptural teaching, through James, is obviously transadministrational in nature. Indeed Paul presents himself as our model in this matter as well: e.g., "I shall come back again to you, God willing"

**Unsearchable Riches,* vol.31, pp.304-307; A. E. Knoch.

(Acts 18:21). Similarly, "I shall be coming to you swiftly, if ever the Lord should be willing" (1 Cor. 4:19). Upon hearing the prophecy that at Jerusalem the Jews would put the apostle in bonds and give him over to the Romans, the brethren declared, "Let the will of the Lord be done!" (Acts 21:14). They realized that this was the will and work of the Lord, for, "Would there come to be evil in a city, and Yahweh not have done it?" (Amos 3:6b).

It is not that we may never use the future tense concerning ourselves under any circumstances, but that we are not to do so when speaking predictively where God has not promised. When it is evident we are simply speaking *ideally*, as an example of a commended course, the future tense may freely be used by itself. For example, Paul said, concerning all who were announcing Christ, "I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing" (Phil.1:18). He is not boasting of the morrow, but setting us an example.

Yet if indeed when saying "I will" (or, "I'm going to") we actually mean no more than "I intend to do so," or, "my plans are," then why not say as much—at least when speaking of matters of some importance? Undoubtedly, not unlike the matter of saying "eonian life" instead of "eternal life," here too we wish to be accepted by others, and so convince ourselves that these matters are not very important after all. Yet Paul has said, "Have a pattern of *sound* words, which you hear from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.1:13). Though even among ourselves, perhaps we need not always express the words, "the Lord willing," nonetheless, we should be very far from neglecting them altogether. But let us not be overrighteous in this matter, or intent upon reforming our friends. We have enough to do to deal with our own

weaknesses, and in many areas. Let us be sensible and practical, but not unfaithful under guise of these.

Yet let us remember, "It is the glory of the Elohim to conceal a matter" (Prov.25:2). Most are well satisfied as to their own rectitude in paying little heed indeed to these teachings. Their consciences do not bother them. They are quite ensconced in their habitual ways of thinking and speaking. So let us remember that it is God's grace that brings adjustment, not our impatience.

It is extremely helpful to realize that our trials, with all their human failings (or "sin") do not happen by free will. Instead, they occur according to the wise counsels of our God and Father. This realization becomes a powerful influence upon us, giving us an ability to undergo many an unhappy matter that we would otherwise never have. Like Job, we can take these things from the hand of our *God*, our Subjector. For we know, though they find no place whatever in His *heart* of love (*cf* Jer.32:35; *cp* 44:21), His wisdom dictates their ephemeral presence, and His *hand* brings them to pass, according to His counsels (e.g., *cf* Acts 4:28; *cp* Isa.53:10). This is so that we might one day have the blessing of deliverance from all evil, and glorify and thank Him accordingly.

We rejoice in the assurance that God is faithful. Together with the trial He will be making the sequel also, to enable us to undergo it. Consequently, in the midst of trial, in everything we are giving thanks (1 Thess.5:18). May we be giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, to our God and Father (Eph.5:20).

James Coram

(To be continued)

Psalm 116

116 I love Him ᵗbecause Yahweh has ˡheard
`My voice, my supplications;
2 For He has stretched out His ear to me,
And I shall call to Him ᵗthroughout all my days.
3 The cables of death have enveloped me,
And the constrictions of the unseen,
they have converged upon me;
I ˡfound distress and affliction.
4 +Then I ˡcalled ᵗon the name of Yahweh,
Oh Yahweh, do make an escape for my soul.
5 Gracious is Yahweh and righteous,
And our Elohim is compassionateˡ;
6 The One keeping the simple is Yahweh;
I was impoverished, and He ˡsaved > me.
7 Return to your rest, my soul,
For Yahweh, He has dealt well ᵒⁿwith you.
8 ᵗIndeed, You have extricated my soul from death,
`My eye from tears,
`My feet from foundering.
9 I shall walk before Yahweh
In the land of the living.
10 I believe; ᵗwherefore I am speaking:
I´ am very much humbled;
11 I´ said in my nervous haste-,
Every ˙human is a liarˡ.
12 What can I ˡrestore to Yahweh
For all His bountiful dealings ᵒⁿtoward me?
13 I shall take up the cup of salvation
And proclaim ᵗ the name of Yahweh.

14 I shall pay my vows to Yahweh
Straight in front >of all His people.
15 Precious in the eyes of Yahweh
Is the death >of His benign ones.
16 Oh Yahweh, seeing that I am Your servant,
I am Your servant, son of Your maidservant,
You have opened >up my bonds;
17 I shall sacrifice to You a sacrifice of acclamation
And proclaim ' the name of Yahweh.
18 I shall pay my vows to Yahweh
Straight in front >of all His people,
19 In the courts of Yahweh's house,
In your midst, Jerusalem.
Praise ye Yah.

WHEREFORE I AM SPEAKING

Paul uses the words of Psalm 116:10a in 2 Corinthians 4:13. In both cases it was faith in God's saving grace that led to speaking, the psalmist singing of Yahweh's past rescue, and the apostle testifying to our future rousing by the Lord Jesus. Yet the joy and peace spoken of in this psalm would be impossible apart from the experience of distress and affliction. Now his soul may "return to rest" (verse 7). Similarly, Paul writes that the "momentary lightness of our afflictions is *producing* for us a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).

The word "precious" in Psalm 116:15 should probably be taken in the sense of "costly." Death is an enemy which brings great sorrow to God, but He will destroy it completely one day through the saving and rescuing power He has placed in His Son (1 Cor. 15:26).

YAHWEH'S CALL FOR OBEDIENCE

AFTER THE DEATH OF THE DISOBEDIENT GENERATION, Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying: "Today [on the Moab wilderness road] you are passing along the boundary of Moab, that is, Ar; then you will come near to the [southern and western] forefront of the sons of Ammon. Do not distress them and do not stir yourself up against them, for I shall not give any of the country of the sons of Ammon to you as a tenancy, since I gave it to the sons of Lot as a tenancy" (Deut.2:18,19).

In Transjordan Moses continued his first address to the younger generation of the sons of Israel. He quoted the words of Yahweh on their way to the north along the eastern border of Moab that was also called Ar (after the name of its capital). The Moabite territory was adjoining the Salt Sea between the Zered in the south and the Arnon in the north. The Moabite and the Ammonite were the descendants of Lot's sons born of incest, Moab and Ammon (Gen.19:37,38). Yahweh had given their countries "to the sons of Lot as a tenancy" (Deut.2:9,19), just as He had given the hill-country of Seir for "a tenancy to Esau" (2:5). So Yahweh warned the Israelites not to molest any of the three countries.

The following verses (Deut.2:20-23) are apparently the equivalent of another footnote, added by a later editor who wanted to emphasize that the sons of Esau

and the sons of Lot had received their tenancies from Yahweh and could not be evicted by Israel. The situation of the Philistines was different. They are called here by their earlier name, Caphtorim, since they had come from Caphtor* (Crete). They had invaded southwestern Palestine, exterminating the ancient village dwellers, the Avvim, as far as Gaza. In the eyes of Yahweh, the Philistines were not regarded as tenants of the area they had occupied; hence they were themselves liable to dispossession by Israel.

STRUGGLE WITH HIM IN BATTLE

"Arise, journey, and cross over the watercourse of Arnon. See! I will give into your hand Sihon king of Heshbon, the Amorite, and his country. Start out to tenant it, and struggle with him in battle. This day I shall start to put the awe of you and the fear of you on the face of all peoples beneath the entire heavens; whenever they should hear a report of you, they will be disturbed and in travail before your face" (Deut.2:24,25).

Moses quoted Yahweh's command to cross over the Arnon and to attack Sihon the Amorite, whose kingdom was north of this watercourse. We should keep in mind that Moab's northern boundary at the Arnon adjoined the country of king Sihon, not that of the Ammonite, for the latter dwelled in the area eastwards of Sihon's kingdom. So after the Israelites had crossed over the Arnon and had entered Sihon's territory on their march to the north, they did not have to distress the Ammonite, farther to the east.

Israel's first victory over an organized state was so

*Jeremiah 47:4 may be translated: The remnant of the island of Caphtor.

complete because "Yahweh our Elohim delivered him [Sihon] up before us, and we smote him," as Moses put it. "From Aroer which is on the ridge of the watercourse of Arnon . . . even as far as Gilead [to the north of Sihon's territory] . . . Yahweh our Elohim gave the whole into our hands. But to the country of the sons of Ammon . . . you did not come near, thus *doing all* of that which Yahweh our Elohim had given *instructions*" (Deut.2:33,36,37).

The younger generation of the Israelites had closely followed the divine instructions. They left the Ammonite unmolested as they had been told. For their complete obedience they were granted a complete victory. Now they occupied the whole area between the Arnon in the south and the Jabbok in the north, between the Jordan in the west and the boundary toward the Ammonite in the east.

Noah's curse (Gen.9:25) found its fulfillment on the descendants of Canaan. Among them were the Amorite (Gen.10:16) who once formed a large empire to the west of Babylon, including all of Syria and Palestine. The Babylonian king and lawgiver Hammurabi stemmed from this Amorite dynasty. Yet their wide realm was shrinking until, in Moses' day, only Transjordan remained under Amorite control, with king Sihon in Heshbon, and king Og of Bashan. In accordance with the curse of Canaan, and because of the Amorite depravity (Gen.15:15; Deut.20:17,18), the kingdoms of Sihon and Og were to be dispossessed by Israel.

Concerning Og, Yahweh had said to Moses: "Do not fear him, for into your hand I will give him, all his people and his country, and you will do to him just as you did to Sihon king of the Amorite who was dwelling in Heshbon" (Deut.3:2).

While the Israelite base camp remained in the plains of Moab, northeast of the Salt Sea, the military hosts marched up to the north where Og king of Bashan came forth to meet them for battle at Edrei (Deut.3:1), about 30 miles east of lake Gennesaret. Moses summarized the outcome of the battle with these words: "So Yahweh our Elohim also gave into our hand Og king of Bashan and all his people, and we smote him until no survivor at all was left remaining to him . . . At that time we took the area from the hand of the two kings of the Amorite who were in Transjordan, from the watercourse of Arnon as far as Mount Hermon . . . all the cities of the tableland and all Gilead and all Bashan" (Deut.3:3,8,10).

Verse 11 was apparently inserted into the original text of Moses' address by a later editor. Obviously king Og had been a man of superior stature, the last one of the Rephaim mentioned in Deuteronomy 2:20. We may presume, even though without any full knowledge of the facts, that after the defeat and death of Og at Edrei, some of his men fled into the territory of the Ammonite and took with them the corpse of their king to Rabbah,* the capital city of the Ammonite, where a giant sarcophagus of black basalt was at hand. It was designedly made larger than Og, so as to give the impression that he was taller than he really was. The dimensions of his "burial divan" were 13 to 14 feet by six feet (Deut.3:11).

TENANCIES ALLOCATED IN TRANSJORDAN

Toward the end of his first address Moses made short mention of having allocated the Transjordan area as tenancies for the sons of Reuben, the sons of

*modern Amman in Jordan

Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh (i.e., the descendants of Manasseh's sons Machir and Jair). For a more thorough report on the matter (in Deut.3:12-17), we should read all of chapter 33 in Numbers.

Then Moses reminded his audience of the final instructions that he gave to the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh: "Yahweh your Elohim, He has given to you this land to tenant it. You shall cross over [the Jordan] outfitted for war before your brothers, the sons of Israel, all you sons of valor. But your wives and your little ones and your cattle (I know that you have much cattle), they may dwell in your [Transjordan] cities which I gave to you until Yahweh shall give rest to your brothers, as He gave to you, and *they* too will tenant the land that Yahweh your Elohim is giving to them across the Jordan. Then you may return [to Transjordan], each to his tenancy, which I gave to you" (Deut.3:18-20).

YOU SHALL NOT FEAR

At this juncture Moses referred to a more recent event, when Yahweh had said to him: "Take to you Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom there is spirit, and support your hands on him; have him stand before Eleazar the priest and before the whole congregation and commission* him before their eyes" (Num. 27:18,19). Moses did just as Yahweh had instructed him, and commissioned Joshua as his successor (Num. 27:23).

In his address to the younger generation of Israel, who had been told *not to fear* their enemies, Moses now reported his personal advice to Joshua (that is not mentioned in Numbers 27:23): "I commissioned

---

*or: instruct, the same word in Hebrew.

Joshua at that time, saying: Your eyes were the ones seeing all that Yahweh your Elohim has done to these two kings. Thus shall Yahweh do to all the kingdoms where you are passing. *You shall not fear* them, for Yahweh your Elohim, He is the One fighting for you" (Deut.3:21:22).

LET IT BE ENOUGH FOR YOU

Earlier in his address (Deut.1:37) Moses had reported, that "Yahweh showed Himself angered with me *owing to you* [or: on account of you], saying: Not even *you* shall enter there." If this verse is taken by itself, it would seem to refer to a more recent tragedy after Miriam's death in the fortieth year (Num.20:1-13) *during the second coming* of Israel to the borders of the promised land, and with the new genration. The *fault* was that of Moses because he had offended Yahweh in the midst of the sons of Israel at the waters of Meribah at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin (Deut.32:51; Num.20:12). Yet the *occasion* for Moses' fault was the *words* of the congregation: "O that we had expired when our brothers expired before Yahweh" (Num.20:3; Deut.4:21). So it seems that the spokesmen at this occasion were the remnant of the older generation who would soon come to end (prior to the crossing of the Zered, Deut.2:14).

In a secondary sense, the verse (Deut.1:37) may be understood in the context of Moses' address when he dealt with the rebellion of the older generation *during the first coming* of Israel to the borders of the promised land (Num.13:30-14:10). In verses 36 and 38 (of Deut. chap. 1) Moses mentioned the two men, Caleb and Joshua, who would not die with the evil generation. And in this context, in verse 37, Moses reported, that "Yahweh showed Himself angered with

me owing to you [the evil generation], saying: Not even *you* shall enter there." So it would seem that Moses had to suffer with his own generation for the sin of rebellion. For twice he had identified himself with them when he had implored Yahweh not to extinguish them; he did not want to become the ancestor of "a greater and more substantial nation than they" (Ex. 32:10; Num.14:12).

Obviously Moses had acquiesced in the divine ruling that he would *not bring* the Israelite assembly into the promised land (Num.20:12), and that Joshua was to be the one who would lead the military hosts in the forthcoming occupation of Canaan. Yet after the second census (Num.26:2) Yahweh had declared that Moses would have to go up to the *mount of the Abarim range in order to see* the promised land; and then he would be gathered to his ancestors (Num.27:12,13).

Now toward the end of his first address to the younger generation, Moses recalled how he approached Yahweh in prayer in a personal matter "at that time," obviously just before Joshua's commission as his successor. Moses *supplicated* to Yahweh at that time with these words: "*My Lord Yahweh,* You Yourself have started to show Your servant Your greatness and Your steadfast hand and Your outstretched arm. For what el is in the heavens or on the earth who could do according to Your deeds and according to Your mastery? *Let me cross over, I pray so I may see* the good land that is across the Jordan, this good hill-country and the Lebanon" (Deut.3:24,25).

We find the imperative form "be gracious to me" very often in the Psalms, such as in 30:10. For an intensification of the same verb the Hebrew has a special grammatical form that we render with *suppli-*

cate, such as in Psalm 30:8, and here in Deuteronomy 3:23. Moses began his humble and earnest request with the words "my Lord Yahweh," that we find elsewhere in prayers (Gen.15:2,8; Deut.9:26; Josh. 7:7). Moses was conscious of his own position as servant, and of Yahweh's greatness and mastery. So he wanted to witness the fulfillment of the divine promise given at the beginning of his career: "Bring forth My people . . . I shall come to be with you" (Ex.3:10,12). Even though he knew that he was about to see the promised land at a distance, he *supplicated* for a closer view of the good hill-country and the Lebanon. He prayed, "Let me cross over."

Then Moses reported the divine response to his supplication: "Yet Yahweh was enraged with me *on account of you* and did not hearken to me. Yahweh said to me: *Let it be enough for you!* Do not continue to speak further on this matter. Ascend to the summit of the Pisgah ridge, and lift up your eyes westward and northward and southward and eastward and see with your eyes, for you shall not cross over the Jordan. Yet commission Joshua and encourage him and make him resolute, for *he* shall cross over before this people, and *he* shall allot to them the land that you shall see. So we dwelt in the ravine opposite Beth-peor" (Deut.3:26-29).

The words "on account of you" in verse 26 remind us of the similar phrase "owing to you" in Deuteronomy 1:37; obviously they have the same meaning here. Moses was denied actual entry into the promised land for the same reasons. We should not find fault with Moses' persistence in prayer. It is an indication of the intimacy of the relationship with his Lord Yahweh Who had said: "With him I speak mouth to mouth" (Num.12:8), i.e., "face to face, just as a man speaks to

his associate" (Ex.33:11). Moses felt that his Lord Yahweh was *enraged* with him, just as Paul felt that the Lord *protested* (declared, spoke forcefully) to him, when he had entreated Him thrice for the removal of the splinter of the flesh (2 Cor.12:9).

Yahweh's answer to Moses was: "Let it be enough for you," let what I have told you before, be sufficient for you. "You shall not cross over this Jordan. Yet commission Joshua . . . and he shall allot to them the land that you shall see." For forty years Moses had visualized the promised land with the eyes of his heart. The vision of the land had become to him like "a representation of Yahweh" (*cf* Num.12:8), for his Lord had granted this vision to him. He longed to set foot in the visioned land even though he knew that his Lord Yahweh had decided otherwise: The privilege of looking at the land from the summit of the Pisgah range must be sufficient for him.

Our Lord's answer to Paul was: "Sufficient for you is My grace, for My power in infirmity is being perfected." Glorying in his infirmities, with the power of Christ tabernacling over him, Paul could pray, that we may be made staunch with this power and that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith, i.e., that we may be thinking His thoughts and be governed by His motives, and that our hearts may be widened by His understanding. H.H.R.

(To be continued)

1987 ORDER BLANK CORRECTION

In the process of preparing the typesetting for our book listings, we inadvertently omitted the title CHECK YOUR PANOPLY (The Whole Armor of God), by Herman Rocke. So we take this opportunity to mention that we have a large stock on hand, nevertheless, and commend this book to all (240 pages, paperback; $5.00).

RENDER TO ALL THEIR DUES

(Romans 13:6,7)

THE EVANGEL OF GOD concerning His Son, Jesus Christ (Rom.1:1,3,5) reveals God's righteousness (Rom.1:17) in a world filled with irreverence and unrighteousness (Rom.1:18). It announces peace and conciliation (Rom.5:1,10) in an era of enmity and darkness (Rom.5:6; 13:11,12). It boldly proclaims the love of God (Rom.5:8; 8:35-39) where God Himself has subjected creation to vanity and mankind to stubbornness (Rom.8:20,22; 11:32).

This apparent contradiction is surely one major reason for the rejection of Paul's message by those who hear it, and in fact for much of the general confusion among believers concerning the significance of Christ's death and resurrection. It seems unbelievable that the conditions all around us should tend only to belie God's proclamation of grace and peace in His Word.

Nevertheless, this message is true. We believe (and cannot thank God enough for granting us this faith) that in the gift of His Son, God justifies and conciliates and loves us all. Like Abraham, we accept it "of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were" (Rom.4:17).

Our problem now, though, comes in seeing and being guided by the evangel in our daily lives despite

the contrary forces in the world both surrounding us and existing in us. We have said yes to a message that is opposed by empirical evidence, and now we are to live in accord with that message even though it goes against our human disposition.

Romans 12 and 13 focus attention on this matter. Our faith leads us to endure affliction (12:12), be led to the humble way (12:16), be at peace with all mankind (12:18) and accept superior authority as truly established by God (13:1). This position of leniency, calm patience and trust in the midst of wickedness and deceit seems especially marked out in Romans 13:6,7, as follows:

For therefore, you are settling taxes, for they are God's ministers, perpetuated for this self-same thing. Render to all their dues, to whom tax, tax, to whom tribute, tribute, to whom fear, fear, to whom honor, honor.

This is a continuation of Paul's advice in verses 1-5 concerning our attitude toward civil authority. Entirely apart from an analysis of the rights or wrongs of our rulers' acts, we are to do what is right, and what is right for us is subjection. We are to accept this authority as from God (as it truly is) and honor it. Taxes imposed on us may be unfair, and honoring those who mistreat us or others may be distressful, but we are to "render to all their dues."

Why is this? First of all, it is the way the saving grace of God trains us to act (Titus 2:11,12). And secondly, "our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil.3:20). We are "aware of the era, that it is already the hour for us to be roused out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believe" (Rom.13:11). Terrestrial concerns are felt and current

responsibilities are met, but all of these are secondary to the superior reality of our faith and expectation.

It is interesting that Paul does not speak in Romans 13:6 in the imperative (as he does in verse 7). He does not say, "Settle your taxes," but rather he says, "you are settling taxes." The evangel was already working with power in the lives of the Roman believers. Far from making them oblivious to their civic duties in the current era, their faith led them to carry out these duties with diligence. Furthermore, there is no evidence in Paul's language that they were disheartened and distracted by the corruption and evil that infected the government and society of their city, the very center of the empire. Their awareness that God is operating all together for good (Rom.8:28) must have been keen. Their eyes were opened to a reality that the unbeliever cannot accept: Civil authorities are placed where they are by God; they are "God's ministers," and He Himself places, preserves and perpetuates their institution.

The key to all this is that when we settle our civic responsibilities we are freeing ourselves for attention to the "things of consequence" (Rom.2:18; Phil.1:10). Such a pattern of "good citizenship" in our society is a prelude to any reclaiming of the era (Eph.5:16; Col.4:5) that we may do. Before we can effectively manifest the disposition of Christ and reflect the light of the evangel "toward those outside," we will carry out our responsibilities to the society in which we live.

In speaking of *taxes, dues* and *tribute,* Paul covers all possibilities of direct and indirect taxation. But in speaking of *fear* and *honor,* he goes beyond mere financial obligation to the matter of inner attitude. We are to be subject in both outer and inner ways.

The modern mind, however, is very much aware of

the history of tyranny and oppression in man's rule over others. Ironically, this seems to have been especially cruel when rulers have directly claimed scriptural support for their position and policy. Distrust of authority and even rebellion against every sign of misgovernment is an understandable development of our times.

PRIORITY OF FAITH

Indeed it does rankle to give our "hard earned money" to wasteful, inefficient and often fraudulent government. And to honor persecuting and (as it sometimes happens) murderous authority is almost impossible. Then what shall we say? Simply that Paul's concern here is that we give priority in our lives to faith. The world is here, and it is filled with wickedness, but God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, and this is for good. We will meet our obligations to authorities as well and as honestly as we can, praying to God for them and petitioning on their behalf. To agonize over every possibility of tyranny and misrule and to become occupied in political affairs can only take our attention away from the message of grace and peace that is so vital to us all.

The advice of Romans 13:1-7 is a means to an end; it does not stand by itself. It is a general guideline to help us realize that good citizenship in our temporal realms relates to our spiritual growth and walk. We need to be occupied with devoutness, solicitude for others, the sharing of the word of conciliation and the untraceable riches of Christ. With our temporal obligations settled we can so much more freely and effectively carry on our "logical divine service" to the praise of our God and Father.

D.H.H.

(To be continued)

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 1987
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME SEVENTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

THE ASTOUNDING REVELATION that "the consummations of the eons have attained" to us (1 Cor.10:11) can be helpfully associated with Ephesians 1:13,14, where we learn that "the holy spirit of promise" is "an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment." Right now, in the midst of the darkness and struggle of this wicked eon, we, as believers, may be appropriating and enjoying much of those conditions existing as the future eons reach their goals. It is not so much that we have been taken in spirit into those times, but, as Paul expresses it, that God has brought an earnest of the benefits accruing then to us now.

One of the "consummations" achieved in the future is described in Philippians 2:9-11, when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord. And this will reach to that highest of all consummations, "the glory of God the *Father.*" How this universal appreciation of God's Fatherhood has entered into our spirits today, in some measure at least, is discussed in two articles in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* entitled "Praying to the Father," and "The Prayer Resumed." When we pray, "Abba, Father," and recognize God as our Father, we are enjoying an earnest of that which is to come in fullness for all.

The phrase from Acts 28:15, which Brother Rocke takes as the title of his study, "Paul, Thanking God,

Took Courage," is a striking example in miniature of the way God's future enters into our present. Thanking God and the courage that accompanies this experience are both blessings of the finishing times of the eons. Then also love, which was the complement even of the law and has ever been the essence of God's operations and revelations, will infuse every heart. This consummation, too, is given to the believer in the present era as a pledge of what which has been procured (see the article, "The Dues of Love").

For Israel as well, there was an anticipation of that glorious goal of exultation in praises to God, as expressed in the Psalms. The two included in this issue (117 and 118) are especially rich in these prior-expressions of praise.

Contemplation of God's future and completing achievements is not merely a matter of intellectual exercise as an end in itself. The brief selection from Vladimir Gelesnoff's study "The Triumph of Love" (p.96) points out the sad sequel resulting from a failure to grasp the scriptural revelation concerning God's purpose. In his present installment for the series, "His Achievement Are We," Brother Coram shows how these considerations lead to our continued trust and reliance on God. And in his initial article for our magazine, Brother Phil Scranton speaks of the values of the renewed mind, while Brother Rocke reminds us of the essential need of "Wisdom and Spiritual Understanding."

All of these are blessings being granted to us ahead of time. Let us thank God daily for His gracious provisions during these times of tension and strain. Thus we may be enjoying the earnest of the spirit as well as the expectation of its full realization.

D.H.H.

PRAYING TO THE FATHER

ALL is *out* of God and *through* Christ, hence prayer is *to* God, the Father, *through* our Lord, Jesus Christ. If Christ Himself were the Deity, and we directed our prayers to Him, we would lack a channel, a means of approach to God. That is why some turn to Mary, His mother, and put their prayers through her to her Son, and call her "the mother of God." But she has no fitness for such a function. Christ is the antitype of the Hebrew ritual. He is the Way to God because He is the true Tabernacle, in Whom God dwelt, and He is the one Sacrifice of whom all the others were but shadows. Even as the Israelite could draw near to God only through the ritual and the offerings, so we cannot approach except in the name of our Saviour and Lord, Christ Jesus.

In prayer to God, moreover, it is well always to remember that He is related to us in various characters, and we should use the name or title which is appropriate to our petition. Literally He is the *Subjector,* Who is operating everything, and *Yahweh,* Who is arranging all in the eonian times. He is the *Deity.* Figuratively, in contrast to His creatures, He is the *Supreme,* far above them all, and the *Almighty* or *All-Sufficient,* because He depends upon none, yet all depend upon Him. Figuratively, He is also likened to humanity in the title *Lord,* because all men are merely slaves. But, best of all, He is the *Father* of the faithful

now, and will become the Father of all at the consummation, for He it is Who loves us as an earthly father his own offspring, and Who provides for all our needs during the time of our infancy and childhood and minority, as an earthly parent for his progeny.

GOD AS FATHER

Before His Son was manifested, God as Father was almost unknown. Isaiah puts into the mouths of the people a prayer in which they appeal to Yahweh by this figure, and combine with it His character as Potter and Maker (Isa.64:8):

> And now, Yahweh, Thou art our Father.
> We are the clay, Thou art our Former,
> And the doing of Thy hand are we all.

But this was not so much a personal relationship as a national one, for it did not take in all mankind, yet included those against whom He was wroth, for their depravity.

In the Psalms, where we would expect this endearing term, it seems to be entirely absent, except by way of contrast (Psa.27:10):

> For my father and mother, they have
> forsaken me,
> Yet Yahweh shall gather me in.

In Malachi the figure of father is used, but rather to show that Israel did *not* act accordingly. Yahweh expostulates with them, saying (Mal.1:6): "A son will glorify a father, and a servant his lord. Yet if a Father am I, where is My glory?" They *failed* to glorify Him for His care and provision, as they should. He was not acknowledged as a father.

Again the prophet charges them with conduct in-

compatible with God's fatherhood and creatorship, and asks, "Have we not all one Father? Did not one El create us?" (Mal.2:10). But of appealing to God as a loving and affectionate Father, Who provides for their needs, and cares for their welfare, there is not the slightest intimation.

In contrast to this the term father is used many times of the forefathers of the nation of Israel. To them Yahweh made great promises, and these were used in prayer to Him in order to bring down blessing. The patriarchs, the physical, literal progenitors of that people, stood between them and Him. This seems to have hindered a closer spiritual relationship, such as now exists, between God and His saints by faith.

In the "New Testament," after God's Son had appeared in flesh, the term Father is used of God twice as often as it is used of men. This is an eloquent commentary on the fact that God Himself has literally begotten a Son, and as a consequence, He is related to mankind by a new tie, which will eventually include the whole race at the consummation. The Son, as His Christ, or Anointed, will rule as King, but when the kingdom is handed over to God, He does not become King but Father (1 Cor.15:24). The final relationship of all will not be a kingdom, but a *family*. This is the perpetual name which will keep on gathering hearts into the circle of God's love until all are found within its embrace at the consummation. It is the full-flavored fruit of the eonian times, with all its evil and suffering, for mortals learn by sad experience only how helpless they are in themselves, and how to value and appreciate His loving care.

I have heard of some who refer to God as Father at all times and all occasions. Some have actually gone through their Bibles and changed God to Father

throughout. I have much sympathy for this, but deplore its lack of intelligent appreciation of other aspects of God's character, especially His deity. He is related to us by other ties as well, such as Creator and Saviour. And Father limits Him to us and our needs, while God connects Him to all His creatures, even those who do not know Him in this filial relationship. It is *God* Who loves the *world.* The Father is confined to the family. In our *service* we should acknowledge Him as our *Lord,* and our prayers in regard to His work should be prefaced by this title.

The spirit of sonship that we have received causes us instinctively to cry "Abba, Father!" (Rom.8:13; Gal.4:6). And this leads us to add to the title, God, the further fact that He is our Father, when appealing to Him in prayer. We not only have a much closer relationship to Him than the title "God" implies, but it expresses a tenderness and sympathy which men do not usually associate with the Deity. As God He is related to all His creatures, but as Father He is restricted to those of mankind who have received His spirit. To some extent we appreciate His provision, and thank Him for His blessings. We anticipate the grand goal of all, in spirit, long before all are made alive and reconciled to God at the consummation.

It is well, at times, to enlarge upon the name or title we use by adding the special attributes which are uppermost in our hearts at the time. Paul, in the midst of his trials, blesses Him as the *Father of pities,* and the *God* of all *consolation* (2 Cor.1:3). In view of the transcendent grace which has come to the nations, so that we have a much nearer and higher place than He gave to Israel, the favored nation, we may address Him as the glorious Father, or *Father of glory* (Eph.1:17).

GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

We have considered the direct approach to our God and Father, based on *our* relationship to Him. Yet, in our highest efforts to bless Him, we should be mindful of the One *through* Whom alone we can approach into His presence. He is not only *our* God and *our* Father, but *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* We may rest assured that it is no great honor that we confer upon Him when we acknowledge God as our Father. We are persuaded that, in ourselves, we are a disgrace to Him, and have no right to claim Him as either Father or God. But what a contrast when we think of our Saviour, Who brought infinite and endless glory to His name through His mediatorial work! He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. That means much to Him!

He is the *God* of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is not the great Unknown, Unloving Creator and Operator of all, but the God Who has revealed His heart through a Mediator, *through* Whom He will save and reconcile all to Himself. What can be more acceptable to Him than to be reminded of the fact that He is the God of the One Who, through His humiliation and shame, as well as His glorious reign, will restore sevenfold what seemed to have been utterly lost? On several occasions, Paul commences an epistle with this, the fullest and finest of all the titles of the Deity (2 Cor.1:3; Eph.1:3; Col.1:3). It has a richness and preciousness which appeals to all who would like to look beyond their own happiness and revel in the blessings which our Lord, Jesus Christ, has brought to our God and Father.

What vast values and high honors are expressed by the full name and title of our Saviour! Whenever we think of Him as *our* Lord, let us remember that, in

serving and obeying Him, we are also pleasing His God. And whenever we adore Him as Jesus, that is, Yahweh the Saviour, let us not forget that it was His Father Who sent Him, and His God Who forsook Him for our salvation. And whenever we exult in the glories of His anointing, may we discern that He was *God's* Christ first of all, His Messiah, as Prophet, to make known His mind to all His creatures, as King to rule, not only the earth, but to reign in the heavens as well, as Priest to bring back mankind to Him and reconcile the universe to God.

I am persuaded that it pleases our God when we in praise and prayer, remind Him, not only of *our* relationship to Him by grace, but of His glorious place as the God and Father of the One through Whom all our blessings come. This seems most fitting at the beginning of our prayers, when we preface them with praise, and bless His name, before we descend to petitions and requests which lie upon our hearts. And at the close, if we intelligently realize the vast value of His work, and the deep desire in the heart of God to honor Him, we will close our prayer and our petition by disavowing any right or worthiness of our own, but base all on the name of our *Lord, Jesus Christ.* Through Him, to God, be praise and glory for the eons!

A.E.K.

(To be continued)

PAUL'S EPISTLES, LARGE PRINT EDITION

Quite a few copies of this special large print edition have already been sold. We hope that many additional readers will be helped by this special printing as well. It is a page-for-page (144 pages) photographic enlargement of the typeset pages of our standard CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT, reproduced on looseleaf 8½ x 11 inch sheets, three-hole punched ($5.00).

THE PRAYER RESUMED

On this behalf I am bowing my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after Whom every kindred in the heavens and on earth is being named . . . (Eph.3:14,15).

Here Paul recommences the prayer which he had begun in the first verse of this chapter. The phrase "on this behalf" connects it to the last few verses of the previous chapter where we learn that we of the nations, who once were guests and sojourners, are now "fellow-citizens of the saints and belong to God's family." The family atmosphere is emphasized by the fact that Paul addresses this prayer to "the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ," not (as in the earlier prayer starting at 1:17) to "the *God* of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The family bond between God and Christ is something that is stressed over and over again in the Greek scriptures. "This is my Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight" came the call from heaven on more than one occasion (e.g., Matt.3:17; 17:5). Jesus, while He was on earth, said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). Later, He prayed that the disciples might share that oneness which He has with the Father (John 17:18-23).

The evangel committed to Paul is "concerning God's Son" (Rom. 1:3). In Colossians 1:13, Christ is designated "the Son of [God's] love." In Ephesians, He is simply "The Beloved" (1:6).

In Romans 8:14-16, the status of sonship is also granted to those "who are being led by God's spirit." Such have "the spirit of sonship" in which they can cry "Abba, Father!" thus being permitted to address God in the most intimate terms possible, the cry wrung from Jesus' heart in His moment of intense anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane. In passing, it is an arresting thought that, during that Gethsemane experience, Jesus was so close to God that He addressed Him by that very endearing Name "Abba" (Papa), and yet a few hours later was further from God than He had ever been; indeed, the Father would not speak to Him, but turned away from Him. There is an immeasurable gulf between Gethsemane and Golgotha.

A thought, similar to that in Romans, is expressed in Galatians 4:6,7, "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. Now, if a son, an enjoyer also of an allotment from God, through Christ."

In this Ephesian epistle, we are designated beforehand "for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus" (1:5), and this is "in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the *Beloved.*"

May we remind you of what we said in an earlier study concerning this last phrase. The words bear repeating: " '*Which graces us in the Beloved . . .*' This is perhaps the most intimate and touching statement of all, for it associates us with *God's Son* as the *Beloved.* In this expression we enter the innermost recesses of God's heart. Whatever love God bestows upon Christ (and He is the Son of God's love) overflows on to the ecclesia which is His body. Just as God graces Jesus with the name which is above every

name, so He graces us by placing us in the Beloved, 'in Him in Whom our lot was cast also, being designated beforehand according to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, that we should be *for the laud of His glory,* who are pre-expectant in the Christ' " (*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.75, p.74).

If our pre-expectant position in Christ brings such glory to God, what glory will accrue to Him when all creation is made part of His universal family! That is what is implied in the expression "after Whom every kindred in the heavens and on earth is being named."

The word here translated "kindred" (or "family" in the A.V.) is the Greek *patria* meaning "fatherhood." It lays special emphasis on the fact that all members are of the same Father. It is a different word from that used in Ephesians 2:19, where we are said to "belong to God's family." There the word is *oikeion* (HOME-be-er), as in the expression "the family of faith" (Gal.6:10). The emphasis of this latter word lies in the theme of "being at home," with all the blessings and protection that provides. Here, in Ephesians 3:15, the picture is of the whole universe being gradually brought to acknowledge a common parentage, the Fatherhood of God, and in the prayer, the way is being prepared for the apostle to plead that we may be fitted for our part in the process.

. . . *that He may be giving you, in accord with the riches of His glory, to be made staunch with power, through His spirit, in the man within, Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, having been rooted and grounded in love, should be strong to grasp, together with all the saints, what is its breadth and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ as well which transcends knowledge—that you*

may be completed for the entire complement of God (Eph.3:16-19).

In this prayer, as in the previous one, it is not a question of our being able to offer to give anything to God, but rather a petition that God may give us something. In the earlier prayer, it was "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him" (Eph.1:17). Now it is for a staunchness of heart and mind that will enable us to grasp in all its dimensions the magnitude of the dwelling place which He is even now beginning to prepare for Himself. It is a dwelling place, in spirit, which will eventually include all in heaven and earth, for ultimately He will be All in all. The ecclesia is the first installment, the medium through which His message of conciliation will be conveyed to the rest. We are even now being built together for God's dwelling place, in spirit (2:22). We, if we are members of that ecclesia which is Christ's body, are entrusted with the "dispensation of the conciliation" (2 Cor.5:18,19), just as surely as Paul was entrusted with the dispensing of the evangel (Eph.3:7; 1 Tim.1:11).

There is something of a paradox here. We have contributed nothing to our salvation (Eph.2:8-10), nor can we do anything of ourselves in the role that He has assigned for us. And yet, through the ecclesia, God intends to fulfill His purpose and accomplish His heart's desire. Through the ecclesia, His grace is to be displayed in the oncoming eons (Eph.2:7), and through the ecclesia His multifarious wisdom is being made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials (3:10). In the ecclesia, and in Christ Jesus, God is to obtain glory "for all the generations of the eon of the eons. Amen!"

The yardstick by which God measures His gifts to

the ecclesia is "these riches of His glory," and this means virtually without measure, for who can attach a limit to the glory of God? It has a wealth incomprehensible, and yet it is in accord with the riches of His glory that He gives us the ability to be made staunch with power, through His spirit, in the man within. Accompanying this is the indwelling of Christ—in our hearts, through faith. With all this internal support, how firm and strong should we be! And yet, how weak and fallible we often are due to the hindrance of the flesh. Let no one ever think that he is not in need of these prayers of the apostle; indeed, they should be regarded truly as models for our own prayers.

Paul often uses phrases that are full of meaning, though simply expressed; ". . . you, being rooted and grounded in love" is one of these. A tree has its roots in the ground and draws its sustenance from them. A building has its foundation in the ground and derives its stability from it. In love, we were "designated beforehand for a place of a son" (Eph.1:5), and God's love is daily being "poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us" (Rom.5:5). Brother A. E. Knoch has a very apt comment in an article in *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.31, p.34), where he writes, "Here we have saints pictured by a plant with roots sunk in the ground. The thoughts seem to be *sustenance* and *steadfastness*. A plant well-rooted lives and grows. Properly grounded, it stands sturdy and strong. Love is the soil in which we may thrive and stand. All *flesh* is grass, because it soon fades and vanishes. We are not in flesh but in spirit, and with love as our garden bed, we will not emulate the grass, but grow and stand firm."

Another phrase full of significance is "what is its

breadth and length and depth and height." It has been suggested by some commentators that this is still speaking of the love of God, which has no limits, but extends its embracing influence in all directions so that no one is outside its scope. This, of course, is true, but we are inclined to the thought that the four dimensions refer back to God's dwelling place in spirit at the end of chapter 2. God's earthly habitations—the tabernacle and the temple and the holy city—had finite measurements determined by God Himself, but this dwelling place cannot be measured, at least not in terms of human measurement. It is a universal dwelling place, and its bounds, if any, are the bounds of creation. Yet it is something which the apostle prays "we may be strong to grasp."

And yet a third meaningful phrase is the one, "to know the love of Christ as well which transcends knowledge." This, again, is something that cannot be calculated. That the One through Whom all was created could so efface Himself as to empty Himself of all His pristine glory to come to earth in the form of humanity (as a tiny, helpless baby, completely dependent upon a human mother), and then further humble Himself to be put to death by some of the basest of His creatures, and that death, the death of a malefactor, accursed of God, depicts a love which is beyond all human understanding. We can only marvel at it, and then wonder still further when we realize that love seeks no revenge, but only conciliation and reconciliation, and is being exercised every day as God's purpose unfolds. The love of Christ is that of a Son, doing His Father's will, no matter what the cost. However much we may know of the love of Christ, we can never comprehend it all. Nevertheless, we should pray for an ever-increasing grasp of its meaning and

power, for we are exhorted, in another place, to have the same disposition as Christ (Phil.2:5-8).

The last phrase in this section, "that you may be completed for the entire complement of God," is another that is profound in its purport. The expression "the entire complement" occurs three times—here, and in Colossians 1:19 and 2:9, where it is declared to be dwelling bodily in Christ. All was created through Christ, and for Him, and through Him all will be reconciled to God. Our ministry is in line with this objective; thus we are being completed for our glorious work in the future, a ministry of conciliation, conducted in the strength and under the direction of Him Who is our Head. What a stupendous service is vested in the ecclesia! Mature are we if we can grasp the significance of what it means to be of the complement of the Christ (Eph.4:13).

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

Now we come to the end of the prayer, and the culmination of the first part of the epistle. GOD IS ABLE. This is an axiom we must accept. He is the only One Who can accomplish all that He has purposed, and what He does is superexcessively above all that we can ever ask for or even imagine. And again there is a reference to the power that is operating in us. We remember that in the first chapter, this power was compared with "the might of His strength, which is operative in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead" and exalting Him above all in the universe so that He is given "as Head over all to the ecclesia

which is His body, the complement by which He is completing the all in all."

