

INDEX TO VOLUME C

Adam Died	91
Accord with the Scriptures, In	37,91
Beneficent Divine Providence, A	67
Commendation of God's Love, The	135
Conciliated through the Death of God's Son	215
Concordant Studies	7, 21, 53, 79, 103, 113, 147, 164, 197, 225, 246
Divine Assumptions, The	79
Expectation is not Mortifying	11
Glorying in God	271
God's Deity in Judgment	7
God's Love in the Death of Christ	57
"Holy Kiss," A	123
Human in Creation and Resurrection, The	113
Justified in Christ's Blood	185
Keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Midst of Confusion	173
Mystery of Evil, The	86
Not for All is the Faith	24
Obituaries: D. Carleton 163, H. Jones 122, S. Russ 144, J. Thompson 85, J. Tonn 163	
Paul the Pessimist	21
Paul to the Romans	11, 57, 135, 185, 215, 271
Perceiving the Grace of God	279
Prayer and the Deity of God	229
Prophecy and History	263
Psalms 22	37
Questions and Answers	25, 67, 123, 173, 229, 279
Rock was Christ, The	128
Sin and Death	53
What is Death?	197
What is God's Goal?	246
What is Mankind?	103
What is Offense?	225
What is Spirit?	164
What is the Soul?	147
Whose End is Destruction	30

Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our Centennial Year
(1909–2009)

Contents:

- 2 “The Glory Effulgent”
- 3 Editorial
- 7 God’s Deity in Judgment
- 11 Expectation is Not Mortifying
- 21 Paul the Pessimist
- 25 “Not for All is the Faith”
“Whose End is Destruction”
- 37 Psalm 22

JANUARY, 2009

Volume C

Number 1

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

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Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS
WORD

VOLUME C

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and
James R. Coram

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The Glory Effulgent

Brightness of eonian glory
Shall Thy praise unuttered lie?
Who would hush the heavenly story
Of the One Who came to die?

Crowned the Head of all creation,
Thou didst lay Thy glory low—
Curse-crowned Calv'ry's alienation—
Endless praises ceaseless flow!

Sing His bless'd triumphant rising,
See Him on His Father's throne;
Sing, till heaven and earth surprising,
Reigns the Nazarene alone!

Sing of sin, of God offended,
Death—which cannot Him appall,
For these sorrows shall be ended
When His God is All in All!

Sing His reconciliation,
God and man in friendship sweet;
Sing the august consummation,
When His work is all complete.

Sing His love, surpassing story,
Love abiding, love above
Every attribute and glory—
Sing Himself, The Son of Love!

Universal His creation;
Universal its recall;
Blood-bought reconciliation,
Makes the Father all in all!

-adapted from Robert Robinson

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2009
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

“It is with a sense of deep gratitude to God that we send forth the first number of this Magazine in the interest of a rightly apportioned Word.

“The truth which we endeavor to make known through these pages is one which thus far has been sadly ignored, but which is a stimulus to deeper Bible study, opens up the treasures of God’s Grace and the resources of His multifarious Wisdom, and discloses endless vistas into time and eternity, both past and future.”

With these words, *Unsearchable Riches* was introduced to the public in October 1909. The editors were Vladimir M. Gelesnoff (1877-1922) and A. E. Knoch (1874-1965). Now the present editors send out this five hundred and ninety-fifth number, the first issue of Volume 100, no less sincerely *with a sense of deep gratitude to God*.

How can it be otherwise? In his closing words to Timothy, the apostle Paul urged his young fellow worker: “Herald the word. Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely, expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching” (2 Tim.4:2). Then he added, “Yet you be sober in all things; suffer evil as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus; do the work of an evangelist” (2 Tim.4:5). If we can participate in any way in such a heralding and evangelizing, we can only say, “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity!” (2 Cor.9:15).

Brother Gelesnoff probably had Paul’s charge to Timothy in mind when he referred to this magazine’s mission as being in the interest of a rightly apportioned (“correctly cut” CV) Word. This can be seen in his article, *Paul, the Pessimist*,” originally appearing in volume 2 and adapted for this present issue (pages 21-24). It is our principal con-

cern to "explore the boundless treasures of grace" as our apostle delivered them over to us in his epistles. The evangel of God concerning His Son (Rom.1:1-5, see the article beginning on page 11), and what Paul termed the secret of the evangel (*cf* Rom.16:25; Eph.6:19,20) and especially the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ concerning the multifarious wisdom of God (Eph.3:8-11) are all components of Paul's distinctive apostleship which have been "sadly ignored" and which this magazine has endeavored to make known from its beginning. May God give us grace to continue this effort.

With this in view we plan to give renewed attention in this one hundredth volume to such themes of Paul's writings as presented in past issues of our magazine and as they continue to call for our attention. To repeat and reconsider such matters is for our *security* (*cp* Phil.3:1) in the present perilous times and for our joy and peace in believing (*cp* Rom.15:13). Yet not simply, repetition, but we pray for growth in the realization of God and increasing perception of what He has done for us in Christ (*cf* Eph.1:15-23).

Fundamental to a realization of God is the principle that "out of Him and through Him and for Him is all" (Rom. 11:36). In accord with this Paul writes in Ephesians 1:11 that God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. That this includes God's use of "vessels of indignation" (*cf* Rom.9:22) and their judgment is the theme of the article starting on page 7, compiled from two of Brother A. E. Knoch's early writings entitled, "God is God," and "The Deity of God."

It is as a part of a definite minority that we have maintained that God is the Creator of evil (*cf* Isa.45:7), intending it as the dark background for the appreciation of good. The great test of this is the cross of Christ, which far from being unforeseen by God was in fact an essential part of His purpose. This has often been the theme of articles

in this magazine, and is taken up here in the study on Psalm 22. Whether the forsakenness of Christ on the cross and the loss of all communion with His God in death, or God's deliverance of His Son unto power and glory, God is the One doing it.

The hymn preceding this editorial is based on one written by Robert Robinson in the eighteenth century, adapted with additional stanzas by A. E. Knoch. It was the first poem to appear in *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.3, p.184) and reprinted here as worded in our book of *Scriptural Songs*. It begins with praise to our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, in the words of Hebrews 1:3, is the Effulgence of God's glory. Brother Robinson expressed this reference to God's Son as, "Brightness of *eternal* glory," which Brother Knoch changed to "Brightness of *eonian* glory. For many this would seem to be a diminishing of the glory of God as it is radiated by our Lord. But our longtime readers will understand the correctness of using the English word "eonian" for the Greek word *aiōnios*. The Scriptures do not take up the philosophical concept of eternity, but rather speak of eons and that which pertains to them. God's glory surely exceeds the eons, but we would see it as it is reflected by His Son during the eons as they are presented in Scripture.

In saying this, a note of criticism may be implied in reference to Brother Gelesnoff's words about disclosing "endless vistas into time and eternity." It was not long before both editors saw the wisdom of discarding such unsound expressions as "time and eternity," which draw attention away from things of consequence to vain speculation. The result has been that the magazine has been able, as few other publications have been, to distinguish between such *processes* as the experience of evil and God's works of judgment and the *goals* of justification and reconciliation in God's purpose of the eons (Eph.3:11).

The concern for the use of the sound words and the

sound teaching of God's Word has led of course to the work involved in preparing a "concordant" version of the Scriptures. This is an ongoing endeavor which still leads to the opening of new insights into the meaning of scriptural terms. (Perhaps my suggestions about the word "for-sake" in this issue may lead in this direction.) Similarly, the principles of "concordant" translation give support to sane and careful investigations into the meanings of "difficult" passages of Scripture, such as Jim Coram's remarks concerning 2 Thessalonians 3:2 and 2 Corinthians 11:15 (pages 25-36).

So we are thankful for this centennial year of the publication of *Unsearchable Riches*, looking back at earlier contributions and carrying them forward as God gives us insight and strength. Indeed these are perilous periods. Consequently, we find the words of 1 Timothy 4:10 very welcome and faithful and timely: We rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all, yet in a special way of us who are believing in these days when many are turning away from the faith and are turning aside to myths.

During 2009, in honor of this our centennial year, instead of our customary two-color cover, we are printing the cover of our magazine, as in 1909, in black only, on which the title words, *Unsearchable Riches*, are reproduced exactly as they appeared on our first issue.

Work has been proceeding on our index to the words used in the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament*, as keyed to *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance*. We hope to make this available by the middle of this year. Yet also we are not neglecting the insertion of needed revisions and corrections for the CVOT itself. In reference to this project we do appreciate suggestions and corrections from our readers, and solicit the prayers of all.

D.H.H.

GOD'S DEITY IN JUDGMENT

GOD is *God*. He is supreme. Everything has its source in Him, takes its course through Him, and will finally endorse Him in highest excellence.

He brings all things into line with the advice offered by His own determination. "Who gauges the spirit of Yahweh and is informing Him as a man of His counsel? With whom does He take counsel? And who is giving Him understanding, is teaching Him in judgment's path, is teaching Him knowledge, and is informing Him the way of understanding? Or, who has given to Him first, and it shall be repaid to him?" (Isa.40:13,14). And not only could He go to no one else for counsel, but He yields to no one in the execution of His will. He said to Moses, ". . . 'I shall be merciful to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be pitying whomever I may be pitying.' Consequently, then, it is not of him who is willing, nor of him who is racing, but of God, the Merciful" (Rom.9:15,16; *cf* Ex.33:19). All else is confusion—causeless, incurable chaos.

Thus He deals in grace. He is as solitary and supreme as ever He was before the eons began, when there were no wills that dare dispute His own. So, also, in judgment. "For this selfsame thing I rouse you up, so that I should be displaying in you My power, and so that My name should be published in the entire earth" (Rom.9:17). Truly, then, whom He will, He is merciful, but (just as truly) whom He will, He is hardening (Rom.9:18).

HUMAN PROTEST

But some will protest, "Why, then, is He still blaming? For who has withstood His intention?" What is the spir-

it's answer to such insolence? "*O man!* who are *you*, to be sure, who are answering again to God? That which is molded will not protest to the molder, 'Why do you make me thus?' Or has not the potter the right over the clay, out of the same kneading to make one vessel, indeed, for honor, yet one for dishonor?" (Rom.9:19).

We repeat the question, suiting it to the circumstances attending the exodus out of Egypt. "If God purposed that Pharaoh should resist His mandate, why did He plague Egypt and drown Pharaoh's host in the Red Sea for doing what He had planned that they should do?" God Himself replies that it was done to display His indignation and to make His power known (Rom.9:22). And who dares to question His right to do as He wills with His own?

But for those who bow before His divine Majesty, there is a complete and satisfactory solution of the apparent moral obloquy which seems to cling to such arbitrary despotism. Our mistake lies in this, that we take a small segment of God's dealings with Pharaoh as a public character and treat it as though it were the complete cycle of His dealings with him as an individual.

Orthodoxy insists that the die is cast at death. According to its teachings Pharaoh was not only coerced into rebellion against God at the exodus, but he has consciously suffered for his sin ever since, and will do so for all eternity. The annihilationist view is far more merciful to Pharaoh, for he does not receive any punishment in death and suffers extinction of being after enduring the penalty of his acts. The revolt against God's deity has its roots in these unreasonable and irreconcilable doctrines of human destiny.

Once we allow God to complete the broken record of Pharaoh's life it is easy to justify Him and it is easy for God to justify Pharaoh. The great king is not suffering now, before he appears in the judgment to be sentenced. When he does stand before the great white throne, his

sentence will be just, in accord with his deeds. The judgment will be, not merely penal, but corrective and remedial. Its end will be death, in which there is no suffering or consciousness of time.

So far as Pharaoh's conscious experience is concerned, his death is immediately followed by his resurrection, and ushers him into the judgment. If he was drowned in the waters of the Red sea he loses all trace of time till he awakens before the great white throne. The judgment is not simply to condemn. Its object is to set right what is wrong. The greatest wrong is his attitude toward God. In the presence of Christ and the awful throne this will be corrected. By means of the blood of Christ his life will be justified (Rom.5:18).

We do not believe in the theological denial of death embodied in the formula "Sudden death, sudden glory." There is no glory for us until the resurrection. The silence of the Scriptures and the palpable obscurity of theologians should be sufficient to convince anyone on this point. Nevertheless, since the dead know not anything (Ecc.9:5), this statement is true so far as they are aware. In their conscious experience, the moment of repose coincides with the moment of awakening.

Pharaoh dies the second death, yet to him it is quite as if he entered at once into the unutterable glory of the consummation. Through water he enters into the resurrection. Through fire he enters vivification. Thus he is justified, vivified and reconciled. He is a notable example of those whom God locks up in stubbornness (Rom. 11:32). In his case, as in all others, it is done, not to lead to his eternal condemnation, but that God may be merciful to him. Christ, Who taught His disciples to love their enemies, will display the richness of His heart and the efficacy of His blood, in the reconciliation of the invisible sovereignties which He created (Col.1:16,20).

It is quite fitting that those who hold to eternal torment or annihilation should object to God's deity. They reason in a circle. Because all are not saved He is not God. He is not God because all are not saved. But they should not load us with *their* problems. We who see the grand ultimate are enabled to acknowledge His Godhood. Eternal torment either deifies the devil or transforms God Himself into a fiend. Annihilation somewhat softens the harshness of His injustice, yet insists on Satan's supremacy. No one can be held by either of these doctrines or any intermediate scheme of human destiny and acknowledge the full deity of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His own loving adamant will.

It is only as we see His supreme success at the consummation, when He will be All in all His creatures, that we are able to grasp the great truth of the deity of God. Only then can we turn back to the beginning and see Him supreme. Only then can we look above the clouds and see Him ride the storm. Only then can we believe Him when He says (Isa.45:6-9):

*I am Yahweh, and there is no other,
Former of light, and Creator of darkness,
Maker of good, and Creator of evil:
I, Yahweh, make all these things,
Drip down from above, heavens,
And let the skies distill righteousness:
Let the earth open up, let salvation bud,
And let righteousness sprout together with it;
I, Yahweh, I create it.
Would anyone contend with his Former?
Earthenware of the ground with its artificer?*

A. E. Knoch

The preceding article is edited and excerpted from two earlier studies: "God is God," vol.2, p.207; and "The Deity of God," vol.16, pp.157-170.

EXPECTATION IS NOT MORTIFYING

ON THE BASIS OF the evangel of justification by the faith of Jesus Christ, Paul takes us to peace and expectation (Rom. 5:1,2). These are the rich blessings every believer may be enjoying every day, under every circumstance of life. But they are not gained by anything we do. They rest on the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. The solid foundation of peace toward God and expectation of His glory is the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Peace toward God is of utmost importance. Human irreverence and unrighteousness create a barrier between God and mankind, building up to a day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (*cf* Rom.1:18-2:5). On the basis of human acts, no flesh at all can stand justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). But the evangel tells of the faith of Jesus Christ, Who died for sinners, and on this basis God will be displayed as the Just Justifier (Rom.3:26). Yet even beyond this, on the basis of the death of His Son for His enemies God has conciliated the world to Himself (Rom.5:10; 2 Cor.5:19), and ultimately, on this same basis of the blood of Christ's cross, all will be reconciled to Him (Col.1:20).

But what of today? Justification and conciliation have a unique significance at present even while unrighteousness and enmity still infuse the world of dying humanity. On the basis of the faith of Jesus Christ, the believer is reckoned righteous and granted access to God as Father, to stand in grace before Him in peace (Rom.5:1,2).

Yet also, beyond this, the believer may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2). Added to the

blessing of peace toward God, being enjoyed as an accompaniment of believing the evangel, is the ongoing enjoyment of expectation of all the good which constitutes the glory of God.

No human being is so privileged and blessed as one who is believing the evangel of God concerning His Son. This evangel is truly operative in the believer, both for the present and for the life to come, as a source of power from God for salvation (*cf* Rom.1:16).

With this in mind, we turn again to the opening words of Romans 5, arranging the passage as follows:

ROMANS 5:1-5

- A. Being, then, justified out of faith,
 - B. we may be having **peace** toward God through our Lord, Jesus Christ,
 - 1. through Whom we have the access also, by the faith,
 - 2. into this grace in which we stand,
 - B. and we may be glorying in **expectation** of the glory of God.
 - 1. Yet not only so, but we may be glorying also in afflictions,
 - 2. having perceived that affliction is producing endurance,
 - 3. yet endurance testedness,
 - 4. yet testedness, expectation.
 - B. Now **expectation** is not mortifying,
 - A. seeing that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us.

The evangel of God concerning His Son is set before us in verse 1 by the words “justified by faith” (that is, “by [Christ’s] faith”) and again in verse 5 by the words “the love

of God.” Thus the passage begins and ends with distinct versions of the evangel, first designating it as a message centered upon Christ’s faith and then upon God’s love.

In between, as we have noted, Paul directs attention to two particular blessings, based on this evangel of God, which the believer may be enjoying today in every circumstance. *Peace toward God* is built on justification by means of the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for us. So also is the blessing of the *expectation of the glory of God*. But now also, Paul connects expectation directly with the evangel as an expression of the love of God.

By commending the love of God to us, and as God’s spirit enlightens our hearts, the evangel assures us that we will indeed be participants of the glory of God. The revelation that God loves us so much that He gave His Son to die for our justification is the solid basis of our expectation. This expectation will not let us down.

NOT ONLY SO

Even as Paul elaborated on the blessing of peace toward God by relating it to the provisions of access to God and our stand in grace, in verse 2, so now in verses 3 and 4 he expands on the blessing of expectation by relating it to our present experiences. Affliction, leading to endurance and testedness are experiences given by God, not requirements in order to be brought into the glory of God. They are not the basis of expectation, but they deepen our appreciation of the grace of expectation and energize us in holding fast to what God has said about the good He has prepared for us in the future.

Affliction will come, but the believer is in a position to be greatly benefited by troubles and oppositions. Such experiences are especially effective in drawing our attention to what we are believing. Its effect on believers is to make the word God has spoken to us more meaningful.

Consequently, as we come face to face with things that disturb and distress us, we are given strength for endurance by taking into account the pattern of God's operations as revealed in the evangel:

"Wherefore we are not despondent, but even if our outward man is decaying, nevertheless, that within us is being renewed day by day. For the momentary lightness of our affliction is producing for us a transcendentally transcendent eonian burden of glory, at our not noting what is being observed, but what is not being observed, for what is being observed is temporary, yet what is not being observed is eonian" (2 Cor.4:16-18).

From an outward viewpoint, our experiences testify against any hope for justification and being glorified. Nevertheless, the evangel testifies that God is working all together for good:

"Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are called according to the purpose that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand, also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also" (Rom.8:28-30).

SUFFERINGS GRACIOUSLY GRANTED

Indeed for the believer there is special affliction. "For to you it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29; *cp* 2 Tim.3:12). What we believe is contrary to human wisdom and dangerous to entrenched philosophy. The evangel speaks of what God has done, not of what we must do. And what God has done is centered on the *death* of the Deliverer, not the vigor of His life. "We are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet

to the nations stupidity" (1 Cor.1:23). "In grace, through [Christ's] faith, are you saved, *and this is not out of you*" (Eph.2:8). These are revolutionary words, and they invite opposition which adds to the groaning and travail of human suffering in the current era (*cf* Rom.8:18-23).

The expectation of the glory of God does not replace afflictions, but rather, for the believer living in the present, wicked eon, this expectation becomes more valuable by afflictions. Accepting that God gives us afflictions, and He does so for a good purpose, we find that they strengthen us with *endurance* and *testedness*, and this whole process intensifies our sense of expectation.

SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE

Hence, for those who are believing the evangel, the effect of the experience of affliction is endurance and testedness and a strengthening of expectation. The future enjoyment of the glory of God becomes more sure and certain to those who are accepting and retaining the evangel that Christ died for their sins. The believer gets the point of Romans 8:32. "Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" If God loves us so much that He has done this for us, then He will certainly bring us to the glory of righteousness and peace of which His evangel speaks.

That does not mean this assurance will stay with us day in and day out. The fiery arrows of the Adversary keep coming our way, yet they are extinguished by the large shield of faith (Eph.6:16). The helmet of the expectation of salvation follows the putting on of the cuirass of faith and love (1 Thess.5:8). When we are cast down by the opposition or coolness to attempts to share the evangel, let us realize that it is graciously granted to us to participate in experiences similar to those experienced by our

Lord in His rejection and death (*cp* 1 Cor.9:23; 2 Cor.1:7,4:8-11; Phil.1:29).

NOT MORTIFYING

Life is filled with disappointments. What we hope for does not often come about. But God Himself, through His holy spirit, has set an expectation of righteousness and peace and glory in our hearts, and He has founded it on the gift of His love in giving His Son for sinners. This is not a thing of uncertainty. This is not a conditional matter. It is settled. It is sure to be realized and enjoyed.

Paul's words here in Romans 5:5, "expectation is not mortifying," reiterate the testimony of many others throughout Scripture in times of darkness and trouble. When David felt forsaken by God he focused on the experience of the fathers who trusted in Him and were not put to shame (Psa. 22:4,5).¹ Again he sang out of the distresses of his heart, lifting his soul in prayer, saying, "My Elohim, in You have I trusted. Do not let me be ashamed; Do not let my enemies be glad over me. Indeed, all expecting You shall not be ashamed" (Psa.25:2,3). Similarly, the psalmist prayed to Yahweh, "Support me according to Your promise that I may live, and let me not be put to shame because of my hopefulness" (Psa.119:116).

Paul may have had Isaiah 28:16 especially in mind, for he cites that passage later in Romans 9:33 where he has the expectation of Israel in view: "... the one believing shall not be put to shame." Further, in a time of increasing national deterioration and fearful warning of desolation and travail ahead for Israel, Isaiah was led to say, "Do not fear, for you shall not be shamed! And do not be mortified, for you shall not be abashed" (Isa.54:4). In faith, in trust and in expectation, anchored in God's word to us,

¹ *cf* the article on Psalm 22 in this issue.

we will never be put to shame. What He has declared will come to pass will surely come to pass.

THE BASIS OF EXPECTATION

What is the basis of this assurance? Is it simply that God is faithful to His word?—that God is so powerful that He can and will do everything He has promised to do?—that God is so wise that He can work everything out exactly as He has declared?—that God is love and will not rest until He achieves the full expression of His love? Yes indeed! But for us who are believing the evangel, that is not enough. The evangel is not a message that simply affirms the deity of God, His power and wisdom and righteousness and faithfulness and love. The whole manifestation of God as God, and the complete carrying out of His will of righteousness and love rests on His giving up of His Son to the death of the cross.

The evangel trains us in such a way that we do not think of God's love or power or wisdom or any of His glories without seeing them in relation to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If we consider God's power in relation to His work of creation, for instance, we find that passages such as 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; 5:14-21 and Colossians 1:9-20 add much vital information to that given in Genesis 1. God makes His power, righteousness, wisdom, faithfulness and love known through His evangel concerning His Son.

Israel was given much that pointed to Christ, the sacrifices and unique experiences of affliction and deliverance, besides the more direct words of the prophets. But they did not have the evangel given to us.

Isaiah 28:16 speaks of Christ, and the assurance of Isaiah 54:4 is built upon the prophecies of the afflicted Christ given in Isaiah 53. In type, Psalm 22 speaks of the sufferings of Christ on the cross, and then of God's faithful

and glorious answer to His prayer for deliverance (verses 19-21). The trust and expectation of Israel will not be a source of mortification, for the great Antitype of David was forsaken and smitten of Elohim, wounded because of their transgressions and crushed because of their depravities, so that they would be healed (Isa.53:4,5). Yet this was not made plain, and could not be until the work given to Christ was accomplished.

THE BELIEVER'S ASSURANCE

The Greek word translated "mortify" in Romans 5:5 is sometimes rendered "disgrace" in the CV. God will be mortifying those who look to human wisdom and strength for deliverance rather than to the word of the cross (1 Cor. 1:27). But those whose expectation is established by and centered in the evangel of God's love (which declares that Christ died for sinners) will not be disgraced in this expectation (*cp* Rom.9:33; 10:11). We are assured of this because it rests on God's love, not simply on a feeling of love, but love as expressed in action. It is love as demonstrated in giving up His Son to death on our behalf. God's love is not an abstract theory but an actual glory that is exhibited in the definite operation of the giving up of His Son for the sake of sinners. That love is the ground of our expectation. It is our assurance, in every experience of our lives, that we will be enjoying the righteousness and peace and all that glorifies God.

THE LOVE OF GOD POURED OUT

The love of God is perceived in Christ's death for sinners. "God is commending *this love of His* to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). This is God's astounding message to us. This is the *evangel* [WELL-MESSAGE] of God concerning His Son. In this message centered in the death of God's right-

eous Son, God's righteousness is revealed. And in this message concerning God's giving up of His beloved Son, God's love is expressed.

We need this message.

How does this evangel commend God's love in such a way that our hearts are filled with that love? It is a love unparalleled. We repeat: It is the love of God in not sparing His Son and of giving Him up for our sakes. Let us pause so that we get this right. It is not the love of giving Himself up for our sakes. If God could have died it would have meant the end of everything. But He could not have died, for He is God. There was only One Whose death would do us any good, and that is the death of the One in Whom we were created (Col.1:16), so that the old creation might be put to death and all be vivified in Him (1 Cor.15:22).

The love of God proclaimed in the evangel is His love in giving up His beloved Son for the sake of those creatures described in Romans 1:18-3:20. It is the love that called for God to forsake His Son, remaining silent and unresponsive while He suffered and finally gave over His spirit to the Father and died. The "hurt" (*cp* Gen.3:15) suffered by Christ in this loss is incalculable. How, then, can we speak of the cost to His God and Father?

No wonder that Paul uses the verb "pour out" here. God does not simply love us. He pours out His love in our hearts. When used of wine coming out of bursted wine skins, this verb is translated "spill" (Matt.9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37). There it speaks of a sudden release of what had been bottled up. It is as though God could not hold back His love any longer. It had been stored away long enough.

In His evangel God says to us: Let the light of My love be poured into your hearts!

Now may the spirit of God vibrate over the darkness of our hearts so that this light of His love may flow in all its abundance into them.

It is this overflowing love of God that is the solid rock of our expectation.

THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The holy spirit is the spirit of God. It is first spoken of in Genesis 1:2 as the connecting link between darkness and the word of God, in which Elohim said: "Let light come to be!" Here in Romans 5:5, it is the connecting link between humanity as sinners who are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23) and the believing of God's word in which He says: "Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). It is that invisible power for enlightenment which comes direct from God into the heart (the seat of intelligence and appreciation) of the believer.

It is the evangel that is the word of God in view here. The spirit of God vibrates over the darkness of our hearts so that what God has said to us is being believed, and thus His love is being received.

There are plenty of reasons in our lives to feel distressed and cast down (2 Cor.4:8,9). But for us as believers, despite the darkness all around us and in us, despite our own weaknesses and failures, despite the chaos of events and human thinking, despite all this, we are expecting that God is bringing all to righteousness and peace. He is doing this apart from any contribution from us. He is doing this on the basis of the death of His beloved Son, Who died for our sakes while we were still sinners. This is the love which He pours out in our hearts and commends to us in His evangel, and which expands to vast dimensions as we grow in realization of the blessings He gives us in Christ (*cf* Eph.1:15-23).

With such a strong and sure foundation of love we may be certain that our expectation will not be left unrealized. The expectation of the glory of God is not mortifying.

D.H.H.

PAUL THE PESSIMIST

To be a pessimist in this age concerning the things of the world is equivalent to being looked upon as was one of God's servants in olden time, of whom it was said: "I hate him, for at no time has he prophesied good for me, but rather evil" (1 Kings 22:8), and of whom the apostate king spoke when he commanded: "Put this one in the house of detention, and feed him with bread of oppression and water of oppression" (1 Kings 22:27).

Pauline doctrine in respect to the last days is intensely pessimistic. He has no word of praise for the gigantic achievements of modern intellect, no intimation of his having the slightest hope because of the attainments in mechanical art of the present age. His teaching concerning man in his relation to things mental, political, moral, or ecclesiastical, may be summed up in his words to Timothy: "Now this know, that in the last days *perilous periods* will be present" (2 Tim.3:1).

How completely Paul was outside the currents of modern life and thought may be gathered from a comparison of his words just quoted with the words of those representative of present day affairs. The leaders in twentieth century philosophy, and twentieth century theology, unite in pronouncing the present era to be a *glorious age*. Thus their judgment is a decided negative to the declaration of the apostle. Who, then, is right?

The answer is to be found in the records of human history. But to which page in the register shall we turn? Let us find in Scripture an indication of the method which will

lead us most quickly to the result desired. "No fig tree, my brethren, can produce olives, nor a grapevine figs" (James 3:12). The thought of James is this: "As the root, so shall the fruit be." With this in mind, we proceed at once to the root of human history, and turn to the beginning of things to learn the moral value of these same things, in their end. If the fountain be bitter, its waters cannot, of necessity, be sweet. If the seed sown be thistle, of it we cannot gather the fragrant blossoms of the rose.

We would here ask the reader to carefully peruse the record of man's doings, found in Genesis 4. The record is not embellished in any way; the words chosen are few and simple; the writer's feelings are not once seen; hence the account given is ideally historic. Now, what we learn from history is this: That the present achievements of man, the modern attainments of his science, the latest products of his art—all had their origin in that portion of the race which started out with its back towards God, its face towards destruction, and which, ultimately, was wiped off the face of the earth in the waters of the deluge. Here we learn that the first poet was a bigamist, and the first song that ever came from the lips of man was a praise of murder and of crime. The foundations of the first city were laid by an architect whose hands were crimsoned by his brother's gore.

The notable pessimist of such an age of "progress"—the "Paul" of the day, so to speak—was found in Enoch. We read of him that, notwithstanding the artifices in brass and iron, or the sweet strains of skilled musicians, or the adept poets of his day, he prophesied thus: "Behold! the Lord cometh!" He who "walked with God," knew God's thoughts of the advanced science of his times, estimated it in the light of sanctuary values, and pronounced judgment upon the whole.

In the account of the antediluvian age, we read of cul-

ture, science, invention, art, and progress, but not of God. Hence, in these last days, history is but repeating itself. Man has quarried the rocks, and read the records of pre-historic worlds, and boasts of the greatness of his geology. He harnesses the powers of nature to his chariot and prates of his inventive genius. He sweeps the heaven with his eye, numbers the stars, weighs the planets, and ends by saying that in these days, "the heavens declare the glories of Kepler and Newton." God is barred and bolted from His universe, hurled from His throne, and man would fain encircle his brow with the diadem of the Omnipotent One. Perilous times indeed.

Let us glance at a threefold description of these times of peril. First, from 2 Timothy 4:3, we learn that they are times of "heaped teachers"; next, from James 5:3, times of "heaped treasures"; and lastly, from Romans 2:5, times of "hoarded indignation." It is not necessary to point out that the "heaped teachers" teach not concerning the "hoarded indignation"; they are too optimistic about human abilities to deal with such matters! Neither is it necessary to point out that the "heaped treasures" redeem not from the indignation piled up.

But what of Paul's attitude towards this state of things? What manner of conduct did he enjoin upon the servants of God? Three words contain the answer: "Herald the word." Is there injustice abroad? Herald the word. Is Righteousness bleeding in the dust, and Wrong triumphant on the throne? Herald the word. Those who herald the word today are the real "apostolic succession." The "sword of the spirit" is the only weapon which Paul can commend to the Christian warrior. Hence in his letter to Timothy he puts a threefold emphasis upon the Word:

The Word *inspired* (2 Tim.3:16,17).

The Word *correctly cut* (2 Tim.2:15).

The Word *heralded* (2 Tim.4:2).

But let the reader note that it is to be heralded, not only because it is inspired, but because it must be correctly cut; not only because it is authoritative, but because it must be understood. While the world, then, is delving deep into the treasures of nature, let the ecclesia explore the boundless treasures of grace. While the world hastes on to its “hoarded indignation,” let those called out of its corruption enter into the present enjoyment of the riches of His grace and glory untold. Here is the place for optimism—in reliance on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all (1 Tim.4:10).

If we have noted Paul’s pessimism, and pointed out his method, we cannot close without referring to his experience. In him we see the result of being severely scriptural. The path of faithfulness trodden by Paul was by no means a path of roses. It was:

A path of suffering (2 Tim.1:12).

A path of imprisonment (2 Tim.2:9).

A path of persecution (2 Tim.3:11).

A path of abandonment (2 Tim.4:10,16).

A path to the lions (2 Tim.4:17).

If you would be successful, preach anything that gets the people. If you would be faithful, herald the Word.

Let us then plead for pessimists to take the field against the forces of human optimism. Pessimists who will not have one single good thing to say of the soulish man. Pessimists who, Paul-like, will own to having “no confidence in the flesh.” Pessimists who can see but one place for the old-Adam flesh, and that place the cross of Calvary, and who will gladly acknowledge that “good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh).”

“Perilous Periods”!

“Herald the Word”!

Vladimir Gelesnoff

Questions and Answers

**“NOT FOR ALL IS THE FAITH”;
“WHOSE END IS DESTRUCTION”**

Question:

I would appreciate your comments on the whole of 2 Thessalonians 3:1, 2: “Furthermore, pray, brethren, concerning us, that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, according as it is with you also, and that we should be rescued from abnormal and wicked men, for not for all is the faith.” I am especially interested in your thoughts on the final phrase of this passage, “for not for all is the faith,” as it reads in the Concordant Version. Yet the Authorized Version reads, “for all men have not faith.” What is the apostle Paul actually saying here?

Answer:

HERE Paul begins with the word “furthermore,” which in this case is to say, “In addition to heeding what I have just previously stated, be doing what I am about to say as well.” What the apostle had stated just previously was:

“Now we ought to be thanking God always concerning you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, seeing that God prefers you from the beginning for salvation, in holiness of the spirit and faith in the truth, into which He also calls us through our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, then, brethren, stand firm, and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, whether through word or our epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word” (2 Thess.2:13-17).

However, we cannot very well fulfill our duty here, doing what we ought to do, unless we first of all *believe* that what Paul says here is true. What he says is that “God *prefers you from the beginning for salvation . . .*” Hence, “we ought to be thanking God always,” accordingly that this is so.

This revelation is in accord with the fact that “God saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and *the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian*” (2 Tim.1:9), as well as the fact that “[God] *chooses us in [Christ] before the disruption of the world*” (Eph.1:4).

May we indeed, then, as those who *believe* our apostle’s testimony here, be *thanking God always* that, “from the beginning,” He *preferred us for salvation*, “in holiness of the spirit and faith in the truth, into which He also calls us through our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

We would especially note as well that it is “our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us,” to Whom Paul appeals, to “establish [us] in every good work and word” (2 Thess.2:17). Clearly, it is the work of our Lord Jesus Christ as well as that of God, our Father, to establish us in every good work and word. We need to realize, then, that it is *not our work*—our “job”—to achieve this end. When the goal in view here, that of our having been established in every good work and word, is realized, the achievement thereof will be the work of Jesus Christ and God, our Father, *alone*.

It is at this juncture that Paul declares, “*Furthermore*, pray, brethren, concerning us, that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, according as it is with you also” (2 Thess.3:1). There is a great need for us earnestly to *pray* on behalf of those who are heralding the word, “that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified.” The sense of the word “that” here is not that of the demonstrative

pronoun (*touto*, THE-SAME; “this” for something near and “that” for something at a distance), as if Paul’s intent were for us merely to *declaim* “the following” words, expressed as a wish, here necessarily transposed, “May the word of the Lord race and be glorified.”

Instead, the force of the word “that” which is used here (*hina*) is that of a conjunction introducing the logical result in view, that is to say, “in order that” or “so that.” We are to understand, then, by Paul’s words here that we are to be persevering (*cf* Rom.12:12) in *prayer* on behalf of those who are heralding the word—making our requests known to God for their sakes—in *order that, so that* “the word of the Lord may race and be glorified [among others] according as it is [already] with you also.”

Our role as that of those engaged in earnest prayer on behalf of those doing the work of an evangelist (*cf* 2 Tim.4:5) that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, is the necessary, proximate cause thereof. Yet this necessary, proximate cause itself is within the compass of and subservient to God’s own ultimate and sufficient cause in the realization of this same goal (*cf* Rom.11:36).

Under God, then, *in order that* “the word of the Lord may race and be glorified,” may we be persevering in prayer on behalf of those making the evangel known. By these considerations, we see the essential place of prayer, even though, rightly understood, that essential place affords no room whatsoever for boasting in the flesh in the fact of prayer’s existence. Still, what a privilege it is for us to be agents *through* whom God works in the achievement of His purpose.

In many cases, blessing and benefit *only* come consequent to prayer, not apart from prayer, but instead through prayer, as a result thereof. Even though our prayer itself finds its origin and ultimate cause in God according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), as an integral part of the

divine economy, its existence and occurrence remains vital and indispensable.

Here we can only marvel and rejoice, declaring, "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.11:34-36).

Besides praying on behalf of those making the evangel known *so that* the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, we are to pray on their behalf as well *so that* they should be "rescued from abnormal and wicked men, for not for all is the faith."

The word translated here "abnormal" (*atopon*, UNPLACED) is rendered elsewhere "amiss." The barbarians of Melita, after a viper had fastened on Paul's hand, were astonished to behold nothing coming to be "amiss" with him (Acts 28:6). The enlightened malefactor declared of Jesus to another of the hanged malefactors at the crucifixion of Christ, "we are getting back the just deserts of what we commit, yet this One commits nothing *amiss*" (Luke 23:41).

One who is deemed "amiss" or "abnormal" in his behavior, is one whose behavior, characteristically, fails to conform to normative propriety. Many today are deeply amiss or profoundly abnormal, out of the right or proper course, order, or condition.

In many cases, and even more seriously, abnormalcy is conjoined to "wickedness," which has especially in view the *malignancy* of an action.¹ A "malignant" act is an act per-

1. "Wickedness" (*ponêria*, MISERY-GUSH), perhaps, originally, spoke simply of the impulsive act of one in misery. Yet it has come to be used of any *malignant* act (cf Keyword Concordance, p.326, entry "wickedness").

formed by one who is disposed to cause harm, suffering, or distress deliberately. Often such ones are very dangerous, for their acts tend to be harmful whether in influence or effect, not infrequently out of feelings or displays of ill will or hatred.

Such abnormal and wicked persons can cause a great deal of trouble to those who have become the objects of their displeasure. Hence Paul speaks of the special need of those heralding the word that prayer be made on their behalf so that they may be rescued from any such ones, ones who have somehow become offended by them or otherwise hold them in disapprobation.

That there are such abnormal and wicked persons, and hence the need for rescue from them, is clear, "for not for all is the faith." Paul thus intimates that while "the faith" is a salutary force tending to the dissipation of abnormalcy even as the attenuation of wickedness, even so, "not for all is the faith."

The Authorized Version rendering here, "for all men have not faith," fails to note that the thought in view is not merely that of some sense of abstract conviction even with Christ as its object, but that of benefit gained from consecrated commitment to a particular body of truth which Paul terms "the faith." This is to say that the Authorized Version's rendering, "for all men have not faith," fails to bring out the thought that it is a specific *corpus* of faith to which Paul herein refers, namely, that of the faithful teaching of Christ originally entrusted to our apostle.

Our phrase in question, translated "**for not for all is the faith**" in the Concordant Version, rendered literally from the Greek is "NOT for OF-ALL THE BELIEF." Syntactically expressed in English, this is "for NOT OF-ALL THE BELIEF," which is to say, still speaking in substantive literality, "for NOT OF-ALL THE FAITH."

The word "all" here, in the phrase, "for not of-all the

faith," is in the genitive case, hence our representation of the Greek "(not) OF-ALL." Something that is not "OF-ALL," is something that does not concern all or pertain to all.²

The sense of this overall passage, then, is that we are to be praying, so that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, and so that those heralding the word should be rescued from abnormal and wicked men, *for* "not pertaining to all" is the faith. The phrase is elliptical, the full thought being, "for not pertaining to all is *the enjoyment* of [i.e., the possession or partaking of] the faith."

The enjoyment of "*the faith*," is something that, decidedly, does not pertain to all. Rather, during this present wicked eon, the enjoyment of "the faith" is something that only concerns those who, first of all, are called and chosen of God as believers in Christ, who *as well* are "*faithful* to 'the faith.'" That is, instead of such ones even unwittingly standing in opposition to certain of its teachings, to them it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, *not only* to be believing on Him (which is the portion of all genuine believers), but to be *suffering* for His sake *also*, as they engage themselves, "competing together in *the faith* of the evangel" (*cf* Phil.1:27-30). This is even as Paul declares: "Suffer evil with the evangel," albeit "in accord with the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8).



Question:

Last night I was reading 2 Corinthians 11, and I came across verses 13-15: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into

2. Since the more literal "for not of all the faith," does not constitute good diction, which is necessary in an English idiomatic *version*, the Concordant Version renders the passage thus: "**for not** for all is **the faith**."

the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; *whose end shall be according to their works*" (AV).

I was wondering how we would answer if someone asked us the following: "In teaching about the servants of Satan, Paul taught in 2 Corinthians 11:15 that '[their] end shall be according to their works.' How could they ultimately be saved if their end is according to their works? Would Paul have written such a statement if he actually believed in universal reconciliation?"

Answer:

My answer is, Yes, Paul would have written what he in fact wrote here even though he, indeed, "believed in" the eventual reconciliation of all. The following will explain.

In considering this subject, we are concerned principally with two scripture texts: 2 Corinthians 11:15, and Philippians 3:18, 19. In the Authorized Version, these are translated respectively as follows:

"[concerning the servants of Satan] . . . *whose end shall be according to their works*."

". . . the enemies of the cross of Christ: *whose end is destruction* . . ."

It is not that the Authorized Version translation "end" is simply wrong, but that it is inadequate, especially as it is apprehended by the ordinary reader.

The Greek noun here is *telos*, which signifies "FINISH." In both these passages the definite article (i.e., "the") appears. Hence the Greek reads, "THE FINISH."

When, for *telos*, we say "finish," we do not mean "finish" in the sense of *cessation*, but of *accomplishment*. That is why the Concordant Version ordinarily translates the noun *telos* as "consummation," and its corresponding verb *teleō* as "consummate" or "accomplish."

Hence the Concordant Version translates these two scripture texts, 2 Corinthians 11:15, and Philippians 3:18, 19, thus:

“[concerning the servants of Satan] . . . *whose consummation shall be according to their acts.*”

“ . . . who are enemies of the cross of Christ, *whose consummation is destruction . . .*”

Every intelligent reader is aware that where we read of “the *end* of the Lord” in James 5:11 (AV), this refers not to the cessation of Yahweh’s life (as if such a thing were possible), but to His glorious *accomplishment* at the *consummation* of His operations with respect to Job: “Thus Yahweh Himself blessed the latter years of Job more than his beginning” (Job 42:12). This is because “the *consummation* of the Lord” concerning Job was one of great blessing, “for very compassionate and pitiful is the Lord” (James 5:11, CV). Thus we “perceive *the consummation* of the Lord.”

An opponent of A. E. Knoch once said words to the effect that, Since there are some “whose end is destruction,” there can be no universal reconciliation.

It is simply incorrect, however, to read the idea of “ultimate finality as concerns human destiny,” into the mere word “end.” An “end” simply speaks of *the end* in view, that is, of the eventuality or outcome of something. “End,” or “consummation,” is not a proper noun with an exclusive reference; instead, it is a *relative* term that is always used in relation to its subject. It speaks of a specific outcome into which a particular course of action leads, or in due course will eventuate.

That is: *this* leads to *that*; or, *that* is the eventuality (or outcome) of *this*. That is all that anyone can intelligently make out of the word “end” (or “consummation”). It is *the* outcome (or “end result”) of a certain thing, which is to say that in itself it is simply *an* outcome, though in relation to

its subject, as previously stated, it is *the* specific outcome into which a particular course of action leads.

The “end” or outcome that *belongs to* (“*whose* consummation is . . .”) those who are enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil.3:19) is that of a certain destruction. This is simply to say that the *outcome* of following a certain destructive course will be that of a certain “destruction” (or “loss”) as a *result*.

May we be ever mindful of our need to be imitating the apostle Paul, endeavoring to fully follow him in his “teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings” (2 Tim.3:10).

“In all of these things, let us be imitating Paul, while noting others as well who are walking thus, for we have all such ones as a model (*cf* 2 Tim.3:10,11).

“ . . . *for many are walking, of whom I often told you, yet now am lamenting also as I tell it, who are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose consummation is destruction, whose god is their bowels, and whose glory is in their shame, who to the terrestrial are disposed.* (3:18,19)

“Many who are friends of Christ, are nevertheless *enemies* of the cross of Christ, insofar as its significance is concerned in the achievement of God’s purpose to become All in all (1 Cor.15:28). The consummation concerning them for such unfaithful service will be that of ‘destruction’ (or ‘loss’), namely that which will obtain when they, even as ourselves, are manifested before the dais of Christ and are requited for their practices through the body, whether good or bad (2 Cor.5:10). ‘If anyone’s work shall be burned up, he will forfeit it, yet he shall be saved, yet thus, as through fire’ (1 Cor.3:15).”³

In all such cases, the same principle applies: that to which a certain type of behavior will lead “in the end” (or, “at the

3. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.99, p.30.

consummation" thereof) is that of a certain destruction or loss as a result.

This includes those of 2 Corinthians 11:15 as well, who are the servants of Satan, "whose consummation [or 'outcome' for such unworthy service] shall be according to their acts." As is the case with those intending to be rich, such acts lead to "destruction": "Now, those intending to be rich are falling into a trial and a trap and the many foolish and harmful desires which are swamping men in extermination and destruction" (1 Tim.6:9).

This fact, however—how it is that destructive acts lead to an outcome of destruction—is in no way decisive of the final destiny of any such "destruction-prone" individuals. Many indeed will suffer loss and destruction of various kinds and degrees, including in the case of some, even the destruction of both soul and body by the Gehenna of fire (*cf* Matt.10:28).⁴

This is all that anyone can reasonably make out of such language: Such behavior leads to such ends; and such ends will be the portion of all thus concerned. In all such cases, "end" (or "consummation") is used relatively, that is, in relation to the subject at hand.

Any such outcomes for such ones, however, are by no means the consummation or *final* end of God's purpose concerning them, but are instead only *certain* ends (i.e., outcomes or eventualities), which will accrue to them in due course, in correspondence to their behavior.

4. "And do not fear those who are killing the body, yet are not able to kill the soul. Yet be fearing Him, rather, Who is able to destroy the soul as well as the body in Gehenna." (Matt.10:28). In such cases, Gehenna, effectively, will "destroy" the soul as well as the body. This is because such unworthy ones under law, who by unrighteous acts forfeit the life of the kingdom, in so doing forfeit as well the sentient (i.e., soulish) pleasures thereof, whose bodies, previously, had been destroyed already by the Gehenna of fire (*cf* Isa.66:23,24).

That is, the fact that not only some men, but every one of us, both believer and unbeliever, will experience various kinds of destruction and loss as the consequence of our own unjust behavior, says nothing at all as to whether the *final* end or goal which God has appointed for us will be decided by any of these various antecedent outcomes (or "ends") which befall us during the course of our career.

We need not be in doubt, however, concerning this question. This is because we know, on other grounds, that any loss of wages or even bodily destruction that should be the portion of any among us as the result of our own failures, will nevertheless be *followed* by the *ultimate* end or consummation that God has appointed to us all, according to His *grace*.

That *ultimate* end, that *glorious* "consummation" of which the apostle Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 15:24 ("thereafter the consummation"), is *the consummation of vivification*, when the immortal, incorruptible life of which Christ is the Firstfruit, finally becomes the portion of all mankind. *This* is the outcome, the consummation, to which God has appointed all humanity as the *gracious* fruit of the *saving* work of Jesus Christ on their behalf.

WHAT IS ACHIEVED IN CHRIST?⁵

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

In both of these passages, and in each case, both in

5. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.85, pp.176,177.

that which comes to be through Adam and in that which is achieved through Christ, all mankind are affected. The condemnation of death and dying which befall *all mankind* through the disobedience of the one man, Adam, is put in parallel to vivification and life's justifying which God grants to all mankind through the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ. *Even as* the one apportionment, *thus also* the other. One is the work of Adam; the other is the work of Christ. Both Adam and Christ affect all the rest.

In these matters of justification and vivification, which form the heart of true soteriology and eschatology, neither our sins nor our virtues have any place whatever. All is due to Christ. Nonetheless, since orthodoxy, in its Arminian form, cannot abide that salvation is truly in grace and through the unaided work of Christ, and, in its Calvinistic form, cannot believe that Christ, salvifically, died for all, orthodoxy simply has no room for the truth.

If others fail to understand, much less accept, our teaching, may we ourselves clearly understand why we believe what we believe; and let us be certain that our reasons for our faith are sound and conclusive.

Let us rejoice that those who presently oppose, one day will believe the truth. We may be sure that they will do so, for He Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (Eph.1:11; 1 Tim.2:4).

THE CONSUMMATION OF IT ALL

We see, then, that even though there will be an outcome (an "end" or eventuality) of destruction for those who are the enemies of the cross of Christ, even as an outcome of judgment according to their acts for those who are the servants of Satan, there will *subsequently also* be an outcome of *vivification*, not only for all such ones as these, but in fact, for all mankind. To God be the glory! J.R.C.

