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Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS
WORD

VOLUME XCIII

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and
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A Sonnet

I would praise God's righteousness and love,
But not as though they were great mysteries
Where right was shown below by miseries,
And love forever set apart above.

I would know that everything God is
Is harmony, and good as it is true,
That right is in His making all things new,
And all shall bow in love because they're His.

They certainly are wrong who say that grace
And love are one, but not displays of right—
That wrath and woe bring justice to our sight,
But there's no hope for love seen there, no trace.

But see! The cross of God's beloved Son!
Both right and love win there and stand as one.

D.H.H.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2002
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

OVER half of this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* is concerned with Genesis 4:1-16. This is an especially important passage of Scripture because it initiates a theme that is reflected throughout the Word. The act of disobedience in the garden of Eden spreads into a spirit of stubbornness and pride that increases the alienation between humanity and our God and Creator.

In accord with the dominance of this theme of human corruption in Genesis 4, the character of Cain, rather than that of Abel, dominates our attention. Cain works hard, and Cain does wrong and Cain is angry. Yahweh addresses Cain, and Cain murders his brother. Cain complains, and Cain is given a sign. Cain leaves the family and builds a city. God's Word has a great deal to say to us concerning Cain and his "way."

We hope the comments here concerning "The Way of Cain" and the background information concerning worship and offerings, the place of conscience in regulating human affairs in those days and observations concerning God's dealings with Cain will be helpful to our readers. The topic, of course, is by no means exhausted with these articles, but perhaps they will stir up further interest and meditation and investigation on your part as well.

As for Abel, isn't it interesting how passive he is, how inconspicuous in relation to his older brother? We will give special attention to his part in this passage in our next issue, but clearly Cain gets the headlines.

We never hear Abel speak. All we know of him is that his name meant "Vanity," or "Transitory," and that he brought an acceptable offering to Yahweh, and that he was mur-

dered. But from this small testimony, we see, as did the writer of Hebrews (11:4), that Abel had been given a gift of faith from God. And that says it all.

At one point when I was preparing my article on this passage, I found myself thinking about Abel and exclaiming, "Happy was Abel!" Yahweh heeded him and his approach present.

And happy are we! "For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh; not many powerful, not many noble . . ." (1 Cor. 1:26). "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).

And to know Christ, Whom Abel could hardly know except as He was made known in the types provided by the present he offered, how happy are we! "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:3-5).

Because so many influential teachers have concluded that Cain's final destiny is everlasting damnation, we have made special effort, in commenting on Genesis 4, to point to God's saving purpose for all mankind, including Cain. But what a special and overwhelming grace it is to be included with Abel as a vessel of mercy and to believe what God has said to us in His Word.

Other themes treated in this magazine concerning resurrection and faith, concerning God's faithfulness in His callings and examples of His favor, are actually not different themes. For they treat of these same ways of Cain and Abel and of God's operations in the affairs of humanity in accord with His purpose.

D.H.H.

THE WAY OF CAIN

THE WORSHIP of Yahweh is the sphere into which we are introduced by the first sons of Adam and Eve. After noting the love life of the first human and Eve as his complement, who bore him two sons on whom to lavish his fatherly affection, the narrative turns back to the subject of it all, the worship and adoration which is due to the Giver of all this good. Meanwhile, however, Adam and Eve had offended their Benefactor, and had been driven out of the garden of Eden.

Communion with Yahweh characterized His first contacts with mankind, and will be more than regained at the consummation. The intervening eons are evil because of the lack of His presence. They are largely devoted to efforts to restore this communion, on the part of both man and God. We are not informed of any exertion on the part of Adam and Eve to heal the breach which their sin and offense had brought about. Indeed, as typical characters, we cannot expect them to undertake anything in this direction. The promised restoration was not to come through their efforts, but through the Seed of the woman. We do not read of any such activity until their sons come upon the scene.

GENESIS 4:1-16

4 ⁺Now the human knew ⁺Eve his wife. ⁺She became ⁺pregnant and gave ⁺birth ⁺to Cain, ⁺saying: I have acquired a man ⁺through Yahweh. ²⁺Then she ⁺again ⁺gave birth, ⁺to his brother Abel.

⁺Abel ^bbecame a shepherd^l of the flock, ⁺while Cain ^bwas serving the ground. ³And it came to ^bbe ^fat the end of days ⁺that Cain ^bbrought an approach present to Yahweh from the fruit of the ground. ⁴⁺As for Abel ^{mr}however, he^l brought ^fsome firstlings of his flock and ^ftheir fat portions. And Yahweh gave ^bheed to Abel and ^bhis approach present. ⁵⁺But to Cain and ^bhis approach present He did not give heed; ⁺so Cain's anger grew very ^bhot, and his face ^bfell. ⁶⁺Then Yahweh ^bsaid to Cain:

Why is your anger hot?

And why is your face fallen?

⁷ If you had ^bdone ^bwell,

Would you not lift up your face?

⁺But ^fsince you have not ^bdone ^bwell,

There is a sin offering,

A flocking reclining ^bat the portal,

And for you is ⁷restoration[~] in his sacrifice;

⁺ You^l are ^bdominant in authority ^bover him.

⁸ ⁺Cain ^bsaid to his brother Abel: ⁷Let us go into the field^{bc}.

⁺Now it ^bcame to pass ^bwhile they ^bwere[~] in the field ⁺that Cain ^brose up ^bagainst his brother Abel and ^bkilled him. ⁹⁺So Yahweh ^bsaid to Cain: Where is your brother Abel? And he ^{ls}a replied: I do not know. Am I my brother's guardian? ¹⁰⁺Then He ^bsaid: What have you done? The voice or your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground. ¹¹⁺ Now you are cursed^l, away from the ground which has opened wide ^bits mouth to take ^byour brother's blood from your hand. ¹²⁺When you ^bserve ^bthe ground, it shall not continue to give[~] its vigor to you. A rover^l and a wanderer^l shall you become ^bon earth.

¹³ ⁺Cain ^{ls}a replied to Yahweh: Too great is my depravity ^fto bear[~]. ¹⁴^{bd}Since You drive ^bme out today, off the surface of the ground, and since I shall be concealed from Your presence and will become a rover^l and a wanderer^l ^bon earth—⁺it will come to be that anyone finding

me shall kill me.

¹⁵ ⁺Yet Yahweh ^bsaid to him: ⁷Not so^c; anyone killing Cain—sevenfold shall he be avenged. ⁺So Yahweh ^bplaced a sign for Cain, by no means to smite[~] him, should anyone find him. ¹⁶ ⁺Then Cain went ^bforth from the presence of Yahweh and ^bdwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

CAIN AND ABEL

Just as the darkness precedes the light, in order to make it apparent, and the night still alternates with the day, so worship was introduced by way of its opposite, and adoration by hatred, which still continues to teach us by their terrible contrasts. What greater gift could Yahweh give to Eve than a son? How many mothers' hearts have been filled to overflowing by the advent of their first child! Eve's thankfulness to God should have filled her whole being with the deepest of adoration. Adam had the utmost incentive to worship his Creator for giving him the woman He had formed for him to love and cherish. Both should have prostrated at His feet for these great and gratuitous gifts. But we read of no word of worship from either Adam or Eve. They had to be taught in the hard school of evil before they could bow the knee before their Blesser.

Abel became a grazer, or shepherd, but Cain became a server of the ground, or farmer. These two modes of obtaining a living are most significant. Cain seeks to sweat his livelihood directly out of the cursed ground. Abel gets his by means of *mediation*. The firstborn sustains himself by consuming soulless plants, which cannot suffer when he takes their life. But his inferior, Abel, subsists on the life of souls, who live and suffer for his sake. One had a bloodless, sweaty occupation. The other probably had a bloody, mediatorial method of evading the curse which had come upon the ground through Adam's disobedience.

Cain had a bad start, which really determined his life's

course. His mother imagined that *her efforts* had brought forth the promised Restorer. So she called him *Qin*, Cain, ACQUIRED, or *Bought*, or Paid-for. Here we have the first discernable trace of that great curse of mankind, *salvation by works*. It seems, however, that the conduct of Cain soon taught Eve her mistake, for she named her next son *Ebl*, Abel, VANITY. These two set before us the two main varieties of approach to God. One is based on man and his presumed ability to please his Maker by his unaided efforts. The other acknowledges that all human help is *vain*, and blessing comes only from the gratuitous grace of the Subjector. This is further elaborated in the *occupation* and *worship* of Cain and Abel, and the *presents* they offered to Yahweh.

All mankind is laboring under the illusion that they can earn something, and possess the exclusive right and title to its enjoyment. I like the spirit of William Penn, who bought Pennsylvania from the king of England, but denied his right to sell it, and paid the Indians also. So he paid for it twice, but I do not recognize his title even then, for the Indians, also, had no valid claim. The right of discovery is a sham, and is not recognized when there is a human owner. If I pick up a purse when the possessor is not apparently present, it does not belong to me, and I commit a crime if I make it mine. Even Israel does not *possess* Palestine. The Jews are tenants, who were evicted because they did not pay the rent.

The Creator is the exclusive Owner of the earth, and He does not renounce His rights for the benefit of beggars, who have no inherent title to anything. All of us are debtors to Him for all we have. Before we were born He provided us with parents who spent much on our care and upkeep. The food we eat, the air we breathe, the clothes we wear all come out of His storehouse. Our physical strength, our mental energy, our power of perception, our very life, is His

handiwork. We are not our own, and all we “own” is only a loan, to be used for our great Owner alone. How can we “acquire” anything? Cain was not “acquired” by Eve, but the name may have led to the murder which he committed, even as acquisition has led to many a slaughter since.

What’s in a name? Contrary to the popular conception, very much indeed, especially in the Scriptures. There are many parallel passages in the predictive prophets in which *Jacob* (Heel) balances *Israel* (Uprightness-of-Subjector), and they usually have an appropriate and contrastive context. Many of the prominent characters in the Bible would be more easily understood if their names were translated rather than merely transliterated. David, for instance, is practically Fond, or Darling, and this expresses his loving relationship to Yahweh at all times.

TYPES

We would not insist that Adam and Eve did not worship God, for the action of Cain and Abel seems to suggest that they had learned it from them. But it is of paramount importance to note that the Scriptures give us no hint that they were at all grateful or ever brought any thank-offering to Yahweh, let alone a sin offering or an ascent offering. Adam is a typical character and stands for the old humanity, in contrast to the new, which has the second and last Adam as its Head. No acceptable worship can come through our fleshly relationship with Adam, but must be presented in the name of his greater Son. We see this portrayed in this typical scene where Adam’s *son*, Abel, is the first to offer a sacrifice well pleasing to God, and himself became the victim of human hate. In this he was a most marvelous type of the Son of humanity and His sacrifice.

The Father is seeking *worshippers* (John 4:23). That is the full and final fruit of His eonian operations. At the beginning, His beneficence seems wasted on Adam,

because he had no knowledge of good or evil. At the end His *grace* will bring Him universal homage and adoration. Every knee will bow in token of undeserved blessing received and appreciated. Now, indeed, He is seeking sinners, in order to make them saints. But this is so because only saved sinners have had their hearts filled with responsive love to enable them to worship in spirit and in truth.

CAIN'S PRESENT

The worship and adoration of the Deity is the ultimate object of all creation. Since this is so, there can be no doubt that the Creator implanted in the hearts of His creatures an inclination which would unerringly lead them to this goal. Even a murderer, like Cain, brought a present to Yahweh in recognition of benefits received. His present, however, was more in the nature of repayment, so that he would not owe Yahweh anything more, and left no room for thanks or adoration for undeserved gratuities. Cain ignored the sin and offense of his parents and his own depravity, and simply wished to square accounts with the Subjector. This is the way of Cain (Jude 11). It is the path pursued by all religionists today. All deathless, bloodless worship is unacceptable to God, because it utterly fails to provide the love-link which is needed to unite His creatures to His heart.

Some of the lessons of nature go much deeper than mere appearance. For instance, the various animals used in sacrifice portrayed characteristics which correspond closely to that of the Antitype. The lamb is meek and dumb when mistreated. But we can go much deeper than that. The ground was cursed, so that it takes labor and sweat to make it produce food for mankind. But a sheep can live off a very poor, untilled pasture, and the shepherd can live off the milk and meat of his flock, as well as cover his shame with the wool. So that the lamb is a living, mov-

ing picture of the great Mediator even before it is offered to God in sacrifice.

Not only are such intangible forces as light, life, and love, used to set forth the divine essence, but actual substances, such as *flesh* and *blood*, *bread* and *wine*, *gold* and *silver*, *frankincense* and *oil*, to mention but a few, are used by God in His written revelation, to symbolize spiritual thoughts by the figure of association. This is especially true of the sacrifices offered to God in worship, and all connected with them. They are nothing in themselves, and are repugnant to Him unless they represent precious spiritual contents. Cain's offering lacked this, hence was not acceptable to Yahweh.

ABEL'S PRESENT

By *faith* Abel offered to God more of a sacrifice than Cain, through which he was testified to that he was just (Heb.11:4). Cain was not irreligious. He also brought a sacrifice. So far, there was no apparent difference, but Cain's did not suffice in kind or quantity. Before Adam offended, it might have sufficed as a token of his obligation to Yahweh. But, now that death had entered, and man was a mortal sinner, much more is required than that. Yahweh Elohim had already shown the way when He covered the shame of mortality with a tunic of skin, by sacrificing an animal. Abel knew that fig leaves would not do. He believed Elohim, and imitated Him by his sacrifice of a sin offering.

Human *life* on earth is sustained by *death*. Most of it comes from plants or animals that give up their life to perpetuate that of humanity. Very few fully realize this or learn the spiritual lesson which it inculcates. Killing are we continually, in order to live, yet who knows why? Every leaf or stalk or seed, and all flesh that we eat, is a mild form of murder. All yield up their lives for our sake. Were our eyes open, we would see that almost every mouthful that

we eat is an intimation of the death of Him Who is the Bread of life, Whose death for our sakes does for our spirits what all other food does for our bodies and far more, for it need not be repeated, it makes the dead live, and it will yet make man immortal, beyond the reach of death.

THE PLACE OF SUFFERING

Just as life, to be appreciated, must come from death, so blessing, to be enjoyed and bring adoration and worship to the Blessor, must come from the suffering that precedes death. Our personal experience of evil will lead us to heartfelt thankfulness to God for His goodness. But the suffering of His Son will not only save us, but enable us to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Hence every acceptable sacrifice which was offered to Yahweh had to be a true type of the suffering Saviour or at least be accompanied by such an offering.

Although the animals which were offered of old were typical of the sacrifice of Christ, there was a tremendous difference as regards the blood. The law demanded that the blood should be poured out immediately, so that there was no suffering. This was contrary to the great Antitype, but was dictated by the sympathetic heart of Elohim, which, despite all appearances to the contrary, will not allow any needless suffering on the part of the creatures of His hand and heart. It will be a relief to many to know this, for much has been said and written to blaspheme the God of the Old Testament Who demanded the death of innocent animals. When slain according to the law, their death caused them no suffering as soon as the blood flowed out of their veins.

In the beginning, toil and suffering were indicated by *sweat*. Adam's judgment, which has passed down to his descendants, demands that they suffer from their efforts to provide themselves with food from the accursed ground. Terrible distress and excruciating pain makes men sweat

because of their agony. So also was it with our Saviour. He, figuratively, was crushed as an olive berry in the presses of Gethsemane. There He sweat, as it were clots of blood (Luke 22:44). The blood speaks of suffering. It would have been a great relief if He had actually sweat blood. But He did not lose it then. He retained it in order to suffer on the cross.

Olive oil was made by *crushing* the olives with a large stone roller. The oil ran down into a trough below. This is what gave Gethsemane its name, for it means Oil Trough. I once spent some time there in meditation on the sufferings He endured in that sacred spot. It would be well for all of us to visit it often in spirit, for there it is that we may learn one of the basic lessons of God's Word, the function of *suffering* in revealing the love of God. It was not the ordinary oil of an olive that flowed into the trough on this occasion, but *sweat* (the token of accursed toil) that resembled *blood* (the seat of sensation and suffering), which fell from His frail form. He was not crushed under a heavy stone, but under the weight of humanity's sin and offense.

It is notable that we read of sweating in only two connections in the Scriptures. In one case it is a part of the penalty imposed upon the first human because of His sin and offense, and was implemented by the curse upon the ground (Gen. 3:19). In the other it is the penalty borne by the second Human, because He was about to bear that sin in His own body, due to the curse of the cross (Luke 22:44).

OFFERINGS

An ancient eastern custom decreed that an approach present be sent to a dignitary when *nearing* him, or when desiring an audience with a superior. Jacob sent a munificent *present* to Esau, his brother, whom he had estranged by his circumvention long before (Gen.32:13). This is the special offering brought by Cain and Abel. It is not likely

that they knew of the various offerings which were given to Israel, but only intended to honor and worship the Elohim of whom their parents told them, by offering Him a *present* and thus restore communion. The notable fact is that Cain fell far short of the present offering prescribed by Moses, and Abel went far beyond it. In the book of Hebrews this is clearly indicated, for, by faith, Abel offers to God *more* of a sacrifice than Cain (Heb.11:4).