At this point, we come to what is perhaps the most astounding expression of all. God is to obtain glory for Himself in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!

The ecclesia is placed before Christ in this statement. Not that it is above Christ—far from it, for Christ is always "the Head of the body . . . Who is Sovereign" (Col.1:18), but just to show the importance of the work accomplished through the ecclesia. What a wonderful thought, and yet how humble it should make us feel, to recognize that God is able to use such unworthy material as we are to such a glorious end! His purpose cannot be completed without the ecclesia which is the body of His dearly beloved Son. We are needful to the entire creation, but not from any merit within ourselves, but simply because God has purposed it to be so. This is what the whole epistle has so far been telling us, if we can but grasp it. The phrase "for all the generations of the eon of the eons" makes the service of the ecclesia both comprehensive and final. The eon of the eons is the last eon of all, the day of God (2 Pet.3:12), the day which opens with the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness will dwell, and God will be with His peoples. It brings God's purpose to a glorious consummation that sees all reconciled to Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:20). Nothing will mar the whole; God will be abundantly satisfied as He surveys the outcome of His purpose. None will be lost, for He will be *All in all.*

John H. Essex

(To be continued)

PAUL, THANKING GOD, TOOK COURAGE

"NOW IN THE REGIONS ABOUT THAT PLACE the freeholds belonged to the foremost man of the island, named Publius, who, receiving us, lodges us three days, amiably. Now it occurred that the father of Publius was lying down, pressed with fever and dysentery. Paul, entering to him and praying, placing his hands on him, heals him.

"Now at this occurring, the rest also of those in the island having infirmities approached and were cured, who honor us with many honors also, and at our setting out they placed on board what was for our needs" (Acts 28:7-10).

A TYPICAL FOREVIEW OF THE KINGDOM*

The scene in Acts 28:3-9 may be compared to the end of Matthew's account which (in the preceding chapters) gives us the rejection of the kingdom message as proclaimed by our Lord Himself. This account closes with a millennial foreview when He told His eleven disciples, in anticipation of that day, "Given to Me was all authority in heaven and on the earth" (Matt.28:18).

The nation of Israel had rejected their Messiah

*A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, excerpted and adapted from pp.176,224,225.

when He came in mercy. Similarly, Acts is a record of their rejection of the spirit of grace that lingers over them until Israel's religious rulers refused to consider the word of God and of the Lord, as proclaimed by the apostle Paul. The most signal sign of their apostasy was his imprisonment. It reveals the height of their obstinacy. Rome would free him. But Jewish conspiracy left him no choice but to appeal to Caesar.

Against this bleak background, we are consoled with a millennial scene to remind us that the kingdom is merely delayed, and will come in its proper time. First the serpent is destroyed, corresponding to the binding of Satan at the beginning of the thousand years, then blessing flows out to the nations. Paul, as a herald of that day, is able to pick up serpents without any harm coming to him, but he lays hands on those who are ailing, and they have ideal health (*cf* Mark 16:18).

By healing the father of the chief man in the island of Melita, Paul's fame and message would be immediately spread. Thus the very place of the shipwreck was chosen for this purpose.

Three months busy with blessing came out of the catastrophe. Had the ship wintered in Cnidus, as they had wished, or at Ideal Harbors, as Paul proposed (27:7-11), the ship and cargo might indeed have been saved, but a much greater loss would have been sustained by the islanders. Thus God always gets a greater good out of a lesser evil.

THEY HONORED US WITH MANY HONORS

Publius, the chief Roman magistrate of Melita, invited Paul and his attendants Luke and Aristarchus (27:2) to be his guests until they were able to find a lodging of their own, which they did after three days.

Publius was richly rewarded for his hospitality. Since his father had fallen ill with intermittent fever ("fevers") and dysenteria (as diagnosed by Luke the beloved physician), Paul prayed over the sick man, placed his hands on him and healed him. Obviously Publius himself was present and learned from the prayer that it was Christ Who effected the cure through the apostle. (There is a local tradition that places an ancient Christian church at Melita, with Publius as its first supervisor.)

The news of this healing spread immediately, and "the rest also of those in the island having infirmities approached [Paul and Luke] and were cured." Obviously the beloved physician was able to add his medical skill to the apostle's divine gift of healing. Hence Luke reports that they "honored *us* with many honors also."

The Greek word *timê* is used to indicate the *price* or money value, and also spiritual value, *honor* (Keyword *value*, p.318 in our Condordance). In Acts 28:10 the Greek plural *timais* may also mean *honoraria* (payments given to a professional person for services rendered for which *fees* were not required under the circumstances). The word *timê* may have the same sense in 1 Timothy 5:17,18. "Let elders who have presided ideally be counted worthy of double honor [honorarium], especially those who are toiling in word and teaching . . . Worthy is the worker of his *wages*."

We may presume, even without any full knowledge of the facts, that Paul spoke to Publius and other islanders along the lines he had written to the Romans (15:18,19): He would not dare to speak of anything that *Christ* does not effect through him for the obedience of the nations, in word and work, in the power of signs and miracles, in the power of God's

spirit, so that, even here in Melita, he has completed the evangel of Christ.

The islanders showed their appreciation for Paul and his attendants by supplying their need during the three months of their sojourn on Melita, and even for the time of their voyage to Puteoli and possibly the overland trip to Rome.

SYRACUSE, RHEGIUM, PUTEOLI, ROME

"Now after three months, we set out in an Alexandrian ship with the ensign Dioscuri, which had wintered in the island. And landing at Syracuse, we stay three days, whence, tacking about, we arrive at Rhegium, and the south wind coming on after one day, we came the second day to Puteoli, where, finding brothers, we were entreated to stay with them seven days. And thus to Rome we come.

"And thence the brethren, hearing about us, come to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Taverns, perceiving whom, Paul, thanking God, took courage. Now when we entered Rome, Paul was permitted to remain by himself together with the soldier who guarded him" (Acts 28:11-16).

The shipwreck in Melita's St. Paul's Bay had probably occurred before the middle of November, and they had to spend three months on the island. They had to wait for early spring; for they could not continue their voyage before the Mediterranean was opened again for navigation. An ancient historian (Pliny the Elder) once wrote that travel across the sea would be resumed when the west winds start to blow, sometimes in early February. Probably the state of the weather determined the resumption of navigation in any particular year. Since the fall season had been unusually tempestuous, it is possible that the favorable weather

for cross-Mediterranean travel began early, some time in February.

Luke reports that after three months they set out in another Alexandrian ship (presumably of the grain fleet) that had wintered in Melita's Grand Harbor. They may have reached Syracuse, on the east coast of Sicily, after one day's sailing. They had to make a stop of three days at Syracuse and of one day at Rhegium on the extreme southern tip of Italy. The following day brought them to Puteoli where the centurion probably attended to official business for the next few days. During that week Paul was given permission to enjoy the hospitality of the local brethren (*cf* Acts 27:3), who obviously advised the Roman brethren of the apostle's arrival. For the latter came to meet Paul and his two companions at the market-town Appii Forum, forty miles out of Rome. The apostle rejoiced even more when a second group met them further on, at Three Taverns, a halting-place on the ancient Appian Way, about 33 miles from Rome. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

In Acts 28:16, Luke's "we" narrative comes to an end. Yet Paul mentions his name in Colossians 4:14 and Philemon 24. So the beloved physician was around when the apostle was permitted to remain by himself together with the soldier who guarded him.

CONSOLED TOGETHER

There had been other times in Paul's life when he was greatly dispirited. The years of his career had never been without anxiety and fear and trembling. (*cf* 1 Cor.2:3; 2 Cor.1:8; 4:8-10). On the Via Appia, he may have wondered what kind of reception he would have from the brethren to whom he had written the Roman epistle about three years before. When he was

met by the two welcoming groups, he may have voiced some of the thoughts he had penned in the introduction to his letter to the Romans:

"First, indeed, I am thanking my God through Jesus Christ concerning all of you, that your faith is being announced in the whole world. For God is my Witness, to Whom I am offering divine service in my spirit in the evangel of His Son, how unintermittingly I am making mention of you, always in my prayers beseeching, if somehow, sometime, at length I shall be prospered, in the will of God, to come to you. For I am longing to see you, that I may be sharing some spiritual grace with you, for you to be established: yet this is to be consoled together among you through one another's faith, both yours and mine."

When the apostle was approaching Rome, his prayers were granted; he saw the brethren face to face, and thanking God, he took courage. Each one was consoled through the other's faith in Christ Jesus.

H.H.R.

(To be continued)

CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT
NOW AVAILABLE IN BLUE AND IVORY

In 1984 we ordered a special large printing of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT WITH KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, doing so on behalf of another ministry which hoped to distribute it widely. Since they were not able to do so, we now have this printing in stock ourselves. The gold stamping (on the spine and front cover) is large and quite striking, and both colors of imitation leather (dark blue and ivory) are very attractive.

We are making these books (which are otherwise practically identical to our standard black edition) available for only $10.00 per copy. Special prices are available for those who can order one or more cases (20 books per case). Please write for information.

THE DUES OF LOVE

(Romans 13:8-10)

To no one owe anything, except to be loving one another, for he who is loving another has fulfilled law (Rom.13:8).

We are to pay all our dues to civil authorities, endeavoring to settle every debt of this sort. In this way we are at liberty to tend to things of consequence.

However, there is one debt that we can never settle. The word "dues" in Romans 13:7 (which is translated "debt" in Matthew 18:32) is the noun form for the verb "owe" here in verse 8. We are to be loving one another, but the debt of love can never be paid in full.

In Romans 1:14 Paul wrote, "To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and foolish, a debtor am I." The apostle's eagerness to bring the evangel to his fellowman stemmed from a realization of the wealth of God's love being poured out in his heart (Rom.5:5). This love is measured by the gulf between our deserts and the price paid on our behalf for deliverance, justification and conciliation. And this love is experienced in the joy and peace that accompanies faith. "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (5:8).

How can such dues be paid? They cannot ever be paid in full. Yet it is well pleasing to God when we respond to His love by exercising concern, patience, compassion, kindness and prayerfulness (for this is

love) on behalf of others. For the apostle, this took the form of giving himself to evangelization. For us also, the rendering of the dues of love often takes the form of heralding God's good news of grace or (perhaps more expressively) by witnessing to it in our disposition and behavior.

Law itself is not a collection of cold, objective requirements for right behavior and orderliness, but it is a reflection of the good that lies in considering the needs of one another. The second occurrence of the English word "another" in this verse translates a Greek word literally meaning "the different [one]." Paul is speaking here of sensitivity to those specific individuals, different from ourselves and perhaps even to our viewpoints, whom God sends into our lives. This goes beyond the sense of the law of Moses given to Israel, where the immediate meaning seemed to have been a concern for fellow Israelites. Yet both the fundamental and the ultimate sense of law, whether the law of Moses or the law written on the human heart (*cf* Rom.2:15), is love.

Hence to be paying the dues of love to the different individuals God sends our way is to be filling up law. It is to be doing that which makes law complete and truly meaningful (see also Gal.5:14).

For this: "You shall not commit adultery," "you shall not murder," "you shall not steal," "you shall not testify falsely," "you shall not covet," and if there is any other precept, it is summed up in this saying, in this: "You shall love your associate as yourself" (Rom.13:9).

When the Pharisee asked the Lord, "Teacher, what is the great precept in the law?" (Matt.22:36), He referred to Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. The foremost precept is to love God; the second is to love

our associate. "On these two precepts is hanging the whole law and the prophets" (Matt.22:40).

Where our Lord had used the verb "hanging" to express the critical place of love in the law, Paul uses the verb "sum up," a term that occurs only one other time in Scripture, namely in Ephesians 1:10, where we learn of God's will to *head up* all in the Christ. Every precept hangs on love. And all the precepts together are summed up or headed up in love. If we added up the essential meaning of every requirement of law, the sum total would be love. Love is what gives law its full meaning and makes it complete.

Love is not working evil to an associate. The complement, then, of law, is love (Rom.13:10).

Here Paul adds a precept of law. Like those precepts cited from Exodus 20:13-17 and Deuteronomy 5:17-21, this precept is expressed as a negative. Love is shown as much in what we do not do as in what we do. Doing what appear to be good works without real, loving consideration of what is needed and helpful is actually working evil. True love (in the sense of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 or Ephesians 5:1,2) is genuinely solicitous and sensitive to the concerns of others (*cp* Phil.2:20), and this may call for refraining from interference as much as a zeal for assistance.

In all of this *loving* guidance Paul is not, of course, putting us under law. But in reminding us that the essence of law is love, he is showing us the vital importance of love to our lives. We are "not under law, but under grace"(Rom.6:14), and this indicates that the essence of law is also the essence of grace. Love characterizes all of God's administrational provisions to man.

The difference lies in the context. When the precept, "you shall not steal," appears in Exodus 20 it

appears as a requirement *for* God's favor; when it appears in Romans 13, it appears as a logical entreaty rising *from* God's favor. But in both cases it is love.

How then can we be paying the dues of love? By believing and holding in heart God's gracious work "which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ" (Rom.5:18). We *will* be loving when we are believing and appropriating the love of God. We have said it many times before, but it is well to repeat it again and again, that the evangel unfolded in Romans 3:21-8:38 is the basis for the walk set before us in Romans 12-16. How can we thank God enough for His great gratuity?

D.H.H.

(To be continued)

MICHIGAN REPORTS

The first two Michigan Fellowship Gatherings for 1987 were memorable occasions for all who were able to attend. Pastor James Andrews hosted the meetings on January 10 in Northville with the theme, "The Salvation of All Mankind," and Orville Hunt hosted the February gathering in Grand Rapids with "Great Secrets of God's Purpose Told in the Pauline Scriptures" as the topic for consideration. The March 28 meeting to be held in Almont and the April session at Peck (now rescheduled for May 2) will have as their theme "The Gratuity of the Grace of God."

Dean Hough is scheduled to travel from Detroit on March 31 to be with the brethren in California during the first week of April. He plans on spending part of his time at the Concern and the remainder of his visit with Brother Rocke in Carpenteria, conferring with him concerning Old Testament translation matters.

Dean and his family returned to Michigan in June 1984, and this is his first trip to California since that time. The Lord willing, on Sunday, April 5, Dean will present a message in Canyon Country entitled, "The Things of Consequence." We hope that many of our friends in Southern California will be able to join with us on this special day.

ON THY ACCOUNT

WE TRUST this study will make it evident that indeterminism or "free will" is unscriptural, but no more so than fatalism. Yet both these philosophies contain vital truth. Free will ideally recognizes the essential place of those things which are means to an end, and fatalism truly perceives that whatever God has appointed will surely come to pass, according to His own operations. Truth is not made the worse for the company in which we may find it.

Neither are we contending for any cold, secular determinism which knows nothing of loving design, wise direction and glorious purpose. We seek only to point the believer in Christ Jesus to the divine disposings, the gracious counsels and operations of his God and Father, that he may know Him, trust Him and rely upon Him:

"For I laid all this on my heart, and my heart saw all this: That the righteous and the wise and their services are in the hand of the One, Elohim" (Ecc.9:1). "Just as you have no knowledge what the way of the wind may be, Or how bones are formed in the belly that is full, Thus you cannot know the work of the One, Elohim, *Who made everything*" (Ecc.11:5). "Again I saw under the sun That the race is not to the fleet, Nor the battle to valiant masters, Nor even bread for the wise, Nor riches for the understanding, Nor even favor for the knowing, For season and mischance [or, "oc-

currence"] shall *happen to* them all. For, moreover, a man does not know his season, Like fish that are held in a vicious weir, And like birds that are held in a snare, So the sons of humanity themselves are trapped by a season of evil, When it falls on them suddenly" (Ecc.9:11,12). "I applied my heart to inquiring and exploring by wisdom concerning all that is done under the heavens: it is an experience of evil Elohim has given to the sons of humanity to humble them by it" (Ecc.1:13).

Indeed, "According as it is written [Psa.44:22], that '*On Thy account* we are being put to death the whole day, We are reckoned as sheep for slaughter' " (Rom. 8:36).

"Account" is a variant of *logos*, LAY (say)ing; it is usually translated "word." The sense is, concerning the evils that attend our course, God has decided, and He has *spoken*, saying that this should be our lot, even if the particulars concerning the affairs of each person are far too numerous to record as part of His written Word. Indeed, "Who is this who speaks and it is coming to be, when my Lord did not *instruct*? Is not the evil and the good faring forth from the mouth of the Supreme?" (Lam.3:37,38). "For, *as* the downpour and the snow is descending from the heavens, Yet it is not returning there, but rather soaks the earth, And *causes* it to bear and to sprout, *So* shall My *word* which shall fare forth from My mouth. It shall not return to Me empty, But rather, it does that which I desire, And prospers in that for which I sent it" (Isa.55:10,11).

It is on account of God that we experience evil, and, as surely as "sheep [are set] for slaughter," we will continue to be subjected to it. But this is only so that in the midst of our afflictions and sufferings we might find the assurance of God's love. It must be a vast love

(*cp* Eph.2:4), full of patience and power, for the opposition is fierce and formidable. Though all manner of things threaten to separate us from Him and do their utmost toward that end, in all creation *nothing is able* to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. In all our pains, "we are *more* than conquering through Him Who loves us" (Rom.8:37). As good as it is to "conquer," it is far better to be inseparable from the love of God.

When we are conformed in character to the image of God's Son and given a glorious body even as His own (Rom.8:29; Phil.3:21), it will be a great understatement to say that we have conquered our failings and overcome our afflictions. As good as it is to meditate upon the marvelous and total victory which lies ahead, it is even better to meditate upon God's present love for us and what this love portends. His grace upon us consists of far more than the eventual defeat of Sin. Its riches are to be found in a realization of His love. Since God is *able,* and since He *loves us,* "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" (Rom.8:38,39). Through Him Who loves us, we are "more than conquering"; we are loved.

GOD HAS MADE US

Most believers seem to realize that at least the rest of creation never comes into existence, and can never be sustained, except according to divine providence. Yet if men and their ways were somehow an exception to this, *we* might never have been born at all. The "possibility" of our having been generated by chance

is even far more remote than the absurd fantasy that, "Given enough time and typewriter ribbons, a roomful of monkeys could both create and type out the Encyclopaedia Britannica." It is vital to recognize that "Yahweh, *He* is Elohim; He it is Who has *made us,* and we are His" (Psa.100:3).

Left to the winds of chance, we could never have become "pre-expectant in the Christ," and destined to be "for the laud of [God's] glory" (Eph.1:12). We could never have become ourselves, with all the countless things that make us unique, except through our own actual parents, and through that unique begettal, in all its details, which resulted in our birth, to say nothing of all that has happened since. The truth is, most do not even realize that God is *their* Creator, much less the Creator of evil. They merely think He created all the natural processes which made their life "possible," and then left whatever might happen to freewill chance.

HONORABLE DEEDS AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The truth of our words is well represented in the following popular claim: "My parents, even as all of their ancestors before them, '*chose*' to have me—or at least they *could have* chosen not to. *No one had to be conceived.* Otherwise, there would be no honor in the bed of matrimony or dishonor in adultery."

Such words, which are most persuasive to those attuned to the world's ethics, are actually altogether foolish. In response we can only say, "Let no one be deluding himself. If anyone among you is presuming to be wise in this eon, let him become stupid, that he may be becoming wise, for the wisdom of this world is stupidity with God" (1 Cor.3:18,19).

Such claims can never be maintained. For the deter-

mination of what is honorable or dishonorable is not to be discovered by the supposed relationship between human actions and free will, but by ascertaining what God has *said* is right and what He has said is wrong, according to His revealed, preceptive will.

Even this changes in many ways, depending upon the divine administration under which we are living. It was not wrong for the people of Israel to omit performing those things which were only given through the apostle Paul many centuries later. And it is not wrong for us today to refrain from doing many an external that brought dishonor and severe judgment to the transgressor of the law of Moses. For he was *under* the law of Yahweh, and subject to its curses. However, for ourselves, "Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes" (Gal.3:13).

Though we are not lawless people—we are not without God's law, His rules of action for us (1 Cor. 9:21)—nonetheless we are not *under* law at all, but under grace (Rom.6:14). Therefore we are certainly not under the law which God gave to Israel through Moses. To be "under law" is to be subject to the lordship of Sin and Death (Rom.6:9,14), because of one's having committed a violation of law. For "sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4), and the "ration of Sin is death" (Rom.6:23a). But, "Sin shall not be lording it over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Rom.6:14). For ourselves, "now the consummation is life eonian." For "the gracious gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:22,23).

The unbelief of the Jews remained a dishonor to them, even though they were unable to believe (John 12:39). Yet to the chosen ones, "according to the foreknowledge of God" (1 Pet.1:1,2), who were believing "through the grace of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 15:11),

was "the *honor,* yet to the unbelieving: . . . [the dishonor of being those who rejected Christ] who are stumbling also at the word, being stubborn, *to which they were appointed also*" (1 Pet.2:7,8). Their stumbling was to be accounted for by their being stubborn, yet they were appointed to this by God (*cf* Isa. 6:9,10; Rom.11:32).

It is hardly to the dishonor of a woman of the most excellent virtue and strength of character that she is unable to engage in base, sordid acts. She *cannot* choose them, for they are abhorrent to her. Likewise, the vile, wicked acts of those "that do not stop from sin" (2 Pet.2:14), who love unrighteousness and commend the unclean, do not become any less abominable because they are but flesh, and the flesh is not able to be subject to the law of God (Rom.8:7).

Apart from God's all-encompassing operations, any number of things might have hindered either the beginnings of our life or its continuance at countless points along the way. Consequently, we thank *Him* for our life and breath and all. It is far from ideal to think of ourselves, more or less, as self-made men. For it is not our name that is to be glorified but His. To be faithful, our prayer can only be that our God should be fulfilling every delight of goodness and work of faith and power in us (2 Thess.1:11). Prayer must never be based upon the proud sentiment, "Help me, but not too much, for I still want some glory of my own."

It is God Who fulfills all that is good in us. As the Lord Jesus said of Himself, "Now the Father remaining in Me, He is doing His works" (John 14:10). For ourselves as well, then, it can only be thus, "so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, in accord with the *grace* of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess.1:12).

INTERCONNECTION AND DEPENDENCY

Not realizing that God's creation of evil is a righteous creation for the good of all and for His own glory, many express shocked disbelief when hearing us say that it is the work of His hand. Yet their unbelief concerning His creation of evil distracts them from facing the fact that neither do they believe that He is the Maker of good, certainly not in man's personal character and well-being, since these, indeed, depend in such great measure on his own choices, and yet it is insisted that nothing at all, certainly not God, causes him to choose as he does. Therefore, notwithstanding its followers' best intentions and outward forms to the contrary, traditional Christianity has largely become an atheistic religion. For the realm of Chance is under the direction of no one at all.

Christianity often represents itself as if it were dualistic: "God only makes good, the Devil makes evil," only to turn about and become polytheistic: "Where you spend eternity is 'up to you.'" It likes to pretend to be monotheistic: "God is the sovereign Lord of all"; but in the end proves itself actually to be atheistic: "Man, even as God, possesses free will [that is, the power of contrary choice], and is not caused to behave as he does."

Nonetheless, if God had not caused someone to bring the evangel to us, or if we had died prior to such a time, we would hardly have been in a position to believe, or to do anything else. Yet, as history and universal experience have shown, things quite inconsequential in themselves have often altered the subsequent course of men's lives in far-reaching ways. This principle of interconnection and dependency is true of all things and at all times, though it should spread to

concern itself with multiplied trillions upon trillions of details throughout all time.

The secret of God's will (Eph.1:9) is "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ . . . in Whom *our lot was cast also*" (Eph.1:10,11). This reminds us of Proverbs 16:33: "It is the lot that is cast forth in the bosom; Yet from Yahweh is its every judgment." That is, the determination of our destiny, and the destiny of all, is entirely in the hands of God. This is the very point of the figure, "in Whom our lot was cast also." God appoints His Son "enjoyer of the allotment of all" (Heb.1:2), and "Head over all" (Eph.1:22). And when God heads up all in Christ, all will find their allotment *in* His allotment. None will receive anything but what is first of all His. Truly, all is of God.

However, in the relative sense, many things are "not of God," for they are contrary to His preceptive will as well as to His callings (e.g., 1 John 3:10; Gal. 5:8). But even these, absolutely speaking, find their source, means and goal in the counsels and operations of God. "Let all the earth fear Yahweh; . . . For He spoke, and it came to be; He enjoined, and it stood firm. Yahweh, He annuls the counsel of the nations; He repudiates the designs of the peoples. The counsel of Yahweh shall stand for the eon, The designs of His heart for generation after generation" (Psa.33:8-11).

It is true that God's preceptive will and counsel can be repudiated, indeed this is usually the case today. But it is just as true that His decretive will and counsel shall stand. "All My counsel shall be confirmed, And all My desire will I do" (Isa.46:10b). It will come to pass, on account of Him.

James Coram

(To be continued)

THE RENEWING OF THE MIND

THE EVANGEL of the kingdom associated with Israel and the evangel of grace committed to Paul differ in many ways. Both messages encourage a holy and devout life, but their sources of motivation to live a God-pleasing life are different.

The kingdom evangel's chief motivational factor is fear of the loss of privilege and blessing, and even life. Not only were kingdom subjects to repent, produce fruits worthy of repentence and be baptized (Luke 3:3,8), but the establishment of the earthly kingdom was to come through a fiery cleansing and winnowing of its subjects (Matt.3:10-12). The pardon of sins was conditioned on obedience and righteous living, and could be revoked (Matt.6:12-15; 18:21-35). The performance of miracles and the casting out of demons were not sufficient to guarantee a kingdom allotment (Matt.7:21-23). And future kingdom subjects are even warned to use stringent self-control in order to avoid Gehenna (Matt.5:21,22,27-32).

Paul's evangel, on the other hand, lacks the element of fear found in the evangel of the Circumcision. It is true that the additional allotment of reigning will be awarded to many for faithful suffering with Christ (Rom.8:17, 2 Tim.2:11-13), but justification, reconciliation with God and the allotment of life are all gracious gifts from which we cannot be separated.

What, then, is the guiding and motivational

element for the believer under grace? The answer to this question is to be found in one of the chief underlying themes of the epistle to the Romans. The Roman letter takes us from man with a disqualified mind to man with a renewed mind (Rom.1:28; 12:1,2). Under the disqualified mind, man is guilty of all kinds of sins (Rom.1:28-32), but under the renewed mind man is transformed and is testing what the will of God is (Rom.12:2). This renewed mind is the source of motivation for righteous living.

The first chapter of Romans relates man's journey deeper and deeper into the corruption of sin and death. The milestones along the road are the different taskmasters which have had custody of mankind. Three times "God gives man over" (Rom.1:24,26,28). The word translated "give over" (*paradidomi*) does not mean "cast off" or "thrown aside," but clearly something else. The word is used many times in the Greek scriptures and means to place in the custody of another. Judas "gave over" the Lord Jesus into the hands of authorities; he "betrayed" Him (Matt. 27:3,4). The householder "gave over" the talents to his stewards for their use. A soldier would "give over" his prisoners to the jailer. God gave mankind over to uncleanness, dishonorable passions and a disqualified mind for the experience of evil.

Thanks be to God that He has not left us under this cruel bondage! Instead He "gave over" His Son for us all (Rom.8:32) and for our offenses (Rom.4:25), and He has "given us over" to the teaching of His evangel (Rom.6:17). A teaching is something that is implemented in one's life through the understanding of the mind. So the teaching of the evangel becomes the custodian of our lives, and the task of the mind is to comprehend and implement it.

But the mind struggles with many seemingly insoluble problems. How did mankind come to be in such a lamentable condition? Why did God favor one nation over all others, and how can such favoritism be just? Why must mankind experience such evil? These questions, and many others, are answered in the Roman epistle, and the answers are the means of bringing peace to the mind of the believer. In fact, Paul's method of expounding the evangel is to do so by raising (although not always directly asking) and answering such questions. When reading the epistle, this question-and-answer method stands out through repeated phrases such as "What shall we declare?" (3:5; 4:1; 6:1; 7:7; 8:31; 9:14,30), "By no means!" (3:4,6,31; 6:2,15; 7:7,13; 9:14; 11:1,11), and "Do you not know . . . ?" (2:4; 6:3,16; 7:1; 11:2,25).

When sin and death came upon mankind in Eden, there was an overthrow in the ranks of authority. The serpent which was to be subject to man, through deception overthrew man's dominion. The first chapter of Romans shows us the same type of thing happening within man (Rom.1:19-32). Though man had the knowledge of God and His attributes available to his mind, he became vain in his reasonings and was subjected to the lusts of the heart and dishonorable passions. But when the mind is renewed by the evangel of grace it is reinstated in the position of authority and gets the response of obedience from the heart (Rom.6:17).

J. Philip Scranton

Brother Scranton, who prepared the preceding article, is a diligent student of the Scriptures presently living in Corydon, Indiana. We look forward to other contributions from him in future issues.

Psalms 117 and 118

117 Praise `Yahweh, all nations!
Laud Him, all `clans!
2 For His benignity is masterful over us,
And Yahweh's faithfulness is > eonian.
Praise ye Yah.

118 Acclaim > Yahweh, for He is good!
For His benignity is > eonian.
2 Let Israel *pr*surely say,
t His benignity is > eonian.
3 Let the house of Aaron *pr*surely say,
t His benignity is > eonian.
4 Let those fearing Yahweh *pr*surely say,
t His benignity is > eonian.
5 From `my constriction, I called to Yah;
Yah answered me `with a wide place.
6 Yahweh is for me; I shall not fear
What a human may do to me.
7 Yahweh is for me `as my Helper|,
And I´ shall see victory `over those hating me.
8 It is better to take refuge in Yahweh
/Than to trust¯ in a human.
9 It is better to take refuge in Yahweh
/Than to trust¯ in patrons.
10 All nations, they have surrounded me;
It was `with the name of Yahweh
That I |cut them off;
11 They surrounded me; /*r*yea they surrounded me;
It was `with the name of Yahweh
That I |cut them off;
12 They surrounded me like bees;
They were extinguished like a fire of thorns.
It was `with the name of Yahweh

That I [cut them off.
13 7I was pushed~c, yea pushed- so as to fall,
+Yet Yahweh, He helped me.
14 Yah is my Strength and 7myc8 Melody,
And He [became mine for salvation.
15 The sound of jubilation and salvation
Comes 'from the tents of the righteous:
Yahweh's right hand does[valiantly;
16 Yahweh's right hand is exalted[;
Yahweh's right hand does[valiantly.
17 I shall not die 'but shall live,
And I shall recount the dedeeds of Yah.
18 Yah has disciplined, yea disciplined- me,
+Yet He has not given me over to death.
19 Open the gates of righteousness to me;
I shall enter 'through them and acclaim Yah.
20 This is the gate belonging to Yahweh;
The righteous, they shall enter 'through it.
21 I am acclaiming You, for You have answered me,
And You [became mine for salvation.
22 The stone which the builders[rejected,
It came to be for the head of the corner.
23 From `Yahweh bcame this;
It is marvelous[in our eyes.
24 This is the day Yahweh has dmade;
Let us exult and rejoice in it.
25 Oh Yahweh, do save us prnow!
Oh Yahweh, do prosper us prnow!
26 Blessed[in the name of Yahweh
is he who is bcoming;
We bless you from the house of Yahweh.
27 El is Yahweh, and He shall enlighten > us.
Bind the way of celebration 'with entwined boughs
Unto the horns of the altar.
28 You are my El, and I acclaiming You;
My Elohim, I am exalting You.
29 Acclaim > Yahweh, for He is good!
For His benignity is > eonian.

NOTES ON PSALMS 117 AND 118

Psalm 117 is the shortest of all the psalms, yet it sings of an enlargement of praise to Yahweh, not from Israel alone but from "all nations" and "all clans." Its spirit accords so well with Paul's apostleship that he cites the first verse in Romans 15:11 in consideration of "the grace being given to me from God, for me to be the minister of Christ Jesus for the nations" (Rom.15:15,16).

In Psalm 118 we can see in our mind's eye a magnificent procession, perhaps in connection with the Passover. In the beginning we can hear the throng lifting up its united theme of praise. But suddenly, starting with verse 5, we are aware of a single voice. Who is this who speaks of constriction, of being surrounded by the nations, of being pushed so as to fall? David, indeed, or a later king, truly. But still beyond them all, we hear that greater Son of David Who fully knows Yah as His Strength, His Melody and His Salvation (v.14).

The throng responds with sounds of jubilation in verses 15 and 16, and with a single voice in words of confidence in verses 17 and 18.

Then, the Messiah Himself is brought to our attention once again, at least when these expressions are considered in their fullest sense. Our Lord applied verse 22 to Himself in Matthew 21:42, and in verse 25 we hear the Hebrew "Hosanna" (rendered "do save us now") followed in verse 26 with "Blessed in the name of Yahweh is he who is coming," which were cried out when our Lord entered Jerusalem (see Matt.21:9). Finally, we are brought along the way bound "with entwined boughs" (*cp* Matt.21:8) to the altar itself (v.27), where sins are dealt with. How can we help but join in this hymn of praise and acclaim God, "for He is good! For His benignity is eonian"?

D.H.H.

WISDOM AND SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

MOSES' FIRST ADDRESS to Israel's younger generation was, for the most part, a historical review, as we have learned from Deuteronomy chapters one, two and three. In chapter four, he concludes this address with a call for obedience to the holy law that Yahweh Elohim had given them. First Moses explains that the divine statutes and judgments (*cf* 5:1; 6:1) are the very foundation of the great nation of Israel. Hence he begins to *teach them to obey,* because Yahweh Elohim does not demand blind obedience to a code of regulations and rules. He rather wants them to *understand* the whole procedure. By appreciating the divine wisdom underlying the various statutes and judgments, they should obey them since it would be wise to do so ("*your wisdom and your understanding,*" 4:6).

NOW, ISRAEL, HEARKEN!

"Now, Israel, hearken to the statutes and to the judgments that I am teaching you today, to obey them, that you may live and may enter and tenant the land that Yahweh Elohim of your fathers is giving to you. You shall neither add to the word that I am enjoining on you, nor shall you subtract from it, but observe the instructions of Yahweh your Elohim that I am enjoining on you. Your eyes were the ones seeing

all that Yahweh did with regard to Baal-peor, for every man who went after Baal-peor, Yahweh your Elohim exterminated from among you. Yet you who were clinging to Yahweh your Elohim all of you are alive today. See! I have taught you statutes and judgments just as Yahweh my Elohim had instructed me, for you to do thus within the land where you are entering to tenant it. And you must observe and obey them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the eyes of all the peoples who shall hear of all these statutes and will say: Surely this great nation is a people *wise and understanding*. For what great nation is there which has elohim so near to it as Yahweh our Elohim is in all that we call to Him? And what great nation is there which has statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law that I am putting before you today?" (Deut.4:1-8).

NEITHER ADD NOR SUBTRACT

The statutes and judgments are part and parcel of Yahweh's covenant with Israel. The renewal of this covenant is the central theme of Deuteronomy. Hence Moses asks his audience repeatedly to hearken to the stipulations of this covenant (4:1; 5:1; 6:3), i.e., to listen attentively while he is expounding on them. For complete obedience to them was the precondition for entering and tenanting the land (4:11).

The injunction not to add to the divine word and not to subtract from it, is repeated in 12:32. It does not, however, refer to a different wording. We shall see that the wording of the decalogue (the ten words) in Deuteronomy 5:6-21 differs from the one in Exodus 20:2-17. So the *essence* of the divine word is in view here (4:2), not the letter of it. The intrinsic substance of the ten words is the same in both chapters (Deut.5;

Ex.20), even though there is some difference in the wording in several places.

Disregard for the injunction (4:2; 12:32) in Jesus' day led the Pharisees to repudiate the divine precept, when they encouraged young people to give God a greater place than their parents by circumventing the obligation of "the first precept with a promise" (Eph.6:2), thus dishonoring their parents and invalidating the word of God. Our Lord quoted this corban manipulation as a flagrant case of Pharisaic hypocrisy (Mark 7:9-13).

YOU WERE CLINGING TO YAHWEH YOUR ELOHIM

In contravention of the first commandment, some of the people (of the post-Sinai generation) had behaved as their fathers. At Baal-peor (Num.25:2) they had eaten from the sacrifices of the Moabite gods and had bowed themselves down to them. So Yahweh exterminated the perpetrators; and Moses could point out to his audience that they all were alive today since they had kept close to Yahweh their Elohim (Deut.4:4).

ACT ACCORDINGLY WITHIN THE LAND

Moses continues teaching statutes and judgments (just as Yahweh Elohim had instructed him) in view of the future life of the Israelites in the promised land (4:5). Yahweh's faithful servant (Num.12:7) has a vision of the day when Israel will be renowned as a people of distinction, when its neighbors will hear of the divine statutes and will say: "Surely this great nation is a people *wise and understanding*" because it "has statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law . . ." (Deut.4:6,8).

The nearness (4:7) of Yahweh to Israel lies in the in-

timate covenant relationship between Yahweh Elohim and His chosen people of whom He had said: "Now, if you shall hearken, yea hearken to My voice and observe My covenant, then you will become Mine, a special possession, above all of the peoples . . . a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex.19:5,6).

LEST YOU FORGET

"But guard yourself and keep your soul especially vigilant, lest you should forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they should withdraw from your heart, all the days of your lives. You make them known to your sons and to your sons' sons, lest you forget the day that you stood before Yahweh your Elohim at Horeb [Sinai], when Yahweh said to me: Assemble the people to Me that I may let them hear My words, so that they may learn to fear Me all the days, that they are alive on the ground and may teach their sons. Then you [actually: your fathers] approached and stood below the mountain, when the mountain was consuming with fire unto the heart of the heavens, with darkness, cloud and murkiness, and Yahweh spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you were hearing the sound of words, yet you were not seeing a physical representation, nothing except a voice. He told you His covenant which He instructed you to keep, the ten words. Then He wrote them on two tablets of stone. And Yahweh instructed me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, for you to obey them in the land where you are crossing over to tenant it" (Deut.4:9-14).

In chapter four, Moses began addressing his audience with the words, "Now, Israel, hearken . . . " In 4:9 we have two more imperatives in the singular. (Those in 4:15,23 are in the plural.) The nation ought

to keep its soul (its faculties for seeing, hearing, touching) especially vigilant in the promised land where the former inhabitants represented their heathen gods by means of visible images that they could see with their own eyes and touch with their own hands. Israel, however, would be distinct from all its neighbors because there was no physical representation of its Elohim to which they could point and say: This is Yahweh!

NO PHYSICAL REPRESENTATION EXCEPT HIS VOICE

Not even the selectmen of the sons of Israel had literally seen Yahweh Elohim after the ratification of the covenant when they had their meal as part of the peace offering. They enjoyed the presence of Yahweh while they were sitting beneath His feet and were looking up into the very heavens for purity. "They perceived [became aware of] the One, Elohim, and ate and drank" (Ex.24:9-11).

Later when Moses had asked Yahweh, "Show me, I pray, Your glory," he was told, "You cannot see My face, for no human shall see Me and live." Then Yahweh added (in a figure of speech), "You will see My back" (Ex.33:18-23). Moses was not promised an objective image of Yahweh's back; when He passed by (Ex.34:6), nothing is said of what Moses might have actually seen with his eyes. Moses was granted a spiritual "insight" of divine grace.

Earlier, in the third month after the departure from Egypt, all the sons of Israel had been terrified at the manifestation of Yahweh's presence when He had descended on Mount Sinai in fire and had spoken to them from the heavens (Ex.19:1,18; 20:22). They had actually perceived (i.e., they had become aware of) a theophany: fire, murkiness, gloom, tornado, blare of a

trumpet, sound of declarations (Heb.12:18,19). Yet they had not seen a physical representation of the Deity, "nothing except a voice" (Deut.4:12).

The memory of these awe-inspiring details of the covenant ceremony should never be forgotten. The fathers should make them known to their sons, and to their sons' sons, lest they forget the day when their ancestors stood before Yahweh Elohim at Horeb (the mountainous area within which Mount Sinai was located) where He instructed them to keep His covenant, the ten words.

This divine manifestation of the past is supposed to be so vivid in the minds of the post-Sinai generation (who had heard about it from their fathers) that Moses can speak to them as if they had been present: "Yahweh spoke to you [all] from the midst of the fire . . . He told you His covenant . . . And Yahweh instructed me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, for you to obey them in the land where you are crossing over to tenant it" (Deut.4:12-14).

Later Moses added the following injunction: "These words . . . repeat them to your sons, and speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down, and when you arise. Tie them for a sign on your hand, and they will come to be for the brow bands between your eyes; write them on the jambs of your house and on your gates" (Deut.6:6-9).

WISDOM AND SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

The greatness of the future nation of Israel would lie in the wisdom and spiritual understanding that it would acquire as the fruit of obedience to the covenant stipulations. Chapter 28 of Job refers to this wisdom and understanding that "is not being found in

the land of the living," but only with Elohim, He understands its way, and He said to mankind: "Behold, the fear of Yahweh, it is wisdom, and to withdraw from evil is understanding" (28:12,13,23,28).

Hence the Proverbs of Solomon were written "to know wisdom and admonition" (1:2). In chapter 8 we hear Wisdom speaking: "Yahweh Himself acquired me as the beginning of His way, preceding His deeds of yore" (v.22).

Both wisdom and understanding are just as essential for *our* spiritual life and our daily walk as they were for the Israelites in Moses' day. Are we fully aware of the fact that we need wisdom and spiritual perspicacity today when our God and Father, in all wisdom and prudence, is making known to us the secret of His will (Eph.1:8)? Do we realize that in Christ all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed (Col.2:3)? Do we pray daily for others and for ourselves that the Father of glory may be giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him (Eph.1:17), and that we may be filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, so as to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing (Col.1:9,10)? Like Moses, Paul was admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, so as to present every man mature in Christ Jesus (Col.1:28). Hence let the word of Christ be making its home in us richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another (Col.3:16). H.H.R.

(To be continued)

If sufficient interest is shown in a hardcover edition of UNSEARCHABLE RICHES volumes II/III ($9.00, paperback), we would be glad to have a small quantity bound in cloth.