PSALM 22

NOT ONLY does the evangel of our salvation accord with the whole of Scripture from the very beginning, but often the ancient, Hebrew Scriptures provide explicit glimpses of the details surrounding the death of Christ. This is true, for example, in the account of Abraham offering up his son in Genesis 22, and of the events in Joseph's life recorded in Genesis. It is often true as well in the life of David and in the words of his psalms. Psalm 22 is particularly beneficial in making us wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (*cf* 2 Tim.3:14-17). In looking ahead to many vivid features of our Lord's sufferings on the cross and of the glories after these (*cf* 1 Peter 1:11), it is able to deepen our appreciation of the evangel of God as it was given over to us through the ministry of the apostle Paul (*cf* Rom.15:4; 1 Cor.15:1-4; Gal.1:6-12; 2 Tim.1:6-12).

This has recently become greatly evident to me while meditating on Romans 5:5,¹ but many other passages from Paul's writings, even those recounting the "untraceable riches of Christ" (e.g., Eph.1:7-12, 20-23; 3:1-18; Col. 1:18-20) may be enriched by this psalm as it anticipates Christ's sufferings and death (Psa.22:1-21b), and then His resurrected life and future reign (Psa.22:21c-31). God was operating in the life of David toward this end, so that once again His Word would testify to the central crisis of the eons in the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ, followed by His exaltation.

1. *cf* the article, "Expectation is Not Mortifying" in this present issue of *Unsearchable Riches*.

DAVID ANTICIPATES CHRIST

The heading identifies this as a Davidic Psalm. But the exact relationship of the psalm to David's own experience cannot be determined. This is well, for it frees us to concentrate on its application to Christ. This is not to deny that it recalls David's own experience and reflects his own feelings, but its great value for us is its anticipation of Christ's sufferings on the cross and the blessings resulting from His resurrection, especially as He related them to the operations of God. God spares not His own Son for our sake, and God highly exalts Him as Saviour and Lord of all.

With a few corrections in typeface and rearranging of phrases for better emphasis, plus a change to a more literal reading in verse 8, the following is the CV of Psalm 22 as published in our 2008 edition:

A Davidic Psalm

22 My El! My El! Why have You forsaken me?

Far from my salvation are these **words of my roaring.**

² **My Elohim, I am calling by day,**

+yet You are not answering,

And by night, +yet there is no^t stillness for me.

³ **+But You are holy,**

The One dwelling among the praises of Israel.

⁴ **In You our fathers trusted;**

They trusted, and You ^ldelivered them.

⁵ **To You they cried out, and they escaped;**

In You they trusted, and they were not put to shame.

⁶ **+But I am a worm and not a man,**

A reproach to humanity and despised^l by the people.

⁷ **All those seeing me, they are deriding [˘] me;**

They ^lopen up their lip in sneering;

They ^lwag their head, saying,

⁸ **He hands over[˘] himself to Yahweh;**

let Him deliver him!

Let Him rescue him, seeing that He delights in him!

⁹ **'Indeed You were the One rushing me forth
from the belly,**

Causing me to trust on my mother's breasts.

¹⁰ **On You was I flung from the womb;**

From my mother's belly, You have been my El.

¹¹ **Do not be ^lfar from me, for distress is near,**

'Because there is no one helping.

¹² **Many young bulls surround me;**

Sturdy ones of Bashan, they compass me about.

¹³ **They open their mouth wide ^{on}against me**

⁷Like^s a lion, ravening and roaring.

¹⁴ **Like water I am poured out,**

And all my bones are disjointed.

My heart has become like wax;

It is melted in the midst of my bowels.

¹⁵ **Dried up like earthenware is my vigor,**

And my tongue clings^l to my jaws;

+ To the soil of death You [˘]bring me ^llow[˘].

¹⁶ **For curs have surrounded me;**

The crowd of evildoers^l, it has encompassed me;

⁷They dig into^{˘Qc} my hands and my feet.

¹⁷ **I ^lnumber all my bones;**

They ^llook; they ^lstare ⁱat me.

¹⁸ **They ^lapportion my garments [˘]among themselves,**

And ^{on}for my clothing they ^lcast the lot.

¹⁹ **+Yet You, O Yahweh, do not be ^lfar away!**

My Fortitude, do hurry to my help!

²⁰ **Do rescue my soul from the sword,**

My only one from the paw of the cur.

²¹ **Save me from the mouth of the lion**

And from the horns of the wild bulls—

22:15 ~~~ bring me ^llow: Hb set me on the ^lhearthstones.

22:16 7--Qc They dig into: Hb Like a lion.

You have answered me!

- ²² **Do let me 'recount Your Name to my brothers;
In the midst of the assembly shall I praise You.**
- ²³ **Those fearing Yahweh, praise Him!
All the seed of Jacob, glorify Him!
And revere^f Him, all the seed of Israel!**
- ²⁴ **For He has neither despised
Nor abominated the humiliation of the humbled,
And He has not concealed His face from him.
+But 'when he implored' to Him, He hearkened.**
- ²⁵ **From 'You comes my praise in the vast assembly;
I shall pay my vows in front of those fearing Him.**
- ²⁶ **The humble shall eat and shall be satisfied;
And those seeking after Him shall praise Yahweh.
May 'their^{cs} hearts live for the future.**
- ²⁷ **All the limits of the earth shall remember
and return to Yahweh;
+ All the families of the nations shall worship
before 'Him^c.**
- ²⁸ **For Yahweh's is the kingdom,
And 'He^o is the One ruling 'among the nations.**
- ²⁹ **~Yea, to Him~ shall bow down
all those ~about to be sleeping in~ the earth;
Before Him shall crouch all those descending
to the soil.
And he who did not ^mkeep his soul alive—**
- ³⁰ **His seed shall serve Him;
It shall be recounted 'about ^sYahweh^{ph}
To the generation 'that is coming~.**
- ³¹ **And they shall tell of His righteousness
To a people about to be born',
Declaring that He has done this.**

22:26 7--cs their: Hb your.

22:27 7--c Him: Hb You.

22:29 --- Yea, to Him: Hb They will eat and; --- about to be sleeping in: Hb sleek of.

22:30 7-- that is coming: Hb They shall come [placed at beginning of next verse].

THREE CRITICAL LINES

Three lines in this psalm stand out from the rest and sum up the whole: the first, the last and the third line of verse 21. They all tell of actions of God, and thus make Him known. Indeed, they point ahead from God's dealings with David to specific actions of God in relation to His Son, Jesus Christ. And thus they illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:6).

First of all, God Himself brought the evil of forsakenness upon Christ, the evil of putting a temporary end to the rich fellowship that had always existed between Himself and His beloved Son:

My El! My El! Why have You forsaken Me?

Then, abruptly, in the middle of the psalm, with a complete change of expression and tone from the preceding lines, we hear words of David, now becoming the words of Christ addressed to His God, in resurrection:

You have answered Me!

Finally we hear our Lord bringing the good news to humanity concerning His God, Who had brought the evil and Who had rescued His Son from that evil which He had brought. This rescue from death is a message of good, first for Israel and then extending to the limits of the earth, even to all humanity. And it is a message heralding God's righteousness, declaring:

He has done this!

What was a psalm of David becomes a psalm concerning Jesus Christ, leading to the praise of God. It emphatically draws attention to the afflictions which are endured by God's Son unto death, and boldly traces them to God. Then it testifies with exultation to God's rescue of His Son from death, and in praising God for this deliverance, it points to its widening effects of life and worship and ser-

vice to the glory of God. It is all to His glory, for He is the One Who is wholly responsible for what has been done.

GOD SPARES NOT HIS SON

Like Job, our Lord, Who became the Antitype of Job in His suffering of evil, refused to attribute His sufferings to immediate causes. He did not call out to His God, saying, "My God! My God! Why has Satan so deceived humanity that they despise and deride Me and dig into my hands and feet like savage beasts?" No, what pressed most deeply upon Him was not what human sinners had done, but what His God had done, crying out with a loud voice, saying, "My God! My God! Why have You forsaken Me?" (*cp* Matt.27:45,46).

THE WORD "FORSAKE"

The Hebrew verb translated "have forsaken" in Psalm 22:1 occurs over two hundred times in the Old Testament. A complete listing of its occurrences is given starting on page 915 of *Englishman's Hebrew Concordance* (in Strong's Concordance it is assigned the number 5800). In the vast majority of its occurrences the CV renders this word by some form of the verb "forsake" (as does the AV, and most other English translations). But in a few instances this will not work.

English dictionaries assign various shades of meaning to the word "forsake," ranging from the sense of giving up or renouncing something held dear, to that of abandonment or desertion. But an examination of the Hebrew word in all its contexts indicates that it is broader in its meaning than the English word "forsake." The terms do not entirely match up in meaning.

Exodus 23:5 provides a good test case. Here the Hebrew verb usually rendered "forsake" occurs three times, and if the CV rendered all three occurrences by a form of *for-*

sake it would read as follows: "In case you see the donkey of one hating you reclining under its load, then you will halt from forsaking him with it. You shall forsake, yea forsake it along with him."

This same instruction appears in Deuteronomy 22:4 but with different verbs, helping us greatly to catch the intended sense: "You shall not see your brother's donkey or his bull or any domestic beast of his fallen on the road and obscure yourself from them. You shall raise, yea raise them with him."

The AV and many other versions and lexicons treat the verb in Exodus 23 as a distinct term meaning "help," taking it as a homonym of the verb rendered *forsake*. It is claimed that here we have two words that are spelled the same but have different meanings.

However, we see these as occurrences of one word covering a range of meaning that is not always conveyed by the English word "forsake." The CV translates the last line of Exodus 23:5, "You shall *set free*, yea *set* it *free* along with him." The law instructed the Israelites they were not to forsake a needy member of their community, even if there was hate between them. Instead, in the particular situation described, the one who observed the problem was to set the donkey along with its owner free from the predicament, that is, help get the donkey and the man *forsaken* of the very unwelcome trouble into which they had fallen.

The CV also uses "set free" for this Hebrew verb in Deuteronomy 32:36 which speaks of Yahweh's adjudication and mercy for His people when they have no power left in themselves, both those in restrained servitude and those *set free* from restraints. We also use this rendering in Job 9:27, where Job would have his face *set free* from its disfiguring stress so that he can smile again. Job wanted to be forsaken of this intimate association.

In addition, we will revise Nehemiah 3:8 and 4:2 where

we presently translate this verb by forms of the English word "renovate." It is clear that those working on the ruined walls of Jerusalem were not *forsaking* them, but the term "renovate" adds nothing to the word "repair" which is already used in the passage. These men were repairing and *setting* the walls and stones *free* from the ruin and "rubble" of their then current state. They were forsaking Jerusalem from the devastation in which it existed.

Hence we can see that the core meaning of the Hebrew word is something like "disassociate," although that seems far too colorless to catch the nuances of feeling in the Hebrew. It is a disassociating of a close relationship, whether the separation is desirable ("set free") or undesirable ("forsaken").

SEVERED FROM FELLOWSHIP

Our Lord's forsakenness consisted of a terrifying *stillness* on God's part, when He did *not answer*, in any way, the cries of His Son. It was a matter of a broken relationship between God and the One Whose place of rest is in His bosom (John 1:18). In forsaking Christ, God had cut off that most intimate and precious association. Even in the long, days of labor among the people of Israel, who "accepted Him not" (John 1:11), the Lord could always turn in prayer to His Father, and know Him as His God (*cp* Psa.22:10). But now when no one was helping (v.11), God was silent and still.

Jesus suffered from the jeers of the people and the cruel mistreatment of the evildoers, but it was God's place in it all that captured His mind and burdened His heart. The people spoke in derision, but in fullest of irony what they said was truth. Intending to add to His distress, they opened their lips in sneering, supported by the body language of scorn in the wagging of their heads, saying: "He hands over Himself to Yahweh; let Him deliver Him! Let Him res-

cue Him, seeing that He delights in Him!" (Psa.22:7,8). Indeed, it was so that He would soon hand over His spirit to His Father's keeping, and, in God's own time, He would rescue Him out of death as the object of His delight.

Consequently, the great test for Jesus was holding fast to His trust in God despite the fact that God had forsaken Him. His God had broken off the way of refreshing and sustaining fellowship during the hours of darkness on the cross. And now God was bringing Him low to death itself, when He must give up His spirit. Our Lord passed the test, trusting in His God as His Fortitude (Paul calls this in the context of justification, "the *faith* of Jesus Christ").

GOD'S WAY

"To the soulish man, the whole earthly career of Christ is a strange enigma. The temptation in the wilderness, the privations of the way, the agony of Gethsemane, the blood baptism of Calvary, are impenetrable mysteries transcending our faculty of comprehension. Yet Christ had confidence in the Father, confidence in His love and wisdom, and so He followed unhesitatingly the marked out path. Viewed from the standpoint of our ideas, the humiliation of Christ seems meaningless. Viewed from God's throne, we perceive that by this down-stoop, the foot of the ladder leading to the throne was reached. The path of the Lord Jesus exemplifies the supreme value of confidence in God.

"Christ's expectation also was in God. In the darkest hour, when all forsook Him, when even His God hid His face, He cried, "Father, into Thy hands am I committing My spirit." And the open grave and the honor which now adorns His brow as He sits on the Father's right demonstrate the value of that expectation.

"We, too, may place our confidence and expectation in God. His God is our God. His Father is our Father. He leads His people on to glory. Though the way be dreary

and the outlook gloomy, let our confidence be firm and our expectation bright. The way He chooses is not the shortest nor the easiest, but it is the right way, and it ends right.”²

GOD HAS ANSWERED

For three hours there had been no consoling contact between God and His Beloved, Who had been made to be the Antitype of the sin offering (2 Cor.5:21), and this would be continued in greater reality in the three days of death. As that horrible reality approached Jesus turned to His silent God as His only Fortitude (Psa.22:19).

He shouted with a loud voice, “Father, into Thy hands am I committing My spirit” (Luke 23:46), while the jeers of evildoers roared against Him like a lion, and the pain they had inflicted upon Him like wild bulls throbbed within (Psa.22:21).

There is no break in the psalm itself, but there is a decisive break in thought between the second and third lines of verse 21. This is indicated by the long dash in the CV. As a word of prophecy concerning what had not yet occurred, this represents the death of our Lord.

The sounds and the pain of the first two lines of Psalm 22:21 are gone when the Lord, heard through the words of David, cries out to His God in exultation, “You have answered Me!” The psalm has nothing to say about the days of death or their significance. It goes immediately from the Lord's last sensations on the cross to His cry of praise when, in His Father's love, He receives back His soul (*cf* John 10:17,18). He is roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing (1 Cor.15:20).

God's answer was that answer to our Lord's cry which God had not given Him when He called out to God for it. It was the answer of deliverance to the One Who trusted in

² Vladimir Gelesnoff: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.1, pp.37,38 (adapted).

Him; it was the rescue of the One in Whom He delights; it was the help of His God and Fortitude, at exactly the right time. But more than rescue and deliverance and help from the jeers and the wounds of evildoers, it was life out of death. It was life in which the way of communion to His Father had been restored, and more than restored, for the value of the fellowship was vastly multiplied because of the experience of forsakenness.

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

The psalm tells us that this life of the risen Lord is centered in the activity of making God known. This work is first and primarily viewed as it involves Israel, but it enlarges to involve all the limits of the earth and all the families of the nations. Even then, it does not reach to the level and scope of the revelations given to Paul concerning our celestial calling and the heading up of all in the Christ, but it allows for them. What is most important for us is that God's forsakenness of Christ and His answer to that forsakenness, as given in Psalm 22, is most beneficial to us in our appreciation of the evangel of God concerning His Son, which we are believing.

For it is an evangel centered on the relationship of Jesus Christ to His God and Father. He was obedient to His God even when His God cut off communication with Him and was silent and still. Thus He died. But He was roused, and God exalts Him in a work of rule which will bring all into the recognition and appreciation of the work of deliverance which God brings about in Christ, *for the glory of God, the Father*.

“For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and being found in fashion as a human,

He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 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*" (Phil.2:5-11).

OUT OF GOD, AND THROUGH HIM, AND FOR HIM

David's experience of forsakenness and its sequel of God's rescue has become absorbed as a prophecy of God not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all, and of God exalting His Son, Christ Jesus, above every name that is named, for the glory of God, the Father. God is the One doing all this! God is the One Who broke the fellowship between Himself and His Son, having made Him to become sin (we drop the lightface words of 2 Corinthians 5:21). This was sourced in God's will and was carried out through His operations in accord with the counsel of His will.

God is the One Who roused Christ from among the dead and (as we have now learned) Who exalts Him above every power and authority. Furthermore, God has now made known the secret of His will, to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ. And this also is sourced in God's will and is carried out through His operations in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:9-11).

God is the One doing it all.

"O, the depths 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).

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our Centennial Year
(1909–2009)

Contents:

- 49 Editorial
- 53 Sin and Death
- 57 God's Love in the Death of Christ
- 67 A Beneficent Divine Providence
- 79 The Divine Assumptions
- 86 The Mystery of Evil
- 91 Adam Died

MARCH, 2009

Volume C

Number 2

The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

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A. E. Knoch, paperback, 346 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2009
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

“WE HAVE the precious privilege of giving thanks at all times and for all things: not for good things only, but for apparently bad things; not in seasons of prosperity alone, but when all seems dark and dismal. All things, whatever their appearance, are cooperating for our welfare, and the keener our realization of God’s supervising care and control, the more ready we are to rejoice, even in the midst of sorrow and suffering.

“It is not the mission of this little magazine merely to teach the truth, but to put our readers into the most intimate relations with God, Who is Truth. It is one thing to talk about the omnipotence, omnipresence and immanence of the Deity, yet deny them in thought and action, and [another] to enjoy the presence and unlimited power of God at all times and in all places. The apostle Paul wished to attain, in his experience, to the resurrection life. So it is our privilege, not only to see the grand vision of God’s ultimate, but to allow its rays to illumine our lives even now.

“Unless God retains the reins of the universe in His hands today, He can never guide it to the goal. And, since He controls all and cares for His own, we must not only trust, we may not merely acquiesce, we should tune our hearts to continual thanksgiving, unphrased, inaudible perhaps, but grateful to the heart of God.”

So wrote Brother A. E. Knoch in the July 1925 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.16, p.193). Now, nearly eighty-four years later, we are still facing “apparently bad things” and seasons “when all seems dark and dismal.” As in 1925 there are many good things for which we are thankful. But the test of faith is its vitality “in the midst of sorrow

and suffering.” When confidence in God as the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, and this for good, is placed alongside our troubles, we see how right and fitting Paul’s entreaty is.

There are three foundational revelations of Scripture here. First, that God is operating all; second, that God is operating all for good; and third that all is for God’s glory. All is out of God, and through Him, and for Him.

In this present issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, we concentrate on the first and second principles, but in doing so, keep coming to the third.

As to the fundamental fact that all is out of God, we reprint Brother William Mealand’s masterful meditation, “The Mystery of Evil” (p.86), first appearing in our magazine in 1919 (vol.10, p.283). Looking into the issues of divine causation more deeply, Jim Coram carefully defends our teaching of “A Beneficent Divine Providence” from the charge that it is tantamount to fatalism (p.67).

We often hear from friends who are troubled by upheavals in national and world events, wars, economic policies, social changes and the very fact that, in human affairs, nothing stays the same (while not really being new). The “nations are perturbed, and the folk, they mumble empty [things]” (Psa.2:1). Others are distressed by more personal circumstances of life, such as family troubles, losses of jobs and restricted situations due to sickness or age.

Yet Paul says, “. . . the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything,” and then advises, “but in everything, by prayer and petition, *with thanksgiving*, let your requests be made known to God” with the result that “the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus” (Phil.4:5-7).

How can this be so? Only as it is true that God is the God of wisdom and power and righteousness and love that the evangel concerning His Son reveals Him to be.

Hence, we also would draw attention to this evangel and its extensions as it applies to us as members of the body of Christ. In the current issue, I have tried especially to follow Paul’s thoughts carefully concerning the way in which the evangel that announces, “Christ died,” is related to God’s love (p.57 and p.91). Along with this, we print some thoughts of Brother Knoch on “Sin and Death” (p.55), which were instrumental in opening up to my own mind the crucial place of Christ’s death in God’s achievements of justification, conciliation and reconciliation, along with vivification and subjection. In accord with this we also reprint Brother Knoch’s article on “The Divine Assumptions” (p.79, first appearing in volume 10, pp.25-31), which focuses on the crucial place of Jesus Christ, as the Effulgence of God, in all of God’s operations.

This is not to praise Brother Knoch or claim some special superiority of teaching for myself or others who write here. If anyone teaches rightly it is due to God’s grace in enlightening understanding, and the teaching, if it is right, must and will be altogether to the glory of God. This is true not only of those who plant the word, and those who irrigate, but of those who respond with faith and faithfulness (*cf* 1 Cor.3:5-9; Phil.1:29). It is God Who makes His Word grow up.

No one escapes the experience of evil. But, in such experience, we who are believing God’s word to us, are given the special grace of being aware that God is working all together for good (Rom.8:28). This does not mean that we will no longer have to face trials and trouble, or that such evils are not real. But growth in the realization of God and what He is doing, provides us with power “for all endurance and patience with joy” (Col.1:11) even while the evil persists.

The apostle Paul gives many reminders of this and provides many examples of its truth. But perhaps that given in

Romans 9-11 is most striking. There he begins by speaking of his great sorrow and the unintermittent pain which was in his heart because of what was happening to his relatives according to the flesh (Rom.9:1-5). And he ends in the recognition that God locks all together in stubbornness so that He should be merciful to all (Rom.11:32), leading him to the joyful outburst of praise to God in Romans 11:33-36.

Some readers of *Unsearchable Riches* may feel we refer to those verses too often. But what Paul writes at the end of chapter 11 is exactly God's provision to him for endurance and patience with joy in view of his sorrow over Israel. With such a God of power and purpose in view, Who is the God Who reveals His righteousness and love through the faith of His Son, as proclaimed in the first eight chapters of Romans, we can go forward to Romans 12 and see the logic of its entreaties.

Consequently, in God's grace, we would continue to point to this revelation of God as the One, out of Whom and through Whom and for Whom is all.

For we, too, are experiencing sorrow and pain of heart as we look at the world about us. Yet also beyond this, we know something of suffering evil with the evangel and its heralding, certainly not as Paul faced, but still enough to perceive the importance of his prayers for realization of the truth which are clearly related to his prayers for boldness and faithfulness.

"Therefore we also . . . do not cease praying for you and requesting that you may be filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the realization of God; being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy; at the same time *giving thanks to the Father*" (Col.1:9-12).

D.H.H.

SIN AND DEATH

SIN, in the languages of inspiration, is a faded figure. It presents a picture to our eyes of a man aiming at a target, yet *missing the mark*. In the Hebrew it actually means miss. In Greek, it denotes UN-MARK. This very illustration is used when we are told that there were left-handed men in Benjamin who could fling stones and not miss, or sin (Judges 20:16). The picture is further elaborated if we add the law, which denotes AIM. Yet those who seek to keep the law are poor shots, for they usually do *miss*, or *sin*. Even as no one can hit the bull's-eye every time, so no one can avoid sinning.

Our English word *sin* is the nearest we have to represent these terms, so a translator is obliged to use it in a version. Yet the closer and more illuminating terms are valuable aids to the earnest student and even the casual reader. A single picture may convey a clearer impression than many words, and this is true even if it is only a word picture.

WHY WE SIN

The word *through* is used thrice in Paul's explanation why all humans sin. "Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned" (Rom.5:12). It was

through one human, Adam, and
through his sin, and
through death—on which all sinned.

Sin was not transmitted through a single channel. A man does not keep on missing the mark because he did so

once. If some outward influence caused him to do so the first time, and the conditions are all perfect, he may never miss again. But if the first mistake lowered his vitality so that he trembles, he may never be able to hit the bull's-eye until he is cured of his infirmity.

God purposely constituted Adam so that, if he made a mistake, in his case if he should eat the wrong thing, he would disintegrate, and return to the soil of which he was composed. This *process* is called *dying*, and the resultant *state* He called *death*. God distinguished between these two in His warning (Gen.2:17) by saying to *die* (the state) shall you be *dying* (the process).

DEATH AND DYING

In Genesis 2:17 the verb "die" is repeated in two different forms. First it is in the so-called "construct infinitive." Our infinitive is "to die." Being in the "construct state" shows that it is limited or restricted in its meaning by the following word. In the phrase "the word of the Lord," for instance, the word "word" is in the construct state because not everyone's word is intended, but only the Lord's. So here, the thought of dying is restricted by the following verb "you shall be dying." From this we gather that it is only in a restricted sense that Adam would die that day. "To die shall you be dying" brings before us a *process* of death, culminating, indeed, in actual death, but of indefinite duration in its operation.

YAHWEH'S UNDERSTANDING

What is Yahweh's commentary on this phrase? For the time came when He must remind Adam of it and pronounce a sentence in harmony with it. As a matter of fact the verdict of Yahweh, found in Genesis 3:17-19, is but an expansion of this phrase. And, as we have been led to expect, it is mostly occupied with the process of death:

¹⁷ **And to Adam He said: 'Because you hearkened to your wife's voice and 'ate from the 'only^o tree ^wthat I instructed you, ' saying⁻ you must not 'eat from it,**

Cursed' is the ground 'on your ^paccount;

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

¹⁸ + **Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you,**

And you will eat 'the herbage of the field.

¹⁹ **'By the sweat of your brow shall you eat 'your^o bread,**

Until you return⁻ to the ground,

for from it were you taken.

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

Henceforth Adam began to return to the ground and continued to do so, until his heart ceased to beat and his body decayed. The slow decay during life makes it impossible for us to always hit the center of the target. "Death passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned."

When Adam finally, literally died, his soul lost all connection with the world. He could no longer see or hear, or taste or smell. Not only did his body decay and return to the soil, but his sensations vanished, and his spirit returned to God, as it was before he was created.

This is literal *death*.

THE ONE MAN, ADAM

In his inspired analysis of sin's operation in the world, Paul ignores the temptation of Eve, and traces it all back to *one* human, Adam. Eve's disposition is not reckoned as the first sin, and her eating is not counted in the transmission of sin. Moreover, Adam was not deluded as Eve was (1 Tim.2:14). She ate first, and he ate, not because he expected to get any benefits, but *because she ate*.

Sin's entrance is a silhouette of its exit. Adam's love for Eve gives us a clear intimation of Christ's love for those who were created in Him, as Eve was in Adam (Col.1:16).

He was not seduced or deluded, so as to be in the transgression (1 Tim.2:14). But, when Eve transgressed, his love for her led him to do likewise. He did not sin until he took the fruit and *ate*.

So it was with our Saviour. He did not sin, nor was He deluded by it; nevertheless, *for the love of us*, He was made Sin, or a Sin Offering. This was done by crucifixion, for the curse of God was upon all who were hanged on a pole. He did not do this of Himself, but suffered it to be done because of His love for us.

Our Saviour did not have a man for a father, but He did have a woman for a mother. As Christ was born of God, He did not inherit the death sentence of Adam; nevertheless He came of a woman, so is figuratively called the “seed” of Eve and of Mary.

So the story of sin is really the greatest *love* story ever told. Adam sinned for love of Eve, and Christ was made sin for love of mankind. Yet both sins were planned by God in order to *reveal His love* to all His creatures, not only the sinners themselves, on the earth, but all His erring creatures, from the north star to the southern cross. All must learn through sin that *God is love!*

ADAM AND CHRIST

Adam’s *one* offense is counteracted by Christ’s *one* just award (Rom.5:18). The act of Adam actually affects *all mankind*. So Christ’s work, eventually, must also actually justify *all mankind*. Man has no choice in becoming a sinner, *thus also* will it be through the work of Christ. Both are actual and universal.

A. E. Knoch

The preceding was adapted from *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 6, pages 45-47 (vol.54, pp.78-81); volume 49, pages 49-52; and the *Concordant Commentary*, page 235.

GOD'S LOVE IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST

It is out of and through Jesus Christ's faith that God's righteousness is revealed as the glorious remedy of human unrighteousness (*cf* Rom.1:17,18; 3:20-26; Gal.2:16). The faith of Jesus Christ is His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross (*cf* Phil.2:8; Rom.5:19). This is the source and solid foundation of the righteous justification which God is now reckoning to those who are believing this evangel of God concerning His Son (Rom.3:26; 4:5,23-25).

Hence we have seen from Romans 3:21-4:25 that the evangel is a message revealing *God's righteousness*. It does so through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners.

Now in Romans 5:1-4, the apostle Paul has shown that this righteous work of God in justifying sinners on the basis of Jesus Christ's faith is a continuing source of peace and expectation for those who are believing this evangel. But in verse 5 he goes forward from viewing the evangel as a revelation of the righteousness of God to presenting it also as the expression of the love of God. The evangel concerning God's Son manifests *God's righteousness*, and in addition, it commends *God's love*.

THE LOVE OF GOD

The love of God is unparalleled.

It is made known by a cruel *death*.

It is made known by the ignominious death of *the One God has anointed* as Head over all.

It is made known by the death of God's Anointed One *for those who, in every perceptible way, are unlovable*.

God would not have His love seen and known by any other act except as that act is viewed in connection with the death of Jesus Christ. Not God's work of creation, not His gifts of mercy and grace, not even the glories He has purposed for the future—God would not have His love defined by any of these operations unless they are related to that one most solemn and most mind-boggling act of all history, the death of Jesus Christ.

In Romans 5, verses 5 and 6, and then again in verse 8, this astounding revelation of divine love is stated in most emphatic terms.

There are a number of unusual features in the Greek text of Romans 5:6, but its connection with verse 5 and parallel with verse 8 are clear. Let us read the passage apart from a paragraph division, noting the way in which the terms, "seeing that" and "for" join one thought to the next:

Now expectation is not mortifying,

seeing that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts, through the holy spirit which is being given to us.

For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent died.

Why is expectation not mortifying?

Expectation is not mortifying *seeing that* it is based on God's love for us. Our expectation of the glory of God is founded on God's love, and therefore it is certain to be fully realized.

What is God's love for us?

It is that Christ died for us, infirm and irreverent human beings as we are. God loves us, *for* Christ died for our sake.

The love of God which began to be poured into our hearts when we first believed the evangel, and which is still being poured into our hearts as God's holy spirit enlightens us who are believing, is that Christ died for us,

who are weak and irreverently occupied with the schemes and ways of our times, and who are deserving of nothing except indignation and death (*cf* Rom.1:18,32). When the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth concerning humanity is exposed, the verdict is: "Not one is just, not even one" (Rom.3:10); by human effort, no one can be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20).

The situation is out of our hands. It is completely in God's hands, Who gives His beloved Son to the death of the cross and *by this means* expresses His love for us in the achievements of justification and conciliation.

This extraordinary definition of God's love is repeated in Romans 5:8 with words that cannot be mistaken. Again we draw attention to the connecting term, which, in this case, is: "seeing that." God's love is disclosed by Christ's faithfulness in dying for sinners:

God is commending this love of His to us,

seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.

In accord with this, we read in John 3:16, "For *thus* God loves the world, so that He gives His only-begotten Son . . ." The way in which God loves us is in view here, not its measure (as suggested by the AV word "so"). God's love is defined by the giving of His Son, Who died for our sakes.

CHRIST DIED

Every believer ponders over this most central and basic statement of the evangel of God: *Christ died*. In making known His good news, God begins by announcing the death of His Son, Who is the *Anointed One* (*cf* Acts 4:27; Heb.1:9), the *Christ*, in Whom all will be headed up (Eph. 1:10). This One *died*. The entire message is built upon that fundamental and remarkable fact.

The verb *die* is used four times in Romans 5:6-8. As the expression of God's love, Christ *died* for the sake of those described in Romans 1:18-3:20. This love of God's is distinct from the love of the rare human being who might be willing to *be dying* for the sake of a just man, and with the unusual person who might be daring *to die* for the sake of a good man. God, in commending His love to us, saw to it that Christ *died* for the sake of sinners, for weak humanity, engrossed with themselves and their times, irreverently avoiding God. He died for those who could never stand before God in righteousness by their efforts.

The verb "die" must not be glossed over. It must not be obscured by euphemistic sentiment. Christ ceased to live. The One anointed by God with power and glory was dead until He was roused. And it is because Christ truly died that God can be (and is) righteous in His work of justification and can (and will) bring sinful humanity to Himself in love.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14

In itself the evangel is a paradox. How can the message that the Son of God died be a message of good? And how can God's giving of His Christ, His Anointed, to death be the very expression of His love?

It will greatly help us in this regard to attend carefully to the words of 2 Corinthians 5:14. When Christ died, all died, which means that the entire human race was included in His death. This is God's love: that He would give the One Who was most precious to Him, so that the corrupt and ruined human race might be put to death in such a way that it might be vivified anew, and come to know God as its All (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22-28).

It is God's Son as His Anointed Who died. It is the One Who is the Image of the invisible God, in Whom all is created, Who died (Col.1:15,16). It is the One in Whom all is

to be headed up, Who is to complete "the all in all" (Eph.1:10,23), Who died. Christ died, so that no one would finally be left out in bowing in His Name of Jesus and acclaiming His Lordship to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:5-11). His blood was shed at the cross so that all will be reconciled to God (*cf* Col.1:20).

Here we see the full sweep of this expression of God's love in the death of His Anointed. This will be set before us again in Romans 5:18,19. But now in the first half of the chapter Paul relates this love of God to the believer. God's love commended in the death of Christ has special meaning to us (*cf* 1 Tim.4:10), who are "being now justified in His blood" and will be saved from indignation (Rom.5:9), and who are "conciliated to God through the death of His Son" and will be saved in His life (Rom.5:10).

FOR OUR SAKE

Thus we see that the death of God's Son, Jesus Christ, is the expression of God's love in that, through this severest of losses, it brings forth great good for us, unachievable by any other means. This is introduced in Romans 5:6-8 by the Greek preposition, [*h*]*uper*, which is generally rendered "for the sake of" in the CV when used, as here, with a noun or pronoun in the genitive case.

In Romans 4:25 Paul speaks of human offenses as leading to the giving up of Jesus our Lord to death. Now in Romans 5:6-8 he speaks of the death of Christ as dealing with human infirmity, irreverence and sinfulness. The direction of thought is reversed, the former passage moving the thought from human wrongs to our Lord's death, and the present passage moving it from Christ's death to its effects on sinful humanity.

The preposition, [*h*]*uper* appears here four times, always in association with the verb *die*. Altogether, directly or by contrast, these terms inform of the object of Christ's death.

For Christ, . . . *for the sake of* the irreverent, died.
 For hardly *for the sake of* a just man will anyone be dying;
 for *for the sake of* a good man, perhaps someone may
 be daring to die,
 yet God is commending this love of His to us, seeing
 that, while we are still sinners, Christ died
for our sakes.

We, in our offensiveness, are the cause of our Lord's death, but His death is for our sakes. Christ's death is for the good of those who were the cause of His death. Christ died for our sakes. His blood was shed for our justification (5:9). The death of God's Son was for the conciliation of God's enemies (5:10).

Verse 7 serves to lay emphasis on this unique character of God's love in that His Son, Whom He anoints above all, died for those who continually bring dishonor to Him. In relating love to death, one would suppose that the qualities of goodness and righteousness must also be present. To die for someone assumes that the one died for is good and just. But the evangel of God concerning the death of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is for the sake of those who altogether lack these qualities. God spared not His own Son but gave Him up to death for the sake of those who are deserving of death.

In this, God commends His love.

IRREVERENT MEN¹

Before His death and after it, to the very last, men are irreverent. That is, they want happiness, but refuse to tolerate any "interference" on God's part. They cast Him out of their plans, though they readily follow and cooperate

1. The following paragraph is excerpted from A. E. Knoch's article, "Exhortation to Peace," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.4, p.76 and vol.52, p.163.

with Satan in his schemes to better the lot of mankind. But, though they refuse Christ, Whom God has given power and authority to bless them to the full, and though they had fully proven their own inability and infirmity, yet even thus Christ dies for them, laying the foundation of eonian happiness. The weakness of that death is stronger far than the combined efforts of man and Satan. "For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the *irreverent*, died" (Rom.5:6).

STILL INFIRM AND IRREVERENT SINNERS

Along with the repeated verb, *die*, and the repeated expression, *for our sake*, our passage employs the Greek adjective *eti*, three times, rendered in the CV by the word "still," as follows:

Christ died for us while we are *still* infirm.

He died for us while we are *still* in accord with the era.

Christ died for us while we are *still* sinners.

We are infirm. We are irreverently drawn away from God to the influences of our times. We are sinners.

This was true of us when we first believed. Even if we had tried to be otherwise, we remained the weak and irreverent sinners we had been from birth. And this remains true of us, as to our flesh, no matter how much good God's spirit has effected in our lives as believers.

This is not to deny the good that believing the evangel brings to us. Rather, it is to point to the transcendent good that has been done for us, so that we might realize the goodness of this good, untainted by anything of ourselves, and thus it might work in us. There is never a time, in our current lives, when we can leave this evangel of God's love in the background. We remain human beings who are mortal and weak. We need the evangel in heart and mind every moment of our lives.

Romans 5 is not an appeal to sinners to stop being sinners, any more than it is an encouragement to indifference as to our walk. It is a *declaration of the evangel* begun in Romans 3:21 (concerning God's righteousness in His work of justification) with new and expanded enlightenment (concerning God's love in His work of conciliation). That needs to be grasped first so that we can go forward to Romans 6-8 and appreciate the force of Romans 12-15.

In speaking of the human need of the evangel, Paul begins here with the human defect of *infirmity*. The evangel recognizes what we are in the flesh, which is that we are helpless and defenseless sinners.

Then, from the fact of ingrained and unavoidable infirmity Paul turns to the consequential fact that we are irreverent, especially as those who avoid God and cling to the human ways of this wicked eon. We are drawn to the interests of the current era, and in this we offer divine service to the creature rather than the Creator (Rom.1:25).

We are sinners, which is to say we fail, not only as to righteousness in our actions, but as to what we are in our human minds. We are constituted sinners (Rom.5:19). This is our condition; it has been passed down to us from Adam (*cf* Rom.5:12). Not only are we weak and irreverent and failing to reach the standards of genuine goodness and righteousness, but we are absolutely unable to change the fact by our own efforts and will.

Yet in His love, *God* changes the fact.

He spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all. Christ died for us.

Romans 6 will build on the evangel as presented in Romans 5, pointing to the relationship between the believing of this evangel and the living of it. But now Paul is presenting the evangel itself, even expanding on its glories. For us to know God's righteousness and God's love it is essential that we recognize that justification and the enjoyment

of peace toward God are blessings entirely dependent on God's giving of His Son to the death of the cross. Christ died for us who can do nothing to get ourselves out of the hopeless wretchedness in which we exist.

IN ACCORD WITH THE ERA

The Greek phrase, *kata kairon*, rendered "according-to SEASON" in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT sublinear, is almost always associated with Christ's death in English translations of Romans 5:6. Paul's thought is thus understood as similar to that of Galatians 4:4 ("when the full time came, God delegates His Son"), giving the sense, "*in due time* Christ died" (AV). This is true, but it is not what Paul has in view here.

The most likely manuscript reading of Romans 5:6 has two uses of the word "still" (rendered "yet" in the AV). Where this is accepted, it is generally explained that the double usage is intended to emphasize the fact that we were *still* infirm ("*yet* without strength" AV), even though no suggestion of such emphasis is given in the translation.

But in the CV the phrase, *kata kairon*, is associated with the human condition of conformity to the spirit of the age. The second "still" of Romans 5:6 is attached to this point. In our flesh, we are "*still* in accord with the era."

Christ died for us who are still infirm and irreverent and disposed to the patterns of thought and action that characterize and dominate the era in which we live. It is vital that we recognize this if we are to grasp the measure and value of God's love for us. God's love is the love of sparing not His own Son for us, who in our flesh are still disposed to the current era of human irreverence. We are unlovable.

RECLAIMING THE ERA

This corresponds with Ephesians 2:2 where Paul calls human beings by the name "sons of stubbornness" who

walk “*in accord with the eon* of this world.” (*cp* Col.1:21). As to the flesh we still exhibit this character, even though the evangel that God deals graciously with us in Christ, Who loves us and gives Himself up for us (*cf* Eph.4:32-5:2) invigorates us spiritually to be *reclaiming the era* (*cf* Eph.5:16; Col.4:5).

Later in Romans, in view of the evangel concerning Christ dying for the sake of those who, in flesh, are still in harmony with the current era, Paul writes to us who are believing this evangel: “I am entreating you, then, brethren, by the pities of God [such as designating us beforehand for sonship, calling us in grace for justification and glorification; *cf* Rom.8:30], 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 perfect” (Rom.12:1,2).

This entreaty would never be made if the flesh of the believer was no longer attracted, even enslaved to the ways of the current era and wicked eon. But the message of grace that highlights God’s love in the death of Christ for our sakes makes this entreaty both logical and meaningful to us. We thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord (*cf* Rom.7:24,25).

KEEPING GOD’S LOVE IN VIEW

Every day of our lives brings this love of God to our attention. We stumble and fail to honor God as God and do all sorts of things that reasonably should cool God’s love for us, and yet He keeps pouring out His love into our hearts through His holy spirit. He keeps on invigorating us with joy and peace as we keep a tight hold on His evangel concerning His Son.

D.H.H.

A BENEFICENT DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Question:

I would like to know whether I am responsible for my actions; or rather, I would like to know in what sense I am responsible for my actions; and, if there is such a sense, the sense in which I am not responsible for my actions. These are surely important questions, things of consequence about which one should exercise the greatest of care.

Not only in my church at home, but in conferences I have attended in other places as well, even where the Concordant Version is used and generally commended and the teaching of the eventual salvation of all affirmed, the teaching of God's deity in all things as set forth in your book by A. E. Knoch, *THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD*, is often denied. (Someone even said privately to me that though you at the Concordant Publishing Concern may claim otherwise, your false teaching as to God's so-called deity is little more than baptized fatalism, to which it is tantamount.)

When I am actively engaged in reading this book by Mr. Knoch, its teaching rings true, and I am blessed. Yet when I hear the arguments of others against its teaching, by some who have been acquainted with Concordant publications far longer than myself, at least some of their arguments seem correct; at least I am unable to tell that they are incorrect. It may be that I have not followed your explanations sufficiently closely. But I am waiting for further light on this subject, "the eyes of [my] heart having been enlightened."

Answer:

YOUR APPROACH to this important topic (which is also, regrettably, often a subject of controversy) is ideal. In the end, true scriptural understanding is a matter of enlightenment, as God gives us eyes to see and ears to hear. In the case of a much-controverted subject, often what is needed is not so much a conclusive argument, but the grace of openness to, together with the ability to recognize, grasp, and accept, a conclusive argument, should one be exposed to such an argument. It is important to keep in mind as well that, to those who are “dull of hearing,” what may seem to be just “words, many and abstruse” (*cp* Heb.5:11), may actually be instead at least an approximation of the simplest possible, adequate explanation of a somewhat complex subject.

Since any form of behavioral determinism (which is merely to say, of the affirmation of the existence of sufficient causes of which human decisions are the effect), *especially the teaching of the altogether wise and benign “deity”* (i.e., “GODness” or “PLACERSHIP”) *of God* (*cp* Col.2:9), is a radically different concept than that of mere fatalism, it is far from just and correct to claim that our putatively “false teaching as to God’s so-called deity is little more than baptized fatalism, to which it is tantamount.”

As popularly understood, fatalism affirms that whatever is fated to happen, will come to pass *no matter what, regardless of what one may do* to avoid one’s inexorable fate. Fatalism, effectively, says, What will happen tomorrow is what is fated to happen tomorrow *no matter what, regardless of what we do*, either today or tomorrow.

Determinism, of any kind, on the other hand, affirms that much that will happen tomorrow, will happen only because of and not apart from what we do today.

The argument of fatalism is that if it is fated that you will recover from an illness, then, regardless of whether you consult a doctor or you do not consult a doctor you

will recover. But also, if it is fated that you will not recover from an illness, then, regardless of whether you consult a doctor or you do not consult a doctor you will not recover. But either it is fated that you will recover from an illness or it is fated that you will not recover. Therefore it is futile to consult a doctor.

The thought, presumably, is that it is futile, because what you do will have no effect. If so, the reply given by Chrysippus (c. 280–206 B.C.) to this argument seems exactly right: “The conclusion does not follow; because it may have been fated that you will recover as a result of seeing the doctor.” (The corresponding reply would be equally apt if we substituted “necessary” for “fated.”)¹

Our point here is that essential means are indispensable to objective ends; hence objective ends, even though certain to occur, cannot occur apart from their own essential means (*cf* Acts 27:21-25; *cp* vss.30-37; 42-44).

Though we would not boast about tomorrow, for we do not know what a day may generate (Prov.27:1; *cp* James 4:13-17), we do know that careful deliberation and wise choice, not to mention necessary effort, are all essential to the achievement of desirable goals. Good results require good actions, which in turn require good choices. It has well been said that, No one knows what he can do until he tries. In sum, in the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., “The mode by which the inevitable comes to pass is effort.”

CHOOSING WHAT IS CHOICE

We are free to do as we please, and yet only as we please. This is to say that under normal circumstances, we are free from being compelled to act contrary to our own will, and are free to choose as we please and do as we want. Yet

1. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “Fatalism, entry 7, ‘The Idle Argument,’” adapted: [HTTP://PLATO.STANFORD.EDU/ENTRIES/FATALISM/#7](http://PLATO.STANFORD.EDU/ENTRIES/FATALISM/#7).

at the same time, we are bound to choose according to our strongest desire, whatever on the whole appears most “choice” to us at present.

At a certain time and in a certain circumstance (according to the present state and character of the psychological forces² inhering in our mind), this may be to defer short-term gratification in the interests of gaining long-term benefit. Yet at a different time and in a different circumstance, this may be to yield to short-term gratification, even though this entails the forfeiture of long-term benefit. In each case, however, we will be acting voluntarily, choosing what we please and doing what we want.

If we were not bound to choose according to our strongest desire, to select whatever on the whole appears most “choice” to us at present, not only would our actions not be voluntary, according to our own choice, but our lives would be subjected to utter chaos.

For example, we might find ourselves suddenly engaged in adultery or murder, even though such acts—not only in the abstract but in relation to our present desires as well—were altogether undesirable and abhorrent to us, at odds with our own will and preference. Similarly, we might find ourselves, even under the most dangerous of road conditions, driving at a great speed and utterly recklessly, even steering our automobile in such a way as to cause it to fly off a cliff and we with it unto a certain death. That is, we might find ourselves doing this even though our present strongest desire was to drive slowly and cautiously, with the greatest of care, with a view to the avoidance of any injury.

2. These include any mental states or entities that can preferentially arbitrate between different options, especially our emotions, such as joy, fear, happiness, sadness, peace, worry; all of one’s thoughts, feelings, desires, beliefs, inclinations, motivations, and so on.

(I owe the phrase “psychological forces,” and the contents of most of this footnote to Brian D. Parks, in “Ultimate Moral Responsibility is Impossible: A New Defense of The Basis Argument”: http://people.consolidated.net/gptravel/umr_no_possible_bdp.pdf.)

In God’s own appointed time, when we are finally constituted just (Rom.5:19) and conformed to the image of His Son (Rom.8:29), though we will still be free to do as we please and yet bound to act according to our strongest desire, since due to the abiding, wholly virtuous character with which we will then be endowed, it will always be our strongest desire to act only wisely and righteously, never unwisely or unrighteously.

This is, even as it is written, when the chosen ones among the sons of Israel are fully begotten anew, that it will be the case that, “Everyone who is begotten of God *is not doing sin, for His seed is remaining in him, and he can not be sinning, for he is begotten of God*” (1 John 3:9).

This same principle holds as well for ourselves, who are members of the ecclesia, the ecclesia which is, figuratively, “the body of Christ” (*cf* Eph.1:22,23; *cp* Col.1:24). In the day when we are, not as today, only in earnest, but in that day, altogether and entirely, a new creation in Christ (*cf* 2 Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15)—resurrected and vivified, immortal and incorruptible—we will also be, altogether and entirely, members of “the new humanity which, *in accord with God*, is being *created in righteousness and benignity of the truth*” (Eph.4:24). Then will fully come to pass the words of our Lord, concerned with the only “true” or “real” freedom—whether of will or other aspect of liberty—worthy of the name: “If ever, then, the Son should be *making* you free, you will be *really* free” (John 8:36).

VARIED SENSES OF RESPONSIBILITY

If what one means by “responsibility,” is simply accountability or just liability to judgment, then, Yes, we are “responsible” before God, for “each of us shall be giving account concerning himself to God” (Rom.14:12); and “all of us must be manifested before the dais of Christ, that each should be requited for that which he puts into practice

through the body, whether good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10). All our practices must be considered; none may be ignored; and, they must all, both the good and the bad, receive their fitting response (i.e., requital or recompense).