Cain brought the fruit of the ground which God had cursed (Gen.3:17; 4:3). All of the other offerings under the law were *souls* from the beast or the herd or the flock, but the “[cereal] approach present” was composed of *soulless* fruits of the ground, probably grain (Lev.2:1-16). However, it was *beaten* into *flour*, and *toasted* or *baked* or *cooked*, with the addition of *salt*, and *oil* and *frankincense*, and a memorial of it was *fumed* on the altar, so that it ascended above to God as a restful *odor*. We read of none of these things in connection with Cain’s present. Without this the fruit he brought probably rotted on the ground and rose as a sickening stink.

There is a modicum of truth in Cain’s sacrifice, for the fruits died, and death is necessary for restoration to God. *But there was no suffering*. Neither was there actual suffering on the part of the grain used under the law. But it is clearly indicated in a variety of ways. The grain was *beaten* into fine *flour*. It was subjected to *fire* when *toasted* or *baked* or *cooked*. And it was actually *burned* as incense when *fumed*. Cain did not realize his need of a *suffering* Mediator. He was not aware that, if Adam’s offense brought suffering on him and his, so his own shortcomings called for judgment, and this must at least be indicated by the offering which was to mediate between him and Yahweh. It is not the Saviour’s *life* that saves, but His *suffering* and *death*.

Moreover, he needed far more than a mere substitute.

God isn’t trying to repair mankind and bring it back to Eden. The suffering and the sacrifice must lead to a fellowship infinitely finer and more perfect than that. So under the law *oil* and *frankincense* must be added to the present, in order to indicate the great *Anointed* Saviour, the Son of God’s love in Whom He *delights*.

By the marvelous figure of condescension Yahweh speaks to us in terms a human can comprehend. Not only does He speak plainly through later revelation, telling us that the Father is seeking worship in *spirit* and *truth*, but, in the shadowy language of the types, the present offering *must* be accompanied with *frankincense* and *oil*. When the first is fumed as incense it gratifies His sense of *smell*. When the oil is burned it produces *light* to illuminate His *sight*. But the connections between these are not very clear in an English translation or the ordinary course of life. We must look for their significance in Hebrew and in the service of the tabernacle, Yahweh’s dwelling place in Israel.

In the offerings, the effect of frankincense was a delightful *odor*. In Hebrew the stem *ruch* is used for *wind*, *smell*, *odor* and *spirit*. When we read that Elohim is *smelling* a restful, or fragrant *odor* (AV a sweet savor) it suggests the word *spirit*, to the reader of the Original. He is *spirit*, and those worshiping Him must be worshiping in *spirit* (John 4:24). This Cain did *not* do. God’s spirit was not rested by his present.

All of the frankincense was fumed with fire on the altar. We do not read that it disseminated its odor until it was *burned*. So it speaks also of *suffering*. Hence it is particularly symbolic of our Lord’s *spiritual* humiliation and the agony of separation from His Father, endured on Golgotha. This is the highest aspect of His sacrifice, which brought the greatest pleasure to the heart of His Father. While it speaks of the only time when He was *forsaken* by Him, it is the basis on which all will be *reconciled* to Him. If we

approach the Father with the plea that His Son was forsaken by Him for our sakes, our present offering will be most acceptable. It will be a *restful* smell, and He will welcome us to His heart. At the consummation it will bring all His estranged creatures back to Him, to enjoy His permanent rest.

In nature the connection between the sense of smell and *moving* air is very evident. The hunter, in stalking games, is careful to get to windward of it, for most animals are exceedingly sensitive in this regard, and can detect the odor given off by another at a considerable distance. They can scent a man afar off even if they cannot see or hear him, if the wind is in their direction.

A SIN OFFERING

The AV reads “sin lieth at the door”(Gen.4:7). This is generally taken to mean that Cain had committed some sin, with the implication that Abel had *not* sinned. This is a serious misconception. *Both* were sinners. If that had caused Yahweh to ignore his present offering, then He would have rejected Abel’s as well.

In Scripture the simple word *sin* is frequently used for the sin *offering*.

Yahweh Elohim pointed out Cain’s mistake and made provision for it. Cain probably had no flock, as he was not a grazier like his brother, but a farmer. Nevertheless, God actually *provided* a sacrifice for him. He did not even need to tend a flock and raise a lamb, as Abel had done. There was one lying right at his door. He, like his father, Adam, had the right to sway over all the animal creation (Gen. 1:26). So Yahweh Elohim reminds him that he has authority over it. How simple it would have been for him to obey and sacrifice the sin offering which lay at his very door! Only thus could he be restored to Yahweh’s favor.

RESTORATION

The reading of the Authorized Version, “unto thee shall be *his desire*” (Gen.4:7), yields little satisfaction. The Greek version is altogether different. It reads “for you is *restoration of him*.” The Hebrew here is *thshuqe* RUN-ABOUT. Change the q to b (half of which has almost the same shape as q) and we have *thshube*, return, or: restoration. The evidence seems conclusive that this was the original reading of the inspired text. Cain needed to be *restored*. The sin offering reclining at the opening was just what was needed to do this. Had he obeyed the voice of Yahweh, he would have been restored to favor. But this he refused to do.

Instead of sacrificing the sin offering, Cain killed his brother. Thus it has been ever since. Enmity toward God is the source of dissension among mankind. This is especially true of the attitude of the unbeliever toward the believer. Sainthood and suffering go together. And it all springs from man’s enmity to God. *It can never be rectified apart from restoration to the favor of God*. All the welfare work, the peace conferences, even the religious associations, cannot restore mankind apart from the light of revelation. Nature’s light is not sufficient.

Even as Cain was provided with a sacrifice, which he had *not* “acquired,” either by work or purchase, so it is today. The Lamb of God has been provided by God Himself. Indeed, it is not necessary to offer it up, for He has done this already. All that is required is to accept it and enter His presence with rejoicing. Do not attempt to draw nigh to Him with any offering of your own providing! Far more than this, He has also provided a sin offering for your misdeeds, and a peace offering for your offenses and an ascent offering for your worship. He is conciliated to all, and He prays all to be conciliated to Him through the death of His Beloved Son.

A. E. Knoch

CAIN'S STUBBORNNESS AND FEAR

THE FAMILY of Adam did not live under any established government. Conscience was the principal directing factor, formulating all needful institutions and practices to regulate life and its affairs in those earliest of days. Since nature could lead humans to discharge the law's demands, and of this conscience would testify (*cf* Rom.2:14,15), it became plain that conscience could be a potent factor in restraining human failure. This was agreeable to the simplicity of that period.

Moreover, at this point, the position of Adam as the father of the race would be very important, even as, in subsequent days, precedent and custom vested great authority in the father of the family.

But beyond the directing force of conscience and the authority of Adam, Yahweh added to human understanding in those days of beginnings by revealing matters concerned with His worship. In Genesis 4 we even find Him intervening and discriminating between the earliest of Adam's children.

CONSCIENCE

The regulation of life by conscience did not provide for the redress of wrongs such as the law later offered. There was no stated penalty for Cain's acts. However, though humans were constituted sinners, nature and the capacity to recognize rightness and wrongness remained unaltered as guides for ethical behavior. Joined with this testimony was the authority vested in Adam.

Cain Knew What was Right

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In this circumstance, the position of Adam's firstborn is seen in its importance. Conscience pressed upon Cain the privileges and duties that he held as the eldest son, and which were vital in family life and affairs.

YAHWEH'S INSTRUCTIONS

Yahweh supplemented human conscience and knowledge by revealing His instructions concerning offerings and specifying their significance. In later revelation we read that "*By faith* Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain" (Heb.11:4). That Abel's sacrifice was *by faith* tells us that Yahweh had directed the requirements of sacrifice before Him, pointing Adam and his family to the important distinctions around the offerings as related to sin, or as approach presents. Here we perceive how Abel believed God and obeyed, whereas the elder son, though engaging in sacrifice, presumed to approach Yahweh in a manner which has come to be termed the "way of Cain."

Nevertheless, though Cain was grossly presumptuous, Yahweh Elohim did not leave him to the folly of his own way. Yahweh intervened to instruct Cain more exactly. In Genesis 4:6,7, it was shown to Cain that the foremost need was a sin offering, and for him it was immediately at hand, reclining at the portal.

By that lamb was to be Cain's own restoration. Thus Yahweh Himself proclaims to Cain an evangel, which followed the pattern set in Genesis 3:21 when Yahweh Elohim had made tunic coats for clothing Cain's parents. The full covering came by way of the sacrifice of an animal.

But Cain refused to heed the intimation; he was blind and perverse to God's ways. When rising against Abel (Gen.4:8), Cain was attempting something on behalf of his own prior wicked acts. In the slaying of Abel, he sought to consummate the issue developed by his stubbornness toward Yahweh.

Now once again Yahweh addressed Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" (Gen.4:8). The wording is most pointed. Yahweh was not simply inquiring about Abel, but He added to the name the significant words, "your brother." Yet, in his reply, Cain showed his scorn for the privileges belonging to the firstborn, for he attempted to evade any duty he held as the elder brother.

YOUR BROTHER

The occurrences of the words *Abel* and *brother* are most interesting, and their use, both together and singly, confirm that God was stressing the aspect of Abel's particular relationship to Cain, and thus He was pointing to the special position belonging to Cain as the elder brother. In this way Yahweh Elohim called to Cain's mind, not only a relationship, but also the associated duty of caring for and protecting his brother.

The name *Abel* occurs seven times in Genesis 4:1-16, and so also does the word *brother*. In three instances the word *brother* is attached to the name Abel, in verse 2 when noting Abel's birth, and then in verse 8 when Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and finally in verse 9 when Yahweh asked Cain about his brother Abel. For the purpose of the narrative the use of the two words together is not necessary. In fact, immediately after the first question has been addressed by God to Cain, the record uses *brother* alone, and the name, *Abel*, is not used further.

Cain discerned the implication. His reply to Yahweh omitted the personal name, and by using the word of relationship alone, Cain dealt directly with that matter. "I do not know. Am I my *brother's* guardian?" (Gen.4:9). By this Cain not only replied to Yahweh's question, but he also repudiated that which his conscience taught.

Cain was aware that he had obligations, yet he now sought to establish that there was no propriety in Yahweh's

suggestion of obligation to his brother. He was attempting to evade the accountability of his position as the elder son. Yet by nature and conscience Cain realized his duties as firstborn. There was nothing in Yahweh's words concerning his brother which surprised Cain.

In Yahweh's intimations concerning Cain's position as the elder brother, we see the beginnings of those customs concerning the firstborn which agreed with God's later claim of the firstborn under the law, they who were redeemed in favor of the sons of Levi (*cf* Ex.13:2; Num.3:11-13).

CAIN DISMISSED FROM HIS FATHER'S FAMILY

Cain was fully aware that he was his brother's guardian. Yet he not merely failed to carry this into effect, but he created a situation whereby Abel needed to be guarded from the very one who ought to have guarded him.

God was invoked by the blood of Abel. It cried to Him from the ground. God, hearkening to this cry, charged Cain, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground" (Gen.4:10). Forthwith God dismissed Cain from his position in his father's family, for he had violated his privilege. He would not be allowed to remain with the family, but was to become a rover and a wanderer on the earth. From the ground would come Cain's curse, for it would no longer yield its vigor to his service. This would drive Cain about as he sought to augment the sparse results of his labor.

THE KINSMAN REDEEMER

Cain began to feel the effects of his ways. He perceived the significance of God's words to him. He had failed, and now, degraded from his position in the family, he came to see that his father must become the one by whose hands conscience would be resolved into justice. For it was not only Cain's brother, but it was also Adam's own son who

had been slain. The father must seek, and if he *finds*—? Cain was dimly apprehending the basic aspect of the kinsman redeemer of blood which became approved and established as a regulating custom.

The singular word *anyone* and the verb *find* speak of one seeking. Later, in Numbers 35:19, the law declared, “The kinsman redeemer of blood, he shall put the murderer to death; when he comes upon him he shall put him to death.” Although Yahweh provided cities of asylum, yet if the murderer should leave, “and the kinsman redeemer of blood *finds* him outside the boundary of his city of asylum, and the kinsman redeemer of blood murders the manslayer, there is no bloodguilt on him” (Num.35:27).

Cain would not fear the wildness of any population since it was still composed of one family, and thus control remained simple and single. Interest in, and knowledge of, Cain’s crime could not be outside the family circle. With the head of the family all authority was invested.

Cain feared “anyone” who would stand as redeemer of Abel’s blood. And as long as Adam lived this would certainly refer to him. Cain feared lest the one who held responsibility for orderly governance, as directed by conscience, should seek to redeem the blood of Abel, his brother.

GOD’S LENIENCY TO CAIN

The decision of Yahweh Elohim forced home to Cain’s understanding what his depravity entailed. It was a consequence he had not fully estimated. He claimed God’s leniency on the ground that he was unable to bear its results. Yet conscience had taught him that murder deserved death, even though it be not specified in an established law.

Nevertheless, Yahweh Elohim, though maintaining that Cain should become a rover and wanderer, affords protection to Cain agreeable to the regulation of life by conscience. A sign was given for Cain, and he was preserved.

E. H. Clayton

God and His Work

OUTSIDE THE GARDEN

THE ACTIVITIES of *Yahweh* in Genesis 4 are primary. What Cain and Abel do is instructive, but what Yahweh does is critical. The two human brothers represent two lines of divine operations. A dualism is established which is reflected from this point forward in Scripture. Cain begins a “way” (*cf* Jude 11) of pride and stubbornness that is followed by most of humanity, while Abel represents a humble way of faith (*cf* Heb.11:4) directed by what God has said.

But it is God Who locks human beings up in stubbornness (*cf* Rom.11:32), and it is God Who gives faith (*cf* Rom. 12:3; Phil.1:29). It is God Who creates human beings as living souls and places them in the environment in which they live. He planted the trees of the garden and made the crooked serpent and cursed the ground when the human pair had sinned and cast them out of the garden. He is God.

Therefore, what *He* does is of first importance.

GOD IS OPERATING

In His first recorded dealings with humanity outside the garden, God would have us know Him as One Who is Supreme, not only as Creator but also as Subjector Who is vitally concerned with humanity, particularly in humanity’s great need of approach and access to Him.

In Genesis 4:1-16 there are three different verbs used with *Yahweh* as the subject: *heed*, *say* and *place*. Yahweh *heeds* (or does *not heed*) the offerings of the two brothers (4:4,5); He *speaks* (“says”) words of good (Gen.4:6,7), words of judgment (4:9-12) and words of protection (4:15a);

and He *places* a sign of protection for Cain (4:15b). The record of these divine actions exhibits a pattern that can be arranged as follows:

- God heeds (or does not heed) man and his offerings.
- God speaks words of evangel.
- God speaks words of judgment.
- God speaks words of protection.
- God places a sign for protection.

After humanity was driven from the garden, God continued to operate *all* in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). His heeding and saying and placing as recorded in Genesis 4 were not His only activities. But they are the only acts of God mentioned for this time period at the very beginning of the long human history severed from the blessings of Eden. As such they call for special attention.

The first and last operations of God in this chapter are distinctive actions which seem to stand in contrast to each other. God's heeding or not heeding is a matter of strictness, while His placing is a matter of mercy. The middle three operations are all expressed by the same verb, *say*; but what Yahweh says also provides apparent contrasts. His message is first an announcement of good news, then a pronouncement of judgment and finally a promise of mercy.

There is a strictness in God's act of heeding that may seem at first unwarranted. Both Cain and Abel were sinners who had surely done many other deeds both commendable and fleshly. Now they both approached near to Yahweh with presents, which certainly seems commendable in itself. What they brought corresponded to their vocations and represented what they had. But the uncompromising response of Yahweh makes His displeasure with Cain very clear.

On the other hand, God's act of placing a sign for Cain's protection after Cain had murdered his brother may seem

too lenient, setting a bad precedent and giving the wrong impression concerning the seriousness of Cain's crime.

That is how it appears from the human standpoint. God begins with inflexible discrimination and ends with a leniency that may strike us as an act of capitulation to the whining of a murderer.

It is also remarkable that God's verbal response to Cain's wilfulness in bringing the wrong kind of offering begins with the announcement of good news, and only when this is ignored and Cain murders his brother does God pronounce a curse. And then, in the end, God's message becomes definitely one of patience and forbearance.

SEVERITY AND LENIENCY

Although the leniency of Genesis 4:15 by no means reverses the severity of divine rejection in verse 5 or the curse of verses 11 and 12, it is important that we see it as having a positive relationship to the acts of judgment. God is not sending a mixed message with His acts in Genesis 4:1-16. He is not doing something harsh and then, as though suspecting He has gone too far, reversing His direction and being unusually lenient, and then hedging again toward severity which He finally modifies by mercy. The divine activities are cohesive components of the divine purpose, directed to the common goal of good and glory.

God's actions of mercy do not contradict His actions of severity, but rather they help define the significance of His severity. They remind us that severity in and of itself is not God's object. His goal is to bring humanity into a relationship with Him that is blessed and ideal. If we suppose that God intends to send Cain to an everlasting hell of torment or destruction, the pattern of God's actions in this first account of human stubbornness after the events of Genesis 3 does not lend its support.