THOUGHTS ON THE PURPOSE OF GOD

AN intelligent conception and unclouded view of the consummation which Scripture sets before us as the goal of faith and hope is contingent on a clear grasp of the Divine purpose and intention. God works according to a predetermined purpose which has been in operation in the past, is in operation at present, and will continue to be in operation until accomplished. The tangled web of complex processes serves His purpose. The whole natural order is but the body and organ of the spiritual, and exists only to serve it. The present state of things, viewed apart from the controlling purpose, seems aimless and baffling, creates perplexities, engenders doubts. Through preoccupation with the agencies at work we are apt to miss the purpose and misunderstand the nature and function of the agency itself. Herein is a prolific source of failure in both doctrine and practice. The sons of Israel did not ground themselves in Yahweh's promise and were in consequence unnerved by the test. Today, theological activity is characterized by attempts to analyze, systematize and unify processes rather than by sustained effort to grasp the underlying purpose; the prevailing views of human destiny and one-sided conceptions of God are the sequel.

Vladimir Gelesnoff

The preceeding was adapted from *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.3, p.151. A paperback reprint of volumes 2 and 3 bound in one volume is now available ($9.00).

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 1987
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME SEVENTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

"APART from God, we do not really know the past, let alone the future." So writes A. E. Knoch on page 107 of this issue. We may add that this is true of the present as well. All the developments throughout the ages can be understood in right perspective only as they are viewed as part of God's purpose and under His direction. All is out of God, and through Him and for Him.

In the Scriptures we can trace this best with regard to the nation of Israel. Without an appreciation of God's deity, His overriding mercy and righteousness, how can we understand the historical accounts and prophesied future concerning this nation? Or how can we sort out the contradictions surrounding its current status? Brother Rocke's two articles in the following pages well illustrate this puzzle. In Deuteronomy we learn of Israel's unique place in God's purpose and of His unchanging love for them (see pages 109-114). Yet the book of Acts concludes with a pronouncement of blindness on them. That "spirit of stupor" that God gave them is still there (p.137).

We cannot help but be fascinated by events in the Middle East, especially regarding Jerusalem and the ancient area of Babylon. Wars and disturbing religious, social and economic developments accord with prophecies in God's Word. It is both helpful and correct to view all this as out of God and for His glory.

Then, too, we wonder about the lawlessness and greed that so characterize our age. Here it is especially important that we view these matters in the light shed

by God's Word and with the understanding that God is the God of power, purpose and love. Both current events and current experiences are part of the divine plan and under His directings.

God is at work, causing us to choose that which is really choice (p.115), filling us with thanksgiving (p.99) and guiding us to worthy walk (p.123). Yet alongside all of this there is the spirit of this wicked eon, the perils of selfishness and pride (*cf* 2 Tim.3:1-9) and the groanings and travailings of life (Rom.8:18-23; 2 Cor.5:4). Is not God at work in these as well?

Indeed He is, and one important benefit from this "momentary lightness" of affliction is the way it sharpens our longing for the "transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory" which He has promised (2 Cor.4:17). Expectation is one of the three "greater graces" that remain for us today (1 Cor. 12:31; 13:13), and it is vital to our joy and peace.

Even though there is much that disturbs us, we are learning not to be worrying because God has given us a consciousness of our Lord's nearness. This nearness relates to space as shown in Philippians 4:4,5 (see p.106) and to time (at least for our conscious awareness) as shown in Romans 13:11,12 (see p.131).

The past, the present and the future become meaningful to us because we believe God is operating all in accord with His counsel and purpose.

The series entitled "The Word of God and of the Lord" by Herman H. Rocke is concluded in this issue. It began in January 1978 (vol.69) and complements an earlier series by Brother Rocke entitled "Imitators of Paul and of the Lord" appearing in volumes 55-57. Bound volumes of *Unsearchable Riches* containing these articles are still available. D.H.H.

WITH THANKSGIVING

THANKFULNESS for favors *received,* for prayers *answered,* for benefits *enjoyed,* should arise from every grateful heart. But this falls far short of our privileges for today. Prayer should be *accompanied* by thanksgiving, *before* the answer comes, along *with* the petition. That is the faith that honors God! Let us be grateful that He will *not* blindly obey our behests. Let us give thanks that He will do only what is for His glory, which alone is our good. If we realize only a little of our own folly and feebleness we will be overwhelmingly grateful for every apparent failure to get what we want, for there can be no doubt that it would have been bad for us and against the glory of God. We are instinctively appreciative of receiving what we want, but let us thank Him in advance for sending only that which accords with His intention.

Thanksgiving is not based on a thing or a theory, but on *life, experience, action* and *rejoicing.* Like the vivifying revelation which God has given us, the very form in which it is expressed conforms to its vital message. As it is such a brief and beautiful example of the divine mode of expression, we will set forth the literary structure, or skeleton of Philippians 4:4. Read *down* the left side and *up* the right. The center only calls attention to the theme of each line, which is repeated in reverse.

[READ DOWN]		[READ UP]
Be rejoicing.....	[what]	.....be rejoicing!
in the Lord.....	[who]	.....I will declare,
always!.....	[when]	.....Again

WHAT

The words "Be rejoicing" begin and conclude this verse.

Joy is the beginning and end of God's eonian operations. In anticipation, the morning stars sang together at the start, and at the close all creation will exult in the consummation (Job 38:7; Rev.5:13). If the cosmos has such glorious boundaries, why should not we microcosms have a similar experience? I have been told that every atom is a miniature of the material world. Let us rejoice in remembrance of God's choice of us and His call and the salvation He has provided, and the place we have in His Christ. Let us enjoy the prospect of the glory that lies before us, for we surely will exult when the fulfillment comes. So shall our thanksgiving be the link between the joy of anticipation and the rejoicing of realization. And therefore it should always accompany prayer, not as a delayed and nonessential afterthought, but as the leading feature. Every petition should commence with thanks or worship.

The two most important prayers for us are those imbedded in the first chapters of Ephesians, which are models for our imitation. In the first chapter, before he prays, Paul begins by *blessing* God for His grace (verse 3), and, after having detailed our blessings, he *gives thanks* (verse 16) *before* he prays that the saints may enter into a realization of their bliss. There is rare rejoicing in what God has done for us in the past and what He proposes for the future, with Paul's petition in between. Prayer is but the link between past and future joys. If this is realized in our hearts, it will always be flavored by grateful praise of Him to Whom it is directed.

WHO

The second point of importance in Philippians 4:4 is *Who*. We may rejoice briefly in many things and in a multiplicity of persons. But the chief source of genuine joy for us will center about two, One the Source and the other the Channel of our greatest and most lasting blessings. Only in God and His Christ is the spring perennial of perfect and eternal bliss, and only through the apostle of the nations comes the transcendent grace to us, the least deserving of all God's creatures. It is to Paul's declarations that we must turn if we wish to enjoy fully the special and supernal blessings in store for us among the celestials.

But the bliss here bestowed is not alone that which comes through a realization of our *place* in *Christ*, but also that which is connected with our *service* in the *Lord*. It is comparatively easy to be happy in Him, but may seem beyond us to rejoice in the performance of His work, for then we come into contact, if not collision, with our fellows. Then we are likely to have ample cause for sadness and sorrow and despair, due to the persecutions and calumnies, not only from the world, but from our fellow saints, as well as the fiery arrows of our spirit adversaries. Here is where most of His people fail. As they do not believe God creates evil, they cannot well rejoice when it jolts them, for they think it must come from the devil, and is contrary to God's intention. It is only when we see that God uses evil as well as good for His eonian operations, that we can rejoice in very much that befalls us in this life.

Paul is the only pipeline which will convey to us the wine which works in us to produce the joy ineffable wrought by the transcendent grace of God's present operations. Whenever the vintage of this economy is

adulterated by the admixture of other times, it deteriorates, and nothing so marks the difference as the lessened measure of delight which it produces. And the flavor, too, is different. The soulish cheer of other eras tends toward sensuality, but the purely spiritual satisfaction and felicity which is poured out for us by Paul charges our spirits with celestial nectar prescient of that which will be our portion in His presence. If any of God's creatures should be glad, we should rejoice more, for we alone are the subjects of grace transcendent. No others were so undeserving, and none have received so much. We are at the summit of God's climacteric plan to reveal His heart.

WHEN

We should have no difficulty in fixing upon the proper season for rejoicing. Israel concentrated most of its joy upon the harvest festival of tabernacles, beginning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. For seven days they were to rejoice (Lev.23:40). Yet at some other times they were to humble their souls (32). They were to be cut off from among their people if they did not humble their souls on the tenth day of the seventh month (Lev.23:27-32). So must it be under that immature, enigmatic administration. What a contrast with us! When are we charged to afflict our souls? *Never!* When shall we set aside a time to rejoice? Holidays? Sundays? Birthdays? Anniversaries? *Why not?* But these, numerous as they may be in some lands, are far from enough. We should rejoice *always! Again and again!*

WITHOUT THANKSGIVING

A most remarkable feature of Biblical Hebrew is the absence of a distinct term for *thanks*. The words so

rendered in our Authorized Version are translated more consistently by other expressions. The most of them should be *acclaim*, although they render this word by *praise* in a number of instances, and *praise* is used by them mostly for *ell* IRRADIATE, idiomatically *praise*, especially in the phrase, "Praise the Lord!" ("Praise ye Yahweh!"). It is sad that such a significant fact should be hid from us because of a discordant version. The law did not generate thankfulness, but self-acclamation. Even when the Pharisee had a word for thanks in Greek, he misused it. He thanked God that he was not as the rest of men, when he should have *confessed* that he was far worse, though in a decent and religious way. The word *bless* seems to have done duty in place of thanks, in Hebrew.

Such an incredible fact needs all the confirmation it can get, so I turned up the Greek concordance of the Septuagint, and called a witness to confirm my findings. Sure enough, the verb *thank* (*eucharistein*) occurs no more than six times in the whole book! And the noun (*eucharistia*) only four! Hold! All of these are in the Apocrypha! There are only two other forms, each with a single occurrence. One is also in the uninspired books. Only one, *thankful* (*eucharistos*) has a Hebrew equivalent. In Proverbs 11:16 it is used for the Hebrew GRACE (*chn*), rendered, "a *gracious* woman retaineth honour" in the Authorized Version. Tentatively, the C.V. reads: "A gracious woman upholds glory." If this is the only place the Greek translators felt the need of using the word *thank* in the whole Hebrew scriptures, we may be sure that the thing itself was very scarce.

Confession and *acclamation* are variants of the same word in Hebrew. It is simply the verb of the noun HAND. We use the same idiom in English when we say,

"Give him a *hand!*" Then we all clap our palms in approval, as an *acclamation.* But in Hebrew it is most significant and suggestive that *self*-acclamation denotes *confession!* Literally rendered Leviticus 5:5 would read: when he realizes his guilt as to one of these, then he will *acclaim himself* in what way he has sinned. And, in 16:21, Aaron lays both his hands over the live goat, and *self-acclaims* (confesses) over it all the depravities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins. May we all learn the lesson of the Hebrew language, that *the only self-acclamation before God must be confession!* (Lev.5:5, 16:21, 26:40, Num.5:7).

Under the law, the very nature of things demanded confession when approaching God in prayer. So we find, when Israel was manifestly under the displeasure of Yahweh in the deportation, that Ezra and Nehemiah and Daniel prefaced their prayers by *confession,* rather than thanksgiving. Their prayers are most instructive and helpful, but we must not imitate them on that account, for we are not under law, and are not unduly concerned with ourselves, now that *we want no righteousness of our own,* and have the righteousness of God. We should put *thanksgiving* for deliverance from sin in place of confession.

When Ezra prayed he *confessed,* lamenting and cast to the ground before the House of the One, Elohim (Ezra 10:1). "Those from Israel convened around him, a very great assembly, men, women and children; for the people lamented with increased lamentation. Then Shecaniah son of Jehiel of the sons of Elam responded and said to Ezra: We ourselves have offended our Elohim when we located in our houses foreign women from the peoples of the land. Yet now there is expectation for Israel in spite of this. Let us

now contract a covenant with our Elohim to send forth all our foreign women and the children born of them, in accordance with the counsel of Yahweh and of those who are trembling at the instruction of our Elohim; and let it be done according to the law."

Under the law confession was not enough. There had to be a rectification of the wrong and a forsaking of the sin. Israel's principal sin had been the taking of foreign wives. As the law specifically forbids this (Ex. 34:16, Deut.7:3-4), they were forced to put them away.

Nehemiah is a refreshing character, the political counterpart of Ezra, the priest. The priest's principal business was to deal with the sins of others, and so Nehemiah might have confined his confession to the sons of Israel, for he was seeking to recover them from the effects of their transgressions. In accord with the era and God's limited revelation at the time, he wept and mourned for days, and fasted before he prayed. But there is no *grace* in his words. He prays to the *great* and *fear-inspiring* El, Who *is keeping the covenant* and the *benignity with those loving Him and observing His instructions*. First he beseeches for an audience, for he feels that God would not hear his prayer which he prays day and night, for the sons of Israel, His *servants*. Then he confesses the sins of Israel, especially of his and his father's household, and claims an answer on the ground of their conduct (Neh.1:4-11).

Daniel is also in full harmony with the times in which he lived. He prayed, confessing to the great and fearful Yahweh, Keeper of the covenant and the *kindness for those loving Him and keeping His instructions* (Dan.9:4). He confesses the sins of the people as one of them: "We sin and we are depraved, we

do wickedly and revolt, we withdraw from Thy instructions and from Thy judgments. We do not hearken to Thy servants the prophets, who speak in Thy name to our kings, our chiefs, our forefathers and to all the people of the land. (Dan.9:5-7). It was the seventy years of deportation from their own land which wrought repentance and prayer in the heart of Israel, as expressed by their spokesman, Daniel. Grace is well-nigh absent. Even confession is not enough. Hearing and blessing depends on *their conduct, not on God's grace.* Is not that the reason why *thanksgiving* is not there?

THE LORD IS NEAR

It is a blessed truth that Christ may appear at any moment, and that the Lord may soon descend to call us away to His presence where rejoicing will fill our hearts forevermore, but that is not all. In spirit the Lord is near *now.* If we realize this, it will help us greatly in our relations with others, especially in their unjust dealings with us. If we stood alone, with no hope of righting our wrongs, it would tend to make us bitter and severe. But, with Him at hand, we know that all will be adjusted in due time, and, in the meanwhile, is part of His plan for us; hence we are able to be lenient and forbearing. In these last days of inordinate selfishness it is very difficult to make our lenience *known,* for the most flagrant wrongs are considered rights, so that our very lenience may be denounced, or used as evidence against us. But this must be expected in a period which is perilous (2 Tim.3:1), when men are *ferocious* like the demoniacs of the Gergesenes (Matt.8:28). How much worse would it be if the Lord were not near!

THE WHY OF WORRY

Why should we not worry? The saints have read these words again and again throughout this era, and still many kept on being fretful and fearful, sad and concerned for the future. They failed and still fail to grasp that *God* is for them, so that nothing *can* be against them. They still imagine that they are heard for their much speaking, or, perhaps, lack blessing because of their lack of prayer. Some even express their anxiety in "persevering" prayer, afraid that all would go wrong if they should cease to worry the Deity with their supplication and intercession. Such prayer is not based upon rejoicing and seldom commences with genuine thanksgiving. It is not the prayer of faith, but of unbelief.

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 tranquility 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. From the very beginning He knew the end, and planned every detail in between. Nothing ever has or can go wrong. Everything today is just as He foresaw it. For Him the future is as settled as the past. What has He to worry about?

With us it is otherwise. Apart from God, we do not

really know the past, let alone the future. Very little of it is according to our plans. Perhaps much of it was contrary to our wishes and expectations. We have no guarantee whatever of the future, except gradual dissolution and death. The young and the careless may have much to rejoice in, and to distract their minds, so that they do not worry. But the aged and thoughtful may well fear for the future. Many seek freedom from worry by various diversions and try to drown their dread in drink. These should have our heartfelt sympathy. Let us not look askance at worry. Like all other evil it has a part to play, and a very important one, in God's plans.

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. Without it, proper and acceptable prayer today is hardly possible. With it, every petition will be crowned with the halo of thanksgiving. A.E.K.

NEW BOOKLETS

A revised and expanded edition of "The Rich Man and Lazarus" (by Alan Burns, $1.00) and a combined edition of "The Address on the Envelope/When Did the Church Begin?" (by A. E. Knoch, $1.00) are now in stock.

YAHWEH IS THE ONLY ELOHIM

IN CHAPTER FOUR, as we have seen, Moses comes to the conclusion of his first address to the post-Sinai generation of Israelites. His topic is an urgent call for total obedience to the holy law that Yahweh Elohim had given to their fathers at Horeb/Sinai, and of which they had heard from them time and again. Hence Moses can speak to the younger generation as if they had been present when Yahweh spoke "at Horeb from the midst of the fire" (Ex.19:18; 20:22; Deut.4:15).

So Moses warned his audience in the plains of Moab that they must be very much on guard against their soulish desires to make for themselves any physical representation of Yahweh. They would bring ruin on themselves, should they attempt to represent Yahweh Elohim in human likeness, or in the likeness of any animal (Deut.4:16-18).

Then Moses went on to say: "Guard yourselves lest you should lift up your eyes toward the heavens, and you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heavens, and be induced to bow yourself down to them and serve them" (4:19). Yet these great luminaries are just a fraction of the work of the Creator's hands; *they point to Him Who had made them* (Gen.1:16). Hence it says in the 19th Psalm: "The heavens are recounting the glory of El, and the atmosphere is telling the work of His hands" (19:1). Other peoples may worship what they *see* in the

heavens and worship an idol that is within the limits of their physical vision. But Israel must not restrict El's transcendence in such a manner.

Israel's relationship to Yahweh had been unique since the days of the exodus "from the iron crucible, from Egypt." They had "become His as a people of allotment" (Deut.4:20); and at the Sinai covenant ceremony they had heard the voice of their invisible Elohim. They had not seen Him, but they had seen what He had done for them during the long journey through the wilderness that had brought them to the plains of Moab.

Moses had warned the younger generation before with the words: "Guard yourself and keep your soul especially vigilant, *lest you forget* the things which your eyes have seen" (Deut.4:9). Now he warns them again: "Guard yourselves *lest you forget* the covenant of Yahweh your Elohim that He contracted with you, and so you make for yourselves a carving, a physical representation of anything, against which Yahweh your Elohim had instructed you; for Yahweh your Elohim, He is a devouring fire, a jealous El" (Deut. 4:23,24).

Not forgetting the covenant had to be much more than just remembering the covenant ceremony at Sinai and Yahweh's steadfast hand, His outstretched arm, and His great fear-inspiring deeds in Egypt, at the Sea of Weeds and in the wilderness. Yet all this covenant experience in the past had to produce *continuous obedience* to the law that Yahweh Elohim had given the Israelites. Failure to do so would provoke His anger (*cf* 4:25-28).

PROPHETIC WORDS

Moses had an intuition of the dangers that the

Israelites would have to face in the promised land. Should they become corrupt and do evil in the eyes of Yahweh Elohim, so as to provoke Him to vexation, then they would quickly perish off the land. They would become few in number and would be scattered among the peoples [in the land, among the Canaanites]. The unfaithful Israelites would "serve other elohim, the work of human hands, of wood and stone which are neither seeing nor hearing, neither eating nor smelling" (4:28).

The futility of serving such lifeless clods would awaken again long-forgotten memories of the living Yahweh Elohim. So Moses, His spokesman, added these prophetic words: "Yet from there you will seek Yahweh your Elohim and find Him when you inquire for Him with all your heart and with all your soul. In your distress, when all these things find you in the latter days, then you will return to Yahweh your Elohim and hearken to His voice. For Yahweh your Elohim is a compassionate El. He shall neither neglect you nor bring ruin on you, nor shall He forget the covenant of your fathers about which He had sworn to them" (Deut.4:29-31).

IN THE LATTER DAYS

The word "latter" (Heb.: *achareeth*) in the term "latter days" should not exclusively be taken as pertaining to the time of the end, but rather as referring to the end of a time period as contrasted with its beginning, such as in Isaiah 46:10 where we translated the word as "hereafter," just as in Genesis 49:1 when Jacob was about to tell his sons what would meet them "in the days hereafter."

In his second inspired discourse, Balaam revealed among other things what Israel would do to Moab "in

the latter days." This divine prophecy was fulfilled some three hundred years later when king David subdued Moab and other nations named in this context (Num.24:14,17; 2 Sam.8:11-14). Similarly "the latter days" in Deuteronomy 4:30 would refer to the centuries of repeated oppression during the judges' period, also to the fall of the two kingdoms (Israel and Judah) and the deportations of many of their inhabitants.

The eschatological context in Isaiah 2:2 and Micah 4:1 seems to demand the term "latter days" rather than "hereafter." Yet we have used this word in Proverbs 23:17,18.

"Let not your heart be jealous of sinners, But rather be zealous for the fear of Yahweh all the day, For then you have a hereafter, And your expectation shall not be cut off."

ISRAEL'S UNIQUE EXPERIENCE WITH YAHWEH ELOHIM

In the final words of his first address, Moses wants his audience to become aware of an act of Yahweh that is unique in human knowledge of the past, since the creation of mankind. Such a divine act has never before occurred anywhere else in the whole world, "from one end of the heavens unto the other end of the heavens" (4:32). Moses questions the young generation: Has any other people ever experienced a manifestation of Yahweh's presence such as Israel had witnessed at Horeb/Sinai, when the living Elohim descended on the mountain in fire, murkiness and gloom, and spoke to them from the midst of the fire? Of course, the answer must be "Never."

Moses asked his audience another rhetorical question (4:34): "Has an elohim ever tried to come and take for himself a nation from among another

nation by trials, by signs and by miracles, by war, by a steadfast hand and by an outstretched arm and by great fear-inspiring deeds, such as all that Yahweh your Elohim did for you in Egypt before your eyes?" Again the answer must be "Never."

Then Moses emphasized: "*You* were shown this to know that *Yahweh, He is the only Elohim.* There is no one else aside from Him" (4:35). The Egyptians and all the other nations that Israel had met and was going to meet, had many gods. Actually, however, Yahweh was the only true and living Elohim. The events leading to the exodus from the iron crucible and to the theophany at Horeb/Sinai were sufficient proof that there was no god aside from their Yahweh Elohim.

Yahweh granted Israel the unique experience to hear His voice in order to discipline them (4:36), i.e., to establish a father-son relationship by means of a unique covenant. In his second address Moses repeated this truth at greater length: "*So you know* with your heart that just as a man disciplines his son, Yahweh your Elohim is disciplining you. Hence observe the instructions of Yahweh your Elohim so as to walk in His ways and to fear Him" (Deut.8:5,6).

YAHWEH YOUR ELOHIM LOVES YOU

Human love is transient as a rule. In order to say that Isaac *was loving* Rebecca, and Jacob *was loving* Rachel (Gen.24:67; 29:18,30), the Hebrew uses the so-called incomplete form of the verb, so as to indicate that loving was progressive or developing, or even partial. Yet when Yahweh *loves* the patriarchs and Israel (Deut.4:37; 7:13; 23:5), the Hebrew has the complete form, thus denoting the certainty and the permanence of His love. Likewise Israel's love to Yahweh ought to

be lasting and changeless, not partial, but undivided: "So you will love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul *and with all your intensity*" (Deut.6:5); or, as our Lord put it in His answer to the Pharisee: "... *and with your whole comprehension*" (Matt.22:37).

Since Yahweh's love lasts indefinitely, Moses emphasized this truth by saying: "For inasmuch as He *loved* your fathers and chose their seed after them and brought you forth from Egypt into His presence by His great vigor ..." (4:37). Thus Moses implied that divine love had chosen them and will certainly bring them into the promised land that will be given to them as an allotment (4:38).

Moses might have added: Telling the same to you is not irksome for me, yet it is your security, so as to keep you free from fear and doubt. Hence he said: "*So you know today,* and you recall it to your heart that *Yahweh, He is the only Elohim* in the heavens above and on the earth beneath; there is no one else" (4:39).

Later, in his second address, Moses says in a similar context: "Hence you will love Yahweh your Elohim and *observe His charge,* His statutes, His judgments and His instructions all the days. *You know today* ..." (Deut.11:1,2).

The younger generation of Israelites had heard the divine message that Moses had delivered to them. In his closing sentence he bade them: "Hence you will *observe His statutes and His instructions* which I am enjoining on you today, that it may be well with you and your sons after you, and that you may prolong your days on the ground that Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you, all the days" (4:40).

H.H.R.

(To be continued)

CHOOSING WHAT IS CHOICE

WHEN Abram and Lot went their separate ways, it is recorded that Lot lifted his eyes and saw the Jordan basin, "and Lot is choosing for his [part], all the basin of the Jordan" (Gen.13:8-11). When Moses' father-in-law advised him to delegate some of his work to others, we read "Moses chose men of ability from all Israel and set them as heads over the people . . ." (Ex. 18:25). When the Lord visited at the home of Mary and Martha, Mary chose "the good part" in sitting at His feet and listening to His word (Luke 10:38-42). When we choose, we choose what is *presently* choice *to us.* It is not possible for us to do otherwise, for our choices *reflect* the true condition of our heart, and manifest our character.

Moral, or volitional, ability must be distinguished from physical ability. No one can prefer anything which is contrary to his preference, any more than he can love what he hates. A man may well lie to others concerning his preferences, but he can never truly choose with his lips what he rejects in his heart.

There are all manner of things we would be able to *do,* to carry out through the use of our bodily members, if we were only able to *choose* to do them (in the sense of acting upon them), or at least able to choose something else connected with them which would result in their being accomplished. However, one's possession of a particular preference or ability to make a certain choice can only exist, like everything else, as the result of its own cause, of which it is merely a product.

A sinful will only reflects the much deeper matter of a sinful heart. The relative foolishness (or wisdom) of our preferences, reflects the present condition of our heart (*cp* Prov.4:23b; Matt.15:18,19). Our choices are not things of chance, but the *effects* of their causes. Our choices are constantly changing, and are changing in many ways, from one moment to the next. With the exception of internal organic functions and certain involuntary or reflex bodily movements, the rest of our actions, great and small, occur voluntarily. That is, they reflect the choices which we have made.

We *do* many voluntary acts, however, that, in themselves, we have never *chosen*. Instead, we choose other things with which our deeds are connected and from which they result. Insofar as external acts are concerned, in many cases we do them even though we have not chosen them. We can never do a voluntary act, however, except as the product of a choice, regardless of what our *object* of choice may actually be. When we "decide to *do*" things that are undesirable in themselves, our *decision* is never made in favor of such an object, but in favor of some other thing with which it is connected, something which *is* desirable to us, or at least slightly preferable to all other things presently in view or under consideration.

Any statement of actual preference is an exhibition of truth. In any certain moment, either we *have* a given preference (and consequently effect a corresponding choice and action) or we do not. We cannot have a new preference while our old preference still exists. Nor can we make a new choice while we still have an old preference. For the act of choosing is merely the exercise of *existing* preference. One cannot prefer what is not yet preferable. Yet when it becomes preferable it is preferred and cannot be unpreferred.

CHOOSING CHRIST

The gospel today is nearly always presented as a transaction, as something quite available to any and all who would simply of themselves do some certain thing or things, even if others will not. Much is said of the importance of making "decisions." The idea, however, is simply that in these decisions it is man himself—not the spirit of God—which makes the difference between success and failure at present and, certainly, between happiness and horror for eternity. Indeed, it is insisted that God will do all for one man that He will do for another but that He will not do enough for any man to insure even his present pleasure, wealth or health, much less his eternal life.

It is insisted that when the lost—billions of whom either having never heard of Him or having only nominally done so—finally come into the Saviour's glorious presence, it is then that Christ Himself will command them all forever to leave it and enter into the terrors of everlasting burnings! "Evangelism" is carried on in the man-centered hope that at least a few will be strong enough to meet the divine demands.

Few realize that "No one is recognizing the Son except the Father; neither is anyone recognizing the Father except the Son and *he to whom the Son should be intending to unveil Him*" (Matt.11:27). Even in His personal ministry to Israel, the Lord plainly said to His numerous disciples, " 'There are some of you who are [actually] not believing' . . . . 'No one can be coming to Me if it should not be given him of the Father.' At this, then, many of His disciples came away, dropping behind, and walked no longer with Him. Jesus, then, said to the twelve, 'Not you also are wanting to go away!' Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we come away? Declarations of life eonian hast

Thou! And *we believe* and know that Thou art the Holy One of God.' Jesus answered and said to them, '*Do not I choose you,* the twelve . . . ?' " (John 6:64-70). Indeed, "Not *you* choose Me, but *I* choose you" (John 15:16a).

Yet again, conversely, the Lord said to the throngs, "Wherefore do you not know My speech? Seeing that you *cannot hear* My word" (John 8:43). This was so "that the word of Isaiah the prophet, which he said, may be being fulfilled" (John 12:38a). Isaiah had prophesied long ago that unbelief would be widespread and that the strong arm of the Lord would not be revealed. "Lord, who believes our tidings? And the arm of the Lord, to whom was it revealed?" (John 12:38b).

Our closed minds must be *opened up* to understand the scriptures (*cf* Luke 24:45). Otherwise, we can no more grasp their true significance than a blind man can see the brightest of objects immediately before him. The reason for the unbelief of the Jews was that *God* had blinded His people: "*Therefore they could not believe,* seeing that Isaiah said again that *He* has blinded their eyes and callouses their heart, *lest* they may be perceiving with their eyes, and should be apprehending with their heart, and may be turning about, and I shall be healing them. These things Isaiah said, seeing that he perceived His glory, and speaks concerning Him" (John 12:40,41).

If we are wise, we too will recognize that "It is the glory of Elohim to *conceal* a matter" (Prov.25:2a). "For there is not anything hidden, except that it should be manifested, neither did it become concealed, but that it may be coming into manifestation. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!" (*cf* Mark 4:22,23).

Only those who are called and chosen actually choose *Christ*. The *ecclesia* (OUT-CALLED ones) of the Thessalonians *had* chosen Him, and Paul could perceive (the results of) their choice: "having perceived, brethren beloved by God, your choice, *for* the evangel of our God did not come to *you* in word only, but *in power also*, and in holy spirit and in much assurance, according as you are aware" (1 Thess. 1:4,5).

How marvelous it is that God has *revealed* His Son to us: "This is My Son, the *Chosen;* Him be hearing" (*cp* Luke 9:35). No one can genuinely choose Christ who does not find Him *Choice*, or to be preferred above all others. Likewise, anyone to whom Christ *is* Choice, cannot but choose Him during the time in which He is deemed Choice. For example, when it delights God to *unveil* (FROM-COVER) His Son in us (*cf* Gal.1:15) and while He continues to do so, we choose Christ and cannot reject Him. For we are no longer blind; we now see Him as He truly is: *choice* indeed. And we are getting to know Him as well, for God has unveiled Him in us.

Many, however—to whom Christ, in fact, is not choice—out of selfish interests, can only choose to make a *profession* of Christ. Their faith is only simulated or "feigned" (*cp* 1 Cor.15:2). Fleshly attempts at self-conviction do not constitute God-given faith. A decision merely to profess Christ or to make a supposed public "acceptance" of Him, is a very different thing from actually choosing and accepting *Christ*. No one can "accept" (or "take along," *paralambanō*) Christ who has not first chosen Him. Yet Christ can never be *chosen* by those from whom He is veiled. An object must first be perceived before it can be compared and selected from a field.

Furthermore, we cannot tell the unbeliever that if he will only do a certain thing, God will then in return give him faith. All such claims are false. For they represent God as a Rewarder in granting faith, as One Who has obligated Himself to "meet halfway" all who will fulfill His requirements. Since salvation is a matter of grace, it cannot also be a matter of meeting requirements. All genuine faith in Christ is *graciously* granted to us (Phil.1:29).

Again, no one to whom Christ is not yet choice can choose Christ. And Christ cannot be choice to anyone to whom He has not yet been made choice. When He is made choice He *becomes* choice and so *is* choice; or to say the same thing, He is chosen. This first act of the believer in which Christ is consciously chosen, is merely a consequence of his new mental preference which has been *graciously* granted to him by God.

THE NATURE OF VOLITION

No one can *choose* what he does not *prefer*. There is no such thing as an object being choice which has not yet been chosen. A man can no more exercise volition contrary to his understanding and disposition than a tree can bear fruit contrary to its nature: "*Either* make the tree ideal and its fruit ideal, *or* make the tree rotten and its fruit rotten, for by its fruit the tree is known" (Matt.12:33). There is no middle ground. "Progeny of vipers! *How can you* be speaking what is good, *being* wicked? For out of the superabundance of the heart the mouth is speaking. The good man out of his good treasure is extracting good things; and the wicked man out of his wicked treasure is extracting wicked things" (Matt.12:34,35).

"From their fruits you shall be recognizing them. Not from thorns are they culling grapes, not from star

thistles figs. Thus every good tree ideal fruit is producing, yet the rotten tree noxious fruit is producing. A good tree *cannot* bear noxious fruit, *neither* is a rotten tree producing ideal fruit" (Matt.7:16-18). "Will the Ethiopian turn his skin, or the leopard its spots? Moreover, then, you can do good, when taught to do evil" (Jer.13:23).

Since there is therefore no hope from within, let us look only to our God and Father, but not, craftily, to ourselves. Our *humble* prayer, serious and heartfelt, should be that *God* might be "adapting [us] to every good work to do His will, doing in us what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory for the eons of the eons. Amen!" (*cp* Heb.13:20,21). It is glorious to know that we are making our requests known to *One Who is able.* And so, to the One "Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be the glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!" (Eph.3:20,21). Only thus can our outlook and attitude accord with the truth. May God enable us to say from the heart and with understanding, even as it is written, "He who is boasting, *in the Lord* let him be boasting" (1 Cor.1:31).

This is not at all to say that our efforts are not essential or that there will be nothing for us to do since it is God Who saves us from our failings. To the contrary, God graciously saves us by causing us to work, "training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon" (Titus 2:11,12). But our efforts are merely a product; they are the means through which *God* saves us. *We contribute nothing.*

It is not a question of our discipline and volition, but of pride and self-reliance concerning our discipline and volition, of boasting in the flesh instead of glorying in the transforming power of God. As long as we continue to see ourselves, in a final sense, as the key to anything, we will remain proud, antagonistic to "the grace of God *in truth*" (Col.1:6).

It is one thing to conceive of ourselves, in a dutiful sense and *relatively speaking*, as "cooperating" with the Lord Jesus, as He leads us into paths of better service. It is quite another, however, *proudly* to fancy ourselves to be so utterly independent of the Supreme Deity Himself, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, that even He is at a loss to change our will or walk without our help.

Christ is the Head of the ecclesia, and He is the Saviour of the body (Eph.5:23). He "gives Himself up for its sake that *He* should be hallowing it, cleansing it in the bath of the water ([that is,] *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" (Eph.5:25-27). He is "nurturing and cherishing" the members of the ecclesia, ". . . for we are members of His body" (Eph.5:30). Though the course is often arduous, slow, and disappointing, nonetheless, the entire ecclesia is growing in the growth of God (Col. 2:19). We *will* be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make us stand (Rom.14:4). And it is by the *power* of these words of faith, because of their influence upon us, that we are learning to be choosing what is choice.

James Coram

(To be continued)

ENTREATY TO WORTHY WALK

I am entreating you, then, I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace: one body and one spirit, according as you were called also with one expectation of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all (Eph.4:1-6).

We now come to the second half of the letter to the Ephesians. Whereas the first three chapters dealt with doctrine, the latter three outline the deportment which should be our response to the reception of that doctrine. The teaching has opened up vistas far and away above anything that we could possibly have imagined, and these should awaken in us an overwhelming sense of gratitude and thanksgiving, together with a desire to live in accord with our new status as members of the body of Christ as His complement.

THE LANGUAGE OF GRACE

Let us note first the word "entreat." Though the mode of conduct which the apostle is about to place before us is God's due from us because of the grandeur of our calling, Paul does not demand it of us as of right. It is not a case of "I command" but "I am entreating." There are none of the "you shall's" or "you shall not's" that followed the giving of the law at Sinai. This is the language of grace, not of law.

And Paul entreats us as "the prisoner *in the Lord.*" We considered the status of Paul as a prisoner in an earlier article (*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.77, p.219), but let us note again the distinction between "a prisoner in the Lord" and "a prisoner of Christ Jesus." As a prisoner of Christ Jesus, Paul sums up the doctrines of the secret administration; as Paul the prisoner in the Lord, he inculcates the deportment which adorns the doctrine (see CONCORDANT COMMENTARY on Eph. 3:1 and 4:1)

Paul defines our conduct under five headings (five being the number of grace): (1) all humility; (2) meekness; (3) patience; (4) bearing with one another in love; and (5) endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace.

If we had been required to state qualities which might be expected of those called to so great a ministry, I doubt whether we should have used these expressions. More likely we would have used terms like boldness, determination, fortitude, strength and zeal. But those actually mentioned by Paul are more difficult to practice and maintain. They are in accord with the fruit of the spirit, detailed in Galatians 5:22,23. Let us look at these five qualities more closely.

Humility implies self-abasement both toward God and men. It puts God first and attributes *all* to Him, recognizing that He is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. It accepts that we are His achievement, and that our salvation is "not of works lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:9,10). It also means that we must respect the feelings and claims of others. "With humility" we should be "deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also"

(Phil.2:3,4). In this we have a supreme example in Christ Who "humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Meekness is not weakness, as to human eyes it so often seems. Meekness does not mean compromising the truth, but it does mean accepting the fact that others may have a greater measure than oneself. It also often means that we accept suffering without murmuring, affliction without complaining, injustice without rebelling. Strength of character is required to repress our feelings of indignation, especially when we feel that we are suffering undeservedly.

Meekness is one of the attributes of the new humanity which has to be "put on" after other things connected with the old humanity have been "put away" (Col.3:8,12). It is brought into action when "training those who are antagonizing" (2 Tim.2:25). Paul exhorted Titus to "be yielding, and to be ready for every good work, to be calumniating no one, to be pacific, lenient, *displaying all meekness toward all humanity,*" and the reason for this is that we ourselves were "once foolish, stubborn and deceived" (Titus 3:1-3).

Patience involves "waiting upon God." We tend to become impatient when we do not see immediate or early results of our ministry. In our zeal, we may be trying to hasten things faster than God intends. God Himself is the supreme example of patience. Romans 9:22 tells us that He "carries with much patience the vessels of indignation, adapted for destruction." While His indignation against evildoers is suspended, we, "the vessels of mercy, which He makes ready before the glory," are benefiting.

How often do we hear the complaint, "Why does God allow this to happen? Why does He not in-

tervene?" Well, everything is moving precisely according to His purpose. As long as the conciliation is in operation He cannot take vengeance. He is exercising patience until the ecclesia which is the body of Christ is complete. And we, likewise, have to show patience with one another. Some are slower to grasp things than are others. Some are indeed antagonistic. Look how Christ displayed all His patience with Paul, the foremost of sinners, and with what glorious results! The persecutor and outrager became "a pattern of those who are about to be believing on Him for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:13-16). Paul himself entreated the Thessalonians to "be patient toward all," whether they were disorderly, fainthearted or infirm (1 Thess.5:14). Patience is often coupled with endurance, and in Colossians 1:11 both patience and endurance are attended by joy.

"Bearing with one another in love"—how beautifully this condition is described by Paul in Philippians 2:1-4! With the supreme example of Christ provided in verses 5-8 we marvel; how demanding it must have been to Him, Whose love for humanity was so intense, to suffer so much at their hands! Yet in His greatest anguish He could cry, "Father, forgive them, for they are not aware what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

All three of Paul's prison letters are in accord, entreating that we should bear with one another in love. Colossians has a passage in the third chapter, verses 12-15, to which we earlier referred in part, but now quote in full: "Put on, then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, pitiful compassions, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, *bearing with one another* and dealing graciously among yourselves, if anyone should be having a complaint against any. Ac-

cording as the Lord also deals graciously with you, thus also you. Now over all these put on love, which is the tie of maturity. And let the peace of Christ be arbitrating in your hearts, for which you were called also in one body, and become thankful."

"Dealing graciously among yourselves" is a far stronger expression than in the AV, "forgiving one another." To forgive someone implies that we have first accused him (mentally at least) of committing an offense against us; to deal graciously with such a person means that we do not charge him with any offense at all.

An illustration of this is seen in the outcome of the prayers of Christ on the cross and of Stephen immediately prior to his assassination. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they are not aware what they are doing," but this did not prevent Peter, speaking with the full authority of holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, from charging the Jews with their crime, and urging them to repent (Acts 2:23,36-38). Indeed, Peter repeated the charge several times afterwards (Acts 3:15; 4:10; 5:30). Stephen, however, prayed, "Lord, Thou shouldst not stand against them this sin!" (Acts 7:60). Though it is recorded that Saul was endorsing Stephen's assassination, he was never called upon to repent. On the contrary, the Lord's emissary, Ananias, entering the house at Damascus where Saul was praying after his experience on the road, immediately placed his hands on him and said, "Saul! Brother! The Lord has commissioned me . . . so that you should be receiving sight and be filled with holy spirit" (Acts 9:17). The Lord was very gracious to Saul; no wonder he, in later years as Paul the apostle of Christ, could exhort us to be gracious one to another even as the Lord had dealt graciously with us.

Let us note here that we are to endeavor to *keep* the unity of the spirit, not to make it. So much is heard today among believers about the making of unity. Christianity is hopelessly divided into many sects, each with its own articles of faith, which its members are often required to accept or be disfellowshiped. Paul upbraided the Corinthians because of the schisms that had already sprung up among them in his time. He told them that they were being fleshly. "Where there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly and walking according to man?" (1 Cor.3:3). Here in Ephesians we are entreated to "walk worthily of the calling with which you were called." Note, we are not, in ourselves, worthy of our calling, but we may *walk worthily* of it by regarding our bodies as dead, and ourselves as if alive from the dead (Rom.6:1-14). It will be a continuous struggle, and we may often fall short of the ideal, but the desire should always be there.

The unity of the spirit is indeed seen in the unity of the members of that one body which is the complement of Christ. It is a spiritual unity, not a fleshly one. In the flesh we are as diverse as we can be, but in the spirit we are as close as can be, for our unity is made by God and not by us.