But if what is meant by "responsibility," however, is accountableness and just liability to judgment *because* of one's, as the case may be, either proper or improper use of one's "free will," as popularly construed, then, No, we are not thus "responsible" before God.

The law of causality is that every effect has an antecedent cause. This is an analytically true statement, for by definition, for every effect there is a cause; and every cause produces an effect.

The hypothesis, "Everything has an antecedent cause," however, is a false hypothesis since it entails either an infinite regress in seeking a first cause, or the necessarily false notion of self-causation (*causa sui*, Latin, meaning "cause of itself").

Nothing can be the cause of itself, for in order for something to be the cause of itself, it would have to exist prior to its own existence. The notion of ultimate self-creation, then, that is, of one's own self being the ultimate cause of the way one is, is formally false, since it fails the test of logical analysis.

This is not at all to suggest that since we cannot be thus self-caused insofar as the content and course of our own lives is concerned, that we cannot cause changes in our own disposition and composition (i.e., aggregate characteristics), whether for good or ill. Indeed, if only in small measure, or to a substantial degree, we regularly cause changes in our own disposition and character, whether for good or ill.

The important, life-changing decisions that one makes at present will surely influence one's future character and personality. But even so, to be *ultimately* self-created, which

is to say to be *ultimately responsible* for the decisions that one makes at present, one would have to be ultimately responsible for the motivational forces that effectively led him or her to make those very decisions.

HEREDITY AND PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

This, however, is demonstrably impossible, for it involves an infinite regress:

In order to be truly morally responsible for what one does, it seems that one would have to be the ultimate cause or origin of oneself, or at least of some crucial part of one's mental nature. One would have to be *causa sui*, in the old terminology. But nothing can be truly or ultimately *causa sui* in any respect at all. Even if the property of being *causa sui* is allowed to belong (unintelligibly) to God, it cannot plausibly be supposed to be possessed by ordinary finite human beings. "The *causa sui* is the best self-contradiction that has been conceived so far," as Nietzsche astutely if not graciously remarked in *BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL*:³

It is a sort of rape and perversion of logic. But the extravagant pride of man has managed to entangle itself profoundly and frightfully with just this nonsense. The desire for "freedom of the will" in the superlative metaphysical sense, which still holds sway, unfortunately, in the minds of the half-educated; the desire to bear the entire and ultimate responsibility for one's actions oneself, and to absolve God, the world, ancestors, chance, and society, involves nothing less than to be precisely this *causa sui* and, with more than Baron Münchhausen's audacity, to pull oneself up into existence by the hair, out of the swamps of nothingness.

In fact, nearly all of those who believe in strong

3. Friedrich Nietzsche, *BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL* (1882), "Part One: On the Prejudices of Philosophers, section 21": [HTTP://WWW.ALLPHILOSOPHERS.COM/NIETZSCHE/NIETZSCHE_CHAPTER1.HTML](http://www.allphilosophers.com/nietzsche/nietzsche_chapter1.html).

free will do so without any conscious thought that it requires ultimate self-origination. Nevertheless, this is the only thing that could actually ground the kind of strong free will that is regularly believed in, and it does seem that one way in which the belief in strong free will manifests itself is in the very vague and (necessarily) unexamined belief that many have that they are somehow or other radically responsible for their general mental nature, or at least for certain crucial aspects of it.

The above argument may seem contrived, but essentially the same argument can be given in a more natural form as follows. (i) It is undeniable that one is the way one is, initially, as a result of heredity and early experience. (ii) It is undeniable that these are things for which one cannot be held to be in any way responsible (this might not be true if there were reincarnation, but reincarnation would just shift the problem backwards). (iii) One cannot at any later stage of one's life hope to accede to true or ultimate responsibility for the way one is by trying to change the way one already is as a result of one's heredity and previous experience (which is to say, one's specific nature and nurture; one's genetics and precise constitution, even as one's fully-detailed life-experience).

For one may well try to change oneself, but (iv) both the particular way in which one is moved to try to change oneself, and the degree of success in one's attempt at change, will be determined by how one already is as a result of heredity and previous experience. And (v) any further changes that one can bring about only after one has brought about certain initial changes will in turn be determined, via the initial changes, by heredity and previous experience.

(vi) This may not be the whole story, for it may be that some changes in the way one is are traceable to the influence of indeterministic or random factors. But (vii) it is foolish to suppose that indeterminis-

tic or random factors, for which one is *ex hypothesi* [i.e., by hypothesis] in no way responsible, can in themselves contribute to one's being truly or ultimately responsible for how one is.

The claim, then, is not that people cannot change the way they are. They can, in certain respects (which tend to be exaggerated by North Americans and underestimated, perhaps, by members of many other cultures). The claim is only that people cannot be supposed to change themselves in such a way as to be or become truly or ultimately responsible for the way they are, and hence for their actions. One can put the point by saying that the way you are is, ultimately, in every last detail, a matter of luck—good or bad. That is, luck swallows everything.⁴

While the substance of Professor Strawson's point is well-taken by ourselves, since luck is conceived either as random events of sheer chance or as deterministic yet undesigned and purposeless events in the evolving course of nature, we would not speak of luck, but instead of divine providence. We would say, then, that one can put the point by saying that the way you are is, ultimately, in every last detail, a matter of divine providence. That is, seeing that out of God, through God, and for God is all: "to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36), it is evident that a beneficent divine providence, for wise and good ends otherwise unattainable, accounts for everything.

"YET NOT I BUT THE GRACE OF GOD"

The traditional notion of moral responsibility is that one is morally responsible for an action if and only if one chooses and acts as one does neither by chance (i.e., apart

4. Galen Strawson, in E. Craig (Ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Routledge: London; 1998, 2004), "Free Will": [HTTP://WWW.REP.ROUTLEDGE.COM/ARTICLE/VO14](http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/VO14).

from any cause at all), nor as the effect of a causal history; that is, because of a chain of sufficient causes which explain why one chose and acted as one did, rather than in some other way.

Instead, one must act in such a way so as to be ultimately responsible for how one chooses and acts. And, it is believed, this is how one ordinarily does choose and act.

It is evident, however, that any such notion of moral responsibility is impossible to satisfy, and therefore that the belief that this is how one ordinarily does choose and act is a mistaken belief. This is because either one acts as one does as the effect of one's own causal history, in which case one's actions are unavoidable, being the effect of a cause (or rather, of an entire causal history), or else one acts as one does merely by chance, apart from any cause whatsoever, in which case one's actions are unpreventable, being events of sheer chance.

Between these two accounts of behavior (or some combination of the two), the field of possibilities is exhausted. This is because either one acts as one does as the effect of a cause, or else one does not.

Since this is the case, no additional account of behavior beyond these two is even possible. Hence, on any possible account, it is impossible to satisfy the requirements of the traditional notion of ultimate-responsibility-based, moral responsibility.

It is true, in one sense, namely, the hypothetical, that at the time of choice one indeed could have chosen otherwise. That is, on the hypothesis that at the time a choice was made conditions had been sufficiently different that one would have chosen otherwise, then, quite obviously, one could have chosen otherwise. But, in the categorical sense, in the time when a choice was made, conditions being as they were, one could not have chosen otherwise. This is because on any possible account (whether cause-

affirming or cause-denying), in the case of any occurrence, only one outcome is possible.

Yet it is this very notion of ultimate self-creation which is exemplified in the popular belief which affirms that one is, at least to a considerable degree, a "self-made man" with regard to the existence of one's own virtues.

The most egregious offense inherent in the doctrine of self-created virtue, commonly termed "free will," is that it ascribes the glory of the creature's virtue not to the creature's Creator, but to the creature himself. And, since the essence of pride is the holding of a high or inordinate (i.e., excessive) opinion of one's own dignity and importance, those who believe that their virtue is self-created (and hence, finally, thanks to themselves), are necessarily prideful individuals.

Using the Concordant Version or holding to the eventual salvation of all, is by no means a preventative against the mistaken belief of self-created virtue, or for that matter, against a wide variety of other mistaken beliefs. Specious (i.e., seemingly correct, but actually fallacious) argumentation is often persuasive, appears in attractive form, and by means of winning personality. Very often, it creates a strong bias against actual truth. Even so, it remains essential error. The only question, then, is whether we are sufficiently enlightened to *recognize* its essential error.

Properly-speaking, "self-control" simply speaks of the control of the self by the self; by usage, it has in view the control of the self with a view toward uprightness of action. That is, the scriptural expression "self-control," says nothing in favor of the notion that when one engages in self-control, one enjoys a power of *ultimate* control *over* oneself as to *how* one engages in control of oneself, even that when one chooses one thing instead of another, one can choose otherwise than what one does in fact choose, and so forth.

Nothing, including one's own virtue, can be *ultimately*

self-created.⁵ The “self-control” that chooses virtue over vice, righteousness instead of sin, discipline instead of laxity, is itself a *fruit* of the spirit (Gal.5:23). The self-control, then, that opts not to quench the spirit (1 Thess.5:19), but instead to be filled full with spirit (Eph.5:18), is not causeless, but the “fruit” (i.e., effect) of a cause.

The truth is that to the degree that we have self-control, even as in the spheres in which we enjoy its presence and empowerment, we are what we are “in the *grace* of God.” This is even as the apostle Paul says concerning the twelve, “*In the grace of God*, I am what I am . . . more exceedingly than all of them toil I—*yet not I but the grace of God* which is with me” (1 Cor.15:10). Similarly, even as concerns sexual continence, while the apostle declares, “. . . I want all men to be as I myself also,” he goes on to say, “*but each has his own gracious gift from God*, one indeed, thus, yet one thus” (1 Cor.7:7).

In light of the fact, then, that any teaching in support of freewill-based responsibility as popularly understood is necessarily mistaken, one should reject it, not view it as possible “new truth,” new truth that just happens to be the same old error as is already all but universally embraced.

May it be our heartfelt privilege to join with the apostle Paul in affirming, and, in insisting upon, the glorious *good news* of 2 Corinthians 1:12: “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.”

J.R.C.

5. This is the case even within the Deity Himself, in Whom the fullness of virtue is *self-existent*, not *self-created*. God did not *create* Himself a particular way, with a particular disposition and character. Instead, God Himself *exists* in a particular way, with a particular disposition and character.

THE DIVINE ASSUMPTIONS

AMONG the glories which grace our Lord Jesus Christ is one of surpassing interest and splendor; but this, like many another gem in His diadem, has been long lost and forgotten. It is brought before us in that galaxy of glories which graces the opening of the epistle to the Hebrews.

Like every inspired gem, it is fitly set. The coming eon was allotted to Abraham, the father of the Hebrews. So now Abraham's greater Son is set forth as the Allottee of all. The nation of Israel is the eonian nation and so we see Him as the Maker of the eons. As these eons are made for the display of God, we are now introduced to the One Who is to be the means of His revelation. First He is the Effulgence (i.e., out-shining, or radiant splendor) of God's glory. And then He is introduced to us as the Emblem (i.e., representation, or symbol) of the divine assumptions (Heb.1:3).

In meditating upon the relations between God and His Son, it will be our wisdom to observe and preserve the figures and illustrations which He Himself suggests rather than any of our own invention. "The effulgence of His glory" leads us to the most notable of all natural representations of God's glory, the sun.

The sun itself is not visible to human eyes. What we see is the luminous photosphere or radiance which surrounds it. What we feel is the radiance of which it is the source. In the richer Hebrew tongue two terms are used to describe the sun. One, referring to the sun itself (Job 9:7) is but seldom used, but the other, the common term, refers rather to the radiance of the sun, its shining. Thus when we read the phrases at which so-called scientific scholars

scoff, and are told that the sun rises and sets, moves and stands still, gets hot and scorches, it is not the astronomical idea of the sun which is intended, but the phenomenal thought—the sunshine—which is suggested. By appealing to the poverty of our language and not noting the precision of the tongue of inspiration, the wisdom of the wise has confounded itself.

All our physical blessings are borne to us by sunbeams. All light and life relies, not only on the sun, but on its radiance, its effulgence. Should the sun shut in its beams and shroud its shining, it would be like God apart from the offices of His Son—unappreciated, unknown, inscrutable. And so He is to all who have not seen and felt His light and love as these radiate from His Effulgence.

To us who know God and all His warmth of love and life-giving illumination, He still remains invisible. But by His Son, His glories have filled our hearts with blessing as the sun's beneficent beams spread blessing on the earth.

The next illustration, in which we are particularly interested at this time, brings before us quite a different picture. Just as this page is printed from type whose form corresponds to that of the characters which appear before the reader's eye, so it is with God and His Son. The type and its impression are distinct and different in many ways; yet, so far as the interpretation of thought is concerned, they are one. The printer who reads the type and the reader who scans these lines, are impressed with precisely the same ideas. So the Son of God is the Emblem (*charaktêr*; CARVING) of God's assumptions, being thus expressive of His character.

This phrase has been variously rendered. The Authorized translates "the express image of His person." That this is rather in the nature of a commentary, or a suggestion as to what they thought it meant, rather than a true rendering of the original, is manifest when we note their trans-

lation of the word here rendered "person" by "substance" in the first verse of the eleventh chapter.

"God is spirit" (John 4:24). How then, can we speak of His *substance*? In the AV, The Greek word here translated "substance" has been rendered *confident* (2 Cor.9:4), *confidence* (2 Cor.11:17; Heb.3:14); and the Revisers have followed the AV in using *substance* in Heb.11:1. But faith is not substance. In fact, it is quite its opposite.

In order to rest satisfied as to the meaning of this important word we will need to find an expression which will fit into the context of each of its occurrences. "Confidence" seems to suit the Corinthian contexts fairly well. But the apostle has shown more than simple confidence. He has expressed this to others. He has *assumed* that they were ready and feared lest this assumption may not be true. Here we have hit upon an expression which will fit each occurrence as a key fits the lock. It does not strain the context, but fills its place perfectly and opens up the significance of the passage. Using this as the basis of a concordant version, we have this satisfactory definition of faith (Heb.11:1): "Now faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed" (CV).

Faith in God's word rests, not on evidence, but rather exists because of the lack of it. It is a *conviction* concerning matters where evidence is withheld. It is an *assumption* of that which we are expecting. All our blessings, like those of the worthies of this chapter, may be perceived afar off, and may be saluted, but have not yet been obtained (*cf* Heb.11:13).

Faith, as related to hope, or rather expectation, *assumes* all the force and flavor of the longed-for object. The fulfillment of faith alone can substantiate it. But faith refuses to wait for fact and takes for granted that He Who has spoken will not fail to fulfil His word.

Palestine, we assert, belongs to Israel. That is faith. In fact, it has been the territory of many peoples over the centuries. But we *assume* that God's word is true and that any others who may possess it for a time, will have it only for a temporary term.

Faith, then, is the *assumption* (*hupostasis*, STANDING-UNDER) of that which we are expecting; it is the banner under which we take our stand. Thus, when we transfer this thought to the phrase in the first chapter of the epistle, it not only fits perfectly but suggests a vast field of almost unexplored truth. The Son of God is not the image of God's *substance* or *person* (whatever these may mean), but the Emblem, or Impress, of His Assumptions. Through His Son, God makes the eons (Heb.1:2). Throughout these eons, God places Himself in various *attitudes*, and *relations* to His creatures. He *assumes* various characters; He is Creator, Ruler, Provider, Master, Husband, Father. He is Yahweh and Elohim. He assumes these parts; but how can His creatures become aware of His assumptions? How can they know His relationship to them? He makes this manifest through His Son, Who is the *Emblem*, or *Impress* of these assumptions.

The Greek word for "impress" is the source of our word "character." Indeed, the Greek word, transliterated, is *charaktêr*. It occurs only in this passage; but, with another affix, marking the fixed result of a stamp or die, it is used often in the Revelation to denote the "mark" or stamp of the beast (*charagma*, CARVE-effect; Rev.13:16). It is also used in Acts 17:29, where it is translated "graven" in the AV, or "sculpture" in the CV. Idols were sculptured to depict the character of the god or goddess which they represented. Hermes (Acts 14:12, Mercurius) with his herald's staff and winged sandals, is proved to be the messenger of Olympus; Artemis (Acts 19:24,27,28,34,35, Diana) was known as a huntress by her pack of dogs; while Zeus (Acts 14:12,13,

Jupiter) proclaimed himself by his scepter and his throne. But the Son of God is no mere *charagma*, no sculptured image of His God. He is a *charaktêr*, and displays Him by His words and works, by a life of love and a dread death, by a radiant resurrection and an august ascension.

He is the facsimile of God's assumptions, their *characteristic* presentation. In Him, God's peculiar and salient attributes are converted into terms of human speech and action. When God is indignant, He frowns; when He rejoices, then the smile will play upon His Beloved's lips.

He is the Impress of all God's assumptions. It is vain and vicious to drive in a wedge, as we so often do, between the Son and the Father, as though there were as little sympathy between them as there is in the average human family. He and His Father are one, just as He and His saints are one. This unity is one of spirit, not identity of personality.

Failure to apprehend the truth that our Lord is the Impress of all the divine assumptions, has led to many a self-imposed difficulty. Some passages prove that He is *Adonai*, not *Yahweh*. Other passages make it clear that He *is Yahweh*. Still others give Him the title *El* or *Elohim*.

Let us note the words of Psalm 110:1: "The averring of Yahweh to my Lord . . ." (Psa.110:1; cited, "Said the Lord to my Lord . . ." Matt.22:44). This seems to show clearly that David's Lord was *not* Yahweh. Yet it is David who speaks of the crucified One: "I poise Yahweh in front of me continually . . ." (Psa.16:8; *cp* Acts 2:25). Thus, while we infer from one of David's utterances that He was *not* Yahweh, we have clear evidence from another passage that He *is*.

The same is true of the title Elohim. In Hebrews 1:9, Elohim is called His God. Yet in the preceding verse, He Himself is called Elohim (*cf* Psa.45:6,7).

In His distress on Calvary He calls upon El, "Eloi, Eloi" (Matt.27:46), yet in the very same book He Himself is called

Immanuel—El with us (Matt.1:23). This, too, is the title given the Son as the Creator (Heb.1:10; Psa.102:24-27).

In the Greek Scriptures Master or Lord is used indiscriminately of the *Adonai* or *Yahweh* of the Hebrew; yet this is the peculiar title which is used to distinguish Him from His God. "For even if so be that there are those being termed gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless for us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him" (1 Cor.8:5,6).

Often is God spoken of as the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Yet the title God is not denied the Son. Thomas acknowledges Him to be his Lord and his God, and is not rebuked for his confession (John 20:28). There is a strong probability that He is called "the Only Begotten God" in the first chapter of John's account (v.18). The same apostle tells us that He is the true God (1 John 5:20).

Indeed, while the title "Father" is the one most distinct from the Son, He is the *Emblem* of the divine fatherhood, too. He told His disciples, "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. And henceforth you know Him and have seen Him." Philip is saying to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficing us.' Jesus is saying to him, 'So much time I am with you, and you do not know Me, Philip! He who has seen Me has seen the Father, and how are you saying, Show us the Father? Are you not believing that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The declarations which I am speaking to you I am not speaking from Myself. Now the Father, remaining in Me, He is doing His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me . . .'" (John 14:7-11).

From all of these examples, it is evidently beside the mark to seek to limit any divine characterization to Deity proper, for we cannot hear Him apart from His Expression;

we cannot see Him apart from His Image; we cannot perceive the characters He assumes apart from the Emblem of His assumptions. *This does not obliterate manifest differences of identity and personality.* Indeed, we are forced to distinguish between the Image and its invisible Original; we cannot confuse the Expression with the One Who speaks; and we are not distressed when the Emblem is spoken of in the same terms as the Assumption. The one great Mediator between God and humanity is fully authorized to speak and act as God; and to receive the honors which are due to Him only. And this because His will and ways and words are not His own but His Who sent Him.

From this it is manifest how unscriptural is the theological theory of a "trinity." We are asked to believe that there are three God-persons whose three wills act in unity. Scripture knows of but one God whose will is supreme and needs no subordination or compromise or harmony with any other will. The Son of God always did the will of His God, and never presumed to cooperate with Him. As the Expression of God, He does not announce His own will; and He renounces any will of His own as the Emblem of the divine assumptions.

A. E. Knoch

JOY THOMPSON

Our sister in the Lord, Elzina Joy Thompson, of Melvin, Illinois, died on February 6, 2009, age 78. She is survived by her husband, Dayo, six children, fifteen grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. As her daughter, Lisa Krall, related to us, "Beyond being the 'typical' wonderful mother, Mom was an ambassador of Christ, making it clear to me and to my five brothers who we are, why we are, and what we are—*through Him*. God uses many ways to reach His people, but none can be dearer than one's own mother. He has blessed our family superabundantly."

At Joy's funeral, since it encapsulates her strongest beliefs, Ephesians 3 from the Concordant Version was the principal reading.

THE MYSTERY OF EVIL

WHATEVER of mystery there may be in the origin of evil, its presence in the universe is a great outstanding fact. Explained or unexplained, evil exists, and it is just this fact which presents a problem of absorbing interest. Philosophy is unable to account for the mystery, and science can only infer that some inscrutable law is operating in the play of two great forces, good and evil.

While acknowledging the fact of evil, many hope for its elimination by way of evolution, regarding it as a present imperfection which the human race will shed as it ascends the hill of life. Others, in their eagerness to exonerate God from responsibility, give evil a permanent place in the universe, ascribing its origin and continuance to the devil. However, there are those who cannot reconcile the thought of perpetual sin and suffering with a just conception of God, and to these the writer specially commends this brief study of a great theme.

In the realm of romance, genius vividly portrays the conflict of vice and virtue, and with unerring instinct depicts the triumph of good and the eclipse of evil. Now, this longing for the ascendancy of the noble and praiseworthy is no small token of that perfect state which shall ultimately prevail. The difficulty with many is to see how evil can be conducive to good, and a necessary factor in the accomplishment of divine purpose. That evil was no mere accident, but an integral, indispensable part of the divine plan, is proved and illustrated by the entire range of sacred narrative and history. Bold in statement, strong

in truth, Scripture still offers the clearest solution of the problem of evil. Shall we be less bold in reception, or must we modify and water down its strength to suit our fixed notions and ideas?

GOD'S FIAT

The fiat of God has gone forth. "Former of light and Creator of darkness, Maker of good and *Creator of evil*, I, Yahweh, make *all* these things" (Isa.45:7). Surely, then, there must be a purpose in evil's creation, since nothing can be purposeless that comes from Him. Absolutely supreme, God is responsible for the guidance of the universe to its appointed climax. Able to avert evil, He created it for reasons of His own. Evil is God's prerogative, and its employment subserves the purpose in view. He takes full control, and is at the helm of affairs in such manner that He is "operating *all* in accord with the counsel of will" (Eph.1:11). Truly, "all is of God," and though we may not be able to fully comprehend His ways, yet we may see sufficient of His ability to assure us of a purpose marvelous in wisdom and rich in love.

There is no real good, no vital virtue, apart from conflict with, and victory over, evil. Suffering in some form is inevitable, but is transfigured when we see that it is the Divine means to an exalted end. Herein there is much point in the thought expressed of Christ that, "even He also, being a Son, learned obedience from that which He suffered" (Heb.5:8). We even read that He was "... given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God ..." (Acts 2:23); and, that "... of a truth, in this city were gathered against Thy holy Boy Jesus, Whom Thou dost anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the nations and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and Thy counsel designates beforehand to occur" (Acts 4:27,28).

Thus we see that the machinations of wicked men were instruments in the fulfillment of the divine purpose.

The story of Joseph finely illustrates the inter-weaving of good and evil. His brothers planned his death, but eventually sell him into slavery, concealing their crime by crafty deceit. Years roll by, and Joseph, the obscure, becomes ruler of Egypt, and a thoughtful benefactor of the people. Revealing his identity to his brothers, who fear reprisal for their misdeeds, Joseph makes a fine acknowledgment of God's overruling power. He consoles them by saying: "And now do not be grieved nor let it be hot in your eyes that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you for the preservation of life . . . So now, not you sent me here, but the One, Elohim" (Isa.45:5,8). Indeed, "You devised evil against me, yet Elohim, He devised it for good in order to accomplish, as at this day, to preserve many people alive" (Gen.50:20). Truly what we term circumstance and chance, attend upon His will in the accomplishment of His manifold purpose.

WORLD EVENTS PRE-ORDAINED

In such quotations as the following we see the supremacy of God in the great forces of good and evil. Referring to Israel, God says: ". . . Just as I brought on this people all this great evil, so shall I bring on them all the good which I am speaking concerning them" (Jer.32:42). "And it will come to be just as I was alert over them to pluck up and to break down, to demolish and to destroy and to smash, so I shall be alert over them to build and to plant, averring is Yahweh" (Jer.31:28). And again: "Who has given Jacob to the robber, and Israel to the plunderers? Is it not Yahweh . . . ?" (Isa.42:24). Indeed, "Would there come to be evil in a city and Yahweh not have done it?" (Amos 3:6). We also read that ". . . He makes out of one every nation of mankind, to be dwelling on all the surface of the earth,

specifying the setting of the seasons and the bounds of their dwelling . . ." (Acts 17:26). Thus we see that the events of history, rise and fall of kingdoms, changes in the world's map, have been all foreordained.

It may be said that if God thus acts in supremacy of power, He must therefore invade the domain of what is termed "free will." But Scripture, experience, and observation show conclusively that man is not absolutely free. He may be free in the realm of will,¹ but not in the sphere of action. He may plan and purpose, determine and devise, but there is a controlling power above himself which ever and anon restrains the execution of his will. Man is often the creature of circumstance. In the words of Byron, "Men are the sport of circumstances, when circumstances seem the sport of men." Thus, man's proposals are ever at God's disposal.

Profoundly wise and beautifully simple was the attitude of the poet who penned the following lines:

*I have no answer for myself or thee
Save that I learned beside my mother's knee:
All is of God that is and is to be,
And God is good. Let this suffice us still,
Resting in childlike trust upon His will
Who moves to His great ends unthwarted by the ill.*

Evil is but temporary, though its reign seem long. The will of the creature shall yet be swayed into perfect correspondence with the will of the Creator. Within the majestic monitions of His will, punishment and judgment there may be, but all the minutiae of His marvelous guidance and government is ordered with a view to the ultimate issue. And when the mystery of His will is seen in the light

1. That is, simply in the sense that he is free from compulsion, from acting contrary to his own will, and may do as he pleases in correspondence to the desires of his heart. "Yet it is Yahweh who regulates the heart" (Prov.21:2), from which "spring the outflowings of life" (Prov.4:23).

of full accomplishment, there will be joyous acquiescence from the lips of all.

The presence of evil, in conflict, crime, and catastrophe may mystify and perplex, but once grip the grand conception that the winding ways of men, though a seeming tangled skein, is not purposeless with God, and we have enlightenment and assurance. We may safely trust the destiny of mankind to Him who created, who fashioned and formed in august pursuance of a purpose supreme. Therefore, we may rest heart and intellect in His power to bring to glad fruition the operations of His majestic will.

William Mealand

“THE PHANTOM OF FREE WILL”

There is only one independent “free” will in the universe, and that is the will of God. This will, during the eons, is manifested in two distinct ways, through experience and revelation. The flesh of mankind has been placed by God in an environment which leads it contrary to His revealed will. Mankind’s physical heritage from Adam, disposes it against His manifest pleasure. This is God in history working out His will in the realm of subconsciousness. In order to perfect His purpose men must not be aware that they live and move and are in Him. They must be oblivious of all but the fruit of His operations through their progenitors and in their associates. They must imagine that they are independent deities, well able to match their wits and wills with that of their Creator. This is the great democratic doctrine of “self-determination.”

The false “free will” which men claim arises from ignorance of God’s ways and of their own limitations. Not realizing that God is working against Himself in order to become known, they imagine that their will is independent of His. Not being able to analyze the intricate processes which underlie their own determinations, they delude themselves into thinking that each volition on their part is a creative act, indeed, far more than that, for creation is not, as commonly supposed, based on nothing. But man’s will is itself a creature of circumstance and can be molded and shaped by the great Controller of circumstances, to suit His own pleasure.

A. E. Knoch

(THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD, p.126.)

ADAM DIED

IN Genesis 5:3-5 we have the history of Adam briefly presented in terms of three particular verbs: *live*, *beget* and *die*. The first is a verb of goodness and glory. The second indicates purpose in life. But the third verb stands against the other two with dire implications.

³ + Adam **'lived** ⁷two **hundred thirty**⁰ years and **'begot** a son **in his likeness** and ^{as}**after his image**; + he **'called** **'his name Seth**. ⁴ And the **days of Adam, after his begetting** **'Seth, came to** **'be** ⁷seven **hundred**⁰ years, and he **'begot sons and daughters**. ⁵ + So all the **days of Adam which he lived came to** **'be** **nine hundred thirty years**; + then he **'died**.

There are other verbs here, but *live*, *beget* and *die*, these three are of most significance. And of the three, the first and last are critical to the overall message of Scripture concerning God's plan and purpose for humanity, centered in the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The verb "live" is traced back to Genesis 2:7, where we read that Yahweh Elohim formed Adam out of soil and blew into his nostrils the breath of *life*, and he became a *living* soul. In creating the human, God had in view a living, sentient being. Adam consciously experienced sensation and feeling.

The verb "beget" relates back to Elohim's words in Genesis 1:28, addressed to humanity concerning its place in creation: "Be fruitful and increase; fill the earth and subdue it," which in turn connect with Elohim's words of purpose in the making of humanity: "Let Us make humanity in Our image and according to Our likeness. Let them hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heav-

ens, over the domestic beast, over every land animal and over every creeper that is creeping on the earth” (Gen. 1:26). This filling of the earth also carries forward the primary statement of purpose given in Genesis 2:15 where we read: “Then Yahweh Elohim took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to serve it and to keep it.”

THE OMINOUS VERB

But the good indicated by these verbs telling of divine glory and purpose in the creation of Adam (“human”) is fearfully threatened by the verb “die.” The person who dies is no longer living, no longer a sentient being. One who dies cannot serve as the image of God. Such a creature cannot subdue other kinds of creatures which need clear direction and timely provision. The human who dies cannot serve and keep the garden filled with fruitful plants which sustain life. The glory of the Creator is darkened, and the goodness of life and increase is obscured by the entrance of death into the world.

Adam lived for nine hundred and thirty years, but from the day he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he was dying. The vitality of life was diminishing day by day from that fatal day of disobedience. The function of subduing and keeping plants and animals in order was increasingly weakened until it was ended entirely. There is no communication, no awareness, no honor, no glory in death.

TO DIE YOU SHALL BE DYING

The concept of dying is introduced in Scripture with Yahweh Elohim’s instruction concerning the trees of the garden (Gen.2:16,17). It enters like the chaos and vacancy and darkness of Genesis 1:2 and casts a foreboding shadow across the lush beauty and serene prosperity of the garden of Eden:

¹⁶ **And Yahweh Elohim instructed ^{on} the human, [>] saying: From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat.**
¹⁷ **+But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for ⁱon the day you eat from it, to die^e you shall be dying.**

This verb comes before us next in Genesis 3:1-5, where we read:

3 +Now the serpent, it became more crafty ^fthan any other animal of the field ^wthat Yahweh Elohim had ^dmade. + ⁷The serpent ⁿsaid to the woman: Indeed ⁱ did Elohim say, You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?

² + **The woman ^{sa}replied to the serpent: We may eat ^fof the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ +yet ^fof the fruit of the tree ^wthat is in the midst of the garden Elohim said, You shall not eat from it, and you shall not touch ⁱ it lest you should die.**

⁴ **+But the serpent ⁱsaid to the woman: Not to die^e shall you be dying; ⁵ for Elohim knowsⁱ that ⁱon the day you eat ^fof it your eyes will be unclosed, and you will become like Elohim, knowing good and evil.**

INSTRUCTION AND WARNING

The first use of the verb “die” in Scripture comes directly from the mouth of God, Who uses it twice in the same statement (Gen.2:17). In instructing Adam concerning the fruit He had provided in the garden, Elohim said he could eat from every tree except that of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Elohim’s message is clear and emphatic. Adam is *not* to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the reason he must not do so is given stress by the repetition of this dark and sobering verb. Elohim warns Adam, “You must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it,

to die you shall be dying.”

This was not an evangel. Yet it prepares the way for the evangel of God concerning His Son.

Then in the next appearance of the verb “die,” Eve cites Elohim’s words, but not exactly as He had spoken (Gen.3:3). She elaborates on His instruction regarding the forbidden fruit, telling the serpent: “Elohim said, You shall not eat from it, and you shall not touch it

lest you should die.”

This was not an evangel either. But in changing the strong, unconditional declaration of God to one speaking of possibility (which opens the door to uncertainty), Eve distracted attention from the extremely serious subject that Elohim had introduced. Altogether, with her additions and revisions, she managed to make God seem unreasonable and His words equivocal.

The serpent, however, avoids any sense of uncertainty and speaks with clear declaration in openly denying the words of God (Gen.3:4):

“Not to die shall you be dying.”

And then he changes the subject. It is not to the advantage of the liar to dwell on his lie. Indeed, for the Adversary the less said about death, the better, for it may lead to the exposure of his most audacious falsehood.

Nevertheless on the day Adam sinned, he began to be dying. He continued to live long beyond what we would suppose possible, but as with our own experience, his living was a diminishing process. And so it came about that God’s word expressed by the infinitive “to die” (Adam was *dying* so as *to die*) was fulfilled, and Adam died.

GOD SPEAKS AGAIN

In the evangel of God, we again hear Him speak concerning sin and death. But in this case life is fully established, and death is abolished. Christ is made to be Sin,

the Antitype of the sin offering. He dies. And the result is the life of vivification, in which righteousness and peace and glory reign.

“For the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be a *sin* offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God’s righteousness in Him” (2 Cor.5:21). “Christ *died* for our sins” (1 Cor.15:3). “For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, *died*” (Rom.5:6). “God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ *died* for our sakes” (Rom.5:8). “In that [Christ] *died*, He *died* to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God” (Rom.6:10). “If [Christ] *died* for the sake of all, consequently all died. And He *died* for the sake of all that those who are living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One *dying and being roused* for their sakes” (2 Cor.5:15). “For even as, in Adam, all are *dying*, thus also, in Christ, shall all be *vivified*” (1 Cor.15:22). “The last enemy is being abolished: *death*” (1 Cor.15:26).

In Romans 5, the apostle Paul contrasts Adam with Christ, and the entrance of death through the sin of Adam with the life and righteousness that enters through the obedience of Jesus Christ in Himself dying for us all:

“Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin *death*, and thus *death* passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned— Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life’s justifying. For even as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just” (Rom.5:18,19).

Thus Adam also is included in the death of Christ and will enjoy life and righteousness as it has been gained by Christ for all mankind.

WITHOUT EQUIVOCATION

In the evangel God speaks about death openly and clearly, without equivocation. Christ died. That is the opening declaration of the evangel which we have accepted, in which we stand and through which we are being saved (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Let us not, like Eve, place doubt on, or, like the serpent, deny the sober reality of His dying by claiming it was really some sort of living in which some service was being performed and usefulness maintained somewhere among the dead who somehow live on.

The entombment of our Lord was not simply intended to serve as evidence to the human mind of the resurrection when it was emptied. It is the evidence that Christ was truly dead during those three days, and that when He was roused and got back His life, the very power of death itself was defeated, so that ultimately it will be completely abolished from God's universe (*cf* 1 Cor. 15:26, 54-57).

As for us who are believing, let us be believing the evangel we have accepted. As our own mortality increasingly takes hold on our consciousness we need especially to hold fast to the welcome message of God that Christ died for our sins. This message is continually God's power for salvation, not only for the life ahead, but for the present as well. The evangel tells us that we died with Christ, and the old humanity was crucified together with Him (*cf* Rom. 6:5-11; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3). We are dying, but Christ has died for our sakes, and we will live together with Him.

The stark and unadorned message of human life and sin followed by death which is set before us in Genesis prepares us for the astounding message concerning the death of Christ and of His resurrected life in which He is no longer dying. Both accounts have serious significance for us all. The one points the way to the other and together give marvelous cohesion to the Word of God.

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our Centennial Year
(1909–2009)

Contents:

- 97 Editorial
- 103 What is Mankind?
- 113 The Human in Creation
and Resurrection
- 123 A “Holy Kiss,” Yet Opposition;
“The Rock was Christ”
- 135 The Commendation of God’s Love

MAY, 2009

Volume C

Number 3

The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

This book traces the divine function of *evil* (whatever is harmful or destructive) from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty.

As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book’s author: “Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God’s way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God’s strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation.”

The message in this book is especially valuable to us in these days of doubt and distress, to lead men to rely on and rest in God alone.

A. E. Knoch, paperback, 346 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

New edition; price \$10.00

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2009
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

WE PRESENT here portions of four editorials from earlier issues of our magazine, the first appearing in volume one (pages 201-203), the second in volume twenty-seven (pages 193,194), the third in volume thirty-nine (pages 3,4), and the last in volume forty-three (page 50). They are dated according to the particular issue of the magazine. The first one may have been the joint effort of Brother Gelesnoff and Brother Knoch, but the other three are from the pen of A. E. Knoch alone.

Altogether they exhibit the concern of our founding editors and of ourselves today for the scriptural principle set down in Romans 11:36, “. . . seeing that *out of [God] and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons!* Amen!” That God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11) is the solid support of our joy and peace. It gives God His rightful place as the One Who blesses and puts us in our proper place as those who are blessed and who bless God because of this (*cf* Eph.1:3). All is out of God, and all is to His glory.

God has a message of grace for us, and He prepares our hearts to receive it:

FEBRUARY 1910

SO ABUNDANT has been God's blessing upon our little magazine that we are constrained to publish abroad our thanksgiving, that it may redound yet more to His glory and encourage the hearts of those who have taken such a kindly interest in this effort to exalt His Name

Many of [the] precious truths [being presented here] will be new to our readers, but we trust that their novelty will in no wise deter anyone from testing them by the most exact and searching scrutiny of the Word of God. We desire for all our readers the rank of Berean nobility (Acts 17:11) who "*examined [anakrinontes]* the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so"

We are not ashamed to stand for intense exactitude in dealing with the words of God, though this has often put us to shame. In His material creation the microscope is unable to find the limits of His infinite perfections. His spiritual creation is no less exact and perfect in its sphere. To shun exactness is to shun the light. It is, in measure, to reject the Word of God for the philosophy of man. We do so only to gloss over and conceal those uncomfortable details which mock our theology and endanger our reputation before others. Nothing but a divinely implanted desire to please *Him* can deliver us from this plight.

We have rejoiced greatly to find that God has not only given the message, but that He has prepared hearts to receive it. Both are His work; both are essential. For, of ourselves, it is not only impossible to discover the truth in His Word, but we are so dense that, apart from His gracious operation, we cannot even recognize the light when we see it.

So we are utterly cast upon God; and we are glad that it is so, for here we can rest. He has given the message, and He is able to prepare hearts to hear it.

And here, at rest, and filled with thanksgiving, we can worship and say:

Who is like our God, Who in giving us riches unsearchable, has enriched Himself with surpassing praise?

Since, like Paul, we are what we are by the grace of God

(1 Cor.15:10), and not due to anything of ourselves, our behavior is to reflect this with humility and patience. Our deep desire is that others also, along with ourselves, may be brought to a greater appreciation of God as He reveals Himself in Christ Jesus our Lord. Here the guidelines of Ephesians 4 and 5 are especially welcome:

JULY 1936

THE FRUIT of Ephesians is found in 4:1-6, "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." Whoever knows the highest truth in the Scriptures will walk in this way. This should be our endeavor, especially in these days when so few know the truth. And it should be especially stressed in our contacts with those whom God has given ears to hear and eyes to desire His glory. We all have much to learn ourselves, so it should not be hard to have patience with others, even if they seem slow and dense. Let us remember that, if we really have the highest truth, it will not appear in pride and self-exaltation, or in confining our fellowship to those like minded, but in lowly and forbearing service among those we desire to lead into further light.

Above all let us not give offense by a haughty pretension to all the truth, or by claiming for our leader the monopoly of it. All of God's saints have some light, and much truth has come to everyone who has sought to know God through His Word. One who was overzealous for his special teacher claimed that the others had learned from him. But this teacher spoiled it all by acknowledging that he, also, got most of his knowledge from an early writer—called Paul! None of us has aught that God has not given to him.

And it is not given us to keep, but to dispense. Let us not award the prize before the race is run. Then the Lord, Who looks upon the heart, will praise each one.

We should show especial sympathy and helpful consideration to those pastors who, with a true heart, are seeking to lead their flocks into the truth. Here the test is not the head, but the heart. It is not easy to clear our mind from tradition, nor can it be done in a moment. And one who feeds others must deal gently with them, and cannot do as he himself desires. He must suit his pace to their steps. Like Jacob, he dares not overdrive them a single day, lest the weak fall by the way. It may not be pleasant for us to measure our steps, but this must be done when ministering to many. Let us not discourage those whose hearts are open to God's truth, but who still cling to the past. Their persistence is a good quality which may keep them from wavering when they come into fuller light.

Yet a walk in grace and love, patterned after God's love for us which is commended in Christ's giving of Himself for us (*cf* Rom.5:6,8; Eph.4:32-5:2), does not mean timidity in the face of opposition to the truth that glorifies God:

JANUARY 1948

IT HAS become the fashion to make a virtue out of timidity, of dubiousness and uncertainty. Indeed, a firm stand for the truth is decried as "petrified dogmatism" and other slanderous epithets. God gives us, not a spirit of timidity, but of power and of love and of sanity (2 Tim.1:7). The era has come when they will not tolerate sound teaching, turn away from the truth (2 Tim.4:3,4). Some are always learning, yet not at any time able to come into a realization of the truth (2 Tim.3:7). Many of the saints do not glorify God as God; they will not have it that *all* is out of and through and for Him. This is the principal seed-plot of the apostasy.

Who will prepare for the battle if the trumpet give a dubious sound? Here are some of the peals that should

pour forth: Pray . . . that I may open my mouth with *boldness*, to make known the secret of the evangel (Eph.6:19) . . . that the saints may by no means still be minors, surging hither and thither, and carried about by every wind of teaching (Eph.4:14). 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)!

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 going, 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; 2:1,15; 3:14)!

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!

We do not know what is ahead in the days immediately before us. But we are aware that God is working all together for our good (Rom.8:28).

This is grandly supported by the word of God which tells us that He chooses us in Christ before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the *glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved* (Eph.1:4,5).

MARCH 1952

GOD AND HIS GRACE are the greatest glories that the saints will ever possess. Let us do our utmost to guard His deity and hold fast to the very transcendent grace that characterizes the present administration. His grandest gifts were all given to us in Christ eons ago by choosing us in Him before sin came in. Then it was that our lot was cast in Him, and we were predestinated to participate with Christ in His universal headship. None of the called in this administration had the least choice in deciding their fate. It is all due to the counsel of *His will*.

The special danger is for those of us who have been granted a measure of knowledge beyond the average. Knowledge puffs up. Love builds up. It is grand to know of God's great plans for us, but it is grander still to realize that only unmerited grace could include us among the recipients of these gifts. It is especially gratifying to know that they were ours in Christ, even when we were absolutely oblivious of them . . .

Consequently, our prayer is for endurance and patience with joy (Col.1:11), and also that *expression may be granted, in the opening of our mouths with boldness* (Eph.6:19,20).

As for this present issue, our thoughts are especially directed to God's wisdom in creation and His grace and love in the death of His Son for us and in our place in Him. Humanity as the creation of God will be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:21). This is solely because while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). Now, as believers, we are identified with Him in His death, entombment and resurrection, enjoying in spirit that which is fully manifest in the consummations of the eons (1 Cor.10:11).

D.H.H.

WHAT IS MANKIND?

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

As we are especially concerned with the constitution of man himself, in order to view aright the subject of resurrection, we will pass over the first account of man's creation (Gen.1:26,27), which views him in relation to God and to the creatures of his dominion, and pass on to the detailed account of man's composite formation as recorded in chapter two, verse seven. As this lies at the root of all subsequent study, let us quote the Concordant translation of this important passage and study each word thoroughly before we proceed.

Yahweh Elohim¹ formed the human out of soil from the ground, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life; and the human became a living soul. (Gen.2:7)

THE SOUL—AN EFFECT

This brief, yet comprehensive account, falls naturally into three distinct statements, which concern the body, the spirit, and the soul: The “human”—formed from the soil. The “breath”—the basis of the spirit. The “soul”—the result of the union of body and breath. It should be noted

1. Yahweh Elohim is a transliteration of the principal divine name and title which is translated “Lord God” or “Jehovah God” in other versions.

that these are not three distinct entities. The soil was there before; the spirit, too, was given by God (Ecc.12:7). *But the soul was not added to these*. It was simply the effect, like the light of a lamp, of which the oil might figure the body and the oxygen the breath. Indeed this word “became,” in the exact form which it takes in this passage, is first used in Genesis 1:3 in the phrase “there was light.” (Concordantly rendered this reads: “And it is *becoming* light.”) Now we know that light is not a substance existing apart from the agents by which it is manifested, but is merely the effect of certain relations between substances.

COMING TO BE

The precise form of this word “become” occurs six times in the first chapter (Gen.1:6[7],9,11,15,24, and 30), in the phrase “and it *was* so (or, concordantly, “And *coming* is it to *be* so”). In each of these cases it is abundantly clear that it notes simply the *effect* of the previous words and never gives the idea of another and distinct addition to what has been said. In fact, it is a question whether a single passage can be found to show any such usage. This is most significant, for the word occurs hundreds and hundreds of times, so often, indeed, that ordinary concordances give only a few specimens of its usage.

The first occurrence of this word is a notable example of its force. Genesis 1:2 should read, “. . . the earth *came to be* . . .”, not *was*. From this we know that it was not created “waste and void” or, rather, “a chaos and vacant,” but became so as the effect of some interference. This is confirmed by the words of Isaiah 45:18:

*For thus says Yahweh, Creator of the heavens;
He is the One, Elohim, the Former of the earth
and its Maker,
He Himself established it;*

*He did not create it a chaos; He formed it to be indwelt:
I am Yahweh, and there is no other.*

Our point is that “came to be” registers the effect or result of *previous action* and introduces no new element.

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

SOLID—LIQUID—GASEOUS

Matter—so far as it can be apprehended by our human sense—has three forms: solid, liquid, and gaseous. We are well aware of the distinct qualities of each of these, yet we may fail to grasp their significance. Everything that we sense is a parable; it is the stepping stone from the known to the unknown. This has indelibly impressed itself upon all language, for spirit is never expressed in terms of solids or of liquids. It is always associated with air. By the figure of implication it is called by the same name as the wind. In Hebrew and Greek and Chaldean, the languages of inspiration, the same word is used for “wind” and “spirit.” It is a sad token and a parable of the degeneracy of our days when the English language persistently speaks of spiritual things as “psychical,” which is, by interpretation, *soulish*. Too often, alas, the so-called “spiritual” is soulish and is well named “psychic.”

The soul is not figured by the gaseous forms of matter,

but by the liquid. It may be “poured out” (Job 30:16). It is like a “watered” or “soaked” garden (Jer.31:12). It is definitely stated to be represented in the human body by the blood (Lev.17: 14, here mistranslated “life” in the Authorized Version).

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

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

We are first struck with the *manner* in which God made the man. He “forms” him. God is the great Potter. The Hebrew word “forms” is not to be taken here as a simple creative word of command, but portrays the careful, loving molding of the creature which was to satisfy His heart.

HEBREW TERMS FOR “MAN”

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

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

adm (Greek: *anthrōpos*) = human, in contrast to spirits and beasts (Gen.6:7).

aish (Greek: *anēr*) = man, husband in contrast to *ashe* (Gen.2:23) and *gunē* (John 4:17) woman, wife.

zkr (Greek: *arsen*) = male in contrast to *nqbe* (Gen.1:27) and *thēlu* (Matt.19:4) female.

gbr = master.

anush = mortal.

It is obvious that the last term, “mortal,” cannot be used of man before the entrance of sin, before death entered. Nor is the descriptive appellation “master” ever used in the book of “In a Beginning” which was misnamed “Genesis.”

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

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

The important fact that mankind is a part of the ground becomes apparent in the judgment scene which followed Adam’s offense, for there he is doomed to return to the *ground* because he had been taken out of it (Gen.3:19).

MAN IS SOILISH

It has often been debated as to what is essentially the “man.” We have the answer here, for, *before* the spirit is imparted the form which Yahweh Elohim made is called “the human.” This indicates that “the human” is essentially *soil*. Such a thought is fully confirmed by the apostle Paul, when he says:

“The first human, Adam, ‘became a living soul;’ the last Adam a vivifying spirit. But not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual. The first human was out of the earth, soilish; the second Human is the Lord out of heaven. Such as the soilish one is, such are those also who are soilish, and such as the Celestial One, such are those also who are celestials. And according as we wear the image of the soilish, we should be wearing the image also of the Celestial” (1 Cor.15:45-49).

The first man is not only *soul*-ish but *soil*-ish, as rendered in the Concordant Version.