One might argue that Genesis 4:1-16 still *allows* for the

everlasting condemnation of Cain, especially in view of his continued stubbornness. The words of Romans 2:3-10 seem particularly relevant. Was not Cain despising the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience, being ignorant that the kindness of God should have led him to repentance? In continually shunning God's instructions and rejecting His forbearance, Cain, in his hardness and unrepentant heart was hoarding for himself indignation in the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God. What is ahead for him is indignation and fury, affliction and distress, for whoever sinned without law, without law also shall perish.

This is true. But Romans 2 is not teaching everlasting condemnation for anyone, and it is not speaking of divine indignation as an end in itself. Even more clearly than Genesis 4, the testimony of Romans 2 is to be understood in light of the evangel. In Genesis the message concerning Christ as the Sin Offering appears in type, as a shadow. But in Romans it is presented boldly as a message of real justification and deliverance.

In order to understand the activities of God in the first sixteen verses of Genesis 4, we need to keep in view, first of all, the revelation of God in the first two chapters of Genesis, and then note carefully the exact relationship between His acts of judgment and mercy in the present context. And finally we must relate all this to the promise of the Seed of the woman as we note the ways in which this passage speaks of Christ.

Romans 1:18-3:20 offers important parallels to Genesis 4, but we must not focus solely on what these and many other passages of Scripture say about human beings, to the neglect of what they say about God. What do the judgments of sinners say about God Who is the Creator of us all and Who has a goal of good for His creation? What is God doing when He makes us as we are and places us

where we are and rejects and judges and is merciful? Are all these things part of a plan, involving the death and resurrection of Christ at its very core, and leading forward to God's glory?

Indeed they are.

TYPES OF CHRIST

There is an optimism in the structural pattern of God's acts in Genesis 4:1-16. The divine severity is joined with divine forbearance and mercy. But far superior to that evidence of optimism is the message behind these acts. Continually throughout these verses, God points ahead to Jesus Christ and His death for sinners. He heeds Abel's approach present because it reflects the death of God's Son for the conciliation of His enemies, and He does not heed Cain's present because it fails to speak of Christ. By His words of evangel to Cain God directs attention to an animal that could serve as a type of the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. In addition, God's acts of leniency are reflections of the disposition of Christ even as these acts themselves are justified by Christ's faithful work on Golgotha. As for the words and actions of judgment, these are shadows of our Lord's afflictions and His forsakenness, which, like the acts of mercy, receive their eventual justification from the achievements of the cross.

Whenever a passage of Scripture speaks to us of Christ, then there is optimism.

DIVINE HEED

Approach to God was one of those experiences Adam and Eve had in the garden but which they had no way of appreciating. Within the garden the blessings of reliance and thankfulness in worship could not be understood, for vulnerability and uncertainty were then outside human experience. Now, however, when the experience of com-

ing near for worship could be appreciated, the barrier of sin had intervened. Any approach to God must take this into account, and this means that God's provision for deliverance from sin needed to be recognized. It is in this context that Cain and Abel come near to God with presents.

What happens now is that God makes clear that access to Him by sinners can be made in one way only. He does this by heeding the one who takes the right way, or rather the way that is *good*, and not heeding the one who takes the way that is not "well."

As we have noted, Abel's present pointed to Christ, and Cain's did not. Yahweh was aware of Cain's toil and sweat in serving the ground, and He was aware that this was due to the curse He had placed on the ground because of the sin of Cain's parents, and He was also aware that He Himself had prepared the conditions which led to this sin. Furthermore, Yahweh was aware that He had not given Cain faith as He had given faith to Abel. (Happy is the human who is given the blessing of faith!) But the fact remains that Cain sinned in his attempt to give that which glorified himself, a present of works and not of faith.

Consequently, Yahweh refuses to heed Cain and his present. And in this act of silence and severity, Yahweh draws attention even today, thousands of years later, to the one way of approach.

Yahweh had testified to this one way in the garden when He provided coverings for Adam and Eve in their experience of shame expressed by their nakedness (Gen.3:21). The slaying of an innocent animal was a picture of the crucifixion of God's Son for sinners. It did not eliminate their sins and clothe them in righteousness, but it was a type of Christ's death for sinners, and that faithful work of Christ would deal righteously and truly and effectively with their sins.

THEN YAHWEH SAID

But because God did not heed Cain and his approach present of the fruit he had worked for and harvested, we must not conclude He is through with this firstborn son of Adam and Eve. And we also must not conclude that by His act of "silence and severity" in not heeding Cain, God had no further concern for this creature of His hands. In refusing to recognize Cain's offering because it did not point to Christ, God was not refusing to recognize the way of deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and its significance for Cain and Cain's approach to God.

Cain had not been given faith, and consequently he had sinned by rejecting God's way for approach to Him, and as a further result Yahweh did not heed him and his approach present. But God persists with words that point to Christ, *saying* to Cain: "Why is your anger hot? And why is your face fallen? If you had done well, would you not lift up your face? But since you have not done well, there is a sin offering reclining at the portal, and for you is restoration in his sacrifice" (Gen.4:6,7).

TO DO WELL

These words, spoken by Yahweh, are words of evangel, a *well-message*, directing Cain in a way which will be well for him. It is a way for *restoration*, as the Septuagint translation indicates. The Hebrew for "do well" is the verb form of the word "good." Even as God sees that His finished creation is very *good* (Gen.1:31), so all His ways are directed to the good. This is the goal He has set. For the human to approach God in the way which is good there must be a witness to the Saviour Who would shed His blood for sinners. This could only be done at that time by a picture, a type of the real Approach Present and the real Sin Offering, Who is Christ Jesus our Lord.

There was a sin offering reclining at the portal. Cain

had not done well because he had brought a present that could not speak of Christ. It spoke only of Cain's works. It was *Cain's* own gift that he had labored for (though actually it also was from God) and now gave to Yahweh.

But God's message to Cain concerns God's provision for Cain's approach to Him with his sin covered. And in effect this sin offering points to the Lord Jesus Christ Whom God would make the Means by which the sinner's sins would not simply be covered, but by which he will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19).

LOCKED UP IN STUBBORNNESS

However, Cain is still locked up in stubbornness. He refuses this provision and adds evil to evil by murdering his brother Abel. This is horrible! Yet it is only a further development of Cain's self-centeredness. He is unable to look beyond himself. He is completely unable to grasp the meaning of God's words to him and appreciate their goodness.

YAHWEH SPEAKS JUDGMENT

This is followed by Yahweh *saying* to Cain, with words of stern judgment, "Now you are cursed away from the ground When you serve the ground, it shall not continue to give its vigor to you. A rover and a wanderer shall you become on earth" (Gen.4:11,12).

This is well deserved. But later in the law it was declared, "The murderer shall be put to death, yea death" (Num. 35:16). What is God doing here? Why didn't He destroy Cain on the spot? The tragedy must have been wrenching for Adam and Eve. The evil that came upon them in the garden had spread and affected more than themselves alone.

And what did all of this mean to the mind and heart of God? We can see by His actions that God Himself focuses on His purpose in the gift of His Son for sinners and the

goal of reconciliation through His blood which He Himself has determined and willed.

This judgment that came on Cain did not put an end to God's dealings with Cain. We misunderstand condemnation if we think of it as an end in itself. God's acts of mercy here in Genesis 4 testify to the fact that His acts of righteous severity do not speak of final things.

GOD'S WAYS

Hence, as we have already noted, Yahweh exhibits here what Paul later called "the kindness and forbearance and patience" of God, which is to lead to repentance (Rom.2:4). Furthermore, this leniency is multiplied when Cain complains, and Yahweh provides a special measure of protection from human revenge. "So Yahweh placed a sign for Cain, by no means to smite him, should anyone find him" (Gen.4:15).

Yahweh's firmness in refusing Cain's offering may be hard for us to understand until we see the issues of faith and works, of human pride and divine glory, involved. But Yahweh's leniency in dealing with Cain in the murder of his brother, and following that, in responding to Cain's fearful plea, is often even more difficult to understand.

God's leniency is not immediately justified by its results. Cain accepted the protection but shunned Yahweh's word once again by dwelling in the land of Nod and eventually building a city (Gen.4:16,17). He was not led to repentance, to a changing of his mind and way.

But God's message concerning the sin offering and His acts and words of leniency added to His acts and words of severity must be taken into account before we leave Cain. What God had to say to Cain about the way of restoration remains viable and essential and triumphant. The Sin Offering will be made.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

God is faithful. Cain's lack of faith in the sin offering and his refusal to do *well*, does not keep God from making Christ to be the Sin Offering (2 Cor.5:21), nor does it keep Christ as the Sin Offering from ultimately being any less the Saviour of vessels of indignation like Cain than the Saviour of vessels of mercy like Abel. The fact that God did not choose Cain as a vessel of mercy and the associated fact that Cain was stubborn in his sinful acts can neither of them keep God from saving him by means of the death of His Son.

THE MAN, CHRIST JESUS

Cain was condemned for his sin of unbelief and pride, but God did not destroy him on the spot. Indeed in the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God, God will pay Cain in accord with his acts (Rom.2:5). But this does not speak the last word in the saga of this first human being born of a woman. God's lenient treatment of Cain is a *witness* that God is not through with Cain. And God's judgments against Cain *testify* that God has more in view for him. But more than this, the coming of God's Son into the world in the likeness of humanity, born of a woman, to save sinners, giving Himself, the Man Christ Jesus, a correspondent Ransom for us all, is the *proof* that God has not finished His work of bringing this one who first rejected God's way of deliverance and approach into that deliverance and blessed approach.

In considering Cain we learn much about the evil of human pride and anger and hardness of heart. But in considering God's actions with regard to Cain we learn much about the goodness and purpose of God which can only strengthen our reliance on Him as the living God and Saviour of all mankind.

D.H.H.

Questions and Answers

A PRESENT RESURRECTION?

*

DISQUALIFICATION AND FAITH

*

JEWS, ISRAELITES, AND JUDEANS

Question:

Isn't "the resurrection" as presented in most of 1 Corinthians 15 referring to a spiritual awakening to truth, *not* to the raising of the body from the grave? Also, concerning the resurrection, notice that the *present* tense is used (for example, "the last enemy *is being* abolished" [v.26]; "if the dead *are not being* roused" [vs.29,32]; "How *are* the dead *being* roused? Now with what body *are* they coming?" [v.35]. Does not this clearly prove that the resurrection spoken of in these passages is a present-day event and not a future event, after death?"

Answer:

IN REPLY to your question concerning a present-day, figurative "resurrection" being the teaching throughout much of 1 Corinthians 15, my answer is as follows: It is the *kind* of UP-STANDING (rendered "resurrection" and "rising" in the CV), according to the context, which establishes the usage at hand, in the passages in question. And, that kind of UP-STANDING, is the kind which Christ Himself experienced in connection with His "rousing" (awakening from the sleep of death). Therefore, the "rising" which is in view is that of a rising from literal death (1 Cor.15:12), namely, bodily rising from bodily death. Further, UP-STANDING,

anastasis (“resurrection” or “rising”), is neither used here nor elsewhere of the spiritual enlightenment (or endowment) which comes to mortal believers in this present life as a result of receiving God’s spirit.

In reply to your second question: No, the presence of *is* (or *are*) along with *-ing* forms within various verses in 1 Corinthians 15 by no means proves that the resurrection is a present-day occurrence. In fact, the presence of these forms entails no such thing. The *-ing* endings on participles, or within participial phrases (as in 1 Corinthians 15:35, “How are the dead *being* roused?”) do not signify present action, but instead, grammatically speaking, incomplete action. That is, they speak of action going on, *regardless of the time in which this action occurs*.

Whether this participial ending is being *used temporally* with respect to action going on at the present time, or instead, either *abstractly* (in a general way), or *proleptically* (in anticipation of a future event), is not a question of grammar but of sensible judgment.

Temporal usage of *is/are* and *-ing* speaks of an action which is presently taking place (e.g.: I am *writing* this article). Abstract usage incorporating these forms, however, considers the mere *being* (or occurrence) of such an act, apart from any consideration of when an act occurs (e.g.: Farm animals are *needing* attention). Yet proleptic usage of these forms speaks of that which has not yet occurred as if it was already taking place, in confident anticipation of its futurity (e.g.: God is *vivifying* all).

Accordingly, the mere fact that in such cases the English employs the “present” substantive verb even as the present participial form, is beside the point.

The substantive verb (*be*, in whatever form) merely expresses being or existence. When used in conjunction with incomplete action, the presence of the substantive verb is simply indicative of grammatical agreement between

the substantive verb (e.g., “are”) and the participial phrase (e.g., “being roused”).

In the nature of the case, “On Thy account we are being put to death the whole day” (Rom.8:36), is a temporal declaration, in reference to the present life. Yet, according to contextual usage, it is evident that, “How are the dead being roused?” (1 Cor.15:35), is an abstract question, concerning a future event. Similarly, and quite obviously, “The last enemy is being abolished: death” (1 Cor.15:26), is a proleptic affirmation concerning a future event.

The “present” form of the substantive verb, in itself, is actually the *factual* (or timeless) substantive. When we say, “God is love,” “two plus two is four,” or “sunsets are beautiful,” we are merely expressing factuality or truth. Similarly, then—insofar as the words themselves are concerned—should we incorporate a participle into one of our statements, and say, for example, “God is abolishing death,” or, as the Scripture declares, “the last enemy is being abolished: death,” the only essential thought is the *factualness* of the declaration, concerning an activity which consists of ongoing action—apart from any question of the time or duration of the action.

That is, the essential idea is that abolishing death is something that God *does*; that the *doing* of which is a divine operation. Likewise, in the latter example, the pre-interpretative affirmation is that the abolishing of death is something that *occurs*; that the *occurring* of which is something that actually happens. Beyond this, we must *judge* of the temporal, the abstract, or the proleptic—not by any grammatical form but by usage—according to context, in the nature of the case.



Question:

In the May, 1990 issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, on

page 144,¹ you refer to those whom Paul speaks of as workers of dishonor as being nonetheless in Christ and possessors of life in the coming eons. I doubt that you are correct about this. Some so-called “Christians” live a very sinful life. It is one thing to say that they will be saved eventually, after the day of judgment and after the second death, but quite another to say that they too will be given eonian life, along with those who have lived a good life and remained faithful Christians. Paul says that some are “disqualified,” and I would think that this must apply to those who are very sinful.

Answer:

In the article to which you refer, I spoke of “any few who believe this evangel [i.e., the Pauline evangel of gratuitous grace] and yet become ‘utensils for dishonor’ (2 Tim.2:20) as to their walk.” I had in mind, as I indicated, those who actually believe the truth concerning the “reign” of grace and how it will prevail whether or not the believer walks worthily of his calling (“even if we should be persisting in sin—even if we should be increasing in sin”; p.143). Of course there are others who are believers in Christ (who, therefore, are members of the ecclesia as well) who may also walk dishonorably, even though they do not correctly understand passages such as Romans 5:20,21; 6:1, or others to which I refer in the article.

My point, however, was that regardless of what the believer believes (beyond his basic acceptance of Christ’s death and resurrection; 1 Cor.15:2-4; 1 Thess.4:14)), and even if his walk should be, and remain, most dishonorable and unrepentant, he “*will* be vivified in that day—just as surely as the apostle Paul.”

The “utensils of dishonor” of 2 Timothy 2, may well

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, “Because of Another,” vol.81, pp.143,144.

include many who are merely naming the name of the Lord, but who do not have genuine faith (2 Tim.1:9; 1 Cor.15:2). But even so, genuine believers are also naming the name of the Lord themselves, though they do so out of genuine faith. In various places, the apostle Paul speaks explicitly of the dreadful sins of many of his fellow believers. Some of these sins were common acts of uncleanness, deeds that are repudiated by all honorable men; others were sins of unbelief and opposition to the truth, even if those committing them were otherwise above reproach.

My point is that, not only nominal “believers,” but some genuine believers as well, walk dishonorably indeed; that is, they too are “utensils . . . for dishonor.” This, however, is actually God’s purpose concerning them, according to His intention, even though their unworthy deeds are contrary to His revealed will.

It is true that the man who committed prostitution in 1 Corinthians 5 was given up to Satan by Paul. (Many others, however, among the Corinthians, were very fleshly themselves, even if not in a way that called for this same discipline.) Yet we cannot say that this particular man (or perhaps someone else who committed this same sin) was the lowliest and most fleshly among the Corinthians. Perhaps, in God’s sight, some who were self-righteous, proud boasters (a sin that is not often considered serious or even recognized by many; 1 Cor.4:6-8), were even more lowly and fleshly than the man who committed prostitution.

But trying to decide which person among the Corinthians was the most fleshly, or who was or who was not given up to Satan, is entirely beside the point. The point is that even that most fleshly one—whoever he or she may have been—*will* be vivified in that day, just as surely as the apostle Paul.

You also spoke of those who are “disqualified.” What Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:8 is that various ones are “disqualified

as to the faith." The various failings mentioned by Paul, lead to a disqualification *about* the faith. This refers to a consequent failure to grasp what "the faith actually consists of." The failings Paul mentions here are common ones; and surely these lead to disqualification *as to* "the faith."