There is a beautiful comment in an early issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.6, p.91) that reads, "God's people in this economy *are* one. They do not need to be made so. And this unity is not based on a physical relationship as with Israel, but on the possession of one and the same spirit. It is a *spiritual* unity. We cannot choose one single member nor repudiate one single saint whom God has pleased to include in this unity. Difference in doctrine does not destroy the unity; it only mars its expression. It is to be maintained in spite

of differences. It is to be sedulously sought under all circumstances."

The unity which characterizes the ecclesia is sevenfold in its nature, and the components are briefly outlined for us by the apostle. Each feature of this sevenfold unity is a unit in itself; the word "one" occurs seven times, the number of divine perfection and completeness.

This sevenfold unity can be structured as follows:

1. one body,
2. one spirit,
3. one expectation of our calling,
4. one Lord,
5. one faith,
6. one baptism,
7. one God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in all.

With the passage set out in this way we see one body energized by one spirit and emboldened by one expectation of its calling, with one Lord recognized as its Head, directing and motivating all, one faith enabling us to take firm hold of the one expectation, and one baptism leading us into the acknowledgment of one God and Father of all. In this context the "all" refers to the members of the one body, but as we know from 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 it will eventually embrace the whole of creation

We cannot stress too strongly that each of these particulars is governed by the word "one." The moment we admit dual or multiple items we deny the unity of the whole, the unity that God has made and into which we have been placed. For we cannot repeat too often that the unity of the spirit finds its expression today in the ecclesia which is the body of Christ. Nowhere else is there such unity (apart from that

between God and His Son); nowhere more than in the ecclesia does the Adversary strive to thwart the purpose of God. But neither he nor we can destroy that unity. He or we may hinder its full expression, but it must always remain intact because it is God-made, and it will be seen to be so when we are exalted to display His grace among the celestials in the oncoming eons.

In the meantime we are to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace. What a lovely phrase is this: "the tie of peace." Peace, so elusive in the world, is like a cord tying us lovingly together. It is the accompaniment of grace in all Paul's salutations. "Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Allied to life, it is "the disposition of the spirit" (Rom.8:6). The peace of God "is superior to every frame of mind" (Phil.4:7). The desire for peace should be so uppermost in our minds and hearts that we shall find ourselves practicing it at every opportunity. As Paul told Timothy, "a slave of the Lord must not be fighting, but be gentle toward all" (2 Tim.2:24). We should let the peace of Christ be arbitrating in our hearts.

We can have true peace, both toward God (Rom.5:1) and toward men. We are assured of our own salvation and that of others also. To paraphrase slightly a well-known hymn by E. H. Bickersteth,

Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?
The cross of Jesus brings us peace within.

We can have peace toward others just because we have this peace within ourselves. And we can have joy with it, the joy and the peace together, that come through believing (Rom.15:13).

John H. Essex

(To be continued)

NOW IS OUR SALVATION NEARER

(Romans 13:11-14)

THE WALK OF LOVE, as Paul points out in Romans 13:8-10, is built upon our realization of our debt to our fellowman. The love of Christ *constrains* us to live a new kind of life to the honor of Him Who died and was roused for our sake (2 Cor.5:14-17). As we comprehend His love we are stirred to acts of love toward others, and we find ourselves avoiding those things the law commanded Israel not to do, such as stealing and coveting. This is because the law is summed up by love (Rom.13:9).

Now in Romans 13:11 we learn that the walk of love is inspired not only by our grasp of the love of Christ in dying for us but also by our grasp of that expectation of life and glory which is established by Christ's resurrection. *This, also, do, being aware of the era, that it is already the hour for us to be roused out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believe. The night progresses, yet the day is near. We, then, should be putting off the acts of darkness, yet should be putting on the implements of light* (Rom.13:11,12).

There is much similarity between the closing verses of Romans 13 and 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11. Here the paired figures of day/light and night/darkness complement the time element found in both passages, and the benefits given to believers are described in terms

of practical usefulness ("implements," "cuirass," "helmet"). The stress in 1 Thessalonians, however, is on consolation and mental assurance, while here in Romans it is on actions.

It is our expectation that is being singled out in these passages as motivating us in right behavior and thinking. Expectation is not mortifying (Rom.5:5); it is a powerful and effective force in the believer's life. At the beginning of this "entreaty" section of Romans, Paul wrote that we are "not to be configured to this eon but to be transformed by the renewing of [our] mind" (Rom.12:2). The values and aspirations that characterize the current eon are not in accord with our calling, and so we need to think and act in accord with the oncoming eons when God will display the transcendent riches of His grace to us (Eph.2:7). "To expectation were we saved" (Rom.8:24). In the midst of the struggle and disappointment of our age we may be enjoying the earnest of the spirit and be appreciating such blessings as peace toward God (Rom.5:1), walking in newness of life (6:4) and "the spirit of sonship" (8:15), and thus be reclaiming the era (Eph.5:16; Col.4:5).

Concerning the word "era" in Romans 13:11, Brother A. E. Knoch wrote, "Sometimes this [term] refers to a literal season of the year, as the harvest season (Matt.13:30). Usually, however, it denotes some characteristic *period* or *era,* as in this scripture. It is illustrated by the dawning of the day. Deeds of darkness are done at night. But this is not the era of darkness but of light. The full day is approaching when our salvation will be complete at His advent. Just as we rouse ourselves in the morning, preparatory to the duties of the day, so, in this larger sense, our conduct should reflect the coming of the light and not

be tainted with the dark doings which seek the shades of night to hide their shame."*

The period of night that Paul spoke of in Romans 13:11 is still with us. The full light of the new era remains just over the horizon. For nineteen hundred years believers have been like watchmen in the early hours of the morning, alert in expectancy of the dawn of a new day.

The fact that nearly two thousand years have passed since Paul wrote these words does not mean that he was mistaken in speaking of the nearness of "the day," for he was concerned with a keen, subjective anticipation of our rescue rather than an objective pronouncement of imminence. Whether we are among the living or have already been put to repose when the Lord descends to snatch us away (1 Thess.4:15-17), there will be only the briefest time elapsing *in our awareness* between the enjoyment of expectancy and the experience of the event itself. It is the *present* conscious anticipation of the *future* conscious experience of being with the Lord which is set before us here.

ACTS AND IMPLEMENTS

The apostle again uses the figure of "putting off" and "putting on" in Ephesians 4:20-25 and, with slight variations, in Colossians 3:8-14. Here the acts of darkness are the wicked deeds of this eon, which indeed are more often carried on at night when they can be better hid from authorities and magistrates (*cf* verses 1-3). In place of such acts we should be putting on the implements of light.

But why does Paul change from this concept of "acts" to that of "implements"? This latter word is

*Concordant Commentary, p.243.

sometimes rendered "weapons," as in 2 Corinthians 10:4, and indeed, military terms are used in 1 Thessalonians 5:8, where, as previously noted, we have a similar context. But the word "implements" has a wider application and may refer to tools for any kind of useful activity. Hence the entire range of constructive and faithful service in the Lord is implied here. Acts of darkness are simply activities without any sense of usefulness implied. But in the word "implements" we learn that acts of light are activities serving a purpose which, as the context also shows, is ideal and fully satisfying.

WALKING RESPECTABLY

As in the day, respectably, should we be walking, not in revelries and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy (Rom. 13:13).

In anticipating our deliverance, the character of that future day is brought over into our present lives. Our expectation influences our walk right now. Hence, both here in Romans 13 and in the parallel passage of 1 Thessalonians, we read of "walking respectably" (1 Thess.4:12).

Here in Romans, Paul presents three pairs of acts that trace a downward path into dishonor and uselessness:

1. Revelries and drunkenness,
2. Chamberings and wantonness,
3. Strife and jealousy.

From indulgence of the human desire for pleasure we can easily fall into practices which bring harm to others as well as ourselves, and then finally into a more general state of discord and bitterness that is bound to add to the darkness of the world within and around us.

In his *Confessions,* Augustine tells how this verse (and the next) encountered him at a time when he was in great despair concerning the course his life was taking. He was caught up in these very acts which Paul lists here, and he could not find a way out.

It is well that Paul is so frank in naming these disgraceful deeds, for we are helped by facing the facts about ourselves and our behavior. Yet we need more than a sense of wrong in ourselves, and we need more than a list of prohibitions from our teachers. It is vital, therefore, that we, as Augustine, go on to the next verse.

. . . *but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be making no provision for the lusts of the flesh* (Rom.13:14).

"The evangel is God's power for salvation" (Rom.1:16), and this applies to salvation from strife and jealousy and from all the lusts of the flesh as well as to salvation from future indignation and condemnation. The evangel concerns Jesus Christ (Rom.1:3,5), Who died for our sakes (Rom.5:8) and is living to God (Rom.6:10).

In 1 Corinthians 1:18 Paul calls this evangel "the word of the cross," and in verse 23 he explains the message with the two words "Christ crucified." Finally, in verse 24 he reduces the evangel to one word, "Christ," and sums up the thought in verse 30, "Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance." The message is the Person, and the Person is the message.

To put on the Lord Jesus Christ is to live by the power of the evangel. To put on Christ is to let His disposition, as shown in His obedience even to the death of the cross, be in us (Phil.2:5). To put on Christ is to be carrying our own salvation into effect (Phil.2:12).

Yet, as we have been emphasizing, the evangel as it relates to our expectation is primarily in view here. We may deal with the lusts of our flesh by putting on the Lord Jesus Christ as we know Him in His resurrection and glorification at the right of the Father. "Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying . . . yet in that He is living, He is living to God. Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom.6:9-11). "And He died for the sake of all 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" (2 Cor.5:15).

Later Paul would express it this way: "If, then, you were roused together with Christ, be seeking that which is above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Be disposed to that which is above, not to that on the earth, for you died, and your life is hid together with Christ in God" (Col.3:1-3).

The very fact that Paul repeats and enlarges on this entreaty throughout his epistles shows that we need to be continually renewed and invigorated by the expectation that is in the evangel. It is not something that is done once and lasts all the rest of our lives. We still live in this wicked eon, and it has a powerful influence on us, always there to attract, to obscure, to weaken and discourage us. Hence the entreaty to put on the Lord Jesus Christ is one that has daily, hourly, even moment-by-moment implication. But though the power of the lusts of the flesh is very strong, the power of God's love in giving His Son to die for us and in rousing Him from among the dead is even stronger. May we be experiencing this power and be manifesting its fruit more and more as our full salvation approaches ever nearer. D.H.H.

GOD GIVES THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR

"NOW IT OCCURRED THREE DAYS AFTER, that he called together those who are foremost of the Jews. Now, at their coming together, he said to them, '*I*, men, brethren, doing nothing contrary to the people or to the hereditary customs, was given up a prisoner out of Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, who, examining me, intended to release me, because not one cause of death existed in me. Now at the contradicting of the Jews, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—not as though having anything of which to accuse my nation. For this cause, then, I call for you, to see and speak to you. For on account of the expectation of Israel this chain is lying about me' " (Acts 28:17-20).

Paul had written to the Romans: "For not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well" (1:16). Hence, whenever the apostle came to a city, it was his custom to go to the local synagogue (13:5,14; 17:1,2; 18:4,19; 19:8) and make contact with the Jewish community before he would turn to the Greeks. There were several synagogues in Rome which he might have visited, had he been a free man. Yet, since he was not permitted to go out, he invited the leaders of the Jewish community to come and see him where he was staying during the first few days after his arrival in Rome. This preliminary meeting may have taken place in the house of one of Paul's friends in the city.

It was years later that Paul was "suffering evil unto

bounds as a malefactor" (i.e., wearing fetters like a criminal, 2 Tim.2:9). Yet the two years of house arrest under military custody (Acts 28:30) are described as follows:* "Paul was treated in Rome with the utmost leniency. He was allowed to hire a house or a lodging in the city, and live there at his own convenience under the surveillance of a soldier who was responsible for his presence when required. A light chain fastened Paul's wrist to that of the soldier. No hindrance was offered to his inviting friends into his house, or to his preaching to all who came in to him; but he was not allowed to go out freely."

THE PRELIMINARY MEETING

At the preliminary meeting with local Jewish leaders (Acts 28:17) Paul addressed them tactfully as "men, brethren," just as he had done in Jerusalem (22:1; 23:1). He pointed out that he had committed nothing against the people or the customs of the fathers. (The adjective "hereditary," *patrōois*, literally means: inherited from the fathers.) With these words Paul subtly implied that Tertullus, while speaking for the chief priest Ananias, had accused him of having tried to profane the sanctuary (among other things, *cf* Acts 24:5,6). At this juncture there was no reason for Paul to admit that he had actually become all to all, to those under law as under law, to those without law as without law (1 Cor.9:20-22). Under the circumstances it was sufficient for him to state that he was not guilty of ever having desecrated Jewish customs.

Then Paul added that his own countrymen (Jews out of Jerusalem) had given him up as a prisoner into the hands of the Romans. Yet the Roman judges found him innocent of any crime deserving bonds or the

*Ramsay: PAUL THE TRAVELLER, p.349

death penalty. As a matter of fact, they would have released him if the Jews had not contradicted. Under the circumstances the apostle had no choice in the matter but to appeal to Caesar. Paul did not go into any details for his move, i.e., that he was not willing to go before a prejudiced tribunal in Jerusalem, the more so as there was a Jewish conspiracy to assassinate him (Acts 23:15; 25:9-12).

Paul emphasized that he had no charge to bring against his nation. He meant to say that his appeal to the Roman supreme court was made to have his innocence established. Then Paul added: "For this cause, then, I called for you, to see and speak to you. For on account of *the expectation of Israel* this chain is lying about me."

THE EXPECTATION OF ISRAEL

The first occurrence of *elpis* (expectation) in the New Testament is in Acts 2:26, where Peter is quoting from the Septuagint text of Psalm 16:8-11 (my flesh also shall be tenting *in expectation*). In his explanation of David's prophetic words, Peter said, that the Psalmist spoke concerning the *resurrection* of the Christ, that He was neither forsaken in the unseen, nor was His flesh acquainted with decay (2:31).

There is another occurrence of *elpis* in Acts 23:6 where Paul addressed the Sanhedrin as a Pharisee and said: "Concerning *the expectation and resurrection* of the dead am *I* being judged" (*cf* 23:6-8). Here we have a figure of speech (hendyadis: one by [means of] two) where two nouns express a single notion even though they are connected by the conjunction "and"; hence Paul had the expectation *of* the resurrection in mind, since all Pharisees agreed in the resurrection of the dead in general. Of course, Paul and a few other

Pharisees (*cf* Acts 15:5) believed that Israel's expectation had been fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ.

The next occurrence of *elpis* is in Acts 24 when Paul stood before governor Felix and said, that he believed all that is written, according to the law and in the prophets, having an *expectation in God,* which these themselves [the majority of the nation] also are anticipating, that there shall be a *resurrection* which is impending for both the just and the unjust (24:14,15). In his closing sentence the apostle referred to his former statement in the Sanhedrin (yet omitting the word "expectation"): "Concerning the *resurrection* of the dead am I being judged today by you" (24:21).

There are two more occurrences of *elpis* in Acts 26:6,7 when Paul stood before governor Festus and king Agrippa. Here the apostle stated: "In *expectation of the promise* which came by God to our fathers, I stand being judged, to which our twelve-tribed people, earnestly offering divine service night and day, is expecting to attain. Concerning which *expectation* I am being indicted by Jews, O king! Why is it being judged unbelievable by you, if God is rousing the dead?"

So Paul's words in Acts 28:20 (on account of the *expectation of Israel* this chain is lying about me) are to be understood in the context of the apostle's previous statements of this matter. For him (and some other Pharisees) Israel's expectation had been fulfilled almost thirty years before, in the resurrection of the crucified Messiah.

A DIPLOMATIC ANSWER

"Now they say to him, 'Neither do *we* receive letters concerning you from Judea, nor do any of the brethren coming along report or speak anything

wicked concerning you. Now we count it worthwhile to hear from you what your disposition is. For, indeed, concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is being contradicted' " (Acts 28:21,22).

The Jewish leaders denied any knowledge of Paul's case. No letters concerning him had been received from the Sanhedrin and no derogatory information from visitors while his case was pending for two years (24:27). Then the apostle had appealed to Caesar, probably in late September or early October when the hazardous season for navigation in the Mediterranean had already begun. Hence no visitor from Judea could have brought this latest news about him during the cloudy winter months when shipping across the open sea was at a standstill. So it was natural enough that the apostle himself was the first to advise the Jewish leaders of the latest development in his case. They had, of course, some second-hand information about the sect that was contradicted everywhere. But they counted it worthwhile to hear what his views were and appointed a day for him. Then more of them came to hear what Paul had to say.

THAT WHICH CONCERNS THE KINGDOM OF GOD

"Now setting a day for him, more came to him in the lodging, to whom he expounded, *certifying to the kingdom of God,* besides persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning till dusk. And these, indeed, were persuaded by what is said, yet others disbelieved. Now there being disagreements one with another, they [began to] break up"* (Acts 28:23-25).

*In 1946, Bro. A. E. Knoch published a long treatise about the Greek middle voice form (vol.37, pp.147,149,229,265). In the sub-linear of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT the middle is indicated by

Paul's last words to the departing Jewish leaders were quoted from Isaiah 6:9,10. This prophecy has had a threefold fulfillment in Israel: when they rejected Yahweh in Isaiah's day, when they rejected the Lord (Matt.13:14,15), and, in the present instance (Acts 28:26,27), when they rejected the testimony of the spirit, through His apostles. Israel, in part, has become calloused, until the complement of the nations may be entering (Rom.11:25; *cf* CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p. 225).

Hence the apostle said in his closing sentence: "Let it be known to you, then, that to the nations was dispatched this salvation of God, and *they* will hear" (28:28). Peter had been the first to witness this trend, when he admitted to Cornelius: "Of a truth, I am grasping that God is not partial, but in every nation he who is fearing Him and acting righteously is acceptable to Him" (Acts 10:34,35). Later he even said that through his mouth the nations are to hear and believe (15:7). As for the Jews, he had come to realize: "Through the grace of the Lord Jesus we are believing, to be saved in [the same] manner even as they" (15:11).

The two occurrences of the term "the kingdom of God" at the *end* of Acts (28:23,31) remind us of its occurrence right at the *beginning* of this book (1:3). After His resurrection, our Lord Jesus Christ told the

---

the passive in *italic* type (37/272), such as in Acts 28:25, THEY-*were*-FROM-LOOSED, in our version: they [were] dismissed°, with the symbol ° for the middle voice form, since "the *passive* is not in the Greek; neither is the active" (37/272). In Acts 15:33 we have a true Greek passive: they were dismissed, *apeluthêsan*, while the Greek in 28:25 is *apeluonto*, for which we may tentatively say: they [began to] break up°, since this seems to fit the context, as there were disagreements among the Jewish visitors.

apostles that which concerns *the kingdom of God.* Yet the restoration of the earthly kingdom to Israel was quietly set aside (1:6,7). Later we hear of Philip (8:12) who brought the evangel concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ to Samaria. When Paul entreated the young disciples in Pisidian Antioch and elsewhere to remain in the faith, he told them: "Through many afflictions must we be entering into the kingdom of God" (14:22).

Later, in the Ephesian synagogue, the apostle "spoke boldly for three months, arguing and persuading as to that which concerns the kingdom of God" (19:8), just as he did in Rome for a full day, "certifying to the kingdom of God, besides persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and the prophets" (28:23). And then we read at the very end of Acts: "Now he remains two whole years in his own hired house, and he welcomed all those going in to him, heralding the kingdom of God, and teaching that which concerns the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unforbidden."

Wherever God's rule is acknowledged, that is His kingdom. In his epistles, Paul mentions it a dozen times, such as in 1 Thessalonians 2:12, attesting to us to be walking worthily of God, Who calls us into His own kingdom and glory.

GOD GIVES THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR

Brother Dean Hough commented on this statement as follows: "*Even as it is written, God gives them a spirit of stupor, eyes not to be observing, and ears not to be hearing, till this very day* (Rom.11:8). The Scriptures (*cf* Deut.29:4; Isa.6:9,10; 29:10) testify to the fact that this callousing of Israel is the work of God. It does not require faith to recognize the blindness of

Israel or the stubbornness of the unbeliever. This is obvious, and it is the very matter that has caused distress. Hence by dwelling on this fact so extensively and by relating it to God's operations, the apostle Paul brings us to a point of crisis. There is no course open to us except that of faith, relating the whole problem of Israel's spirit of stupor (and that of the world in general) to God's essential character of love and ultimate goal of good. Since the God of mercy does the callousing and gives the spirit of stupor, no matter how long that stubbornness may continue it cannot be eternal. For Israel it has lasted "till this very day," but it is in preparation for and will be replaced by a future day when all Israel will encounter God's righteousness."* H.H.R.

Unsearchable Riches, vol.74, p.278

SUMMER CONFERENCES

Arrangements have again been made, as in 1986, for a Scripture conference in Greenville, South Carolina during the month of June. This year the dates are June 12-14. The Lord willing, Jim Coram will be speaking on the theme, "Those Who are Loving God." For information, please contact Alvin Robinson (Box 333, Marietta, SC 29661; 803/836-3110).

This year the annual Baldwin Summer Fellowship is scheduled for July 31-August 2. Pastor Lloyd Hibberd (Box 84, Baldwin, MI 49304; 616/745-7562) announces that the theme will be "The Great Things of God." For many years the Baldwin Fellowship has been a time of rich fellowship around the Word of God, with special attention nearly always being given to the untraceable riches of Christ and the eventual salvation of all mankind.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 1987
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SEVENTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

RECENTLY in a meeting we were discussing Paul's teaching on justification. And we noticed how the apostle made frequent reference to Old Testament passages and incidents, especially in Romans 4, while presenting this aspect of the evangel. As a result, the question came up: Does Paul really present anything new on this matter?

Indeed he does. Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness (Gen.15:6), and in this respect there is a true parallel to what Paul was saying (*cf* Rom.4:23-25). But Abraham's justification was related to one single, righteous experience and not at all to the fact that he was a sinner. (Indeed, as to his sins, Abraham was not, and could not be, justified.) Yet Paul tells us of justification for all, and he relates this directly to the fact that "all sinned" (Rom. 3:21-24).

David sang of a glorious hope where God would not reckon sin against a person (Psalm 32:1,2), but he had no basis for expecting its realization. Yet Paul announces this very welcome achievement in Romans 4:3-12.

We walk in Abraham's footprints insofar as we believe what God says to us. But what God says to us is quite different from what He said to Abraham. The evangel reveals that Christ died for us while we were still sinners, and that we are justified in His blood

(Rom.5:8-9), and this is far more than Abraham received. We, who probably lacked David's longing, have received a full justification based on the obedience of Christ, and this is a superabundant grace and gratuity (Rom.5:17).

In his series on prayer (currently being reprinted in this magazine), Bro. A. E. Knoch traced the changes that have come about in the pattern of prayer, while also showing that its central place in our lives remains the same or actually becomes more important. In this issue, Bro. Coram refers to the endurance and consolation of the Scriptures (p.175) in revealing God's ways. And Bro. Rocke deals with the subject of obedience both in Deuteronomy and in Romans (p.165). Many themes in Paul's letters have their roots in the Hebrew Scriptures. Yet it is the context of grace based on the faithful obedience of Christ that causes all these themes to blossom out into something new in the epistles of Paul. Persevering in prayer relates partly to our perception of the secrets now being revealed. (Besides Bro. Knoch's article, note those by Brothers Essex and Scranton on this matter.) God's deity is now revealed not only in His relationship with Israel, but with all mankind, and in every event and incident of our lives. And so, too, our obedience is not a requirement in order to gain or keep God's favor, but it is a part of that changed life that results from an appreciation of God's overwhelming favor already given to us in Christ Jesus.

All of God's Word is important. All Scripture is inspired and beneficial (2 Tim.3:16). Yet its benefits are increased as we recognize the way in which Paul completes (Col.1:25) and brings to full fruition so many of its glorious themes

D.H.H.

SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR TODAY

GOD'S WORD AND WORK should be the special subject of persevering prayer by the saints in this administration of God's grace. Paul's epistles provide the precepts, and Paul himself is our pattern in this, as in all else (1 Cor.4:16; 11:1; 1 Thess.1:6; Phil.3:17). He prayed for us that God would give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, in order to know Him (Eph.1:17). He pled with the believers to pray for the secret of the evangel (Eph.6:18), and of Christ (Col.4:2), and for deliverance from those who opposed his message (Rom. 15:30). May we give these a special place in our petitions!

Since the shadows are past and the light of noonday is shining in Paul's evangel to the nations, we should search his epistles if we desire to discover God's mind as to prayer for the present. To accord with our unparalleled nearness to Him in spirit, it is given a much larger place there than in any other part of God's revelation. *More than half of the doctrinal division of Ephesians, which is pre-eminently the charter of the church, is presented in a series of prayers!* God, instead of telling us directly of the transcendent grace which He lavishes upon us, puts this in the heart of Paul in the shape of a petition for us, thus enhancing its preciousness by the very form in which it appears.

One who has been enlightened by God's holy spirit through Paul's epistles will find that it operates in complete harmony with His Word. When the glorious gospel of the conciliation becomes ours, the burden is laid upon our hearts to reach others with it. When the secret of Christ's headship over all dawns upon us, we wish to herald it abroad. When we learn of our own celestial honors, we are pressed to share these glories with all the saints. When we find out that all mankind will be saved, who can stop us from making it known? All these things, received through God's spirit, spontaneously ascend and return to Him as sweet incense, the thanksgiving and petition and prayer. And when these truths are opposed, we cannot help pleading for those who hinder, as well as those who help to make them known.

The dire need of persevering prayer for these things is far more apparent today than when Paul penned his requests, for just these lines of truth practically disappeared soon after the apostle's day, and almost nothing has been heard of them since. In all the writings of the early "Christian fathers" and even of the Reformation, what place is given to the secrets of the evangel, or of Christ, or of this administration? Even today they are nearly unknown "mysteries," as the Authorized Version aptly, but unhappily, describes them. Even the truth of the salvation of all mankind has found only a feeble following.

An incident that has just occurred may help us to realize how dense is the darkness, even in regard to the one of Paul's prayers which has found little response in our own day. A committee has constituted itself among so-called Fundamentalists which seeks to serve the saints by exposing all departures from the truth. They do, indeed, show that almost every division of

Christendom is contrary to the Scriptures, and are doubtless doing much good work. But when it comes to the special subjects of Paul's prayers, they seem not only utterly ignorant, but bitterly hostile. They denounce the teaching that all mankind shall be saved as a "hellish" doctrine, and thus revile all who hold it.

Their teaching, not Paul's, may indeed be called "hellish," without giving offense (Rom.14:13). They apparently hold that all unbelievers will be tormented forever and ever in "hell," or the lake of fire. We have submitted this statement to them before publication, lest we should accuse them falsely, for we do not wish to misrepresent even the worst enemies of the truth. But the word "hell" has been repudiated by us, as well as by the Revisers and all intelligent students of the Scriptures. It is not a correct equivalent of the Hebrew *sheol,* the Greek *hades,* or of *Gehenna,* or of the lake of fire, so should not appear in a translation of God's Word. It is an *unsound* expression, to be *shunned.* Hence our teaching is far from "hellish" as it can possibly be.

In Webster's dictionary, the traditional authority of the United States, "hellish" is defined as follows: "Of or pertaining to hell; like hell; infernal; malignant, wicked, detestable, diabolical." We ourselves once held the doctrine of eternal torment for all unbelievers, yet now humbly acknowledge, along with all who still have a spark of feeling for their fellows in their breasts, that nothing imaginable could be more malignant, or wicked, or detestable, especially on the part of the Deity, Who is love, Who wills that all mankind will be saved and come into a realization of the truth, and on the part of Christ, Who is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all, of which Paul was appointed a herald and an apostle (1 Tim.2:4-7).

But what is at all like hell, malignant, wicked, detestable, diabolical, or "hellish," in the teaching that God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), so that He not only wills, but *will save* all mankind and *justify* all mankind (Rom.5:18), and *reconcile* all to Himself through the blood of Christ's cross, whether on the earth or in the heavens (Col.1:20)? This is *heavenly,* not hellish! This glorifies *God,* not Satan! It honors *Christ,* not the Adversary! Paul entreats us to *pray* and *plead* and *give thanks* for all mankind, not to *damn* them (1 Tim.2:1-4)!

Instead of falling in line with God's great program, the Christian world, or system, has used prayer as one of the best instruments of error. "Christians" in name only, who did not possess the spirit of God, and lukewarm believers, considering prayer as a sacred duty, fell into futile formalities. Petitions were written or printed, to be read or repeated by rote. A prayer for every day is considered a very spiritual program. But one of the worst mistakes was the adoption of the "Lord's Prayer" as the standard form for the layman. Not only among Roman Catholics is the "Paternoster" a religious exercise of great merit, but even in Sunday Schools of more enlightened lands it is impressed on the pupils' young minds as if it were a talisman to heaven. It not only leads to hypocrisy but entirely distorts the truth which is ours in Christ Jesus today.

This has been the experience of the writer of these lines: The title page of an early edition of his first book, THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, contained the following: "Praying . . . for me, that utterance may be given to me to open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel." Thereafter followed expositions of the secret of Christ and of this admin-

istration, and a pamphlet "All in All," setting forth the salvation of all mankind. All of this aroused much opposition and fierce defamation, and will continue to do so until the end, for this is according to God's purpose. Even this should call forth thanksgiving. We may well echo our Lord's prayer: "I am acclaiming Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for Thou hidest these things from the wise and intelligent, and Thou dost reveal them to minors" (Matt.11:25).

Paul's greatest prayer for the saints began with ceaseless thanksgiving for them, and was directed to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory (Eph.1:16-17). This is an introduction worthy of the theme, for all blessing has its source in God, and its channel in Christ, Who is our Saviour, and Whom we obey as Lord. Let us always seek to open our prayers by acknowledging Him in the character which accords with the subject of our petitions. This is addressed to God as the One Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials (1:3), that we may appreciate His blessings. It is no longer our need as children that is in view, so He is not seen as *our* Father, but the Father of *glory*. He it is Who endows with the glorious riches, concerning which Paul prays.

Briefly summarized, Paul prays for a *spirit*. This is the greatest need today. We all crave material blessings, food and shelter, health and wealth. It is very striking, in the opening of this epistle, that we are not endowed with physical blessings on the earth, as Israel will be in the kingdom. We are not even assured of bodily welfare among the celestials. These things are necessary, but not nearly so scarce or valuable as an endowment with spiritual wisdom and revelation to enable us to know God and His plans and purpose for us. He wishes us to know what He has in store for us in

the future, and what will be our lot, and the power at His command to carry all of this to completion.

This demands a spirit of wisdom and revelation, which God alone can give. All saints have a measure of God's spirit. A special spirit of wisdom will be wary, for there are many deceiving spirits in the world. The forces of wickedness are spiritual (Eph.6:12). There is a need of discrimination (1 Cor.12:10). When the spirits disagree with the Scriptures, or even with one another, we may be sure that they are evil, no matter how much they attract us, or operate in us to perform wonders. At various times in the history of the church, there has been a yielding to spirit forces, by means of passivity, or marvelous manifestations, but none of them have ever led the saints into the glorious riches which Paul reveals in this prayer. They were devoid of this wisdom and lacked this revelation.

Without this spirit of wisdom the rich revelations of the prison epistles cannot be apprehended. If anyone has not realized these rare disclosures, it is because this spirit is lacking. Let everyone who seeks to understand God's highest unfoldings, as given in this epistle, first of all pray for this spirit. But this is not enough. No one has ever discovered the secrets here revealed apart from the written Word. God's spirit inspired the Scriptures. His spirit is not imparted to the saints to enable them to perceive light *apart* from the Scriptures, but *through* the written record. Wisdom demands that there be two witnesses to the truth. The spirits that ignore the written revelation disagree among themselves. The spirit that cleaves close to the record alone will bring us into harmony with each other and with the spirit of God.

Wisdom will seek to discern the spirits. There are so many divergent ones, each trumpeting itself, that no

one can accept them all. The matter is much simplified if we have the overwhelming conviction that the Scriptures are inspired by God and were set down in writing by means of His holy spirit. Then they become the one and sufficient test as to the spirits, if they are of God. The most dangerous of all spirits is one that rejects this test, and claims individual inspiration, or a super-inspiration which imposes its message above the sacred text. None of these has ever even discovered, much less revealed, the secret wisdom of the present administration, which was hid in God, until it was revealed in writing and made known through the pen of the apostle Paul from his Roman prison.

God is the source of all wisdom. Creatures are confined to apparent appearances. He sees through all outward forms to the very heart. He alone knows the end at the very beginning. And He only can use evil to produce good. So wisdom consists in getting a God's-eye view, of seeing everything from His standpoint. In the Scriptures wisdom will remove the veil from all previous revelation, and show how it prepared for the present. It will transform each seeming setback into a magnificent success. The present is the fruit of much apparent failure, and gets its flavor from defeat. Wisdom will doubt all human testimony and believe God. We should even mistrust the evidence of our own spirit unless corroborated by the documentary evidence of God's holy spirit.

THE DOUBLE WITNESS

Wisdom demands a double witness. This world is full of illusions and deceptions, so every vital matter should rest upon the testimony of two or three. Even men of the world protect their property by legal

papers, attested by witnesses. Their private convictions, their own declarations, carry little weight in a court of law. So the opinions of the saint, or his asseverations, the fruit of his own spirit, are a frail foundation for faith. If he differs from others, one or both are bound to be false. Even if two or millions agree, that is no guarantee. A single certified document may prove all to be mistaken. The saint who has God's spirit should rest only in the divine documents, which alone can give safety and certitude.

This wise precaution should guide us in everything which has been touched and tainted by human hands, even in determining the authenticity of the sacred text itself. Men make mistakes, no matter how hard they try to avoid them. Probably no manuscripts which have come down to us from ancient times were so carefully copied and compared as the sacred scrolls of the Scriptures. Even the three most ancient and best differ slightly from one another. But it would be unwise to take one to the exclusion of the others, and it would be foolish to accept a poor one which is contrary to all the rest. In the providence of God, these, the most precious and important documents for our faith, are preserved practically perfect, when their testimony is combined. That is why they are given in the Concordant Greek Text. There is no question as to the written record of the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus.

In the Hebrew the matter is far more difficult, so that much more wisdom from above is needed. With the exception of Isaiah, the oldest records come to us through a Greek version. Although this differs in many details from the traditional Hebrew which has been handed down to us, as a whole there is substantial agreement. Much more than mere knowledge of the

facts is needed, though these must be the basis of any restoration. Perhaps the greatest aid is a knowledge of God such as Paul pleads for in his prayer. Complementing this is an insight into the failings of mortal men, the prejudices of the people and the mistakes of copyists. To this we may then add the aid of double witnesses, such as are provided by complementary accounts and parallel passages, and especially the recurrences of the same word, in order to determine its divine definition, as used by the spirit of God.

Even in the written record, the truth is safeguarded by *repetition*. The narrative in the book of Acts is complemented by Paul's epistles. Romans is reiterated and reinforced by Galatians and the Corinthian letters. Ephesians has its echo in Philippians and Colossians. One part corroborates the other.

This wise precaution has been carried to its limits by the spirit of God in the very words of inspiration. There is no inspired lexicon telling us what each term signifies, such as is provided by some philosophies. Theosophy issues a special handbook defining its vocabulary. But the inspired documents have done even better by means of repetition. The meaning of a phrase or a word or an element is fixed by its usage. Hitherto this has been largely ignored. Men prefer their false opinions, and translate according to the dictates of a deceiving spirit, rather than in accord with the spirit of God. Hence it is wise to use the same symbol where it is repeated, wherever language will allow.

How different with the wisdom of the world! God will destroy it. He makes it stupid (1 Cor.1:19). The reasonings of the wise are vain (1 Cor.3:20). In the truth for today we learn of the depths of God's wisdom (Rom.8:33). It is a secret wisdom (1 Cor.2:7). It is a multifarious wisdom (Eph.3:10). But our spirits are

not equipped to entertain it, apart from a special gift from God. Paul has given expression to it in the previous part of this epistle (Eph.1:3-12). But how few are there, even of those saints who may be called spiritual, who have been able to grasp the wisdom in this marvelous revelation! How few have even felt the need of a spirit of wisdom, or prayed for it!

Before the Concordant Version was made or any of the literature written, there was persistent prayer for this spirit of wisdom and revelation. Nor has it ever ceased. The fearful lack of it in dealing with the Bible has become more and more apparent, and the need of it more evident. Not only was it necessary to pray for it in order to recover this crowning revelation of God, but now, even after it has been expounded at length, it is needed to apprehend the expositions! So let us pray, not only for ourselves, but join Paul in his prayer for all saints for this special spirit, so that they may realize the greatness of God's grace. A.E.K.

CONFERENCES

Conferences scheduled for the next few months and addresses for further information are as follows:

July 31-August 2 in Baldwin, Michigan (Grace and Truth Chapel, Box 84, Baldwin, MI 49304).

August 29 in Lansing, Michigan (Leonard Bowerman, 229 S. Detroit St., Lansing, MI 48912).

August 29-September 1 near Nottingham, England (Mrs. J. M. Orton, 58 Moore Lane, Bramcote, Notts. NG9 3FH, England).

September 4-7 in northwestern Washington State (Harold E. Jones, 21716 98th Ave. West, Edmonds, WA 98020).

September 19 in Grand Rapids, Michigan (Raymond Van Dyke, 4993 Plainfield Ave. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505).

October 2-4 in Baldwin, Michigan (Grace and Truth Chapel, Box 84, Baldwin, MI 49304).

October 9-11 in Brevard, North Carolina (Mary Bachand, Route 1 Box 192C, Brevard, NC 28712).

GRACE AND MATURITY

Now to each one of us was given grace in accord with the measure of the gratuity of Christ (Eph.4:7).

"To each one of us." This emphasizes the fact that the ecclesia is built up of many members, though it is to be regarded as a corporate whole. As the body and complement of Christ, it is a single unit; nevertheless, it is composed of individual members who have to be adjusted to accept the realities of their united status. For one thing, they do not receive their favors through Israel, but directly from God, Who blesses them, not with the blessings reserved for that nation, but "with all spiritual blessings among the celestials, in Christ" (Eph.1:3). Again they have to grow into a new state of maturity, compatible and commensurate with their enhanced station. This is what the apostle will be telling us in the next few verses.

To bridge the gap between our former earthly life and our new celestial calling, *each one* has been given grace. This grace is sufficient for each one's needs, since it is not based on our estimates of our requirements, but on God's valuation, and He withholds nothing from us, but along with Christ is "graciously granting us all" (Rom.8:32). In 1 Corinthians 1:30 we read that Christ "became to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and

deliverance." In other words, when we were chosen as individuals out of humanity, Christ made up for all our shortcomings by becoming all to us. Paul puts it another way in Romans 6:4, where he writes, "We, then, were entombed together with Him through baptism into death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in newness of life."

In the Ephesian epistle, we are seen as chosen in God's beloved Son from before the disruption of the world, and the apostle desires us to adjust our minds to this fact, and to grow in the realization of what it means to be part of the body, the complement of Christ. God "gives Him, *as Head over all,* to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement by which He is completing the all in all." It needs grace to enable us to grasp the magnitude and marvel of this passage, and yet remain humble before God.

There is a beautiful paragraph in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 51, page 277, which reads, "God's grace was the gift Paul cherished above all others. Yet we can receive it for naught (2 Cor.6:1). We can neglect it, hinder it, and even oppose it. Yet we cannot deny receiving it, for 'to each one of us was given grace in accord with the measure of the gratuity of Christ.' No one has been left out. His grace is sufficient for all. Everyone can lay hold of all the grace he will need to fulfill whatever task has been entrusted to him by his Lord. Everyone has been given the longing to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:13). Yearning to please Him is the *normal* state in a true life of faith."

Between verses 7 and 16 of Ephesians 4, we are much concerned with measures. In verse 7 we have "the measure of the gratuity of Christ"; in verse 13 we

read of "the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ"; and in verse 16 Paul writes, "in measure of each one's part." In the first of these, Christ gives to each one so that he may be built up into the second, so that in the third he is playing his full part in contributing to the upbuilding of the whole.

Wherefore He is saying, Ascending on high, He captures captivity and gives gifts to mankind (Eph.4:8).

Paul was well acquainted with the Sacred Scriptures, and quite often, guided by God's spirit, he quotes passages from the Hebrew writings (Old Testament) and applies them to the presentation of the evangel which he was commissioned to dispense. Here he quotes from Psalm 68, which is a song of triumph.

Paul well knew what captivity meant. At the time he wrote these lines, he was incarcerated in Rome. He was aware also of a perpetual battle within himself, a struggle between flesh and spirit, in which the flesh would always have the tendency to lead him into captivity to the law of sin which was in his members (Rom.7:23). Likewise, he was well versed in the Mosaic law, which had the effect of captivating all who were under it. To say that Christ "captures captivity" is another way of saying, "For freedom Christ frees us" (Gal.5:1). Elsewhere Paul speaks of "the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24). Christ is risen and ascended on high, and that fact alone assures us that His sacrifice on behalf of all has been accepted by God. Because of this, He is able to give gifts to mankind.

Now the "He ascended," what is it except that He first descended also into the lower parts of the earth?

He Who descends is the Same Who ascends also, up over all who are of the heavens, that He should be completing all (4:9,10).

The apostle is concerned that we should have no doubts about the fact that his commission was from the risen Christ, and not from Jesus while on earth. He makes it very clear that the One Who came down to earth is now the One Who has ascended on high. He is now "among the celestials," where our future ministry will be located. In another place, we are urged to be seeking that which is above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. We should be disposed to that which is above, and not to that on the earth, for we have died to the latter, and our life is hid with Christ in God. Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then we also shall be manifested together with Him in glory (Col.3:1-4).

In Philippians 3:20, Paul tells us that "our realm is inherent in the heavens." That is to say, it *belongs* there and has never belonged anywhere else, just as Peter was "inherently a Jew" (Gal.2:14) and the beggar at the door of the sanctuary was "inherently lame from his mother's womb" (Acts 3:2). Neither had ever been different.

Verse 10 of Ephesians 4 picks up the truths expressed in chapter 1, verses 20-23. Christ is exalted above all, that He should be completing all. In the first chapter, we read that He is given as Head over all to the ecclesia, which is His body, and through which (as His complement) He will be completing the all in all.