A “DUSTY” TRADITION

It is contrary to both Scripture and fact to say that man was formed of *dust*. The body is composed primarily of moisture. The Hebrew word, *ophr*; here translated “dust” in the Authorized Version, is also rendered “mortar” (Lev. 14:42,45) where water is absolutely essential; it is solidly set into lumpy casts (Job 38:38), and it forms *tunnels* (Isa.2:19). In its basic meaning this Hebrew word refers to a part of the ground; that moist, fertile layer which covers the surface. Mankind, in death, returns to it, for he was taken from it. We conclude, then, that mankind, as the offspring of the first man, is essentially *soulish* and *soilish*. Thus, it is the prerogative of the second Man, Christ Jesus, to be *spiritual* and *celestial*.

The Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures, called the Septuagint, uses the very word which the apostle Paul applies to man in his Corinthian epistle. So that, if we translate “soil” in the first instance, we ought to translate “soilish” in the second, to preserve the connection. “Earthy,” as in the Authorized Version, would rather show man’s *relation* to the earth; soilish shows his *derivation* from the soil.

The statement that man was made of the soil of the ground is amply evidenced by the fact that it is from the

same soil that humanity derives the food which sustains the body. Whether it be vegetable or animal food, it can all be traced back to that part of the ground which will sustain plant life—which we call the soil. Out of this he was originally formed; through this he maintains his body; into this he must return.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CREATION

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

A consistent translation of Hebrews 11:1-3 will soon show that this scripture has no bearing on the matter we are discussing at all. Nothing is said of the material “world,” for the word here is *aiōnas*, eons. And the word for “framed” is never so translated elsewhere, but “mend” (Matt.4:21; Mark 1:19) and “restore” (Gal. 6:1), “fitted” (Rom.9:22), being usually rendered by “perfect” (Heb.13:21; 1 Peter 5:10). It is derived from *artios* which means “equipped” (2 Tim.3:17, AV: “perfect”), and a study of each occurrence will satisfy us that it refers to an *adaptation* or *adjustment*. It is not probable that the fishermen would be “mending” the nets *in* the boat, but rather that they were *readjusting* them so that they would be ready for another catch (Matt.4:21; Mark 1:19). These changes, together with others of a minor nature, would give us a rendering as in the Concordant Version:

Now faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being

observed; for in this the elders were testified to. By faith we are apprehending the eons to adjust to a declaration of God, so that what is being observed has not come out of what is appearing. (Heb.11:1-3)

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

CREATION FROM PRE-EXISTING MATERIALS

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

The Hebrew word, *bra*, is the only one translated “create” and this is done quite consistently so that the student can easily test this matter. (The complete list of occurrences is given in ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW AND CHALDEE CONCORDANCE, on page 270.)

A very striking passage is found in Numbers 16:30, which refers to Yahweh *creating a creation*. But we look in vain for any new substance, for in this case it has no reference to matter at all. It refers to an occurrence which was without *precedent*, and this seems to be one of the primary notions in the meaning, of “creation.” The mere fact that the female was *created* as well as the male (Gen.1:27; 5:2), when we know that the woman was taken out of the man (Gen.2:23), further confirms the truth that creation is only a new mode of matter—an unprecedented organism into which it is formed.

Adam was *formed* (Gen.2:7) and *made* and *created* (Gen. 5:1). All of these are also predicted, in one breath, of the restored of Israel in the day of her future glory (Isa.43:6,7):

*I shall say to the north, Give,
And to the south, Do not close off;
Bring My sons from afar,
And My daughters from the ends of the earth,
Everyone who is being called by My Name;
And for My glory I created him;
I formed him; indeed I made him.*

Surely they will not be made out of nothing, but are the physical seed of Israel.

During the thousand year reign of Christ on the earth, not only are those called by His name termed His “creation,” but the physical marvels, done by the hand of Yahweh, will be a creation as well (Isa.41:18-20).

The Greek word for creation, *ktisis*, will tell the same tale. We are being *created* in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:10).

The new humanity is a *creation* (Eph.2:15, AV “make”). Nowhere are we told of the creation of either spirit or substance. Philosophy’s bible would open up with the creation of *matter*. But God always presumes this and creates some new form of matter or phase of spirit. It is not that matter was created in a chaotic state and *formed* into the heavens and the earth, but the arrangement or organization of matter into the form of heavens and earth—this was the act which is called “creation.”

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

THE “HUMAN” IS SOIL

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

Yahweh Elohim formed the human out of soil from the ground.

A. E. Knoch

THE HUMAN IN CREATION AND RESURRECTION

THE ELEMENTS of which Adam was formed are worthy of close study. He was a composite of earth and heaven, the ground and the atmosphere, soil and breath (Gen.2:7). His body is soil, his life is in his breath. The soil is a compound of the solid ground with the fluid water, and his breath of the atmospheric gases. So he is really a regrouping or formation of the same elements which were mingled together in the abyss of the ruined earth, and separated into air, water and land on the first three days of restoration. But there was more than this. It was a *vital* combination.

The *vital* element in mankind comes, not from the earth, but from the *heavens*. Not only does the sun supply us with light and warmth, but it furnishes us with vitamins in foods which our organs can assimilate, and which sustain life. We not only see this and feel it and inhale it directly as we live, but our flesh and bones are made, not merely of inert minerals, but of sun-drenched ground, the surface of the land, disintegrated and vitalized by rays of sunshine and the oxygen of the air.

SOILISH FLESH AND BLOOD

Not only was the first human *formed* of the soil, but he and all the rest of us continue *to build* and *renew* our bodies from the soil. As Paul says, the first man was *soilish*, the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. We now wear the image of the soilish, but we shall be wearing the image of the celestial. He goes on to characterize the soilish man as “flesh and blood” (1 Cor.15:47-50). The flesh

is the substantial part of our frames which is built up and renewed by elements taken from the soil, mostly through the medium of plants, their roots and stalks and fruit and seeds. The blood is the carrier of these substances from the digestive organs to the tissue of the flesh.

PLANTS SOILISH

Plants are more soilish than animals. Their roots must be in immediate contact with the soil in order to live. Cut off from their native habitat and transferred to heaven would mean decay and death. In a lesser degree this is true of humanity as at present constituted. The ecclesia which is figured by Christ's body has a celestial destiny, but we could never live apart from the soil with our present bodies. They must be changed. The soilish must be transformed into celestial. We must derive our sustenance, our life, through other channels than the soil. As this is not the ultimate source, but only an intermediary, our life must come through the sun or direct from God Himself, through His spirit.

THE BREATH OF LIFE

The body unites humanity with the earth, but the spirit links us with the heavens. The flesh is tied down to the soil, which gives it substance, the breath associates it with spirit, which gives it life. When breathing ceases the spirit of life departs. The flesh remains, but gradually returns to the soil. The fact that a perfect body can be put to death, with all its parts intact, by merely shutting off the air, shows that the breath supplies the life. This is further confirmed by the fact that life can be restored to such a body if breathing can be renewed, as in the resuscitation of the drowned. Moreover, in miraculous resurrections, the decaying body can be restored, as in the case of Lazarus (John 11-12). The overwhelming proof is found in the

death of our Lord, Whose mortally mutilated body saw no decay, and was resumed in resurrection, *without* the blood.

LIFE NOT IN THE BLOOD

Were the life in the blood (AV Gen.9:4; Lev.17:11), as is generally supposed, we would expect our Lord, in resurrection life, to have a superabundance of blood. On the contrary, He had flesh and bones, but *no* blood whatever (Luke 24:39). His hands were pierced by the nails and His side by the spear, so that the blood flowed forth (Matt. 27:49; John 19:34). It seems that all the blood was withdrawn; otherwise He could not have gone about with such open wounds. He showed them to His disciples, and, a week later, invited Thomas to thrust his hand into His side (John 20:20,27). He had life, abundant life, without any blood. Since He had no blood, His body was not dependent on the soil for its sustenance. It was not soilish. It was celestial.

BREATH THE BASIS OF LIFE

That the *breath* is the basis of the life of humanity at present may be shown by the fact that, when we exhale, it has lost its vitalizing quality. The lungs extract its life-giving force, and expel the residue. It has been changed into the breath of *death*. Our exhalation is poisonous. Neither animals nor man can remain alive in the exhalation we expel. We rob the air of its vitality. If we should seek to sustain life by the infusion of blood *without breathing*, it would soon show that the blood is useless unless it has oxygen to carry, for it is only the transportation system, so far as *life* is concerned.

CHRIST EXHALED VITALITY

Our exhalation is poison now, but it will not be so in resurrection. Our Lord, though He had no blood, so could

not derive His life from the atmosphere, nevertheless could *exhale life*! By this means it was that He imparted holy spirit to His apostles, and empowered them to fulfill their commission (John 20:22). This shows clearly that vital spirit power may be dispensed by God directly without the usual intermediate agencies such as the sun and the breath. It is His *spirit* that is the ultimate source of all life. At present it vivifies our *mortal* bodies by making its home in us (Rom.8:11). In the future it will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory (Phil.3:21). Then it will no longer be a *soilish* body but a *spiritual* one.

THREE FORMS OF LIFE

Three distinct forms of life may be distinguished, plant life and soul life and spirit life. The first two are alike in that they depend upon the soil for substance and upon the atmosphere for life. But plant life is fixed and motionless, without sensation. It is able to transform the soil into organic food, containing vitamins, fit for the consumption and sustenance of soul life. Soul or sensation is in the blood. It is an intermediate form, dependent on plant life and the atmosphere. The blood is also a medium for carrying nourishment and oxygen to the organs of the body and for removing the waste. Spiritual life needs neither soil nor air nor blood, but depends on a direct, though intangible, connection with God's spirit, the source of all life. The body and the blood are like the wiring, the spirit like the electricity of a light.

BLOOD AND SENSATION

The inspired assertion that the soul is in the blood (Gen.9: 4) may be readily confirmed by experience. Cut off the supply of blood from any part of the body and it becomes numb. Feeling vanishes with the blood, even if

the nerves, are not cut or impaired. Sensation returns as soon as the blood courses freely once more. This is the basis for the part that the blood plays in the sacrifices of Israel, and the death of the great anti-typical sacrifice. It explains why the carcass of a slain animal was to be drained of the blood (Lev.17:13). Once the blood is gone, physical suffering is impossible.

SUFFERING AND BLOOD

Sensation and *suffering* are essential factors in the revelation of God's grace and love. Relief from the experience of evil is cause for great thankfulness. It was with this in view that the first human was formed a living *soul*. Physical pleasure and pain are needed to acquaint us with the heights of happiness and the depths of despair. We would not be able to fully appreciate one without an experience of the other. Even then we could not respond to the love of God apart from the sufferings of Christ. When He came in the likeness of humanity and was found in fashion as a human (Phil.2:7,8), it was in order that He might *suffer*.

The blood of animals had to be poured out immediately in order to prevent suffering. Not so with the anti-typical Victim. He suffered to the end, for he retained His blood until after death. They could not take His life from Him even by crucifixion (John 10:18). He had to yield it up of Himself. We need not waste our sympathy on the animals slain in sacrifice on Jewish altars. They suffered little, if at all, for the first duty of the priest was to drain away the blood. After that suffering was impossible.

The formation of Adam is only the second step in the scale of living creatures. The plants are the lowest, the animals next, spiritual life follows with its varying degrees for sainthood and service. Then comes indwelling. The climax seems to be the change from a soulish, soilish body to a spiritual one.

HUMAN LIFE

Since both animals and man are soul life, wherein does man differ from the other animals? So far as the soul goes, there seems to be nothing to distinguish them. Animals can feel and see and hear and smell, even as we can. In some cases they are not as sensitive as we are, but in others more so. An eagle can see further, some insects seem to have a wider hearing range, and bloodhounds certainly excel us in scent. Man and the lower animals are *alike* in respect to the *soul*, in nature as well as in revelation. The animals themselves are a higher expression of life than the plants, because they also have the breath of the spirit of life in a lower degree, than mankind.

GOD IS SPIRIT

Let us remember that, essentially, God is spirit (John 4:24). Our revered version tells us that God is *a* spirit. There are many spirits, some of them wicked. He is not merely one of these, limited in place and power, but the life of all that lives. Hence He is the Source and Supply of spirit wherever it is found. Thus it is easy to see why all life and power is utterly dependent on Him and the impartation of His spirit. And the measure of this dispensation determines the nearness to Himself and the elevation above the balance of creation. Figuratively we might say that the measure of Himself that God has imparted to us fits us for our place in His universe. In Him we are living and moving and are (Acts 17:28).

IMAGE AND BREATH

In Scripture the distinction between humanity and the animals is in *likeness* to the Subjector, so that man is to *sway* over the lower order of living souls, and is empowered by the act of Yahweh Elohim, when He Himself intro-

duced the breath into his nostrils, which gave him a *spirit direct from the Creator*, beyond and superior to that possessed by his subjects. Man has a somewhat different physical form from other animals, but the difference between them as to size and shape and internal structure is not nearly so great as there is between the various classes of animals themselves. The vital distinction is *spiritual*, not physical. It consists in an extra endowment of spirit, which makes him more like the Creator, Who is spirit, and gives him his name Adam, or human, that is, Likeness.

BREATH OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

Later on the phrase "breath of life," is amplified by inserting the word *spirit*. All soul life that expired in the deluge of Noah is described as having "the breath of the *spirit* of life" in its nostrils (Gen.7:22 CV).

This shows the close relation between *breath* and *spirit* in living souls, and their vital connection with life. So far as is revealed, the *bodies*, the flesh and blood of those drowned in the flood, were not mutilated in any manner, as is the case in strife or war, nor was death due to gradual decay. The water cut off the supply of air. It made breathing impossible. With the air the spirit left the body, and death ensued. In souls life is directly dependent on breath. The oxygen of the air is indispensable as fuel for feeding the life process, and preserving the spirit.

BREATH LIKE BLOOD

The breath is not literally the spirit, even as the blood is not actually the soul. As the soul of the flesh is dependent on the blood, so, perhaps, we may consider the breath as the carrier, the medium used by the spirit in soul life, such as the animals and man possess on the earth. It is not necessary in a bloodless, spiritual body. Now, it cannot function without the blood to intervene between it and the

flesh. Moreover, a special lung tissue is needed to transfer its oxygen to the blood and return the carbon dioxide to the air, for the outer skin is not fashioned for this purpose. As the digestive organs prepare the food for assimilation into the blood so the lungs bring the breath into contact with it and vitalize it so that it provides us with sensation.

MAN'S SWAY OVER ANIMALS AND SPIRITS

In this we can dimly perceive, not only the place of humanity, but God's purpose in regard to it, and the method He uses to prepare it for its final function at the consummation. Then will be perfected, not only its rule over the living souls on the earth, but a selection out of mankind will reign in the heavens. If we seek to seize and hold fast to the sequel that God has set before us, it will help us to endure the hardships of our present training period. Not only will the experience of evil humble us, but the sufferings we are called upon to bear will prepare us for a place of authority in the celestial kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Head of all sovereignty, not only on earth, but in the heavens also.

The vivification of Christ's mutilated, bloodless body, is one of the greatest exhibitions of the life-giving power of God's spirit. Not only was He alive, but, like Yahweh Elohim when imparting life to Adam and the race in Eden, Christ imparted holy spirit to His disciples by *exhaling* upon them. At Pentecost they received power by the spirit *coming upon* them by means of a violent *blast*. In the manifestations of the spirit *in connection with the earth*, it is usually associated with the air, the breath, a blast, for this is essential to soul life, and is the best illustration of God's vital energy which produces life and provides power. But, apart from its physical manifestation in soul life and the special endowment given to humanity to raise it above the animals, it was not a permanent possession, but was pres-

ent on special occasions, and for particular purposes.

In explaining the operation of God's spirit with Israel to Nicodemus, our Lord compared it to a blast of air. This is probably the best illustration that can be given, especially when we connect it with begetting, as He did, for it is not only a powerful, intangible *force*, but imparts *life*. Ezekiel's prophecy concerning Israel's regeneration uses a similar figure (Ezek.37:9). He says, "Come from the four winds come, O spirit, and blow into these who were killed, so they may live." They were no longer dry bones, but were covered with flesh and sinews, and encased in skin. But they had no life. This was figuratively imparted by *wind*. Literally, they began to *breathe*, even as Adam, when he first became a living soul.

The life imparted to Adam by means of the breath could not suffice our Lord in resurrection, for He had no blood, and, even if He had, He could never have ascended into the heavens, where there is no air. Neither can we live among the celestials equipped only with our present breath of life. So we find, in Paul's epistles, a much greater and more permanent supply of holy spirit than ever before. Even as the priests and prophets and kings and apostles and disciples were distinguished from the rest of mankind by special dispensations of God's spirit, so we are distinguished from them by becoming the *permanent home* of the holy spirit. At present we have only the earnest, but it is, at the same time, the seal of the fullness that is to follow.

So we see that "the breath of life" imparted to Adam was one of a series of dispensations of life and power through God's spirit. This, however, was not sufficient for carrying out God's operations, so priests and kings, prophets and apostles were empowered by the spirit to work His will. This raised them above the rest even as Adam was above the lower creation, for they are not only like God in respect to them, but are used by God to reach the God-

like human race. And now He is imparting His spirit permanently, and will even transform our soulish bodies, such as Adam had, into spiritual frames so that we may become His intermediaries to the celestial hosts. Thus we, as the body of Christ, being most vitally and spiritually united to Him, will be the highest achievements of His holy spirit, to the glory of His grace.

Resurrection, the return of the spirit to the body is, perhaps, the greatest of all the miracles wrought by our Lord during His ministry. Dead and decaying Lazarus was called back to life by the spirit of His voice. But how much greater will it be when all of Israel's saints, long since returned to the soil, will be roused from their tombs after His advent? They will not return to mortal bodies, doomed to die again, but receive life eonian, until death itself is abolished. Their bodies will not continually decay and cause them to sin against their inclination. They will enjoy a perfect and perpetual life. In a word, they will be *vivified*. Yet we will not only be made *alive* beyond the reach of death but *transformed*. Our soilish, soulish bodies will become celestial and spiritual. Our infirm, immortal frames will become powerful and immortal. Not till then will we realize what it is to be *like* Him and *beloved* by Him. To Him be glory for the eons of the eons!

A. E. Knoch

EXPECTATION CENTERED IN CHRIST

Born not too many years after the founding of this magazine, Brother Harold Jones of Bellingham, Washington, was put to repose on April 9. He loved to speak to others of the One Whom he called, "The All-Victorious Christ," sharing the truth of Romans 5:18,19; 1 Corinthians 15:22-28; Ephesians 1:10,11; Colossians 1:13-20 and 1 Timothy 2:4-7. He had requested of his family that the funeral service be centered, not on himself, but on such passages of Scripture as these, and this request was honored.

A “HOLY KISS,” YET OPPOSITION;
“THE ROCK WAS CHRIST”

Question:

In your fellowship gatherings, why do you not greet each one in attendance—man or woman, young or old, whether close acquaintance or not—with a literal “kiss” by means of the lips? After all, you claim to follow Paul, and yet does not Paul say, “Greet one another with a holy *kiss*” (2 Cor.13:12); and, “Greet *all* the brethren with a holy *kiss*” (1 Thess.5:26)? There can be no doubt that you are guilty of blatant error in not following this practice. This is beyond the fact that certain of your major teachings are now being opposed by some very knowledgeable people.

Answer:

THERE is a serious problem in your inquiry. First, you *ask* us *why* we do not do a certain thing. Then you assert that there can be no doubt that we are guilty of “blatant error” for not doing this same thing. If whatever we may say in reply to your question is necessarily mistaken, why bother to ask us to answer your question in the first place?

But in any case, to reply to your Scripture question, Does not Paul say, “Greet one another with a holy *kiss*”; and, “Greet *all* the brethren with a holy *kiss*”? our answer is, Of course he does! Furthermore, we consider his thought here to be an important one, and wish to heed it accordingly. Even so, it simply does not follow that we must now become careful to engage in some type of actual touching or pressing with the lips each time we see any and all

of our fellow believers, whether long-time friends or new acquaintances, even if this should be done in a manner that is altogether “holy.”

It is true that the English word “kiss,” though not ideal, is a satisfactory translation of the Greek *philêma*. However, it is *not* true that this Greek word, *philêma*, (or even the English word “kiss” for that matter), signifies “to touch with the *lips*.” The essence of the English word “kiss,” is simply “a slight touch or contact” (THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY, p.487). The thought of making such a contact by means of one’s *lips* is a *usage* of the word (albeit the ordinary usage of the word), not its essential meaning. Furthermore, the Greek word itself, *philêma*, by its elements, signifies FOND-*effect*, and certainly has nothing to say about human “lips,” in any way whatsoever.

This is true even in such a case as the woman who did not intermit “fondly kissing” (i.e., DOWN-FONDING, *kataphilousa*) the Lord’s feet (Luke 7:45). It is evident, in the nature of the case, according to Luke’s record of this occurrence (Luke 7:37-50), that she touched His feet by some means. As far as language is concerned, however, we cannot say whether, in so doing, she did so even by means of her head (much less by means of her lips). In light of eastern custom, we may *presume* that—in some altogether righteous manner—she indeed expressed her fondness for the Lord by embracing His feet, at least in part, even by means of her lips. But we do not, in fact, *know* this to be the case.

Besides, it is neither wise nor uplifting to speculate about such things, much less to give them excessive attention. The point is simply that this woman, though a sinner (*cp* Luke 7:37), *through some wholesome means of contact*, expressed her *fondness* for the Lord accordingly.

As is suitable in each case, then, through *whatever* means we may deem expedient and appropriate, when

greeting our brethren in the Lord, we are to be effecting not indecency (*cp* Rom.1:27) but holiness, while conveying our genuine *fondness*¹ for them accordingly. This is the main thing; in fact, this is the only point of Paul’s entreaty, “Greet one another with a holy ‘kiss’” (i.e., by means of a consecrated expression of *fondness*, in recognition of mutual faith). The vulgar notion of some sort of “lip contact” is entirely foreign not only to the Greek, but even to the English.

Let us seek to be wise and sensible. If we cannot follow the Greek, let us at least learn to distinguish the difference between English meaning and English usage. Moreover, let us not fail to note the enormous “forest” which manifestly lies before us merely because of some phantom “trees” which seem to lurk in the foreground.

You also mentioned that “certain of [our] major teachings are now being opposed by some very knowledgeable people.” More specifically, what you really mean to convey here is the fact that certain of our major teachings are now being opposed by some very knowledgeable people *with whom you are acquainted*, ones with whom we are

1. In speaking of the Russian Marxist, intellectual, and revolutionary, Leon Trotsky, the American humorist and entertainer, Will Rogers, declared, “I bet you if I had met him and had a chat with him, I would have found him a very interesting and human fellow, for *I never yet met a man that I didn’t like*” (*Saturday Evening Post*, November 6, 1926). Surely, then, rather than heaping contempt upon some even among our fellow believers because of certain of their ignoble characteristics, may we instead, with singlemindedness concentrating on the *good* that is in them even now, learn to view others even as Will Rogers perceived those of his acquaintance. Rogers’ words here, in fact, say more about him than about those whom he knew. The sense of his words is by no means that he, categorically, simply “liked” everyone whom he met, but that he *concentrated upon* not what he found deeply offensive in others, but upon what was interesting, and, connotatively, of good “human” characteristic in them, in such a way that *thus* he could honestly say: “I never yet met a man that I didn’t like.”

acquainted as well, ones who formerly agreed with our findings, but now no longer do so.

Such opposition, however, is nothing new, by any means. Throughout the one hundred year history of the ministry of the Concordant Publishing Concern, there have always been no lack of “very knowledgeable people” opposed to our findings on various major teachings, whether such ones were always and continually opposed to our views, or only came to oppose them later on, having for a time embraced them themselves.

This fact that you note, then, is simply not very significant in itself; it can only seem significant to one who, out of his or her own bias, is pre-disposed to defer to a certain teacher, unduly inclined to favor a certain teaching, or even secretly gratified to find some other certain teacher or ministry “guilty of blatant error.”

Concerning a number of doctrines currently being advocated by some, we would simply say, for your own sake, Make sure you have all the facts before taking a stand against our teaching. Have you at least carefully considered and discerned the main points on a question as set forth not only by those holding contrary views, but as presented by ourselves as well, in our primary, relevant expositions? At least it is possible that we may have considered these very matters now of concern to you with greater insight and more faithfully than you suppose.

As well, we would ask—in order to guard against even the possibility of pride or presumption—*before* going to others (which inevitably will entail at least some measure of disturbance among friends, including ones who have a high regard for our ministry), Have you spoken with us privately about whatever issues may be of concern to you? Have you understood our points which lead us to conclude as we do, even then letting some significant period of time pass for due consideration of all that is involved

before taking a stand before others, especially ones of our mutual acquaintance, a stand which is, quite obviously, opposed to our own?

Or is it instead that you have prematurely gone ahead, speaking to *us* little or even not at all (too often, in such cases, we are the last to hear and are simply not consulted)?

We do *not* say, Never take your findings to others; much less do we say, Since you differ with us, you must be mistaken. By no means. If you judge that we are mistaken, we want you to have the liberty not only to *think* so, but—where expedient and in a kindly way—to *say* so as well.

Even so, with regard to *how* one does *what* one does—far beyond any considerations of mere human respect and professional courtesy—there is the vital matter of doing that which is pleasing to the Lord, Who loves us *all* and is fond of us *all*, notwithstanding all of our failings. We are mindful, then, that He would have us all be attentive to the feelings of one another, while giving active attention to the pursuit of that which makes for peace.

To be sure, each one has the right to his or her own opinion. Still, we must ever keep in mind that truth is not nearly so readily discerned as many suppose. In the end, its enjoyment is a matter of divine enlightenment. We are all prone to err. It is quite easy for one to be mistaken, while being confident that one is not mistaken. Consequently, then, may we all, mutually and together—in a truly practical and not merely superficial way—both greet and honor one another, “with [lit., ‘in’] a holy kiss.”

“If, then, there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any communion of spirit, if any compassion and pity, fill my joy full, that you may be mutually disposed, having mutual love, joined in soul, being disposed to one thing—nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory—but with humility, deeming one another superior to one’s self, not each noting that which is his

own, but each that of others also. For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also . . ." (Phil.2:1-5).



Question:

In 1 Corinthians 10:3,4, Paul says of Israel that they all "ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank of the spiritual Rock which followed. Now the Rock was Christ." I do not understand what Paul is saying here: What was the "spiritual Rock which followed"? Whom did it follow, and in what sense did it do so? And especially, I would ask, In what sense is it the case that that Rock was Christ? Finally, what is the meaning of "... to whom the consummations of the eons have attained" (1 Cor.10:11)?

Answer:

The entire relevant passage here is as follows: "For I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, that our fathers all were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all are baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank of the spiritual Rock which followed. Now the Rock was Christ" (1 Cor.10:1-4; cf Ex.13:20-22; 14:21,22; 17:1-6).

"But not in the majority of them does God delight, for they were strewn along in the wilderness. Now these things became types of us, for us not to be lusters after evil things, according as they also lust. Nor yet be becoming idolaters, according as some of them, even as it is written, 'Seated are the people to eat and drink, and they rise to sport.' Nor yet may we be committing prostitution, according as some of them commit prostitution, and fall in one day twenty-three thousand. Nor yet may we be putting the

Lord on trial, according as some of them put Him on trial, and perished by serpents. Nor yet be murmuring even as some of them murmur, and perished by the exterminator" (1 Cor.10:5-10; cit. Ex.32:6b; cf Num.11:4; 14:2,36; 21:4-6; 25:1-9; 26:64).

"The redemption of Israel out of Egypt was typical of the spiritual deliverance which is ours in Christ. *All*, indeed, were redeemed by the blood of the paschal lamb, but not all by any means pleased God in the wilderness journey. They *all* went through the Red Sea dry shod, *all* were identified with Moses, *all* ate the manna, and *all* drank the water brought forth by Moses' rod in the desert. Yet, notwithstanding these privileges, they failed in self-control, they went back in heart to the flesh pots of Egypt, reverted to idolatry, sinned and murmured. These were the very sins into which some of the Corinthians were ensnared. And these things still have their appeal to us unless we, like the apostle, reduce our bodies to bondage."²

"THE ROCK WAS CHRIST"

The spiritual "food" and "drink" of which Israel partook in the wilderness, refers not only to the literal food and drink which God gave to them, but to His entire providence unto them during that period, by means of His imperceptible, intangible power. That is, they "drank" of the spiritual "Rock" which followed (i.e., which attended them on their way). "Rock" is capitalized in the CV, since it refers to *God's* entire provision to the sons of Israel during their wilderness journey. By association, the rock from which water came forth at Mount Horeb (Ex.17:6), figures the entire divine providence within that era.

Consequently, Paul says that the Rock "was" Christ (1 Cor.10:4b). That is, the Rock was *like* Christ. Specifi-

2. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.257.

cally, that “Rock” was to Israel, like Christ is to us. Even as they were all “baptized into” (i.e., identified with) Moses, and so received many benefits accordingly, thus also, we are all baptized into Christ, and receive many benefits accordingly—wholly apart from any consideration of our own acts. We *all* are baptized into one body, and *all* are made to imbibe one spirit (1 Cor.12:12,13), having been entombed together with Christ through the baptism into the death into which He entered for our sakes, for our sins (Rom.5:8; 6:4; 1 Cor.15:3).

Nevertheless, and even though the benefits which we receive in Christ far transcend those which were afforded to Israel in Moses, if it should be that God does not delight in us with respect to our ways and walk, being unworthy of the incorruptible wreath (1 Cor.9:25), we will not be granted it.

If, in addition to our salvation from indignation and into life eonian, we would be getting as well “the *compensation* of the enjoyment of an allotment” (Col.3:25) for our service, it will be necessary for us to engage in worthy service. If we would be granted a place of authority in God’s celestial kingdom (2 Tim.4:18), we must faithfully endure (2 Tim.2:12a). If we would “get wages” (1 Cor.3:14), we must do useful work. For, as Paul says:

Now all this befalls them typically. (1 Cor.10:11a; cp Rom.15:4)

The type consists in Israel’s failure in flesh which entailed great loss to the people. If we too, in the overall course of our careers, are displeasing to God, we will forfeit much, both now and at the dais of Christ (2 Cor.5:10). Many are the foolish and harmful desires which are swamping men in extermination and destruction (1 Tim.6:9). Indeed, the record of Israel’s failure “was written for our admonition.”

Yet it was written for our admonition, to whom the consummations of the eons have attained. (1 Cor.10:11b)

We are those “to whom the consummations of the eons have attained”! Paul cannot conclude his word of admonition without first declaring these glorious words. Indeed, they are life to us if we would heed his counsel. For they are the evangel, and the evangel is God’s power for salvation to everyone who is believing (Rom.1:16).

The evangel is the means which God uses to effect practical salvation in His people. All else, that is not otherwise the fruit of the spirit through God’s wider providence, even if quite “successful” in itself, is but the subjugation of one lust of the flesh by a more powerful lust of the flesh, even if, as in many cases, it should be a more “respectable” one as well, one which is highly esteemed among men, one which may not even be recognized as sin.

If, even in measure, we would be *delivered* (not merely exchange one sin for another, for example, exchange a lack of discipline for an abundance of pride), we would be invigorated by the *grace* which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim.2:1). If, even in part, we would be *preserved* (not merely cast out one demon in order to make room for seven worse ones), we would be invigorated in the Lord and in the might of *His* strength (Eph.6:10). If we would be bearing fruit and growing, it would be by the power of the word of God’s *grace* (Acts 20:32) in the word of truth of the evangel (Col.1:6), being refreshed and renewed in the various facets of this glorious message many times throughout our lives.

Though it is surely needful to do so, it will not suffice solely to tell us that if we would not disqualify ourselves we must exercise self-control (1 Cor.9:24-27). Unless we are full of self-confidence (by which, we are already disqualified), telling us no more than this will only discourage us, thereby ensuring our failure.

Therefore, Paul tells us much more: he tells us that we are those to whom the consummations of the eons have attained.

Telos (FINISH, "consummation"), as a verb, *teleō*, is often rendered "accomplish." In a slightly different verbal form, *teleiōō*, it is usually rendered "perfect." For example, "the law perfects nothing" (Heb.7:19). This stem (*tel-*) speaks of that which is finished, not in the sense of cessation but of *accomplishment*. It speaks of that which is "ultimately" achieved (*cp* "Now I am expecting that you will recognize *ultimately*"; 2 Cor.1:13). Its most noble usages may be found in John 19:28,30 ("Jesus being aware that all is already *accomplished*, that the scripture may be *perfected* When, then, Jesus took the vinegar, He said, 'It is *accomplished*!'"), and in 1 Corinthians 15:23 ("thereafter the *consummation*" [i.e., the consummation both of the vivification of all mankind and of the eonian times]).

The phrase "consummations of the eons" is not literal, but is a figure of association. Periods of time, in themselves, are incapable of accomplishment. Rather, the sense is, *God's* consummations, or accomplishments, as the result of His work through the eons. The eons not only come to an end, but culminate in the *purpose* (Eph.3:11) for which God made them (Heb.1:2).

"The eons are divided into two classes, the first three, which are preparatory, and the last two, called 'the eons of the eons,' which turn the evil of the first class into good. The last two eons, including the thousand years' reign and the reign of the saints in the new heavens and new earth, are the fruit and consummation of the evil eons. In *spirit*, Paul brought those under his ministry into the new creation, which is the spiritual counterpart of the eon inaugurated by the new heavens and new earth. It is only thus that the consummations of the eons had already reached the Corinthians."³

"The purpose and perfection of the final consummation

3. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.257.

is partially anticipated and realized beforehand. In the preparatory eons there is type and prediction and promise. But when the crisis created by the cross is reached, all this gives place to fulfillment. The righteousness of the Kingdom, the reconciliation of the new creation—all these are fulfillments of the purpose of the eons. All these are consummations, though in English we may hardly call them 'ends.' The final consummation, then, is not immediately introduced by worldwide judgments or the instant arrest of a revolt or a new creation (though these are steps necessary to bring it about), but is rather the deposition of a perfect universe into its perfect depository—God. It is marked only by the subjection of the Son after all else has been subjected. And this perfection itself is the result of previous consummations.

"In this light we can understand the apostle telling the Corinthian saints of the arrival of the consummations of the eons. Now the time had come for the fulfillment of the types.

"But, in a far deeper and closer sense, are we, as well as the Corinthians, associated with the consummations of the eons. The rejection of Israel has made way for a *spiritual* fulfillment of all for which they wait more than a thousand years. Our justification is more than millennial, our reconciliation exceeds that of the new creation (for we are already a new creation, with, in spirit, far more exceeding riches than any that will be enjoyed even in that glorious era). We are 'complete' in Christ (Col.2:10), thus, in spirit, attaining to a 'mature' (or 'finished') man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ (Eph.4:13; Phil.3:15; Col.1:28).

"In our own spirits we have an undeniable foretaste that the eons are accomplishing the purpose for which they were made. And every accomplishment of God's purpose is but one of many consummations which presages the

grand final perfection—the end and object of God’s primeval purpose—when God is All in all.”⁴

It is in light of all these things, then, that Paul entreats:

Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. (1 Cor.10:14)

An “idol” (*eidōlon*, PERCEIVE-WHOLE) is an image by means of which human senses are supposed to perceive the whole character of the deity (i.e., of the “GOD” or “GODS”) which the idol represents.

Most of us, unlike the Corinthians, may not be inclined to genuflect before statues, to bow before icons, much less to be abominating the idols of the ancient nations (*cf* Rom. 2:22). Even so, we may well still have our idols. Whatever captures our primary interest and takes the highest measure of our devotion, if it be not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is our idol. Indeed, as our apostle explains, prostitution, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and greed, any one of which, effectually, is idolatry (Col.3:5).

So that, let him who is supposing he stands beware that he should not be falling. (1 Cor.10:12)

Paul does not merely entreat us to beware, lest we should be falling. Instead, he says, “*So that* [*ōs te*, lit., AS-BESIDES], let him who is supposing he stands beware that he should not be falling” (*cp* e.g., 1 Cor.1:7,29; 4:5; 5:8). The sense is, As those who stand *beside* (i.e., in awareness of, in close association with) that which has just been stated—namely, that the consummations of the eons have attained to us!—“let him who is supposing he stands beware that he should not be falling.”

May we, then, through this very awareness, be *strengthened* to flee from the allures of the flesh by the power of a strong and saving faith, a faith which is keenly and deeply aware that we are those to whom, in spirit, the consummations of the eons have attained.

J.R.C.

4. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.58, pp.39,40.

THE COMMENDATION OF GOD'S LOVE

GOD—Christ—human sinners—this is the pattern of focus in the evangel. The evangel is the evangel *of God*; it is *God's* power for salvation, revealing *God's* righteousness and commending *God's* love, directed surely and truly to *God's* glory.

Yet it concerns God's *Son*, *Jesus Christ*, *our Lord*, and the good of which it speaks is accomplished through the faith of *Jesus Christ*, in that *Christ* died for *our* sakes, while *we* are still *sinners*. The evangel declares that *Jesus*, *our Lord*, was given up because of *our* offenses, and then roused because of *our* justifying.

This pattern is exhibited in a striking way in Romans 5:8, where we read:

God is commending this love of **His** to [or *for*] **us**,
seeing that, while **we** are still sinners,
Christ died for **our** sakes.

In the evangel God is not only revealing His righteousness, but also commending His love, and in doing so we perceive that God's love is something very unique and special. It is a love for¹ us, who are sinners. And even

1. As indicated above, this verse may be understood as speaking of God *commending to us* His love, or of God commending *His love for us*. Both thoughts are true, but the parallel with "Christ died *for our sakes*, and Paul's use of the Greek pronoun, *eis* [INTO], in similar contexts (e.g., Rom.3:22; 5:18; Eph.1:15; Col.1:4; 1 Thess.3:12) seems to favor the latter meaning. According to the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.159), the sense of *eis* "is never limited to unto, but always extends into."

more astonishing, it is a love expressed by the death of the Anointed One of God.

We begin, then, with God, first looking back in review at what Paul has said about Him as He is known apart from the evangel, and then considering what he writes about God now as the evangel makes Him known:

KNOWING GOD

Apart from the evangel that which is known of God by mankind in general is "descried from the creation of the world" (Rom.1:19-25). His achievements in creation, in what can be seen, are continually manifest by the very existence of life, sustained and continued, and by the immense and critical forces of the physical universe. Although evils of disruption, death and sin are always present, nevertheless sunrise and spring, birth and song and much that is welcome and hopeful testify to the existence of One of power and divinity, One Who is behind it all and Whose abilities and intelligence are superior than anything we can know or do.

Yet as for human beings, "knowing God" in this way, "not as God do they glorify or thank Him" (Rom.1:21).

Since this is so, and humanity continues in its ways of irreverence and unrighteousness, God is presently made known for "His kindness and forbearance and patience" (Rom.2:4). After all the evidence of human irreverence and unrighteousness, God still does not put an end to this system of failure and those who are wrapped up in it.

From the human standpoint, God's forbearance brings about only an additional layer of irreverence. This, in turn, leads to the further revelation of God in the day of indignation as a God of righteous judgment. Then He will be known as One Who judges in accord with truth and impartiality (Rom.2:1-16).

In addition, beyond all this, for the Jew, God has given

the law, in which He made known much concerning His will and the "things of consequence" (Rom.2:17,18). But here again the result has been that the name of God is being blasphemed among the nations, and the chosen people themselves "through the transgression of the law" are "dishonoring God" (Rom.2:19-27). This failure, however, opens the way to a new revelation of God, which could not be made known apart from Israel's unbelief, and that is that God remains faithful and true to what He has promised (Rom.3:2,4).

Kind and forbearing and patient, God nevertheless will bring "indignation and fury, affliction and distress, on every human soul which is effecting evil" (Rom.2:9). Is there not something unaccountable here? If such judgment is certain, and if it is God's final word, why all this kindness and forbearance? It only seems to prolong the misery, while increasing the sum of those who will suffer future misery.

Then also, righteous and impartial in judgment, God is nevertheless faithful in bringing about benefits and prerogatives for a people who are unfaithful and who bring dishonor on His name! Is there not a serious contradiction here? There is no just basis for such faithfulness apart from the evangel.

And that is the point. The fact that God is faithful under such conditions makes it necessary and certain that such a righteous basis would be provided. All that is said in Romans 1:18-3:20 brings the evangel into its vital position regarding human deliverance and divine glory.

That which is known of God, apart from His evangel concerning His Son, leaves Him still hidden in mystery except for conviction in faith that He is a God of righteousness and salvation (*cf* Heb.11:1-12:2). The revelation of God is incomplete until we know Him as He reveals Himself in the giving of His Son for sinners, and its glorious results. Yet now in that message, announcing that Christ died for

our sins, was entombed and has been roused, there is a revelation of God's righteousness that is complete and full, a demonstration of His love that is without any element of contradiction or mystery.

GOD IS COMMENDING

To commend something is, according to the word elements of the Greek term, to *stand together* with it. In commending Phoebe (Rom. 16:1), Paul was figuratively placing her next to himself, drawing attention to her as a worthy servant of the ecclesia. So also God places His love for us next to Himself in a position of high honor and worth to Himself. This is what God is doing regarding His love, when He says: Christ died for our sakes.

Let us never restrict the love of God, never underestimate its high place in God's operations, never suggest it cannot be all that is called for by the glory of God. For it is established by the death of His Son, Who is the Christ, and this for sinners.

GOD'S OWN LOVE

We need to pause. The apostle is drawing attention to God's personal love itself, what it is. It is so distinctive, so immense, so astounding that it must be spoken of in extraordinary terms and striking expression. Paul's wording in Greek must have seemed unusual even to those familiar with the language, so that the believers in Rome might well have called for its repetition when they first heard it. ("What is that, again?") Adapting the English sublinear line as given in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT we might capture the emphasis on the special character of God's love more fully than is provided by our familiar, idiomatic translation:

Commending the Himself love into us is the God . . .

The subject, "God," is put at the end, so that we are left with this reference to the Deity ringing in our ears. What is spoken of here is the love of **God!** And this love of God's is the love which characterizes Himself. There should be no doubt that the apostle speaks of God's love so that this is seen as God's truly *self-revealing* love.

WHAT IS THIS LOVE?

The unusual wording of the first clause of this verse is matched by the surprising wording of the second. The love of God is viewed here solely in terms of what Christ did, without direct reference to God's own doing. The love of God for us is that *Christ died* for our sakes. Let us look at the passage again in accord with the Greek syntax:

Commending the Himself love into us is the God, seeing that . . . Christ over us died.

Indeed, in drawing attention to God's own distinguishing love, we might expect Paul to tell of God's giving of Christ to the death of the cross. Instead he rushes ahead and equates God's love directly with the fact that Christ died for our sakes.

There is an ellipsis here which is supplied by Romans 8:32. Thus we understand the complete thought to be somewhat as follows: "God is commending this love of His [for] us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, [God spares not His Anointed One, but gives Him up for us all, in that] Christ died for our sakes."

But instead of this full and certainly true statement of the evangel, the apostle hastens forward to associate God's love solely with what Christ did. To draw attention to God's giving of His Son here might lessen the attention to the vital issue of Christ's dying. In order to focus on God's own love, we are taken immediately to that which demonstrates its essence most acutely, the death of Christ for

sinners. This was that which cost God the most, that His Son should be placed in that state over which the Adversary has the might (*cf* Heb.2:14). And this is that which achieves the most for His creation, as will soon be made clear in Romans 5:9-19.

At this point, nothing else is to be considered.

CHRIST DIED

But what does it mean that Christ died? It seems incredible that this should have to be asked. Only two verses later the death of God's Son is distinguished from His life. "For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the *death* of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His *life*" (Rom.5:10). When Christ died, He was no longer living. When He was roused to life, He was no longer dead. When Christ died, He became dead.

Some have taught that when Christ died, He passed to another kind of life. If this were so, how is it that Paul places such pointed emphasis on Christ's death as the commendation of God's love for us? Is God's love for us expressed in releasing Christ from His suffering into another conscious existence of great mysteriousness, but evidently without the agonies of the cross? And how can we gauge the value of God's love by such a qualified and vague sense of death, where the word "life" holds an essential part?

Others have taken a different approach, claiming that the word "died" in verses 6 and 8 refers, by a figure of association, to the final stages of the dying process. Hence it speaks here of the sufferings on the cross. But a figurative sense of the verb is more than unlikely in this context. Christ did literally die. His life as it had existed in the form of humanity came to an end. It is inexplicable that Paul, in presenting the evangel, would intend to bypass the fact that Christ literally died and employ the verb "die" in a figurative sense that could easily be expressed literally.

A few verses later, in Romans 5:15, Paul will again use the verb "died" in a literal sense. This is in accord with the list given in Genesis 5 of those who lived a certain number of years and then "died." It does not refer to the terminating stages of the dying process, but to the termination of life.

Later in Romans Paul tells us that "we *died* together with Christ" (Rom.6:8), a powerful figure of speech showing the effect of Christ's [literal] death on us. It is indeed a figure, but one that is based on the meaning of the words "Christ died" in our present passage. Are we to understand that we are identified with only the final stages of Christ's life? No indeed. The old humanity must be done away with (*cf* Rom.6:6), and the means for this is that Christ died for our sakes, and our old humanity is put to death in that death.

THE SUFFERINGS AND THE DEATH

The sufferings of the cross are certainly critical in the demonstration of God's love, but we must see them in association with Christ's literal death. They are indeed in view in the words "crucified" and "cross," but in speaking of the manner of Christ's death these terms necessarily testify to the fact that He died. That Christ *died* is the vital and determining factor here where Paul dwells on the love of God. God's love is poured out in our hearts, *for* Christ *died* for the sake of the irreverent (Rom.5:6). God's love is commended in the fact that Christ *died* for the sake of sinners (Rom.5:8).

When Christ died He was no longer alive, and consequently He was no longer suffering. In giving up His spirit, He was placing Himself under the power of the Adversary. In this fearful and faithful act, in accord with the will of God, we are to see God's love, if indeed it accomplishes the good God has in view.

Therefore, in the death of Christ, purposed in God's heart of love, there is the death of the corrupt race of

humanity created in Him, so that it might be vivified in Him, Who was roused because of our justifying (*cf* Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor.15:22).

OUR PLACE IN THE EVANGEL

This love which is God's own personal love in the death of His Son, the Anointed Lord, is for us, that is, directed "into" us, who are sinners. Let us look at Romans 5:8 in the syntax of the Greek once again, this time noting the way in which God's love expressed by the death of Christ is related to us:

*Commending . . . the Himself love into us is God,
that **still sinners being us,**
Christ over us died.*

Note that in this message of glorious good, we are positioned in the middle of everything that is said.

We stand as sinners between God's act of commending His love and the identification of that love expressed in the message that "Christ died for our sakes." There is no better place for sinners to be.

Yet this is not all. Even before Paul speaks of us as sinners, he refers to us as beneficiaries of God's love. We are those who are favored by being positioned between the commended love and God, Who commends it. Commending His self-revealing love *for us* is God.

Then in the last line of this verse we hold the prime position of being between Christ and His act of dying. Christ, *for our sakes*, died. There we are securely identified with Christ in His death, and thus our old humanity was put away.

FOR SINNERS

To be identified as a sinner is not based alone on our unrighteous and irreverent acts. The term applies to any-

one who fails to achieve or maintain what is good and right and perfect. An irreverent and idolatrous person is a sinner, and so is one who is ignorantly devout (*cf* Acts 17:23). Regarding humanity as it is, there is one assessment: "There is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:9,23).

Nevertheless, God loves us in such a way, with such intensity, that He spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all. The Anointed One of God died for the sake of sinners.

In our flesh, as descendants of Adam, we who are believing the evangel are in the same boat as all mankind. What is said about humanity in Romans 1:18-3:20 applies to us all to one extent or another. This is doubly certified in Romans 5:6-11 where Paul describes us as objects of God's love in the giving of His Anointed, His Son, to death. We are:

1. infirm
2. in accord with the era
3. irreverent
4. not just
5. not good
6. sinners
7. enemies

The wonder is that there can be an evangel (WELL-MESSAGE) of God that has anything at all to do with us. But that is to fail to hold fast to the fact that it is the evangel *of God*, Who is commending His very particular and personal love. As Romans 5:7 testifies, God's love is something far different from human love. Such love is the certain basis for the blessings Paul is about to describe:

WHAT WE ARE AS BELIEVERS

We who are neither just nor good in ourselves are brought into this message which announces that, despite what we

are in the flesh, as sinners who now are believing that Christ died for our sins, we are those:

1. who are being justified by [Christ's] faith,
2. who may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,
3. who have access through Him into grace in which we stand,
4. who may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God,
5. who are receivers of the love of God,
6. for whose sake Christ died,
7. who are being justified in His blood (*cp* #1),
8. who shall be saved from indignation,
9. who were conciliated to God through the death of His Son,
10. who shall be saved in Christ's life (*cp* #8),
11. who are glorying in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ (*cp* #4),
12. who have obtained the conciliation through Him (*cp* #9).