Being disqualified as to the faith, however, has nothing to do with being "in Christ" at present, or with enjoying the allotment of eonian life in the oncoming eons. If the believer is "disqualified," whether specifically as to the faith itself, or concerning a worthy walk in general (*cp* 1 Cor.9:24-27), he will forfeit wages (1 Cor.3:14,15); and, if, failing to endure, he is one who is characterized by the works of the flesh, he will not participate in God's reign (2 Tim. 2:12; Gal.5:21). Even so, he is still complete in Christ (Col. 2:10), and will be glorified in His presence in that day.

There is no such thing as qualifying or disqualifying for membership in the body of Christ, or for the allotment of life eonian. The unworthy are quite as secure in Him as the worthy. Besides, the worthy are only so because of Him, according to God's grace, through the greater measure of faith which has been given to them.



Question:

I notice that you use the word "Jew" in your translation. Why do you subscribe to the dictionary definition of the word "gentile" (namely, "anyone who is not a Jew")? But what I really want to know is why do you use the word "Jew"? Whenever you read the word 'Jew' in the N.T., it is an *incorrect translation* of the original Greek words. This is a word which you use too much, but ought not to use at all. Don't you know any better? Don't you know there is a distinction between Judah and Israel?

Answer:

We only acknowledge that "one who is not a Jew," is the

common definition of the word "gentile." Dictionary definition merely records ordinary usage. Consequently, we can hardly claim that such a dictionary definition is "false." You are confusing disparate themes: (1) the dictionary definition of "gentile," and (2) the confusing rendering in most Bibles in which *ethnos* is translated "gentile."

You should not presume that we "subscribe" to the usual false notions concerning this subject. Indeed, we do not use the word "gentile" in our translation at all, for it would be most confusing to use gentile as the equivalent of *ethnos*, which it is not, and yet it does not correspond to any other word in the Original.

Instead, where *ethnos* appears in the Greek, we always use the word "nation." Indeed, we hardly ever use "gentile" even in our expositions, unless it should be in reference to secular usage or to the teachings of others, and even then only rarely. Again, we are well aware of the various points which you zealously seek to point out to us on this subject. We earnestly concur with you with respect to all the popular confusion attending this word.

Concerning your objection to our use of the word "Jew" (a word which we do use in our translation, and to a corresponding degree, in our teaching ministry), let me say at the outset that, fairly considered, I think you will find that we do not use this word incorrectly (or excessively), at least in any practical sense.

A. E. Knoch, very early in his career, when he was engaged in the early stages of his work on the Concordant Version, considered using the word "pole" or "stake," instead of "cross" in rendering the Greek *stauros* (STANDER). Yet, as he once mentioned (albeit whimsically), that when he proposed this to certain others, they nearly "crucified" him!

Brother Knoch was a man hardly given to improper compromise. Yet he was unhesitating, albeit with some regret, in implementing the word "cross" in the Concordant Ver-

sion. He wished not to stumble others needlessly, or only over matters of little consequence. The goodhearted, discerning believer may readily say the word “cross” while conceiving the idea of a stake or pole, and do so apart from any notion (whether pagan or Roman Catholic) of an object in the form of a lowercase “t.”

Thus we compromise neither our own faith, nor disturb the immature needlessly, whom we wish not to stumble over trifles, that we might win them concerning incomparably more important issues. Within our writings, however, incidentally along the way, we freely speak about nearly all such minor matters. But we do not present them as things of consequence, for they are not.

Now concerning the distinction between Judah and Israel which you mention, even as your related comments concerning the word *ethnos* (which we translated “nation”), your points are well taken. But I should add that, at least in our case, they are also well known; and, in the course of our writings, have been extensively expounded.

The name Israel belongs to *all* the sons of Jacob and their descendants, when viewed from the spiritual standpoint. That is not to say that they were spiritual in themselves (for this was so in the case of only a few), but that in God’s ultimate counsels concerning that nation, and concerning all individuals comprised therein, by God’s spirit, through Christ, one day, they will indeed all be “upright with El [God]” (which is what “Israel” means).

It is to be regretted that most who seek to point out the worthy historical distinction between Judah and Israel, do so not in the interest of mere accuracy or of the wholesome general education of others, but in preparation for their advocacy of either the teaching commonly known as British Israelism or of some other similar racial notion.

In approaching us concerning matters which you may feel we need to correct, it may be more expedient and help-

ful (for your sake as well as our own, should questions still remain after having carefully considered our writings), if you would simply ask us why we translate or teach as we do—if you still merely do not understand. If an inquirer, one who truly has endeavored to grasp our presentations, whether through the printed page or spoken word, simply requires additional clarification, we are glad to help.

But I would suggest, and primarily for your sake, not merely our own, that it is simply not helpful baldly to set forth unfounded claims such as, “Whenever you read the word ‘Jew’ in the N.T., it is an *incorrect translation* of the original Greek words.”

After all, you are only writing to us in the first place because you have noted, disapprovingly, that we use the word “Jew” in our translation. One would hope that you might surmise that at least we have our reasons for so doing, and that they appear sound to us. Therefore it will take something more than a bold affirmation of our error to set us on the true path.

A PRACTICAL EQUIVALENT

We are not oblivious to the fact that “Judean” is the *anglicized, transliterated form* of the Greek adjective *Ioudaion*, nor that the English word, “Judean,” which, being transliterated Greek and adjectival in form, maintains a closer formal correspondency with the Original than does the English noun “Jew.” The customary form “Jew,” however, is merely a contracted adaptation of “Judean”; hence, it may hardly be deemed a “mistranslation.”

The fact of the matter is that, through figurative usage, this Greek word (*Ioudaion*), in the New Testament Greek text, is usually used as a noun. In other instances, ones, in principle, of a parallel nature (such as in the case of the word “all,” which, though an adjective, both in Greek [*pan*, EVERY or ALL] and in English, is often used as a

noun), it is possible to maintain a more literal (though, in the nature of the case, non-translitative) formal correspondence in translation while still preserving good diction and ordinary language.

In later times (unlike in earlier eras) *Ioudaion* was usually not used strictly of the tribe of Judah (in contradistinction to members of the other tribes), but by association (technically, this figure is termed metonymy of the *adjunct*), was applied to *Israelites* who had returned to the *land of Judah* (*Iouda*) and again involved themselves in the divine service of the law, as practiced in Judea (*Ioudaia*), the southern part of Palestine. Thus, by figure of association, all such *Israelites*—regardless of their tribal lineage—came to be known as “*Ioudaion* [ones],” that is, as “Judeans,” (or as this same thought is more commonly *and yet perfectly correctly* expressed today), as “Jews.”

Our exposition, “*Refuse the Refuse*,” which is a reply to British Israelism, presents ample evidence of this fact, a fact which few indeed (apart from those who are deeply entrenched in British Israelism) would care to dispute in the first place.

Since the common English noun, “Jew,” in *English*, is ordinarily defined (as in the RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY; 1980, p.476) as, “a descendant of the Biblical Hebrews,” and since “Hebrew” is defined as, “a group of Semitic peoples inhabiting ancient Palestine and claiming descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (p.406), it would be needless (and so unwise) to introduce the uncommon term “Judean” into an English *idiomatic version*. This is evident to anyone who is impartial.

All the questions considered here have long been addressed by various teachers in contradictory ways. So we can only say on behalf of all: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren! Amen!” (Gal.6:18).

J.R.C.

Notes on 2 Samuel

ISRAEL UNDER NEW RULE

2 + It ^{lb}was afterward +that David ^{lask}inquired ⁱof Yahweh, [›]saying[–], Shall I go up ⁱto one of the cities of Judah? + Yahweh ^{lsa}replied to him, Go up! +Then David ^{lsa}asked, Whither shall I go up? + He ^{lsa}answered, To^d Hebron. ²+So David went ^{up}there, + ^{mr}along with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail, the former wife of Nabal the Carmelite. ³+As for his men who were with him, David ^ebrought up each man +with his household; and they ^ddwelt in the cities of Hebron. ⁴+Then the men of Judah ^ecame, and there they ^lanointed ^{David}as king over the house of Judah.

+When they ^{told}David, [›]saying[–], It was the men of Jabesh-gilead who entombed ^{Saul}, ⁵+then David ^lsent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead and ^lsaid to them, May you be blessed[›]by Yahweh ^wbecause you ^dshowed ^{this} kindness ^{wi}to your lord, ^{wi}to Saul, +when you ^lentombed ^{him}and his son Jonathan⁰. ⁶+nowTherefore may Yahweh ^dshow ^{wi}you benignity and faithfulness; and I ^{mr}too, I shall ^drepay [›]you ^{this} goodness ^wbecause you have done ^{this} loyal ^{sp}deed. ⁷+ Now let your hands be steadfast, + ^bbe [›]sons of valor, for your lord Saul is dead, and ^{mr}also the house of Judah has anointed ^{me}as king over them.

⁸+As for Abner son of Ner, chief of the military host ^wthat Saul [›]had, he had taken [›]Ishbosheth son of Saul and had ^ltransferred him ⁷from the army camp⁰ to Mahanaim. ⁹+ There he ^emade him ^{king}over ^{Gilead}and [›]over ^{Asher}, + [›]over Jezreel and over Ephraim and over Benjamin, +

2:9 [›]Asher: lit, the Ashurite.

over all of ^{it} Israel. ¹⁰ Ishbosheth son of Saul was forty years old ⁱwhen he became king⁻ over Israel, and he reigned two years. The house of Judah ^hhowever, they ^bwere followers of David. ¹¹ + The number of days ^wthat David ^bwas king in Hebron over the house of Judah ^hwas seven years and six months.

¹² + Abner son of Ner, together ⁺with the servants of Ishbosheth son of Saul, marched ^fforth from Mahanaim toward Gibeon. ¹³ + Also Joab son of Zeruiah^o, together ⁺with David's servants, marched ^fforth ⁷from Hebron^o and ^hencountered them; they met together ^{on}at the reservoir of Gibeon. ⁺ There they ^hsat down, these ^{on}at the reservoir ^fon this side and those ^{on}at the reservoir ^fon that side.

¹⁴ + Then Abner ^hsaid to Joab, ^{pr}Now let the lads rise up and make ^hsport before us. ⁺ Joab ^hsaid replied, Let them rise up. ¹⁵ + So they ^harose and ^hcrossed over in equal numbers, twelve for Benjamin, ⁺ that is for Ishbosheth son of Saul, and twelve from David's servants. ¹⁶ + Then each man ^htook ^hfast hold of his associate ⁱby the head and thrust his sword into his associate's side; ⁺so they ^hfell down together. ⁺Therefore ⁺that ^{ri}place was ^hcalled Helkath-hazzurim^o, which is in Gibeon.

¹⁷ + The fight ^hbecame obstinate unto excess ⁱon ^hthat day, and Abner and the men of Israel were ^hstruck before David's servants. ¹⁸ + Now the three sons of Zeruiah ^hwere there, Joab, ⁺ Abishai, and Asahel. ⁺ Asahel was fleet ⁱon his feet, like one of the gazelles ^win the field. ¹⁹ + So Asahel ^hpursued after Abner and did not turn aside, to go ^{on}to the right ⁺or ^{on}to the left, from following Abner. ²⁰ + Then Abner ^hturned around, ^{af}behind him and ^hsaid asked, Is that you, Asahel? ⁺ He ^hsaid replied, It is I. ²¹ + Now Abner ^hsaid to him, Turn aside, off ⁺with you ^{on}to your right or ^{on}to your left! ⁺ Take hold of one ^fof the lads ⁺as yours, and take ^hhis

2:13 Zeruiah: a sister of David.

2:16 Helkath-hazzurim: lit., The-Portion-of-Sharpness.

outfit for yourself. ⁺Yet Asahel would not ⁺withdraw⁻ from following him. ²² + So Abner ^hcontinued to ^{sa}warn ⁺Asahel once ^fmore: Withdraw from following me, off ⁺with you! Why should I smite you to ^dthe earth? How could I ⁺then ^hlift up my face to your brother Joab? ²³ + But he ^hrefused to withdraw. ⁺So Abner ^hsmote him ⁱwith the butt end of ^hhis spear ⁺on the fifth rib, and the spear came ^fforth ^fthrough his ^{af}back. ⁺ He ^hfell there and ^hdied on the ^uspot where he was. And it came to ^hbe ⁺that they ^hstood still, everyone ^hwho came^l to the ^{ri}place where Asahel had fallen and ^hdied.

²⁴ + Yet Joab and Abishai ^hpursued after Abner. And the sun was ^hsetting ⁺as they themselves came as far as the hill of Ammah, ^woverlooking Giah on the road to the wilderness of Gibeon. ²⁵ + The sons of Benjamin ^hconvened themselves ^{af}behind Abner; ⁺ they ^hbecame ⁺as one phalanx and ^hstood on top of one hill. ²⁶ Abner ⁺then ^hcalled out to Joab, ⁺ ^hsaying, Shall the sword devour ⁺permanently? Do you not realize that there will ^hbe bitterness in the latter end? ⁺ How ^flong will it be? Will you never ^hsaid order ⁺your ^{wi}soldiers to turn back from following their kinsmen?

²⁷ + Joab ^hsaid replied, As ⁷Yahweh^{-c} lives, ^t if you had not ^{sp}challenged us, ^t then ^fby ^hmorning the ^{wi}soldiers would have moved ^{on}away, each man from following his kinsmen. ²⁸ + So Joab ^hblew ⁱthe trumpet, and all the ^{wi}soldiers ^hstood still. ⁺ They did not ^hpursue after Israel any ^flonger and did not ^hcontinue to fight them any ^fmore.

²⁹ + As for Abner and his men, they ^{go}marched all ^hthat ^hnight ⁱthrough the Arabah, ⁺ ^hcrossed ^hthe Jordan, ⁺ ^hmarched through the entire Bithron gully and ^hcame to Mahanaim. ³⁰ + As for Joab, he returned from following Abner and ^hconvened ^{all} ^hhis ^{wi}soldiers; ⁺ nineteen men from David's servants were ^hmissing, ⁺besides Asahel. ³¹ + Yet David's servants, they had smitten those ^fof Benjamin and ⁱof Abner's men of whom 360 men had died. ³² +

2:27 7--c Yahweh: Hb the Elohim.

They ^lcarried Asahel and ^lentombed him in his father's tomb ^w at Bethlehem. ⁺Then Joab and his men ^{lgo} marched all ⁿnight ⁺until dawn was lighting up for them ⁱat Hebron.

DAVID INQUIRES OF YAHWEH

David's few days at Ziklag were a time for earnest retrospect. What did God intend for him to learn from the experiences of the last two weeks—two of the most traumatic weeks of his life?

And where did he go from here?

His move to Ziklag had obligated his alliance to Achish and forced him to march against Israel. This allowed for the captivity of the families of all David's men by the Amalakites. The swift and strenuous march to save their families removed David further from the battle scene, making the removal of Saul from the kingdom something in which David could have no influence. Now David was travel worn, battle torn, mourning for Jonathan and his people, and his home city had been burned. Emptied of himself, David waited upon Yahweh, Who was about to have him anointed king again.

David was faced with several hard decisions at Ziklag. Should he rebuild Ziklag and remain there? How could he continue living in the land of the Philistines, after they had killed his king and many of his people? Saul's jealous persecution was ended. Was it time to go home?

David inquired of Yahweh, and was directed to return to Judah. But David showed less of the impulsiveness that had prodded his earlier move to Ziklag. He inquired of God again and was directed specifically to Hebron.

HEBRON

Hebron had been the primary area of sojourning in the land of promise for Abraham and Isaac. There Abram's name had been changed to Abraham. Hebron is the burial

place for Sarah (Gen.23), Abraham (Gen.25:7-10), Isaac (Gen.35:27-28), and Jacob (Gen.49:29-50:13). It is the place where the bones of faith rest in the promise of God.

In addition, Hebron was designated as one of the cities of refuge (Josh.20:2,7), and it was situated in a defensible position. We can appreciate the divine wisdom exercised in the selection of this city as the place where rule that is characterized by faith would commence.

COMMENDATION OF THE GILEADITES

David commended the valiant of Jabesh-gilead for their loyalty to Saul in rescuing the bodies for honorable burial. This was much more than a diplomatic gesture. David claimed an indebtedness to these men—an indebtedness that was required by his own patriotism and citizenship in Israel as well as his close association and love for the members of the royal family.

ABNER

Abner, a commander of Israel's army, was a cousin of Saul (1 Sam.14:50,51). He was an ambitious man. Abner took Saul's son, Ishbosheth, and set him up as king in Mahanaim (v.8). Apparently Ishbosheth's realm was small and scattered, but it grew until it included "all of Israel" (v.9) except Judah. The extension of the rule of Saul's house probably coincided with the reclaiming of territory in central Palestine from Philistine domination through military campaigns led by Abner.

David is said to have reigned over Judah in Hebron for seven years and six months. The reign of Ishbosheth as king of Israel is said to have been only two years. Probably these two years were contemporary with the last two of David's seven and one-half years before the kingdom was united under David.