And the same One gives these, indeed, as apostles, yet these as prophets, yet these as evangelists, yet these as pastors and teachers (4:11).

To accord again with the number of grace, which is

a feature of this epistle, we have *five* categories into which those who minister to the ecclesia are classified. These classes are not necessarily mutually exclusive; on the contrary, the same person can be in several or all of these categories. Apostles are those sent forth with a mission; prophets are those who stand (as it were) before God to aver His truths or His intentions; evangelists are those with glad tidings to preach; pastors are those who look after the welfare of the ecclesia; while teachers are those who give instruction and untangle difficulties. But all operate with one aim in view, namely:

. . . toward the adjusting of the saints for the work of dispensing, for the upbuilding of the body of Christ (4:12). Our ministry at the present time is primarily on behalf of the fellow members of the ecclesia rather than toward humanity in general. Of course, as we have occasion, we should "be working for the good of all, yet *specially* for the family of faith" (Gal.6:10). If we look upon our life today as preparation for our ministry among the celestials in the oncoming eons (Eph.2:7), then we could regard the present period as a time for schooling ourselves in readiness.

The members of the ecclesia need "processing" (to use a modern term) to make them ready for their future ministry, which is one of conciliation, for which they alone are given the dispensation (2 Cor.5:18). They need adjusting and upbuilding, but while the adjusting is an individual requirement, the upbuilding is a corporate one. We need to become realistically aware that we are members of *one body*, and our aim should be to work for its constructive development.

. . . unto the end that we should all attain to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of

God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ (Eph.4:13).

This is the climax to which the apostle has been leading us. Christ is the dearly beloved Son of God, and we are each a part of the ecclesia which is His body. He is our Head, and at the same time Sovereign of the universe (Col.1:18). Our expectation is that these present bodies of our humiliation will be so transfigured as to conform them to His body of glory (Phil.3:21). It is impossible to imagine a greater and more glorious future than God has prescribed for us. Let us live in anticipation of it, but above all, let us try to assimilate what it means to be a son of God, a mature man, the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ.

In verse 3 of this chapter we were exhorted to endeavor to *keep* the unity of the spirit; now in verses 13-16 we are shown how we may *attain to* the unity of the faith. In another context, where Paul speaks of something to which he should be attaining, he says, "Not that I already obtained, or am already perfected, yet I am pursuing . . ." (Phil.3:11,12). This should be our attitude toward attaining the unity of the faith. It is something to be earnestly sought and striven for, for in striving for it we move ever closer to maturity.

Back in Romans, we were declared to be sons of God (Rom.8:14). But sons grow up and mature as they become older. Here in Ephesians we reach the *adult* stature of a son of God. We reach *mature* manhood. When God created humanity He had in mind, not a temporary soulish humanity headed by Adam, but a permanent spiritual humanity headed up by Christ. The soulish humanity fulfilled its purpose, and at the same time settled its own fate when it crucified the Lord of glory; it lingers on because the world as a

whole does not recognize that, in God's purpose, it has been superseded. The new humanity will fulfill its purpose when it sees the whole universe reconciled to God. Let us rejoice in the fact that we are even now part of this new humanity which is being created in righteousness and benignity of the truth (Eph.4:24). "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new!" (2 Cor.5:17).

If we are fully mature, fully grown up spiritually, we should be ready to grasp what is meant by "the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ." The structure of this phrase, and others similar, was commented upon in an earlier article in this series (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol.76, p.118). Also the meaning of the complement of Christ, with reference to the ecclesia, was discussed at length in another article in the same volume (pp.265-272). It would be helpful to the reader to review these studies.

Also, at this point, let us read Colossians 1:15-20, where it is said of Christ, "Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him. And He is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens."

With our finite minds, we can only faintly grasp the magnitude and the majesty of the One so described.

How breathtaking is the thought that we are to be fully associated with Him in His work of reconciling the whole universe to God! This is a development only revealed in the prison letters of Paul. It is the maturity hinted at in 1 Corinthians 13:10.

It was Paul's desire that he should be able to present every man mature in Christ Jesus (Col.1:28). To him it was a toil and a struggle, but one that he gladly undertook for the sake of the ecclesia. He was able to speak of his fellow believers as his glory and joy. They would be to him as a wreath of rejoicing, in front of our Lord Jesus, in His presence (1 Thess.2:19,20; Phil.4:1).

To summarize what we have been saying: the gratuity of Christ is the ability given to us by Him to enable each one to fulfill his part in the complement. We need have no fear that we shall fail in any way, for we shall be operating, not in our own strength, but in that of Christ Who is our Head. This will be true of us all in the oncoming eons. The glories of Christ's Headship surpass all that we can express or imagine, and human thoughts are equally inadequate to describe the marvel and the closeness of our association with Him *as His complement.* To think that He will be carrying out His Father's loving purpose *through us* until it is finally consummated at the end of the eons, and that *through us* He will be able to hand back a completely reconciled kingdom to God, that He may be All in all—these thoughts are far too stupendous for us to grasp in all their fullness. Yet we accept by faith the statement of the apostle, "Now unto Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus, for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!" (Eph.3:20,21). John H. Essex

SECOND ADDRESS OF MOSES TO THE POST-SINAI GENERATION

CITIES OF REFUGE IN TRANSJORDAN; this is the topic of a short note, following the conclusion of Moses' first address in the country of Moab (Deut.1:5). This note (4:41-43) reminds us of an order that Yahweh had given Moses when He had spoken to him in the plains of Moab along the Jordan across from Jericho. At that time Yahweh had made provision for the tribe of Levi since it would have no allotted tribal territory in Canaan (*cf* Num.18:20-24; 35:1-8). The other tribes would have to support the Levites by giving a tenth of their agricultural produce to them and by assigning to them 48 cities with the surrounding common pasture lands (35:7). Six of these Levite cities should become asylum cities (three in Canaan, and three in Transjordan) where a manslayer could take refuge (Num.35:13-15).

Hence "Moses separated three cities in Transjordan toward the sunrise, for the fleeing there of the manslayer who slays his associate without knowledge, when he was not hating him heretofore. Then he will flee to one of these cities that he may live: Bezer in the wilderness in the tableland country for the Reubenite, and Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadite, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassite" (Deut.4:41-43).

Golan, the northernmost city of refuge, was probably located to the east of the Sea of Galilee. The hill-country of Golan Heights (northeast of Israel and southwest of Syria) has been named after this city. Ramoth in Gilead was situated to the south of the watercourse of Jabbok (*cf* Deut.2:37), while the exact location of Bezer is not known; it was presumably located to the north or northeast of Aroer (*cf* Deut.3:12), in the wilderness of the tableland country for the Reubenite.

THIS IS THE LAW

"This is the law that Moses placed before the sons of Israel. These are the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments that Moses pronounced to the sons of Israel when they had come forth from Egypt, in Transjordan in the ravine opposite Beth-peor*, in the country of Sihon, king of the Amorite, who was dwelling in Heshbon, whom Moses and the sons of Israel smote when they had come forth from Egypt. Then they tenanted his country and the country of Og, king of Bashan, two kings of the Amorite who were in Transjordan toward the sunrise, from Aroer, which is on the ridge above the watercourse of Arnon and as far as Mount Sirion (that is Hermon), and all the Transjordan Aravah toward the sunrise and as far as the sea of the Aravah** below the slopes of the Pisgah ridge" (Deut.4:44-49).

---

*Beth-peor (Deut.3:29; 4:46; 34:6; Josh.13:20), presumably the same place as, or close to, Baal-peor (Num.25:3,5; Deut.4:3; Psalm 106:28) where the Canaanite Baal of Peor was worshiped. Beth-peor was probably situated east of the Jordan, opposite Jericho, in one of the wadis leading into the Pisgah mountainous area.

**i.e., the Salt Sea (Deut.3:17)

This long introduction to the second address of Moses (in Chapters 5 through 26) reminds us of the geographical and historical data given in the preliminary section (Deut.1:1-5) that preceded his first address.

The *law* (that Moses is about to present and expound) comprises all the testimonies, statutes and judgments which were proclaimed to the sons of Israel at Horeb/Sinai after they had come forth from Egypt (4:44,45).

In those days political treaties (such as those between Egypt and its vassal nations) used to begin with a historical prologue to *antecedent events* that had led to the contractual agreement (*cf* historical review in Deut.1:8-3:17). When Yahweh formulated the terms of His covenant with Israel, He used the pattern of secular covenants which were certainly familiar to Moses. The main body of such a political treaty comprised both general and detailed stipulations. Since we have in Deuteronomy a *duplicate of the law*, we are going to find in this book the same sequence of statements and provisions for *the renewal of the Sinai covenant*. Thus, in his second address, Moses expounds the general covenant stipulations in chapters 5-11, beginning with the Ten Words (the decalogue) in 5:6-21; then he deals with the detailed covenant stipulations in chapters 12-26.

SUMMONS TO HEAR, LEARN, AND OBEY

Moses called to all Israel and said to them: "Hear, Israel, the statutes and the judgments that I am speaking in your ears today, that you learn them and observe to obey them. Yahweh our Elohim, He contracted a covenant with us at Horeb. Not with our fathers did Yahweh contract this covenant, but with us

[each one of] us, these here today, all of us who are alive" (Deut.5:1-3).

Moses had concluded his first address to the post-Sinai generation with a call for obedience to the stipulations of the covenant that Yahweh had contracted with all Israel, saying: "*Hearken* to the statutes and to the judgments that I am teaching you today, to *obey* them, that you may live and may enter and tenant the land that Yahweh Elohim of your fathers is giving to you" (Deut.4:1).

In his second address (in 5:1) Moses called to *all* Israel (just as he had done in 1:1) to *hear* the statutes and the judgments. They should listen attentively (hearken or hear) so that they "*learn* them and observe to *obey* them." Moses emphasized that he was speaking in their ears, i.e., he wanted them to be all ears when he told the younger generation: "Yahweh our Elohim, He contracted a covenant with *us* at Horeb." Moses meant to say that they could identify themselves with the older generation that had been present at Horeb/Sinai. The covenant relationship with their fathers (which had been established forty years before) was a living reality for the post-Sinai generation as well.

Hence Moses added this vividly impressive statement: "Not with our fathers did Yahweh contract this covenant, but with *us*, [each one of] us, these here today, all of us who are alive." The fathers who had entered into the covenant with Yahweh, had died in the wilderness. Yet the same covenant remained in force with their descendants, all of those who had been clinging to Yahweh Elohim and were alive (*cf* Deut.4:4).

The perpetual task of every Israelite was to *learn* for himself (and to teach his sons) all that concerns this

covenant. We will not find any occurrences of the verb *learn* (including: make-learn, or teach) in the earlier books of the Old Testament. This verb does not occur in the detailed divine commands of Exodus 19:9-13 which are supplemented in Deuteronomy 4:10 where we read: "Assemble the people to Me that I may let them hear My words, so that they may *learn* to fear Me all the days that they are alive on the ground and may *teach* their sons."

We will find the terms "learn to fear" repeated in the detailed covenant stipulations concerning tithing (14:23), concerning the king's daily reading in the law (17:19), and concerning the public reading of the law to all Israel "at the end of seven years, at the celebration of the booths" (31:10-13). Fear shown in reverence and obedience was the Israelite's proper response to his Yahweh Elohim.

OBEDIENCE BASED ON UNDERSTANDING

Complete obedience to the statutes and judgments was the precondition for entering and tenanting the land about which Yahweh had sworn to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to give to them and to their seed after them (*cf* Deut.1:8; 4:1). No blind obedience was called for, but an obedience based on *understanding* the statutes and the judgments in the law. Hence they had to hearken, to *hear,* (to listen attentively), to *learn them and observe to obey.*

The summons "observe to obey" is repeated time and again, both in the general and the detailed stipulations for the renewal of the Sinai covenant. In consideration of finding full prosperity of life in the promised land, Moses warned the young generation: "Hear then, Israel, and *observe to obey* [it], that it may be well with you, and that you multiply exceed-

ingly, just as Yahweh Elohim of your fathers promised to give to you a land gushing with milk and honey" (Deut.6:3; *cf* 8:1; 11:32).

Toward the end of the detailed stipulations Moses emphasized: "This day Yahweh your Elohim is instructing you to keep these statutes and judgments, and you will *observe and obey* them with all your *heart* and with all your soul" (Deut.26:16; *cf* 12:1,32; 15:5; 17:19; 19:9). In this context we are reminded of Paul's words in Romans 6:16,17 where he speaks of *obedience from the heart.*

FACE TO FACE

"Face to face Yahweh spoke with you [all] at the mount from the midst of the fire (I was standing between Yahweh and you at that time, to tell you the word of Yahweh, for you were fearful because of the presence of the fire and did not ascend onto the mountain) . . ." (Deut.5:4,5).

In order to place special emphasis on the continuing validity of the covenant for the post-Sinai generation, Moses spoke to them as if each one of them had been present when Yahweh Elohim had addressed Israel at Horeb/Sinai from the midst of fire (Ex.19:18; Deut.4:15; 5:4). In His message to Israel, Yahweh had stated explicitly: "You yourselves have seen that from the heavens I have spoken to you [all]"(Ex.20:22). "Face to face" is a Hebrew idiomatic expression that cannot be taken literally. What is implied here, has almost an equivalent in the English term "person to person," and it means that Yahweh had spoken with Israel directly, at least to begin with. For the people were afraid of what they perceived and asked Moses: "Speak you with us that we may hear; yet Elohim must not speak with us lest we die" (Ex.20:19; *cf* Deut.5:23-27).

OBEDIENCE FROM THE HEART

"You *obey from the heart* the type of teaching to which you were given over" (Rom.6:17).

The late Brother George L. Rogers* commented on this topic as follows:

"The service of *obedience* is *for righteousness*. Had Adam obeyed God he would have escaped death and passed from a negative innocence to a positive righteousness. Faith is always obedience to a divine revelation which demands it; it is a righteous thing to obey God. The evangel calls for faith-obedience (Rom. 1:5; 16:26) as opposed to law obedience, and in that faith-obedience the saint presents himself to God for a righteous service and life . . . . Obedience from the heart evidences true faith, for with the heart the evangel is believed for righteousness." H.H.R.

(To be continued)

---

*George L. Rogers, STUDIES IN PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, extracted from pp.384 and 386

REPOSING

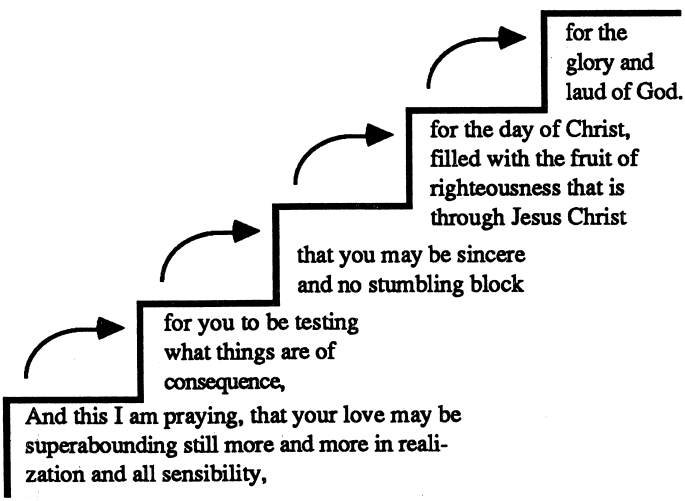
We are sorry to hear of the death last January of Brother **William F. LeFevre, Jr.**, of Shaker Heights, Ohio, at 70 years of age. He had a keen interest in the Scriptures, especially Paul's epistles. One remarkable result of his studies was his paper entitled "The Exodus Crossing of the Red Sea," based on firsthand investigations. It will be included in a list of "Selected Subjects" from the Rolex 1987 Awards. Our sympathy goes out especially to his widow and to his mother, our good friend, Matie M. LeFevre.

The Bible Fellowship of Grand Rapids, Michigan, has lost a good friend and brother in the death of **Donald P. Fongers**, aged 62, on April 29. He was a faithful supporter of the work there, as well as our own, and rejoiced in the truth of universal reconciliation and Paul's message of grace.

THE PHILIPPIAN PRAYER

PAUL'S PRAYER for the Philippians is very interesting and instructive. It takes the Philippians up a staircase of maturing that ends in the glory and laud of God. Each step upward results from reaching the step before.

Philippians 1:9-11:



The words "for" or "that" begin the phrase at each ascending step. "For" is the translation of *eis* (meaning "into"), which carries the idea of "toward a goal." The word "that" could also be translated "in order that." So both of these words, which Paul uses to link

the prayer together, are words of progression and direction.

Paul's initial request in the prayer is that their love would overflow, particularly in the areas of realization and sensibility. The Philippians had love. They exhibited their love, not only in their repeated financial support of Paul (4:16), but also in their friendship and concern for him (1:7). So evident was their love and unity in purpose with Paul that he considered them "joint participants" with him in grace (1:7).

What Paul meant by this request can best be understood by considering the results he expected it to bring. The Philippians would be "testing what things are of consequence." When their love was well seasoned with a realization of God and His purpose, and a sensibility (a perceptive awareness of the people and circumstances in their environment), their behavior would be affected. They would be circumspectly considering the outcome and lasting results of their conduct and intercourse with others.

Seldom are life's decisions easily divided into black and white or right and wrong. Choices must be made between two things that are both good, or maybe two things that are not so good. The responses made to people and situations often yield lifelong results. An alloy of love, realization and sensibility is what one needs to keep a steady hand on the disposition and a strong grip on a God-pleasing life.

"Testing things of consequence" could also have an application to beliefs. As the structure of Paul's letters implies, he was persuaded that what one believed would determine the character of conduct. The enemies of the cross (3:2,18,19), who were among the Philippians, were a negative example.

When the Philippians had a love tempered with

realization and sensibility, they would be equipped to test things of consequence. This would result in a life characterized by sincerity and constancy, and a life that was not a cause of stumbling to others. The Greek word for sincere is a compound: "sun-judge." The idea is that something has been examined in broad daylight and found free of defect. The Latin word "sincere" is also picturesque in its etymology. It is a compound of "sin," meaning "without," and "cerus," (from which we get "caries", as in dental health) meaning "rottenness." The sincere life is one with "no cavities." Sculptors sometimes used wax to hide scratches or cracks in their work. A sincere statue was one with "no wax." The scratches and cavities in one's life are often causes of stumbling to the weaker in faith. If one has an abundance of love for brothers and sisters in Christ, he will be truly concerned that he not be a detriment to their faith.

There are many blessings affixed to the life of constancy and sincerity. Respect, an honorable reputation, and helpfulness to others are only a few, but Paul focuses on something else. He rushes ahead to the day of Christ, and sees the Philippians standing before their Lord. The loving and righteous acts of their lives are many, and he sees them as trees laden with good fruit, pleasing to the Lord. Such a life honors Christ, and when Christ is honored, His God and Father is praised and glorified. How often do we stop to think, that individual decisions and actions of daily life have the potential to honor and glorify God? The glorifying of God is also the outcome of living according to the disposition of Christ (2:5-11). In many ways this is a prayer for the development of the disposition of Christ within us. May we pray it for ourselves and for each other.

J. Philip Scranton

TO GOD BE ALL THE GLORY

"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!" (Rom.11:33-36).

This is not a passage "to fall back on when everything else fails," but one that needs to be in the forefront of all our thinking. As with the events of Israel's history, everything that happens in our lives and throughout all the eons is out of God and through Him and for Him. What is written here concerning the experiences of one group of people is true of everyone.

Indeed, it is evident that "whatever was written before," throughout the Hebrew scriptures, is *representative* of God's ways with ourselves, insofar as His direction and control of human affairs is concerned. If this were not the case, those things could hardly have been "written for this teaching of ours," and it could never be "that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures we may have expectation" (Rom.15:4).

It is consolation and a source of joyful expectation to realize that man today is no more the master of his fate and captain of his soul than were his ancestors before him. For "the Supreme is in authority in the kingdom of mortals" (Dan.4:17), and "according to His will is He doing" (Dan.4:35). Were it otherwise the Scriptures could never help us to endure; they would not console us, and could never afford us expectation out of our own failures and sufferings.

It is significant that the best-known Bible stories, such as Joseph and his brothers and the terrible troubles of Job, focus directly on the work of divine providence. The explicit testimony of God's Word is that He is operating all.

According to the apostle's rhetorical question—since no one at any time already *knew* the mind of the Lord, or became His *adviser,* informing Him of things of which He as yet had not been aware, or were in need of repayment inasmuch as they had given Him something *first*—this is why the riches, wisdom and knowledge of God are so deep, His judgments inscrutable, His ways untraceable. Again, none knew His mind, advised Him, or gave anything to Him first, *seeing that* out of Him and through Him and for Him is *all:* to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen! (Rom.11:36).

THE ALL

It is clear, then, that in this passage the thought is, *all* that *is,* and *all* that *happens,* is out of, through, and for God. The words "the all," in any text, refer to all that is in view, all that is comprised in the subject at hand, or true in the nature of the case. Therefore, by means of the illuminating rhetoric which Paul

employs in this marvelous passage, he clearly manifests the universal scope of that which brings glory to God for the eons.

That these words are used in a limited way in certain other passages (e.g., Col.3:8), is quite irrelevant. The question is: What is the scope of "the all" in Romans 11:36?

Outside of God Himself (*cp* "it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him . . ."; 1 Cor. 15:27), there is no exception to this "all" of Romans 11:36, nor can there be. For if just once, even concerning a trivial matter, someone had already known His mind when He as yet had not informed him, or if at any time someone had advised Him of something of which He had hitherto been ignorant, or had given something to Him first that He had not already dispensed, then indeed some things would not be out of God. But since Paul's whole point is that such an idea could never be true, we can be sure that all is used universally in this passage.

FOREKNOWLEDGE AND PROPHECY

Since all that exists and all that occurs is out of, through and for God, it is evident that God knows all. He could hardly be ignorant concerning anything that found its origin, ultimate cause, and purpose in His own counsels. Future events are as much an object of God's knowledge as past events. Therefore, the Scriptures having explicitly declared that He *does* know all (1 John 3:20), there is no sound reason to suppose that anything is excluded.

What God fore*tells* He first of all fore*knows*, and it is evident He foreknows only that which He will bring to pass Himself. He can hardly rely upon man to help Him out! He fulfills His own word. Surely He has a

perfect knowledge of all the great number of prophetic events recorded in the Scriptures, though these events should be ever so complex in themselves, and connected with innumerable other events of equal complexity before and after them.

Prophecy always declares that the events foretold *shall* come to pass, often insisting that they *must* occur (e.g., Luke 24:46; Rev.1:1). Though the prophetic word in itself does not cause events to happen, this fact is very far from being of any aid to the concept of free will.

The sheer existence of prophecy constitutes absolute *proof* that the events it predicts will be caused to happen. For events without a cause would be unpredictable, and our subject is predictive prophecy.

Events which *shall* and *must* take place can never be events of free will. Events of free will, according to their supposed nature, never *have* to occur, and it can never be said that one day they *will* happen, for there is always a "chance" they will not! In the nature of things, they would be absolutely unpredictable, even by God Himself.

By itself, therefore, prophecy constitutes a complete disproof of the theory of human free will. Furthermore, all prophetic events are connected with countless other events upon which they depend for their existence. And these events as well are themselves dependent upon countless antecedent events for their own existence, and so forth. This is true of all things, throughout all time, "up to the fountain, God," Who alone is self-existent.

To say that the foreknowledge of an event is certain and infallible and yet the foreknown event itself is quite uncertain and may therefore never occur, is completely unsound. For if the event that is

foreknown to occur does not occur, the foreknowledge is not foreknowledge.

In order for an event to be known, there must be evidence of that which is to be known. But if any future event should truly be an unnecessary event, that is, one that does not have to occur, the future existence of that event would be absolutely without any evidence whatsoever. It could not be, and therefore would not be, an object of knowledge. The event would not be evident, and so could not be seen to be evident, or to say the same thing, it could not be known. One who has infinite strength of sight and infinite capacity of discernment will be able to see all that there is and all that, in fact, *will* be, quite perfectly indeed. Yet such abilities will not enable anyone to observe evidence which does not exist. To the contrary, they will enable the one who has such abilities to discern with absolute certainty that there is no evidence whatever of any and all unnecessary events.

To claim that things which God knows will occur may not occur, is contradictory. To say, as some have claimed, that He may have ways of knowing of unnecessary events even though we cannot conceive of such things, or at the same time that God knows a thing to be certain, He also knows it to be uncertain, is as foolish as to say that, for all we know, God may know contradictions to be true.*

It is *impossible* for anything to occur that would disprove God's foreknowledge, and thus make it foreerror. His foreknowledge *must* be correct; it is not

*Portions of the preceding two paragraphs were adapted from FREEDOM OF THE WILL, Jonathan Edwards, pp. 74-76: Robert Carter and Brothers (1881)

enough that it simply turn out that way. At the moment it is subjected even to possible failure, it no longer has to be true. And at the moment in which it no longer has to be true, (1) it is then possible that it may become false, and (2) it then becomes quite uncertain that it is correct; that is, any convictions of it which may yet be entertained, become fallible opinion, and they are no longer *knowledge.*

Consequently, then, it is impossible that something even *could* occur which would prove God's foreknowledge mistaken. No man at any time can even possibly do a single thing that, if done, would disprove His foreknowledge. And divine omniscience would indeed be subjected to possible failure in the instant that it became possible for man to act contrary to it. Yet, as we have shown, this would make it contradictory to itself, and therefore nonexistent.

No clear mind can understand the nature of both free will and foreknowledge and believe in them both. The whole subject is really quite simple: According to the fundamental claims of its own advocates, events of "free will" *never have to occur.* And yet, foreknown and prophesied events *always have to occur.* These concepts are mutually exclusive. The latter one is scriptural; consequently, the former *must be mythical.* And men *have* been turned aside to myths (2 Tim. 4:4). "As to the faith, they swerve" (1 Tim.6:21). Yet we are not to be heeding myths (1 Tim.1:4).

DESIGNATION BEFOREHAND AND "PREDESTINATION"

In the Authorized Version, *proorizō* is translated "predestinate," as well as "ordain" and "determine before." The Concordant Version translates it uniformly as "designate beforehand." This is its sense; it simply speaks of what is designated or specified (*cf*

Acts 11:29). Man often fails to accomplish his plans, the things he designates to accomplish. But God's plans, the things He designates to occur in His own wise counsels, always come to pass, for it is He Who fulfills them all (Isa.46:9-11).

In the Scriptures the expression "designate beforehand" is only used in reference to a few subjects, all of them of great consequence. Yet it should never be inferred from this that these are the only things God *designates* beforehand. For God's counsels are concerned with *all* (Eph.1:11). Concerning matters yet to occur, His "counsels" speak of His *plans*—those things which, in the nature of the case, He has *designated* to accomplish. The issues involved in this great question cannot be resolved by merely noting that only a few matters are directly *spoken of* as being designated beforehand. This is especially so when even these are not truly accepted as the work of God (e.g., Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:27,28).

The question is this: Does God *operate all* (Eph.1:11)? or, absolutely speaking, Is there any other God (or Placer) except One, "the Father, out of Whom *all* is" (1 Cor. 8:4-6)?

Along with the expression the "sovereignty" of God, "predestination" has been the traditional expression which has been employed by many in order to express their belief (or disbelief) in God's deity or subjectorship, His regulation of man's actions.

Certainly we ought to believe that it is the Deity Who regulates man's actions, for the scripture declares, "By Him actions are *regulated*" (1 Sam. 2:3). This is also true concerning man's "spirit" and "heart" (Prov.16:2; 21:2), "from [which] spring the outflowings ("issues," AV) of life" (Prov.4:23). Indeed, "Yahweh has made everything for its own

pertinent end, Yea even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov.16:4). "I know, Yahweh, that not to a human is his way, Not to a man who is going is it also to prepare his march" (Jer.10:23). For it is our God Who directs our steps (Prov.16:9).

As Benjamin Warfield wrote, "Our difficulties with Predestination arise from a, no doubt not unnatural, unwillingness to acknowledge ourselves to be wholly at the disposal of Another. We wish to be at our own disposal. We wish 'to belong to ourselves,' and we resent belonging, especially absolutely, to anybody else, even if that anybody else be God. We are in the mood of the singer of the hymn beginning, 'I was a wandering sheep,' when he declares of himself, 'I would not be controlled.' We will not be controlled. Or, rather, to speak more accurately, we will not admit that we are controlled.

"I say that it is more accurate to say that we will not admit that we are controlled. For we are controlled, whether we admit it or not. To imagine we are not controlled is to imagine there is no God [no *Placer*]. For when we say God, we say control. If a single creature which God has made has escaped beyond His control, at the moment he has done so he has abolished God. A God who could or would make a creature whom he could not or would not control, is no God. The moment he should make such a creature he would, of course, abdicate his throne. The universe he had created would have ceased to be his universe; or rather it would cease to exist—for the universe is held together only by the control of God . . . .

"The only justification for making anything is that we both can and will control it. If a man should manufacture a quantity of an unstable high-explosive in the corridors of an orphan asylum, and when the

stuff went off should seek to excuse himself by saying that he could not control it, no one would count his excuse valid. What right had he to manufacture it, we should say, unless he could control it?

"It is purely this idea of control which people object to when they say they object to Predestination [or, the deity of God]; not the idea of previousness, but purely the idea of control. They would object just as much if the control was supposed to be exercised without any previous intention at all.

"They ought to object much more. For a control exercised without intention would be a blind control. It would have no end in view to justify it; it would have no meaning; it would be sheerly irrational, immoral, maddening. That is what we call Fate. Say intention, however, and we say person; and when we say person we say purpose."*

UNIVERSAL GRACE AND GLORY

Since God is so marvelously wise, the end which He has purposed will be a wise end; since He is good, it will be good; since He is love, it will be full of love; since He is just, it will be right.

He can never become All in any who remain all in themselves. Yet to become All in all is His very purpose. Therefore, He sees to it that all moves toward this goal, the fulfillment of His purpose, to become, "All in all" (1 Cor.15:28). Whatever occurs has a place to fill toward this end. Thus significance, justification and purpose are given to all; there are no purposeless events in all the universe at any time. This is our theodicy; only thus can we harmonize and vindicate

*SELECTED SHORTER WRITINGS, Volume 1, "Some Thoughts on Predestination," pp.103-106: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. (1970)

even the temporary existence of evil with the goodness and deity of God.

Interminable evil simply cannot be. Indeed, it is not the justice of God that requires an "eternal hell," but the myths of man. It is God's *good* news that reveals His righteousness (Rom.1:17; 3:21); horrible predictions about everlasting burnings can never make it known. And the good news is, since all are in need ("for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God"; Rom.3:23), that "being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" is "for *all*" (Rom.3:22,24)!

Then through these considerations too, besides the other plain passages of glad tidings for all, it becomes evident that the doctrine of endless punishment, even as that of unpurposed eonian evil, is perfectly false, and is impossible to reconcile with the divine attributes.

It is for these reasons, in light of these scriptural considerations, that we believe as we do. In the Scriptures, human affairs are not left to chance, but are to be accounted for on causal grounds. Indeed nothing whatsoever can be *accounted* for except on this basis. And since divine causality is what the Scriptures reveal concerning *all*, we need not apologize for the Word of God, or for our faith in its testimony. Instead, it is in a recognition of these things that we glory in God and in His Son.

May we ascribe all the glory to God for all our achievements, and with much thanksgiving, being aware that He is doing all things well, "the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11).

James Coram

(To be continued)

WE ARE THE LORD'S

(Romans 14:1-9)

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST over us is based on His death and the victory of His resurrection. The effective mastery of His authority is not something forced on us by a burden of obligation or a fear of punishment, but it grows within us as we grow in realization of God's grace centered in the gift of His Son. We willingly and eagerly acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord because all that we need is superabundantly supplied in Him. The ideal service is that which is motivated by God's grace, and it is to this end that the apostle Paul is guiding us in these last chapters in Romans.

Romans 14:1-15:7 is a section of Scripture dealing (on the surface) with problems between believers at different stages of maturity in the faith. The real emphasis here, however, is not on our conflicts, but on our appreciation of the Lordship of Christ. That recognition is basic to our service and deportment and toward the solution of our conflicts.

In fact, Paul does not settle the differences among the Roman believers by telling them directly what are the rights and wrongs in the matters of diet and observances of days discussed in these verses. Instead he directs their attention to Christ as their Lord and to

the basis of His Mastery over them. Once that is grasped, the differences between them will dissipate.

Now the infirm in the faith be taking to yourselves, but not for discrimination of reasonings (Rom.14:1).

Abraham was *not* infirm in the [way of] faith (Rom.4:19). If he had been he would have doubted God's promise to him, or he would have read something into God's declaration that was not there. But those in Rome who were infirm as to the faith were not doubting what was said in the evangel so much as failing to grasp all that was being said. Their infirmity was an inability to take in such a glorious message of grace. They needed loving concern from their brethren who were more mature in the faith, not careful reasonings about all their shortcomings and errors. They needed the patience and the love that characterize the servants of the Lord, who are motivated by an appreciation of His love toward us all.

It is likely that all of us have a certain measure of weakness as to the faith. It is so contrary to ingrained human concepts. We keep thinking that only those who do righteous acts can be justified, but God tells us that His righteousness comes on all who are believing through the channel of Jesus Christ's faith (Rom. 3:21,22). Justification is for those who are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead, Who was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:24,25). God must grant us the faith to believe such a message!

Indeed there is a tone of irony in Paul's words here in Romans 14:1. If those who grasp God's grace better than others are not taking the others to themselves in mutuality and concern, they are also somewhat infirm in the faith.

The expression "take to oneself" is used here in

verse 1, and again in verse 3, concerning God taking us all to Himself, and later in Romans 15:3, we find the expression used concerning Christ taking the believer to Himself. Paul says much the same thing later in Ephesians 4:32-5:2 and in Philippians 2:1-8. The grace of God trains us to treat others as God has already treated us.

One, indeed, is believing to eat all things, yet the infirm one is eating greens. Let not him who is eating be scorning him who is not eating. Yet let not him who is not eating be judging him who is eating, for God took him to Himself (Rom.14:2,3).

When teachers in Colosse were subjecting the brethren to decrees concerning foods (Col.2:20-23), the apostle exposed the error in no uncertain terms. But in Rome, the dietary practices were not set forth in opposition to God's grace or as requirements for salvation. Those who were confining their diet to greens were weak in the faith and were not leaders within the company of believers.

But it was disturbing to Paul that these weaker believers were judging the other believers who were not so scrupulous. And, on the other hand, it was no great sign of maturity for those who were enjoying their liberty in Christ to be scorning those who were less clear about their position in Christ.

Nevertheless, the apostle avoids the strong tone of criticism found in Colossians (see also Galatians 4:8-11). He wishes to guide the Roman believers to see and appreciate the grace that has been given to them, so that they will be responding with behavior and attitudes that harmonize with this faith. Therefore, he reminds the Romans and all of us that God has taken each one to Himself. Each individual believer has been called into the faith by God, Who knows all

about our personal failures and lacks. Here again we have a restating of the evangel in the midst of a discussion about our service and walk. The message of "the faith" cannot be separated from the mature and pleasing walk in "the faith."

Who are you who are judging Another's domestic? To his own Master he is standing or falling. Now he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand (Rom.14:4).

These words seem to be directly addressed to those who were avoiding meats since they were judging those who were eating (verse 3). Yet they are applicable to us all in that each one of us, no matter what side of a conflict he may be on, needs to see his place before his own Master. We will eat or not eat according as we see its appropriateness to the evangel. Or, taking a more current problem, we will baptize or not baptize according as it harmonizes with the message we believe concerning Christ, His love and His victory. The evangel influences us. This is how our Lord exerts His Mastery over us. He makes us stand in ideal service and walk an ideal behavior by being our Saviour, by giving Himself up for our sakes, by pleading for us at the right hand of the Father, by being the Head of the body which is the ecclesia. Every revelation of our blessings in Christ becomes a factor in establishing His gracious Lordship over us.

One, indeed is deciding for one day rather than another day, yet one is deciding for every day. Let each one be fully assured in his own mind. He who is disposed to the day, is disposed to it to the Lord; and he who is eating, is eating to the Lord, for he is thanking God. And he who is not eating, to the Lord is not eating, and is thanking God (Rom.14:5,6).

The entreaty to be "fully assured" reminds us again

of Romans 4:19-21 where Abraham is described as not infirm in faith and being "fully assured" that what God has promised He is able to perform. Surely this repetition of wording is not merely coincidental. To be infirm in the faith is to lack something of full assurance in what God has spoken. To be strong in the faith is to have full assurance in God.

The apostle does not force the conclusion. He does not tell us whether those who observe days or those who do not (or both groups) will find that their practice truly harmonizes with the faith. He does not say that those eating or those not eating (or both groups) will actually find full assurance that they are doing the right thing. But he does say that those who submit their practice to the evangel will become fully assured of what is right. Then, if they are fully assured that observing days is appropriate and in harmony with the faith, they will indeed be observing them to the Lord and thanking God. If those who eat all foods find that this is in harmony with the faith, and are fully assured of it, they will behave themselves in such a way as to honor the Lord and as an expression of thanksgiving to God. It will be the same for those who avoid certain foods; if they find that this practice accords with the message given to them for believing, then they will be fully assured in their practice and will do it unto the Lord with thanksgiving.

Which side is right, or are both sides right? Paul does not tell us directly. Instead he gently tells us to become fully assured ourselves *in our own mind* as to what is right. Our "mind" is the renewed mind of Romans 12:2, "the mind of Christ" of 1 Corinthians 2:16. It is the mind that is occupied with an appreciation of God's love in Christ and is stirred by the implications of Christ's death and resurrection

(expounded in the early chapters of Romans). That mind will have full assurance about the truth of what God has spoken and what kind of behavior is most pleasing to our Lord in response to this grace.

Judging and scorning one another is clearly wrong, but the rights and wrongs about eating foods and observing days are best discovered by each individual believer as he measures his practice by the revelations in the evangel. In other words, we should be directed by our Lord, experiencing the way He guides us by impressing the word of His grace upon us.

For not one of us is living to himself, and not one is dying to himself. For both, if we should be living, to the Lord are we living, and if we should be dying, to the Lord are we dying. Then, both if we should be living and if we should be dying, we are the Lord's (Rom.14:7,8).

In themselves believers are like everyone else. We have arguments and disputes over all sorts of things. We all have our individual habits and ways of thinking, shaped by our different upbringings and genetic makeup. Because we have been called into the faith does not automatically mean that we will get along with each other. It is only as our faith grows and our minds grasp the love of God that we will be manifesting the disposition of Christ. It is only as believers are *believing* that their service to the Lord becomes pleasing and meaningful.

The human disposition is one of selfishness. But when we learn and believe that Christ has died for our sakes, and that God is graciously granting us all that we need and is for our good (Rom.8:28,29), then our disposition is changed. From a negative standpoint we no longer will be so selfish because there is no necessity. And from a positive standpoint we seek to imi-

tate God in His love by loving others. We no longer live to ourselves, but our life is given real meaning and purpose in being lived to the Lord.

This is the great ideal Paul presents in these verses. And he adds that even in the process of dying, we may be freed from selfish concerns and fears. Like Epaphroditus who came very close to death, our thoughts and concerns may be directed to others even in such straits (*cf* Phil.2:25-30).

"We are the Lord's." This is our new life. We belong to Him when we eat our meals and when we wake up each day and when we go to sleep at night. We are His in our living and even in our dying. The consciousness of His grace remains with us as long as we are conscious of anything at all, and this consciousness trains and directs us in our thinking and in our doing.

To be sure, we are still unfinished. We, like Paul, are not "already perfected" (or "matured" in the faith and in our response to the faith). But we are pursuing, if we may be grasping that for which we were grasped by Christ (Phil.3:12,13). Every day "we are the Lord's," and every day the glory of this relationship is becoming more and more precious to us.

CHRIST'S UNIVERSAL LORDSHIP

For for this Christ died and lives, that He should be Lord of the dead as well as of the living (Rom.14:9).

In this way we have been drawn away from our conflicts to the evangel. Our thoughts have been taken away from disagreements regarding foods and days to settle upon the Lordship of Christ.

But further, the apostle's thoughts about serving the Lord at all times, in our living and also in the process of dying, have led him to present the evangel in its

widened scope. The purpose of Christ's death and resurrection is not only that He might become our Lord but the Lord of all who have died and of all who are living. The Lordship of Christ is to be universal.

Here again the parallels between Romans 12-16 and the epistle to the Philippians come to the fore. Romans 14:9 is saying much the same thing as we read in Philippians 2:9-11. "Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father."

Someday everyone will say, "I am the Lord's," and all selfishness will disappear along with the bickerings burdened the human condition. This is one of the glorious goals for which Christ died and lives.

D.H.H.

(To be continued)

JOSEPH SNYDER

We are sorry to report the death of Brother Joe Snyder of Newport Beach, California, on March 30, at the age of 88. Like the apostle Paul, Brother Joe was born "of the race of Israel," and later was grasped by the Lord Jesus Christ and overwhelmed by His grace. For many years he attended the class in Los Angeles where Brother A. E. Knoch taught, and more recently Joe and his wife, Mariam, occasionally were able to be with us for our meetings in Canyon Country. How often he would speak, with tears in his eyes, of Brother Knoch's struggles! And then he would recall Paul's words in Philippians 1:29 concerning God's gracious granting of sufferings, and from this passage move on to what must have been his favorite passage of Scripture: "I am aware Whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard what is committed to me, for that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES for SEPTEMBER 1987
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SEVENTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

How do we know God's Word is true? Is there empirical evidence for its reliability? Should we search for signs in the events of history that would prove it is so? Or should we analyze its structure in order to establish its perfection beyond all doubt?

Current events such as the war between Iraq and Iran, and Iraq's efforts to make the ancient site of Babylon into a tourist center, intrigue us in light of passages like Revelation 17 (see pages 229-231 in this issue of our magazine). Economic strains among the nations also point us in this direction. But our confidence in the Scriptures does not *rest* on such matters. Even if these stirrings in the Middle East do not develop exactly along prophetic lines during our lifetimes, we still believe those prophecies will be fulfilled. We believe this because God has graciously granted us faith (Phil.1:29).