What a contrast between what we are as human beings and what we are in Christ because of God's love expressed in the death of His Anointed! We can clearly see why our place in this message brings praise and thanksgiving to God and honor to our Lord Jesus Christ, and not to ourselves.

D.H.H.

AWAITING HIS SHOUT

Our dear sister, Shirley Russ, of Grand Rapids, formerly of Baldwin, Michigan, was one who believed that Jesus died and rose. Consequently, when she was put to repose in March, it was in expectation that our Lord will descend with a shout, the voice of the Chief Messenger and the trumpet of God, and she will rise to be always together with Him (1 Thess.4:13-18). May it be soon.

Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our Centennial Year
(1909–2009)

Contents:

- 145 Editorial
- 147 What is the Soul?
- 164 What is Spirit?
- 173 Keeping the Unity of the Spirit,
In the Midst of Confusion
- 185 Justified in Christ's Blood

JULY, 2009

Volume C

Number 4

Concordant Version of The Pentateuch

GENESIS
EXODUS, LEVITICUS
NUMBERS, DEUTERONOMY

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

The Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses, is referred to by our Lord as “The Law” (Matt.7:12; 22:40; Luke 16:16). Any passage in these five books is referred to as being in the Law, even if it is not in the decrees of Sinai.

The title of four of the Mosaic scrolls consists of the opening words of the text: “In a Beginning” for Genesis, “And These are the Names” for Exodus, “And He Called” for Leviticus, and “These are the Words” for Deuteronomy. The title of Numbers is taken from the first sentence, “In the Wilderness.”

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2009
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

IN the August, 1912 issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, (volume 3, p.245), V. Gelesnoff wrote, "Those who seek the mind of God through the Scriptures are confronted with a critical obstacle of an unusual kind. The current versions often translate the same Hebrew word in various ways, and quite as often one word is made to do the duty of several words in the original. In this way a veil of mystery has been thrown over many a passage, and a certain amount of human opinion and guesswork has been imported into God's truth. Of course, the translators had no intention of introducing confusion into the text or color it with their own views. The inconsistency which vitiates their work is the inevitable result of ignoring the foundation principle of right translation—the use of a separate word in the translation for every word in the original."

This principle, which we have called "the Concordant Method of translation," became the basis of the Concordant Version, and remains a guideline for us as we continue our translation work. We perhaps can never claim to have reached the full ideal Brother Gelesnoff envisioned; idiom and the range of usage of particular words differ from one language to another. But a high standard of consistency remains our goal.

It is not only for purposes of more exact translation that we give careful attention to the appearance of each term in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. The Concordant Method of translation is also a Concordant Method of Scripture study. Two excellent examples of this are presented in the current issue: A. E. Knoch's articles entitled "What is the Soul?" and "What is Spirit?" The former first appeared in Volume 5 (pp.259-273) and was reprinted in Volume

53 (pp.169-176, 225-234). The latter is an abridgement of an original article, appearing in Volume 20 (pp.7-20) and reprinted in full in Volume 66 (pp.5-12, 77-83). This also appears as the opening chapter of the book, *Spirit, Spirits and Spirituality*.

We are presenting them again because of their valuable contributions to the appreciation of these basic and critical themes of God's Word. They are human works and must be taken as such, but the extended lists and groupings of the various uses of the Hebrew and Greek words rendered "soul" and "spirit" should greatly help us in guarding our thoughts from personal prejudices and directing us more truly to God's own mind.

What Brother Knoch wrote about the soul has been particularly helpful to me in understanding Paul's reference to justification in Christ's blood in Romans 5:9. Yet in this passage, where he saw Christ's blood primarily as a *memorial* to His sufferings (see p.159), I suggest Paul had principally in view the shed blood as a *witness* to Christ's lack of all sensation, in death. I give some of my reasons for this in my article starting on page 185.

The concordant investigations set before us in "What is Spirit?" can aid us greatly in appreciating and distinguishing the various uses of this term in Scripture. They reveal that there is a common, connecting thought of "invisible, intangible power." Regarding the subject of the unity of the spirit (which Brother Coram discusses in his article starting on page 173), we find much happiness and assurance in knowing that, despite all our human divisions and divisiveness, there is a true unity among members of the ecclesia which God has established by His invisible power.

We are thanking God for each one of you who join us in consideration of these things of consequence, and for the opportunity to continue this effort.

D.H.H.

WHAT IS THE SOUL?

“For the word of God is living and operative, and keen above any two-edged sword, and penetrating up to the parting of soul and spirit . . .” (Heb.4:12).

THE LACK OF VITALITY and penetration in human literature and conversation is most clearly evidenced by the utter failure to distinguish between soul and spirit. It is almost universally the case that when the soul is spoken of, the spirit is intended. The English words which have been derived from *psuchê*, the Greek word for soul, all, erroneously, refer to various aspects of spirit. For instance, *psychology* has to do with the mind, not the soulish sensations. *Psychic*, instead of bearing its true meaning, soulish or sensual, denotes pneumatic, or spiritual. These are not mere curiosities of philology, but the sure indexes of the present day confusion which we must detect and avoid if we wish to get the truth on the subject of the soul.

A NEED FOR DILIGENCE

To get a firm grasp of the true and proper idea conveyed by the term “soul” is not the work of an instant. It can only come by a careful consideration of the contexts in which it occurs. These form an infallible index of its force. Yet here the English reader is at a great disadvantage because the version to which he may be accustomed often translates the same words in the original by a variety of terms in the English, thus concealing their true force. *Psuchê*, soul, is so often translated by the term “life” that the distinction between soul and life as well as between soul and spirit (the source of all life) is almost obliterated.

THE "AUTHORIZED" RENDERINGS OF THE HEBREW

With two exceptions the word soul, as found in the Authorized Version, always represents the Hebrew word *nphsh*. Job 30:15 and Isaiah 57:16 have no reference to the soul. The latter should be rendered "breath." Apart from these, every occurrence of "soul" in the accepted version may be depended upon to be correct.

But in a multitude of instances *nphsh* has been translated by other English expressions. We give a list of these passages so that the student may correct them in his King James Bible. In all, there are about forty-four variations. These are grouped together where the meaning is allied.

THE TRANSLATIONS OF *nphsh* IN THE AV
except where rendered "soul"

any, Lev.2:1; 24:17; Num.19:11; Deut.24:7.

appetite, Prov.23:2; Ecc.6:7.

beast, Lev.24:18,18,18.

body, Lev.21:11; Num.6:6; 19:13; Haggai 2:13.

breath, Job 41:21.

creature, Gen.1:20,21,24; 2:19; 9:10,12,15,16; Lev.11:46,46.

dead, Lev.19:28; 21:1; 22:4; Num.5:2; 6:11.

dead body, Num.9:6,7,10.

deadly, Psa.17:9.

desire, Ecc.6:9; Jer.22:27; 44:14; Micah 7:3; Hab.2:5.

fish, Isa.19:10.

ghost, Job 11:20; Jer.15:9.

heat, Ex.23:9; Lev.26:16; Deut.24:15; 1 Sam.2:33; 2 Sam.3:21; Psa.10:3; Prov.23:7; 28:25; 31:6; Jer.42:20; Lam.3:51; Ezek.25:6,15; 27:31; Hosea 4:8.

hearty, Prov.27:9.

him, Prov.6:16.

life, Gen.1:30; 9:4,5,5; 19:17,19; 32:30; 44:30,30; Ex.4:9; 21:23,23,30; Lev.17:11,14,14,14; Num.35:31; Deut.12:23,23; 19:21,21; 24:6; Josh.2:13,14; 9:24; Judges 5:18; 9:17,

12:3; 18:25; 25; Ruth 4:15; 1 Sam.19:5,11; 20:1; 22:23,23; 23:15; 26:24,24; 28:9; 21:2; 2 Sam.1:9; 4:8; 14:7; 16:11; 18:13; 19:5,5,5,5; 23:17; 1 Kings 1:12,12; 2:23; 3:11; 19:2; 2,3,4,10,14; 20:31; 39,39,42,42; 2 Kings 1:13,13,14; 7:7; 10:24,24; 1 Chron.11:19,19; 2 Chron.1:11; Esther 7:3,7; 8:11; 9:16; Job 2:4,6; 6:11; 13:14; 13:39; Psa.31:13; 38:12; Prov.1:18,19; 6:26; 7:23; 12:10; 13:3,8; Isa.15:4; 43:4; Jer.4:30; 11:21; 19:7,9; 21:7,9; 22:25; 34:20,21; 38:2,16; 39:18; 44:30,30; 45:5; 46:26; 48:6; 49:37; Lam.2:19; 5:9; Ezek.32:10; Jonah 1:14; 4:3.

lust, Ex.15:9; Psa.78:18.

man, Ex.12:16; 2 Kings 12:4; 1 Chron.5:21; Isa.49:7.

me, Num.23:10; Judges 16:30; 1 Kings 20:32.

mind, Gen.23:8; Deut.18:6; 28:65; 1 Sam.2:35; 2 Sam.17:8; 2 Kings 9:15; 1 Chron.28:9; Jer.15:1; Ezek.23:17,18,18,22,28; 24:25; 36:5.

mortally, Deut.19:11.

one, Lev.4:27.

person, Gen.14:21; 36:6; Ex.16:16; Lev.27:2; Num.5:6; 19:18; 31:19,35,40,40,46; 35:11,15,30,30; Deut.10:22; 27:25; Josh.20:3,9; 1 Sam.22:22; 2 Sam.14:14; Prov.28:17; Jer.43:6; 52:29,30,30; Ezek.16:5; 17:17; 27:13; 33:6.

pleasure, at, Deut.23:24; Psa.105:22; Jer.34:16.

self, Lev.11:43,44; Deut.4:15; Josh.23:11; 1 Kings 19:4; Esther 4:13; 9:31; Job 18:4; 32:2; Psa.131:2; Isa.5:14; 46:2; 47:14; Jer.3:11; 17:21; 37:9; 51:14; Amos 2:14,15; 6:8; Jonah 4:8.

they, Job 36:14.

thing, Lev.11:10; Ezek.47:9.

whither will, Deut.21:14.

will, Psa.27:12; 41:2; Ezek.16:27.

would have, Psa.35:25.

[omitted entirely, Gen.37:21; Lev.24:17,18; Num.31:35; Deut.19:6; 22:26; Judges 18:25; 1 Sam.22:2; 1 Chron.5:21; Isa.3:20; 56:11; Jer.2:24; 40:14,15].

By combining this list with the occurrences of "soul"

the student will have at his command every context which the Hebrew Scriptures afford for the study of this very important term.

A HELPFUL CONCORDANCE OF THE GREEK *psuchê*

The following list of the occurrences of *psuchê*, the Greek word for soul, will enable those who have no concordance of the original to check all the divine contexts. Every reference is given, segregated into groups according to the grammatical relation which the word sustains to its context. Thus "soul" is in one line while "souls," in the plural, is in another line. The genitive of the Greek is found following "of soul" and "of souls." The dative follows "in soul" and "in souls." The accusative, our English objective, is not distinguished in form from the nominative, but rather by its place in the list, toward the bottom. The vocative is indicated by an exclamation point, thus, "soul!" In each case those references which have no article ("the") are given first, then those which have it, prefixed by "the soul" for the singular, or "the souls" for the plural. A helpful definition is also included.

ALL THE OCCURRENCES OF *psuchê*, soul, IN THE GREEK SCRIPTURES

The result of imparting breath to the human (Gen.2:7); in the blood (Lev.17:14); limited to moving creatures (Gen. 1:20); distinguished from life (Gen.2:7); from spirit and body (1 Thess. 5:23)—a *sentient* being. *Figuratively*, the person as viewed from the standpoint of his sensations or experiences (Rev.6:9).

soul, Acts 3:23; Rom.13:l; Rev.16:3. the soul, Matt.6:25; 12:18; 26:38; Mark 14:34; Luke 1:46; 12:23; John 12:27; Acts 4:32; 20:10; 1 Thess.5:23; Heb.10:38; 3 John 1:2.
souls, Acts 2:41; 1 Pet.3:20. the souls, Acts 27:37.
of soul, Acts 27:22; Eph.6:6; Col.3:23; Heb.4:12; 10:39.

of the soul, Matt.16:26; Mark 8:37; 12:30,33; Luke 10:27; Rom.16:4; Heb.6:19; 1 Pet.2:11; Rev.18:14.
of souls, 1 Peter 1:9. of the souls, Acts 27:10; 2 Cor.12:15; Heb.13:17; 1 Peter 2:25.
in soul, Matt.6:25; Acts 2:43. in the soul, Matt.22:37; Luke 12:19,22; Phil.2:30.
in souls, Acts 7:14. in the souls, Matt.11:29; Heb.12:3.
soul, Matt.10:28; Mark 3:4; Luke 6:9; Rom.2:9; 1 Cor.15:45; James 5:20; 2 Peter 2:8. the soul, Matt.2:20; 10:28; 39,39; 16:25,25,26; 20:28; Mark 8:35,35,36; 10:45; Luke 2:35; 9:24,24; 12:20; 14:26 17:33; John 10:11,15, 17,24; 12:25,25; 13:37,38; 15:13; Acts 2:27; 20:24; Rom.11:3; 2 Cor.1:23; 1 John 3:16; Rev.12:11.
souls, 2 Peter 2:14; Rev.8:9; 18:13. the souls, Luke 21:19; Acts 14:2,22; 15:24,26; 1 Thess.2:8; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:22; 4:19; 1 John 3:16; Rev.6:9; 20:4.
soul! Luke 12:19.

We suggest that these passages be translated uniformly. It is no crime to cross out mere human deviations and insert divine verities in their place. If soul meant "life," as our translators so often suggest, why was it not written with the Greek word for "life" in the original instead of the word for soul? We have already convinced ourselves of the fact that soul and life are utterly distinct by the phrase "living soul" (Gen.2:7). If we translate the word *nphsh* in that phrase as it is so often translated, we come to the absurd conclusion that, as the result of the impartation of the breath of the living, man became a "living life." Could Job have said, "*My life* is weary of my life" (Job 10:1)?

SOUL AND SPIRIT SEPARATE

The distinction between soul and spirit is no less pronounced. Besides the passage in Hebrews 4:12, which gives the Word of God the monopoly on this distinction,

we have the list “spirit and soul and body” (1 Thess.5:23). It is needless to say that this does not enter into the relation of the soul to the spirit and body at all, but only to its blameless preservation unto the presence of our Lord. The fact that the soul is the effect of the union of spirit with body is neither taught nor refuted by this text. It is thoroughly in harmony with the twofold constitution of man. For, while the soul is not one of the units of which man is constituted, its condition in view of His coming has a place quite as important as the body and spirit. And the preservation of the entire man involves the soul just as much as the two units on which it is based.

Now, instead of the soul and spirit being the same, they are put in striking contrast in the discussion of the differences between the first man, Adam, and the last Adam, Christ Jesus. The first became a living soul, the last a vivifying, or life-giving *Spirit*. This same contrast is even more apparent in the adjectives “spiritual” and “soulish.” In the second chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians this distinction is obscured by the rendering “natural.” Not the “natural,” but the *soulish* man is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God (1 Cor.2:14). Such perception is reserved for the spiritual man (v.12). So, too, in the fifteenth chapter. The body is there called a *soulish*, not a “natural” body, in contrast to the spiritual body of the coming resurrection (1 Cor.15:44,45,46).

THE SOUL SPEAKS OF SENSATIONS

The truth that the soul refers to sensation or conscious experience is really acknowledged by the translators themselves, though they have concealed it from their readers by their renderings. Many who think of the soul as the seat of our highest spiritual faculties would be surprised to know that it finds its fitting place between such words as “terrestrial” and “demoniacal.” In James 3:15 we have “terrestrial,

soulish, demoniacal.” The translators rendered it: “earthly, sensual, devilish.” Here, however, if we take the word sensual in its present day acceptation, they have overshot the mark. But in their days it probably meant very nearly what soulish means—one who is swayed by physical sensation. The crowning proof of its antipathy to spirit lies in its last occurrence. There we read of those who are “soulish, *not having* the spirit” (Jude 19). Here again the translators rendered it “sensual.”

THE SOUL IN GENESIS

Having noted that there is a distinction between life and spirit and soul, we are now ready to inquire more closely into the characteristics which define the latter. The first few occurrences in Genesis will supply us with the information which we need at this point. There we find developed the broad distinctions between flora and fauna, plants and animals.

It is most instructive to note the contrast between the introduction of plants on the third day of God’s work of restoring the earth and the creation of living souls on the fifth and sixth days. Plants are, indeed, living *organisms* quite as much as animals, yet they differ from animals in a number of important particulars which are duly emphasized. Plants do not *swarm*. But the first mention of living souls brings out this characteristic. “Let the waters *swarm* with the *swarming* thing, the living soul” (Gen.1:20, CV). This rendering may, perhaps, best convey to our minds the fact that the words “bring forth abundantly” and “moving” of the common text are but different grammatical forms of one expression in the Hebrew. To breed may be involved but it is not so stated. Swarm expresses the idea of motion, which is further developed in the next occurrence of the word “soul.”

Plants cannot *move*. They are rooted in their place.

But not so with animals. This is brought out in the second statement; “Elohim created . . . every *moving*, living soul” (Gen. 1:21).

Plants are never called souls, yet, like the animals, they derive their nourishment from the soil and carbon from the air. But in them this combination causes no sensation or consciousness, which is the chief characteristic of soul. Generally speaking, soul is spoken of only in those forms of life which can move from place to place, which possess the further function of sensing the outward world, of being conscious of their own existence.

Now when, a few verses later, man is brought upon the scene, we are informed that he, too, becomes a “living soul” (Gen.2:7). What shall this convey to our minds? Simply that he, too, like the animals, would be able to move from place to place, would have the power of sensing the world around him and a conscious realization of his own existence. He is not a plant, but an animal, and possesses these endowments in common with other animals.

Instead of this phrase marking a difference between the man and the previously created animals, it shows his similarity to them. In fact, until we study and appreciate what has already been said of living souls, we are at a distinct loss to realize what is meant when the man is said to become a living soul.

A striking recognition of man’s distinctly human attributes is found in the apostle Paul’s address at Athens (Acts 17:28). The spirit is recognized in the statement that “In Him we are living.” The soul is implied in the word “moving,” and the body in the third item, which is the usual word for “are,” for the identification of the man with his material structure, is consistently confirmed throughout the scriptures. “In Him we are living and moving and are” is a clear indication of the apostle’s analysis of mankind. And that he considered it most elementary is shown by

the fact that he does not hesitate to proclaim it to unbelieving idolators.

THE SOUL, AND THE SENSES

Plants have life as well as animals, but it is not a conscious life. They do not see and feel and hear and taste. This is the force of being a “living soul.”

The connection of soul with the senses is evidenced by a selection of interesting passages. We will give the renderings of the Authorized Version. The taste is especially intended in such scriptures as “whatsoever thy *soul* lusteth after” (Deut.12:15, 20,21), “thy *soul* longeth to eat flesh” (Deut.12:20), “eat grapes thy fill *at thine own pleasure*” (Deut.23:24), “Their *soul* abhorreth all manner of meat” (Psa.107:18), “a thief, if he steal to satisfy his *soul*” (Prov. 6:30), “eateth to the satisfying of his *soul*” (Prov.13:25), “an honeycomb, sweet to the *soul*” (Prov.16:24), “if thou be a man given to *appetite*” (Prov.23:2), “The full *soul* loatheth an honeycomb, but to the hungry *soul* every bitter thing is sweet” (Prov.27:7), “should make his *soul* enjoy good” (Margin reads: “delight his *senses*”), (Ecc.2:24), “the *appetite* is not filled” (Ecc.6:7), “to make empty the *soul* of the hungry” (Isa.32:6). In all of these cases the point lies in the sensation accompanying the use of food, the physical satisfaction which the soil furnishes when we partake of its products.

A CONVINCING CONFIRMATION

This is amply confirmed by our Lord’s words: “Do not worry about your soul, what you may be eating, or what you may be drinking . . . Is not the *soul* more than nourishment” (Matt.6:25)? These creature needs are what the soul craves, yet true satisfaction is not to be found in them. Even as He said on another occasion: “For what will a man be benefitted, if he should ever be gaining, the whole world,

yet be forfeiting his *soul*? Or what will a man be giving in exchange for his *soul*?” (Matt.16: 26). This is the evil which the wise man saw: “A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it . . .” (Ecc.6:2, AV).

“SAVING SOULS”

So, too, he who prefers the indulgence of his physical senses to loyalty to Christ, who shrinks from the discomfort and distress which His disciples must endure, he shall lose his soul in the time of Christ’s exaltation. But he who “loses his soul” for Christ’s sake, he will gain it in that glorious future kingdom. In the phraseology of today’s theology, to “lose your soul” is the very worst calamity which can occur. It is equivalent to “eternal damnation.” Yet our Lord used these very words and urged His disciples to “lose their souls.” “For whosoever should be wanting to *save his soul* shall lose [or “destroy”] it” (Matt.16:25). He who would save his soul (which is continually put before the sinner today) was to be discouraged and restrained by the fact that such would destroy their souls. Once we allow the true scriptural force of “soul” the passage is luminous with meaning and “the salvation of soul” takes on an entirely different color. This phrase, so loudly proclaimed today, is never once used in Paul’s epistles. In fact, he very seldom speaks of the soul. Indeed he highly commends Epaphroditus for “risking his soul” for the sake of his fellow Philippians (Phil.2:30). This risk was evident in his sickness and depression which accompanied it. Paul could never commend anyone risking their salvation for any cause. But in Hebrews and James and Peter’s first epistle, which are concerned with the *physical* blessings of the earthly Kingdom, in these letters we read of the salvation of the *soul*.

SOUL AS A FIGURE OF SPEECH

The term “soul” is often used as a figure of speech to denote the person from the standpoint of his sensations or experience. This is called a metonymy of the adjunct, because an object is characterized by some closely related thing. In the International Edition of the Concordant Version this figure was marked with a small superior capital A, standing for the figure of Association. Thus we speak of a human being as a “soul” when we wish to call attention to their feelings or sensations or experiences. A familiar instance is the phrase “the *soul* that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek.18:4, AV). In Israel, they had been using a proverb: “The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children’s teeth are set on edge.” In other words, they accused Yahweh with punishing them for the misdeeds of their fathers. In reply Yahweh says that the soul that sins—the one who actually experienced the sensations connected with the sin—*that* soul shall die, and not one that never was experientially connected with the sin.

THE SOUL OF A BEAST

With this key in hand, how much more impressive and harmonious is the proverb, “A righteous man regardeth the *soul* of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel” (Prov.12:10). It is not simply the life of the beast which is here spoken of, but the comfort and strength and sustenance of the beast which is the object of the just man’s solicitude. He will not overload it; nor will he underfeed it. He will see that it is well taken care of at all times. That this is the real thought is confirmed by the second member of the couplet, for all of this is in contrast with the cruelty of the wicked.

And how luminous does our Lord’s invitation become in the light of a true understanding of the soul! “Hither to

Me, all who are toiling and laden . . . and you shall be finding rest in your *souls*" (Matt.11:28,29). It is the soul that feels the pressure and distress of life's burdens and responsibilities and it is the soul that finds its rest in His yoke.

And the same light shines from that striking contrast—the rich man who said to his soul: "Soul, many good things have you laid up for many years. Rest, eat, drink, make merry" (Luke 12: 19). But his soul was never to enjoy the rest or the feast which he had prepared for it.

Therefore the Lord told them not to worry about their soul, *what they may be eating*. We would have said that eating was a care of the *body*, not the soul. But He knew better, and, while He spoke of clothing as connected with the body, eating was for the soul. Indeed all living souls need nourishment, but not necessarily covering. No soul can live without food, but the animals, except man, need no protection from the elements beyond what is provided for them by nature.

THE SOUL IS IN THE BLOOD

Just as the divine illustration of the spirit was in the *breath*, so we have the divine picture of the soul in the *blood*. Much has been lost by the arbitrary change of the word soul to "life" in the passages where this is clearly taught. Notice how the two are used together in Genesis 9:4. "Only flesh with its *soul*, its *blood*, you must not eat" (CV). This truth is again emphasized in the phrase, "for the *soul* of the flesh, it is in the *blood*" (Lev.17:11, CV). And again, "for the *soul* of all flesh is its *blood*; as its soul is it . . . for the *soul* of all flesh, it is its *blood*" (Lev.17:14, (CV).

Now, why should the blood be chosen to picture the soul to us? We have already seen that the soul has its origin, not in the body merely, nor yet in the spirit alone, but in their combination. And what could better portray this than the blood? It is fed from food by means of assimila-

tion and thus is linked to the body and the soil; it is fed from the air by means of respiration and is thus linked to the breath and spirit.

BLOOD FOR PROPITIATION

Having learned that soul is synonymous with sensation and that the soul of the flesh is in the blood, we are prepared for the further truth that "it is the *blood* that maketh an atonement for the *soul*" (Lev.17:11, AV), or concordantly rendered, "for the blood, because of the soul, it makes a propitiatory shelter."

Now, as the soul is in the blood, what is more appropriate as a means of propitiation than blood? The same holds true in the higher sphere of justification or acquittal. The blood of Christ, the memorial of His sensations or sufferings for sins, is the pledge of our safety from coming indignation (Rom.5:9). Christ's suffering was over when the soldier pierced His side and blood flowed forth (John 19:34). And, after His resurrection, when He sought to calm His disciples, He could not say (which would have been most natural) that a spirit has no flesh and *blood*, but "a spirit has not flesh and *bones* according as you behold Me having" (Luke 24: 39).

OUR SOULISH BODY

In perfect accord with all this we are told that there is a *soulish* body and there is a spiritual body (1 Cor.15:44). The last Adam became a life-giving, or vivifying spirit, in contrast with the first Adam who became a living soul. Flesh and *blood*, indeed, is not able to enjoy an allotment in the kingdom of God, for the blood is the badge of a soulish body, while flesh and bones is in accord with a spiritual body (1 Cor.15:50). The statement that Christ's flesh was not acquainted with decay (Acts 2:31) in the tomb is enough to show that it was the very same flesh

which endured the suffering of the cross. And this is put beyond question by the nail prints and the spear wound. And the further fact that His body is bloodless reminds us that a propitiatory shelter, for the pardon of Israel's sins, as well as those of the whole world, has been accomplished (1 John 2:2). The "blood" that is "making a propitiatory shelter" has been poured out.

THE SACRIFICE WAS NOT TO SUFFER

The just and merciful law which Yahweh gave to His people Israel, while it insisted on the death of countless victims in sacrifice and countenanced the slaying of animals for food, made due provision that they should not suffer. It was obligatory that the hunter pour out the blood of an animal taken in the chase (Lev.17:13) and blood was never allowed to be eaten.

To this very day the slaying of animals for food is the work of a Jewish rabbi who is specially trained for the task. He has a keen bladed knife with which he severs the animal's throat and drains off the blood. The carcass is called "Kosher" meat. No other will be eaten by the pious Jew. This is far better than the usual practice of stunning an animal about to be slaughtered, for it not only eliminates suffering for the animal, but avoids the possibility of tainting its flesh by means of the blood during the process of dying.

UNDERNEATH THE ALTAR

The blood of the sin offering was poured out at the foundation of the altar (Lev.4:7,18,25,30,34; 5:9). When their souls were poured out these souls went underneath the altar. It is said that in Solomon's temple there was a vast pit under the altar to receive the rivers of blood which flowed from the thousands of sacrifices which were offered upon it. So that we must seek the soul of the sacrifices underneath the altar, where the blood had been poured.

It is the suffering and anguish which God's faithful witnesses will endure during the reign of Antichrist that calls for avenging. When Abel died his blood cried from the *ground*, whence it had been poured (Gen.4:10). But when these martyrs die for the sake of their testimony to the one great Sacrifice, their blood is, as it were, poured out underneath the *altar* and their death ascends as a sweet savor to God. Hence we read of those under the fifth seal (Rev.6:9) who were slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had, that their *souls* were underneath the altar, where it was customary to pour the blood of the animal sacrifices. And the reason for the figure characterizing them as "souls" is very evident, for they cry for avenging on those dwelling on the earth who had shed their *blood*. It was the sufferings unto death which they had endured for His sake which cried aloud for God's judging and avenging. We need not imagine that Abel's blood, which had been swallowed by the ground, actually became endowed with the organs of speech and made an articulate audible appeal to Yahweh. Neither should we suppose that the souls of these martyrs received a miraculous embodiment for the purpose of crying aloud for averring on their adversaries. To say the least it would take a large altar to cover them all or very small souls to be cramped in such numbers into so small a space. Such a dismal, bloody, ashy pit would hardly be a fit recompense for their previous tribulation!

MAN AS AN ORGANISM

Many attempts have been made to define the soul. Among these may be mentioned the suggestion that it refers to man as an *organism*. This is chiefly founded upon those passages in which a dead soul is translated a dead "body," which could not be touched without defilement. Yet these instances are better understood when we

remember the figurative usage of the word in connection with death. When death is viewed as an experience, it is the soul which departs; when it emphasizes the end of life, it is the spirit which expires. It all depends upon the viewpoint.

That the soul is not merely another name for “organism” may be seen from several considerations. Plants are organisms, yet they have no soul. They are living organisms but not living souls. The glorified body, too, could hardly be *contrasted* to a living organism for it continues to be such even when it becomes a spiritual body. To call a soulish body an organized body tells us nothing more than is already contained in the word body. Let us put the word “organized” for soulish and it will be most evident that it will not do. “The *organized* man receiveth not the things of the spirit” (1 Cor.2:14); “earthly, *organized*, devilish.” (James 3:15); “*organized*, having not the spirit.” (Jude 19)—these, are discords which hinder, rather than help our apprehension of the true force of the term “soul.”

THE CONTEXT CLARIFIES

The context gives us the needed clue to a clear distinction between soul and spirit. The soul senses the material, tangible, visible, physical sphere; the spirit moves in the realm of the etherial, the invisible, the metaphysical. The soul *sees* the letters upon the page, the spirit *perceives* the meaning which they convey. Time and time again, the terms which primarily refer to soul have been transferred to spirit. We *taste* food with the soul and we *taste* God's goodness with the spirit. We *feel* the comforting warmth of the sunshine with the soul, while we *feel* the effects of His love in our spirits.

SEEKING THE SOULISH

It is not that the soul is essentially bad and the spirit essentially good. Nor yet the reverse, for many evil things,

such as pride, may be spiritual rather than soulish. Yet, as the delights of the senses are satisfied by the physical, so the spirit craves the metaphysical. The prevailing tendency is towards allowing the soul to rule. Elegant edifices, robed choirs, popular preachers—all these appeal to the soul and seek to satisfy the senses. This tendency is not surprising since our present body is a *soulish* body. It exaggerates the importance of its sensations. It does not readily respond to the spirit.

THE SOULISH IN THE SCRIPTURES

Thus, to sum up, just as human *existence* is joined to the soil (for the *human* was formed of the soil *before* the spirit was imparted), and as spirit is the source of *life*, so the soul is the seat of *sensation*. And for human beings, sensation is impossible except where there is a material body vivified by a spirit. Sensation does not depend upon a distinct entity or organism apart from either body or spirit, but rather upon their union. This union and its resultant sensation is termed “soul” in the sacred Scriptures.

A. E. Knoch

JACOB H. TONN

Our brother in the Lord, J. H. Tonn, of Roseburg, Oregon, was put to repose on December 27, 2008. Brother Tonn was the English translator of the German publication THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S RECONCILIATION OF ALL IN CHRIST by Ernst Ferdinand Stroeter. We anticipate our joyful reunion with Brother Tonn in the day of Christ's appearing.

DONALD R. CARLETON

Donald R. Carleton of Aurora, Colorado, fell asleep in Christ on May 29. Don was an avid tennis player and an employee of Wilson Sporting Goods Company. Don had the opportunity of presenting the evangel of Christ to many, including through a Bible class which he taught for many years. Our friends Dave Benson and Ed O'Brien officiated at Don's memorial service on June 5.

WHAT IS SPIRIT?

BOTH the Hebrew and Greek words for spirit are figures of speech. Literally they denote air in motion, a *wind* or *blast*. Sometimes there is a slight question whether it is literal or figurative. Some have proposed to translate John 3:8 somewhat as follows: "The *spirit* is breathing where it wills, and you are hearing the sound of it, but you are not aware whence it is coming and whither it is going. Thus is everyone begotten by the spirit." But the word *breathing* should be *blowing*, and a spirit makes no *sound*. Both are true literally of a blast of air. It was spoken to one without spiritual perceptions in order to illustrate what he could not understand. Nicodemus knew about the motions of the air, but he was ignorant concerning the movements of the spirit. Hence we translate literally *blast*, rather than figuratively *spirit*.

The great key words of God's revelation, in the Original, should be familiar to His saints. In Hebrew the word spirit is *ruch*. While it is usually translated *spirit* in the AV, it is also rendered, *air*, *blast*, *breath*, *cool*, *tempest* and *wind*. The last is its undoubted literal meaning in many passages. As this is its primary sense and is the natural phenomena to which God appeals to convey to us the idea of spirit, let us first of all assure ourselves that this is indeed true by reviewing the passages in which this occurs. The following are most of the texts in which *ruch* refers to actual *air in motion*, or WIND. The list is well worth reading. We give the familiar Authorized renderings. Practically all should be translated *wind*.

ruch, WIND, spirit

Gen.	3:8	in the garden in the <i>windy</i> part of the day
Gen.	8:1	Elohim caused a <i>wind</i> to pass over
Ex.	10:13	Yahweh, He drove an east <i>wind</i> . . . the east <i>wind</i> carried the locust swarm along
	119	an exceedingly steadfast west <i>wind</i>
	14:21	by a strong east <i>wind</i> all the night
	15:8	by the <i>wind</i> of Your anger
	10	You made a breeze with Your <i>wind</i>
Num.	11:31	and a <i>wind</i> , it journeyed
2 Sam.	22:11	He swooped down on the wings of the <i>wind</i>
	16	by the breath of the <i>wind</i> of Your nostrils
1 K.	18:45	with thick clouds and with the <i>wind</i>
	19:11	and a great and steadfast <i>wind</i> was ripping apart the mountains . . . yet Yahweh was not in the <i>wind</i> . After the <i>wind</i> was an earthquake
2 K.	3:17	ye shall neither see a <i>wind</i>
	19:7	I am putting a <i>spirit</i> in him
1 Chr.	9:24	The gatekeepers were in four <i>directions</i>
Job	6:26	Yet treat as <i>wind</i> the words of a desperate man
	8:2	be such abundant <i>wind</i>
	21:18	like crushed straw before the <i>wind</i>
	28:25	He granted weight to the <i>wind</i>
	30:15	my reputation is pursued as by the <i>wind</i>
	22	You lift me up into the <i>wind</i>
	37:21	When the <i>wind</i> has passed
	41:16	that the <i>wind</i> cannot enter between them
Psa.	1:4	that the <i>wind</i> whisks away
	11:6	let a simoon <i>wind</i> be the assigned portion
	18:10	He swooped down on the wings of the <i>wind</i>
	15	the <i>breath</i> of wind of Your nostrils
	42	before the face of the <i>wind</i>
	35:5	like trash before the <i>wind</i>
	48:7	like the east <i>wind</i> which broke up the ships
	55:8	away from the gusting <i>wind</i>
	78:39	a <i>wind</i> going that is not returning
	83:13	like straw before the <i>wind</i>
	103:16	the <i>wind</i> it passes over him
	104:3	Who is going on the wings of the <i>wind</i>
	107:25	He spoke and recruited a tempestuous <i>wind</i>
	135:7	bringing forth the <i>wind</i> from His treasuries

- 147:18 He is reversing His *wind*
 148:8 tempestuous *wind* performing His word
 Prov. 11:29 He who brings trouble on his own house shall be allotted *wind*
 25:14 like vapors and *wind* when there is no downpour
 23 a north *wind* travails forth a downpour
 27:16 he who stifles her can stifle the *wind*
 30:4 Who has gathered the *wind* in both His hands
 Ecc. 1:6 the *wind* is going . . . the *wind* returns
 5:16 since he toiled for *wind*
 11:4 he who observes the *wind* does not sow
 Isa. 7:2 trees of the wood sway because of the *wind*
 17:13 like trash before the *wind*
 26:18 yet it is as though we bear *wind*
 27:8 removes her away with His stiff *wind*
 32:2 a hiding place from the *wind*
 41:16 and the *tempest* shall scatter them
 29 *wind* and chaos are their molten images
 57:13 the *wind* shall carry them all away
 Jer. 2:24 an onager . . . she gulps the *wind*
 4:11 a glazing *wind* from the ridges
 12 a fuller *wind* than this shall come
 5:13 the prophets, they shall become *wind*
 10:13 and brings forth the *wind* from His treasures
 13:24 by the wilderness *wind*
 14:6 they snuff up the *wind*
 18:17 like the east *wind*, I shall scatter
 22:22 the *wind* shall graze all your shepherds
 49:32 I will toss them away to every *wind*
 36 I will bring upon Elam four *winds*
 I will toss them away to all these *winds*
 51:1 I am rousing . . . a ruinous *wind*
 16 brings forth *wind* from of His treasures
 52:23 ninety-six pomegranates . . . each *direction*
 Lam. 4:20 the *spirit* of our nostrils
 Eze. 1:4 a tempestuous *wind* was coming from the north
 5:2 shall you toss to the *wind*
 10 will toss away all your remnant to every *wind*
 12:14 I shall toss away to every *wind*
 13:11 a tempestuous *wind* shall rend it
 13 I will rend with a tempestuous *wind*

- 17:10 when the east *wind* assaults it
 21 spread to every *wind*
 19:12 the east *wind* dried up its branch-shoots
 27:26 the east *wind* broke you apart
 42:16, 17,18,19,20 *side of the . . . wind*
 Dan. 8:8; 11:4 the four *winds* of the heavens
 Hos. 8:7 they are sowing the *wind*
 12:1 Ephraim grazing on *wind*
 Jonah 1:4 Yahweh, He cast forth a great *wind*
 4:8 Elohim assigned a sultry east *wind*
 Zech. 2:6 the four *winds* of the heavens
 5:9 and the *wind* was in their wings

THE GREEK WORD FOR SPIRIT

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

pneō, BLOW, breeze

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

A glance over this list will show that the basic idea is almost identical with that of the Hebrew *ruch*. It refers to the *movement of the atmosphere*. Usually the wind is men-

tioned, But the usual word wind is not derived from this root in Greek. It is a special term *anemos*. Hence we have rendered BLOWING by *breeze* in Acts 27:40. These occurrences are all literal, and should give us a vivid impression from which to form an idea of the operations of spirit. It is an invisible, intangible force, at times gentle, at other times of terrific power.

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

pnoê, BLOWing, blast, breath

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

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

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

It is seldom used in a literal sense. Once (Heb.1:7) we have the couplet,

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

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

DEFINITIONS OF SPIRIT

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

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

Its highest use denotes the divine power as manifested in His invisible, intangible operations (John 4:24), the Spirit of God, that holy Spirit (Matt.1:18; John 3:8; Acts 13:2) which comes on men for power (Acts 1:8), baptizes for cleansing (Acts 1:5) and unifying (1 Cor.12:13), filling for utterance (Acts 2:4; Eph.5: 18), sealing for safety (Eph.

1:13), and homing (1 Cor.3:16) for permanent fellowship.

IMPERSONAL SPIRITS

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

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

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

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

1 John 4:6 By this we know the *spirit* of truth and the spirit of deception
 1 Peter 4:14 the *spirit* of glory and power, and that of God has come to rest on you
 Eph. 1:17 a *spirit* of wisdom and revelation
 Rom. 8:15 you get the *spirit* of sonship
 2 Cor. 4:13 the same *spirit* of faith
 Heb. 10:29 outrages the *spirit* of grace
 1 Cor. 4:21 in love and a *spirit* of meekness
 Gal. 6:1 in a *spirit* of meekness

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

1 John 4:6 the *spirit* of deception
 2 Tim. 1:7 God gives us, not a *spirit* of timidity

Rom. 11:8 God gives them a *spirit* of stupor
 15 you did not get slavery's *spirit* to fear again
 Luke 13:11 a woman having a *spirit* of infirmity

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

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

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

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

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

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

Much that exists is formal, and sometimes empty. Such was the ritual of divine worship given to Israel. God, being Spirit, desires its force rather than its form. He craves the invisible, intangible reality of which the outward is but the counterpart.

- John 4:23 true worshipers will be worshiping the Father in *spirit* and truth
 Phil. 3:3 we are the circumcision, who are offering divine service in the *spirit* of God
 Eph. 2:22 built together for God's dwelling place, in *spirit*

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

- Matt. 5:3 happy, in *spirit*, are the poor
 22:43 How, then, is David, in *spirit*, calling Him Lord
 Rom. 15:30 through the love of the *spirit*
 Col. 1:8 makes evident also to us your love in *spirit*
 Gal. 5:25 If we may be living in *spirit*
 1 Peter 4:6 should be living according to God, in *spirit*
 Eph. 6:18 be praying on every occasion, in *spirit*
 1 Cor. 14:16 if you should be blessing in the *spirit*
 Eph. 5:18 be filled full with *spirit*
 Gal. 5:16 Walk in *spirit*
 18 if you are led by *spirit*
 1 Cor. 14:2 in *spirit* he is speaking secrets
 Gal. 5:5 we, in *spirit*, are awaiting the expectation of righteousness by faith
 Eph. 3:6 in *spirit* the nations are to be joint enjoyers

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

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

A. E. Knoch

KEEPING THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT, IN THE MIDST OF CONFUSION

Question:

The diversity of opinions among Christians is troubling to me. Worse yet, many will not even acknowledge that what they claim is the truth is simply what they think is the truth, not necessarily the truth itself.

Such ones while acknowledging their own fallibility, will typically argue that nevertheless their beliefs (or at least principal beliefs) themselves cannot be mistaken. This is because since they can be proved to be true, therefore they are true.

I have heard this same sort of argument made in favor of a wide variety of claims, ranging from the identity of “the true church,” to the truth and inspiration of the Scriptures themselves; from the nature of the state of the dead, to the nature of the human will. And, concerning the question of final destiny, I have heard such arguments made time and again in favor of eternal torment.

Another claim I have encountered many times, however it may be put, in principle, is as follows: “I am correct in what I teach, since I teach simply what the Bible says. The Bible does not need to be interpreted and ought not be interpreted; instead, it ought to be believed. And this is what I do: I do not interpret the Bible; I believe the Bible, rightly translated and applied of course. In cases where clarification may be needed, the Bible interprets itself; we just need to find where it does so, and then apply what it says.”

I might add that, from some, I have also heard it argued that if you do *not* believe in the Trinity, that

at death, Christians go to heaven, and that many people will go to hell for all eternity, you are not really saved. Yet by certain others I have heard it argued that if you *do* believe in the Trinity, that at death, Christians go to heaven, and that many people will go to hell for all eternity, you are not really saved. What confusion! Yet in making such claims, neither side will admit they are mistaken, or as a rule, even acknowledge that they might be mistaken. After all, they have “proof” that they are correct!

In these various self-justifying claims, something seems quite wrong. Can you help me out here? I want to fellowship with all invoking the Lord out of a clean heart (2 Tim.2:22), and am aware of the need, as Paul says, to “keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace” (Eph.4:3). Even so, I am not always sure how best to go about this.

Answer:

IN RESPONDING to your letter, I would like to address especially the subject of fellowship among all invoking the Lord out of a clean heart, in consideration of our need to be keeping the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace in all our dealings and interchange with our fellow believers.

But before I do so, I would like to give significant attention as well to your earlier concerns regarding the various truth-claims made by some. These include, as you related them to me: the imagined immunity to error of even the most fantastical beliefs which, it is claimed, have nevertheless been proved to be true; the supposed wrongness and needlessness of interpreting Scripture, while claiming one’s own avoidance of this allegedly improper activity; and finally, the contradictory claims that the believing or disbelieving of certain doctrines, ones which putatively inhere in the minds of all those truly saved, is the proof that one is or is not truly saved.

At present, however, I will give attention only to the intellectual principles we must follow if we are to determine what the truth is concerning any and all such truth-claims as those which you relate. I will do so instead of giving attention at this time to the specific errors which I may note in these particular truth-claims. Through one’s implementation of better critical thinking skills, one will be much more able to spot for oneself any such specific errors.

Many simply dislike the task of engaging in careful, precise thinking, at least in the course of Scripture study. Some will even make the irrational claim that any attempt at analysis and exactitude is “unspiritual.” Perhaps most, however, while acknowledging the importance of such mental labors, still dislike them, feel they are “too hard,” and that, in any case, somehow, such activities are “just not for me.”

Indeed, we cannot stress enough, and most heartily agree that, “If the Lord is not in it,” even our best human efforts and acumen will prove most inadequate to the goal of significant scriptural insight and understanding. This is even as the Psalmist declares: “If Yahweh Himself is not building a house, its builders toil futilely in it. If Yahweh Himself is not guarding a city, the sentinel is alert futilely” (Psa.127:1).

We would not at all, then, study and investigate the Scriptures with a view to learning their truth—using necessary, legitimate means unto this end—because we imagine ourselves, out of ourselves, up to even the least part of the task. Instead, we would do so because we *pray* that God Himself would be with us in our endeavors, *graciously* guiding our path and enlightening our way.

In our quest for understanding, we merely seek to use the proper and necessary tools for the task, implementing them for the same reason that those building a house seek to use the proper and necessary tools for their task.

Yet if we are not aware what the needed tools for our

task even are—or else are aware, but still decline to avail ourselves of them—how can we ever hope to gain a competency in their use, and, I would add, how can we also ever hope, realistically, to build our “house” well?

You well summed up what the usual claims made by many come to, who affirm not merely that they think their beliefs are correct, but in fact that their beliefs cannot be mistaken. As you well note, exposed to the light of day, their claims are nothing more or less than that since their beliefs can be proved to be true, therefore they are true.

All that such a claim amounts to is this: Since the premises from which my position follows are true, therefore my position itself is true; indeed, it is not only true but necessarily true.

To state this argument objectively, as well as more carefully, however, one should employ not the word “since,” but rather the word “if.” Specifically, one should say as follows:

“If the premises of one’s position are true, and if the conclusion that one affirms as one’s position follows from these premises, therefore one’s position itself is also true; indeed, it is not only true but must be true.”

To say no more than this, however, is merely to recount the definition of a sound argument, with an added word affirming what logicians term, “the necessity of the consequence.” As important as knowing what the definition of a sound argument is, the question at hand is not, What constitutes a sound argument? but, (1) Are the specific premises claimed as true which form the basis of a particular truth-claim, *themselves* actually true, and (2) Does the conclusion claimed to follow from these premises, actually follow from these premises.

The answer to Question Two here, which is not so often disputed even though it is vital, is simply a matter of elementary logic. But ascertaining the answer to Question One, however, is usually far more involved, and nearly always more contentious. This is because, very often, those mak-

ing false claims, claim as true, premises that are demonstrably false (or at least either unproved or unknowable); and, very often as well, both the true premises and sound arguments of those making legitimate truth-claims are nevertheless denied by their opponents.

An argument which is Sound is also Valid; but a Valid argument may or may not be a Sound argument.

A Sound argument is an argument *founded upon true premises* which *also* results in a *true* conclusion. An argument which is Valid *but contains even a single false premise*, is not a Sound argument, and does *not* yield a true conclusion, even though its conclusion follows from its premises.

Here are examples both of a Sound argument (which entails its also being a Valid argument), and of a Valid argument, yet one which is nevertheless not a Sound argument:

An argument is sound if and only if

1. The argument is valid.
2. All of its premises are true.

For instance,

All men are mortal.

Socrates is a man.

Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

The argument is valid (because the conclusion is true based on the premises, that is, that the conclusion follows the premises), and since the premises are in fact true, the argument is sound.

The following argument is valid but not sound:

All organisms with wings can fly.

Penguins have wings.

Therefore, penguins can fly.

Since the first premise is actually false, the argument, though valid, is not sound.¹

1. *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia* (Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.), entry, “Soundness”: [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/SOUND_ARGUMENT](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sound_argument).

REJECTION OF SCRIPTURE TRUTH

For the era will be when they will not tolerate sound teaching, but, their hearing being tickled, they will heap up for themselves teachers in accord with their own desires, and, indeed, they will be turning their hearing away from the truth, yet will be turned aside to myths. (2 Timothy 4:3,4)

While the apostle Paul herein evidently refers at least primarily to the religious, or religious-related myths to which men, in their rejection of the actual truth of Scripture, will be turned aside, it is the case that in the world itself today, there exists an abundance of fanciful myths which many are persuaded to accept. Time will tell whether even some of these become credible to those who have first rejected the truth of the evangel.

My personal favorite is the claim that numerous eyewitnesses have observed reptilian humanoids, and that reptilian species are the force behind a worldwide conspiracy directed at manipulation and control of humanity. These humanoids have the remarkable capacity to “shape-shift” at will, appearing usually in human form, while in private, appearing in their preferred and native form, that of reptilian humanoids. Perhaps the most fantastic claim of all made by some among those affirming the earthly presence of such reptilian humanoids, is that many of our world’s leaders, from George W. Bush to British royal family, are in fact seven-foot tall, blood-drinking reptilians, immigrants to earth from the constellation Draco.