CIVIL WAR

Abner moved an armed force from Mahanaim to Gibeon. Mahanaim was east of the Jordan, where Abner took Ishbosheth after the defeat by the Philistines, when Saul was killed. Gibeon was west of the Jordan, in the land of Benjamin, and was close to Gibeah, Saul's old capital.

This move may have been part of a plan by Abner to restore the kingdom as it was in Saul's day. Gibeon was also the home of the Gibeonites, whom Saul had killed (2 Sam. 21:1-14), probably for the purpose of making their properties gifts for his courtiers (1 Sam. 22:6-8). Abner is likely to have been a benefactor of that episode, and may have had considerable property in Gibeon. That would have made Gibeon a desirable place to Abner for his headquarters.

Gibeon was in close proximity to Hebron, and the presence of Abner's army there posed a potential threat to David and the kingdom of Judah. Joab brought a force from Hebron to meet Abner.

The ensuing contest between a dozen of Joab's men and a dozen of Abner's men may have been intended as a means of avoiding war—"winner takes all"—like the challenge of Goliath. Of that we are unsure. What is sure, is that a bloody civil war was to follow before Israel would be united under David.

WOUNDS OF BITTERNESS

Joab, Asahel and Abishai, the sons of David's sister Zeruiah, were every bit as hard and battle-proven as Abner. They intended to bring all Israel under David's rule, and the sooner the better. "The fight became obstinate unto excess" (2 Sam. 2:17), and as Abner warned Joab from the hilltop (v.26), deep and lasting wounds of bitterness were inflicted that day.

J. Philip Scranton

Concordant Version of The Former Prophets

(JOSHUA, JUDGES, 1 SAMUEL, 2 SAMUEL, 1 KINGS, 2 KINGS)

The *Concordant Version of the Former Prophets* endeavors to follow a pattern of consistency in translating the Hebrew words and thoughts of the Original. Hence there has been an effort to avoid the use of any English term for more than one Hebrew term, even though several English words may be required to do duty for a single Hebrew term. Boldface and lightface type, superior symbols and abbreviations and footnotes are all used to clarify the meaning or to represent some unique features that are otherwise difficult to express in English.

Boldface type is used for words (or parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. The regular, lightface type is used for words (or parts of words) which have been added to help express the Hebrew thought in more idiomatic English.

Symbols and abbreviations are used to indicate variant readings in the various Hebrew manuscripts or ancient Versions or to provide more complete information concerning the literal expressions in the Hebrew. These symbols and abbreviations are identified on the inside covers of the book.

We cannot press too strongly that the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings belong among the *prophecies*. They foretell nothing, it is true, yet the histories they contain all revolve about the man of God who was the one link which still united Israel to their God.

We will get very little if we read these merely to increase our knowledge of ancient history, or the annals of the Hebrew nation. But if we fix our hearts on the fact that Yahweh is here displaying Himself in the various vicissitudes of His people, and that He deals with them through His spokesmen, the narrative takes on life and meaning.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2002
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

“Now, if our evangel is covered, also, it is covered in those who are perishing, in whom the god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them. For we are not heralding ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, yet ourselves your slaves because of Jesus, for the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us” (2 Cor.4:3-7).

Our evangel is that Christ Jesus *died for our sins* (1 Cor. 15:3), God having made Him a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God’s righteousness in Him (2 Cor.5:21).

Our evangel is that Jesus our Lord was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:25). God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him. 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.5:8-11).

Our evangel is that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the

place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus. This is in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved (Eph.1:3-6).

And, our evangel likewise is that God, our Saviour, *wills* that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). That is, God has *formed the decision* that this should occur, and, unto this end, is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:10,11).

Accordingly, then, our evangel is that *God is the Saviour of all mankind*, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10). While as the recipients of life and glory in the oncoming eons it is evident that God is *especially* the Saviour of believers, it is nevertheless first of all true that He is *factually* the Saviour of all mankind.

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"¹ shall be constituted just (Rom.5:18,19).

Hence it is our evangel that Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing.

1. Even though the word "many" (*polu*) can be *used* in reference to "less than all," it nevertheless does not *mean* "less than all." Instead, it is a relative term used in contradistinction to a few, or, as here, in contradistinction simply to one. When used in reference to quantity or to advancement in time, it is translated "much" (2 Cor.8:2; Mark 6:35). It often appears together with *ochlos* (THRONG), and in such cases is translated "vast" (e.g., John 12:12). Hence the sense here in Romans 5:18, 19, is that since it is true, first of all, that it is through the disobedience of the one man that "this vast [throng]" (of which we are speaking, namely, all mankind) were constituted sinners, and that thus also, through the obedience of the One that "this vast [throng]" (of which we are speaking, namely, all mankind) shall be constituted just, it is *therefore also* true 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.

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. The last enemy is being abolished: death. Thus God subjects all to Christ, that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:20-23,26,28).

Though our evangel is wholly glorious, truly "worthy of all welcome" (1 Tim.4:9), there is a great problem involved here even so. The problem is that men love the darkness rather than the light (John 3:19). This is because God has not yet given them repentance to come into a realization of the truth, leaving them instead in the trap of the Adversary, where they have been caught alive by him, for that one's will (2 Tim.2:25,26).

At the deepest level, however, men continue to love the darkness rather than the light, imagining themselves to be free while all the time bound in the Adversary's trap, because God locks up all together in stubbornness, albeit doing so that He should be merciful to all (Rom.11:32).

Most continue on throughout their lives locked in stubbornness in relation to God and to His Word. This is because, as God Himself declares, "I shall be merciful to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be pitying whomever I shall be pitying" (Rom.9:15; *cp* Ex.33:19: "I will be gracious to whom I am being gracious and will have compassion for whom I am having compassion").

Thus it is that our evangel is "covered"; and, thus it is that it is covered in those who are "perishing," in those who are, in one respect or another, undergoing "loss" in relation to it.

It is true that the god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible

God, does not irradiate them. Yet it is also true that this will not always be so. This is because our Saviour, God, is also the Saviour of all, Who wills accordingly that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth.

Therefore, we are not heralding ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. We do not wish to distract from His message by calling attention to ourselves, as if we ourselves were somehow important. Instead, the apostle Paul together with any who would join him in common ministry “belong to” (“we are your slaves because of Jesus”) the members of the ecclesia. That is, this is so with respect to their fulfillment of the task of certifying and teaching the evangel to their fellow saints.

These things are so, since “the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor.4:6).

As Paul says ideally concerning our evangel, “Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us” (2 Cor.4:3-7).

Rather than announcing this marvelous evangel of God directly from heaven in great glory and majesty, in the wisdom of God, it is instead conveyed through lowly “earthen vessels.” It is proclaimed and made known through the agency of common sinners, albeit ones who themselves now have been graciously granted faith in the evangel of Christ, which Paul terms accordingly, “our evangel.”

In the face of great opposition and frequent rejection, even as in the midst of an abundance of apathy, it often seems impossible to continue. After all, our own faith is not always strong, and many are opposing, whether wittingly or unwittingly. “Our evangel,” however, is still our evangel; it is not covered to us, even if it is covered to most. We would continue, then, to announce it and teach it, according as God Himself enables us to do so.

J.R.C.

ABEL'S SACRIFICE

ABEL, in contrast with Cain, brought of the *firstlings* of his *flock*, and of their *fat* (Gen.4:4). He evidently *believed* and *understood* the story of the fig leaf girdle skirts and the tunics of skin. His name Abel denotes VANITY. It is quite a contrast to that of his brother, Cain, ACQUISITION, and seems to indicate a vast change on the part of his parents, in their attitude toward human life. They seem to have had a premonition of the conclusion reached by the Assembler, Ecclesiastes, when he summed up the total of human endeavor: "Vanity of vanities: all is vanity." But, from the divine standpoint, he did far more than Cain, the city builder, the progenitor of a long line of descendents. *Abel worshipped Yahweh!*

GOD SUPREME

It would almost seem that Abel, when he offered the *firstlings* of his flock, already by faith recognized the great truth that the Supreme and His sacrifice are not on an equality with man, but infinitely high above all. Ever since then, man has been shown lesson upon lesson upon the screen of human experience, which will one day enable all the rest of the race, and even the celestial host, to realize, in some measure, His infinite superiority to all of His creatures. Let us seek to learn it now, and put it into practice in our contacts with those whom He has placed above us. A great blessing lies in the anticipation of the final subjection of all to the great Subjector. Let us be subject for His great name's sake!

THE BLOOD

The principal difference between the two sacrifices lay in the *blood*, which was absent from Cain's and present in Abel's. The priests poured out or sprinkled the blood on or about the altar, which Abel could not do. It is significant, however, that the blood of the sin offering went right into the divine Presence, beneath the *cherubim*. These guarded the garden in Abel's day, and marked the limit, beyond which he could not go. It may be that he offered his sacrifice and carried the blood there, as it was as close as he could get to the divine Presence.

BLOOD

As Abel's *present* is also called a *sacrifice* (Heb.11:4), he must have shed the blood of the victim. Apart from blood shedding comes no pardon (Heb. 9:22). The suffering which it symbolizes is absolutely essential to salvation. When the great Antitype of all the sacrificial victims faced the sufferings that really save, and He cried out in the agony of His soul to have the cup pass Him by, *it was not possible to do so* (Mark 14:26). And so it became the symbol of *pardon* and *justification*. We are justified in His blood (Rom.5:9). In Abel's case Yahweh accepted his present, and his sins were set aside, so that his deeds, unlike his father's, did not bring down judgment on his head. Instead, Yahweh testified that he was *just* (Heb.11:4). He will rise in the resurrection of the just.

THE FIRSTLING OF THE FLOCK

Abel's present offering was of the *firstlings* of his flock. Of Cain's present nothing of this kind is said, so it seems evident that he made no effort to bring the *best* of the fruit of the ground, but just the common kind. This difference may seem trivial when looked at with the eyes of a

man, but the distinction becomes vital when viewed from the divine standpoint. God is not in need of either flesh or fruit, so it has no value for Him as far as nourishment is concerned. But He does covet the loving regard of His creatures, and is supremely blessed by the highest token of affection which He will ever receive—the sacrifice of Christ, Who gave *Himself*, not only for our salvation, but, first of all, as a love gift to His Subjector and Father.

Every other offering received its value from His, inasmuch as it is a reminder of His, and in the measure in which it is saturated with the same spirit as His. He was the commencement of El's *creation*, the *First*, in whom all the rest were created (Rev.3:14). Moreover, He is also the *First-born*, Who later entered the human race by means of generation. Moreover, He is also the Firstborn from among the dead (Col.1:18). In all three spheres, creation, generation, and vivification, He is *first*, in order that He may become the highest. Such is the great Offering, the Antitype of all other gifts that are given to God by His creatures. Hence they should, as much as possible, conform to this ideal in whatever sphere they may be found.

CHRIST FIRST IN ALL THINGS

Christ was not a common man, like the rest of us. It was His humiliation from the greatest glory which He had with God before the world was, down to the deepest depths of shame and suffering, that gave infinite value to His sacrifice. Had He merely been the highest of the heavenly host, or the highest human of Adam's race, that would never have qualified Him to be the Saviour of all mankind, or the Reconciler of the universe, or brought to the Supreme the infinite satisfaction and delight which His great heart craved. He was *First* in time as well as position. Hence this spirit should pervade every present offered to Him, in order that it may be acceptable to Him. Abel's present offering was

a *firstling*. Hence Yahweh gave heed to it. Cain's present lacked this flavor, hence God gave it no heed.

Throughout His revelation to mankind God repeats this lesson. It is especially stressed in connection with His earthly people Israel and the divine law and ritual that He gave to them. As soon as He had them for Himself in the wilderness He spoke to Moses, saying, "Hallow to Me every *firstborn*, opening up every womb among the sons of Israel, among human and among beast. It is *Mine*" (Ex.13:2). Later on He explained that, when they were in Egypt, Yahweh killed all the firstborn, both human and beast. Only the firstborn sons in Israel, under the shelter of the blood of the passover lamb, did not die. Therefore they had to ransom all the firstborn. Otherwise they were to behead them (Ex.13:13-16; 22:29; 34:19). An ass could be ransomed by a flocking. An unclean beast could be appraised, with a fifth added, and paid for (Lev. 27:26).

Later on Yahweh took the tribe of Levi instead of the firstborn, and they became His, to serve only Him and to lead His people in His worship. This applied to their beasts also (Num.3:12,41; 8:16-18).

THE FAT

Abel's present offering, besides being firstlings, include the fat which was on their viscera. This speaks to us of the deep, inner *richness* of God's compassions. Abel gave Yahweh, not only the first, but also the *finest* and most *feelingful*. All through the Scriptures the inner emotions are associated with the vital organs which are contained within the torso. The very word for *compassion* is, literally, entrails, or viscera, or intestines, in the Greek Scriptures. In the Hebrew it is *womb*.

In the later elaboration of the details concerning the present offering, all the fat on the internal organs was burned on the altar as a fragrant odor to Yahweh. Most of

the third chapter of Leviticus is concerned with the fat. *All the fat is Yahweh's* (Lev.3:3-17).

JUDAS' LACK OF COMPASSION

We shudder at the grisly horror of Judas' suicide, and wonder why we should be told that his intestines, or entrails, were poured out (Acts 1:18). It is only as we learn the significance of these that we grasp its import. The same word *splagchna* is elsewhere always *compassions*. Even in old English, it is rendered bowels. Paul writes to Philemon, according to the AV, "refresh my *bowels*" (Philemon 1:20), where the CV has "soothe my *compassions*." Judas was entirely lacking in compassion or he never would have sold his Saviour for silver. So it was most fitting that the part of his physical frame that represented the kindly compassions which he lacked should all flee from his carcass in disgust, for he had no compassion.

The common Hebrew greeting, *shalom*, commonly translated *peace*, has a wider range of meaning than this, and includes *well-being*. The stem *shlm* denotes REPAY, as in Exodus 21:34, where the AV reads, "the owner of the pit shall *make it good*." Again, in Genesis 29:6, Jacob inquires concerning Laban, "Is he *well*?" And they said, "He is *well*." In Exodus 18:7 we read, "They asked each other of their *welfare*." We have no English word with this wide range, so must remember that *peace* in the Scriptures implies general well-being, not merely absence of strife. This is the significance of the peace offering. We already know that war includes all that is ill, and peace implies what is well.

FAT, PEACE, WELL-BEING

It was an eonian statute in Israel that they were not to eat the *fat* or the *blood*. All the fat is for Yahweh (Lev.3:16,17). Nothing is said about the fat in the ascent offering, which was *all* for Him, and was primarily concerned

with *worship*. Yet fat has a large place in the *peace* and *sin* offerings, which have to do with man's well-being. But in the latter case it is to be offered *as in the peace offering*. So it primarily speaks of *peace* or well-being. Although they were not to eat the fat, Pharaoh promised Jacob the *fat of the land* (Gen.45:18). This, and such phrases as "the fat of the oil" (Num.18:12), "the fat of the wheat" (Psa. 81:16), which is translated "the *finest* of the wheat" (AV Psa.147:14), shows that the *best* part is typified by the fat. This is what pleased Yahweh Elohim in Abel's offering. Only this part of an animal will burn. He may have fumed this in his offering.

THE FAT AND BLOOD ARE YAHWEH'S

The Israelites were not to eat either the *fat* or the *blood*. These belonged to Yahweh (Lev.3:17), and should be offered up to Him. Both speak especially of the immolation of Christ in its exclusively divine aspect, the blood as a sacrifice, and the fat as an offering *to God* for a fragrant odor (Eph.5:2). In our self-centered souls, we lay far too little stress upon the *divine* side of Christ's work, as if the all-important issue were the salvation of mankind. But this is not the first consideration. We must not forget the higher and greater aspect. Above all it was for God and His glory.

To the thoughtful saint, the fact that *fatness* is not even mentioned in connection with Israel in the Greek Scriptures, is very significant. There must have been tons of fat consumed on the altar of the temple in the days of our Lord and afterward, but its antitype was definitely lacking. Not only Judas, but the whole nation, as such, was disemboweled. Had they possessed any compassion at all, let alone richness of it, would they have crucified their Christ? Their sacrifices were a sham; the fat was an insult to Yahweh, for it had nothing to correspond to it in their lives. As

in Isaiah's day, He was surfeited with the fat of fed beasts. Their offerings were vain (Isa.1:11,13). They ate the fat themselves, as in Ezekiel's day (Ezek.34:3).

FAT, PEACE, CONCILIATION, COMPASSION

As the fat is so closely connected with the *peace* offering, it is most suggestive of *conciliation* and *reconciliation*. Just as the blood reminds us of justification, so the fat speaks of peace with God, which comes *through* it, yet is the *richest* part of the sacrifice. As, in the ritual, it is closely associated with the internal viscera, which represent the compassions, so conciliation is a declaration of God's clemency and compassion toward the world in refusing to reckon their *offenses* against them. The blood is concerned with justice, the fat with peace, and its *rich* results, which will spread beyond the limits of the earth, and include the heavens also (Col.1:20).