Our appreciation for God's Word is strengthened when we note its symmetry and the way that various themes connect and parallel and interweave. There is surely significance to the fact that the Law was built on ten "words" or commandments (see p.207) and that Psalm 119, which acclaims the Sacred Scriptures, uses ten words over and over again in reference to the Law (p.215) But again, we do not *rely* on such features as proof that God's Word is true.

Faith is one of the three remaining spiritual endowments for our era (1 Cor.12:1,31; 13:13). From a human standpoint it is such a small thing, but when it is centered in the evangel of God's grace its value is in-

calculable (see p.204). And as we grow in faith toward maturity (see p.219) we find that our confidence in and love for God's Word increases. Instead of fears and worries over the affairs of this eon we become occupied more and more with the things of consequence (Phil.1:10). We are led to pray Paul's prayers, such as that in Ephesians 1:15-19 for "The Spirit of Revelation" (p.195).

Expectation is also a grand provision for our day. It is not a matter of setting dates based on identifying current events with biblical predictions, but is always centered on our Lord. What happens around us ideally increases our longing for our rescue, but those happenings are not the *source* of our expectation. Our expectation is an endowment from God.

We are not watching for signs or searching for visible evidence to prove the accuracy of God's Word. Instead it is our privilege to believe that what God says is so. When, in 2 Timothy 3:1-9, Paul speaks of perilous periods to come, he is not laying down a prediction by which we in our times can be testing the Word. Rather he is telling us of these things to come so that we will keep following Paul in his teaching, motive purpose, *faith,* patience, love endurance, persecutions and sufferings (2 Tim.3:10). No matter what happens in our days we believe that the Scriptures are inspired and that God is operating all together for our good. He has spoken thus (2 Tim.3:16; Rom.8:28), and we have been given faith to believe it.

"By faith are we walking, not by perception" (2 Cor.5:7). But this is far from being a cause for complaint. We are thanking God for the gracious calling with which we are called and for the endowments of faith, expectation and love which accompany our pathway. D.H.H.

THE SPIRIT OF REVELATION

Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of wisdom and 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, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength (Eph.1:15-19).

Can a man by searching find out God? Is humanity endowed by nature to discover the Deity? Can he perceive Him in Creation? Can he learn to know Him by logical deduction? Is God revealed to all who read the Bible? Is the saint fully equipped to comprehend Him if he searches the Scriptures? Many have tried all of these, yet have fallen far short of a knowledge of God and His highest revelation of Himself in His present operations. Therefore we should emulate Paul and pray, as he did in the first chapter of Ephesians, that God would give the saints the *spirit of revelation.*

Before Adam sinned and offended God, he was in close communion with his Creator. Endowed by nature with all the faculties which raised him above the rest of earthly creation, undimmed by disease and undeterred by dread, he far surpassed his progeny in

natural powers. His eyes could see, his ears could hear, and all his perceptions were perfect to a degree which no other mere man has ever known. He conversed on intimate terms with his Creator, Who crowned all His other gifts by giving him a complement as his companion. Did he come to know Him? Did it teach him to trust Him? Did he learn to love Him? *No!* A single insinuation from the serpent showed that his heart had never appreciated his great Benefactor. By nature, even under ideal conditions, man cannot make acquaintance of the Deity.

SEARCHING FOR GOD

Since Adam's day man has made an intense study of nature, on earth and in the heavens. He has pried into the structure of the tiny atom, and tried to comprehend the mighty celestial spheres. He has searched the depths of the earth and the waters of the sea for minerals. He has catalogued and systematized and investigated the flora and the fauna in the oceans, on the land, and in the air. He has amassed tremendous amounts of knowledge concerning God's handiwork, with its multitudinous marvels and awful wonders. But has he met the Creator of all this walking in the garden, as Adam did? By no means! Great scientists are often atheists. Those who see Him in His achievements have met Him elsewhere first. They have learned to know Him through His written revelation as God Himself opened up the understanding.

But cannot men use their minds to reason their way into His presence, or deduce His purpose and His plans from His methods with mankind? Alas, men's minds are feebler than the faculties of sensation. Since their knowledge of God in creation, which displays His

imperceptible power and divinity, does not lead them to glorify Him or thank Him, their reasonings are vain and their heart is not intelligent. Alleging themselves to be wise, they are made stupid. Their logic is illogical, and leads them away from the Deity. Without a knowledge of Him and His ways they lack the major premise on which all reasoning must be based.

But even if a man cannot find God in nature or by reason, surely he can find Him by the Bible! Here, indeed, is a means of acquaintance with the Deity which is ideal for the purpose! It is better even than the personal communion of Adam in the garden. No greater boon can come to any people than the Word of God. Israel's primary prerogative consisted in this, that to them were entrusted the oracles of God (Rom.3:2). Yet they did not all find Yahweh. On the contrary, when His words first came to them in the wilderness, they did not desire His presence and refused to believe His word, so their corpses marked their trail through the desert.

No people has ever prized their holy books as the Jews valued their sacred scrolls. They were copied with the greatest care and preserved with religious zeal. Many memorized much of them. Yet how few really grasped their import! This might be understood if the lower classes, the poor and the ignorant, the stupid and the foolish, failed to become acquainted with God through His holy law and other literature, but, when our Lord came, He acclaimed God because He *had hid* these things from the *wise* and *intelligent,* and had revealed them to minors (Matt.11:25). The rabbis among the Jews, past and present, are often intelligent men, made wise by their knowledge of the sacred scrolls; nevertheless, how few have come to the knowledge of God! None of our

Lord's apostles came from this class. Even Peter and John were unlettered, unlearned men.

The staff which worked on the *Concordant Version* delved into the details of the divine records as has seldom been done. The books, the words, the elements, the grammar, all were analyzed in minute detail. Surely that should enable all to enter into the innermost precincts of God's oracles! Would not that open up His revelation as no other effort of man? It was indeed a very wise procedure, and evidence of the spirit of wisdom, but man may be blind in the brightest of sunshine. It needs a miracle, a special gift of God. No matter how exact our knowledge may be of dead facts, these need to be vivified by the spirit of God before our hearts can realize and respond, and enjoy the full revelation of God's glory as now made known through the apostle to the nations.

Even when the Living Word, God's human Expression, set the Deity before them in letters of life so that even the illiterate could read His deeds, only a few learned to love God through His words and His works. And even after He had manifested the heart of God in its deepest depths by His sacrifice on Golgotha, the nation to whom God's oracles were given turned against Him and His messengers. God repeatedly dulled their ears and eyes and hearts that they should not understand Him. He did it in Isaiah's time (Isa.6:9,10). He repeated it in the midst of our Lord's ministry (Matt.13:14), and after the nation rejected the testimony of His apostles and Paul (Acts 28:27; Rom.11:25). The possession of the Bible is not enough to insure an acquaintance with God!

Even Peter, the chief of the Circumcision apostles, found Paul's epistles hard to apprehend (2 Peter 3:15), for they dealt with a sphere altogether distinct from

his own. In early days those who did not have this special spirit for which Paul prayed, twisted it to their own destruction. This is the usual practice today. Very few leave Paul's message as it is, or believe it as it was given. Almost all distort it by mixing it together with previous revelation. Its grace goes against the grain. Even those who have God's spirit in some measure prefer to be under law, with its righteousness, rather than realize crucifixion with Christ and the need for undiluted grace. This spirit is a necessary foundation for the present revelation, for no one can possibly merit the glory which has been prepared for us, but rather the reverse. A rejection of the cross and the grace it involves locks the door to the spirit of revelation, so that it cannot enter.

Today the nations have a much greater and grander revelation of God than Israel ever had. He actually entreats His enemies to be conciliated to Him! He does not demand righteousness of the sinner, but imparts it. Instead of excluding us aliens from His presence, He breaks down all barriers, even those which kept the mass of Israelites from coming near to Him. Instead of allowing us a subordinate place of blessing through Israel on the earth in His future kingdom, He gives us a place superior to the celestial hosts! How can we fail to respond to such supernal grants of grace!

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

This spirit of revelation is for all believers, not for one or for a few. It is given in order that they may realize what God has revealed to them by His spirit in the Scriptures. It is not that they may get separate revelations for themselves, or that they receive new ones for others. There have been, and are, those who

claim to receive additional revelations beyond what is given us in the Sacred Scriptures. But they disagree among themselves, and none of them ever appears to have the spirit spoken of here, for they have not been enlightened with the truth contained in this epistle.

No one, not even the saint in whom the spirit of God makes its home, can grasp the fullest and final revelations in God's Word without special equipment. This is imparted freely to those who pray for it. Paul says that the truth was made known to Him by revelation (Gal.1:12). God's spirit imparted it to him directly and inspired the written record. These revelations represent the greatest accumulation of riches in the universe. They are stored in the Sacred Scriptures as in a safe. No one can get at them except those who have the combination. God does not reveal His secrets to all, but reserves His glories for those who have communion with Him, and are led to pray for His special favor. To them He imparts the same spirit which originally revealed the truth to Paul—the spirit of revelation. They alone enjoy these treasures now, though they are the common property of all the saints.

Yet how few accept God's proffered favors! As it was in Israel, the wise and intelligent will not receive it. God, in His wisdom, destroys the wisdom of the wise and repudiates the understanding of the intelligent. He delights to save those who believe through the stupidity of the cross. Not many wise or powerful or noble are called, so that we should find our all in Him, and boast in Him, not in ourselves (1 Cor.1:18,31). With the full Bible in their hands, the nations as a whole do not come to the knowledge of God. More than that is needed.

What is necessary in order that we may know Him? Three things, first of all. Not only must we *hear*, or

read, the word of truth, the evangel of our salvation, but must *believe* it, and be sealed with the *holy spirit* of promise. All believers receive the holy spirit. That is the *seal* that guarantees to them and the *earnest* that enables them to enjoy in advance a small taste of the glorious allotment which has been procured for them. They are sure to get it, and are able to anticipate some of it in spirit. But, once more, even of them how few realize the riches of the grace and glory of their allotment, through which alone we may attain to a realization of God!

Spirit is what is needed! We have the holy spirit, which gives us *life*. Now we need a special dispensation of spirit to enable us to grasp the full import of God's purpose with us, for this enlightens our hearts so that we enter into a full realization of His character. No previous revelation has done this. They were all partial and preliminary, preparatory preludes to His highest unfolding, which is not confined to the earth, but includes the universe. Even the celestial hosts are apprized of God's multifarious wisdom through this secret administration (Eph.3:10).

This is the special spirit that searches out the *secrets* of God. As the truth for this administration is much concerned with secrets, very few of the saints have any clear conception of its character unless they have been endowed with the spirit of revelation. Even some truths, as justification, which were not secret, are seldom grasped. They are not "mysteries" which cannot be understood. They are secrets, known only to the initiated. They are unknown to all who lack this special spirit.

OUR NEED FOR PAUL'S PRAYER

In view of the almost universal ignorance of the

divine mysteries from Paul's day to this, we can appreciate the need of his prayer. There is still greater need today, for Christendom not only ignores the truth for the present, put powerfully opposes it. Many of those who know Christ as their Saviour and have the seal of the holy spirit, are not only devoid of this spirit but deem it their sacred duty to condemn all who enter into these precious and powerful truths, and seek to keep the saints from even considering them. This must needs be, for it will cap the climax of grace. It makes the grace more gracious. A lesser quantity or quality of grace would at least demand that it receive a grateful reception. But this is so vast that it overflows even its rejection.

Paul prayed that the Father of glory may give us a spirit of *revelation*. At that time God had already revealed Himself through the Hebrew Scriptures. His Son had come and made Him known in living form. Perhaps many in that day considered that God had fully revealed Himself, and no more was needed to make Him known. Most of the saints today are in the same position. They see little more than the kingdom revelation of our Lord and His apostles. Nor can they do otherwise if they are not endowed with this special spirit. The lack of this has almost eclipsed the brightest and most glorious light that shines in the heavens. The saints mistake the moonlight for the sun. They grope in the gloom as if the sun were not at its zenith. Blind guides of the blind lead them into the pit.

This prayer is for the highest boon a creature could conceive—a vital knowledge of the Deity. The ancient Greeks had a saying which was considered the height of knowledge, "Know thyself." If they had managed to do this, they would have groveled in the dust. But even this cannot be accomplished apart from a know-

ledge of God. Moreover, the word knowledge is not nearly strong enough. We may know much about many things without an intimate experience. A *realization* of God is not a fleeting glimpse of a distant star, but a persistent experience, an everyday intercourse with Him in view of His vital interest in us, and the expectation, the place, and the power He imparts to us.

The depth and thoroughness of this knowledge is expressed in a fine and forceful figure. As a rule, the eyes are the best and safest avenue of knowledge. Job exclaimed, "With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, but now my eye sees You" (Job 42:5). Even eyes cannot see in the dark. So the heart is made the organ of sight, and we are given a special store of light in order to perceive what God will and has done for us, and the power He employs in our behalf.

Let us repeat. All believers have God's spirit in measure. Yet few indeed have this special spirit, or Paul would not have prayed for them in this behalf. Let us, then, join our prayers with his, first indeed for ourselves, and then for all saints. May all who read these lines enjoy this priceless boon! A.E.K.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

1. Title of publication: *Unsearchable Riches*. 2. Date of filing: September 1, 1987. 3. Frequency of issue: every other month. 4. Location of the known office of publication: 15570 Knochaven Rd., Canyon Country, CA 91351. 5. Location of headquarters or general business offices of the publisher: 15570 Knochaven Rd., Canyon Country, CA 91351. 6. Publisher: Concordant Publishing Concern, 15570 Knochaven Rd., Canyon Country, CA 91351. 7. Editor: Dean H. Hough, 5693 Sandhill Rd., Almont, MI 48003. 8. Owner: Concordant Publishing Concern, 15570 Knochaven Rd., Canyon Country, CA 91351. 9. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages and other securities: none. 10. The purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes have not changed during the preceding 12 months. 11. Extent and nature of circulation: Total number of copies printed: 3200. Total paid circulation (all through mail): 1800. Total for office use: 1400. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. (signed) *James R. Coram*, Business Manager.

FAITH: THE LEAST AND GREATEST

THE third chapter of Romans is intense with the subjects of guilt and condemnation. But with the declaration of God's grace and righteousness, Paul moves into the happiness that comes with freedom from guilt and condemnation (Rom.4:7,8). The transition is from the shortcomings of the flesh to the forthlookings of faith.

THE SMALLNESS OF FAITH

Simply put, faith is believing something. Faith is a small thing. God utilizes our faith because it accords with His grace (Rom.4:16) and ascribes all glory to Him. People believe all kinds of things, some true and some false. Some people believe that warts come from a virus, while others believe that warts result from handling toads. And a myriad of beliefs exists concerning how to get rid of them. But there is no particular virtue or honor in believing one way or another. And so also with the faith of believers. There is no personal honor in believing God. He is faithful and trustworthy. Everyone should believe in Him; in fact, it is folly not to believe Him. And the faith one has, he actually receives as a gift from God (Eph.2:8,9). So this little thing—faith—which is to be the guiding and controlling factor of the believer's life, is that least little thing which God determined to use so that His grace might be magnified.

THE GREATNESS OF FAITH

Yet faith is also a great thing. Faith is the crow's nest from which land is first sighted. Faith is the root which nourishes the ever spreading and ever climbing branches of assurance. Faith is the rock which the waves can never break or wash away, and upon which the lighthouse of expectation stands. Faith is the five senses of the spirit, enabling the believer to enjoy what he has not yet received; thus faith is God's unique provision for present times. Faith is imitation of the God Who "calls what is not, as if it were" (Rom.4:17). Faith is the foundation and root of expectancy (Rom.4:18). Faith is something that renews and refreshes life (Rom.4:20).

Faith is not empirical knowledge. Knowledge is a wonderful thing; it guides, comforts and encourages. Knowledge of the way something works can enable one to fix or solve a problem that arises. Knowledge that the outcome of events will be good is a great comfort when circumstances are trying. But how can one know what he has not seen or experienced? Abraham could not have knowledge of what God would do in the future simply by reasoning or calculating. But he could believe that the things God promised would come to pass. So, for the believer, the simple belief in what God says replaces knowledge gained by experience or deduction. And faith becomes a basis of action for the believer, just as knowledge is a basis of action in ordinary life.

The faith spoken of in the Bible is always a belief that is coupled with expectation. Belief that the universe exists does not require any expectation. One can have constant assurance of that through the use of his senses. But faith in Christ as Saviour is belief inseparably joined with expectation. "For to expectation were

we saved" (Rom.8:24). "Faith is the assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed" (Heb.11:1).

Faith, then, is a gift and enablement from God which sets a goal before the believer. And faith is the beginning of a new order within the individual, a walk that accords with the spirit rather than the flesh. Faith is something which knows no fleshly barriers and something which honors and imitates God.

J. Philip Scranton

ALL WALKING IN PRIDE HE CAN ABASE

Our Lord Himself laid down the law that "everyone exalting himself shall be humbled" (Luke 14:11). All *proud* concepts of oneself, including those that are not recognized as such or even outwardly offensive, are inherently of a *boastful* nature. In the Scriptures, *pride* is connected with the flesh, and is always sinful. *Boasting* is usually sinful as well, and is always so whenever it is concerned with the flesh. Boasting is always sinful whenever its object is man in himself and his supposedly independent "contributions" to his own well-being. We may only engage in boasting if it is in God and in His Christ. "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14), "so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight" (1 Cor.1:29).

The self-confident claim that there are few things indeed "beyond our control," exhibits a remarkable lack of discernment. Those who actually have been *graced* to be strong have far more scorn than pity for any of their associates whose walk may be less commendable than their own. Self-control, which, indeed, is requisite to good character and constitutes the key to its possession, is itself a fruit of the spirit, not a work of the flesh (Gal.5:23). It is only our pride, in a veiled attempt to deny the truth, that seeks to complicate this simple fact.

Pride itself is a malignant mental illusion and a seedbed of discord and enmity which can have no place in God's perfect ultimate. Our hearts leap with joy at the thought that *God is able* to cope with pride and rid the universe of its baleful presence. As in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, *all walking in pride He can abase.*

THE TEN WORDS

"I, YAHWEH, AM YOUR ELOHIM Who brought you forth from the country of Egypt, from the house of servants" (Deut.5:6). This introductory sentence to the Ten Words (the Decalog) reminds us of the divine motivation clause that we found in Leviticus where Yahweh enjoined on Israel by means of Moses: "Holy shall you become, for I am holy, Yahweh your Elohim" (Lev.19:2). This motive clause occurs time and again throughout the book of Leviticus, though mostly in an abbreviated form, such as in 19:4,10,25, "I, Yahweh, am your Elohim." Occasionally this is shortened to just two words in Hebrew, "I [am] Yahweh" (19:12,14,16,18). Yet all these succinct phrases refer to the divine motivation clause: "*Holy shall you become, for I am holy,*" which is to be understood as underlying such divine statements as Deuteronomy 5:6 and Leviticus 19:36,37; "*I, Yahweh,* am your Elohim Who brought you forth from the land of Egypt. Hence you will observe all My statutes and all My judgments and do them: *I . . . Yahweh.*"

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

"You shall not come to have other elohim in preference to Me" (Deut.5:7). The motivation for obeying this basic precept was given in the preceding verse: Yahweh had seen the humiliation of the older generation (the fathers) in Egypt; Yahweh had heard their outcry at the Sea of Weeds. He split the sea apart before them and flung their pursuers into the shadowy depths, like a stone (*cf* Ex.14:10,21; 15:5; Neh.9:9-11).

Egypt was a superpower, yet its gods had not been able to prevent the destruction of Pharaoh's chariots and his army. So Moses sang: "Who is like You among the elim [the gods], Yahweh?" And he continued: "Who is like You, ennobled in *holiness?* . . . You guided in Your kindness this people You have redeemed; You will conduct them by Your strength to Your *holy* homestead" (Ex.15:11-13).

In view of Yahweh's redeeming action, how could Israel ever worship other gods in preference to their own Yahweh Elohim? Yet when Moses ascended into the mountain to Yahweh in order to receive the stone tablets, the law and the instructions, the fathers withdrew quickly from the way which Yahweh had instructed them. They made for themselves a molten calf and said: These are your elohim [gods], Israel, who brought you up from the country of Egypt (Ex. 24:12; 32:8). Their idol represented a calf, i.e., a young bull; for they had seen that bulls were worshiped in Egypt. And so the older generation had bowed down to this idol in preference to Yahweh their Elohim.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

In his first address to the post-Sinai generation, Moses had reminded them that their fathers had not seen any physical representation at all on the day that Yahweh had spoken to them at Horeb/Sinai from the midst of the fire. Any attempt to represent Yahweh Elohim by a male or female human form, or animal form, would be a soulish desire, i.e., totally inadequate and misleading (Deut.4:15*ff*). Israel must never restrict El's transcendence by disobeying the second commandment:

"You shall not make for yourself a carving nor any

physical representation of that in the heavens above or that on the earth beneath or that in the waters beneath the earth. You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor be made to serve them, for I, Yahweh your Elohim, am a jealous El, visiting the depravity of the fathers on the sons, on the third and on the fourth generation, to those hating Me, yet doing kindness to thousands, to those loving Me and observing My instructions" (Deut.5:8-10).

The length of Moses' stay on the mountain (forty days and forty nights, Ex.24:18) had been a test for the old generation, and they had failed. For them, Moses had been the visible representative of the invisible El. They had said to him, "Speak you with us that we may hear; yet Elohim must not speak with us lest we die" (Ex.20:19). When Moses was "tardy to descend from the mountain," they referred to him in indifferent language (Ex.32:1) and demanded from Aaron an image that was to take over the function of Moses.

Aaron's sin was against the second commandment. For him the molten calf was a physical representation of El; and he may have said: "*This* [is] your *Elohim*, Israel, Who brought you up from the country of Egypt" (*cf* Neh.9:18). We know that Aaron called out and said: "A celebration to Yahweh tomorrow" (Ex. 32:5).

Moses had warned the post-Sinai generation to be especially vigilant lest they forget their covenant relationship with Yahweh; and they should *teach their sons and grandsons* accordingly (Deut.4:9). Failing to do so would have evil consequences for future generations if they were not taught to obey the second commandment. For proper instruction how to become *holy* was essential to their well-being and prosperity. If a father should hate Yahweh Elohim, then his sons

and his sons' sons would suffer too. Yet Yahweh "Who is faithful" promised to act with benignity (or loving kindness) toward a thousand generations of those loving Him and observing His instructions (Deut.5:9,10; 7:9).

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

"You shall not take up the name of Yahweh your Elohim for futility, for Yahweh shall not hold innocent him who takes up His name for futility" (Deut.5:11).

The wording of Deuteronomy 5:6-11 is almost identical with the one in Exodus 20:2-7 that had been recorded about 38 years before in the wilderness of Sinai. Shortly after the ordination of Aaron and his sons for the priesthood, Yahweh had spoken to Moses and given him prescriptions for *practical holiness*, such as those in Leviticus 19, where He commented on the third commandment with these words: "And you shall not swear by My name falsely and so profane the name of your Elohim: *I* [am] *Yahweh*" (Lev. 19:12). This divine prohibition was directed against any careless, irreverent, insincere or evil use of the name of Yahweh; He Himself guards the holiness of His name. Hence He ordered later that "the sojourner as well as the native [Israelite], when he blasphemes the Name, he shall be put to death" (Lev.24:16).

We know that our Lord spoke out against the rash oaths of His contemporaries (Matt.5:33-37; *cf* CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.16).

HOLINESS BEGINS IN THE HOME

"You are to observe the sabbath day to hallow it, just as Yahweh your Elohim had instructed you. Six days shall you serve and do all your work, yet the

seventh day is a sabbath to Yahweh your Elohim. You shall not do any work on it; you, your son or your daughter, your servant or your maidservant, your bull, your donkey or any domestic beast of yours, or your sojourner who is within your gates, that your servant and maidservant may rest as you do. Remember that you had become a servant in the country of Egypt, and Yahweh your Elohim brought you forth from there with a steadfast hand and with an outstretched arm. *Therefore Yahweh your Elohim instructed you to observe the sabbath day*" (Deut.5:12-15).

The italicized words refer back to the first presentation of the fourth commandment at Horeb/Sinai, as recorded in Exodus 20:8-11, where the reason for the sabbath observance is given as follows: "For in six days Yahweh dealt with the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He stopped on the seventh day. Therefore Yahweh blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it" (Ex.20:11).

In Deuteronomy 5:15, however, reference is made to the time of slavery in Egypt, with no appointed day of rest from continual hard service in clay and bricks (Ex.1:14). The seventh day was to become a day of rest for the householder in Israel, his family, his family members, and his domestic beasts; even his servants and resident aliens were forbidden to work on the sabbath, so that the deliverance from Egyptian bondage could be remembered with thanksgiving.

"Glorify your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged on the ground which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you"; this was the earlier form of the fifth commandment (Ex.20:12). This wording is repeated in Deuteronomy, yet with the inserted phrase: "just as Yahweh your Elohim has instructed you" (Deut.5:16). A statute in Leviticus

20:8,9 deals with the very antithesis of glorifying (*cf* Deut.21:18:21; Matt.15:4).

Since holiness begins in the home, Yahweh enjoined on the whole congregation of the sons of Israel by means of Moses: "Each of you shall fear his mother and his father, and observe My sabbaths: I, Yahweh, am your Elohim" (Lev.19:3). Honoring father and mother (the first precept with a promise, Eph.6:2) is one of the foremost duties, not only for children for whom the parents are in the place of God. Hence the child should learn to honor and to fear them so as to become prepared for honoring and fearing Yahweh for the rest of his life. Through the observance of the sabbath in the parental home, the growing child would receive an increasing awareness of things that belong to Yahweh (like the sabbath) and are *holy*. These two precepts that even a child can understand, are preceded by the divine statement that should provide the motivation for strictly obeying these and the other commandments: "*Holy* shall you become, for I am *holy*, Yahweh, your Elohim."

THREE TERSE COMMANDMENTS

"You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal" (Ex.20:13-15; Deut. 5:17-19). In Hebrew these three prohibitions consist of just two words each. The sixth commandment (Not you-shall-murder) begins with "Not," the last four with "And-not." The Hebrew word for murder (*ratzach*) is nearly always used of the killing of a personal enemy, be it intentional murder or unintentional homicide. In the latter case Yahweh made provision for the right of asylum (Num.35:13-28; Deut.19:1-13). Yet no ransom could be made for intentional murder (Num.35:29-31).

The seventh commandment deals with adultery which was considered a violation of the sanctity of the marriage bond and also as a sin against Elohim (Gen.39:9; Psalm 51:4). The penalty was death. (Detailed legislation on adultery and related matters is found in Lev.20:10-21; Deut.22:13-30.)

All sorts of theft are included in the eighth commandment (*cf* Ex.22:1-13), also the worst form of theft: manstealing, i.e., kidnapping for slavery (as Joseph experienced it, Gen.37:27). Exodus 21:16 says: "He who steals a man, whether he sells him or he is found in his hand, he shall be put to death, yea death" (*cf* Deut.24:7).

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

The immediate context was the prohibition of false witnesses in a judicial trial. Giving false testimony could result in the punishment of an innocent neighbor or cast doubt on the character of that neighbor, if he was not falsely pronounced guilty. Special legislation concerning slander and defamation of character is recorded in Deuteronomy 19:15:21; for false testimony a penalty was inflicted according to the law of retribution.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

"You shall not covet the wife of your associate. You shall not lust after the house [or: household] of your associate, his field, his servant or his maidservant, his bull, his donkey or anything which is your associate's" (Deut.5:21; in Ex.20:17 the sequence is: house, wife, field, etc.).

By implication, the introductory sentence to the decalog included the divine motivation clause: *Holy shall you become, for I am holy, I, Yahweh!* So it was

necessary not only to prohibit wrong acts (as in commandments 6-9) but also the desire leading to any such act. Even if the desire may not lead to the act, it betrays resentment against a fellow Israelite who should be *loved.* For Yahweh had said: "Nor shall you be resentful against the sons of your people. You will love your associate as yourself: *I am Yahweh*" (Lev.19:18). It was in this light that our Lord saw the precepts that "were declared to the ancients" (*cf* Matt.5:21-48). Hence He said: "You then shall be perfect [holy]" (5:48). We also remember Paul's words: "I had not been aware of coveting except the law said 'You shall not be coveting' " (Rom.7:7).

THE GREAT AND FOREMOST PRECEPT

When our Lord was asked, "What is the great precept of the law?" He answered with the words of Deuteronomy 6:5, "You shall be loving the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole comprehension." And He added: "This is the great and foremost precept. Yet the second is like it: 'You shall be loving your associate as yourself' [Lev.19:18]. On these two precepts is hanging the whole law and the prophets" (Matt.22:37-40).

The foremost precept may be watered down occasionally to loving God with most of our heart and soul and some of our intensity (*cf* Deut.6:5), even if we do not love the current eon. As for the other precept, believers have often been biting and devouring one another (as Paul put it, Gal.5:14,15) instead of loving their associates as themselves. This is why we have to foster ourselves with the words of faith and of the ideal teaching (1 Tim.4:6), since we are enjoying God's vast love with which He loves us (Eph.2:4). H.H.R.

(To be continued)

Psalm 119:1-16

119 Happy are they whose way is flawless,
Who are walking in the law of Yahweh.
2 Happy are those preserving His testimonies;
[With all their heart, they are seeking after Him.
3 Indeed, they do not contrive iniquity;
In His ways they walk.
4 You Yourself have instructed that Your precepts
Are to be kept very faithfully.
5 Ah that my ways should be established
To keep Your statutes.
6 Then I should not be ashamed
[When I look- to all Your instructions.
7 I shall acclaim You in uprightness of heart,
[While I learn- Your righteous judgments.
8 `Your statutes shall I keep;
O do not [forsake me *[r]* utterly.
9 Whereby shall a youth purge `his path?
>By keeping- *[as]* Your word.
10 [With all my heart, I have sought after You;
O do not [let me [err from Your instructions.
11 In my heart have I secluded Your *[a]*promise,
That I may not [sin >against You.
12 Blessed[be You, O Yahweh;
Teach me Your statutes.
13 [With my lips I recount
All the judgments from Your mouth.
14 In the way of Your testimonies I am elated,
As over all wealth.
15 May I meditate in Your precepts,
And may I scrutinize Your paths.
16 In Your statutes am I reveling;
I am not forgetting Your word.

HAPPY ARE THEY

THE GREATNESS of God's Word is continually a source of joy for us and praise to Him. The Sacred Scriptures begin with an exhibition of the power of God's declaration, "Become light!" (Gen.1:3), which in turn forms the basis for the grand introduction to Jesus Christ given in John 1:1-18. Psalm 119 is a magnificent song in celebration of the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch.

It is an acrostic psalm, which means that it is divided into sections in accord with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The first eight verses begin with the Hebrew letter *aleph,* verses 9-16 with the next letter, *beth,* and so on until all 22 letters of the alphabet are used to begin an eight-verse stanza.

Also, just as the Law is based on "ten words" or foundational commandments (see the previous article in this magazine), so this psalm is constructed around ten words which are repeated over and over again. They each occur sometimes as nouns in singular or plural form or sometimes as adjectives, but they all have primary reference to the Pentateuch (or as the Israelites called it, "the Torah," meaning "the Law"). These words, with the verse of their first occurrences, are as follows: 1. *way* (v.1); 2. *law* (v.1); 3. *testimony* (v.2); 4. *precepts* (v.4); 5. *statutes* (v.5); 6. *instruction* (v.6); 7. *righteous/righteousness* (v.7); 8. *judgment*

(*custom* in v.132), (v.7); 9. *word* (v.9); 10. *promise* (v.11).

"This happiness" over the Word of God, "is it for the Circumcision, or for the Uncircumcision also?" (to borrow the wording of Romans 4:9). It is for all who love God's Word, whether it is the Pentateuch or Paul's epistles, whether it is the Prophets or the poetic books or the evangel of our salvation.

When the Galatians began to substitute law and traditions for the evangel of the grace of Christ (Gal.1:6), Paul had to ask, "Where, then, is your happiness?" (Gal.4:15). They were so occupied with rules and regulations that they had no time for the evangel to work in them to make them solicitous for Paul and others of their brethren. But the good news that God has spoken to us leads to the happiness of love toward others and a disposition of grace and peace.

There are many parallels between Psalm 119 and Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus. The psalmist spoke of "keeping" God's precepts faithfully (119:4,8). And Paul writes, "Have a pattern of sound words, which you hear from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. The ideal thing committed to you, guard ["keep"] through the holy spirit which is making its home in us" (2 Tim.1:13,14). "And what things you hear from me through many witnesses, these commit to *faithful* men, who shall be competent to teach others also" (2:2). It is here also that we read of the "faithful sayings" (1 Tim.1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim.2:11; Titus 3:8), which are indeed "worthy of all welcome."

We read in Psalm 119:9, "Whereby shall a youth purge his path? By keeping Your word." Paul wrote to young (1 Tim.4:12) Timothy, "Herald the word. Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely . . ." (2 Tim.

4:2). The psalmist exclaimed, "Then I should *not be ashamed* When I look to all Your instructions" (Psa. 119:6), which reminds us of 2 Timothy 2:15, "Endeavor to present yourself to God qualified, an *unashamed* worker, correctly cutting the word of truth." Then also we read in Psalm 119:15, "May I *meditate* in Your precepts, And may I scrutinize Your paths," which parallels 1 Timothy 4:15, "On these things *meditate*."

The evangel given to us, like all of God's Word, is a treasure of great wealth. "The grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:14). "In the way of Your testimonies I am elated, As over all wealth" (Psa.119:14). The psalmist found the Law beneficial for happiness, for a faithful walk, for uprightness of heart, for not sinning against the Lord. Similarly Paul wrote concerning not only the evangel but all of God's Word, "All scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness, that the man of God may be equipped, fitted out for every good act" (2 Tim.3:16,17).

Happy are they who are reaping the benefits of God's Word. D.H.H.

(To be continued)

GLENN HOLLIDAY

Brother Glenn Holliday, a longtime subscriber to our magazine from Springfield, Illinois, was put to repose on May 21 at the age of 82. He had been working for several years on a project of typing out the information in our 1930 LEXICON AND CONCORDANCE (recently reprinted) in a fuller form, and although he did not complete this, he set a pattern for a possible revision of this work. Even though Brother Holliday is reposing, our expectation is in the "God Who rouses the dead, Who rescues us from a death of such proportions, and will be rescuing" (2 Cor.1:10).

OUR NEED FOR GROWTH

(Ephesians 4:14-19)

WE concluded our last study with a challenging question: "Can we lift our thoughts to grasp what is meant by 'the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ'?"

This is an individual matter, not a corporate one. Failure to attain to this would simply mean that we would remain minors in Christ, juveniles, not fully developed. This could never be pleasing to God or satisfying to the believer who has grasped something of the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And so the apostle entreats,

. . . that we may by no means still be minors, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching, by human caprice, by craftiness with a view to the systematizing of deception (Eph.4:14).

Paul explains the meaning of the word "minor" in 1 Corinthians 13:11, and particularly in 1 Corinthians 3:1,2 which reads, "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." The writer of Hebrews, in chapter 5, verses 12-14, has a somewhat similar passage, "For when also, because of the time you ought to be teachers, you have need again of one to teach you

what are the rudimentary elements of the oracles of God, and you have come to have need of milk, and not of solid nourishment. For everyone who is partaking of milk is untried in the word of righteousness, *for he is a minor.* Now solid nourishment is for the mature, who, because of habit, *have faculties exercised for discrimination* between the ideal and the evil."

A minor is one under adult age, one who is still growing up. He may even be a babe, unable to assimilate solid food, or he may be a youth, able to understand only the simpler things of life, and unready to stand firmly on his own two feet. He is easily swayed by the views of those older than himself, often accepting them at their face value, especially if they come from someone seeming to speak with authority. That is why, in this wicked area in which we live, children have to be warned against accepting the blandishments of strangers. A minor is too young to have a voice in affairs. In 1 Corinthians 14:20 Paul uses a remarkable expression to illustrate the difference between minority and maturity when he says, "Brethren, do not become little children in disposition. But *in evil* be minors, yet *in disposition* become mature."

Maturity varies according to the time and circumstances in which one lives. For instance, the disciples of Jesus showed a degree of maturity when they asked the risen Jesus, "Lord, art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" In spite of the crucifixion they still accepted Jesus as their Messiah, which is something that the vast majority of their nation do not do at the present time. They had been promised that "in the renascence whenever the Son of Mankind should be seated on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt.19:28). In Luke's account, where the promise is

made after the occasion of the last meal together, a little more is added. There we read of Jesus saying to them, "Now you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I am covenanting a covenant with you, according as My Father covenanted a kingdom to Me, that you may be eating and drinking at My table in My kingdom. And you will be seated on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:28-30).

Although at the moment of His greatest trial they all left him and fled (Matt.26:56; Mark 14:50), this did not abrogate the covenant which Jesus had made with them, and He evidently reassured them of this, even as He had reassured Peter, who actually had disowed the Lord three times (Matt.26:69-75; John 21:15-19).

The expectation of the disciples did not rise beyond this because they were not promised more. This was the limit of their expectation. They are not part of that ecclesia which is the body of Christ. This is where the majority of believers today make a fundamental mistake and thereby indicate their immaturity in the evangel. They believe that they are to be "born again" and become part of "the bride of Christ," in spite of the fact that there is no such expression as the latter in Scripture and that all references to the bride (of the Lambkin) and the Bridegroom occur in the Circumcision writings which are primarily for Israel.

The ecclesia which is the body of Christ is referred to only by Paul, who is the apostle to the nations. This ecclesia long precedes Israel, in that it was chosen in Christ *before the disruption of the world.* Israel did not come into existence in any sense until the time of Abraham, and was not named until the time of Jacob.

Maturity in this day of grace is to be found in an understanding of the great truths of the three prison

letters of Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, and in particular, in the realization that we are members of that body which is the complement of Christ. We cannot improve upon the notes on Ephesians 4:13 in the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, which read:

"Before the revelation of the secret administration by means of this epistle, the saints among the nations were in a period of adolescence. This is fully set forth by the apostle in writing to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 13:10). The gifts then given were for the purpose of leading them to maturity but were to be set aside when 'perfection' came. Paul's prison epistles bring maturity (Phil.3:15; Col.1:28, 4:12). The shifting changes incident to the period of growth which characterized the era from Paul's call until his imprisonment, which brought the saints among the nations from a position like proselytes to Judaism to a place entirely independent of Israel, were all intended to prepare them for this final revelation in which they become Christ's complement."

Let us for the moment take stock of our position by reminding ourselves of the steps which God has taken to make us the complement of His Son, as well as what He purposes for us now and in the future:

1. He blessed us with the gift of grace in Christ Jesus before times eonian; that is, before He put any part of His purpose of the eons into operation (2 Tim.1:9). This gift determined from the first the nature of our future ministry.

2. He chose us in Christ "before the disruption of the world" (Eph.1:4). The word "disruption" is important here, for this is the scriptural evidence of rebellion. We are not children of rebellion, nor is our status affected in any way by the disruption or what followed from it.

3. Although God allows us to experience the evils of a sinful humanity (essential if He is to use us to display His grace), He calls us out from among our fellows and frees us from the power of sin by justifying us by faith through the deliverance which He has made in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24).

4. He frees us from the domination of the flesh by making us part of a new creation in Christ, in which no fault is to be found (2 Cor.5:16,17; Rom.8:1,2).

5. In accord with this, and in line with that pre-eonian gift of grace in Christ Jesus, He gives us a new ministry, that of the dispensation of the conciliation outlined in 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. This is for the present as well as for the future.

6. He incorporates us into His family by giving us the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying "Abba, Father!" As sons, we are enjoyers indeed of an allotment from God, and joint enjoyers of Christ's allotment (Rom.8:14-17).

7. He blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, and intimates that our realm is *inherent* in the heavens (Eph.1:3; Phil.3:20,21), our life being hid together with Christ in God (Col.3:1-4). We should be seeking, and in fact be disposed to, that which is above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

8. He gives His Son to us as Head over all, that through us the all in all may be completed (Eph. 1:22,23). As a result of this, He is to find glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons (Eph.3:21)!

This list is by no means exhaustive, but if we accept these truths and mold our lives around them, we shall be in little danger of surging hither and thither, and of being carried about by every wind of teaching.

There is some excellent advice given in an editorial in the January 1948 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.39, p.4), from which we may be permitted to extract a portion: "Be *confirmed* in the faith (Col.2:7)! *Stand firm* in the faith (1 Cor.16:13)! *Persist* in the faith, *grounded* and *settled,* and don't be *removed* from the *expectation* of the evangel (Col.1:23)!"

The thought continues, "Alas! These are the last days, and *nothing that we can do will stop the apostasy,* for God has warned us that it must come. Man must reject the greatest grace agoing, to demonstrate the depths of his own depravity. But our appeal is to those who fear God and *believe His Word. They* need not be dragged down with the rest! Read and heed the special message for today! Suffer evil with the evangel! Have a pattern of sound words! Be invigorated by grace! Don't engage in useless controversy! Correctly cut the truth! Withdraw from injustice! Remain in what you learned and verified! Herald the Word! Stand by it! Expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching! (2 Tim.1:8,13; 2:1,14,15,19; 3:14; 4:2). May God enable you to steer clear of the many sunken reefs that beset your course, and glorify God *as God,* out of Whom, and through Whom, and for Whom is ALL!"

Now, being true, in love we should be making all grow into Him, Who is the Head—Christ—out of Whom the entire body, being articulated together and united through every assimilation of the supply, in accord with the operation in measure of each one's part, is making for the growth of the body, for the upbuilding of itself in love (Eph.4:15,16).

This is a positive direction, and a true indication of the way in which we should be using our time and energies, namely for the benefit of the ecclesia as a

whole. It is not our task to convert the world, or even to win souls for Christ. We can leave that to God, Who, in any case, has already chosen the members of the ecclesia. It is true that we may be privileged to pass on the truth to others, and we should be alert to grasp any opportunity which presents itself, but our main concern should be to upbuild the ecclesia, ministering to our fellow members in love, emphasizing always that Christ is our Head. In a physical body, the head presides over, and directs, the actions and functions of the various members, supplying them with sustenance; so it is with the ecclesia which is the body of Christ. "Each member of Christ's body is in touch with the Head, dependent upon Him for food, development and direction" (CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.292).