Since like most conspiracy theories, falsification² of the reptilian humanoid hypotheses is nearly impossible, the proponents of such hypotheses continue to prosper. No matter how daft such claims may appear to most, virtually

2. Scientific falsifiability (or refutability) is the logical possibility that an assertion can be shown false by an observation or a physical experiment.

every folkloric hypothesis in existence may claim its own audience, to whom it appears credible.

To find out the latest, both pro and con, about reptilian humanoids and most every other folkloric belief among the practically innumerable variety of such beliefs extant in the world today, one need only consult one’s own preferred internet search engine. Many of these beliefs will seem absurd to nearly all, yet not to some. And, even some dubious theories capable of falsification, will still appear credible to many, in some cases, even among those who are more discerning, whether or not, in fact, these theories are actually correct.

REJOICING IN COMMON FAITH

While we may well smile at the absurdity of claims about reptilian humanoids living among us, the point we must not overlook is that there are those, otherwise sane and normal persons, to whom such claims are altogether real. Never mind that not many share their convictions; true believers in such tales will not be dissuaded.

And indeed, which is the most fantastic claim, after all? Is it the claim that Queen Elizabeth is an extra-terrestrial lizard? Or is it not instead the claim that God, the All-Sufficient Creator—Who is love and Who is the Saviour of all mankind—will nevertheless torment in unspeakable agony even a single one of His creatures for all eternity, not to mention the actual prevailing claim itself, that He will forever torment in unspeakable agony by far the greater part of His creatures?

Yet this latter claim that God is an Eternal Tormenter, indeed an Eternal Tormenter of vast proportions, is the settled faith not of a few eccentrics, but of many thousands of learned men, by far the majority of them, at least in notable ways, exemplary individuals; and, it is the settled faith as well of millions of their followers and adher-

ents, whatever the case may be concerning each one’s personal character.

When attention is drawn to the fact that many of those naming the name of the Lord, do indeed hold to the doctrine of eternal torment, not to mention to an entire array of other false teachings as well, the question naturally arises, Are those affirming such views nevertheless members of the ecclesia itself, called and chosen of God? Well, at least we cannot say that any such individual person, even though he may hold many false beliefs, is *not* a member of the ecclesia.

Here we must say that it has not been revealed to us what percentage of the professing ecclesia are also members of the genuine ecclesia. It is likely that the true number of the members of the ecclesia is much larger than supposed by some, while remaining much smaller even so than presumed by many. Beyond this, we ourselves have no opinion here; for to say any more would be to be disposed above what is written (*cf* 1 Cor.4:6).

Indeed, faith can be feigned (i.e., “simulated”; *cf* 1 Cor. 15:3), not genuine; even so, this is not to say that in any certain case we may know that it is. It is simply not our place or province to judge such matters, whether on an individual basis or on a global basis. It is enough for us to confirm our own faith (*cf* 1 Cor.1:23-25; *cp* 1 Thess.4:14), and to be persuaded as well of the genuine faith of our close associates, ones who convince us thus accordingly (*cf* 2 Tim.1:5; *cp* 1 Tim.1:2). The rest we may well leave to God (*cf* 2 Tim. 2:16-19), being happy and content in so doing.

CONSOLATION IN CHRIST

With these considerations in mind, let us now turn to the subject of fellowship among all those invoking the Lord out of a clean heart, in consideration of our need to be keeping the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace.

As a prelude, we can do no better in preparing our hearts for this theme, than by quoting our beloved apostle Paul in Philippians 2:1-4:

If, then, there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any communion of spirit, if any compassion and pity, fill my joy full, that you may be mutually disposed, having mutual love, joined in soul, being disposed to one thing—nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory—but with humility, deeming one another superior to one’s self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also.

How much consolation, how much comfort of love, how much communion of spirit, and especially, how much compassion and pity, we find in our Lord Jesus Christ, Whom we love!

Well, then, says Paul, that being so, I would have you fill my joy full by always pursuing what I am about to say, which is with a view to your becoming truly “*mutually disposed*” among yourselves, that you might be having *mutual* love, joined in soul. Unto this end, then, I would have you be disposed to just *one* thing, which must ever be kept in mind. Here is what it is: Be doing *nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory*; instead, with humility, be deeming one another superior to one’s self in consideration, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also.

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. (Ephesians 4:1-6)

Many having a clean heart, may not have a clear mind or an enlightened spirit. To the degree that we suppose ourselves to be enjoyers of such a mind and spirit, it behooves us to be “taking to [our]selves” those whom we deem “infirm in the faith” (Rom.14:1), thus “pursu[ing] righteousness, faith, love, peace, *with all* who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart” (2 Tim.2:22). To be sure, while we must not concur with them in their misapprehensions, still we may rejoice with them in common faith, in the death and resurrection of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for the sins of us all.

We may at all times take all such ones to ourselves in spirit, while being cordial and gracious in all our encounters. Yet, even as in all our relations among all with whom we are acquainted, both believer and unbeliever, we should only deeply involve ourselves with those with whom we find it *expedient* or *edifying* to do so, God granting us wisdom here, concerning any certain activity or specific pursuit (*cf* 1 Cor.6:12; *cp* 1 Cor.10:23).

In my following restating of Ephesians 4:1-6, while the text remains the same, I have added some words in brackets. The careful reader will note that these additions are relevant, and true in the nature of the case; ideally, even self-evident. While they do not change the sense of what Paul says, hopefully the reader will find that they do help to clarify the sense of what is actually stated:

“I am entreating you, then [in consideration of all the foregoing in this epistle], I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called. [Thus, I declare,] with all humility and meekness, with patience, [be] bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to *keep* the *unity* of the spirit with the tie of peace [thus—which is, according to truth, whether recognized or not, that there is but]: *one* body and *one* spirit. [This is so, as you are aware, though the infirm in faith may not agree]

according as you were called also with *one* expectation of your calling, [it being true, in fact, even as, again, *you* are aware, that, for us, there is but] *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all.”

GROWING IN MATURITY

Thus we see that Paul herein provides us not with a means by which we may justify ourselves in excluding others from our circle of fellowship (or still worse, even from our acknowledged circle of sainthood), but with the *one* true foundation upon which we may rest, becoming “settled, unmovable” (*cf* 1 Cor.15:58), *growing* in maturity ourselves, while *bearing with* one another in *love*.

The unity of the spirit which God has made and we, in our practice, are to endeavor to keep, is that God has made it so that there is, in truth and faithfully speaking, but *one* body and *one* spirit.

Be the organized church bodies all around us ever so numerous, and the many false spirits abounding among those who are deceiving others, being deceived themselves (*cf* 2 Tim.3:13), there remains but *one* body of believers, through which they are enlightened by *one* spirit, the holy spirit of God (Eph.4:30).

The *one* body is the ecclesia, which is the “body” of Christ: “the ecclesia which is His body” (Eph.1:23), its members being so closely identified with Him as to be, in a figure, the very members of His body.

In 1 Corinthians 12:11-13, these two intimately related themes of the *one* body and the *one* spirit, are brought together in a single passage: “Now all these *one and the same spirit* is operating, apportioning to each his own, according as He is intending. For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, thus also is the Christ.

For *in one spirit* also we *all* are baptized into *one body*, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and all are made to imbibe *one spirit*.”

Accordingly, “. . . whoever are baptized into Christ, put on Christ, in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you *all* are *one* in Christ Jesus” (Gal.3:27,28).

It is unnecessary to be very widely acquainted with the many theologies and theological systems of Christendom, whether present or past, to realize that over the course of more than two millennia, “every wind of teaching” (Eph. 4:14) has indeed circulated and prevailed among some, whether among only a few or a great many.

Concerning every vital subject as rehearsed here by Paul, concerning which he assures us that there is but “*one*,” the theological world effectively has cried out saying, “No! there are *many*.” Yet this is only to be followed by each one of its representatives, bickering among themselves, wishing to add, “the only true one, however, is mine.”

It is vital to note that here in Ephesians 4, Paul by no means *defines* the parameters of truth, the truth concerning the one body, the one spirit, the one expectation of our calling, the one Lord, the one faith, the one baptism, the one God and Father of all. That is not his purpose. Instead, his purpose is to assure us that there is indeed but *one* of each, and that that true *one*, in every case, may be discovered through an enlightened reading and study of the collective whole of his epistles, complemented to be sure by the rest of the sacred scriptures as well.

Our common quest is, in God’s own time, that we should “*all* attain to the *unity of the faith*” (Eph.4:13). In the meantime, let us all, “with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, [be] endeavoring to keep the *unity* of the *spirit* with the tie of *peace*” (Eph.4:3).

J.R.C.

JUSTIFIED IN CHRIST'S BLOOD

THE *righteousness* of God is revealed in the evangel of God (Rom.1:1,17), which is the message that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and roused from among the dead (*cf* 1 Cor.15:3,4). The *love* of God is commended to us by Christ when He died for sinners (Rom.5:8). So we see that God's righteousness and His love are made known by the same operation of God, His giving of His Son (Rom.8:32), Who, in turn, was faithful in dying for our sakes.

In Romans 5:6 and 8 this evangel of God is set down in the simplest of terms: *For Christ, . . . for the sake of the irreverent, died While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.* The evangel of God declares:

A. *Christ died*

B. *for our sakes.*

Now in Romans 5:9 Paul expands on the words, "Christ died," and he makes the general expression, "for our sakes," specific, taking up these two points in reverse order:

B. Much rather, then, *being now justified*

A. *in His blood,*

B. *we shall be saved from indignation,*

A. *through Him.*

Paul will continue this exposition and enlargement of the evangel in Romans 5:10 and 11, but we will focus on verse 9 first, noting what it says about Christ's death and what it did for our sakes. Christ died, and the result of this shedding of *His blood* is that we are *being justified*. And this being so, we are blessed even more in that we *shall be saved from indignation through Him* Whose blood was shed.

THE PLACE OF JUSTIFICATION

Paul has already presented the evangel of God concerning His Son as it relates to justification. What he wrote in Romans 3:21-28 is summed up here by the words, "being now justified in [Christ's] blood." Justification is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, thus manifesting the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ. It does not arise from our faith any more than it could arise from our works. Our faith is the acceptance of the evangel that announces what God has done for us in Christ. On believing this evangel God reckons to us the justification achieved in and through the death of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.4:5,23,24; *cp* Eph.1:13,14).

What was referred to as the faith of Jesus Christ in Romans 3 is now referred to as the blood of Christ. To speak of His faith and His blood is to present, in specialized terms, the evangel that Christ died for our sins. To be justified in Christ's blood is to be justified in His death, which occurred with intense suffering and was effected with no feeling and no awareness whatsoever. Christ's death is the place of our justification. But in using the word "blood," the apostle directs our attention to the death of Christ as it relates to His soul.

BLOOD AS A TYPE

In the Scriptures, blood is associated with the soul (*cf* Gen.9:4-6; Lev.17:10-14).¹ It is necessary for sentient life, for feelings, consciousness and all the functions of a "living soul."

As a figure of speech, in connection with death, the term "blood" generally speaks of death by the hand of another or others, often violently. It is death in the sense of blood-

1. See the article entitled, "What is the Soul?" in this issue, especially pages 152-161.

shed, or blood poured out. This figurative use of the word invariably appears in Scripture after the death of the victim, so that, while it may serve as a memorial of sufferings associated with the dying process, it necessarily witnesses to the actual loss of all sentient qualities. Significantly, in these cases, the blood is outside the body. That which sustains the soul has been removed.

In its first occurrence in Scripture, Genesis 4:10, the word directs attention to a vicious, hateful shedding of blood, calling for vengeance (*cf* Matt.23:35,36). Speaking to Cain, who had murdered his brother Abel, Yahweh said:

*"The voice of your brother's **blood** is crying out to Me from the ground."*

In this striking way the horrible reality of Abel's death is brought before us. Abel himself was dead, and his blood was in the ground instead of in him as the medium of consciousness. It was no longer surging in his body, sustaining sensation and that most commendable disposition he had possessed in desiring to honor his Creator. The shock and hurt of his last moments were gone as well as any contact at all with the world about him. Without blood, Abel was no longer a living soul.

When the blood of Christ, the great Antitype of Abel, was shed, it spoke to God, not simply of vengeance, but of that glorious effect of the death of His Anointed which goes far beyond divine indignation to justification. The voice of Christ's blood cries unto God for the sake of the sinner.

Similarly, the passover flocking was slain and its blood put on the jambs and lintels of the houses of the Israelites in Egypt so that Yahweh would pass over them in bringing the stroke of death on the firstborn (Exodus 12:6-13, 21-23). The children of Israel were sinners just as surely as the Egyptians, but the blood of the innocent animal pointed ahead to the blood of Christ which would be shed for the pardon of sins (*cf* Matt.26:28). Now in Romans 5:9,

the apostle Paul takes us further in informing us of *justification* (not simply pardon) in Christ's blood.

Later in Leviticus, the many references to the blood of animals which were slain have much to say about the blood of Christ as He became the Antitype of each of the various offerings. Regarding the sin offering as described in Leviticus 4, it was to be slain, and its blood was to be taken before Yahweh. Note again the progressive steps as recorded in Leviticus 4:14-16:

... when the sin with which they have sinned becomes known, then the assembly will bring near a flawless bull calf of the herd as a sin offering and bring it before the tent of appointment. The elders of the congregation will support their hands on the head of the young bull before Yahweh, and one will slay the young bull before Yahweh. And the anointed priest will bring some of the blood of the young bull to the tent of appointment . . .

First the sacrificial victim was brought near, and then the elders placed their hands on its head, and then it was put to death. It is only after the animal had been slain that its blood is brought into the picture. The shed blood testified to the fact that the animal was no longer a living soul. As in Genesis 4:10, so also in Exodus 12 and throughout Leviticus whenever the blood was mentioned, there was a message to God concerning the blood of our Lord. The blood of Christ was *poured out*, (Matt.26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20). The sufferings of His soul had been endured, and now there were no sensations of any sort whatsoever. Christ had died. And in this full separation from being a living soul there was justification.

JUSTIFIED IN HIS BLOOD

Hence, in Romans 5:9, the reference to the blood of Christ is a commentary on the words "Christ died." It is a

testimony to the fact that when Christ died He had no sentient contact with life at all. When His blood was poured out, He no longer could feel anything. In its fullest meaning, He had given His soul a ransom for many, even for all mankind (Matt.20:28; 1 Tim.2:6). As the One Who was made to be Sin (the Sin Offering), He was dead.

This accords with Romans 4:25 which tells us that Jesus our Lord was given up *because of* our offenses, and was roused *because of* our justifying. The fact that Christ was given up to death is traced to our offenses, and the fact that Christ was roused out of death is traced to our justifying which had been gained in His death. The principle is clearly stated in Romans 6:7 where Paul declares that "one who dies has been justified from Sin."

When Jesus our Lord was given up to crucifixion He was given up to the greatest of humiliation and the greatest of suffering of soul, extending to every inch of His body and sensed in every nerve. His blood fed this pain and kept it virile and sharp while the cruelty of humanity raged, and then in the hours of darkness, God Himself turned from Him Who had been made to be Sin.

Then He died, and His blood was shed (*cf* John 19:33,34). There was no more pain, but also no more sensation of any kind, no awareness, no contact with humanity or any of creation, and, most serious of all, no fellowship with God, His Father. God's Son, His Anointed One, in Whom all of God's purpose for good was centered, died. All of this was due to our offenses, but it was also for our sakes.

For we died together with Him (Rom.6:2-11).

This marked the end of the old humanity with all its irreverence and unrighteousness, all its offense and sin, all its infirmity and all its enmity. (This is not yet put into full effect, but it is absolutely certain, for the necessary deed has been done.) In the shedding of Christ's blood all that was wrong with humanity was done away with, and

thus we are justified. Now the way is opened to a new life in which all the lessons learned from the experience of evil are retained within a constitution of righteousness (Rom.5:18,19).

The reference to Christ's blood in Romans 5:9 intensifies the significance of the verb "die" in verses 6 and 8. It speaks of the kind of death, but in speaking of death itself it speaks of the complete nullifying of all the faculties of the soul.

SALVATION FROM INDIGNATION

Furthermore, in view of this justification centered in the shedding of Christ's blood for sinners, Paul points ahead to the blessing of salvation from indignation. What has been done in Christ's blood is the basis, and sole basis, of our standing before God in grace and peace (*cf* Rom.5:1,2).

In pronouncing woe on the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, the Lord declared that "on you should be coming all the just blood shed on the earth, from the blood of just Abel until the blood of Zechariah, whom you murder between the temple and the altar. Verily, I am saying to you: All these things will be arriving on this generation" (Matt.23:35,36). The scourging and persecuting that they had brought upon God's spokesmen will come upon them, and as they killed, so they will be killed. In the expression of God's indignation, the blood they had shed will be avenged with the shedding of their blood.

But in Paul's evangel God's purposes are revealed more fully and deeply. Whereas the blood of Abel called for vengeance, the shed blood of Christ, in its highest significance, brings about the end of divine indignation. Apart from God's grace in reckoning righteousness to us who are believing, and in fulfilling all His promises to His chosen ones, there are still times when God will pour out His indignation on sinners. But because of Christ's pouring out of

His blood, the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love, all will ultimately enter into the reconciliation which has been gained (Col.1:20).

As for us who believe, since our old humanity with its infirmity and irreverence of soul was put to death, and thus we stand justified in God's grace (*cf* Rom.3:24; 5:2), we are fortified with the sure and certain hope of salvation from any expressions of God's indignation. Justification means the expectation of the glory of God, of joy and peace and all the blessings of the new humanity.

Expressed negatively, to the extent that we do not accept and retain with growing faith (*cp* 1 Cor.15:1,2) our position of justification as declared in the evangel, our enjoyment of the expectation of salvation from indignation is weakened today. If we suppose that justification depends to a certain degree on ourselves, to that degree we will harbor uncertainties in mind and heart about what is ahead for us. No matter how well we can cover up our inner doubts before the world, if we think God wants something from us to add to what Christ has done, we will be mired down in a similar situation to that experienced by Saul of Tarsus under the law. He was wretched in the knowledge that he could not do what he willed and kept doing what he did not will (*cf* Rom.7:7-24).

We are justified in the shedding of Christ's blood. We are justified in what has been already done. It is all settled!

How much more, therefore, is it settled that we will never come under the indignation of God.

THROUGH HIM WHO SHED HIS BLOOD

Even as justification is achieved in Christ's blood, so also salvation from indignation is made certain through Him Who shed His blood for us. The brief words, "through Him," at the end of Romans 5:9 recapitulate all that has been said about Christ in the preceding verses. Christ, for

the sake of the irreverent, died. While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. We are being now justified in the shed blood of God's Anointed. And we shall be saved from indignation through this very same means.

This is critical. The evangel of God which was given to Paul to bring to sinners of every nation concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. It is not concerned with what we must do in order to be justified and saved. It is concerned with what Christ has done and with what then happened to Him. Christ died for our sins. He was entombed, and He has been roused from among the dead.

Furthermore, in accepting the evangel, it is not only critical that we do not put ourselves in the place occupied by Christ, but that we do not confuse what it says about Him by inserting philosophies and traditions of human wisdom. Christ died for our sakes. Christ's blood was shed for our justification which assures us of salvation from indignation. It was necessary for Him to die, so that we might die with Him. The old had to be put away once and for all to a finality (*cp* Heb.9:13,26; 10:1,14) so that the new can take its place. The more clearly we see this, the more truly we will be readied for what follows in Romans, especially in chapters 6-8 and again for the entreaties which begin in chapter 12.

THE CRUCIAL PLACE OF CHRIST'S DEATH

The shed blood of Christ testifies to the indisputable fact that He was dead. There was no awareness, no contact with life, no sensation. It was in this state, and in our identification with Him in His death, that justification occurred.

In this God's love for us is expressed, in that He died for us while we are still sinners, that His blood was shed that we might be justified, and that we might be saved from indignation. This is God's gratuitous grace. And this is the bold simplicity of the evangel of God concerning His Son.

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our Centennial Year
(1909–2009)

Contents:

- 193 Editorial
- 197 What is Death?
- 215 Conciliated Through the Death
of God's Son
- 225 What is an Offense?
- 229 Prayer, and the Deity of God

SEPTEMBER, 2009

Volume C

Number 5

Concordant Version of The Latter Prophets

ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL,

HOSEA, JOEL, AMOS, OBADIAH, JONAH, MICAH, NAHUM,
HABAKKUK, ZEPHANIAH, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI

Endeavoring to bring forth more of the vital facts of the Scriptures in a setting of harmony and consistency, we are presenting this Concordant Version of the Latter Prophets as a further installment of our translation of the Old Testament. The English vocabulary chosen is designed to represent as closely as possible that of the Original. Keeping the words of the Original distinct in translation is one of the advantages of the concordant method. By analyzing the contextual usages, a single English word was first selected as the most suitable equivalent for each Hebrew word. To achieve readability some Hebrew words were then given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are concordant and harmonious with the Original. Generally these idiomatic variants are not used for other Hebrew words.

In accord with their length, these books are generally divided into two groups, the “Major Prophets” (Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel) and the “Minor Prophets” (or “The Twelve,” the books of Hosea through Malachi). But all of them, like the Former Prophets (Joshua through Kings), are concerned with God's operations with respect to the nation of Israel. The distinctive feature of these books is their revelation of Yahweh's ample provision for His erring people. They may fail, but He remains true. Indeed, their unfaithfulness is necessary to make known His faithfulness.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2009
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

IN ADDITION to our many printed publications, which may be ordered either by postal mail or from our website, *www.concordant.org*, we also provide on our website the content of many of these same books, booklets, and pamphlets. All of this extensive on-line material is available without charge, for personal reading or printing, as desired. In fact, a number of our publications that are no longer available in print (or may be temporarily out of print), are nonetheless available on-line.

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(2) Sample typeset files (in PDF format) of several chapters each both from the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT, and from the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

(3) Scanned pages (PDF) of the entire printed book, the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT WITH KEYWORD CONCORDANCE.

(4) The entire contents (typeset, PDF, 1,762 pages) of our five, large-page-size books which together comprise the entirety of the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

(5) Scanned, on-line images of the 378-page book, A COMPREHENSIVE LEXICON AND CONCORDANCE, which is a complete key to the Greek Scriptures and their English translations in the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT. The corresponding numbers of each of the Greek words as recorded in STRONG’S EXHAUSTIVE CONCOR-

DANCE have been superimposed in red for each entry in this on-line edition.

(6) Our new typeset document (PDF, 321 pages), VOCABULARY INDEX FOR THE CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

This index is an attempt to provide users of the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (CVOT) access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament. It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE published with the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT. But until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute. This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT, still being updated in 2009 as work proceeds on a first edition of the CVOT as a whole.

The list is keyed to ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW AND CHALDEE CONCORDANCE (5th edition), which is presently available under the title, ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW CONCORDANCE (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA 01961-3473, ISBN 0-913573-21-3). The word entries in this latter edition are coded to the numbering system of STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE, and these numbers are also provided here in our index.

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(7) *The Sacred Scrolls of the Scriptures*, an overview, book by book, explaining the general character, place, and purpose of each of the books comprised in the Sacred Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments.

(8) *Introducing the Concordant Literal New Testament*, The Concordant Method of Translation, in two parts,

provides detailed information concerning the principles employed and practices followed in the preparation and publication of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT.

(9) *Scripture Translation Principles*, presents a simple explanation of what *translation* is, while explaining the difference between translation and interpretation, addressing as well how definitive usage and essential meaning are determined.

(10) *Proponents for a Literal Translation of the New Testament*, in four parts, wherein the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT is tested by standards proposed by recognized scholars in the field of translational problems. Investigation is made to see if the Concordant Version anticipates available versions, or improves on suggested renderings, or points the way toward possible solutions of problems connected with difficult words or verses or passages.

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The principal remaining sections of our website are as follows:

Audio. This section includes, in digital format for on-line listening or downloading, a large number of our recorded Scripture messages originally available in cassette tape format. A great many “things of consequence” (*cf* Phil.1:10) are considered in these messages. Since the teaching of Romans is basic and is pre-supposed in all of Paul’s epistles, in our special series of messages “Outlines in Romans” (from 32 tapes), we present a detailed exposition of this epistle. Romans presents the evangel of God in a full, orderly and systematic way not found in any other book.

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Finally, a large and diverse selection of our Scripture expositions from *Unsearchable Riches* magazine, are included in this section of our website as well. While these are far too numerous to list here, as we are able, we intend to add to their number considerably, all in the interests of heralding the word (2 Tim.4:2), that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified (2 Thess.3:1).

J.R.C.

WHAT IS DEATH?

AMAZING AS IT MAY SEEM to some, death is a *return*. Man is soil and *returns* to the soil (Gen.3:19). The spirit *returns* to God who gave it (Ecc.12:7). The soul *returns* to the unseen whence it came (Psa.9:17 and Acts 2:27,31). In fact Job speaks of death itself as a return when he says:

I know that You are returning me to death.
(Job 30:23, CV)

Neither man as a whole, nor any part of him enters a new, unknown condition at death, but all returns to the state from which it emerged when life was imparted. Even as the body was created of existing entities, so with the spirit which was given by God; and at death these return to the same condition in which they were before.

This truth has been obscured by inconsistency in rendering the Hebrew word *shub*. This word is represented in the English Authorized version by one hundred and forty-two variations in rendering. On the other hand, five Hebrew words are translated "return." Our only recourse is a fresh, concordant study of the term. The main question to be decided is whether this Hebrew word simply means to *turn*, or if it includes the thought of a previous condition, hence a return. The following passages from the Authorized Version are in point.

Gen.3:19	till <i>thou return</i> unto the ground;
Gen.3:19	unto dust <i>shalt thou return</i> .
Psa.104:29	they die, and <i>return</i> to their dust.
Psa.146:4	<i>he returneth</i> to his earth.
Job 10:9	<i>wilt thou bring me</i> into dust <i>again</i> ?

Ecc.12:7 *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it.*
 Psa.9:17 *The wicked shall be turned into hell,*
 Judges 15:19 *and when...his spirit came again*
 1 Kings 17:21 *let this child's soul come into him again.*
 Gen.42:28 *My money is restored;*
 Lev.6:4 *(5:23) that he shall restore that which he took*

These are but a few of many passages which clearly prove that this Hebrew word means not only *turn* but *return*. Many instances are quite misleading if we should translate *turn*, but all are clear when we prefix *re-*.

With this key in our hands we are able to unlock the secret of death. And if we apply it first of all to the material part of mankind, the body, we not only have unquestionable proof of its truth, but are supplied with a parable of the spirit and a clue as to the soul.

THE BODY IS SOIL

Consider, then, the facts as to the body. It is soil. At death it returns to the soil whence it came. While it was a part of the body this soil was stamped with our personality. We speak of it as our body, though the elements which compose it are constantly changing and are entirely decomposed in death. As a matter of fact, each seven years or so the body has undergone an entire change, so far as its material components are concerned, yet it is the same body as far as we are aware. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that our bodies die every seven years and are renewed as often. This, of course, is a gradual process, nevertheless a real one. It should help us to realize what the death of a body involves. Could we compress this process of dying into a brief period and check the repair processes, then we have death itself. This daily dying is a continual reminder and a constant intimation of mortality. Death is written large in our daily experience for it is

perpetually operating in our bodies to return them to the soil from whence they came. And it is to this that Scripture points us if we would realize what death means. It should teach us that the body is not identified with any arbitrary unchangeable portion of the soil, but remains the identical body when the material elements which compose it have been replaced by entirely different substance. The elements which return to the soil have no more consciousness or identity than they had before we partook of them in the form of food.

DEATH FOR LIFE

Another law, akin to this, is that the higher organization must live by the death of the lower. Plants can draw their sustenance directly from the soil, but animals, living souls that move, cannot extract their food from the earth directly. They must live by the death of the herb and the grain and the fruit.

Thus we are constantly being reminded of the great lesson that God cannot only bring life from death, but that our death is but a stepping stone to the high honor given to us through His Beloved, Christ Jesus.

No fact in all the universe is so amply and constantly evidenced as the truth that death is the only means of life. The death of Christ, as the harbinger of life to a dying race, is the most illustrious example, but it is far from being a solitary one. It is but the apex of a pyramid of facts which have been piled up by the ages, which are still recurring and which may be felt by everyone and everywhere. The food we eat is eloquent on this point. Not merely flesh food—though this is its highest expression—but vegetables and grains as well. To begin with, it is only by dying that the grain can grow. It is only through death that the seed we sow can sprout. And this imparted life is lost again when the grain is used as food, either of animal or man-

kind. Death, death, death, nothing lives but by death. This is the universal law of life from which nothing can escape.

DEATH IS NOT LIFE

Men have been betrayed into the most absurd inconsistencies in their efforts to accept the dictum of the serpent “Ye shall not surely die.” They frantically flee from death, they add precaution to precaution to avoid it, they brand a man a murderer who kills another, and call him a suicide if he kills himself, yet they persist in painting death in most pleasing colors. If it is such a blessed state why not embrace it?

But the word of God clears away such mists by associating life with good and death with evil (Deut.30:15,19). God has no pleasure in the death of those who die (Ezek.18:32), nor has anyone else. Death, in God’s Word, is compassed with sorrows (Psa.18:4; 116:3) and terrors (Psa.55:4).

DEATH IS ESSENTIAL TO RESURRECTION

The greatest havoc wrought by a false view of death is the virtual denial of the resurrection. In my early endeavors to grasp the mind of God as to the true evangel which He would have preached, the most striking and notable departure from the preaching of the Apostles I found to be in their constant stress on the resurrection of Christ, while present day evangelical preachers hardly ever deem it worth mentioning in a Gospel address. I sought the cause of this discrepancy and found it in the false view of death which has become orthodox and “sound.” For if death for the believers is but the entrance into a fuller, free *life*, then what need of a resurrection? Why drag down the spirit from its ecstatic session in the divine Presence into a burdensome body again?

In line with this I found that the theological phrase “the resurrection of the *body*” (which virtually denies resur-

rection in that it excludes the soul and spirit) has wrought great mischief. This unscriptural, misleading phrase has found its way into the creeds and seeks to hide its falsity by its challenge to “faith.” It wears a mask of truth to conceal its real intent, which is hardly less than the error of which the apostle Paul warns us (2 Tim.2:18) for it infers that the resurrection is past already so far as the soul and spirit is concerned.

Until we acknowledge death to be *death* we cannot understand resurrection aright, for it is resurrection from the *dead*, not from another form of life!

Another remarkable phenomena is worth noting in this connection. It is the tendency for those who deal much with the original Greek to become “heretics” on this question. The church has corrupted the truth so that a vital contact with the early manuscripts is sure to lead to “heresy.” In truth, such a study of the original has become almost necessary in order to recover this truth. Thus it was with Martin Luther, soon after his escape from the thralldom of Rome. In his “Defense” he says: “I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful: such as that the soul is the substantial form of the human body, that the soul is *immortal*, with all those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals.”

But even before that day our martyr, William Tyndale, whose life and death were devoted to the truth, writes to Sir Thomas Moore: “In putting departed souls in heaven, hell and purgatory, you destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection. What God doth with them, that shall we know when we come to them. The true faith putteth the resurrection, which we be warned to look for every hour. The heathen philosophers, denying that, did put that souls did ever live. And the Pope joineth the spiritual doctrine of Christ, and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together—things so contrary that they cannot

agree. And because the fleshly-minded Pope consenteth unto heathen doctrine, therefore he corrupteth the Scriptures to establish it. *If the souls be in heaven*, tell me why they be not in good case as the angels be and *then what cause of the resurrection?*"

And not only the faithful Tyndale but others since his day who have dealt directly with the text of the early Greek and Hebrew have become convinced of this "heresy." As a young inquirer I was warned against Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott on this ground. Rotherham, whose quaint version has been the delight and help of many, has been impeached of this "error." Dr. Bullinger, whose Critical Lexicon evinces a close study of the original, suffered much for maintaining this truth. So that we must warn all who wish to remain orthodox not to brush aside the veil of the Authorized Version or look upon the face of the ancient text or you will surely be tainted with the heresy of God's truth!

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL NOT SCRIPTURAL

The most unblushing denial of God's word is found in the orthodox doctrine of inherent immortality. It finds no source or prop or excuse in the Scriptures of truth. It is but the wild guess of a pagan philosopher foisted upon us by a degenerate theology. When its supporters are driven to admit that it has no place in God's Word they try to tell us that it is everywhere inferred. If they should say that it is everywhere inferred that God will bring all back to life it would fully satisfy each intimation and would have solid support and definite declarations. But nowhere is there the least intimation of immortality being a present possession anywhere in the sacred scrolls. Death is insisted on everywhere as being the lot, not only of humanity, but of other creatures as well.

At the very forefront of revelation man is denied immortality. The serpent had indeed said, "Ye shall not surely

die" (Gen.3:4). But Yahweh Elohim takes all the necessary precautions, so that His Word does not fail. Not only does the sentence go forth, "soil are you, and to soil are you returning" (Gen.3:19, CV), but they are driven from Eden for the express purpose of keeping them from the tree of life. Had they tasted of this tree then they would indeed have been immortal—at least for the eon—and their life would have been prolonged in the midst of all the infirmities and distresses of advancing age. They would be tortured by pain and racked by disease without the possibility of escape through death or restoration by resurrection. They would be in the modern "hell."

But Yahweh Elohim allows no such inconceivable calamity to overtake them. He placed cherubim and a flaming sword to guard the way of the tree of the living. In other words, He took care that no one could possibly become immortal until the way should once more be opened by means of Christ and the resurrection. How anyone, in the face of the narrative, coupled with the distinct assertion that Christ alone has immortality—how anyone can still believe Satan's lie, seems almost incredible. Yet we know that those in high places not only hold and herald it forth as truth, but seek to find "evidence" for it in the Scriptures! Some, however, allow that it is not taught there, but that it is taken for granted!

IMMORTALITY AND INCORRUPTION

Christ alone has immortality (1 Tim.6:16). We shall put it on when we are vivified (1 Cor.15:53,54). These two passages are the only references to immortality, or deathlessness, in the Greek Scriptures. Romans 2:7 and 2 Timothy 1:10 refer to incorruption, not immortality. This is clear from 1 Corinthians 15:42,50,53,54, Ephesians 6:24 and Titus 2:7, which comprise all the occurrences of the word for incorruption.

PLATO’S PHILOSOPHY *vs.* GOD’S TRUTH

In spite of the plain, unequivocal declaration of Holy Writ, it is commonly believed that the theory of Plato, that man is inherently immortal, is found in the Bible. Let any one who believes this take up his Bible and concordance and search and see if he can find a single passage to support the assertion. Usually this is acknowledged, though some passages, such as Mark 12:27, “He is not the God of the dead, but of the living,” are cited which clearly refer to resurrection, or the fact that the dead are roused, not to deathlessness. The very weakness of Plato’s position, when referred to the Word of God, ought to be the most powerful argument for believing God’s express declaration that Christ *alone* is now possessor of immortality (1 Tim.6:16).

Nevertheless many of the arguments of Plato and his followers appeal to our reason with great force. The longing for deathlessness which God has implanted in the human breast is eloquent in its favor. Will He deny the craving which He has Himself created? Shall death defeat the designs which have cost Him infinite pains and unlimited labor?

It was but human for Plato to reason from all this that death was not the end of God’s dealing with mankind. And thus far he and those who follow him are right. But his error lay in his ignorance of God’s power to rouse the dead. All Plato could do was to deny the reality of death itself. He would limit it to the body. He would make the soul or the spirit immortal and thus provide for the continuance of man’s existence that the purpose of creation might thus find a possibility of fulfillment.

The grand truth that, in Christ, all shall be made alive, or vivified, at once denies the doctrine of inherent immortality and supplies the true and satisfactory solution to Plato’s problem. Man, truly, was not created to float as a vapor

across the sky and dissolve into nothingness. His present life is no more than this. But this fails to fulfill his destiny and falls short of the purpose God has in view in His creation. But the object is not obtained by a fancied immortality. It is attained only through death. It is reached only by resurrection. It is found alone in vivification. Men shall not be *kept* alive; they shall all be *made* alive. It will not do to deny death, for death is one of the means for manifesting God’s might and mercy.

ALL VIVIFIED

Every argument in favor of immortality receives a complete and comprehensive answer when once we see that all shall be vivified. Not only will they be raised to receive the deserts of their deeds, but, when this has been attended to and the second death has run its course, then they will be made alive in Christ in order that God may enjoy the fruit of His endeavors on their behalf and that they may enjoy the love which will not leave them even in the dust of death.

It has been truly said: “Even in pagan religions there is found an element of distorted truth. In fact, many a deep truth, which narrow-minded Christian theology has never grasped, can be discovered, in caricature, in heathen religions. They all date back to the sons of Noah, all of whom had the oracles of truth, as far as they were known in their day. It is around fragments of these oracles as a basis that heathen philosophy has spun. It is from them, as a source, that all pagan cults have sprung, even though they are, in the form they have taken, ‘doctrines of demons.’ Distorted, malignant caricatures of truth are they, just the same And so, in the heathen belief of the soul’s immortality there is a grain of truth also.”

The element of truth in the doctrine of the inherent immortality of man will be evident after the consummation when all men will indeed be possessed of this price-

less gift. But the great error lies in the denial of God's power and that of His Christ. Life is not inherent in man in any sense. Not even in God's Son. The Father has life in Himself—inherent life—and He makes this a gift to His Son (John 5:26). Apart from Christ, the Son of the living God, there is no life.

The continuity of life after death in some modified, fragmentary way, is entirely unknown to Scripture. The spirit does not continue to empower life. The soul does not continue to live. The man is dead. The denial of this is only a subterfuge of philosophy which knows nothing of resurrection. At all hazards they must keep God from touching His own creatures!

GOD GIVES

But God will not have it thus. The cold comfort which "inherent immortality" affords is replaced by the grand consolation that death, like all else, is *for* God; a means for the discovery of His heart. So that when all men indeed possess immortality it will be a *gift*—a gift from God Himself, and the realization of their utter unworthiness for this priceless boon as well as their absolute helplessness to gain it—these are the offices and function of sin and death and judgment. God will *sell* nothing to any man, but nothing will be able to keep Him from *giving* with a lavish hand what each may most esteem and least deserve.

Inherent immortality is a doctrine of the demons, the substructure of spiritism, a destructive delusion. It is the offspring of the ignorance which prevails as to God's ultimate vivification of all. Christ alone has immortality now. In order to die, when on the cross, it was necessary for our Lord to give up His spirit, for His Father had given Him to have life in Himself (John 5:26). This power God gave back to Him in resurrection. Thus it is that through Him, the Firstborn from among the dead, and His death, God

is able to promise to all the gift which they vainly seek to arrogate to themselves, apart from God's grace.

TWO FALSE VIEWS OF DEATH

Resurrection is denied by both of the extreme views of the death state. One theory is that the dead are conscious though disembodied—that they are really *alive*: the opposite view holds that they are annihilated. From both of these standpoints resurrection is impossible.

"THE DEAD ARE ALIVE!"

If the dead are consciously alive then they are not dead at all and both the need and possibility of resurrection is unthinkable.

Being an unscriptural doctrine, the advocates of a conscious intermediate state have nothing definite to offer as to the conditions of such an existence. It would be far from accurate to guess that it would correspond to the state of so-called "angels;" or to liken it to the imagined conditions of "disembodied spirits."

Once a leading magazine published a series on "Are the Dead Alive?" Few seemed to notice the incongruity of the question. For if it should be established that the dead are alive this would also prove that they are not dead. This leads to the bold denial of death:

"There is no death
What seems so is transition."

And this reminds us of Eden's garden where the mother of all the living is told, "Ye shall not surely die." Orthodoxy is nothing less than the propagation of the Adversary's lie. In seeking to deny death, however, it also denies the possibility of resurrection. To make alive that which already has life should not call forth much effort. Yet resurrection is set forth as the mightiest exhibition of God's great

power. And everywhere it is insisted that it is the resurrection *from the dead*.

Likewise, if the dead are as though they had not been they are beyond the reach of resurrection. Let us allow all that God says as to the reality of the death state. Let us never think of it as life in any sense. Let every element return whence it came. Yet it is no more possible to annihilate the history of a man's life than to annihilate his individuality, or that which is spoken of in Scripture by means of the pronoun. Our Lord said that all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth. If they had been annihilated what "they" would there be to hear His voice? We are persuaded and fully grant that they can hear no *other* voice; in fact they are no more able to hear than if they really had been annihilated. And, indeed, unless *He* should speak to them we are certain that they never would hear nor live again—they would be the same as annihilated for all practical purposes.

But while we allow death its full force, we must always stop short of annihilation and acknowledge that something still exists (not *lives*) which responds to the voice of the Son in resurrection.

Perhaps one of the most convincing passages in favor of annihilation is found in Obadiah 16 where we read: "They shall be as though they had not been." This, however, is but a loose paraphrase of the Hebrew text, for the verbs "shall be" and "had been" are exactly the same in the original. If we render the verb the same in both instances it relieves the sentence of the very element which it needs to predicate annihilation. If for instance, we should translate "they are as if they are not" their existence is affirmed rather than denied. Besides, this passage deals with *nations*, not individuals, and we are quite free to admit that nations are to vanish as such, but not the persons who compose them.

The most striking case of the fire of Divine judgment is

found in the overthrow of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Indeed, they are expressly said to be set forth as an example "experiencing the justice of fire eonian" (Jude 7, CV). But even this extreme case carried no thought of final annihilation to the mind of our Lord or to the prophets. Ezekiel assures us that Sodom shall return to her former estate (Ezek.16:55). Our Lord warns those cities which were refusing His message that it would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judging than for them (Matt.10:15; 11:24; Mark 6:11; Luke 10:12).

THE SECOND DEATH

While many will acknowledge that death is not annihilation, they insist that this is not true of the second death, the lake of fire. We are told that death without resurrection is virtual annihilation, and such it is. But let us not be too positive that there is no Scripture which teaches that there is a resurrection from the second death. That many have never discovered such a passage is quite true. But it is not what we have not seen which should form our doctrine, but what we have seen. There is such a passage, as we shall show, in due time. The main confusion on the subject of the second death has been brought about by the refusal to believe that it is a death at all. It is put in an entirely distinct category simply because it is called the second death. But we must remember that this phrase "the second death" is not to be explained—it is itself the divine explanation of what is to be understood by the lake of fire. Let us never seek to explain God's explanations.

We read of many things which are said to be *second*. Was not the healing of the nobleman's son (John 4:46-54) a *sign* just as much as when the water blushed at Christ's presence in Cana of Galilee (John 2:11)? Was the second "ward" or jail not a ward because it was second (Acts 12:10)? And the second Man, is He not a Man just as cer-

tainly as the first man, Adam (1 Cor.15: 47)? And is not the second covenant (Heb.8:7) a covenant at all? And the second "veil" or curtain (Heb.9:3), was it not a veil? Peter's second epistle (2 Peter 3:1), the second animal (Rev.4:7), the second seal (Rev.11:14), the second foundation (Rev. 21:19)—all of these are precisely what they are said to be in spite of the fact that they are not the first of their kind. Why, then, should the second death (Rev.2:11; 20:6,14; 21:8) be anything other than death?

This is the divine definition of the lake of fire. The fearful travesty which makes the dead alive, tortured before they are even brought before God's bar of justice, and raised from the dead merely to be hurled back into a fiercer torment—with such travesty the Scriptures have nothing to do. Nor do we appreciate the mighty effort God puts forth to wrest them from the sleep of death, if it is only to consign them once again to oblivion by the awful horror of the lake of fire.

To those who know the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the judgment of the great white throne will always present an insuperable difficulty apart from the grand truth of universal reconciliation. Why disturb the slumber of the wicked if no one is to be benefitted thereby? Why wake them to life again if it only brands His name as Vengeance and wreaks unspeakable pain on them? Or if (as some may insist) they are consciously suffering even before their trial, why should He put forth infinite power only to damn them with double damnation? This is not His God nor ours.

ADAM, DYING TO DIE

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

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

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

The most plausible explanation—spiritual death—becomes more impossible the closer it is considered. "Spiritual" death is figurative. It depends on a knowledge of literal death for its understanding. Now it is an unbreakable law of figures such as this that the literal must come first, then the figurative. But death was unknown to Adam before this. Literal death would be difficult for him to apprehend, much less "spiritual." Another consideration confirms this conclusion. In all the references to death in the Hebrew Scriptures not once is spiritual death referred to. It is a thought beyond the range of those who received that installment of God's revelation.

Besides, death was not confined to Adam's spirit. The pronoun "you" cannot be so interpreted, for we are never told that Adam was spirit, but often that he was soil. If we confine it to any part of him it will be necessary to refer it to his body, for he was not only formed from the soil but it is distinctly stated "soil *you* are, and to soil *you* shall return" (Gen.3:19, CV).

The key to the solution of our difficulty lies in the notable expression which our translators have rendered "surely die." In the Hebrew it is unlike anything which we have in English. It reads literally, if we accept current standards of translation, "to die shall you be dying." That is, the verb "die" is repeated in two different forms. First it is in the so-called "construct infinitive." Our infinitive is "to die." Being in the "construct state" shows that it is limited or restricted in its meaning by the following word. In the phrase "the word of the Lord," for instance, the word "word" is in the construct state because not every one's word is intended, but

only the Lord's. So here, the thought of dying is restricted by the following verb "you shall be dying." From this we gather that it is only in a restricted sense that Adam would die that day. "To die shall you be dying" brings before us a *process* of death, culminating, indeed, in actual death, but of indefinite duration in its operation.

The same phrase is used in a similar sense in Genesis 29:7; 1 Samuel 14:44; 22:16; 1 Kings 2:37,42; 2 Kings 1:4,16; Jeremiah 26:8; Ezekiel 3:18; 33:8,14.

The most interesting of these occurrences is 1 Kings 2:37, where we have the identical statement made to Shimei by Solomon in case he should dare to leave the confines of Jerusalem. "In the day . . . to die shall you be dying" gives us a perfect parallel case. And, like Adam, Shimei transgressed. And like him *he did not die* on the day he crossed the brook Kidron, but went to Gath after his servants and returned. This would not be so notable if Solomon had offered some excuse for not keeping his word and sending after him to fulfill his threat. Indeed, Solomon reiterates his previous words, not omitting the phrase "in the day" and proposes to carry it into execution several days afterward! It is evident that his understanding of this phrase was quite different from the impression conveyed by our usual English translation.

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

But we have still stronger evidence from Him Who is greater than Solomon.

YAHWEH'S UNDERSTANDING

What is Yahweh's commentary on this phrase? For the time came when He must remind Adam of it and pro-

nounce a sentence in harmony with it. As a matter of fact the verdict of Yahweh is but an expansion of this phrase. And, as we have been led to expect, it is mostly occupied with the process of death.

"And to Adam He said: Because you hearkened to your wife's voice and ate from the only tree that I instructed you, saying you must not eat from it, cursed is the ground on your account; in grief shall you eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you, and you will eat the herbage of the field. By the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread, until you return to the ground, for from it were you taken. For soil you are, and to soil you shall return" (Gen.3:17-19, CV).

Instead of instant death, he is to eat of the ground in sorrow "all the days of your life." Here we have an intimation of death, yet only as the result of grief long drawn out. The same story is repeated when he is assured that he shall eat bread "until you return to the ground, for from it were you taken. For soil you are, and to soil shall you return."

"THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT"

The silly story of the "apple" need not concern us. But whatever the fruit may have been, it seems certain that it was "poisonous," as we would say—a slow poison, eventually causing death. Its effects were felt the very day on which it was tasted.

Let us not suppose that this is the introduction of evil into the universe. It was merely the channel *through* which it came into the world system (Gk. *cosmos*, Rom.5:12). The adversary had spoken of evil as something well known to the "gods" (Heb. *Elohim*) and Yahweh *Elohim* Himself says:

"Behold, man has become like one of Us in knowing good and evil. Now lest he should stretch out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live for the eon—."

(Gen.3:22, CV)

Therefore Yahweh *Elohim* sent Adam forth from the gar-

den of Eden, to till the ground from which he had been taken. So He drove out the man; and He stationed at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim, and the flame of the revolving sword, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Grace glows in every word of this judgment scene. We have become so used to man's judgment that we can think of it in no other way than a vindictive condemnation. Not so in the Scriptures, "Judge the widow and fatherless" does not mean to condemn them: it rather refers to their receiving their full rights in spite of their weakness and lack of influence. So here, in this, the earliest trial of mankind, we have the principles which govern all subsequent sessions of the court of God. It consists essentially of such a readjustment of affairs as will eventually produce, not only restoration, but reconciliation. The cursing of the ground was not in revenge; it was "for your sake." And toil and sweat, as we all know, carries with it a blessing, in fact it is one of the means of warding off the death which so surely impends.

DEATH WILL GLORIFY GOD

Another merciful provision was the guarding of the way leading to the tree of the living. Life, such as we now know it, is tolerable for a brief period, but when the functions fail and the senses cease, living becomes an unbearable burden. So that death itself is a mercy, under the circumstances, and provides the Creator with another opportunity to magnify His name by means of resurrection. He is not the God of the dead but of the living!