THE FATNESS OF THE OLIVE

In later revelation, the idea of *fatness* occurs only once. Paul tells us that the nations are now joint participants of the *fatness* of the olive. The sense of this is clear in the context, where it is expressed in literal terms. The discomfiture of Israel is the nations' *riches* (Rom.11:12,17). And is it not a fact that the nations, as such, are not only *conciliated* to God, but have been favored far more than Yahweh's earthly people? And their well-being, during this administration, has been dependent, to a large extent, on divine revelation. Where the Bible has had even a superficial place in human government, the people, as a rule, are not only more enlightened, but better off. Europe and America have not suffered from the dire distress and degradation of Asia and Africa during the course of Christianity. But the real riches were not in the material but in the spiritual realm.

LIGHT MAKES FAT

Perhaps we can see this in the olive berry itself. It not only provides light, when crushed and burned, but is a source of fat when used as a food. The fat of the olive seems to be the richest of foods, yet a very digestible fat. So the light of revelation is not only healthful and wholesome for the spirit, but is the source of the only *true riches* which cannot be lost or stolen, nor is doomed to decay. It is the redundancy of these riches that should accompany our present offerings, for with such worship God is well pleased.

Yahweh Elohim was pleased with Abel's present because it not only set forth the way of salvation by suffering and reconciliation by death, but also gave Him His place supreme. Abel did not insult Him by giving the last and worst, but the first and best. How often do men give Him that for which they no longer care and which they can well spare, instead of the choicest and dearest that they have! Abraham offered his best, the darling of his heart. How rich was God's response! The widow who gave all her living, although it was an insignificant sum, gave most. It is the gleeful giver that God loves. May God help us not only to shun the way of Cain, but to revel in the way of Abel!

A. E. Knoch

ERNEST L. MARTIN

Dr. Martin, who died suddenly on January 16, will be greatly missed by his many students and friends. Nearly fifty years ago, while he was a student at Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, he came across a copy of the Concordant Version and became so interested in it that he paid a visit to Brother A. E. Knoch at his home to learn more of his work, especially of his studies related to the eonian times revealed in Scripture. Although Ernest carried on his work independently, he introduced others to the Concordant Publishing Concern and maintained a cordial friendship. His great interest was in the field of scriptural research, writing a number of books and studies, and becoming involved even with archaeological excavation in Israel.

YAHWEH HEEDS ABEL

IN HIS ACTIVITIES after the disobedience of Adam and Eve, Yahweh exhibits a continuing focus on the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus, that is, on the great work of the Seed of the woman (Gen.3:15). The promise of restoration by means of the husband (Gen.3:16) looked ahead to this One Who would come into the human race which would be preserved by propagation. The clothing of the sinful and vulnerable pair by skins of a slain animal (Gen. 3:21) spoke of that provision of God which would not simply be a “cover-up,” but a real taking away of sin by means of the Lamb of God (*cf* John 1:29). When Yahweh heeded Abel’s approach present and did not heed Cain’s, He was centering on the One Who would be God’s Approach Present for salvation (*cf* Eph.2:8). And Yahweh’s own provision of an animal as a sin offering for Cain (Gen.4:7) directed attention to Christ as the One Whom God would make to be the Sin Offering for sinners (2 Cor.5:21).

Furthermore, the fact that in expelling humanity from the garden and the tree of life, and in driving Cain out from family and home, Yahweh still sustained the corrupted race, speaks of a divine purpose beyond the acts of judgment. Again, for the believer at least, Yahweh’s reference to the cry that came to Him from the blood of Abel (Gen.4:10) adds to the many striking points of comparison between the murder of Abel by his brother and the death of Christ. And in doing so, God impresses our minds on all the similarities of meekness and faithfulness between Abel and God’s beloved Son in Whom He delights.

Never, in all His activities in connection with humanity, does God forget His purpose in Christ Jesus. Nothing is done without that in view, not His callings, not His judgments, not His mercies, not His indignation, not His grace, not any of His promises and blessings, not any of His acts of severity or kindness or any of His dealings with mankind.

THE REASON FOR DIVINE HEED

It is true that God heeded Abel and his offering because Abel acted in faith. Abel is distinguished in later Scripture for his faith. "By *faith* Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain, through which he was testified to that he is just at God's testifying to his approach presents, and through it, dying, he is still speaking" (Heb.11:4). But Abel's faith pointed to Christ. And as far as his act of believing was concerned it was a gift; it was nothing Abel could boast in as though it was of himself. In fact, Abel, whose name meant "vanity," exhibited no confidence whatsoever in himself. His present was patterned after the remarkable and single gracious act of Yahweh toward his parents in the garden, after they had sinned, the provision of animal skins as a covering for their nakedness (Gen.3:21). Abel's present was a recognition of God's present to Adam and Eve which was, in effect, a present for all of this first family of human beings.

This needs to be repeated: The fundamental reason for God's heed of Abel lies in the fact that this second son of Adam and Eve and his offering spoke of Christ and God's purpose in Him. For it is only through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ that Abel himself can be justified.

Abel is still speaking. In Genesis 4 we do not hear one word spoken by Abel. But by means of his offering and his dying he has been speaking for thousands of years and is still speaking. What Abel speaks has to do with God's way of dealing with the shame and misery of sinful human-

ity, which involves the death of His Son as typified by the death of an animal in Genesis 3:21 and again in Genesis 4:4. What Abel is speaking has to do with Jesus Christ.

Hence, to us who are privileged to live now after the actual humbling of Christ to the death of the cross and, as God's chosen ones, to be believing the evangel concerning His Son, Abel is speaking of God's great gift of salvation which Paul calls God's approach present. "In grace, through faith, are [we] saved, and this is not out of [us]; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8,9).

THE WAY OF ABEL

The Scriptures do not speak directly of a "way of Abel" as they do of the "way of Cain." The way taken by Abel, like the way taken by Abraham, was the way of believing what God says to him, apart from seeing that it is so (*cf* Rom.4:17). This way of faith does not celebrate Abel but the One Who is the Inaugurator of faith (Heb.12:2). We may certainly speak of "the way of Abel" or "the way of Enoch" or "the way of Abraham," but we must see this as the way of faith that is graciously granted to God's chosen ones. It is a way that draws attention to God and honors Him rather than the person involved.

And in honoring God, this way of faith draws attention to *God's way* of deliverance and righteousness centered in Christ. Yahweh heeded Abel in his way of bringing an approach present not because this way made Abel righteous but because it pointed ahead to the One Who, in the grace of God, would be tasting death for the sake of everyone (Heb.2:9).

BLESSINGS OF FAITH

We note that this way of faith involved enduring the hatred of his brother, and it led to Abel's death. That was

necessary as a type of Christ. But, as for Abel's afflictions while living, which indeed pointed ahead to the hate Jesus received from His brethren (*cf* John 15:24,25), these also had important values for Abel in his life. "All who are wanting to live devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted" (2 Tim.3:12). Nevertheless, "affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness *expectation*" (Rom.5:3,4). Abel was blessed in looking forward to something better (*cf* Heb.11:39,40).

EXCEEDINGLY DEEP

God's actions in Genesis 2-4 are astounding. "How great are your works, OYahweh," exclaimed the psalmist, "exceedingly deep, Your designs!" (Psa.92:5). But God's works are deep, not so much in being mysterious or obscure, but in being so exceedingly *great* in glory.

In Genesis 2-4 God acted in accord with His righteous and loving purpose of deliverance and reconciliation through the death of His Son. In doing so, He intended that Cain would bring an offering that He would not heed, and graciously granted Abel not only to be believing but to be suffering also as a type of Christ. Since God is righteous and wise and good, what He did in preparing the way for generations of sin and shame, judgment and death, along with mercy and forbearance, He did for right and wise and good purposes, which are centered in Christ Jesus. What God did is for His glory.

No wonder then that the actions of God in these early scenes of Genesis continually involve types and promises of Jesus Christ and His death for sinners. God always keeps that in view. As His Word testifies, this is what God *heeds*. And it is our privilege to do so too, to note with faith and expectation what God does and heed the direction of His deeds toward His glorious purpose in His beloved Son.

D.H.H.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST,
WE MUST BE SAVED

Question:

I believe that God, in His justice, will subject the lost—which is to say the non-elect—to endless punishment for their sins, albeit to a punishment consisting not of endless torment but of permanent death.

Likewise, the gospel is that Christ died for *our* sins, that is, for the sins of the elect. Christ's work on the cross was designed to save the elect alone, who are saved by grace alone, and who alone will be saved, though not apart from faith in the gospel.

Since you, too, as a universalist, like the Arminians, do not believe the gospel, you, too, are unsaved, and will remain unsaved and perish for eternity unless you repent and believe the gospel.

In correspondence to the above considerations, I also believe that the dictates of justice are determinative of the acts of love, not that the dictates of love are determinative of the acts of justice. Therefore, whatever God does is right; this includes all instances in which He, in love, grants blessing, and, all instances in which He, in accord with His will and purpose, instead, imposes punishment. Accordingly, then, I would ask you this: To be righteous, does God *have* to save anybody?

Answer:

IN REPLY to your statements and question, let me first say that I agree with you in several important points.

Certainly you are correct in your finding that the final

adversative judgment of Scripture, to which all the lost will be committed, is that of *death*, not conscious torment, endlessly experienced.

The only question is whether death is to be the destiny of the lost temporarily or permanently. When considering their fate insofar as this is contemplated in John's vision of the new earth, we acknowledge that, "their part is in the lake burning with fire and sulphur, which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

This fact notwithstanding, however, there is no reason to conclude that therefore this is their final destiny, claiming thus that since, here, it is their lot to be subjected to the second death, therefore the second death will always be their portion. Indeed, even if John's vision of the new earth (Revelation 21, 22) were the only scriptural revelation pertinent to this question, it would still be wrong to insist that the lost will never be delivered from the second death. Instead, in that case, we could only say that the Scripture does not inform us whether or not they will one day be delivered therefrom.

Likewise, and with much enthusiasm, I join you in acclaiming the gospel that Christ died for *our* sins, we who are His *elect*, or *chosen* ones (1 Cor.15:3; cf Rom.8:28-33). The apostle Paul does indeed hereby declare "the evangel of [*our*] salvation" (cf Eph.1:13), not some other message of glad tidings, concerned with a different theme.

Accordingly, I certainly agree with you in your affirmation that the elect are saved by grace alone, even as in your further testimony that their salvation by grace alone is not apart from faith in the gospel.

God truly *chooses us*, singling us out from the rest. He does so in His grace, according to His purpose. Even though He has not disclosed to us His specific reasons for choosing us instead of others, we do know that before the disruption of the world, *He chose us* (Eph.1:4).

Salvation is not a matter of reciprocity, but of gracious blessing. Under Paul's evangel, it is not that we are required to believe or to live uprightly, but that we are privileged to do so, each in the measure appointed unto him. We cannot boast either in our faith or in our good works. Our faith is a gracious gift (Phil.1:29), not a requirement to be saved. Our good works are not a "ticket" giving us the right to salvation, but a provision of God, which He makes ready beforehand that we should be walking in them (Eph.2:10).

The evangel of our salvation, however, is not the only evangel of salvation revealed in Scripture. And, while it is true that we are God's "elect" and that we alone enjoy the blessings thereof, election has reference to *eonian* life, life in the oncoming eons (cf Acts 13:48; 1 Tim.1:16; Eph.2:7). It does *not* preclude blessing beyond the eons for those who, with reference to eonian life, are indeed the "non-elect."

It is ironic that Calvinists who, unlike Arminians, enjoy the great truth of their own election in grace, have nevertheless seen fit to endow the phrase "the non-elect" with the notion of eternal reprobation.

I strongly object to this common practice of Calvinists in which they glibly speak of the "non-elect" as being non-elect with respect to salvation itself—as if this very term entailed preclusion from salvation for all persons thus identified. It does not follow simply because God does not "elect" to bless a certain man with vivification at a certain point in time, that He will therefore never bless him thus at all, at any point in time.

All scriptural references which are concerned with the elect and their particular salvation are confined to blessings of the oncoming eons; they do not address issues of vivification at the consummation or life subsequent thereunto. Therefore, it is begging the question to argue as if the question were already settled in the negative whether all will finally be saved inasmuch as there are those who may justly be termed "the non-elect."

Indeed, as God's chosen ones, we—and we alone—are saved *from* indignation (Rom.5:9), and *for* life eonian (Rom.5:21). But we should not conclude since the non-elect will not enjoy life eonian, that they will therefore never be delivered from death. The question is not, Is there a second death? but, Will death be abolished?

The answer to this vital question is explicitly declared by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:26: "The last enemy is being abolished: death." Even as President Lincoln's emancipation proclamation which decreed the abolition of slavery entailed the deliverance from slavery for all those formerly enslaved, thus also, the apostle Paul's grand pronouncement decreeing the abolition of death, entails the deliverance from death for all those who were formerly dead.

There can be no question that Paul's vision of "the consummation" (1 Cor.15:23), at which juncture death will be abolished (1 Cor.15:26), contemplates a time subsequent to that of John's vision of the new earth, recorded in Revelation 21,22. This is because at the time envisioned by John, Christ is still reigning (*cp* Rev.11:15), and the saints of that allotment are continuing to reign as well (Rev.22:5b). Likewise, in that day, the second death is still extant (*cp* Rev.20:15; 21:8).

Paul, however, in speaking of the consummation, envisions a day which, of necessity, is subsequent to the time of John's vision. This is because, in that still later day to which *Paul* refers us, Christ will *no longer* be reigning (*cf* "whenever He may be *giving up* the kingdom [i.e., the 'reign'] He must be reigning *until* He should be placing all His enemies under His feet"; 1 Cor.15:24,25). Similarly, it is evident that the saints of the new earth, by that time, will have ceased to reign as well, for Christ will then *nullify all* sovereignty and *all* authority and power (1 Cor.15:24).

Accordingly, while at the time contemplated in John's vision, death is still *present* (Rev.21:8; even though even in that day no *more* will be *added to* the dead; *cp* "death will be no *more*"; Rev.21:4), in the day perceived by Paul, which is "the consummation" (1 Cor.15:23), death will be abolished. And, as noted above, this entails deliverance from death for all those formerly dead.

"The consummation" is the day in which God's great work of vivifying all (1 Tim.6:13) will finally be realized. Not only does "the consummation" speak of a day in which "vivification" will occur (which is to say, that glorious life of which Christ is the Firstfruit; 1 Cor.15:23a), but it speaks of the day in which the remainder of those who will enjoy this blessing will be granted it: "in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit [of vivification], Christ; *thereupon* those who are Christ's [shall be vivified] in His presence; *thereafter* the consummation [of vivification shall occur], whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father . . ." (1 Cor.15:22-24).

We are told that, "even as, *in Adam*, all are dying, thus also, *in Christ*, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

As we have explicated in a previous writing,¹ the usage of "in" in these phrases is instrumental (as in, "In you [i.e., Abraham], shall all the nations be blessed"; Gal.3:8; or, "in Christ is it [the old covenant] being nullified"; 2 Cor.3:14); it is not locative (as in, "[those] who . . . came to be in Christ before me"; Rom.16:7).

As stated in that article: The instrumental usage of "in" in the phrase, "in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22), reveals *how* we are vivified (we are vivified, "in Him").

Indeed, the phrase, "in Christ is it being nullified" is parallel to, "in Christ, shall all be vivified." "In Christ, shall all be vivified," then, no more means "those who are in

1. "Crucial Questions About Resurrection," vol.85, pp.163-177.

Christ shall be vivified,” than “in Christ is it being nullified,” means “those who are in Christ is it being nullified,” which, means nothing at all.

It should be noted that in 1 Corinthians 15:22, Paul does not say, “all in Adam” and “all in Christ,” but, “in Adam, all,” and “in Christ, all.” It is unconscionable to reverse the scriptural syntax as so many do, when interpreting this passage. It is unconscionable as well, when the apostle’s words already express a clear thought as they stand, to revise his words so as to express a *different* clear thought than *his* clear thought.

We may not change the scripture syntax when by so doing we change the scripture sense. The syntax we are considering is the syntax of these scriptural phrases in question in 1 Corinthians 15:22, “in Adam, all . . .” and, “in Christ, all . . .” The words “in Adam” and “in Christ,” are prepositional phrases. Prepositional phrases may be used as adverbs or as adjectives. When we say, “in Christ, shall all be vivified,” we are using the words “in Christ” adverbially, so that “in Christ” modifies “vivified.” Such a construction answers the question how, or where, all shall be vivified. The sense is: “*all* [in this case, all mankind] *shall* be vivified,” but they shall be vivified, “in Christ [i.e., not otherwise or elsewhere].”

The *non*-scriptural construction, however, “all in Christ,” presents us with a different thought from that of the scriptural syntax, “in Christ, all.” And, as it is popularly understood, this non-scriptural syntax presents an *unscriptural* thought. In the construction, “all in Christ,” the phrase “in Christ” is used adjectivally, so that it modifies the adjective (used as a noun) “all.” In this case, the sense is that “the ‘in Christ’ all” are “the all” who shall be vivified.

Before we even attempt to judge the sense or scope of such a phrase, we must realize that such a phrase does not declare Paul’s idea. Whether or not, on other grounds, such

a thought, in some sense, may be true, such a thought is not revealed here.