There is a parallel passage in Colossians 2:19. Just as the Head (in this case, Christ) is responsible for directing the members, so the members should be concerned with "holding the Head." We live in an era when insubjection is rife. Let us set the example by acknowledging our Head in all our doings.

This, then, I am saying and attesting in the Lord: By no means are you still to be walking according as those of the nations also are walking, in the vanity of their mind, their comprehension being darkened, being estranged from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the callousness of their hearts, who, being past feeling, in greed give themselves up with wantonness to all uncleanness as a vocation (Eph.4:17-19).

Surely this follows from what has been said earlier, but what an indictment this is of humanity as a whole. The conditions here described by Paul are true of all the years since he wrote, but never more so than at the

present time. The knowledge available to man has been sharply increased through scientific discoveries and inventions, and is even now rapidly accelerating, but instead of this leading to a deeper appreciation of God, it does exactly the opposite. For example, men glorify those who harness the power of the atom, but not God Who put the power into the atom in the first instance. Similarly with all other attainments which serve to boost human vanity. When men fail to glorify God *as God*, they are made vain in their reasonings, and their unintelligent heart is darkened (Rom.1:21). The ultimate of all this is outlined in 2 Timothy 3:1-9. Let us continually pray that we may not be walking thus, or rather, more positively, that our walk may ever be in accord with God's will. John H. Essex

---

HUMILITY'S COSTLY CROWN

Man's free will is considered essential in theology in order to preserve his dignity and self-respect. Perhaps no one ever succeeded in enforcing his own desires more than the great king, Nebuchadnezzar. If anyone ever had a free will, he had. And, no doubt, prior to his humiliation, he would have insisted upon this himself. *When he was humbled*, however, he came down to actuality. In reality there is only one uninfluenced, unhindered, supreme will. The Most High alone can do according to His will both in the heavens and upon the earth. And no one is able to interfere with Him or call Him to account. His doings are beyond question.

That pride and haughtiness are not esential to the highest glories is clearly shown by the King of kings, whose glories eclipse that of all earth's monarchs put together, even though He is meek and humble of heart. Nebuchadnezzar's retinue must have lost all respect for him during his insanity, yet now they give him the place which is his due. We must confess that this great evil was a blessing in disguise (as all evil is), and cast a glory over the closing days of Nebuchadnezzar's reign which finds few parallels in the annals of the nations. His humility was a more costly crown than all the others that he wore.

BOASTING IN GOD'S WILL

IN LIGHT OF our own pride it is well to remember the account recorded by Daniel concerning King Nebuchadnezzar: In His wisdom, God brought the great king to utter abasement, and caused him to make his abode with the animals of the field. He was shoved from among mortals, and ate herbage even as the oxen; his body became streaked with the night mist of the heavens till his hair increased as vultures' feathers, and his claws became as those of birds. God did this "unto the intent that the living shall know that the Supreme is in authority in the kingdom of mortals" (Dan.4:17), "and to whom He is willing He is giving it" (Dan.4:32). This was needed. For Nebuchadnezzar had said (and no doubt believed for many years), "Is not this Babylon great that *I* have built to be the house of the kingdom within the might of *my* safeguarding walls, for the esteem of *my* honor!" (Dan.4:30). Yet "While the matter is still in the mouth of the king, a voice falls from the heavens, 'To you they are saying, King Nebuchadnezzar: The kingdom passes away from you' " (Dan.4:31).

Yet at the end of the appointed days, rather than complaining of this tremendous judgment, when his understanding returned to him, Nebuchadnezzar lifted his eyes to heaven in praise: "Then I blessed the Supreme, and I lauded and honored Him." The king

found that God's jurisdiction is not an occasional thing but is "an eonian jurisdiction, and His kingdom is with generation after generation" (Dan.4:34). Nebuchadnezzar continued, "All abiding on the earth are reckoned as naught: *according to His will is He doing* in the army of the heavens and with those abiding on the earth. And no one will actually clap with his hands and say to Him, 'What doest Thou?' " (Dan.4:35). "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, am lauding and exalting and honoring the King of the heavens, seeing that all His deeds are verity, and His paths are adjudication; and *all walking in pride He can abase*" (Dan.4:37).

God is the Maker of good and the Creator of evil (Isa.45:7). And, He is just in *all* His ways, and kindly in *all* His doings (Psa.145:17). To the illuminated believer, when he learns of God's wisdom and perceives His purpose, this becomes evident even in those things which are so terrible in themselves. It is not at all sinful for God to create those evils which are *men's* sins. Rather than this being wrong, in light of evil's necessary yet salutary ministry for permanent and universal good, it would be wrong were He to fail to do so.

If God is good, able, and knows what is best, and if it is best that evil should not exist, then it would be necessary for Him to make its existence impossible. For in order to retain one's attributes, one must act in accord with them. Since God *is* good, able, and knows what is best, and since evil *does* exist, it must be best that evil should exist.

If it is best that evil should exist, there can be no doubt—instead of leaving its existence to chance —that it is also best that God alone should create and superintend it. Otherwise, if it should even come into being at all, it might well dissipate before accom-

plishing its mission or, alternatively, overflow its bounds altogether.

Likewise, if we would experience good, it follows that God is the One best suited to determine the times in which we should enjoy it, and all the particulars attending it, lest our enjoyment of it be less than ideal or even never occur at all.

Would we not far prefer to have what *is* best according to the only and wise God, instead of what merely *seems* best in the eyes of shortsighted and sinful man?

Yet even these meditations concerning our own best interests must never be our main concern. The greatest thing—what we desire the most—is that all should be for God's glory and according to His purpose: "Yahweh has made everything for its own pertinent end" (Prov.16:4). "Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36). Our own unique experience of good and evil is only of secondary importance. Only in the wisdom and goodness of God, for His own glory, can we find our own perfect blessing.

FATALISM IS FALSE, EVEN AS FREE WILL

God *is* operating all. His operations, however, accord not with fatalism, but with the counsel of His own will. The divine will *includes* the human will. God's will does not eliminate man's will. To the contrary, it *creates* it. God imparts to men's hearts whatever is needed that they might do His "opinion," that is, whatever He has wisely concluded is best and has decided should occur.

This principle is well illustrated for us by the leading events which will occur in Babylon in the Lord's Day, during the time of the end, the conclusion

of the eon. We read that the ten kings will be led by God Himself in their opposition to His will!

The messenger is saying to John, " 'These waters which you perceived, where the prostitute is sitting, are peoples and throngs and nations and languages. And the ten horns which you perceived, and the wild beast, these *will* be hating the prostitute, and they *will* be making her desolate and naked, and they *will* be eating her flesh, and they *will* be burning her up with fire, *for God imparts to their hearts to form His opinion,* and to form one opinion, and to give their kingdom to the wild beast, until the words of God shall be accomplished' " (Rev.17:15-17).

"The Jews in Babylon will be supported principally by the toil of the great masses in the Western nations. The enormous interest on the national debts will make the people comparative slaves of those to whom the interest is paid. When it becomes known that the greater part of this money is used by the Jews in Babylon for their luxurious magnificence, it will arouse the hatred of the peoples and the governments who are under a perpetual tribute, as there is no possibility of paying off the principal. This hatred will lead to the unanimous opinion that Babylon must be destroyed. The wild beast upon which Babylon rests, after being obsessed by the dragon, becomes her implacable enemy. This is God's means of destroying the apostates in Israel.

"By a bold figure of speech God is said to have an 'opinion.' The ten horns pride themselves in forming their own opinion and in carrying it out, when, as a matter of fact, they are obliged by the purpose of God to think and act as they do. Man is moved by ulterior motives. God provides these, and men, conscious only of their own selfish aims, accomplish His end. God

wants Babylon destroyed: They gladly do it for their own sakes, not for Him."*

It is important to recognize that the truth on this theme repudiates fatalism as much as free will. The idea that God's will shall prevail and the things He intends occur without or regardless of our own wills is fatalism. This is not the scriptural position. According to God's operation of all, however, events do come to pass just as inevitably as they do according to fatalism. (After all, at least fatalism is not so foolish as to deny causality.)

Let us consider an example: A man is extremely ill with a terrible disease; apart from the power in his medicine (an excellent one), he will surely die. Yet, if he takes it, he will recover. And, God knows he will take it, and has even designed that he should do so, and then recover. The man is free to do whatever he wants. *All these things are true.* Thus it becomes obvious that apart from and except for man's essential choices and actions a given state of things cannot and will not be achieved.

Under God's operations, what we choose and what we do are no less *essential* and vital than under the mistaken concept called "free will." Avoiding laziness and being industrious are just as important as we always thought they were. In the example, though the man will surely take his medicine, and cannot fail to do this, he is still free to do as he pleases. And, *due to* all the causal factors with which this is connected, whether heredity or early childhood training, internal or external considerations, inclinations or disinclinations toward certain things, or special im-

*CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.400; A. E. Knoch

mediate circumstances, the man *will* do this very thing, and *not* something else.

That which he does will be that which he wants to do, at least at that moment. Or at least it will be something connected with his wants, of which his actions are a consequence. It will be the product of all the factors, from within or without, distant or immediate, which cause him to act accordingly.

Prayer remains essential. Indeed, God will provide it whenever this is so. For many things are only given to us in response to our requests in prayer. It certainly is true that in many cases, not having been given to ask, we have not because we ask not. God graciously sustains us in any case, but for believers much of His provision is directly related to prayer.

Let us consider a further example: My child becomes injured in some type of accident. We are miles away from all help, and I do not know what to do to save his life, though one who was well trained to care for such injuries would know just what to do to take care of this matter ideally. Now I believe that since this has happened, ultimately speaking this is only because God has given us this experience. And I also know that in themselves all men are useless and incompetent, including myself. Yet if the proper emergency care is not given, my child will soon die. It should be added that I also believe God has already decided what is best. Whether my child should recover or not, God will bring to pass His own will in this matter.

In ourselves, my child and I are absolutely helpless. Actually our case is always this very way continually, apart from God's saving hand. We are always in need of salvation, whether for preservation or deliverance. Not at any time, nor in any situation, can we say, "I

have no need of Thee." But we are often simply too unenlightened to realize this.

However, because God has *given* me at least some uprightness of mind, I do not want my child to die. Indeed, I cannot even bear the thought. Yet he will die if *I* do not do something about the matter immediately. It is not at all that he will either recover or die whether I do anything or not, or whether I do the right thing or the wrong thing. No, I must choose to do and then actually act to carry out the proper choice. Yet I do not even know what that may be! But God knows, and He is able. So being the person I am, as God has shaped me, I make my request—my urgent plea—known to Him. With much heartfelt concern and anguish, I ask Him, *if it be His will* (*cf* Matt.26:39), to cause me to do whatever is necessary to save my child, or that He otherwise provide for his deliverance.

Since I am aware that prayer is essential, I have not a thought toward the neglect of prayer. Besides, I love God and am glad to pray to Him. In fact, I instinctively cry out to my God, Who alone is able to save. Nor do I pause to entertain any fancies concerning the glories of free will, craftily asking the Deity to help me only in part, so that I might still remain the key to it all, and have a glory of my own, and a tremendous one at that! I am not interested in either fatalistic or freewill foolishness—I want my child to live!

Let us be no more fatalistic than autocratic. Let us make our plans and have our goals. And when we have made and even accomplished some of them, let us account for this as due to the providence of our God. For He is doing all things well. God's operations are concerned with *all*, all that exists and all that occurs. There are no exceptions to what is out of, through and

for God, and to His glory. Indeed, the passages that declare this can have little practical value to us apart from this realization.

Though to the calumniator and to the immature our teachings may somehow appear to promote laziness and apathy in particular, and sinfulness in general, they actually do no such thing. Whatever weaknesses we have had along these lines may still remain in us, but they are certainly not made the worse by our faith. To the contrary, many have been given special strength through their reliance upon God alone, while recognizing that any good they may achieve is due entirely to His gracious work in them: "For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity *of God*, not in fleshly wisdom, but *in the grace of God, we behaved ourselves* in the world, yet more superabundantly toward you" (2 Cor.1:12).

It is "not that we are competent of ourselves, . . . but our competency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5). To those who are "puffed up, one over the one, against the other," Paul says, "For what is making you to discriminate [differ]? Now what have you which you did not obtain? Now if you obtained it also, why are you boasting as though not obtaining?" (1 Cor.4:7). In this way the apostle guides us to boast, like Nebuchadnezzar after his experience of humiliation, to boast in God's will and the glory of His ways. Only such convictions as these can deal effectively with our pride and reliance upon the flesh. They afford us a special happiness which we can otherwise never know.

James Coram

(To be continued)

THE DAIS OF GOD

(Romans 14:10-13)

CHRIST is both our Lord and Judge (*cf* 2 Tim.4:8), yet in Romans 14, as elsewhere in Paul's epistles, these offices are not presented in a threatening sense, but rather in a salutary sense in relation to the evangel. They arise from the cross. The death and resurrection of Christ has reshaped such subjects as discipline and judgment, which indeed have their roots in the Hebrew Scriptures and may still be expressed in old ways, but which now must be apprehended in new surroundings. We are introduced to our Lord and Judge not as One Who appeared in fire and smoke at Sinai or as One Who smote His enemies in wrath, but as the One Who died for us and is at God's right hand pleading for our sakes.

It is not that the Old Testament was wrong, but it did not manifest the whole truth, nor could it have done so when Christ had not yet died on behalf of sinners. The full significance of future judgment has now been unfolded in clearer light because of Christ's obedience. This is especially true for us who believe, as shown by the fact that neither indignation nor condemnation has a place in our future (Rom.5:9; 8:1). But even such matters as "vengeance" on unbelievers (Rom.12:19) and future affliction (Rom.2:9)

take on a new character, apart from hopelessness and despair. All judgments are to be positive in nature, as indeed they were always intended to be even when that purpose was not revealed.

In coming to know Christ as Lord we are enjoying one of the good results of God's grace. Similarly, we are beginning to realize that His work as Judge is also built on the achievements of the cross. It is something we may genuinely look forward to. Where once we might have said with despair that "Christ is *Judge*," now we say with exultation that "*Christ* is Judge," and the change of emphasis has made all the difference.

He who would slave for Christ will do so in sincere recognition that it is a privilege which issues out of a joyful heart. The revelations concerning the dais of God only add to the spirit of joyful expectancy that infuses us. And in addition, these revelations train us in our everyday associations with fellow believers to deal graciously with full assurance in what God has in store for each one. It is especially with this aspect of our service in mind (dealing with our brethren in love) that Paul writes:

Now why are you judging your brother? or why are you also scorning your brother? For all of us shall be presented at the dais of God . . . (Rom.14:10).

Why then should we not be judging or scorning our fellow believers? It is because we will all be together on one level before the dais, and it is because we know that our Lord Himself will be the Judge, and He will do that which is right and good for each one.

In 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 Paul urges the brethren to judge those who are behaving immorally, but here in Romans 14 he entreats us not to be judging a brother's attempt to honor the Lord without any consideration of his motivation and level of maturity. Paul directs his

thoughts to those who judge without having any way to see all the facts, and who do so without a sense of oneness with their brethren, for whom Christ died.

Maintaining fellowship with one who is openly and continually bringing disgrace on the assembly of believers is wrong. But leniency and patience are called for when those who are infirm in the faith are seeking to serve their Lord in ways that may not be appropriate to the message of grace and love we have received. We must not scorn them for their mistaken views, but leave it to the Lord to set these things right at the dais of God. Then, in the meantime, as the Lord opens the way, we may be taking the infirm in the faith to ourselves (Rom.14:1) in order to help encourage them in worthy service.

This subject of the dais itself might well be a profitable matter for discussion between those who are strong in the faith and those who are still occupied with requirements of law and ritual. Its harmony with the evangel of grace is seen in such passages as 1 Corinthians 4:1-5; 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:15; Ephesians 6:5-8; and 1 Thessalonians 3:12,13. When believers speak in love to one another about such matters there is bound to be spiritual profit.

In *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 38, pages 101-108, Brother A. E. Knoch shared some thoughts on this subject. He wrote, "The key words which describe the dais are *illumination, manifestation, requital* and *applause*. They are closely connected with judgment, but the sting has been withdrawn. They are not due to God's indignation, as is the case with the unbeliever, but to His holiness, which insists on the removal of all that might be a source of evil in the future. He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and reveal the counsels of the heart (1 Cor.4:5). The true

value of our service lies in the motivation back of it, not in its apparent success or failure. If it is done for His glory alone, it will not fail to find applause. But if it is centered in self, it will not survive the fire. Yet we will be glad to see it vanish" (p.103).

Hence we see that the stress is on the positive nature of the dais. Rewards for faithfulness and the discarding of that which is useless are both great benefits. Our awareness of these features of the dais helps shape our attitudes toward our fellow believers as well as our service. As the dais is for good, so also should we be concerned with the good of our associates.

THE ISAIAH QUOTATIONS

. . . for it is written;
Living am I, the Lord is saying,
For to Me shall bow every knee,
And every tongue shall be acclaiming God!
(Rom.14:11).

In order to express the benevolent character of the dais, Paul borrows three lines from the Septuagint (LXX) Version of Isaiah and inserts them here in this new context. The statement, "Living am I, the Lord is saying," is taken from Isaiah 49:18, and Paul uses it here in Romans 14 to refer to Christ's offices in His resurrected and ascended life. The connection is with the words "Christ . . . lives" in Romans 14:9. Right now, and through the oncoming eons, the ascended Christ carries on the work of establishing and fulfilling His Lordship over all. Romans 14:1-9 relates that Lordship to the believer's present life and service, while verses 10 and 11 relate that Lordship to the dais and our presentation there.

By citing Isaiah 49:18, Paul reminds us that Christ will exhibit all the characteristics of life at the dais. He

will be *active*, he will be *aware* of all things, and He will fully *manifest* His gracious disposition.

The second citation in Romans 14:11 is from the LXX of Isaiah 45:23, "For to Me shall bow every knee, And every tongue shall be acclaiming God!" Since Paul is referring to believers here, we correctly understand him to say that every single believer will acknowledge the Lordship of Christ, and in doing so we will be acclaiming God. To some extent we may be doing this today, but we will first do it in its full extent at the dais. In Isaiah 45 we see how all those participating in the coming kingdom will join in this recognition and praise. Then, in using this passage in Philippians 2:9-11, the apostle shows that it will eventually have a universal application "to the glory of God the Father."

These are marvelous stages in the development of Christ's Lordship, and we exult in anticipating those that are future as well as in the privilege of acknowledging Christ's Lordship right now. The bowing and the acclaiming, both now and in every future stage, must always be from the heart, a saving and living acknowledgement that Jesus Christ is Lord.

As we have seen, this heartfelt recognition of Christ's Lordship is, in essence, acclamation to God Himself. The final words of Philippinan 2:11 make this clear. The life of Christ always is directed to God's glory, and His office as Judge at the dais is viewed as directly having that objective.

Consequently, then, each of us shall be giving account concerning himself to God. By no means, then, should we still be judging one another, but rather decide this, not to place a stumbling block for a brother, or a snare (Rom.14:12,13).

Although Christ is the Judge, His work and posi-

tion at the dais is with the glory of His God and Father always in view. Hence the dais is here designated as being "of God." The recognition of Christ's Lordship is described as "acclaiming God." So also our presentation before the dais is for the purpose of each one "giving account concerning himself to God." The epistle of Romans has centered our attention on God's righteousness, power and love. In this way it has revealed God more clearly and truly than ever before in the Sacred Scriptures. Now we are told that we will give an account of our deeds before Him Who spares not His Son but gives Him up for us all.

That is surely a stupendous prospect. It takes our breath away. And yet, while we may tremble at the thought, we also anticipate this presentation because of what we have now learned of God and His achievements in Christ Jesus. May that day come soon!

We cannot want to stumble a brother in any way. To judge him heedlessly or to scorn him without really knowing his motives or appreciating the pressures in his life will lead to much present hurt and harm, both for him and for the one judging. Yet above all else it is a failure to appreciate the true benefits of the dais.

The dais of God is in full accord with our calling. It is for our good, a gracious provision for healing wounds and getting rid of that which is not ideal. It will not be a time for posings and positionings, or scoldings and scornings, or self-aggrandizings, nor a time of covering up or hiding in shame. Instead, it will be a time of release from pride and the burdens of our failings into the glorious freedom of bowing before our loving Lord and acclaiming the greatness of our God and Father.

D.H.H.

(To be continued)

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES for NOVEMBER 1987
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME SEVENTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

ARE we growing up? This is something Paul wanted us to be conscious of. He struggled to present all those under his ministry "mature in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28,29). He dispensed the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ so "that we may by no means still be minors, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching" (Eph.4:11-14).

That maturity of which Paul was speaking is impossible apart from a grasp of the revelations in his letters, especially those written from prison. Yet such maturity does not stop with an understanding of truth. In the final analysis it is a matter of behavior, indeed based on truth, but exhibited in our disposition, our walk and our service.

For 78 years now, *Unsearchable Riches* has concentrated on the message of overwhelming grace and multifarious wisdom in Paul's epistles. The very title of our magazine reflects this stress (see Eph.3:8-13). And yet each of us continually needs to enter into these rich revelations and meditate on them, testing them anew and assimilating them afresh, as our daily food.

Beginning on page 243 we reprint A. E. Knoch's excellent study on Ephesians 1:18, "The Expectation of His Calling." This is solid food, not milk (contrast 1 Cor.3:2) because it centers so completely on the grace of the glorified Christ and on our own un-

worthiness. We generally see expectation as the fruit of diligent labor and faithful service; it is thought of almost as a reward or even a wage. Consequently, we are apt to feel unsure of what is ahead when it is fully based on the achievement and favor of someone else. How fitting, then, that Paul prays for a spirit of wisdom and revelation in appreciating this expectation!

We follow Bro. Knoch's article with Bro. John Essex's thoughts on Ephesians 4:20-5:2 and my study on Romans 14:14,15. We need a grasp of Christ's love in dying for all so that we may be putting on the new humanity, walking as imitators of God in accord with the love of Christ in giving Himself for our sakes. The mature believer puts no limits on this love, and because he appreciates something of its pure graciousness, he will be dealing graciously with others.

Then in this issue, we repeat this pattern of an article on "mature revelation" followed by one on "mature deportment," with Phil Scranton's review of the significant phrases, "In Christ, In Christ Jesus and In the Lord," and Jim Coram's article, "Herald the Word!" Staunchness and perseverance in making the evangel of God's grace known is developed in those who are growing in their perception and appreciation of that evangel.

Even as Israel repeated over and over again the words that were "Written With the Finger of Elohim" (see "Studies in Deuteronomy" by Herman H. Rocke, p.279), and even as David clung to Yahweh's testimonies (Psa.119:31), so we go over the words of the ascended Christ and cling to them, that we might be "manifesting a letter of Christ, engraven into our hearts with the spirit of the living God" (see p.284).

D.H.H.

THE EXPECTATION OF HIS CALLING

(Ephesians 1:18)

MOST FORLORN of all mankind are we if our expectation is limited to this life (1 Cor.15:19). Material prosperity, sensations of pleasure, high honors, are by no means the special prerogatives of the saints in Paul's latest revelations. He himself, as their chief representative, lived a life of great hardship, with much persecution, and, at the last, was loaded with a chain, and lived on prison fare, and had very little he could call his own. Far worse than that, the very ones to whom he had brought the highest honors and grandest glories, who should have rewarded him with their undying loyalty and friendship—even these were turned against him. He was, indeed, forlorn, with no perceptible evidence of his vast spiritual wealth or the rich reward for his labors and his sufferings (2 Tim. 1:16).

In contrast to our poor expectations in this life, there seems to be no limit to the riches and glories that await us in the next. These are promised to us, not on account of our deserts, but rather the opposite. God's main object is to reveal *Himself* to the heavenly hosts, especially the riches of His *grace* and *love*, so He needs such undeserving subjects as we are in order to press home, by practical examples, what He can do for those who are unworthy of His gifts and have done much to draw forth His enmity and little to deserve

His favor. Let us press this home to our hearts, or it will be impossible for us to believe the magnificent promises of honors and glories which are ours in Christ Jesus.

The first part of the petition of Ephesians 1:18 has to do with our future. What are we to expect? The saints in Israel had a very clear and definite idea of what was in store for them, for the prophets are full of predictions on which to base their expectations. Our Lord added much to raise high hopes of a grand and glorious kingdom when He returns. Even if that were the basis of our expectation, we would have cause for thankfulness, for the nations in that day will be blessed through Israel. But this is not our calling! We will not be the lowest on earth, but the highest in the heavens! We would, indeed, be highly favored if we received a secondary place among the celestials. But this would not reveal God to us. His grace would not be properly displayed even by such a promotion. It calls for much more than that! It demands that the last shall become *first*, the lowest *highest*.

Ours is a life of *faith*. Our blessings lie in the *future*. While the present is not our expectation, it is a necessary and salutary preparation for the life which is to come. Our own appreciation of God's glorious grace will be vastly enhanced as we view the fearful failures of our fellow believers even after they have been called, and of our own experiences in crucifying the flesh and fighting our spiritual foes. We fail to put the flesh in the place of death, and we fail to use the large shield of faith to protect ourselves from our unseen foes. But our shortcomings should have the salutary effect of convincing us of our own utter unworthiness, and magnifying our thankfulness and adoration for the fullness of His favor.

The Concordant Version makes a clear-cut distinction between expectation and hope. We expect that which is sure and certain, something on which we can *depend.* Indeed, it is translated so when used of God on Whom we rely (2 Cor.1:10; 1 Tim.4:10; 5:5), which is in contrast with the dubiousness of riches, on which we do not rely (1 Tim.6:17). *Hope,* in contrast with this, must also be rendered *apprehensive,* as were the sailors on board the ship that was wrecked on the island of Melita (Acts 28:6). Faith does not *hope,* is not *apprehensive,* but *expects,* and *relies* on the promises of God for the future.

The prophetic Scriptures are full of the expectation of Israel, and the Circumcision writings of later revelation confirm them. The disciples of our Lord expected that He was about to redeem Israel (Luke 24:21). Yet it is remarkable how much more often this thought wells up in Paul's epistles. Although they are not nearly half as long as the Circumcision writings, far more than half of the occurrences of "expect" and "expectation" occur in them. In other words, about two-thirds of the occurrences are found in Paul's epistles. This is doubtless due to the fact that *faith* is far more prominent in the truth for today than it ever was in the past.

Expectation is the future outlook of faith. The past provides the foundation of faith, the future its fruition. We look back and believe God's record of His activities in creation and revelation as recorded in the Scriptures of truth. We, who have His latest and fullest unfoldings, revel in the deeper truths, that He not only created the heavens and the earth as recorded in Genesis, the book of the Beginning, but that all was created in Christ, the Son of His love, His visible Image, whether that in the heavens or on the earth,

whether visible or invisible. All was created through Him and for Him, and He is before all (Col.1:13-17).

Although expectation is not concerned with the past, it is largely based upon it. Confidence in the future of anyone depends on his previous record. When we realize the exalted position of God's Son as His creative Original (Rev.3:14), so that He is First in place as well as time, it helps us to look forward with confidence to His exaltation in the future, so we expect to see Him as the Last (Rev.1:18), in Whom all will be headed up (Eph.1:10).

This is especially true as to ourselves. How it cheers our hearts and consolidates our faith and encourages our outlook for the future to know that we were chosen in Christ before the disruption (Eph.1:4)! Our sonship is not a recent development. This high honor was ours before we were called, yes, ere we were born. It even antedated the entrance of evil into the world. The high nobility of earth do not, as a rule, do anything themselves to deserve their exalted position in society. They inherit it from their ancestors, whose titles may date back as far as the Crusades. But the sons of God today derive their title from a patent dated in a time when sin had not even entered the scene. So it does not mar their escutcheon or endanger their prospects.

HAVING NO EXPECTATION

As a background of our present glorious expectation, those of us who are not of the seed of Abraham should always *remember* the position of the nations in relation to God in the past, before the present administration of God's grace. Being uncircumcised in flesh, we had no covenant relationship with the Deity; consequently, we had no Messiah, for He came only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt.10:6). Even

after the apostasy of the favored nation was apparent, and God turned to the nations through a special apostle, Paul, they were only guests at Israel's board! Not having any spiritual values of their own, they participated in Israel's spiritual treasures, hence were in their debt, which they sought to settle by sending them fleshly gifts (Rom.15:27).

Israel has a glorious expectation. Yahweh not only promised them a land gushing with milk and honey, peace and plenty under the reign of a righteous King, but supremacy over the other nations. They will not only *rule* them as kings but *bless* them as priests. No other nation on earth has any ground to look forward to such a future. Indeed, there were nations that attained to world rule—Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece—but they brought little blessing to mankind, and perished in their own corruption. There will be another world ruler in the future, the Man of Sin, but he will draw down the indignation of God on the nations. They may expect a little economic prosperity from him at first, but then they will be overwhelmed with suffering and woe.

In these last days there is a pseudo-messianic spirit, which leads nations to hold out high hopes of worldwide peace and plenty, a millennium without God's Messiah. Usually it is to be brought about by changes in social and economic structure such as installing socialism in place of capitalism, or the harnessing of the powers of nature, or the use of machines in place of men. So far these illusive utopias have led to widespread poverty rather than plenty, to dissatisfaction rather than contentment, to wars rather than peace.

The widespread movement to form a world government, to put an end to the present chaos and in-

security, holds out a hope for the nations that is doomed to bring upon them the direst destruction, except for the deluge, that will ever devastate the human race. What they need is a man who is magnetic and powerful enough to unite them under his leadership. When Satan inspires such a man, the Antichrist, their expectations will doubtless be raised to the highest pitch. Now we will have peace! Now all will have plenty! Estranged from God, rejecting Him and His Christ, they hope to be sovereigns of their souls and designers of their own destiny. But God will blast them from the earth. *This is what the nations may expect, apart from God's grace.* Let us remember this, and contrast it with our celestial expectation, which we have in Christ Jesus.

The nations, as such, had they faith in God's Word, would look forward to a measure of blessing in the millennium, subordinate to Israel. But they must also reckon with the iron club, with which Messiah will deal with all doers of unrighteousness in that day. Through Israel they will learn of Yahweh, the God of the priestly nation, and His ways. Their weapons of war will be made over into implements of peace. But the transformation will by no means be perfect or permanent. In the midst of the millennium Gog and Magog will rise against Israel and perish (Ezek.38-39). At the end Satan will deceive them for the last time, and perhaps the greatest army of mortals ever assembled surround the citadel of the saints, seeking to destroy the mediatorial nation and blot out God's name from the earth (Rev.20:7-9). Such is the expectation of the nations, as nations.

But we are rather concerned with the *individuals* among the nations, especially such as received the evangel Paul made known to them in his earliest mis-

sionary journey, soon after Israel had rejected the ministry of the Twelve. What expectation had they? *They had none.* Had Christ come to set up His kingdom, even though they were saints, indwelt by God's spirit, they could not point to a single promise of any place or portion in that Kingdom. What could be done with them there? They cannot claim the promises made to Abraham, or to David, or to their seed, for they are aliens and uncircumcised. Although, *in spirit,* they could enter into the very holy of holies of the millennial temple, in flesh they would be excluded even from the outer court.

But suppose they had died. Would they not have been raised at His advent, along with the Circumcision saints? *No!* There is no hint of any such thing. In fact the Thessalonians were disturbed about this very matter, and did not know what to make of it. Therefore Paul wrote to them that he did not wish them to be ignorant concerning those who are reposing, lest they sorrow as the rest, who have no expectation. They had sorrowed so because they knew of no expectation. They had sorrowed so because they knew of no expectation for themselves. So he reveals it to them for the first time (1 Thess.4:13-18). He bases it upon the death and resurrection of Jesus. He Who recalled Him to life will lead forth those who are reposing in Him. The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout of command, and the dead and living will be snatched away to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord (1 Thess.4:13-18).

When the apostle Paul revealed this expectation to the Corinthians, he called it a *secret* (1 Cor.15:51). We will not find it in the Scriptures before this time, because the very idea of blessing to a distinct body of

people among the nations was quite out of line with previous revelation. It takes the spirit of revelation, for which Paul prayed (Eph.1:17), for us to apprehend it. Paul left the Thessalonians in the air, both literally and figuratively. Yet that is hardly a proper habitation for a mortal. The revelation of our expectation was given in installments. He takes us first to the air. Now he enlarges upon this and explains that, at Christ's presence, we shall all be changed from mortals to immortals. So we can live anywhere and everywhere, in the air or even in the heavens. In fact, our bodies will no longer depend, as now, upon the soil for sustenance, but will be celestial—able to function throughout the universe.

But why should we have celestial bodies when the home of humanity is on earth? It is evident that the saints in the transitional era, which introduced the present secret administration, were not blinded at the beginning by the brilliant blaze of our celestial expectation. Paul himself seems to have lost his sight when the light above the brightness of the sun flashed about him on the Damascus road. It was too bright, so that, instead of enlightening him, he could see nothing, even when his eyes were open. Does not this give us a good illustration and explain why the excessive glory of our celestial expectation was not revealed all at once, but was imparted in installments? The saints were gradually prepared by Paul, during his itinerant ministry, for the full blaze of his celestial revelations in his perfection epistles.

Israel will be blessed with every *physical* blessing on the earth. Under their own vine, and fig and olive trees, they will enjoy health and wealth while they bring righteousness and peace and light to the rest of mankind. Because of their *physical* relationship to

their Messiah they are accorded earth's richest blessing and grandest glories, and are chosen to spread His name and fame from pole to pole.

Our expectation is the counterpart and complement of this on a higher plane and with a grander scope. We will enjoy every *spiritual* blessing among the celestials (Eph.1:3), because of our spiritual relationship to Christ as the Head of the entire universe. In immortal, glorious, powerful, spiritual, celestial bodies we will never need to be concerned about our health or wealth (1 Cor.15:42-44). And we will enjoy the highest happiness, not merely because we are ourselves "in heaven," but in bringing blessing to the celestial hosts, to whom we even now make known the multifarious wisdom of God (Eph.3:10), by displaying to them the transcendent riches of His grace and kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:7).

This is the expectation of His calling. This is what the future holds for all who are called by God during this administration of God's grace, whether they are Jew or Gentile, Circumcision or Uncircumcision. For the Circumcision, the change from the highest place on earth to the lowest one in heaven would be a stupendous promotion. But for us—aliens, outcasts, curs—words fail to measure the height of our exaltation. It is like the universe, whose dimensions we cannot apprehend. It is the expression of the love of God, which passes all comprehension. May it be our boon to perceive this expectation now, so that the highest of all happiness may be ours in the realization of God, and heartfelt thanks may rise unceasingly to Him as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory.

A.E.K.

(To be continued)

PUT ON THE NEW HUMANITY

(Ephesians 4:20-5:2)

Now you did not thus learn Christ, since, surely, Him you hear, and by Him were taught (according as the truth is in Jesus), to put off from you, as regards your former behavior, the old humanity which is corrupted in accord with its seductive desires, yet to be rejuvenated in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new humanity which, in accord with God, is being created in righteousness and benignity of the truth. Wherefore, putting off the false, let each be speaking the truth with his associate, for we are members of one another (Eph.4:20-25).

In these verses, our former behavior (*cf* Eph.2:1-3) is associated with "the old humanity which is corrupted," and this is contrasted with "the new humanity, which, in accord with God, is being created in righteousness and benignity of the truth." This is a concise statement; for a more detailed explanation, read the whole of Romans 6, and remember also that "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new!" (2 Cor.5:17).

The record of the creation of humanity is in Genesis 1:26-28, but in these verses there is no suggestion of soulishness or sin. We submit that God had in mind the new humanity, headed up in His Christ, even when He was creating the first. It is in Genesis 2:7 that

we learn that man was "formed" (not "created") from the soil of the ground and became a living soul, and it is in Genesis 3 that we find the sinful consequence of this. But, taking the long view, the old humanity was necessary to bring Christ to the cross, and also to educate creation (including ourselves) to appreciate the grievous effects of disobedience to God. But the old humanity must eventually be superseded by the new, and, in our case, this should already be happening. The new is being created in righteousness, and is pushing out the old. As Paul wrote to the Philippians, "God is operating in us to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (2:13).

This chapter in Ephesians finds a counterpart in Colossians, where we read, "Deaden, then, your members that are on earth: prostitution, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and greed, which is idolatry, because of which the indignation of God is coming on the sons of stubbornness—among whom you also once walked, when you lived in these things. Yet now you also be putting away all these: anger, fury, malice, calumny, obscenity out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, stripping off the old humanity with its practices, and putting on the young, which is being renewed into recognition, to accord with the Image of the One Who creates it, wherein there is no Greek and Jew, Circumcision and Uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but all and in all is Christ" (Col.3:5-11).

In both Ephesians and Colossians, the new (or young) humanity is described as a *creation*. In other words, there is no way in which the old humanity can *grow* into the new. The old must be completely "passed by" (2 Cor.5:17) before there can "come new." In no way may the new be contaminated by the

old. In God's sight, the old was crucified with Christ (Rom.6:6). It is not resurrected, but replaced.

The new creation is "created in righteousness and benignity of the truth." The word "benignity" is not one that is commonly used in conversation, though its root "benign" occurs more often. Sometimes it is used in connection with cancerous growths which are not malignant. "Benign" is defined in the dictionary as "gracious, kindly, of a mild type," and "benignity" as "goodness of disposition, kindness, graciousness." In the Authorized Version, the Greek word *hosiotês* is translated "holiness" here and in Luke 1:75, but the usual Greek word for "holiness" is quite different (*hagiasmos*). The KEYWORD CONCORDANCE suggests that the Greek root *hosion* seems, from its Hebrew equivalents, to combine the thoughts of merciful, kind and bountiful. To attach these meanings to the new humanity seems very appropriate, and justifies the use of the word "benignity" in the Concordant Version.

We notice, both in Ephesians and in Colossians, the emphasis that is placed on the truth. In Ephesians, it is that the new humanity is being created in the "benignity of the truth. Wherefore, putting off the false, let each be speaking the truth with his associate." In Colossians, it is "Do not lie to one another, stripping off the old humanity with its practices." The old humanity is tainted with lying and deceit; the new is graced with righteousness and truth. In the words of Tennyson, let us "Ring out the old, ring in the new; ring out the false, ring in the true." Just as the old year cannot carry one minute over into the new, neither can the old humanity project one iota of itself into the new humanity.

Are you indignant, and not sinning? Do not let the sun be sinking on your vexation, nor yet be giving

place to the Adversary. Let him who steals by no means still be stealing: yet rather let him be toiling, working with his hands at what is good, that he may have to share with one who has need. Let no tainted word at all be issuing out of your mouth, but if any is good toward needful edification, that it may be giving grace to those hearing (4:26-29).

We must always remember that the Adversary is lurking around, trying to trip us at every opportunity, and we should not try to help him. What may seem in the heat of the moment to be righteous indignation against another should if possible be settled the same day lest it grow into anger. Let us show our associates, whether brothers and sisters in Christ, or people in the world with whom we come into contact, that we hold nothing against them, even though in our hearts we may feel that we have been wronged by them. This will be dealt with more fully in the next section.

On the principle that it is happier to give than to get (Acts 20:35), let us abandon any attempt to get from others more than is our rightful due, but rather work so that we are in a position to help others when needed. This is completely against the practices of the world, where each is for himself. Similarly, we should guard what we say. A tainted word is not necessarily an offensive one, but one that corrupts in the sense of misinforming or misrepresenting others. Truly the tongue is a little member and is grandiloquent (James 3:5).

DEALING GRACIOUSLY

And do not be causing sorrow to the holy spirit of God by which you are sealed for the day of deliverance. Let all bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny be taken away from you with all

malice, yet become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, dealing graciously among yourselves, according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you (4:30-32).

We are sealed with the holy spirit of God, termed in chapter 1, verse 13, "the holy spirit of promise." This has the effect of making it impossible for us to lose out, for it is the earnest, or pledge, of our allotment—the guarantee that, that which has been procured for us will indeed be delivered to us, for us to enjoy to the full. With such an expectation before us, how can we sour it by indulging in conduct likely to cause sorrow to the very spirit which has sealed it for us? May those worldly qualities of bitterness, fury, anger, clamor, calumny and malice be taken from us—they prevent us from enjoying the peace and harmony associated with the body of Christ. Let us rather be kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, dealing graciously among ourselves, and the pattern for this is how God is dealing graciously with us, in Christ.

God has dealt most graciously with us. Though He cannot fail to notice our offenses, He never charges any of them against us. Indeed, through His apostle, Paul, He even goes so far as to declare that "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus." In fact, He then challenges the universe to find someone who can be indicting His chosen ones (Rom.8:1,33). There is not one who may justifiably lay any charge against us. In the face of this, we should never consider indicting any of our brethren, but learn to deal graciously with them.

IMITATORS OF GOD

Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in love, according as Christ

also loves you, and gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor (5:1,2).

This passage at the beginning of chapter five is really the climax of the exhortations in chapter four. These two verses incorporate the highest possible criterion of conduct, namely, that we should become *imitators of God,* like little children who look up to their fathers, for we are truly beloved by Him. Let us note that this imitation is not achieved by intensive work, but by simply *walking in love.* The example placed before us is Christ. He gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor.

There are two types of sacrifice brought to our notice in Scripture, particularly in the book of Leviticus. Those in Leviticus 1-4 are depicted as rising to God with a fragrant odor (or sweet savor), and those in chapter 5 have no fragrant odor. The former are connected with service and the latter with sin. All are typical of Christ's sacrifice, but (we repeat) those which ascend to God as a sweet savor are related to service, not to sin. They found their fulfillment during the three hours of daylight while Christ hung on the cross and was able to converse with His Father. During the three hours of darkness which followed, He was mute. It was during the second period of three hours, when God turned away from Him, that the question of sin was resolved.

But Christ's service does not end on the cross, even though His work in connection with sin was fully accomplished. On the contrary, His service continues. It is at present being exercised on behalf of His ecclesia. In Romans 8:34, He is portrayed as being at God's right hand, pleading for our sakes. Our response to

this should be in line with Romans 12:1,2, where Paul says, "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." This entreaty was made before Paul had revealed the celestial nature of our allotment. If that was then our logical divine service, how much rather should we be willing to offer it in the light of the later and greater revelation of Ephesians four and five!