A. E. Knoch

CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUIT

"For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Corinthians 15:21,22).

CONCILIATED THROUGH THE DEATH OF GOD'S SON

THE EVANGEL that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3) has been presented in Romans 5:8 as the love of God, in that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.

In 2 Corinthians 5:14, this same message is presented as the love of Christ, in that He died for the sake of all, and consequently all died.

What can be more shocking than the message that the Anointed One of God died? What can be more challenging to our common notions than the claim that this was an act of love which was for our sakes? What can seem more fantastic than the whole accumulative revelation that Christ died, and when He died, He died for the benefit of everyone, none of whom were worthy, and that the benefit begins with everyone being identified in His death, so that, in some way, in truth, all died?

Again, what did Christ do for sinners when He died?

First of all, when Christ died, all died.

This seems very radical.

But we recall that God told Adam the effect of his disobedience would be: *to die you shall be dying* (Gen.2:17). Sin is dealt with by death.

When we die we can no longer sin (*cf* Rom.6:2,7,10). The sinner's death, as a descendant of Adam, gets rid of the sinner, but it does nothing further than that. On the other hand, the sinner's death in the faithful and obedient death of Christ brings about justification (Rom.5:9), which opens the way to our identification with Him in His resurrected and glorified life.

Ultimately all shall be vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22) and enjoy “life’s justifying,” where also all who were constituted sinners will be “constituted just” (Rom.5:18,19), and all who were estranged and enemies of God will be reconciled to Him (Col.1:20). But now in Romans 5:1-11 our apostle is unfolding this evangel of righteousness and peace to us who are believing, showing its significance for us already. Even now while we still remain sinners in the flesh, God pours out His love in our hearts, reckoning us righteous on the basis of Christ’s shed blood, and bringing us to Himself in peace and love on the basis of the death of His Son.

ROMANS 5:10

In Romans 5, we are taken from glory to glory in the exposition of the evangel of God, even as these revelations transform our lives (*cf* 2 Cor.3:18). The announcement of justification in Christ’s blood and salvation from indignation is continually a source of deep joy and spiritual invigoration for us, but also there is the remarkable gratuity of peace which enters our hearts as we come to appreciate God’s unparalleled achievement of conciliation, and the future salvation it points to:

*For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God
through the death of His Son,
much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved
in His life.*

The message we have received from God directs us to the contemplation of what God has done. The evangel comes to us as a message, not concerning what we must do, but of what God has accomplished in and through His Son. That is where we begin, so that the evangel itself might become to us the power of God for salvation in our lives (Rom.1:16).

Thus we learn that, while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes. We are justified in His blood and shall be saved from indignation through Him. So also, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son. And furthermore, in accord with the evangel, which adds to the words “Christ died,” the revelation that “[He] has been roused” (*cf* 1 Cor.15:3,4), the message now declares that and we shall be saved in the life of God’s Son. The evangel does not come to us, as God’s words to Israel at Sinai came, with instructions and requirements placed upon us, but with the message of Christ’s death and His resurrection from among the dead, and the glorious effects this has for the sake of the infirm sinner and irreverent enemy.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE, AND ITS EFFECTS

As we noted in meditating on Romans 5:9, our apostle is defining and expounding the evangel concerning God’s Son, Jesus Christ and what God did for us in and through Him. But Paul is doing so in reverse order. What was gained for our sakes was justification and salvation from indignation. What was done was that Christ shed His blood.

Now in Romans 5:10 this exposition of the world-changing message that “Christ died for our sakes” is enlarged further in the first half of the verse, and then in the second half Paul goes forward to identify us with the life of God’s Son out of death. Thus the phrase, “for our sakes,” now comes before us in the words, “being enemies we were conciliated to God,” and again in the words, “being conciliated, we shall be saved.” Then the statement that “Christ died” is re-stated by the phrase, “through the death of [God’s] Son.” Finally, we are led to the culminating declaration of the evangel, in which the rousing of Christ from death into life is announced. Our future life of salvation into that peace, described in Romans 8:21 as the glorious freedom

of the children of God, is assured by the life of Christ, not His life before the cross, but His life in resurrection out of death and now in exaltation.

In order to see the pattern of this exposition of the evangel of God concerning His Son more clearly let us carry forward the arrangement given in our last article, now extending it through verse 10, as follows:

A. *Christ died*

B. *for our sakes.*

B. *Much rather, then, being now justified*

A. *in His blood,*

B. *we shall be saved from indignation*

A. *through Him.*

B. *For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God*

A. *through the death of His Son,*

B. *much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved*

A. *in His life [out from among the dead].*

Thus we see that the evangel of God has two parts: The first part concerns God's Son, announcing that He died and then was roused. This part focuses on what has been done *by God* through and in His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. The second part of the evangel announces what this operation of God has done *for us* who are sinners, infirm and irreverent, and enemies of God.

BEING ENEMIES

The evangel as presented in Romans 5:10 takes us from "being enemies" to "being conciliated." Just as the message of verses 8 and 9 has told us of God's love taking "sinners" to the position of "being justified," so now we learn that God's love removes us from being under God's indignation to the position where we stand before God in closest harmony of peace. We have learned what God's love is. It

is that Christ died for sinners. The death of Christ takes sinners and brings them to justification, and it takes enemies and brings them to conciliation.

We became enemies in the same way we became sinners. Paul is about to recount this historical process starting with verse 12. Adam sinned. Thus death passed through into all mankind. As a result all sinned and thus all are sinners.

But as sinners we also are enemies, which speaks especially of our attitude toward God. The *disposition* of our flesh is enmity to God (Rom.8:6). As we are in flesh, descendants of Adam, we are *estranged* and enemies in *comprehension* (Col.1:21). God's indignation is directed not only against the unrighteousness of our acts but the irreverence that lies behind them and is expressed in them (*cf* Rom.1:18).

In the six verses of Romans 5:15-20, the word "offense" appears six times. Not only did Adam disobey the divine instruction (5:19) concerning the fruit of the tree and thus transgress (5:14) beyond the wide realm of blessing set before him, but in doing so he offended God. To sin is to offend, but to disobey the instruction of divine law is to increase the offense (5:20). Thus as death operates in us so that we are constituted sinners, we are not able to please God. Our position before God as descendants of Adam, in our flesh, is that we are His enemies.

There is no harmony, no peace, no way of access to God's heart of love, but only offense added to offense until brought under the indignation and fury of the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (*cf* Rom.2:5-10).

BEING CONCILIATED

Nevertheless, it was given to Paul to bring an evangel, not only of the revelation of God's righteousness, but of His great achievement of peace. In heralding that Christ

died for our sins, our apostle was graced with the message that we, as enemies of God, were conciliated to God through the death of His Son.

Conciliation is God's achievement. God is the One Who brings it about, and He does so in a most astounding, even paradoxical way, at the greatest of cost to His heart. Conciliation is established by God *through the death of His Son*.

But what is this conciliation? The Greek word translated "conciliate" is given the root sense of DOWN-CHANGE in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE. The word DOWN represents the Greek preposition, *kata*, which, like all prepositions, is a connective showing the relationship of one thing to another. In this case the general sense may be that one thing is brought "down alongside" the other, or, as *kata* indicates when used with the accusative case, "in accord with."

Hence the change may be seen as one from enmity to one of harmony and accord. That is what God has done. We, the enemies, have not come to Him, putting aside our enmity and heeding His word with thanksgiving. He has brought us, who offend Him in countless ways, to a place of access to Him and a standing before Him where peace reigns. He has bridged the pathway to His heart through the death of His Son.

THE MEANS OF CONCILIATION

To speak of the death of God's Son is to say words that are plain. The words are not hard to understand, but they are joined together in extraordinary association, *death*, and *His* (that is, *God's*), and *Son*. How is this a welcome message? The Son of God died!

These are indeed words of glad tidings, for God's act of conciliation was achieved, as worded in Romans 5:10, *through the death of His Son*. No greater expression of enmity toward God could be imagined than that exhibited at the cross. Here was the public display, before all

creation, of rejection and hate toward the One of Whom God declared, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight" (*cf* Matt.3:17; 12:18; 17:5). Yet this is what brings about peace.

"Concentrated here we see the enmity of man toward God. His Son, the unceasing and delightful source of His purest joy, the effulgence of His glory; His Son is rejected, despised, cast out and crucified!"¹

Yet this most offensive of offenses is the means of our conciliation to God. From the human side it was the greatest exhibition of enmity of all the eons. From God's side it was the greatest act of conciliating love of all time.

The believer is already benefiting, in spirit, from the effects of this achievement of God. As we will learn from Romans 5:11, we have *now obtained the conciliation*. We may be enjoying peace toward God through all the afflictions of life, for we have access to Him, where we are positioned before Him in grace. God's love is being poured out in the hearts of those who are believing. But note, at the very root of our faith is not the message that we are justified or that we are conciliated, but that Christ died for our sakes, that the Son of God was put to death for the enemies of God. This is where God's love is commended, and this is where peace is made.

"What, then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:31,32).

WHAT GOD HAS DONE

Hence we see that the conciliation was established when the Son of God died. In His death, all who were God's

1. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.52, p.200.

enemies by their offensive deeds, words and thoughts toward Him, even their avoidance of glorifying and thanking Him—all these died.

But this was not even announced until several years later when, in Israel's offense of rejecting the Messiah, Paul (who, as Saul of Tarsus had led the way in seeking to be anathema from Christ) was given this revelation to dispense (*cf* Rom.11:11-15). Now he is bringing it before us in his evangel, a special revelation of our relationship to God during this present era (affecting all the world also, as announced in chapter 11).

WHAT GOD IS DOING

This marvelous announcement is repeated in 2 Corinthians 5:18, where Paul writes, "Yet all is of God, *Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ*." There also, as in Romans 11, Paul relates this message of conciliation to the world itself as well, not only to the believers, adding that "God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them." This affects the whole world in which we live, in that God is not responding to human offense as He did in previous eras, but rather is treating mankind (with respect to their offenses) in accord with what was gained for us all through the death of His Son. When men avoid Him and even deny His existence, He is silent and refrains from responding with clear acts of divine indignation.

This also becomes a vital part of evangelizing, that is, bringing the evangel to the unbelieving world. Hence, Paul writes concerning his dispensation, "For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God!'" (2 Cor.5:20).

As noted above, Paul will speak of the conciliation of the world in Romans 11:12-15 as it relates, in the current era,

to God's dealings with Israel and the nations. But now in Romans 5:10,11, he is focusing our attention on the conciliation as it relates to us who are believing. In ourselves we are sinners, and in ourselves we do that which is offensive to God. Yet, as expressed in 2 Corinthians 5:18 with respect to the world, in conciliating us to Himself, God is not reckoning our offenses to us.

What a grand and decided change this is! It speaks of peace and access established by righteousness (Rom.5:1,2) and measured by the love of God (Rom.5:6) by means of the death of His Son for our sakes. This blessing is intensely practical for our daily lives now as we face afflictions, for they produce endurance and testedness as they are faced with awareness of our stand before God in grace and righteousness and peace. Then also, as Paul has made clear in Romans 5:2-5, our expectation is sharpened by this conjunction of the struggles of our lives with the revelation of the great change God has achieved through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

SAVED IN THE SON'S LIFE

Since it is true and blessed that we are conciliated to God through the death of His Son—since this very major blessing is a true one, how "much rather" it is true and blessed that "we shall be saved in His life!" Since God has brought us before Him in peace, pouring out His love into our hearts, by means of the death of His beloved Son, we can have no doubt whatsoever that we shall be saved from all infirmity and missing of the mark of perfection, all acts of irreverence and every expression of enmity, into life where we fully participate in the glory of God. As enemies we have died in the death of God's Son; now as friends, even children of God (*cf* Rom.8:16), we know we shall be made alive in His life.

Thus "... the Son Himself alive forevermore, beyond

Death's reach, is the assurance of the love-life to which it is the introduction. He is the living love-link which binds us with bonds unbreakable to the Father's heart.

"Such was the affection shown us when we were still enemies. But now that His love has subdued our stubborn hearts, we may enter into settled and enduring peace. How little need we fear for future welfare! If such rich favor is dealt out to *enemies*, what shall be the portion of His *friends*!"²

As we are identified with the Son of God in His death, so we will be identified with Him in His life. "Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall be living together with Him also, having perceived that Christ being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying. Death is lording it over Him no longer, for in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God" (Rom.6:8-10).

YET NOT ONLY SO

What has happened by means of the death of God's Son? *We were conciliated to God.*

This brings God's love and the enjoyment of peace close into our lives every day.

What shall happen in view of the life of God's Son? *We shall be saved.*

This is our expectation. But expectation is not simply a vision of what shall be. Like the evangel of what God has done, this message of what God will do is an active force in our lives. Since we shall be living unto God as Christ is now living unto God, we are led by this expectation to the enjoyment, in spirit, of what shall be. We will consider this in our next study as presented in Romans 5:11.

D.H.H.

1. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.52, p.203.

WHAT IS AN OFFENSE?

THE Greek word *paraptōma* is composed of two word elements, signifying BESIDE-FALL. It occurs twenty-one times in the Greek Scriptures and is always rendered *offense* in the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT.

The suggested definition given in our KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.209) is: “that which wounds the feelings.”

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18,19

*Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their **offenses** to them.*

We should never confuse offenses with sins. In the present administration, during the dispensation of conciliation, God is not reckoning their offenses, even to the world. That does not apply to their sins and crimes and injuries against one another and Himself. For these they will give account at the great white throne in the resurrection of judging. But now, even the blasphemies of the modern godless movement, which can hardly be exceeded in vicious vehemence and awful offensiveness, do not move Him to protect the honor of His name.

Though a judge dare not *justify* any infringement of the law on the part of the one who stands before the bar, he may choose to bear a good deal of illtreatment himself on the part of others in the courtroom. He may overlook or forgive those whom he deems in contempt of court without being himself unjust. It is more a question of feel-

ings than of law. It concerns personal *offense*. In Biblical usage the word *offense* should be limited to social misconduct. Its loose usage as a synonym of *crime* in legal language is to be deplored, for much that is *offensive* cannot be counted as a legal *offense*. A judge may fine a man for laughing at him, but if he has a sense of humor he may join in the laugh. Either way he is neither just nor unjust. Such offenses belong to a different category, only remotely related to his proper judicial functions.

—A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.37, pp.80,81.

ROMANS 5:15-18

*But not as the **offense**, thus also the grace. For if, by the **offense** of the one, the many died, much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds.*

*And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the grace is out of many **offenses** into a just award. For if, by the **offense** of the one, death reigns through the one, much rather, those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

*Consequently, then, as it was through one **offense** for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying.*

The first human offense followed right after the first display of Divine affection. Adam's first recorded act after Yahweh, the Subjector, had kindly provided a complement for him, so that he was no longer lonely, was to wound his Benefactor's heart by questioning His fondness and disbelieving His word, and acting contrary to His wise warning. It was a mistake, a *sin*, to eat the death-dealing fruit. It was a *transgression* to disobey His word. But, far deeper

and more malignant than these, it was a frigid, frightful *offense* to hurt His *feelings*, when He had just manifested His *affection* in a most marvelous manner. Except it be to reveal His own love to His creatures through it, the main motive in building the woman was to fill the void in the heart of adam with happiness. It should have called forth the most thankful obedience and heartfelt trust.

The fact that Adam's sin and transgression was an *offense* against God's feelings, due to the surrounding circumstances, is clearly conveyed by the record, yet it is but dimly discerned by the saints, even though the revered Authorized Version always uses this term when referring to it in the fifth of Romans. This rendering is excellent, yet it would have been even better, if they had used the same term, *offense*, elsewhere when the same word occurs in the original. This is especially true in 2 Corinthians 5:19 where God is dealing with the descendants of Adam at the present time. Instead of not imputing their *trespasses*, to make them immune from *judgment*, He is not reckoning their *offenses*, which frees them from His *displeasure* in the present period of super abundant grace. It is an affair of the heart, rather than of the hand or head.

Because, at the present time, God is more concerned with the display of His *grace* than His justice, with *love* than judgment, it is important that the other occurrences in Paul's epistles be correctly rendered. Galatians 6:1 should read, "if a man should be precipitated . . . in some *offense*," rather than overtaken in a fault. In Ephesians 1:7, "the forgiveness of *sins*," and 2:5 "dead in *sins*" should be *offenses*, as *forgiveness* deals with *feelings*, and these offenses separate men from God in figurative death. In Colossians 2:13 we have both of these thoughts in one sentence, but the AV renders it "dead in *sins* . . . having forgiven you all *trespasses*." God is *love*, and the clearer this appears on the pages of His revelation, the better it will be for us. This

should govern the underlying motive of all our dealings with Him and with one another.

It is exceedingly helpful to note that the beneficent attitude Yahweh Elohim had toward Adam, in whom the whole race was hidden, was very much the same as at the end, when humanity is once more on friendly terms with Him. But here it is followed by the first offense, and then by final reconciliation. The *feelings* play the principal part in the tragedy of the eons, especially at these prominent points in human history. This throws much light on the present, which began very much the same, with a new creation in which the old is passed by, and all is new in the spiritual sphere, as it was then in the material. Now again we learn to know evil, and are dying. Yet the way to life is not barred . . .

—A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.45, pp.47-49.

ROMANS 5:20

*Yet law came in by the way, that the **offense** should be increasing.*

Law is not the foundation of God's dealings with the race. It only came in by the way. Its object was *not* to give men a standard of conduct by which they may walk to please God, but to transform *sin* into *offense*. It is only a temporary expedient in God's great demonstration, showing that man not only falls short of the glory of God, but is at enmity with Him. He not only *fails*, but *rebels*. The light of the law does not keep him from sin, but leads him on to offense.

—A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.69, p.249.

OTHER OCCURRENCES

This word also occurs in Matt.6:14,15; Mark 11:25,26; Rom.4:25; 11:11,12; Gal.6:1; Eph.1:7; 2:1,5; Col.2:13.

PRAYER, AND THE DEITY OF GOD

Question:

One of the strongest arguments against the teaching of the sovereignty of God is that it renders prayer superfluous. If God works all things after the counsel of His own will, *why bother to pray*, since it will not change anything? *Why pray at all, if whatever happens is bound to happen?*

Now, you may be able to give some false, “intellectual” argument against these questions; but I’m confident you can’t really answer them, by showing that even if the doctrine of the sovereignty of God is true, prayer is *not* thereby made unnecessary. I say this because it seems beyond question that if the doctrine of the sovereignty of God is true, then prayer thereby *is* made unnecessary.

But what I really want from you as a starting point is simply an *honest* answer to the following question: Do you not at least *feel* the force of this argument against your teaching? *Honestly* now, doesn’t it seem quite clear to you, as it does to me, that if God ordains everything anyway, there simply is *no need* to pray?

I really need for you to tell me the truth here: Assuming that you actually pray and don’t just claim to do so, don’t you yourself feel *foolish* asking God to grant your request, since, according to you, He has already decided whether or not He will do so? In any case, under your theory, you *ought* to feel foolish doing such a thing, whether you do or not.

Can’t you see that your teaching that “all is out of God” discourages prayer and is deeply injurious to

prayer—as at least a few holding your doctrine have been honest enough to admit is the case?

Answer:

BEFORE addressing the subject of prayer in light of our teaching of the deity of God,¹ commonly termed, God's "sovereignty," I would like to say a word concerning the question of our "honesty" here. This seems in order, since you plainly appear to question it: You suggest that, unless pressed, we may not give you an "honest" answer; again, you insist that we answer you "honestly"; you "really need" for us to "tell you the truth"; concerning prayer, at least you suggest that perhaps we do not really pray, but only claim to do so. Finally, you say that "at least a few holding your doctrine have been honest enough to admit" that such a teaching as our own "discourages prayer and is deeply injurious to prayer," plainly intimating that we ourselves may not be so honest as to admit even this much.

As I will explain in what follows, you are simply mistaken in claiming that "[our] teaching that 'all is out of God' discourages prayer and is deeply injurious to prayer." Actually, just the opposite is the case. And if there is anyone who believes that all is out of God who actually affirms that while all *is* out of God, this is nonetheless a truth which discourages and injures prayer, then that person would be mistaken as well.

Misapprehension and improper application of truth can of course be a deleterious influence. Similarly, in the eyes of shortsighted and misperceiving skeptics and opposers, many truths will appear unseemly and stupid. This is so concerning even the very word of the cross itself (*cf* 1 Cor.

1. When we say, "the deity of God," we mean the "GODNESS" of God (*theotês*, PLACERSHIP; "that which pertains to God," entry "Deity," Keyword Concordance, p.71); that is, all that God *is* and all that He *does* (*cp* Rom.1:21).

1:18-25). These considerations, however, are simply irrelevant as to the question, What is true.

I would suggest that at least you consider the possibility that it may be that those who differ with you, do so not because they are dishonest, but simply because, to them, you appear to be mistaken. Why think the worst of people unnecessarily? And, why ascribe the worst of motives to others when you (1) have no way of knowing that their motives are actually impure, and therefore (2) also have no way of justifying yourself in ascribing the worst of motives unto them in the first place? Otherwise, you will be comporting yourself as a person of "wicked suspicions" (*cf* 1 Tim.6:4); that is, as someone who goes about merely *surmising* the worst of others, at least in the case of those who differ with you theologically.

One person may very well innocently differ with another in one's understanding of a matter. For example, concerning a certain issue, assuming that both individuals are not mistaken, then one person is correct and the other is incorrect. The mistaken party, however, may well think that he or she is correct, even though that is not the case. Not infrequently, the mistaken party may well not only believe that he or she is correct, but may fervently and adamantly further insist: "I don't just think I'm right and believe I'm right, I *know* I'm right; there's 'no way' that I'm mistaken about this."

When, however, one claims to "know"² that he or she is correct, this is merely to say that that one, however confidently, *perceives* it to be the case that he or she is correct. One may have a clear and certain perception of a matter and with the greatest of fervor equate that perception with fact or truth, while still having a *misperception* of that same matter.

2. To "know" is to "perceive with the mind"; Keyword Concordance, entry "know," p.169.

Dogmatism³ is simply not becoming to us, not to mention, completely inappropriate and unwarranted. Yet how common it is, in a quarrel, for one party, expostulating, to add the words, “I *know* I’m right!” only to be rejoined by the other party, saying, “I know *I’m* right!” Such assertions add nothing to an argument, and, thus expressed, simply evince the conceit of the one or ones thus speaking.

If we would be intelligent and fair, while comporting ourselves in a calm and becoming manner, we simply will not go about vociferously declaring statements such as, “I don’t just *think* I’m right, I *know* I’m right!” How foolish are such declarations, since, in the nature of the case, to *know* that one is right, can be nothing more than to *think* (however confidently) that one is right.

Having presented our argument that a certain proposition is true, normatively, we may then freely assert that, indeed, that same proposition “is” true. That is, we may do so, so long as at some point we have made evident that in speaking thus, we are speaking not categorically, but according to our best judgment—which is not *necessarily* correct, even if it should truly *be* correct. After all, one can *think* that one has indubitable evidence that his or her position is correct, while simply being mistaken that one has any such evidence.

We may *wish* to be able to say more than this, but we simply cannot, warrantably, say more than this. Concerning truth, let us have our reasons for the conclusions to which we come, and where appropriate, let us share these reasons with others. If, after deep and thorough investigation of a question, we find that we have sufficient evidence to warrant a specific conclusion, let us make our conclusion accordingly. This conclusion, then, becomes our conviction.

3. “Dogmatism,” as used here, is “[the] arrogant assertion of opinions as truths” (Dictionary.com Unabridged [v 1.1]; Random House, Inc. [HTTP://DICTIONARY.REFERENCE.COM/BROWSE/DOGMATISM.](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/dogmatism))

Even so, to adapt the principle inherent in Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 4:4 to our case at hand, let us always keep in mind that even if it is the case that “of nothing am I conscious as to myself [as having erred] . . . *not by this am I justified*. Now He Who is examining me is the Lord” (*cf* 1 Cor.4:4; *cp* Rom.14:4).

Where God has truly spoken, let us become “settled, unmovable” (*cf* 1 Cor.15:58). What He has said, *is* true; and, there *is* a specific sense in which what He has spoken is to be understood, whether or not we ourselves are in possession of that correct understanding. To “understand” something, is to “make out the *meaning*,”⁴ both of *what* is said *and of the sense in which* what is said is so.

Since “. . . A man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven” (John 3:27), it is evident, then, that if we would truly *understand* a matter, God must *give* us a special endowment of spirit for this purpose: “a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him” (Eph. 1:17). For this, then, we would pray, “requesting that [we] may be filled full with *the realization of His will*, in all wisdom and spiritual *understanding*” (Col.1:9).⁵

MISCHARACTERIZATIONS OF TRUTH

Before I address your principal claim, which is that if our teaching of the “sovereignty” (or rather, “deity”) of God is true, prayer thereby is rendered superfluous, I wish to address your preliminary question where you ask: “Do you not at least *feel* the force of this argument against your teaching? *Honestly* now, doesn’t it seem quite clear to you, as it does to me, that if God ordains everything anyway, there simply is *no need* to pray?”

4. Keyword Concordance, entry “understand,” p.314.

5. *cp* Isa.11:2: “And the spirit of Yahweh will rest on Him, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and mastery, a spirit of knowledge and fear of Yahweh.”

In all honesty, *no*, I do not at all feel the “force” of this argument, which you make here, supposedly “against [our] teaching.” Nor should I feel it, for it is not actually an argument against our teaching at all, but only against a straw man which you mistakenly think is representative of our teaching.

You also assert, “If God works all things after the counsel of His own will,” then there is no reason to pray “since it will not change anything.”

Since I do *not* believe that “God ordains everything anyway,” that is, in such a way that somehow precludes the essential place of prayer, I cannot be expected to feel the force of an argument wielded against something that I do *not* believe, especially since it has no bearing whatsoever on what I *do* believe.

While I do affirm, as you would put the matter even though you disbelieve it, that “God ordains everything,” that is a very different thought than any notion to the effect that since God ordains everything, it follows from this that He cannot but do so in such a way that precludes both the importance and efficacy of prayer.

To have any merit, your claim here can only be that *if* it were the case that prayer had no efficacy, no proximate causative agency or other vital connection to the constituents of one’s life-experience and outcome subsequent to one’s engagement in prayer, prayer would *then* be an undertaking without critical importance or abiding value. While I agree with your conclusion here based on your own hypothesis, again, the scenario which you envision, is by no means representative of the position for which we stand. You are arguing not against our teaching, but against a “horrible hypothetical,” one of your own devising.

I must emphasize that you are simply mistaken in characterizing our teaching as the proposition that “God ordains everything anyway,” where it is clear by your usage of “any-

way” that you have in mind the idea that, according to our teaching, God ordains everything in such a way that everything will come to pass “anyway”—that is, regardless of *how* we pray or even *whether* we pray.

Again, here you are simply opposing a fatalistic straw man, for what you represent as our teaching is neither our actual teaching as to God’s own determinative operations, nor anything tantamount thereunto.

There is no “anyway” in our teaching. That is, we expressly *deny* that God is operating all according to the counsel of His will in such a way that regardless of *how* we pray or even *whether* we pray, the outcome will be the same.

To the contrary, we affirm the essential place of prayer, since we affirm that *prayer*, regular, earnest and sincere, *changes those who pray*, such that as a result, their attitudes and deeds are significantly different than they otherwise would have been, had they not prayed as they prayed, not to mention significantly different than they would have been had they not prayed at all.

Furthermore, it may well be that in many cases, God grants our requests, whether for ourselves or on behalf of others, not apart from, but only through and consequent to our having made our requests known to Him. Have you not read, “You have not, *because of not requesting*” (*cf* James 4:2b)? Indeed, if we should be requesting anything *according to His will*, He is hearing us (*cf* 1 John 5:14). Thus understood, then, “*Request* and it *shall* be given you. Seek and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened to you” (*cf* Matt.7:7).

No sane and devout believer would presume to know that any certain divine provision will be his whether or not he asks God for it. After all, the reason why we are not to boast about tomorrow, is because “[we] do not know what a day may generate” (*cf* Prov.27:1). Therefore, no sane and devout believer will care to forego making his requests

known to God concerning those things for which He longs which press especially upon his mind.

This is so because such believers are aware that it may well be that in any certain case, if God would grant blessing, He would do so only through, and as a result of our prayers. Though God is our Father, Whom we love, we still do well to have a certain wholesome fear concerning Him. While fear of Yahweh is far from the whole of wisdom, it is nevertheless, “the beginning of wisdom; all who practice it have a good insight” (Psa.111:10).

PRAYER FOR GOD’S APPOINTED GOALS

You ask, “Don’t you yourself feel *foolish* asking God to grant your request, since, according to you, He has already decided whether or not He will do so? In any case, you *ought* to feel foolish doing such a thing under such circumstances, whether you do or not.” Further, you say, “Why pray at all, if whatever happens is bound to happen?”

In reply to your words here, I wish to say the following: I commend you for in these instances arguing against what we *do* teach, not, as in the case of your other questions and comments, what we *do not* teach.

First of all, primary causes do not render intermediate and proximate causes inessential, needless, dispensable. Instead, they remain essential, needful, indispensable (*cp* Acts 27:22-26; 30-36; 44b).

Further, it hardly follows that because future events are “bound to happen,” therefore there can be no good reason to pray concerning them. Nothing is more “bound to happen” than the establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth in the coming eon, in which God’s will, will be done. Yet one of our Lord’s first principles in teaching His disciples *how to pray* was to instruct them that they should be praying: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done . . .” (Matt.6:10).

“The prophet Ezekiel, after giving the outlines of the restoration of the holy land in the day of Yahweh, includes this notable detail: *‘This further I shall be inquired of by the house of Israel to do for them: I shall increase them with humanity like a flock of sheep. Like a flock for holy offerings, like a flock of sheep in Jerusalem in her appointed festivals, so shall the deserted cities become filled with flocks of humanity. Then they will know that I am Yahweh’* (Ezek.36:37,38). Does not this show clearly that, not only is the answer to the prayer already determined by God, but the prayer itself is a part of His planning. How can we know now that the sons of Israel will pray if God does not put it into their hearts to do so?”⁶

We may be fully assured that God finally will save all mankind, for while it is true that God is the Saviour “especially of believers,” even as “[Christ] is the Saviour of the body” (Eph.5:23), it is first of all true that God is “the Saviour of all mankind” (1 Tim.4:10). “God . . . wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth” (1 Tim.2:4). It is “for which” testimony, our apostle declares, that he “was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the nations in knowledge and truth” (1 Tim.2:7).

Yet it is in direct connection with this very testimony “which some, thrusting away, [make] shipwreck as to the faith” (1 Tim.1:19), that Paul declares, “I am entreating, *then . . . that petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanksgiving be made for all mankind*, for kings and all those being in a superior station, that we may be leading a mild and quiet life in all devoutness and gravity, *for this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, Who wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth*” (1 Tim.2:1-4).

6. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.77, p.148.

Note well that, unto God, we are to pray, petition, plead, and give thanks on behalf of all mankind—and that it is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, that we should do so—*because* it is God Himself Who wills that all mankind be saved! *Therefore*, He would have us engage ourselves in prayer, petition pleading, thanksgiving, for their sake. “I am intending, *then*,” says Paul, “that men pray in every place, lifting up benign hands, apart from anger and reasoning” (1 Tim.2:8).

From this we learn the principle that prayer is by no means rendered “superfluous” because it is in accord with God’s will, which shall be done, but rather that it thus becomes fitting, needful, welcome in God’s sight, *because* it is in accord with His will, which shall be done.

In Matthew’s account, concerning our Lord’s great trial of suffering (*cp* Heb.2:18), the reading of His testimony, there in Gethsemane is: “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass by from Me. However, not as I will, but as Thou!” (Matt.26:39). And, according to Luke’s account of this same event, the reading is: “Father, if it is Thy intention, carry aside this cup from Me. However, not My will, but Thine, be done!” (Luke 22:42). In these two readings, and most especially in the latter reading, we have the ideal testimony as to how we ourselves should face, and pray accordingly to God concerning, our own sufferings and trials as well (*cf* 1 Cor.10:13).

PRAYER IN ACCORD WITH GOD

Your concern over the time element as to when God determines the events which entail what His “answer” to our prayer will be, is actually not the critical thing. That is, even if God had not yet decided whether or not to grant my request, it would still be the case that His decision, *regardless of the time of its occurrence*, in any case, ultimately would be based not upon *my* desires, but upon *His*

desires (*cp* Isa.46:10), according to His purpose, in correspondence both to His wisdom and His righteousness.

We must not imagine that God, at least in many things, is indifferent, that very often He simply has no preference, whether something does or does not exist, whether something does or does not occur. This is because whatever *does* exist and *does* occur—which together consist of a practically innumerable number of specific details—these exist and occur solely as the outworkings of God’s own unspeakably intelligent, purposeful, and powerful operations, according to which He operates all (*cf* Eph.1:11; *cp* Rev.4:11).

It is in an awareness of these considerations, then, that I say, No, I do not at all “feel foolish” in making my requests known to God, even though *He* decides, and has already decided, whether or not to grant my request. (Of course, I wholly reject your claim that, I “*ought* to feel foolish” still praying to Him, even “under such circumstances.”)

This is because I am mindful that God, my Father, is aware of my needs *before* I make my *requests* known to Him (Phil.4:7; *cf* Matt.6:8; *cp* 6:31-34). I do not come to Him informing Him, educating Him, counseling Him. He does not need my help here, or for that matter, concerning anything else. It is not as if God is needy and must look to us for assistance:

“The God Who makes the world and all that is in it, He, the Lord inherent of heaven and earth, is not dwelling in temples made by hands, neither is He attended by human hands, as if requiring anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all” (Acts 17:24,25).

Indeed, “. . . 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.11:34-36).

In light of these considerations, then, in preparation for our words in prayer unto God, we would conceive of Him effectively saying unto us at this very juncture:

Yes, I have considered already what you are about to ask Me. I am your God, your Father, and I am aware of all your needs and all your desires, before you ask Me concerning them. Since I know just what to do concerning every one of them, I have decided just what to do also, concerning every one of them accordingly.

Even in your present life, in which while you experience much evil, you also enjoy much good, I grant you all possible goodness even now that is not precluded by all needful evil. This evil exists only temporarily, not permanently; and, no more intensely and in no other form than is necessary unto the realization of My wise and good, great and glorious ends, great and glorious ends otherwise unattainable. All My ways are righteousness, accord with My goodness and My wisdom, and especially with My love.

Now, again, as to this present request of yours: I am mindful that it is for something good, which you long to have. I welcome your asking Me concerning it, and am pleased that you do so, even as I will be pleased once again, every time you make such further requests of Me. Be assured that I know what is best to do here and will act accordingly, whether or not to grant you this specific request even in the near future, or to grant it, or something else instead, at a later time. I love you.

I pray, then, because prayer changes me; because prayer is sometimes and likely often essential to blessing, hence I would not forego it. I pray because my prayer, sincere and devout, is pleasing to God, because I often long to pray, finding no ease until I pray, as much so as I am constrained to eat, drink, or sleep. I pray because God has blessed me, that I should do so.

J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our Centennial Year
(1909–2009)

Contents:

- 241 Editorial
- 246 What is God's Goal?
- 263 Prophecy and History
- 271 Glorifying in God
- 279 Perceiving the Grace of God

NOVEMBER, 2009

Volume C

Number 6

The Concordant Commentary

A. E. Knoch's Commentary (or "Notes") was first published nearly eighty years ago. It is based on the Concordant Literal New Testament, and follows the sequence of books from Matthew to Revelation. Important passages are dealt with succinctly, yet with remarkable helpfulness, especially in light of the relative brevity of the entries. Ample cross-references to notes on related sections of Scripture are provided. Literary frameworks of the various books of the New Testament are included.

As Brother Knoch wrote, "The writer of these notes cannot help uttering a heartfelt prayer that they will never be taken for more than what they are intended to be—suggestive thoughts which lead to and not from the Sacred Text. He would rather they would vanish than that they should stand between anyone and the living oracles. May we never be tainted with the spirit of the ancient Rabbis who did not scruple to place their words above the Sacred Scrolls . . . In the same way, the commentaries and confessions and creeds of Christendom have a stronger hold on the hearts of many of His saints than the inspired Scriptures. May He grant that many will return to the fountain undefiled!"

A. E. Knoch, hardcover, 416 pages
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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2009
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

“THANKS be to God for His indescribable gratuity!” Thus Paul wrote to the Corinthians in view of the way God worked in their lives by means of the evangel of Christ which they avowed as true (2 Cor.9:8-15).

With this six hundredth issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, it seems appropriate for us to express publicly our thanks to God for the way in which His grace operated a century ago in the lives of two young believers, Vladimir Gelesnoff and A. E. Knoch. They were sons of Adam, which means that, as to the flesh, they were mortals, and so they were sinners just like us all. But under different circumstances, even in separate continents, they heard God’s evangel concerning Jesus Christ, and believed it. Yet also, again by different routes, God began to open their hearts to see that this evangel went far beyond the view of traditional creeds and established doctrines of Christianity. And in accord with God’s design they came in contact with each other by correspondence with a mutual desire to share by the printed page what they were coming to see concerning the glory of God and His transcendent grace through Jesus Christ.

The magazine was first envisioned as “A Bi-Monthly in the Interest of a Rightly Divided Word of God.” As such the editors wished to give special heed to Paul’s directive to Timothy as worded in the King James Version: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim.2:15). For them, to a great extent, this meant the recovery of truth that had been lost or covered up by the traditions of men.

But soon, recognizing that the recovery of truth must not be considered an end in itself, the statement of the magazine's purpose was changed to the simple motto: *For God and His Word*. Truth glorifies God.

Hence in connection with the growing realization of God's purpose to reconcile all through the blood of the cross of His beloved Son (Col.1:20), Brother Knoch wrote in the opening editorial of volume 5, as follows:

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

Even here the focus was not so much on the fact that all will be saved, as on the revealed truth that *God is the Saviour* of all mankind. We do not save ourselves, and as a certainty, no one is saved apart from God willing it and accomplishing it through His Son, the Mediator, Who gave Himself a correspondent ransom for all (*cf* 1 Tim. 2:4-6; 4:9,10).

In accord with this, in the article on God's goal of becoming All in all, reprinted in this issue (pp.246-262), Brother Knoch called Romans 11:36 a "compend of divine revelation." *Out of God and through Him and for Him is all*. This great summary of the teaching of Scripture and pronouncement concerning the experiences and happenings of life has shaped much of the testimony of this magazine from the very start.

This is seen clearly in Brother Gelesnoff's introductory article to a series on "the Prophets" of the Hebrew canon,

which we reprint here on pages 263-270 in abridged form, somewhat edited to correspond with later insight.¹ While upholding the revelation that all is out of God and for Him, our brother pointed particularly to the blessing of knowing that all comes about *through* God's counsel and operation. Brother Gelesnoff wrote in infirmity of flesh, but his confidence in the supremacy of God, through every struggle and sorrow, was strong and based solidly on the highest testimony of Scripture to the glory of God.

It was not only the glorious revelation of universal reconciliation that was opened up because of this focus on the supremacy of God, but also such associated matters as the eons and the administrations of God, the various secrets of God, now revealed, God's purpose for Israel and most astounding for us, His purpose for the ecclesia which is the body of Christ—all of these were given careful attention as operations of God in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). Perhaps most startling of all was the series of articles on the origin, purpose and end of evil, which became incorporated in a book, now available under the title: *THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD*.

As Brother Knoch acknowledged with hearty sympathy in volume 15, page 47, it is the reality of evil and suffering that makes the truth that all is out of God such a severe strain on the faith of many. But once we accept the fact that evil is temporary, that it is necessary for the appreciation of good, that God subjects the creation to vanity *in expectation* that it will be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God

1. Originally printed in *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.11, pp.21-31. For further details concerning the life of Vladimir Gelesnoff, see *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 13, pages 45-88, and that of A. E. Knoch, see volume 56, pages 97-144.

(Rom.8:21), we are on the way to full agreement with Paul, with heartfelt exultation, in his praise of God in Romans 11:33-36. *O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God!*

Regarding the fundamental subject of God's grace we read in volume 31, page 137, the following words:

"Grace glorious, rich, transcendent, is our portion now (Eph.1:6,7;2:7) Grace, undiluted by law, unspoiled by works, unconfined by aught of man, is the fullest, freest outflow of God's essence, which is love."

Even the matter of justification by faith is fully centered in God's grace, apart from our acts, for it is achieved by the faith of Jesus Christ. Hence we read in volume 7, page 266 concerning justification by faith:

"The translators of our versions did not believe in Christ's faith, judging by the way they manipulated the passages which point it out Justification is founded on His faith; it is conferred on our faith."

(These two subjects, the grace of God and its place in His work of justification and conciliation, are taken up also in this present issue, starting on page 271 and 279, respectively.)

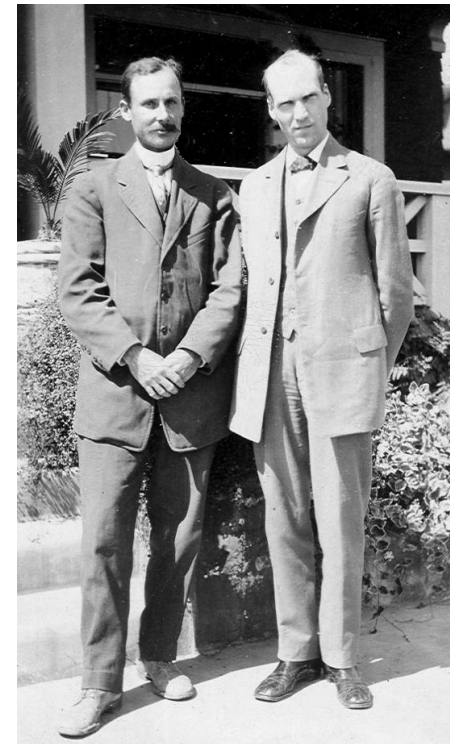
All these interconnecting themes of great consequence have met with opposition and controversy, calling for defense and further investigation. Recovery of truth, defense of truth and becoming settled in the faith (Col.1:23) are ongoing needs for us all. We thank God for others who, in their ways and places, are carrying on the struggle in heralding the word, standing by it, opportunely, inopportunely, exposing, rebuking, entreating, with all patience and teaching (*cf* 2 Tim.4:2). Thus, along with such brethren, we would continue this testimony to the grace, the righteousness and the glory of God as manifested "in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).

With some diffidence, lest it be misunderstood as a

matter for boasting in the flesh, we share the accompanying photo of our founding editors taken sometime after Brother Gelesnoff moved to California in 1911. Brother Knoch, on the left, was the elder by nearly three years and died at age 90 in 1965, while Brother Gelesnoff was put to repose in his forty-fourth year in 1921. They have finished their careers. We, who still remain, look forward to that day when we *all* are snatched away together to be always together with our Lord (1 Thess.4:17,18).

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity.

D.H.H.



WHAT IS GOD'S GOAL?

Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet. Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him. Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all. (1 Cor.15:20-28)

“ALL IN ALL”—such is the august goal of our God! He will yet be everything to every one of His creatures, as it is fitting that He should be. Nothing less will satisfy His heart or the heart of our Saviour. Nothing less will vindicate His love or form a fit conclusion for the tragedy of the eons. Let us with joy believe it. Let us exult as we receive it! May these three simple syllables, that an infant's lips can lisp, become the very basis of our being, the background of every act, the key to every occurrence, a light in every

darkness, a balm for every wound. They are the pole star of all true philosophy, the consummation of all wisdom. They are the heart of that compend of divine revelation, “Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all” (Rom. 11:36), and reflect back upon the dismal story of sin and suffering the bright and beneficent beams of the immanent love of God, for which the darkness and death we now endure is but a fleeting foil.

Well do I recall the days when this part of first Corinthians was utterly incomprehensible to me. The “truth” which held me in its thrall turned it into a dark riddle, which I had no hope of solving, at least in this life. Its beams were too bright, and, in place of illuminating my whole being, as it does today, it blinded my eyes, as Saul was blinded by the brightness of our Lord's presence on the way to Damascus. But gradually the scales fell away, and now that which was the most obscure has become a light for illuminating all the rest. This experience has taught me to bear with much patience the blindness of others, and to wait until God graciously restores their sight so that they may gaze upon these universal glories. Let us pray that God may open many eyes to discern that far future infinitude of bliss—God All in all.

The paragraph which closes with these wondrous words must be illumined by their light, or it will prove an insoluble enigma. The vivification of all, the abolition of death, the abdication of the Son—these truths are too much for the mortal whose heart is still confined in the confessions of human theology. In fact this part of God's revelation is far too magnificent in its scope to be cramped into the creeds of men. Hence we urge all who read these lines to remember at all times, when studying this superlative section of divine revelation, that the object of all which the apostle brings before us is a two-fold universality in regard to God. *Every* creature of His will find in Him its *all*. Keep-

ing this constantly before us we will be able to examine the steps which lead up to it, beginning with Him in Whom it has already found a fulfillment, the Firstfruit, Christ.

CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUIT

Christ *has* been roused from among the dead, and not only so, but He is the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. Just as, each year, a sheaf of grain (Lev.23:10) was waved before Yahweh as a token and promise of the coming crop, so Christ, in His recall from death, was but the beginning, to be followed, in due course, by the whole harvest. All is reckoned as being in the Firstfruit, so that, in another place, the apostle says, "If the firstfruit is holy, the kneading is also" (Rom.11:16). What is true of one is germinally true of all the rest. So that we need only look at Christ to see what God's heart has in store for all the creatures which His hands have made. His vivification is the sample and gives certainty to all the rest.

In his epistle to the Romans, the apostle shows how Christ's work parallels and far more than corrects the one act of Adam, to which is traced the entrance of sin and death. His conclusion was that, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying (Rom.5:18). In fullest accord with this he now develops the same thought in connection with *life*. In this also, Christ is far more than the equivalent of Adam. Death, as well as sin, came in through the first man. So life, as well as righteousness, comes in through the Second, our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, this goes far deeper, for it is death working in us which is the cause of our sin.

THE PROCESS OF DYING

Far more than our decease was brought in by Adam, and something which affects our souls much more than the

sleep which closes our career. God did not say to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen.2:17). If He had, Adam would have died the very day in which he was judged. He might then have had no progeny of sinners. In the precise language of the Hebrew, He said, "to die you shall be dying." That is, there would be dying as well as death. As we now know, there is a long process of disintegration, with which we are all acquainted, even though we are accustomed to calling it life. Ever since Adam sinned, he and his descendants have been dying. Like ripe fruit plucked from the tree, our bloom soon passes away, and we show a slow process of decay. In Adam, all are dying, even while they are still alive. That is the "life" that we inherited from our disobedient parent, which not one of his descendants has ever evaded.

Thus, we read, *shall all be vivified*. The contrast is not between the crisis of actual death and the resurrection, but between the dying process and a life process, beyond the touch of death. Indeed, it is not strictly true that all in Adam are doomed to die. Many have longed to be among the favored few who will not expire, but be vivified at the coming of our Lord. We who survive to the presence of Christ are slowly dying, but we will not complete the process when we hear the shout that will wake the dead and infuse immortal life into our dying frames. Not all of Adam's descendants will die, but all begin to tread the path that leads down to the grave as soon as they are born.

The contrast in this glorious promise is between mortality and immortality, between our present mode of existence and the glory before us. That vivification is far more than resurrection is abundantly evident, for it is for those who have not died as well as for those who repose. Our Lord is not only the Resurrection but the Life (John 11:25). Not only could He call back Lazarus from the tomb to life like that he had before, and thus be his Resurrection, but, in

the days to come, He will call Lazarus once again, to a life indissoluble and incorruptible, and thus become his Life. That is why, especially in relation to Lazarus, our Lord calls Him self by this double title. Lazarus has already experienced His power in resurrection, but he waits in death until His future presence before he makes His acquaintance as his Life. His resurrection was a passing occurrence, but the life that he will receive will be enduring, constant, incorruptible, eonian.

For death the cure is resurrection, but for dying we need life. The crisis of death is a single act and so is resurrection. Each may occur in an instant of time. This is not before us in this parallel (1 Cor.15:22). The words "are dying" and "shall be vivified" are in the incomplete tense in the Original, which denotes an action in progress. The long drawn-out activity of death in dragging men down to the grave is put in contrast with the endless activity of life in imparting incorruption, power and glory. All who endured the first shall enjoy the second. Here is a message for mankind which should lift it above its misery! Knowing this, we can even enjoy the weakness and humiliation of our present state in anticipation of the glory for which it is the necessary prelude.

THE THREE CLASSES

Perhaps all of us are like the prophet, and our hearts cry out, "Till when?" We are like children, intent only on the immediate sensations of our souls. God uses wisdom and waits until the proper preparation has been made. He does not wish to lavish His gifts on thankless, unresponsive hearts, so must reserve His bounty until sin and death have prepared them to appreciate His boons. Only thus can He become everything to them. So the longed-for glory cannot come at once. Moreover, some will be ready before the rest. The great Firstfruit is already glo-

rified. Not only has He been roused from sleep as to His soul, and raised as to His incorruptible frame, but He has been vivified, as to His Spirit, and possesses a life indissoluble (Heb.7:16), beyond the reach of death.