CHRIST, THE FIRSTFRUIT

The purpose of 1 Corinthians 15:22 is to tell us why it is so that “through a *man* came death, [and] through a *Man*, also, comes the resurrection of the dead” (verse 21). The text explains that this is so, “*for* even as, in Adam, *all* are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall *all* be vivified” (verse 22). The antecedent, then, for “all” in both clauses of verse 22, is “man” (i.e., “human”), from the word “human” in both respective clauses of verse 21. Therefore, the elliptical noun to be supplied following “all” in both clauses of verse 22 (“in Adam, all . . .”, “in Christ, all . . .”) is “humans,” that is, “mankind.”

The theme which is in view throughout this entire section, to which Paul makes the extended reply of verses 20-28, is that of the universal forlornness of *all mankind* if there is no resurrection of the dead (*cp* vs.12,19). Further, it is in the context not merely of believers, but of *all mankind* (v.19), in which Paul declares that Christ is the Firstfruit of those who are *reposing* (v.21). “Repose” is the figure of euphemism by which, in gentleness, we make mention of the dead who are lying in their graves. Those who died in unbelief are lying in their graves quite as much as those who died in faith. Hence it is vain to claim that “the reposing” are confined to dead believers. Clearly, the expression comprises all the dead, not merely those of a certain class.

Let us rehearse again the theme that is in view and the considerations attending it. The overriding theme is the universal hopelessness of *all mankind* apart from resurrection. Yet the marvelous point to note is that while it is indeed the case that, considered in themselves, the dead are utterly hopeless, *Christ* is the *Firstfruit* (*cp* Acts 26:23) of a company which comprises *all* the dead! Christ, in vivi-

fied glory, is the Firstfruit of the “reposing,” that is, of the dead. “Firstfruit” speaks of the first fruit to ripen and be presented to God (*cp* Lev.23:10). If the firstfruit is holy, so are the rest (*cf* Rom.11:16)

Christ is 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” (v.21). Notice, the subject is not the resurrection of some certain company among the dead; it is rather simply the resurrection of “the dead” (literally, the “standing up of dead ones”). It is the case that through a *man* came death, and that 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” (v.22).

The theme, the hopelessness of *mankind* apart from resurrection, is established in verses 12-19. The fact that Christ has been roused out from among those who are dead as the Firstfruit of the ones “having been reposed” (literal rendering), is declared in verse 20. That in verses 21 and 22 Paul’s subject continues to be all mankind, is made evident by the overall logical flow of the text. And, that this is and necessarily continues to be, the true range of his subject, is protected against all intelligent denial by the subject-maintaining causal conjunctions “for” at the beginning of both verses 21 and 22.

The fact is that the noun “human” appearing in both clauses of verse 21, constitutes the identification of the elliptical adjective “all” appearing in both clauses of verse 22. This makes the scope of the “all” in both clauses of verse 22, all *mankind*.

To claim that at least in the second “all” of verse 22 (the all who will be vivified), this refers *not* to all mankind but only to all who believe and even then only to all who believe during this life, is to do extreme violence both to the text and the context.

LOVE AND JUSTICE

You asked, “To be righteous, does God *have to* save anybody?” In leading up to this question, you stated that you believe that, “the dictates of justice are determinative of the acts of love, not that the dictates of love are determinative of the acts of justice. Therefore, whatever God does is right; this includes all instances in which He, in love, grants blessing, and, all instances in which He, in accord with His will and purpose, instead, imposes punishment.”

Although I think that most of what you say here, in itself, is quite good, still, I think it is a mistaken perspective to set justice over love. This is because God is “love” (1 John 4:8), and, because, though He is just, we are not informed that He is “justice.” It is evident that while God would have us ever mindful that all that He does is right, He would especially have us realize that His very essence is that of love (*cp* 1 Cor.13).

Therefore, I would instead say that neither God’s love or justice needs to be judged by the other. This is because God’s love is righteous, and His righteousness is loving. It is the cross of Christ which shows this to me.

I wholly concur with you, however, in the principle that *whatever* God actually does is right. We are *informed* by Him as to what is right; we ourselves are by no means the arbiters of righteousness. Neither conscience, intuition, nor “the consensus of scholars” is determinative, either of what is true or of what is right.

It is to be regretted, however, that the adjective “just” and the noun “justice,” for many, have been burdened with an exceedingly negative connotation. How frequently we are told, “Since God is *just*, unrepentant sinners will be punished in hell for ever.” And, “Since God’s *justice* must be satisfied, all Christ-rejectors must be subjected to the eternal punishment of the damned.”

Of course, since in making such astonishing claims even

those setting them forth are often affected by their sheer horror, they feel constrained to say at least something in their favor. Since they can hardly claim that since God is *love*, it is therefore that the lost will spend eternity in hell, groping for something to accommodate their need, they fall back on the claim that since God is *just*, it is for that reason that the lost will always be lost, their punishment unremitted for all eternity.

This is especially ironic since the wider evangel, as it is set forth in Romans 3, is that since God is *just*, He sees to the need of sinners for justification. Since all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God, every mouth is barred from being righteous in God's sight through works of law. The entire world, then, must become subject to "the *just* verdict of God" concerning this grave situation. What will His "just verdict" be concerning our awful predicament when all come under His justice (literally, become "UNDER-JUST" to Him; Rom.3:19)? We anxiously await His reply:

How glorious! In manifestation of the *righteousness* (i.e., justice) of God, His word is not one of malediction but of blessing. It is a declaration as to "righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith." It is a pronouncement that is "for all" (and, "on all who are believing")—for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.

The evangel, here declared, which is "for all, and on all who are believing," is the blessing of: "Being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24; *cp* 3:9-24).

It is in this light that we rejoice even in God's most severe judgments, since we know that even in judging ("in the day when God will be judging the hidden things of humanity"), God will be doing so "according to [lit., DOWN, i.e., based upon] my *evangel*, through Jesus Christ" (Rom. 2:16). "This Jesus," He it is Whom God dispatched into

the world, that the world may be saved through Him (John 3:17), He Who is "the Lamb of God . . . taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Obviously, then, to answer your question, while we would not assume *a priori*² that God will (much less, must) do this or that, even so, now that we have been given faith and have perceived God's achievement at the cross, we freely say, Yes, "in the name of Jesus Christ . . . we *must* be saved" (Acts 4:10,12). God *must* save not only some (your term was "anybody"), and, not only those who are elect for life eonian, but even all mankind. This is because God, our Saviour, is also the Saviour of all mankind. *He* has formed the decision that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth. Accordingly, Christ is giving Himself *a correspondent Ransom* for the sake of *all* (1 Tim.2:4,6; 4:10). It is in this character that we rely on the living God (1 Tim.4:9), Who does not lie (Titus 1:2). Therefore, by the necessity of the consequence, it becomes evident that He must save not only "somebody," but "everybody."

ASSURANCE OF UNDERSTANDING

You said concerning me, "Since you, too, as a universalist, like the Arminians, do not believe the gospel, you, too, are unsaved . . ."

Since I *do*, however, believe the evangel that "Christ died for our sins," which is the evangel to which you refer, your claim can only truly be that I do not believe *your interpretation* of the evangel, which is that Christ died for our sins *alone*. Now while I acknowledge that I do not accept your interpretation of the evangel, it does not follow from this that I do not believe the evangel itself, and so am not in Christ and remain unsaved. Nor is it so that your inter-

2. i.e., in the sense, as innate knowledge (of our own), prior to examination.

pretation of the evangel—*whether or not it should be correct*—is constitutive of the evangel itself.

Even as various others, you confound believing with understanding, the declaration of the faith with the interpretation of the faith. We must all make judgments, which is to say, interpretations, as to the sense, scope, and corollaries of God's Word. Interpretation is central to understanding. This is a simple fact, even if some should deny it, fail to see its significance, or ridicule us for having pointed it out. Indeed, if we should have any understanding at all as to how any certain declaration is to be understood, this is only because, wittingly or unwittingly, we have made a certain judgment as to its sense or interpretation.

Much of the confusion surrounding issues of believing and understanding, is born out of the unsophisticated notion that one need not (perhaps even, must not) interpret the Bible in order to understand it. Then, we have the influence of simplistic aphorisms such as, "the Bible interprets itself," and, "the Bible says what it means and means what it says."

Now we agree with and honor much that is meant by such sayings. Yet the first of these—acknowledging the helpful truth to which it points—simply overlooks the fact that the reader, nonetheless, must have the *insight* rightly to take note of whatever internal governance of sense Scripture may well afford us in settling any certain question. And the second of these sayings—acknowledging its higher intent to affirm the truth of inspiration—in itself, is sheer tautology, if it has any content at all.

In the case of a short, subjectively simple statement, most are apt to imagine, "There is nothing to interpret; just believe what it says." If you think about it, this is surely foolish, besides false (we recall that it is false when we remember that the question of usage is ever present). That such a claim is also foolish is evident inasmuch as

any long, complex statement is nevertheless comprised of short, discrete parts, many of which, usually at least, being subjectively simple.

Even short statements, however, including ones universally recognized as simple, still always call for interpretation. Take for example: "Greet one another with a holy kiss" (Rom.16:16); and, "Jesus weeps" (John 11:35). While we may have confidence that our (presumably, literal) interpretations of these normally uncontroversial statements is correct, *that* does not make them correct, nor does it make them anything other than interpretations. This is because it is neither impossible nor absurd (whether likely or not) that the "kiss" was spoken of in some sort of metaphorical/metonymical way, and that even the "weeping" was metaphorical, an internal "shedding of tears," within the heart. Indeed, in speaking of my own sorrows, I have sometimes spoken of having "wept" over a certain matter in cases where no actual tears were shed.

Perhaps I can illustrate what I have in mind still more clearly, by the words of Jesus which have puzzled so many: "Verily, I am saying to you that by no means may this generation be passing by till all these things should be occurring" (Matt.24:34).³

Now since this has been a very controversial passage which has been *interpreted* in various ways, not many would be apt to say that those who interpret it differently than themselves, therefore do not believe what it says. Any of good sense would say instead that while those of opposing views believe what it *says*—the statement itself—they misinterpret what it *means*—that of which it truly speaks, and the way that that was intended to be understood. And, in saying this, in the case of the one holding

3. Our findings concerning this passage are presented in the exposition, "This Generation," vol.86, pp.121-132; 145,146.

the correct interpretation of this text, he would be correct in speaking thus.

In parallel, then, in considering the text, “Christ died for our sins” (1 Cor.15:3), no one should say that those who interpret it differently than themselves, do not believe what it says—are unbelievers as to this declaration—but that they (to some degree) misinterpret its proper sense. And, in saying this, in the case of the one holding the correct interpretation of this text, he likewise would be correct in speaking thus.

Therefore, all who are convinced that the declaration, “Christ died for our sins” is true, are our fellow believers in Christ, joint enjoyers of salvation even with ourselves. Concerning either the term “died,” or the phrase “our sins,” whether one should understand Christ’s death for our sins as having occurred either categorically, in every way, or only corporeally, or, for ourselves alone, or for ourselves as well as for others, is irrelevant insofar as the question of one’s *faith* in this statement itself is concerned.

Faith is in what is said. Whether or not we should also understand the *sense* in which what is said is so, is a separate issue, one which is irrelevant (i.e., non-determinative) insofar as the question of the existence of faith itself is concerned.

When an intrinsically-coherent, cognizable proposition has been declared, and then—the hearer knowing the basic meaning of the words of which the declaration consists—that same intrinsically-coherent proposition becomes (1) that of which the hearer is cognizant, and (2) that of which the hearer is convinced, *faith* then becomes the portion of the hearer.

We are mindful that for many these various considerations will be difficult to grasp, or simply unacceptable. So our prayer is that God might grant a measure of competency in the discernment of His Word.

J.R.C.

GOD'S EVANGEL CONCERNING HIS SON

FROM the very start, Paul's letter to the Romans directs attention to the evangel of God concerning His Son. The introduction (Rom.1:1-7) is a series of phrases that run together like a long eighteenth century book title, establishing the theme and identifying the writer and those to whom he writes. Yet every point in verses 1-4 directs our thinking forward to *Jesus Christ our Lord* as He is made known in the evangel. And every point in the remainder of the paragraph speaks of grand effects of this evangel concerning *our Lord* in the lives of Paul and the believers. This pattern can be set forth structurally as follows:

Paul, (1) *a slave of Christ Jesus*, (2) *a called apostle*,
(3) *severed for the evangel*

the evangel (1) *of God*, (2) *which He promises before through His prophets in the holy scriptures*,
(3) *concerning His Son*

His Son, (1) *Who comes of the seed of David according to the flesh*, (2) *Who is designated Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead*, (3) **Jesus Christ our Lord**

our Lord, (1) *through Whom we obtained grace and apostleship* (2) *for faith-obedience among all the nations*, (3) *for His name's sake, among whom are you also*

you also, (1) *the called of Jesus Christ*: (2) *to all who are in Rome, beloved by God*, (3) *called saints*.

The basic pattern is clear: We are first directed to the evangel of God which concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Then we find that this evangel concerning Jesus Christ our Lord influences our current lives. The central Figure connecting the evangel to our lives is God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The letter as a whole follows the same pattern. The first eight chapters present the evangel of God concerning His Son, His faith in His death for sinners, concluding with the declaration that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God in *Christ Jesus our Lord*. The last eight chapters illustrate, with concrete examples and human situations, ways in which this evangel affects us under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

It is most important that we keep this pattern in view as we look into the details of the evangel and its significance in our lives. What Paul writes, for instance, in Romans 1:18-3:20 concerning the irreverence and unrighteousness of humanity must be related to the evangel concerning God's Son. The bleak description of the human predicament does not stand by itself. It serves an essential part in bringing out the goodness of the evangel, not only in making clear the desperate human need of deliverance from sin, but, even more importantly, in showing the extent of the calamity that had to be faced and that was overcome with power and righteousness in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The magnitude of the problem defines the need, but it also makes us more keenly aware of the measure of glory in the solution gained by our Saviour.

Similarly, in chapters 9-11, Paul writes of his own personal sorrow over Israel's current apostasy. Here is a matter which calls for divine direction, that is, where the *Lordship* of Jesus Christ is needed. The result for Paul is that his very real sorrow does not become a matter of hopelessness, but an experience that draws the apostle into a stronger reli-

ance on God than he would have had apart from the sorrow. Hence he brings the reader forward with him to the stirring words of praise to God given in Romans 11:32-36. The power and authority of Christ's Lordship in dealing with Paul's distress lies in the revelation of God's righteousness and faithfulness and especially His love given in the evangel concerning Jesus Christ.

This is very practical. The bleak background of human sinfulness, described in the early chapters of Romans, involves daily burdens of unrest and grief, such as those described in the latter chapters. These can be eased and transformed only by a true message of assurance of victory and goodness, which is exactly what the evangel of God concerning His Son is. The believer meets his own personal sorrows and struggles in the current eon, as Paul always did, by that confidence in God as He is revealed in His evangel concerning His Son.

THE INTRODUCTION

Romans 1:1-7 does not expound the evangel of God but establishes its principal features. It is a message of good, reflecting the goodness of God; it is scriptural; it concerns Jesus Christ.

Every thought in Romans 1-7 is important, but the stress is on *Jesus Christ our Lord* as He is made known in the evangel of God and as He affects the lives of those who are believing the evangel. It is important to note what the introduction says about Paul, but this must be related to the message he brings concerning Jesus Christ. It is immensely important that we see that the evangel originates in and reveals the character of *God*, and it will greatly help us understand this evangel if we see its roots in the holy scriptures. But we must never forget that this revelation of God is made known in God's Anointed One (Christ) Who saves (Jesus), and that the promises of good

spoken by the prophets will never be fulfilled apart from Jesus Christ. Again, rule and resurrection are critical features of the good news, but these cannot occur apart from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ upon which the good results are based. They are His works, and they will reveal Him as He reveals God.

SLAVE, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

The story of Saul the Pharisee becoming Paul the slave is a stirring one, not to Paul's glory, but to God's. It does not tell us of a poor, weak man who rises to riches and fame and power, but of a strong and proud leader of religious zealots who is brought into loving subjection to the very One he hated above all others. Where once he supposed himself "bound to commit much contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarene" (Acts 26:9), he became a slave of Christ Jesus, Who invigorated him and overwhelmed him with His grace (1 Tim.1:12-14). His boast came to be in Christ Jesus, in that which is toward God, and he did not dare to speak of anything that might possibly commend himself rather than be directly seen as effected by Christ (Rom.15:17,18).

It is not exalting Paul to distinguish his unique calling as an apostle. But rather it is to honor Him Who called him. Paul was not our Saviour or Lord. The evangel does not concern him. But our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, commissioned Paul to bring the evangel concerning Himself, to us. And He enslaved him in this commission. If we are to appreciate the goodness and power of the evangel we must listen carefully to the one who received this evangel and obtained the grace and apostleship to present it to us.