John H. Essex

(To be continued)

EUGENE CHATT

Our friend in the Lord, Eugene Chatt, of Dayton, Ohio, was put to repose on June 27, 1987. Gene was born in 1929, and was a veteran of the Korean Conflict. Survivors include his wife, Shelba Jean Chatt, and our friends in faith, Larry Chatt, Gene's brother, and Kim Winchester, Gene's stepson.

The newspaper obituary announcing Brother Chatt's death included these simple but very encouraging words which cause us to think of the words of the apostle Paul, "I am aware Whom I have believed," and, "I am not ashamed" (2 Tim.1:12): "Eugene, a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, believed in the reconciliation of all to God, and [was] a supporter of the Concordant Publishing Concern."

While Eugene rejoiced greatly in the entire scriptural revelation, his greatest joy was in the gratuitousness and graciousness of the evangel. I had been looking forward to meeting Gene in person during our trip to Ohio and Michigan this past August. Though our anticipated visit at that time was not to be, we will surely be together in that day, the day of our Lord's appearing.

Jim Coram

WALKING ACCORDING TO LOVE

(Romans 14:14,15)

WHAT JESUS CALLED "the second" greatest precept of the Mosaic Law (Matt.22:39) was not taken from the "ten words" or commandments of Exodus 20 or Deuteronomy 5. Instead it was based on Leviticus 19:18, where we read: "You will love your associate as yourself." To this distinctive command, the Lord added a new and even more astounding instruction: "Love your enemies, and pray for those who are persecuting you" (Matt.5:44). Yet no matter how sincere Israel may have been in desire and resolve to heed these precepts, they failed to carry them into effect. Similarly, no matter how much we as believers wish to walk in love, we find that it is not enough merely to appreciate its righteousness and know it as the ideal pattern for behavior. We also fail, especially when we think of the walk of love as something separate from the teaching that is in the evangel.

Even for Israel the commandments were based on a revelation of the character of God. The precepts in Leviticus 19 were built on the truth of Yahweh's holiness (Lev.19:2). So also the entreaties of Romans 12-16 are built on the message of God's righteousness so carefully laid down in Romans 3:21-28 (see also Rom.1:17) and His operations of justification, conciliation and glorification unfolded throughout the first eight chapters of this epistle.

What was missing in the precepts concerning love was a motivating basis that clearly lay outside of human self-discipline, one that was placed within the inner being of the human as part of his very makeup. This will be provided under the "new covenant," when Yahweh will give Israel a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek.36:26,27). In the end love must be implanted within mankind as a gift from God, so that it arises naturally from our dispositions.

This is what God has provided for us already even while we remain in these bodies of humiliation. The walk of love is being developed in the life of the believer to the extent in which he or she is believing and realizing the fullness of God's love in giving His Son for our sakes. We are seeing this in Romans, but Paul later presented it most succinctly in Ephesians 5:1,2. "Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in love, according as Christ also loves you, and gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God for a fragrant odor."

We are not to see only an example for our walk in the sacrifice of Christ, but along with that we are to understand that His giving of Himself is, in fact, power in our lives when realized and appreciated. Paul wrote, "For not ashamed am I of the evangel, for *it is God's power* for salvation to everyone who is believing" (Rom.1:16). "For the word of the cross is stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing, yet to us who are being saved *it is the power of God*" (1 Cor.1:18).

The foundation in Romans for what is being said about love in chapter 14 is: "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). It is in believing this evangel of God's love that we will find the "just

requirement" of Leviticus 19:18 and of Matthew 5:44 being fulfilled in us (Rom.8:4). The spirit comes in connection with the evangel of God given to us in Paul's epistles.

WE ARE THE LORD'S

I have perceived and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is contaminating of itself, except that the one reckoning anything to be contaminating, to that one it is contaminating (Rom.14:14).

In this present life on the earth we do many things that are not pleasing to the Lord. But nothing we do can change our relationship to Him. He is our Lord because He has bought us with a price (1 Cor.6:20; 7:23), and we are His (Rom.14:8). Nothing can contaminate or spoil this position.

Nevertheless, even though his relationship with the Lord is not spoiled by anything he does, the conscience of one who is infirm in the faith can be contaminated. A. E. Knoch wrote, "The distinctions instituted by the law between things which are to be reckoned clean and unclean have no place in the economy of grace . . . . Hence no food is ceremonially unclean. It is only an uninstructed conscience which counts things unclean."*

Yet much is laid on the mature believer. Again let us note the words in the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY on this passage: "The liberty to eat anything should not be allowed to infringe on the prejudices of others. Those who have a conscience about partaking of certain foods are easily offended. We should not stand on our rights but seek rather to restrain our liberty to

---

*CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.244.

conform to the religious scruples of our fellow believers."

To the Galatians, Paul wrote: "For you were called for freedom, brethren, only use not the freedom for an incentive to the flesh, but through love be slaving for one another. For the entire law is fulfilled in one word, in this: 'You shall love your associate as yourself' " (Gal.5:13,14). The very grace that has given us freedom and has shown us that "all is allowed" us also trains us (Titus 2:12) to do that which is expedient for the good of others (1 Cor.6:12; 10:23).

ACCORDING TO LOVE

For if, because of food, your brother is sorrowing, you are no longer walking according to love (Rom.14:15a).

In Ephesians 5:2 Paul guides us to "be walking *in* love," and this is to be "*according as* Christ also loves" us. The thought is condensed here in Romans 14:15. The term "according to" points to the pattern established by Christ in giving Himself for our sakes. Literally it means "down," and here perhaps it can be visualized as a copy laid down upon the original pattern, matching up with it in its details.

But, as we have suggested above, this is more than copying a pattern or following an example. The original pattern itself operates inside us and shapes the copy in us. The original, that is, Christ's love in dying for sinners, vibrates with spiritual power in our lives so that we begin to walk in that kind of love which accords with His love.

In other words, while rejoicing in the fullness of God's grace and our completeness in Christ, we will not mistake the implications of grace in such a way that we stumble or bring sorrow to a brother . . . or to

anyone for that matter. Since our faith is rooted and grounded in love (*cf* Eph.3:17), so our walk and service accords with His love. It is the love of Christ that constrains us so that we do not live to ourselves but to His honor and praise (2 Cor.5:14,15).

FOR WHOM CHRIST DIED

Do not, by your food, destroy that one for whose sake Christ died (Rom.14:15b).

For whose sake did Christ die? This is a critical question. For we see that our attitude toward someone is shaped by the recognition that Christ died for his sake.

Hence we see that Christ died for our brethren, for those out of mankind who believe. And in grasping this, our hearts go out to all our fellow believers, whether they are strong or infirm in the faith. We are being trained to deal with them with patience and kindness, apart from jealousy and bragging in ourselves, with no self-seeking (*cf* 1 Cor.13:4-7).

But we have also learned that God wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth, and that Christ gives Himself a correspondent Ransom for them all, without exception (1 Tim.2:1-7). The love of Christ is shown in 2 Corinthians 5:14 by the fact that He died for all. Does the walk which accords with Christ's love, then, involve a patience and a selfless concern for everyone? Indeed it does.

It is not always easy to be patient and gracious with those brethren who seem disposed to fleshly things. And it is certainly not easy to feel kindly disposed toward unbelievers who treat us with scorn or even cruelty. To be sure, the walk of love involves the need to be firm in standing against error and refusing that which is wicked. But it does not involve hateful

feelings of the heart. We rightly hate that which is wrong, but because Christ died for each and every member of the human race, our hearts will be trained to love the person.

No one can walk according to love apart from an acquaintance with the love of God in giving His Son for our sakes. Apart from this, what we call "love" is always bound up with some measure of selfishness, some measure of self-seeking, some measure of ambition for one's own glory. Yet when we are believing that Christ died for us, we find a new kind of love stirring up within us, and we will be walking, more and more, according to this love. D.H.H.

(To be continued)

BOUND VOLUMES OF
UNSEARCHABLE RICHES MAGAZINE

We have had several requests for a hardcover edition of the combined volumes 2-3 (1910-1911), which was until now available only in paperback, for $9.00. A hardcover edition will be available in a few weeks for those who want it, at a cost of $15.00. We are now taking orders for this new edition, to be shipped as soon as it is delivered to us from the bindery.

All available bound volumes of other years of *Unsearchable Riches* may be purchased for $7.00 each. Those available are 1909, 1924 through 1926, 1929 through 1938, 1940 through 1956, 1958 through 1960, and 1962 through 1986. (Each volume contains a single year.) A bound edition of the current volume for 1987 will be available in the spring of 1988 for $7.00.

A set of all sixty available bound volumes is priced at $275.00. Indexes are included, both by subject matter and scriptural citations. A detailed information sheet regarding these volumes is available on request.

We also have sets of all available individual loose back issues of our magazine for $20.00. These are by no means complete sets, but are a good resource for the person wishing an inexpensive yet comprehensive array of Concordant literature.

IN CHRIST, IN CHRIST JESUS AND IN THE LORD

THE PHRASES which make up our title are some of the most significant to us in the Greek Scriptures, yet they may be among the least appreciated and understood. Each of these phrases occurs over forty times in Paul's epistles, but they are exceedingly rare anywhere else (1 Peter 3:16; 5:10,14; 1 John 5:20 are exceptions). In addition, Paul uses such expressions as "in Christ Jesus our Lord," "in the Lord Jesus," "in the Beloved" and "in the Son of His love." Each of the phrases is distinct and carries with it a special emphasis, yet, since they all identify the same One, there is also the overlapping and similarity in meaning and usage.

One of the most basic usages of these terms is as a designation of believers. The closing chapter of Romans furnishes an interesting example. Although we were chosen *in Christ* "before the disruption of the world" (Eph.1:4), still Paul can say that Andronicus and Junias "came to be *in Christ*" before him (Rom.16:7). We are the "in Christ" people, those who are "in the Lord" (Rom.16:2), those who are "in Christ Jesus" (Rom.16:3).

The basis of this concept of being "in Christ" is presented in the first chapter of Colossians. There the titles of Lord and Christ, and the name of His humanity, Jesus, are set aside that the topic may be

approached from the viewpoint of the Father's love. Thus we are in "the Son of His love" (v.13). We were in Him before our creation (vv.16,17), our deliverance is in Him (v.14), and in Him we are the fully reconciled objects of the Father's love. We were in Christ, and by His sacrificial work we are brought back into Him. Christ was not a substitute for us, but rather, we were included in Him.* Outside of Christ, man is like a newborn donkey with a broken neck (Ex. 13:13). He is unacceptable and unsuitable to God, and he is unclean for sacrificial purposes. Only by inclusion in Christ can we be reconciled to God.

IN CHRIST

Truly these simple words, "in Christ," are our boast and our joy. "In Christ" is the sphere of blessing in which we are: chosen (Eph.1:4), recipients of an allotment (Eph.1:11), sealed with the holy spirit of promise (Eph.1:13), vivified (Eph.2:6; 1 Thess.4:16), invigorated with the necessary strength for every situation (Phil.4:13), complete and transported beyond the grasp of our sins and offenses (Col.2:10-15). Indeed, to be "in Christ" is to be in the channel through which God's grace flows (Eph.4:32). "In Christ" is a sphere where we are more than what is presently apparent (1 Cor.4:10-13), because it is a sphere above the grasp and limitations of the flesh (2 Cor.3:14; 5:17; 12:2; Gal.3:27,28). "In Christ" is a sphere of God's special operations (1 Cor.15:22; 2 Cor.2:14; Eph.1:20; 2:6), and it is a sphere of fellowship (Rom.12:5), expectation (1 Cor.15:19), bonds

---

*For further study on this topic see: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.73, pp.7-10, 53-58, 99-109, 147-154; and ALL IN ALL, by A. E. Knoch, pp.80-85, 99-109.

(Phil.1:13) and of an understanding of truth (2 Cor.3:14; Eph.4:20,21; Col.2:3).

IN CHRIST JESUS

"In Christ Jesus" adds the name of our Lord's humiliation and flesh to the concepts connoted by the phrase "in Christ." Accordingly, this phrase is generally used where the context is concerned with our mortal humanity and this present life (Rom.8:1,2; 1 Cor. 4:15,17; Eph.2:10; Phil.1:25,26; 4:7,19; 1 Thess.5:18; 2 Tim.2:10; 3:12). It is used when referring to our freedom, both from condemnation (Rom.3:24; 8:1,2) and from law and ceremony (Gal.2:4). It is also used where the context defines distinctions of the flesh (1 Cor.1:26-30), particularly those distinctions between the Jews and the nations (Gal.3:14; 5:6; 6:15; Eph.2:13), but also those between humans and celestials (Eph.2:6,7; 3:10-12; Phil.3:14), and finally where the distinctions of the flesh are being done away (Gal.3:27,28; Eph.2:21,22; 3:6; Phil.3:3). "In Christ Jesus" is found relating to temporal blessings (1 Cor.1:4) and present fellowship, whether in work (Rom.16:3), love (1 Cor.16:24) or captivity (Philemon 23). Further, it occurs in close proximity with earthly locations (1 Cor.1:2; Phil.1:1; 1 Thess.2:14).

In the opening lines of many of his letters Paul calls himself an apostle, slave or prisoner of Christ Jesus. This refers to his work on the earth. But the day will come when he will be known simply as "a man in Christ" as he himself noted in vision (2 Cor.12:2).

IN THE LORD

"In the Lord" is used to emphasize our position as those who have been bought (1 Cor.6:20) and are now freed from Sin and enslaved to Righteousness (Rom.

6:18). Like Paul, we are not disciples but slaves, and so the phrase "in the Lord," reflects this aspect of our lives. These words occur where the context speaks of our service (Rom.16:2; 2 Cor.2:12; 10:17; Eph.6:21; Phil.1:14; Col.4:17; 1 Thess.5:12), our toil and work (Rom.16:12; 1 Cor.9:1; 15:58; 1 Thess.5:12), our disposition (Phil.3:1; 4:2,4,10), our slavehood and obedience (1 Cor.7:22; Eph.6:1; Col.3:20; 4:7), and our walk (Eph.4:1,17; 5:8; 1 Thess.4:1). Chapters 5 and 6 of Ephesians expound this walk at length. Subjection and restrictions (Col.3:18; 1 Cor.7:39; Eph.4:1) and our strengthening and standing (Eph.6:10; Phil.4:1; 1 Thess.3:8) are all viewed as aspects of our position "in the Lord." Paul also speaks of his confidence and expectation "in the Lord" regarding the behavior of those who are in Christ Jesus (Gal.5:10; Phil 1:14; 2 Thess.3:4) and regarding aspects of his own service (Phil.2:19,24).

Clearly the emphasis, then, of "in the Lord" is quite distinct from that of "in Christ" or "in Christ Jesus." In fact, what is said in connection with these phrases could even be misunderstood and contradictory. "In Christ" there is no difference between male and female (Gal.3:28), but the wife is to be subject to her husband "as is proper in the Lord" (Col.3:18). If we focus on what we are "in Christ" to the neglect of what we should be doing "in the Lord," our life will become unbalanced. So also, service in the Lord can never be correctly motivated apart from an appreciation of what we are in Christ. The remainder of these phrases are found in the life where the realization of our blessings "in Christ" becomes the motivation for our service "in the Lord."

J. Philip Scranton

HERALD THE WORD!

THERE ARE TIMES when the Word is held back rather than heralded. For example, some believers who hold to the teaching of the ultimate salvation of all feel that even though the teaching of the deity of God, His sole subjectorship, is true, its being made known will be more of a hindrance than a help to those to whom it is proclaimed. Although this teaching is considered important, they tend to set it aside. And even when it is considered in some measure, they may not speak of it with the openness and depth which other teachings enjoy.

It should not be assumed that there is never a place for such an approach, especially when we consider the dangers attending human pride when antagonized. Morever, the power of tradition is great, and if we would contend against it, we must do so carefully and wisely. Indeed many of us, to our shame, have sometimes been imprudent and ungracious in sharing the Word of God with others. Yet though the importance of the manner in which we present truth must not be minimized, it should not be an excuse for not making the truth known.

Our motive for so doing is very important as well: Do we seek to glorify God and build up our brethren in the faith, or do we seek to exalt ourselves while being unmindful of the feelings of others? This is not to suggest that reserve is to be our constant companion. But there is a time for everything.

An extensive printed exposition such as the present work, which is prepared for the purpose of teaching and of encouragement in faithful service, can hardly have the advantages which are afforded private words among friends. So we commit it, as well as ourselves and all our brethren, to God, "and to the word of His grace which is able to edify" (Acts 20:32).

Things good in themselves, and very helpful to some, may not be helpful at present to those who are not yet ready for such "solid food" (1 Cor.3:2). "Now solid nourishment is for the mature, who, because of habit, have faculties exercised for discriminating between the ideal and the evil" (Heb.5:14). The ideal is to be "pursuing that which makes for peace and that which is for the edification of one another" (Rom. 14:19). It is not that we are to be seeking peace at the price of truth, but that peace is to be our desire and active pursuit, for it is essential to the welfare of all. Still, there is a time, as Paul found with the immature Corinthians, when it becomes needful to present vital revelations in a plain way, even at the risk of offense.

Some have said it is inadvisable to make various teachings known to young people, certainly including this one, as if it were somehow better for them to be instructed in error, or at least left to its influences. Surely this is a mistaken approach, for all scripture is beneficial (2 Tim.3:16), and the sacred writings are founded upon and filled with this teaching.

We seek to give no one cause to stumble in anything, even if we should fail in this at times. Besides, we can only serve others well, or at all, where God opens a door, an "operative" one (*cf* 1 Cor.16:9; *cp* Col.4:3). This is all we wish to do, having no taste for iconoclasm, or desire to disturb anyone. Yet it is important for us all to remember, "He who is not with

Me is against me, and he who is not gathering with Me is scattering" (Matt.12:30).

THE STRUGGLE

Wherever truth of such great importance is opposed or neglected, in God's wise counsels there always seems to be a struggle involved in making it known. And there is always a danger, due to the pressure of having been critically perceived as doing so, that in our own weakness we will indeed be driven to the point of overemphasis or of becoming reactionary, or at least somehow become less than edifying in our presentations. Yet if this should occur, it would be more helpful if criticism—constructive criticism and support—could come from those who freely teach the truth. We trust that where God gives us grace to present this truth in wisdom, in a good spirit and with patience, there will be little danger of actual overemphasis. Indeed, boldness is needed, and, so is loving-kindness.

By practicing protracted reserve and employing ambiguity of expression out of loving concern and a fear of offending certain ones, we fail to provide the instruction which is vital to the growth of those whom God may graciously enable through instruction to think sensibly and fairly, and receive the clear declarations of Scripture. Boldness is not without drawbacks, yet it has a great many advantages. These thoughts are not presented as a criticism of any approach, but as observations taught through experience.

It is a very difficult task to herald and teach the word concerning these matters. "And for this, who is competent?" (*cp* 2 Cor.2:16). May God be adapting us to do His will, "doing in us what is well pleasing in His

sight," that we may be offering divine service to Him (*cf* Heb.12:28; 13:21).

Let us not assume that some teachings are just "too dangerous" to be helpful. There is not a major revelation of Scripture which some have not appraised thus. Though it has often proved dangerous for truth to be placed in the hands of foolish men, in itself it is error, not truth, that is dangerous. Indeed, if men will wreak such havoc from the possession of truth, what will they do when entrusted with error?

If we would do well to emphasize and keep before us the truth of our security in Christ or the ultimate salvation of all, why should we not be similarly edified by a constant awareness that *all* things are of God, especially in light of the ever present practical importance of this revelation?

If indeed we do live our lives by these principles, we also need to make this known to others in order to set an example and to help them do the same. In order for the heart to be touched, the mind must be instructed. Otherwise, we can do no more than "put on a fair face in the flesh" (*cf* Gal.6:12).

THE PHARISEES AND THE GALATIANS

This is the very point of the Lord's figure, "whitewashed sepulchers," concerning the hypocritical Pharisees: Outside, indeed, they are "appearing beautiful," yet inside they are crammed with the bones of the dead and all uncleanness. "Thus you, also, outside, indeed are *appearing to men* to be just, yet inside you are distended with hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matt.23:27,28). Paul told the Galatians, "So foolish are you? Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?" (Gal.3:3). The Lord's order of things is, "*Cleanse first the inside* of the cup

and the plate, that their outside also may be becoming clean!" (Matt.23:26).

Those whose arrogance is apparent do not even have a fair face, and do not even appear to men to be just. It is those who seem modest who are found commendable. Pride and self-righteousness, however, are not at all confined to those who are offensive and constant in talking about their own virtues and generally obnoxious about it, but include as well all who appear humble in manner but who nonetheless fail to *believe* that all good character, especially their own, is *solely* due to the grace of God, without any help from man. The self-righteous are those who "have confidence *in themselves* that they are just" (Luke 18:9). For this reason, though they may well go through the motions of thanking God for their virtues, practically speaking and to no small degree, they pray these things toward themselves (Luke 18:11).

They boast of "letting" the Lord work in them, and insist on having a "part" in it all, especially in the formation of personal uprightness. When all that God will do for them is finished, their salvation remains unfinished, awaiting their help to turn defeat into victory. Many are, so to speak, glad to travel "the sea and the dry land to make one proselyte" (*cp* Matt.23:15), zealously proclaiming, "*Christ* is the answer" while singing of "victory in *Jesus,*" but do they actually believe it?

The truth is, nearly all believe that it is not Christ at all, but some type of human cooperativeness that is the final solution to weaknesses of the flesh. Similarly, stripped of outward forms and nominal claims, victory is actually seen to consist not in the all-sufficient grace which is in Christ Jesus, but in the independent power that is said to inhere in the human will.

Such an approach is the essence of popular Christianity, ancient and modern. In fact, these are the Pharisees and Galatians of today. They may be friends of the Lord, but they are "enemies of *the cross* of Christ" (Phil.3:18). They are opposed to the *sufficiency* of Christ's sacrifice in effecting salvation, and are antagonistic toward the glorious *consequences* which it alone ensures. For they boast of what *they* have done to be saved from wrath, or at least of what *they* must contribute if they would avoid an unworthy walk. "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in *the cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14). May it not be, through this present exposition, as with the Galatians toward Paul, that I "have become your enemy by being true to you" (*cf* Gal.5:16).

The Galatians had been "bewitched" (Gal.3:1), they were "under a spell" and in "the trap of the Adversary, having been caught alive by him, for that one's will" (2 Tim.2:26). They had been transferred from the evangel of *grace* which Paul had first taught them, to a very different message (Gal.1:6), one in which the flesh had a vital place, that of "finishing up" what Christ had left undone.

Yet they were *persuaded* of this false message anyway, instead of the truth (Gal.5:7,8). Their only accord was with these deceptions. As to the evangel, "they [knew] nothing but to do evil" (*cp* Ecc.5:1). However well-intended and innocent in appearance it may be, evil includes—whether in word or in deed—all that is destructive, all that is the opposite of good. Therefore, Paul avers, "if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema!" (Gal.1:8).

Paul had no illusions that, of themselves, the

Galatians would respond to his entreaties. Instead, his prayer was that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ would be with their spirit, enlightening them anew (Gal.6:18). God "manifests His word in its own eras *by heralding*" (Titus 1:3; *cp* 1 Tim.2:6). And our hope is always, May this be the day, and our message the way.

Eventually *all* in the province of Asia turned from the apostle Paul (2 Tim.1:15). By today's foolish standards of success, the apostle to the nations would be an abject failure. "Howbeit, the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: The Lord knew those who are His, and, Let everyone who is naming the name of the Lord withdraw from injustice" (2 Tim.2:19). Injustice is not confined to external deeds, but includes what we believe and what we say as well. It is important, then, for us to be "sober, grave, sane, *sound in the faith*, in love, in endurance" (Titus 2:2).

SUFFERING EVIL WITH THE EVANGEL

If we would fully follow the apostle Paul, we will need to follow him not only in his "teaching," but in his "motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, [and] endurance." We will also find ourselves identifying with him in his "persecutions [and] sufferings, . . . persecutions such as I undergo, and *out of them all the Lord rescues me*" (2 Tim.3:10,11).

"The Lord is near" (Phil.4:5b), but we need to realize this and be aware of it. Let us not look to ourselves, but instead make our requests known to God concerning our need for this important realization and awareness. For we know and are certain that He *shall* be *filling* our *every* need, in accord with His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Phil.4:19). But concerning any particular need, we cannot say whether it will be met next week or in the next eon. We would have

Him fill our needs whenever His own wisdom and purpose dictates, not every time our foolishness wishes to beg for an immediate deliverance from suffering.

Paul was afflicted in everything, perplexed and persecuted, yet he was not distressed, despairing or forsaken (2 Cor.4:8,9). This was so, for the Lord was with Him: "Yet the Lord stood beside me, and He invigorates me, that through me the heralding may be fully discharged, and all the nations should hear; and I am rescued out of the mouth of the lion" (2 Tim.4:17). In spirit, by faith, we are aware that the Lord is with us as well, standing beside us in the work which He gives us to do. We find that He indeed invigorates us, and that we accomplish all that He intends, if not all that we desire.

It is *His* work, not ours (*He* is our Saviour, in grace are you saved!), to make His Word live in us, and to open our hearts to heed what is spoken by Paul. It is much better to wait upon Him and to trust in the ability of the word of His grace, "in its own eras," than continually to conceive of ourselves as the key to success, and then fancy that *we* have achieved it simply because many of our acts may be upright.

It simply will not do to point to all the good that is *present* in men's behavior and then give credit to the flesh for the existence thereof. What an insult this is to God! No human virtue is due to ourselves, but is a resultant phenomenon produced by *the spirit of God* which effects good characteristics to some degree in the lives of all.

Galatians 5:19-23 contrasts what man in his present state is able to do of himself ("the works of the flesh"), with what the imperceptible power of God is able to produce in him ("the fruit of the spirit"). The figure "the flesh" points to our own inherent *weakness*. The

figure "the spirit" (*pneuma,* BLOW-*effect,* "blast" or "wind") points to God's great *power.*

Just look at the shameful sins of the flesh and consider what *we* can do! The works of the flesh are adultery, prostitution, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, enchantment, enmities, strife, jealousies, furies, factions, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkennesses, revelries, and the like of these. If we did have a "part" in it all—if we *had* been called upon to assist in our own salvation—the works of the flesh would be our only offering.

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

So let us turn away from a consideration of man's depravities to gaze upon the glory of those marvels which God alone can create even in such ones as ourselves. The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control.

Here we see the practical value of heralding the Word. It is an exercise that dwells on the glory of God and His achievement. Joy and peace especially are the fruit of confidence in the Deity, and of assurance that He is doing all things well. The conviction that His love is fully triumphant is a genuine source for the walk of love. That all is of God leads to genuine meekness, and that all is for good to kindness, goodness and faithfulness. The assurance that God is in full control is the proper and only effectual motivation for self-control.

There is a world of difference between fleshly discipline and spiritual self-control. True self-control, in the scriptural sense, is a thing of purity, for it is a fruit of the spirit. Unless good deeds are performed under the influence of God's love or because of the assurance

of His deity, they are actually works of the flesh. Inner motive must be distinguished from outward result. Even if many of his deeds are disciplined, "he who is sowing *for* his own flesh, from the flesh shall be reaping corruption" (Gal.6:8a). External morality is often the product of sinful motives. Stronger lusts of the flesh merely restrain weaker ones when the latter fail to serve the purpose of the former.

The apostle presents these striking contrasts between the flesh and the spirit for the consideration of the Galatians. They were under the delusion that they themselves were capable of "completing" if God would only "begin": "So foolish are you? Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?" (Gal.3:3).

The contrast is *not* between, as popularly imagined, the deeds of "Christians" and "non-Christians," but between that which *proceeds from* the old humanity in itself and that which God is able to *produce in* such ones nonetheless—whether they be believers or unbelievers.

Though it is humiliating to the flesh, if we are to do what is pleasing to God, God must see to it that we do so. He not only does not need our help, but He will not have our help. He will bless us as He intends and when He intends, not otherwise or before.

"The Lord *will* be rescuing me from every wicked work and *will* be saving me for His celestial kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:18a). Salvation and glory and power is of our God (Rev.19:1b). This is the word which we herald; it has even become the testimony of our conscience (*cp* 2 Cor.1:12). Our God is great, and greatly to be praised, "to Whom be the glory for the eons of the eons. Amen!" (2 Tim.4:18b). James Coram

(To be continued)

WRITTEN WITH THE FINGER OF ELOHIM

"ENGRAVEN . . . WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD." This phrase from 2 Corinthians 3:3 may be more familiar to us than its counterpart in Exodus 31:18 where we read that Yahweh "gave to Moses, as He finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of Elohim." The two tablets of the testimony "were the handiwork of Elohim, chiseled on the tablets" (Ex.32:15,16; 2 Cor.3:7). The quality of being permanent is indicated by the word "engraven" and by the term "chiseled in stone." What is written with ink can be scraped off the parchment. Yet that which is engraven into the heart cannot be deleted.

THE PERMANENT WORD

Permanency, however, is germane not only to the Ten Words on the stone tablets, but to the whole divine law with all its instructions, statutes, judgments and testimonies that Yahweh Elohim had enjoined on Moses to teach the sons of Israel (Deut.6:1,20). And so our Lord said, "Till heaven and earth should be passing by, one iota or one serif may by no means be passing by from the law till all should be occurring" (Matt.5:18).

ISRAEL'S GREAT CONFESSION

"Hear, Israel! Yahweh [is] our Elohim, Yahweh [the only] One" (Deut.6:4). Our Lord quoted these words in Greek (Mark 12:30), where we read: "Hear, Israel! [the] Lord our God is one Lord." The Greek numeral *heis* means "one," occasionally in the sense of "[only] one," such as in Mark 12:6, where our Concordant Version follows the Greek word order: "Still one had he, [a] son, his beloved." This means to say: "He had still [a] beloved son, his [only] one." Likewise we may translate Mark 12:30 to read: "[The] Lord [is] our God; [the] Lord is [the only] One."

SH'MA YISRAEL YAHWEH ELOHENU YAHWEH ECHAD
Hear, Israel! Yahweh our-Elohim, Yahweh One

The first Hebrew sentence that a Jewish child learns is this verse 4 of Deuteronomy 6. The observant Jew is required to recite it twice daily, in the morning and at nightfall, together with three related passages. He may add verse 5 ("So you will love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your intensity"), sometimes including the following verses 6-9; also Deuteronomy 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41.

The title of this Jewish key prayer is taken from the first word of Deuteronomy 6:4, "Sh'ma" (Hear!). This prayer has been engraven into the heart of every pious Jew; yet throughout the centuries, he has avoided to pronounce the divine name "Yahweh" and has said "Adonai" (Lord) instead.

Our Lord provided a noteworthy supplement to the first part of the Sh'ma when He added the injunction: "You shall be loving your associate as yourself" (Mark 12:31). Hence the great and foremost precept (loving God with all our *intensity*) must never lead us to

become a stumbling block to our weak associate (*cf* 1 Cor.8:9,11).

PROMPTED BY LOVE

The whole book of Deuteronomy is concerned with the renewal of the covenant that Yahweh Elohim had contracted with the sons of Israel at Horeb/Sinai (Deut.5:2; 29:12,13). So obedience toward Him is the prominent theme of this scroll, just as it had been the case in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. This obedience, however, would be possible only when it was *prompted by love* toward Yahweh Elohim, Who had displayed His own love toward them when He brought forth the people from Egypt with a steadfast hand and with an outstretched arm. Furthermore He assured them to evict greater and more substantial nations from Israel's presence and to give their country to Israel as an allotment (Deut.4:37,38; 5:15).

Hence the divine instruction: "So you will love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your intensity." Such all-encompassing love for Him would stimulate the sons of Israel to follow the few simple rules given in the next two verses (6:7,8).

LEST YOU FORGET

In his first address to the post-Sinai generation Moses had warned them to guard themselves and to keep their souls especially vigilant lest they forget the covenant that Yahweh their Elohim had contracted with them (Deut.4:9,23). Now Moses warned them once more not to forget Yahweh their Elohim after arrival in the promised land.

"When it comes to be that Yahweh your Elohim brings you into the land about which He had sworn to

your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to give to you great and good cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not hew, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, so that you will eat and be satisfied, *then guard yourself, lest you should forget Yahweh your Elohim* Who brought you forth from the country of Egypt, from the house of servants" (Deut.6:10-12).

During the past forty years in the wilderness the sons of Israel had repeatedly forgotten Yahweh's great acts of deliverance. Time and again they had failed to appreciate Yahweh's loving care for them. Would the post-Sinai generation fare better than their ancestors? They were about to enter an agrarian civilization that they themselves had not established. After decades of nomadic austerity they would have to adjust themselves to a different lifestyle, enjoying prosperity in cities and on farms, in the promised land. There was the danger of forgetting that all the earthly blessings were the gift of Yahweh's love, thus fulfilling His promise to their ancestors.

Hence, with reference to "Hear, Israel" in 6:4,5, Moses had pleaded with the post-Sinai generation: "These words which I am instructing you today will come to be in your heart. *Repeat* them to your sons, and *speak* of them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you arise . . . . When it comes to be that your son should ask you tomorrow, saying: What are the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments that Yahweh our Elohim had enjoined on you? then you will say to your son: We were servants to Pharaoh in Egypt, yet Yahweh brought us forth from Egypt with a steadfast hand . . . . Then Yahweh instructed us to

obey all these statutes, to fear Yahweh our Elohim for our good all the days so as to keep us alive, as it is this day. So it shall come to be righteousness for us when we observe to do all this instruction before Yahweh our Elohim, just as He had enjoined on us" (Deut. 6:6,7; 6:20,21,24,25).

Since children like to hear stories of adventure rather than abstract formulations of Israel's belief in Yahweh, parents were advised to tell their children of the years of slavery in Egypt, and the wondrous acts of Yahweh by means of which Israel was liberated and given safe conduct through the wilderness, until they arrived in the promised land. Thus the parents could add: "So you will love Yahweh your Elohim."

How could the parents guard themselves, lest they forget? With reference to the celebration of the sabbath day, Moses had told the older generation (after the departure from Raamses, Ex.12:37; 13:9): "You will come to have this as a sign on your hand and as a reminder between your eyes that the law of Yahweh may be in your mouth."

Likewise, Moses told the post-Sinai generation: "Tie them [the divine words] for a sign on your hand, and they will come to be for the brow bands between your eyes. Write them on the jambs of your house and on your gates" (Deut.6:8,9).

Our New Testament KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.14) explains what is meant by "amulets" in Matthew 23:5. Certainly Moses did not intend to imply that these phylacteries (*phulaktêria*, GUARD-KEEPERS) were a charm against evil or injury according to religious custom outside Israel. Deuteronomy 6:8,9 rather deals with physical reminders of what was said in the preceding verses (4-7; Hear, Israel . . .). Later the Jews heeded this injunction by inscribing Deuteron-

omy 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Exodus 13:1-10, 11-16 on small strips of parchment that were enclosed in tiny leather cases and bound on the forehead and the left arm when the Sh'ma was recited.

These four passages written with ink on a little scroll were also put in a small box and attached to the upper part of the right hand doorjamb of the house and the gateway of the village or city, reminding the Jews that obedience to Yahweh's instructions and statutes must be spontaneous since they loved Him with all their heart and with all their soul and all their intensity.

Later the practice of wearing phylacteries descended into one of legalism; mere adherence to the letter of the law destroyed its spiritual content when the scribes and Pharisees were seated on Moses' seat. They did their "pious" works in order to be gazed at by their fellow men; so they broadened their phylacteries and magnified the tassels of their cloaks (Matt.23:1-5).

MANIFESTING A LETTER OF CHRIST

At Horeb/Sinai the Ten Words were written with the finger of Elohim on tablets of stone, as the central theme of the law that confronted man with his inability (Rom.7:19) to fulfill its requirements, such as the foremost precept and the one like it (Mark 12:30,31). Now, however, God's power for salvation is revealed in the evangel so as to establish us in accord with it and enable us to fulfill the entire law by slaving for one another through love (Gal.5:13,14; Rom.1:16; 13:8; 16:25). Thus we, as believers, are manifesting a letter of Christ, engraven into our hearts with the spirit of the living God.

H.H.R.

(To be continued)

Psalm 119:17-32

17 Requite bountifully ^{on}with Your servant,
That I may live and keep Your word.
18 Expose my eyes $^{+}$that I may scrutinize
The marvels$^{|}$ $^{/}$of Your law.
19 I am a sojourner $^{\prime}$upon the earth;
O do not $^{|}$conceal Your instructions from me.
20 My soul is broken up $^{>}$by an ardent desire
For Your judgments in every season.
21 You rebuke the arrogant, who are cursed$^{|}$,
$^{\prime}$Who are erring from Your instructions.
22 Roll reproach and contempt away from ^{on} me,
For I have preserved Your testimonies.
23 Even though chiefs have sat and ^{sa}plotted
$^{\prime}$against me,
Your servant, he shall meditate
$^{\prime}$on Your statutes;
24 Even so Your testimonies are my delectations,
^{7}Your statutes are my men of counsel.
25 My soul clings to the soil;
Revive me according to Your word.
26 I have recounted my ways, and You $^{|}$answered me;
Teach me Your statutes.
27 Cause me to understand the way of Your precepts,
$^{+}$So I may meditate $^{\prime}$on Your marvelous$^{|}$ works.
28 My soul is racked $^{/}$with affliction;
Raise me up according to Your word.
29 Withdraw the false way from me,
And be gracious to me according to Your law.
30 The way of faithfulness have I chosen;
Your judgments have I poised before me.
31 I cling $^{\prime}$to Your testimonies;
O Yahweh, let me not be ^{c}put to $^{|}$shame.
32 In the way of Your instructions shall I run,
For You are ^{c}making a wideness for my heart.

A WIDENESS OF HEART

THE poetry of the Psalms is often so expressive of human experience and so universal in its appeal that even those who do not enjoy it as God's Word have a deep appreciation of its greatness. In Psalm 119:17-32 there are several such lines, reflecting the common lot of humanity:

"I am a sojourner upon the earth" (19a). "My soul clings to the soil" (25a). "My soul is racked with affliction" (28a).

But in selecting these phrases I have purposely avoided the major thought of the song. The struggles of life are solidly viewed here in relation to God and especially in relation to His Word. We all know something of the insecurity and loneliness of our brief time in this world, and much of its sorrows and pains. What the psalmist says about this strikes home to all of us. But for the unbeliever there is not a great deal of identification with the discovery of God's testimonies as "delectations" and His statutes as "men of counsel" (24).

Yet coupled with faith this entire psalm stirs a responsive chord in our hearts. For myself, these lines remind me of many of Paul's lines in 2 Corinthians 4 and 5. There we read of the "word of God" as represented by "our evangel" (4:2,3) becoming a "treasure" (4:7) in the temporary affliction (4:8,17,18) of our present lives in "our terrestrial tabernacle house" (5:1). In both the psalm and Paul's letter there

is poetry in the truest sense, not only an expression of our present human condition but of the wideness of heart which God *makes* (Psa.119:32), revealing His achievements and purpose to us in His Word.

D.H.H.

WORDS FROM OUR MISSIONARIES

Brother Antonio Oblenda of the Philippines sends regular reports of his activities in Ozamiz City and vicinity to our office in Canyon Country. In his messages to believers there, he stresses the teaching of universal salvation and reconciliation despite opposition from some denominational pastors.

Brother Isidro Oguimas, in that same country has been heartened by members of some churches who have opened their doors to him. He says, "We feel glad to see them, whose faith is like the Berean believers." May God continue to open the doors!

Brother James Hemmings of Jamaica recently attended a convocation in London of those of his church. He brought along some Concordant literature and as he told us, "The Lord has helped me to get quite a few saints interested in the Concordant Version." Brother Hemmings visited with Brother John Essex and other brethren in England. And his work continues to go well in Jamaica.

Brother M. P. S. Raju of South India continues his labor of love, to which he has been faithful for so many years, teaching in his native Telugu language. He is continuing a project of translating scripture into the local dialect. Brother Raju distributes the Concordant Version and other literature in person and by mail throughout India.

And finally, Brother Teofilo A. Donal of the Philippines wrote recently telling us of his continuing efforts in his part of that country. He thanked us for the cartons of Concordant literature we had sent.

In fact, we sent a number of cartons of literature to all these brothers and have received thanks from all. Each also receives some financial support which is channeled through our Canyon Country office, and we want to express their thanks to you who contributed to our Missions fund. Please keep these good workers for the cause of Christ in your prayers.

INDEX TO VOLUME LXXVIII

Among the Celestials 21,57,123,157,219,252
Boasting in God's Will 227
Choosing What is Choice 115
Dais of God, The 235
Dues of Love, The 71
Entreaty to Worthy Walk 123
Escape From Rampaging Waters 12
Expectation of His Calling, The 243
Faith: The Least and Greatest 204
God Makes Our Trials 27
God Gives Them a Spirit of Stupor 137
Grace and Maturity 157
Herald the Word! 269
His Achievement Are We 27,75,115,175,227,269
In Christ, In Christ Jesus and In the Lord 265
Justification for All 17
Now is Our Salvation Nearer 131
Obituaries: E. Chatt 258, D. Fongers 171, H. Hansen 11, G. Holliday 218, W. LeFevre 171, J. Snyder 192
On Thy Account 75
Our Need for Growth 219
Paul, Thanking God, Took Courage 65
Philippian Prayer, The 172
Posture in Prayer 5
Power of the Evangel, The 83
Praise and Prayer 5,51,99,147,195,243
Prayer Resumed, The 57
Praying to the Father 51
Psalms: **116** 34, **117, 118** 86, **119:1-16** 215, **119:17-32** 285
Put On the New Humanity 252
Render to All their Dues 45
Renewing of the Mind, The 83
Second Address of Moses to the Post-Sinai Generation 165
Special Prayers for Today 147
Spirit of Revelation, The 195
Studies in Deuteronomy 36,89,109,165,207,279
Studies in Romans 45,71,131,185,235,259
Ten Words, The 207
Therefore Through One Man 17
Thoughts on the Purpose of God 96
To God be All the Glory 175
Untraceable Riches of Christ, The 21
Walking According to Love 259
We Are the Lord's 185
Wisdom and Spiritual Understanding 89
With Thanksgiving 99
Word of God and of the Lord, The 12,65,137
Written With the Finger of Elohim 279
Yahweh is the Only Elohim 109
Yahweh's Call for Obedience 36