Of His soul we read that it was not forsaken in the unseen, or, more literally, the imperceptible (Acts 2:27). That is, in death all perception had ceased. His eye did not see, His ear did not hear, nor had He any sensation whatsoever. As to His soul, death affected it just as it does the souls of all humans. But it was not abandoned in that condition. He was *roused*, and sensation was restored, and every perceptive faculty returned. This is what constitutes consciousness. The return of His spirit to His body was the means of recalling His soul, for sensation is not an entity like the body or spirit, but an effect, which appears and disappears with the combination which causes it in mankind.

Of His body we read, "nor was His flesh acquainted with decay" (Acts 2:31). In this He was unique. His frame saw no corruption, notwithstanding it was dead. Decay is not an essential feature of death, merely a possible after-effect, dependent on the environment. If it should be very cold, decay may be prevented for thousands of years, as has been the case with mammoths encased in ice. By artificial refrigeration, flesh may be preserved for many months. In the hot climate of Palestine, however, dissolution commences almost at once, so that the dead are hurried away and buried on the day of death. But in His case God would not suffer it (Acts 2:27). Indeed, from the time when His work was finished His humiliation ceased. His body was not flung away and dishonored, but was entombed in a costly memorial. His honors began in the tomb, even before His resurrection. His corpse saw no corruption, and He was with the rich in His death (Isa.53:9). Though crucified with robbers and malefactors, He made His grave with the honorable of the earth.

His spirit He had entrusted to God. When He expired He cried, "Father, into Thy hands am I committing My spirit" (Luke 23:46). David, in the Psalms, whom Peter quotes on the day of Pentecost, not only foretold the whereabouts of His soul, and the condition of His body in death, but goes on to deal with His spirit, not indeed, by name, but by its manifestation, which is life. Not a word is said of the spirit in death, for there is nothing to say. After its committal to God when He expired, the next we hear of it is in vivification, for the spirit makes alive. It returned to the lifeless frame. In the words of David, "Thou makest known to Me the paths of life" (Acts 2:28). This is more than the rousing of the soul, or the raising of the body. This is vivification, expressed in the fine figurative fashion of the ancient Hebrew. Although His spirit was in the Father's keeping, He did not ascend to the Father until after His resurrection (John 20:17).

The *Firstfruit*, Christ! To be sure, all men will be raised for judgment. All shall be roused to give an account of their acts to God. But that is not what these words convey. He was not the first to be raised from the dead. Even before He came some received their dead by resurrection (Heb. 11:35). He Himself raised more. Others were roused from among the dead before Him. He was *not* the Firstfruit of resurrection or rousing, but of those who are vivified. No one before Him entered the portals of eonian life. No one was clothed with incorruption and immortality. Only as such is He the Firstfruit. We look for all who are in the tombs to hear His voice and come forth, some to life, and some to judgment (John 5:28, 29). But only the first group finds Him their Firstfruit. The second must find Him this, as we learn elsewhere, at a later time, and in another class.

The three classes of the vivified are distinguished from each other in character and time. Christ is a class by Himself. Then there is the group of faith, those who are His.

Thereafter, to complete the "all," come the remainder, who have no special designation, except that, at present, they may not be called His, hence do not believe. This agrees with the classification elsewhere given, where God is called the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10). And it harmonizes also with the gift of eonian life, which is not the portion of unbelievers. Hence the apostle, instead of describing the third class, gives the fact, rather, of the consummation, and this fixes the time of their vivification after the eons. Hence the third class is not promised eonian life, here, for vivification is not theirs until the eons end.

THOSE WHO ARE CHRIST'S

The time of vivification varies with each class. Christ, as we know, has been beyond the dominion of death ever since His resurrection. "Those who are Christ's" will be vivified at His presence (1 Cor.15:23). This seems to be at the crisis of the eons, between the three evil and the two good ones. As the great object of the apostle here is to show that *all* will be made alive, he does not give details concerning this second class, or tell us when this presence takes place. The term he uses, the *parousia*, the BESIDE-BEING, is broad enough to include all that is written elsewhere concerning the coming of Christ to Israel (cf Acts 1: 11) and, before that, to us (1 Thess.4:16,17). The main point of this part of Paul's presentation lies in the last word, the *consummation*. This is fully described as to both character and time, in the words that follow.

Before going on to consider the consummation, let us note the consistency which has carefully kept from even mentioning the resurrection of condemnation, which takes place at the great white throne. The moment we seek to insert it we find ourselves in conflict with the line of thought. "Those who are Christ's" certainly will not appear

in that judgment. And those who are not will certainly not be vivified, with Christ as Firstfruit, when they are called to stand before Him as Judge. This is more abundantly evident from the fact that they enter death once again. This section does not deal with such resurrections, for they do not introduce any to God as their All. In them Christ is the Resurrection, not the Life. And only this latter character of His comes into play in “making alive.”

THE CONSUMMATION

In place of naming the third class to be vivified the apostle simply tells us that after the vivification of the second class there will be a consummation. He names an event, not the dead who are left. The fate of the third class is so involved in this event, that we need only to understand it in order to be informed of their future. This grand truth seems to be almost unknown in Christendom. Although the very climax and fulfillment of all revelation, it has been eclipsed by human perversions. As a result the god of Christendom has lost the essential attributes of Deity. He is like the foolish man who started to build but could not finish. Theology brings nothing to a conclusion. It attains no definite goal. Sin, suffering, and insubjection are never conquered. God is compelled to work an eternal miracle in order to maintain a never-ending eyesore in His creation, once so subject, so sinless, and so good.

Knowing as I do, the power of this great truth, I urge everyone to make its acquaintance. To know the end from the beginning is no longer a divine prerogative, for in this passage (1 Cor. 15:20-28) God reveals to us the goal He has in view, and the manner in which it will be attained. Few, even of the saints, have any clear idea of the object of all creation and revelation. They have no key to nature and to history. They are riding in an automobile without a steering wheel and have no idea whither it is bound. Most of

the perplexities and many of the pains we are called upon to endure are ameliorated, if not removed, when we see the great goal which God has set before the universe, to which all things tend, for which all are but the preparation. I am heartily sorry for all His saints who have never had their eyes opened to see the end—the purpose of the Lord for all creation.

The consummation consists in *subjection*. Christ Himself will be subject when He has subjected all. Here we have a key to all the evil in the world. It is due to *insubjection* to God. This is seen clearly in the character of the eons. The evil eons are either anarchistic or under human government. The good are under the scepter of Christ. The very name, the Kingdom, speaks of subordination. Adam's insubjection brought in sin. Christ's obedience and reign will restore all to its proper place beneath the rule of God. This is not an endless, hopeless task which never comes to fruition. It will be accomplished. It will find its finish at the close of the eons. It is the consummation of the eonian times. Intelligent and loving subjection on the part of all His creatures brings us to the goal, God All in all.

Christ will give up the Kingdom to *God as Father*. These two names reveal to us the object of the eonian times. They show us their root and their fruit. From being *creatures* of the great *Subjector*, who have rebelled against His rule, mankind is brought to loving obedience, as *children* of the *Father*. If that time could be described as a day, we might call it the day of the Father. Now we have man's day, for man is ruling. Soon will come Yahweh's day, to be followed by the day of God. Then will come the final, the finishing time, the “day” of the Father, in which God becomes the loving Ruler of His own household, and all creation will be one vast family, knowing no subjection except to Him, no laws but filial obedience. The Kingdom will be handed over to God, yet this will transform it into a universal family.

THE REIGN OF CHRIST

It is the office of Christ, God's Anointed, to bring this about. It is astonishing to note how this is to be done. The method is entirely negative and consists in making certain things *inoperative* (15:24,26). The word used to express this is most important, and it is both interesting and suggestive to consider the parts of which it is composed, for the idiomatic meaning is quite in accord with its elements. Its chief root is *erg*, which occurs frequently in the word family denoting *action*. To this is prefixed the Greek letter *a*, denoting UN-, *a-erg*, which combines, the *a* swallowing the *e*, making *arg*, which is the root for UN-ACT, *idle* (2 Peter 2:3). To this is further prefixed the connective *kata*, DOWN (dropping the last *a*), *kat-a-rg*, DOWN-UN-ACT, DOWN-idle, make inactive, or inoperative. Idiomatically it is most difficult to translate this word, for we use many terms to denote this where Greek uses but one. In this passage we may use *nullify* with sovereignty and *abolish* with death. But in our present meditation we shall prefer *make inoperative*.

It is usually supposed that the universe is so essentially wrong that it requires *positive* corrective acts to set it right. From this basic revelation it appears that what is needed is the negative abolition of activity in two distinct directions, the cessation of all subjecting powers over and *outside* of man, and the stopping *in* man of the force which subjects him to sin. In other words, man is now subject to external authorities and to the operation of death within him. Make these activities inoperative and he will be subject to God. Man was made by his Creator for subjection to the Deity. This is his normal condition, to which he returns as soon as alien restraining influences have been removed. Add to this negative removal the positive experiences which were his while insubordinate, and we have

all that is necessary to make the creatures of God not only obedient, but adoring children of the Father; children to whom He is Everything.

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

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

The consummation, then, does not follow immediately

after the vivification of those who are Christ's. The second class are made alive in order to have a part in the *reign* of Christ. The end cannot come so long as there is such a thing as reigning. The interval between the second and the third class consists largely in Christ, with His saints, taking over the government of the universe. No rule, however, can exist where there is no insubjection, for no one who is subject to God needs any intermediary sovereignty or authority or power. These, taking the place which belongs to God, are in their very nature abnormal, opposed to God's ultimate, unless they are temporary and retiring, having their own withdrawal as their aim, being merely scaffolding to be removed when its purpose is accomplished. Such is the nature of the rule of Christ. It is not the object but the means. It aims at its own recall.

THE END OF INSUBJECTION

This passage, because it goes to the very bottom of things, bares to our gaze the true nature of rule. How much disturbance and distress have come to mankind through the operation of human government! From the days of Noah till the present, oppression and tyranny have been the order of the day, wars of aggression and succession have bathed the world in blood, and even the best of governments have left much to be desired. Human government is certainly abnormal. And will the reign of Christ with the saints restore ideal conditions? Is not the rebellion at the end of the thousand years an emphatic denial? The reign will be righteous and good, and will bring much blessing because God will be back of Christ, so that it will approximate the ideal. But evil is not banished from the universe by intermediate rule, but by the gradual and final withdrawal of all rule.

Almost all other rule tends to draw men away from subjection to God. Christ's rule will be devoted to restoring

them to the normal. It will continue until all rule is concentrated in His hands. All enemies will be put under His feet. All of this will be done with the cooperation of the saints, in whom death no longer operates, for they have been vivified. But all the rest are still hindered from yielding spontaneous subjection by the operation of death and sin within them. Others of His enemies are in the second death. What is needed to restore all to more than normal perfection is to stop the activity of death. This is done, at the last, by the vivification of all. The dead and the living, all who are still within the clutches of death in any of its manifestations, are made alive. This is the point of this passage. It puts universal life in place of universal death.

This passage affords a splendid lesson in intelligent interpretation. The apostle insists that Christ subjects all under His feet. He proceeds, "Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him." That which is self-evident and altogether contrary to the object of the whole, need not be stated. Paul need not say, "He subjects all *except God*." But a most important point arises, which is also self-evident, and that is *that there are no other exceptions*. And if the word "all" has no other exceptions here, why should it have them in similar connections elsewhere? Nor is it a sign of superior acumen to insist that stones and sticks are not included. Such an objection is only a sign that the objector is not yet fully subject in his mental operations. It suffices to know that, as a result of Christ's reigning, there will be no insubjection left in all the universe, so that He may hand it over to the Father.

THE ABDICATION OF CHRIST

The time of the consummation is given us, not in chronological fashion, but in relation to the vital events of the universe. When God has brought all into subjection to

Christ, "then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all." What an utter contradiction of all our thoughts about empires is contained in these marvelous words! When the great conquerors of earth had gained universal control they made every possible provision for retaining it. We see what becomes of such an empire in the case of Alexander. When death tore the scepter from his hands, his vast kingdom fell to pieces. What is gained by force must be held by power. But Christ's reign brought all to *God*, not to Himself, except as He was the Mediator of the Deity. Hence His abdication will cause no great change in government. It will merely be the public acknowledgement of a patent fact. Christ brings men to God.

Great are the mediatorial glories of God's Christ! No prophet ever spoke His words more faithfully. No other priest is in His class. No king can compare with Him. But what distinguishes His word above all others is the fact that He carries it on to a conclusion. He is Priest *to a finality* in the day of Yahweh. Hence there is no temple and no priesthood in the day of God. Then He still continues to reign, but it is to such purpose, that He finally rules rule out. This is the greatest of all His glories, the eternal halo, which is composed of the surpassing excellence of all the rest.

A temple, even with all the golden glories of Solomon's majestic pile, is the symbol of a distant God. In Yahweh's day one will be reared once again in the holy oblation. It will far surpass even the splendors of Solomon's. But how much greater, to the anointed eye, is the glory of the day of God, where He dwells with mankind, without any barrier between! Nothing would so dim the luster of Christ's priestly glory, as to shut God up once again, in the day of God, and bid men approach Him as of old, through mediatorial means. The fact that it is not needed in the last eon,

is the highest praise that can be brought to the Melchizedek priesthood. In a thousand years it accomplished its mission, and finished the task God intended it to do. All other priesthood retires because of its weakness and inability to bring aught to perfection. His retires with honors, having accomplished its glorious mission.

A throne, even in the day of God, is the symbol of enmity and of insubjection. We are accustomed to associate it with majesty and splendor, and do not readily perceive that it rests upon resistance to the will of God on the part of those who come under its control. Perhaps our imaginations can conceive of a beneficent governor of some island realm whose subjects had so profited by his rule that, when he left them for a year, he could suspend all government until his return. That would border on the miraculous. The ideal government is that which brings God into the hearts of its subjects to such effect that He alone is needed at the helm, and all intermediaries are idle and superfluous.

At the consummation, as *Christ*, our Lord's work is finally finished. His anointing made Him a Prophet, a Priest, and a King. Not one of these functions is needed when the consummation comes. Hence it is not as *Christ* that He subjects Himself to God, but as the *Son*. In His official glories He was always subordinate to Him, yet, at the same time, He subjects others. Then He lays these glories by, and in the unofficial relationship of Son, He is subjected to the Father. His mediatorial glories will take on the added luster of success, the splendor of achievement, the sublimity of consummation. Oh, how it drags His highest honors in the dust to distort God's Word so that His priesthood is eternal and His Kingdom everlasting! May God forgive the ignorant zeal which seeks to gild the glory of His crowns with the tarnished tinsel of man's imagination! What He starts He will finish, and what He commences He will consummate.

GOD ALL IN ALL

The purpose of all of this, as, indeed, of all God's eonian dealings with mankind, is that God may take the place in every heart which His love deserves, so that each member of the human race becomes, at last, no longer a lost creature but a fondled child, no longer a distant enemy but a delighted son. Death brought in the breach, and life will much more than remove it. Death nearly made God nothing to anyone. Life will make Him All to everyone. In Adam all are dying through no choice of theirs, and so, in Christ, this same all will be made alive. All were created in the Son of His love (Col.1:13-16), and all will be reconciled by the blood of His cross (Col.1: 20). Death, in all its manifestations, will be discarded. Life will be universal, for only so can God be All in all.

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S FINISHED WORK

It is something to know that history, despite its sinister aspects, is after all God's work; we are not standing helpless in a world set adrift by an enemy, but are in a personal world, a moral world, where character is being wrought out and God's purpose is being realized. In such a world it is permitted to us to see a vision of God's finished work, and devote ourselves to the service of the highest and best, in the sure faith that the whole universe will enter into His rest and move in unison with His will.

V. M. Gelesnoff

Here let us direct our attention to the result of God's eonian dealings. God is ALL in ALL. The kingship has been delivered up to Christ's God and Father (1 Cor.15:24), and the Son is subjected to Him (v.28)—as if to suggest that the family, rather than the kingdom, characterizes the ultimate state. The Adamic dead have *all* been raised *in Christ* (v.22); and now, perfected in His perfections, God Himself becomes ALL *in them*. Humanity in the Son, and God in humanity—do we wonder if the eyes of faith at times have blinked when called to gaze upon that wondrous goal?

Alan Burns

PROPHECY AND HISTORY

GOD carries out His purpose of the eons in time. “He makes out of one every nation of mankind to be dwelling on all the surface of the earth, specifying the setting of the seasons, and the bounds of their dwelling” (Acts 17:26). Time does not go on of itself, without supernatural control or guidance. History unfolds itself according to a definite plan. The program of history has been determined by the Most High and every step in the process and the final outcome is infallibly settled. The rise and fall of nations, their continuance in power, their conflicts and the territorial changes consequent thereon, every event and movement is carried out in accordance with the provision of His plan.

The God of the prophets is the Sovereign and Architect of the universe, having neither rival nor competitor. “I am El, and there is no other” (Isa.45:22). Time and space are under His absolute control. Nothing can take place without His appointment. “Who is this who speaks, and it comes about, if Yahweh does not determine it?” (Lam.3:37). Created intelligences which move in space and act in time carry out His will. None can stir without His high behest. “According to His will, He is doing with the army of the heavens and with those abiding on the earth. And there is no one who shall stay His hand and say to Him, What have You done?” (Dan.4:35). He builds, and none can hinder; He works out the purpose set forth by His own advice and prosecutes it to a successful issue, without hindrance, interference, or delay. “Yahweh of hosts has sworn saying, Assuredly just as I have meant, so will it come to be, and

just as I have counseled, that shall be confirmed . . . For Yahweh of hosts, He has counseled, and who shall annul it? And it is His hand that is stretched out, and who shall reverse it?" (Isa. 14:24,27).

God's faithful purpose moves across the ages and keeps tryst with foreseen need. The universal order was dependent on divine intelligence for its origin; and it is equally dependent on divine intelligence for its outworkings. There is no way in which things or events could slip in, which were not provided for in the primal arrangement. God knew from the outset what He was doing, and He intended its interweavings. Hence every event represents a divine purpose, and is part of a divine plan, and is as truly purposeful when realized through ordinary processes as it would be if produced by fiat. This is the doctrine of the divine supremacy, before which the scandals which infest religious thought disappear.

THE LIVING GOD

We are too prone to encompass God with the limitations with which we ourselves are beset. And when we allow the purpose, we practically cancel it by pushing it so far back in time as to think that it must have faded out of the divine mind and interest altogether. The things we planned long ago we have forgotten or they have lost all value for us, and we think it must be so with God. The world of popular thought resembles a patchwork quilt. The universe has been resolved into opposite unrelated units divided by impassable intervening chasms. Nature and mind have been set up in mutual exclusion, and an order of "natural law" has been made a reason for denying purpose. Wherever such law can be traced things are supposed to be sufficiently explained without further reference. God is needed only to supplement the inadequacies of nature, and if nature be adequate, God is needless; there

can be naught but blind happenings for which nature alone is responsible. The underlying notion is that nature somehow has slipped from under God's control, and acquired self equality and self sufficiency which have enabled it to set up for itself and do a great many unintended things on its own account. Nature is thus built into a self-sufficient mechanism operating partly on its own account, partly in opposition to the divine purpose, so that God is obliged to break occasionally into its order to remind us that He is still alive and doing what He can to prevent the utter miscarriage of His enterprise. As a consequence men are looking for God in the field of physical prodigies rather than in the moral realm and in the normal activities of men and the unfoldings of history. Having created a rift between God and His work, nature is looked upon with suspicion; "natural" has become a term of reproach, and the fear prevails that should some outstanding fact be reduced to rule or some miracle accounted for by natural law, faith will vanish and be made of none effect.

THE PROPHETIC VIEWPOINT

The prophets set aside the notion of the cosmic order as the rival of God. For them there is no nature that does the bulk of the world's work, while God is reserved for occasional interpositions. They teach that nature is dependent on a power beyond itself and perpetually does only that which it is intended to do. God is the ever present Worker in the ongoing world, and nature is but the form and product of His ceaseless activity.

The false notion of nature has been extended to the field of history. As nature is supposed to set up for itself and do many things on its own account, so history is supposed for the most part, if not entirely, to go its own way, while God now and then intervenes in some striking fashion for His favorites. The round of human action is a haphazard

scramble of men doing the behest of the devil, while providence spooks about in the dark, frustrating now and then a bold scheme of Satan, but having no connection with the orderly movement of the world. Thus men look for God in signs and marvels, in strange events, in striking crises, in great calamities, and in unusual coincidences, rather than in the orderly movements of human life. This looking for God in the chaotic and abnormal is a source of much weakness. God's action is supposed to be above and apart from law, rather than through it, or in accordance with it.

In opposition to this the prophets affirm a divine purpose, a moral development in humanity as the essential meaning of God in history. This history is the unfolding and realization of the divine purpose. To be sure, we are not always able to discern any special significance in events; but that only proves that the underlying purpose is not always evident. Sometimes the historical crisis is such, and the co-working of complex factors is so marked, that we seem almost to see the hand which shapes our ends. Then we speak of God's nearness. But commonly life runs on in the familiar routine, and we seem left to our own judgment to find the way. At such times we have nothing to say of God. But the only difference is that sometimes the divine purpose seems manifest while at other times it is hidden. The purpose, however, is equally controlling at all times, though not equally manifest. Our eyes are veiled in this matter by the false notions of a self-running nature and a human-run history.

GOD'S WILL AND PURPOSE

The course of history is not something foreign to God's purpose into which He makes occasional raids to reveal Himself. His purpose determines and administers the course of events; and history is but the form of His procedure. We come down, not to the opposition of a rival, nor

to any impersonal principle, but to One Who lives and "is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph. 1:11). The most common event, as the growth of a weed, is as supernatural in its causation as any miracle would be; for in both alike God is equally implicated. Life itself, with all its forms and interests, represents the divine will and purpose and from it God is never absent.

We are in God's world, and the ultimate reason why anything is, or changes, or comes to pass, lies not in any mechanical necessity, nor in any natural antecedents, nor in any machinations of free moral agents, but in the will and purpose of that God in Whom all things live and move and have their being (Acts 17:27). Every system must come down at last to some fact, or system of facts, of which no more can be said than that it is. This fact, to which all else is referred, and from which all else takes its rise, is, for the prophets, the will and purpose of God.

Furthermore, the divine causality proceeds in orderly ways in the realization of its aims, so that events do not happen at random but according to rule. To trace the modes of being and happening is the function of prophecy; and practical wisdom depends on this knowledge.

When the theological banishment of God from His world is revoked and His supremacy set up in its place, we make it possible for faith to endure in the world as it is and to prosper with expectation of what is to come. We return, not to a rabble of capricious wills behind nature and history, but to a loving Father, Who founds and administers the order of the world. God's will is not back of these things at some awful distance of time and space, but is their present living source.

FORMER AND LATTER PROPHETS

It is a widespread idea that prophetic writings are predictive. Ignorance lies at the basis of this mistaken and

misleading idea. Under the title "Prophets" the Scriptures draw together the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets. These books are arranged in two distinct groups. The first, the Former Prophets, embraces Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings. The second, the Latter Prophets, comprises Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets.

The books of the first group are purely historical. They are conspicuous by the absence of the very predictive element supposed to be the prime requisite of prophecy. The men who recorded this history are called "prophets" the same as those supposed to foretell the future. The prophetic element binds their writings into one class; the grouping merely differentiates the constituent parts of prophecy in regard to order. The "former" prophets precede the "latter" in point of logic and experience as well as time. Our concern in life and its interests follows an invariable rule. Our first desire is to know what takes place under the sun. When that desire has been gratified, when the facts are known, questionings arise in regard to the reason of things, and we want to know why things happen as they do.

EVENTS AND THEIR PURPOSE

Two quite distinct questions present themselves to the observer of the times. The first concerns the uniformity of coexistence and sequence which constitute the order. The second, the underlying causality and purpose of the order. The way in which events occur in an order of law is one thing; the meaning of such events in a scheme of purpose is forever another. Things exist and events happen in certain ways. To discover, describe and register these ways of being and happening is the function of history. But when this is done, we further need to trace the causality at work, and the purpose underlying the whole. These two questions are quite distinct, and the answer to both

is necessary to the full satisfaction of the mind. History as such explains nothing; for it only classifies and coordinates facts according to rule; the knowledge of cause and purpose is empty until experience furnishes the facts. As a result of this distinction we can appreciate the grouping of the "Prophets."

Prophecy is a fusion of history and its purpose. The Former Prophets write down history. They relate Israel's fortunes from the entrance into the land to the removal to Babylon. They give us a systematization of sacred history. Events are classified under familiar heads; the order in which divine causality proceeds is traced. But it is description, not explanation.

The Latter Prophets run concurrently with the Former. They found themselves on, and constantly appeal to, the facts recorded in the antecedent books. But here we have purposive interpretation. The divine purpose and the manner of its realization in Israel's experience is traced and explained.

The writings of the Latter Prophets range themselves around the periods dominated by the foreign powers which influenced Israel's life and fortunes—the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Persian. The first claims most of the writings. Here belong Isaiah and the Minor Prophets from Hosea to Habakkuk. The Babylonian period is covered by the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Zephaniah. Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi belong to the Persian period.

DIVINE COUNSEL

In Isaiah God again and again claims for Himself a providential government of history: the career of His Servant is the final touch that reveals the counsel of God from the beginning to the end of history (Isa. 41:21-23; 42:9, 23-25). This involves the restoration of Israel, to fulfil the covenant, and the bringing of salvation to all the nations of

the earth (Isa.49:6). The aim of prophecy is to reveal the cause and meaning and goal of the movement of humanity rather than predict specific events. For this reason prophecy centers around epochs which exhibit the continuity of law and the rational connection of the revealing work. The prophets of each period focus on some outstanding fact of an eventful era—Sennacherib's invasion, the fall of Jerusalem to the Chaldeans, the return from Babylon. These facts are no more divine than others. They are simply extraordinary events which, from their form or the circumstances of their occurrence, make the divine presence and purpose more manifest than is the case with the ordinary routine course of events.

God works His will in history not apart from men, but involving men; and the work is no less divine on that account. We need not fear development, or natural agencies, when we know that the divine purpose underlies them all.

THE DIVINE SUPREMACY

Thus we see the deep significance of the divine supremacy emphasized by the prophets. It recalls God from the infinite distance in space and time to which sense thought has banished Him, and where theology has lost Him, and makes Him the omnipresent power by which all things exist and on which all things continually depend. It is something to know that history, despite its sinister aspects, is after all God's work; we are not standing helpless in a world set adrift by an enemy, but are in a personal world a moral world, where character is being wrought out and God's purpose is being realized. In such a world it is permitted to us to see a vision of God's finished work, and devote ourselves to the service of the highest and best, in the sure faith that the whole universe will enter into His rest and move in unison with His will.

V. M. Gelesnoff

GLORYING IN GOD

IN HIS GRACE and by His righteousness God justifies sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ. In believing this evangel we become acquainted with God's love which He pours out in our hearts, not only in His work of righteous justification but in His unparalleled act of the conciliation of His enemies through the death of His Son. Consequently, it is certain that we shall be saved in His life (*cf* Rom.5:9,10).

YET NOT ONLY SO!

*but we are glorying also in God,
through our Lord, Jesus Christ,
through Whom
we now obtained the conciliation.* (Rom.5:11)

For Paul, when sharing the spiritual grace of the evangel, there is always more to add. Here for the second time in this context he uses the phrase, "Yet not only so," in both cases pointing to ways in which the evangel leads to glorying. Both our glorying in afflictions (Rom.5:3) and now our glorying in God are *present* effects of believing the evangel concerning the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ which occurred in the *past*. And both arise as we anticipate the *future* which God has prepared for us because of Christ's faith: the expectation of the glory of God and salvation connected with the life of God's Son.

This passage looks back to all that Paul has written so far in Romans concerning God and His power, faithful-

ness, righteousness and love, and all that constitutes His glory, as it has been made known through Jesus Christ. But in particular it contemplates the conciliation, which God has brought about through the death of His Son.

Thus we are glorying in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

NOT ASHAMED

Romans 5:11 is the complement of Romans 1:16. In preparing his readers for the evangel he was about to unfold, Paul wrote, "Not ashamed am I of the evangel." Now, having presented the foundational features of the evangel as a revelation of God's righteousness and a commendation of His love, Paul declares without reservation that it leads to "glorying in God." He has taken us from a striking understatement in negative terms to the positive position of bold exaltation. He began by denying any trace of shame concerning a message that is built on the foundation of the shameful death of God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, having brought us to see that this death of God's Son is the means for the revolutionary change from sin to righteousness, from enmity to conciliation and from death to life, he testifies that there is no holding back of joyful praise.

GLORYING OR BOASTING

The Greek term translated "glorying" here is a present participle of the verb, *kauchaomai*, which is often rendered "boast" in the CV. The corresponding term in Hebrew belongs to the IRRADIATE family and is most frequently translated "praise." As used in Scripture the concept is one of joyful, uninhibited appreciation, with or without just cause, whether directed to the self or another.¹

1. cf KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.35, and ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW CONCORDANCE, p.366.

In Romans 5:11 the act of boasting is a glorying that is directed apart from praise of ourselves, and it clearly arises from true and just causes: the revelation of God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ in the justification of sinners, and the commendation of God's love in that Christ died for our sakes, conciliating us to Himself through that death, drawing us close with full access into highest favor.

FOCUSING ON GOD

On first hearing the evangel, most of us focused on what it said about us, about our justification and salvation and all the many blessings which we are given. But our blessings are all in Christ, and the opening words of this message, as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, are "Christ died," followed by "He was entombed" and ending with "He has been roused." With this our attention is enlarged so that we see our blessings as they come to us through and in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Yet again, when introducing the evangel in Romans, Paul identifies it as *God's power* for salvation (Rom.1:16; cf 1 Cor.1:18-25, where also it is called *the wisdom of God*). Then, tied with a threefold cord of testimony, the evangel is seen as revealing, manifesting and displaying *God's righteousness* (Rom.1:17; 3:21,25,26), through Jesus Christ's faith. Later in chapter 5 and again in chapter 8 this message centered upon God's power and righteousness is enlarged in "breadth and length and depth" as it speaks of *the love of God*, in Christ Jesus, our Lord (cf Rom.5:6,8; 8:35-39; Eph.2:4; 3:17,18). The center of focus and ultimate meaning of the evangel is what it says about God.

It is a matter of progress toward maturity. As presently constituted, we probably never get entirely rid of seeing ourselves as the center of things. But the evangel is powerful, energizing the believer by the spirit of God, which

is aiding us in our infirmity, strengthening our awareness of God as the One working all together for good (*cf* Rom. 8:26,28). Thus we learn to say with Paul: "May it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal.6:14).

So it is, after identifying the evangel as a message speaking to us especially of God's power, righteousness and love, that Paul pauses in Romans 5:11 to stir up our hearts in joyful boasting in God. All that he has been saying strengthens our reliance on God, in the great privilege of glorying in Him.

That is, it does so as we are believing the evangel.

ISRAEL'S BOASTING

It was in connection with their position of resting on the law that the Jew boasted in God (Rom.2:17). Consequently, because they could not avoid transgressing the law, they brought dishonor on God (Rom.2:23,24). The cause of their boasting in God, that is, His giving of the law to them, involved their own acts to such a degree that glorying in God became essentially a hypocritical boasting in themselves. Yet when their Rescuer arrives and turns away their irreverence and eliminates their sins (Rom.11:26,27), bestowing His spirit within them, so that they walk in His statutes and observe His ordinances (Ezek.36:27), God will be their praise, or *boast* (*cf* Deut.10:21) more truly than ever before. They will be doing the works of the law, but doing so with full recognition that this is due to God's spirit in them. They will relate their benefits to their Rescuer Who ransomed them from their vain behavior with His precious blood (1 Peter 1:19). Then "in Yahweh shall they be justified, and shall all the seed of Israel boast" (Isa.45:25) with honor to His name.

HUMAN BOASTING

Jeremiah was a prophet to the nations concerning God's place for them in His dealings with Israel (*cf* Jer.1:5-10). As such he set forth the ideal condition for all peoples on the earth, when Israel returns to Yahweh: "Then nations shall bless themselves in Him, and *in Him shall they boast*" (Jer.4:1,2). In accord with this are the often quoted words of Jeremiah 9:23,24:

*Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom,
And let not the masterful man boast in his mastery;
Let not the rich man boast in his riches,
But rather let the boaster boast in this:
To act intelligently and to know Me,
That I am Yahweh, working benignity,
Right judgment and justice on the earth,
For in these I delight, averring is Yahweh.*

But what is not seen here (and could not be plainly revealed) is that Israel's return and all intelligent action and the knowing of God arise from what God has done for sinners through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To know God and glory in Him as the One Who works benignity and executes judgment and justice must ultimately be to know Him as He is revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

OUR BOASTING

In His superabundant grace (Rom.5:17), God has revealed His righteousness and love to us as it is revealed through the giving of His Son for sinners, apart from our works. Consequently, our boasting in God is freed from self congratulation. It is a glorying in God which focuses wholly on what He has done for us through the giving of His Son. Because the doing of works of law has no place in our deliverance from sin and enmity, we are taken even beyond the

new covenant promised to Israel. We are granted a position where joyful appreciation of God is without any element or implication whatsoever of praise to ourselves.

That will be true of all when they bow in the name of the Saviour and acclaim His Lordship to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:10,11). Yet in God's transcendent grace, this, as one of the consummations of the eons, has attained ahead of time to us (1 Cor.10:11), who are debarred from boasting in ourselves (*cf* Rom.3:27). *For God's achievement are we*, being created in Christ Jesus, for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them (Eph.2:10).

THROUGH OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST

Our glorying in God is always in connection with what He has done, is now doing and shall do *in and through His Son, Jesus Christ*. This is clear from the context of Romans 5.

We glory in God for the high privilege of having peace toward Him. And this has been opened to us *through our Lord, Jesus Christ* (Rom.5:1).

We exult in God in that, *through Him Who is our Lord and Saviour, and God's Anointed One*, He has given us access into a position of grace before Himself where we are rejoicing in the expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2).

We praise our God for His love which is defined and exhibited in that *Christ died* for the our sake, who, in ourselves, are sinners, bringing dishonor to our Creator by our acts and are deserving only of death (Rom.5:8).

Our boast is in God in that it is He Who justifies us and saves us from indignation, and He does so *through Christ* (Rom.5:9), Who was given up because of our offenses and was roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:25).

And then there is the conciliation. God Himself has removed all the enmity of His enemies *through the death*

of His Son. Again we have to pause. We must not pass over these words of evangel lightly. It is not *despite* the insidious offense of the death of His beloved Son that God conciliates us to Himself. It was by this means that God expresses what has been from the beginning in His heart concerning humanity. And it does not end with the conciliation, for that must be realized finally in the reconciliation of all, when peace, made through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love, is fully experienced (Col.1:20).

THE CONCILIATION OBTAINED

It is God Who has brought us into a position before Himself in which there is no enmity or offense. It is God Who has given us this standing where we are conciliated to Himself. It is God Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all so that we may have the blessing of the conciliation.

What have we done in all this?

We have obtained what God has given.

The Concordant Version uses the word "obtain" for the passive form of the verb generally rendered "get."² But even the active form often conveys a passive sense, as in John 3:27 ("A man can not *get* anything if it should not be given him out of heaven"). We did not conciliate ourselves to God, but He has conciliated us to Himself. Furthermore, He is presently acting toward the world in accord with this achievement, not reckoning their offense against them, and sending His ambassadors with the entreaty: "Be conciliated to God!" (2 Cor.5:19,20). As for us who are believing that God has conciliated us to Himself through the death of His Son, we are enjoying, in spirit, an earnest of the peace and access to God in grace which He has achieved for us.

2. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.121.

278 Boasting is Directed to God through Christ

In *obtaining* the conciliation from God by means of the death of His Son, we did not *get* slavery's spirit to fear again, but we *got* the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying "Abba Father!" This spirit is testifying together with our spirit that we are children of God, enjoyers of an allotment from God (Rom.8:15-17).

Our boasting is in accord with 1 Corinthians 4:7, where Paul asks, "Now what have you which you did not obtain?" (note again, the words of John 3:27). Our boasting is centered in all that we have obtained from God in Christ Jesus and is directed toward God, and, like Paul, we dare not speak of other things which might bring us praise (*cf* Rom.15:17,18).

THE PLACE OF BOASTING

Where then is boasting? It is not in ourselves, not in our works and not even in our faith. It is in God Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. And the glorying in God ascends from us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; the glorying is through Him, through Whose death and resurrection God has made Himself known and has blessed us with righteousness and peace. D.H.H.

The typeset CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT as well as scanned pages of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT WITH KEYWORD CONCORDANCE are available online at WWW.CONCORDANT.ORG, page: "Concordant Version."

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PERCEIVING THE GRACE OF GOD

Question:

I know what many of the *blessings* of the evangel are (e.g., forgiveness, justification, conciliation, eonian life, immortality, incorruptibility, vivification), but I am not so clear concerning the *nature* of the evangel, that is, what it is and what it entails. Everyone says that we are saved “by grace”—or at least no one cares to say that we are *not* saved by grace—but as it turns out, what it means to be saved by grace, is variously defined.

Even among those affirming the final salvation of all, even as among those affirming eternal torment, grace is understood differently by some than by others. Most claim that one must meet some type of requirement in order to be saved, while a few claim that there is no requirement to be met. Some say that good works are required for life in the coming ages, yet others say that only faith in Christ is required. Still others claim that one’s possession of eonian life turns on just one thing: one’s willingness (according to one’s own free will) to be *non-resistant* to the workings of the Holy Spirit.

In contrast to these various conditional views, some such as yourself teach that those who will enjoy eonian life are simply those whom God has chosen to receive it, according to His Own grace and purpose.

I am familiar with many of the arguments made by the advocates of these various positions; yet at least I am not fully confident just which of these teachings is correct. Can you help me see what the truth is concerning the evangel? I want to know what the evan-

gel is, which will make evident to me what the *nature* of the evangel is. I want to know what salvation “by grace” *actually* means and entails. I know that Christ died for my sins, and that this is good news having to do with my salvation. But does Christ’s sacrifice for my sins secure and ensure my salvation, or does it just secure and ensure the possibility of my salvation?

Answer:

YOU have framed the question well; and that is a good start. May we now consider it carefully, and, especially, answer it correctly and faithfully.

It is upon “*hearing* the word of truth, the evangel of [our] salvation,” and upon *believing* it also (“in Whom on believing also”), that “[we] are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of [Christ’s] glory!” (Eph.1:13,14).

In speaking of our initial “hearing”—to be sure, with “ears to hear”—and “*believing*” of the evangel of our salvation, we have in view the time when we first, as ones who now (1) *rely*¹ upon the evangel of our salvation’s testimony as true, and so (2) are *convinced* (i.e., persuaded) that its testimony, in fact, is true, therefore *assume* it as well (i.e., take it to ourselves as our own).

Especially as concerns the evangel, every man who is

1. “Now faith is an *assumption* of what is being *expected*, a *conviction* concerning matters which are not being observed” (Heb.11:1). The Greek *elpizō*, as here, is sometimes translated “expect” in reference to something in the future. It is also, however, sometimes translated “rely,” as in the testimony, “. . . we *rely* on the living God . . .” (1 Tim. 4:10; *cp* 2 Cor.1:10; Rom.15:12). Futurity (as in “expect”) is incidental to *elpizō*, hence is not inherent to its essential meaning, which is “rely.” More fundamentally then, we may understand faith as “an assumption of what is being *relied upon* [as true], a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed.”

truly wise of heart concerning it, is one in whom Yahweh has *put* wisdom and understanding (*cp* Ex.36:1; *cf* Col.2:2; 2 Tim.2:7). If we would have wisdom and understanding, then, this must be given to us from heaven, for “a man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven” (John 3:27).

Still, wisdom and understanding come to us in measure, and that, in installments; gradually, not suddenly, all at once. To be sure, where one enjoys wisdom and understanding, God has given these self-same endowments. And, where one seeks for wisdom and understanding, one does so solely by God’s grace. Even so, the means of grace through which we gain wisdom and understanding is our own actions and efforts in which we labor unto this end, in order to *acquire* them:

⁵ **Acquire wisdom; acquire understanding;**

**Do not ‘forget, and do not ‘turn aside
from the sayings of my mouth;**

⁶ **Do not ‘forsake her,² and she shall guard you;
Love her, and she shall preserve you.**

⁷ **The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom,
And ‘with all your acquisition, acquire understanding;**

⁸ **Highly regard her, and she shall raise you up;
She shall ^mbring you glory ‘as you ‘embrace her;**

⁹ **She shall ^gbestow a wreath of grace ‘on your head;
A crown of beauty shall she award to you.**

(Proverbs 4:5-9)

“Wisdom” is “the faculty which makes the highest and best application of knowledge.”³ To “understand,” is to “make out the meaning”;⁴ hence, “understanding” is that enlightened intelligence which one enjoys when one has, in

2. “her”: i.e., wisdom.

3. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry “wisdom,” p.329.

4. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry “understand,” p.314.

fact, made out the meaning of something. Through proper analysis of both the meaning (i.e., essential significance) and function of each of the words comprised in a clause or sentence, which together serve to form and convey a specific idea, we may know what that specific idea is.

This may be termed a clause's or sentence's "base-meaning," in contradistinction to its "sense-meaning," which is to say its "interpretative meaning." While establishing even the base-meaning of a statement is often a formidable undertaking, one requiring substantial reading comprehension skills, as a rule, further establishing *the sense in which* that statement should be understood (which is to say, its "interpretative meaning") is an even much more formidable undertaking.

For example, in the words of the evangel, "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3), the base-meaning thereof is that "the Anointed One died ["died" meaning the cessation of life] for [i.e., 'for the sake of,' or "on behalf of"] our sins [i.e., our mistakes, our failings of the ideal]."

From the clause, "Christ died . . ." together with the knowledge that to "die" means to "cease to live," we may determine that when Christ died, He ceased to live, which is the base-meaning of this statement. Still, simply believing that Christ actually died, does not answer the further question of the interpretative meaning here, which is: In what sense did He die? or, In what way is it possible to die (i.e., to cease to live)? Specifically, did Christ die categorically or only corporeally?

Further, to claim that it is, or is not, possible to die only corporeally while still remaining alive incorporeally, is a claim concerning the metaphysics⁵ of death: Is it or is it not possible for one to die corporeally only (hence, in this

5. Metaphysics is the investigation of the nature of reality, seeking to determine what exists.

sense, to die), while still continuing to live, though only incorporeally? The answer to this question can only be discovered through an accurate knowledge of the metaphysics of death, specifically of human death.

The evangel, however, is simply that Christ died for our sins: that in being put to death (hence, in somehow ceasing to live), Christ did so for our sins.

A knowledge of *how* it was that, until the third day, Christ ceased to live, or of what it is for anyone to cease to live, is knowledge altogether distinct from a knowledge of the evangel itself. It is true that one may not *understand* the evangel fully or altogether correctly if one does not understand the true metaphysics both of life and of death. Nevertheless, one who *believes* that Christ *died* for our sins (who therefore has a *verbal* understanding of this declaration), *believes the evangel*—let his *metaphysical* understanding of death be what it will.

DISCRIMINATION OF SENSE

Before addressing your question specifically as to the nature of the evangel, I have first spoken somewhat of the more general matters of hearing and believing, of acquiring wisdom and understanding, even as of noting base-meaning while distinguishing it from interpretative meaning, that is, of the *sense* in which we should *understand* a statement to be so. These considerations which I have rehearsed briefly above, are directly relevant to your question; and, they are directly relevant as well to every other scripture-related question.

Our need is for eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart with which to believe. We are in desperate need of wisdom and understanding, for without these our quest for truth is hopeless. We have vital need as well to be intelligent in our faith, which critically includes discriminating between what is said, and the sense in which what is said

is to be understood, in light of an entire array of considerations relevant to whatever subject it may be that is at hand.

Let us, then, be praying unintermittingly, requesting, that the God our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, the eyes of our heart having been enlightened, for us to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength (*cf* Eph.1:17-19).

A CORRESPONDENT RANSOM FOR ALL

Now to your question: What is the *nature* of the evangel? Keep in mind in approaching this question that the evangel, in essence, is just one thing; it is that, "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures." More fully stated, even as the apostle Paul declares: "Now I am making known to you, brethren, *the evangel* which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are saved, if you are retaining what I said in bringing the evangel to you, outside and except you believe feignedly. For I give over to you among the first what also I accepted, *that Christ died for our sins* according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:1-4).

The good news is that since Christ died for our sins, *our sins have been died for!* Indeed, "... We are observing Jesus ... in the *grace* of God ... tasting death for the sake of *everyone*" (Heb.2:9). "... Christ Jesus ... is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all ..." (1 Tim. 2:5,6). "God ... wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4), and, "is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11).

Hence, "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching" (1 Tim.4:9-11). "For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation ... The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet ... Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22-28).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, *if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died*" (2 Cor.5:14; *cp* Heb.2:9); and, "... *one who dies has been justified from Sin*" (Rom.6:7; *cp* vs.18,22; John 1:29).

"The evangel of [our] salvation" (Eph.1:13), which is the evangel that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3), is "the evangel of the *grace* of God": even as Paul declares, "... the dispensation which I got from the Lord Jesus, to certify *the evangel of the grace of God*" (Acts 20:24). "But not as the offense, thus also the *grace*. For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather the *grace* of God and *the gratuity in grace*, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds" (Rom.5:15). "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying" (Rom.5:18).

THE SAVING GRACE OF GOD

To answer your question, then, What is the *nature* of the evangel? the answer is, as the passages above make evident, that the evangel is an evangel of *grace*, and, of a grace which *saves*: it is the evangel of "the *saving grace* of God"

(Titus 2:11). "Now if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace . . ." (Rom.11:6a; *cp* Rom.4:4; Luke 6:32-35). Hence any claim that salvation depends upon some type of human contribution (such as good works, assent to faith, or non-resistance to the operations of God's spirit), is necessarily mistaken, being contrary to the nature of grace.

Further, it is not a question of the nature of man's will. That is, whether it is or is not the case that man possesses such a freedom of will as is popularly supposed, is simply irrelevant. This is because in the matter of our salvation in Christ, we are not called upon to fulfill requirements. Instead, we are saved by genuine, gratuitous grace, not by some sort of "grace," falsely so-called, that is perfectly indistinguishable from a reward.

The evangel of our salvation, is not an evangel which merely offers to save, but which actually achieves salvation, in the *grace* of God. Therefore, Christ's sacrifice for our sins actually secures and ensures our salvation; it does not merely secure and ensure the possibility of our salvation.

If any "gospel teaching" today either affirms or entails it being the case that salvation is granted only on the condition of some type of human obedience, especially some type of ultimately flesh-dependent human obedience, any such teaching is false, for it denies that salvation is truly a gracious gift, not something granted as a reward or compensation, on a *quid pro quo* (i.e., "this for that") basis.

Alternatively, if any gospel teaching claims that the blessing of the gospel is truly a gracious gift, but that the gracious gift consists not in actually achieving salvation on behalf of the sinner, but only in making salvation possible while leaving its outcome uncertain, that teaching is false as well.

This is because such a concept is synergistic in nature (i.e., co-operation based), and in the end, is not even synergistic, but autosoteric in nature (i.e., ultimately dependent

upon the human self alone). According to that conception, when God has done all that He will do, and will do no more, and yet man still remains unsaved, it is necessarily man alone who makes all the difference between success and failure. In that case, for all eternity, man would be able to boast that when God's work was completed and yet he himself, the sinner, was still lost, it was then that he himself independently pitched in and did whatever was necessary in order for "salvation" to be realized.

" . . . The word of *the truth of the evangel* . . . is bearing fruit and growing . . . from the day on which you hear and realized *the grace of God in truth*, according as you learned it from . . . a faithful dispenser of Christ . . ." (Col.1:4-7).

It is vital that we know what "the grace of God in truth" is not only in the sense of the particular blessings of which it consists according to "the truth of the evangel," but first of all and more especially, what the expression "the *grace* of God," in itself, in truth, actually signifies.

That is, what does it mean for something to be a matter of the "grace," or "favor" of God, in contrast to something that is a matter of the reward, wage, or compensation of God? "Now to the *worker*, the *wage* is *not* reckoned as a *favor* [i.e., as a *gracious* gift], but as a *debt*" (Rom.4:4). A favor or gracious gift, then, is not something that is due us because of something we have done, but is simply an act performed or provision made granted out of kindness and love in order to bring us joy, *irrespective of what we have done or not done, whether good or bad*. This is what grace is; and most importantly, this is what the grace of God is.

In the interests, then, of your perceiving for yourself and gaining an assurance in the grace of God in truth as set forth in the evangel of your salvation, I would commit you "*to God and to the word of His grace*, which is able to edify and give the enjoyment of an allotment among all who have been hallowed" (Acts 20:32). J.R.C.