THE EVANGEL

It is true that the evangel which Paul brought is *from* God, but in terming it the evangel *of* God, the apostle is

speaking rather of its character than its source. It is God's power for salvation and reveals the righteousness of God (Rom.1:16,17). Yet in manifesting God's righteousness, the evangel does so *through Jesus Christ's faith* (Rom.3:22). The deliverance that God graciously grants in His grace is *in Christ Jesus* (Rom.3:24). Propitiation is through faith *in His blood* (Rom.3:25). The message is a commendation of God's love in *Christ's death* for us while we are still sinners (Rom.5:8). God grants conciliation *through the death of His Son* (Rom.5:10; *cp* Rom.8:35). The culminating word of the evangel of God as recorded in Romans 1-8 is that nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God *in Christ Jesus, our Lord* (Rom.8:39).

The roots of this evangel concerning God's Son are found in the holy scriptures which spoke of the Seed of the woman (Gen.3:15) and are filled with types of God's blessings channeled through the death of His Son, especially in the sacrifices, and in the lives of certain individuals such as Abel, Noah, Joseph and Joshua. Many features of our calling were kept secret, but the message of deliverance for sinners, of approach and access to God, of life and peace, all based on the blood of an innocent sacrifice, can be traced from Genesis onward.

CONCERNING GOD'S SON

The evangel which Paul evangelized is that Christ died for the sake of sinners (Rom.5:8; *cp* 1 Cor.15:3,4). But these lines of introduction do not speak directly of justification and conciliation through the death of Christ, or our spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, as Paul does in Romans 3:21-8:39. They do not present the details of the evangel. But they establish the critical point that the evangel concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who has been in view throughout God's Word, and Who brings good.

Two very needed goods are mentioned: God's Son is

the means of *rule* and *resurrection*. In His relationship to David, according to the flesh, He will fulfill the promise spoken concerning Solomon of reigning for the eon like a son to God (2 Sam.7:12-16). Even greater than this, in accord with the spirit of holiness given Him, He is the One Who resurrects the dead, which powerfully exhibits Him as the Son of God.

Human misrule plagues us every day. Death is everywhere, inside us and all around us. The evangel concerns God's Son Who puts an end to these great evils and brings ideal rule and life in their place. Consequently, in speaking of the good that comes to human beings, the evangel is speaking most essentially of the One Who gains and gives them this good.

JESUS CHRIST

How good is the good news? It is as good as the One it concerns, and as good as that which He has done. The evangel of God is not made good by our acceptance of it as true. It *is* good. Jesus Christ does not die for our sins when and if we believe He has died for us. He *has died* for our sins. We believe that which the evangel tells us has already happened. Jesus does not become Saviour by our acceptance of Him as Saviour. He *is* Jesus, the Saviour. Christ does not become the Anointed One by our believing that He is the One anointed by God with power. He *is* the Christ.

Our believing does not make it so. His doing is what makes it so. Our believing is a gracious and special gift given to us before we see it is so. But what is so is what is stated by the evangel to be so. And that is wholly and gloriously good.

Here in the introduction, the goodness of the good message concerning God's Son is contained in the words: *Jesus Christ our Lord*. It is not found so much in what it

says about His coming of the seed of David and about His work of resurrecting the dead, as in this identification of God's Son as the anointed Saviour. In order to rule and to give life to the dead God's Son must be God's empowered Saviour. And He is this because of His death for sinners. It is because He saves that He is Jesus, and because God anoints Him in His work and position that He is Christ.

OUR LORD

Jesus Christ is Lord. But not all yet know this (as all shall know, according to Philippians 2:9-11). We know Him as our Lord in accord with the measure of faith God has imparted to us, the measure of believing that Jesus Christ died for our sakes. Christ's Lordship is the effect of believing that while we are still sinners He died for our sakes. His Lordship is the effect of this revelation of God's love and righteousness on our lives right now, in this present wicked eon when all that we see seems to contradict what the evangel says and we believe.

The Lordship of Jesus Christ brought grace and apostleship into Paul's daily life. He *obtained* these blessings. He did not seek them, but He obtained them, nevertheless.

This Lordship of course was first made evident to Paul when he was "breathing out threatening and murder against the disciples of the Lord" and was cast to the ground by "a light out of heaven," as indicated by his cry, "Who art Thou Lord?" The great light, and the force of this appearance on Saul led Paul into a recognition of lordship at work. But surely it was the identification of this Lordship with the One Who was his Saviour and the evangel that the risen Lord gave to him, saying: "I am Jesus . . ." (Acts 9:1-5), that made that Lordship effective in his life.

We also, like those in Rome, addressed by Paul, are affected by Jesus Christ as our Lord, as God grants us faith to be believing that He is the anointed Saviour, Whom

God spared not but gave up for us all. Faith-obedience comes into the lives of the believers under the Lordship of Christ. His saving work affects us as God graciously opens up the eyes of our hearts to it. We also obtain grace, though not apostleship, but certainly we obtain grace as believers who are called of Jesus Christ, beloved by God, called saints.

The evangel tells us it is not of ourselves but of God (Eph.2:8,9). God loves us by giving His Son for us, and so we are loved! God calls us and sets us apart on the basis of what Jesus Christ has done for us, and so we are called! What a powerful influence this evangel of God concerning His Son has!

GRACE AND PEACE

There is still a line from Romans 1:1-7 that has not yet been quoted here. Paul concludes verse 7 with his greetings, with words that appear in all his letters, nearly the same as here, but which should not be dismissed as mere standard courtesy, but appreciated as continually felt from the heart of the apostle to the believer:

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The evangel of God concerning His Son is a message of grace and peace, and it brings grace and peace into our lives. Traced from God as our Father and Jesus Christ as our Lord, a greeting centered in the blessings of grace and peace is most ideal and meaningful.

I have much to learn yet about the evangel of God concerning His Son, and I expect that you who read this also share in this need. Consequently, even though we have often examined Romans, it should be a welcome experience to do so again in this way in our magazine.

D.H.H.

REMEMBER PAUL'S BONDS

GOD'S PRECIOUS WORD abounds with fascinating insights into the amazing complex personalities of so many individuals. Temperament, ambition, patience, strength or weakness of character, all these and many other traits of genetic and environmental influence, can be identified in those who have been privileged, blessed with some part in this wondrous revelation. Many were chosen for mighty and noble circumstances. Some, for slight or ignoble incidents. Whatever their lot or outcome of their portion, be it great or small, in the unfolding of God's purpose, it is certain that each and every one, either at the dais or consummation, shall rejoice and give thanks for God's subjection and choice.

A most blessed perception is granted to the ecclesia. This is the realization that true significance of the above placements is *primarily* for disclosure of God's wisdom, grace, and especially, His vast love! None, save our dear Lord, was more conscious of this than the apostle Paul. It was this awareness that shaped his character in his years of toil in dispensing the evangel and strengthened him in his afflictions.

OVERWHELMED BY GRACE

With overflowing hearts, we praise our gracious Father for submitting to the snares of self-esteem, one of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, a Pharisee, righteous in law, becoming blameless, and then extricating him from them so that he deemed prestige and position to be

refuse. This one came storming to Damascus bearing the chief priest's warrant. Listen to his own words before king Agrippa: "Besides, being exceedingly maddened against them, I persecuted them as far as the outside cities also" (Acts 26:9-12). He sought the arrest of those followers of Jesus. Who could have believed that but a few days hence, he would be escaping assassination, being lowered ignominiously down the walls of the city in a hamper!

The account of our risen Lord's confrontation with Paul is quite vivid. He describes it in the Roman citadel in Jerusalem (Acts 22) and before king Agrippa (Acts 26). It is in view in Paul's staunch defense to those in Galatia (*cf* Gal. 1:13), and when he writes to Timothy about the effects on him of the Lord's overwhelming grace (1 Tim. 1:12-16). The relevant point which might possibly be overlooked is contained in our Lord's words to Saul, "It is hard for you to be kicking against the goads" (Acts 26:14).

A dear friend confided that for some time he was helplessly involved in a sect which was very confused and misled, but, like the apostle, he also was liberated. "Brother," he declared, "God placed me in that state, and God took me out of it. Now I am enabled to rejoice in the freedom, the sheer love of all this grace!" How long had Paul endured the hypocrisy and harrowing pain engendered through vainly striving to observe the strictures of law keeping? "For through law is the recognition of sin" (Rom. 3:20).

EMANCIPATION

From the time he heard those words, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" his life would never be the same again. Significantly, he was arrested! Returning down from Damascus, he was to face persecution, pain, imprisonment, shipwreck. He was beaten, flogged and stoned. Being left for dead outside the walls of Lystra, he was snatched away into paradise and heard ineffable declarations. So stupen-

dous were these revelations that he was given "a splinter in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he may be buffeting me, lest I may be lifted up" (2 Cor. 12:7-11). The turbulent years of his ministry eventually led him to Rome to appear before Caesar. During the two year term of house arrest he was restricted in body, but not in words. Here, he was inspired by God to record those epistles of perfection which crown his ministry.

"Writing to the Colossians, he affectionately asks them to remember his bonds. He concludes, 'The salutation is by my hand—Paul. *Remember my bonds!*' (Col. 4:18). He desires to excite their sympathy that, in their prayers, the saints may remember his afflictions and beseech their heavenly Father that He should open a door of utterance 'to speak the secret of Christ' because of which he had been bound.

Underlying the superficial meaning of the words 'remember my bonds' we can see the pointer to the great truths back of his chains. The beloved apostle would desire that we appreciate the reason for his bondage—the *secret of the evangel*, and the *secret of Christ* (Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3). His chains were a symbol of the evangel which he heralded and which he could call *his* evangel. The transcendent revelations of the conciliation and the universal headship of Christ required a *chained ambassador* to make them manifest, that the reality of accomplishment should be demonstrated in entirety. *Remember Paul's bonds!*"¹

So great is our loving Father, Who, not only carefully presents and preserves His precious revelations, ensures that competent teachers are thus prepared. In the name of our Lord and Saviour, we praise and laud His holy name. Amen.

Donald Fielding

1. Alan Reid: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 30, p. 84.

DAVID'S HOUSEHOLD

3 +Now there ^{lb}was 'a long war between the house of Saul and ^{bt}the house of David; +but David was ^{go}growing + ^{fast}stronger +while the house of Saul was ^{go}growing + weaker. 2+ Sons were 'born to David in Hebron: + his firstborn ^{lb}was Amnon, 'by Ahinoam the Jesreelite; 3+ his second was Chileab, 'by Abigail, Nabal's former wife, the Carmelite; + the third was Absalom son of Maacah, daughter of king Talmai of Geshur; 4+ the fourth was Adonijah son of Haggith; + the fifth was Shephatiah son of Abital; 5 and the sixth was Ithream, 'by David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

6+ It came to 'be, ⁱwhile there ^bwas 'war between the house of Saul and ^{bt}the house of David, +that Abner ^bwas ^{fast}strengthening his hold ⁱon the house of Saul. 7+Now Saul 'had a concubine, and her name was Rizpah, daughter of Aiah; and 7Ishbosheth^{cs} 'said to Abner, For what reason did you come to my father's concubine? 8+Now 'Abner grew very ^{hot}angry ^{on}at the words of Ishbosheth, and he 'said, Am I a cur's head ^wthat belongs to Judah? Until today I have ^{ld}shown kindness ^wto the house of your father Saul, to his kinsmen and to his associate, and I did not 'let ⁱthe hand of David come upon you; +yet you 'call ^{on}me to account today for a depravity concerning 'this woman! 9 Thus may Elohim do to Abner, and thus may He add to it, for just as Yahweh swore to David, ^tso I will ^{ld}accomplish it for him: 10 To transfer the kingship from the house of Saul and to set up 'the throne of David over Israel and over Judah from Dan + unto Beer-sheba.

11 + 7Ishbosheth^c 'could 'reply- nothing ^fmore 'to Abner ^fbecause he feared- 'him.

12 + Abner 'sent messengers on his ^abehalf to David, > saying-, To ^awhom does the land belong? And he > ^{sa}added-, Do contract your covenant 'with me, and behold, my hand shall be with you to 'bring around 'all Israel to you. 13 + 7David^{cs} ^{sa}replied, Good! I myself shall contract a covenant 'with you; I am asking 'only one thing ^fof you, > saying-, You shall not see 'my face 'unless ^{if}you bring- before me 'Saul's daughter Michal 'when you come- to see 'my face. 14 +Then David 'sent messengers to Saul's son Ishbosheth, > saying-, Do give over 'my wife 'Michal whom I betrothed to myself 'with a hundred Philistine foreskins. 15 +So Ishbosheth 'sent word and had her 'taken away from ^{wi}her^o husband, from ^{wi}Paltiel son of Laish. 16 +Yet her husband 'went 'with her, + lamenting- while going- ^{af}behind her as far as Bahurim. +When Abner 'said to him, Go, return, + he 'turned back.

17 +Now there had ^bbeen communication by Abner with the elders of Israel, > saying-, ^{mr}Heretofore, ^{mr}indeed, you have ^bbeen seeking 'David 'as king over you. 18 +So now ^dact; for Yahweh Himself ^{sa}promised to David, > saying-, 'By the hand of My servant David 7I shall save-^{cs} 'My people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies!. 19 + Abner ^{mr}also 'spoke in the ears of Benjamin. +Then Abner ^{mr}'went into Hebron to speak in the ears of David 'of all ^wthat seemed good in the eyes of Israel and in the eyes of the whole house of Benjamin.

20 +When Abner 'came to David 7in^{cs} Hebron, and 'with him twenty men, + David ^{ld}made a feast for Abner and for the men who were 'with him. 21 +Then Abner 'said to David, Let me 'rise and 'go, and let me 'convene 'all Israel to my lord the king. + They shall contract a covenant 'with you, and you will reign ⁱover all ^wthat your

soul is yearning for. ⁺So David ^ldismissed ^{Abner}, and he ^{went} away unharmed.

²² + Just then David's servants and Joab came ^l from ^a raid, and they brought much loot with them. ⁺As for Abner, he was no longer with David in Hebron, for he had dismissed him, and he had ^{gone} away unharmed. ²³ +When Joab and all the military host ^wthat was ^wwith him came in, ⁺ they ^{told} ^{Joab}, ⁺ saying⁻, Abner son of Ner came to the king; ⁺yet he ^ldismissed him, and he ^{went} away unharmed. ²⁴ +So Joab ^lcame to the king and ^{said}, What have you done? ^{bd} Here Abner was coming to you; why then did you ^mlet him go, so ⁺that he is ^{gone}, yea gone? ²⁵ You knew ^wof Abner son of Ner that he came to dupe you and to get knowledge⁻ ^wabout your goings forth and ^wyour comings, and to get to know ^wall ^wthat you are doing. ²⁶ +Then Joab went ^lforth from ^{wi} David and ^lsent messengers after Abner; and they ^lbrought ^{him} back from the cistern of Sirah; ⁺as for David, he did not know of it. ²⁷ +When Abner ^lreturned to Hebron, ⁺ Joab ^lturned him aside to the ^{flank} of the gateway to speak ^wwith him ^{at} ease. ⁺ There he ^{smote} him on the fifth rib. ⁺Thus he ^{died} ^{for} the blood of his brother Asahel.

²⁸ Afterward, ⁺when David ^{heard} of it, ⁺ he ^{said}, Innocent am I and my kingdom ^fof bloodguilt for Abner son of Ner ^{f wi}before Yahweh ^ffor the eon. ²⁹ May it travail upon the head of Joab and ^{on} all his father's house. And may never be cut off from the house of Joab one who has a discharge^l, ⁺or is leprous^l, ⁺or ^{holding fast} ^{to} the crutch, ⁺or falling ^{by} the sword, ⁺or having lack of bread. ³⁰ +Now Joab and his brother Abishai had killed ^{Abner} ^{on}because ^w he had ^cput ^wtheir brother Asahel to death in the battle ^{at} Gibeon.

³¹ +Then David ^{said} to Joab and to all the people who were ^wwith him, Tear your clothes, ⁺ gird on sackcloth, and wail before Abner! ⁺ King David himself was walk-

ing ^{af} behind the bier.

³² + They ^lentombed ^{Abner} ^{at} Hebron; ⁺ the king ^llifted up ^{his} voice and ^{lamented} ^{at} Abner's tomb; and all the people ^{lamented} too.

³³ + The king ^mcomposed a ^{dirge} ^{over} Abner, ⁺ ^{saying}:

Should Abner have died ^{as} the death
of a decadent person?

³⁴ Your hands were not bound^l,

And your feet were not enclosed ⁱⁿ bronze fetters.

Yet you fell as one falls⁻

Before sons of iniquity.

And all the people ^lcontinued to lament over him.

³⁵ +Then all the people ^lcame to ^curge ^{David} to have a repast⁻ of bread ⁱwhile it was ^fstill ^{day}. ⁺Yet David ^{swore}, ⁺ saying⁻, Thus may Elohim do to me, and thus may He add, ⁱ if I should taste bread or anything at all before the sun sets⁻. ³⁶ + All the people recognized it, and it was ^{good} in their eyes. Like everything ^wthat the king did, in the eyes of all the people it was good. ³⁷ +Thus all the people and all Israel ^lknew ^{on} that day that it had not ^lcome from the king to ^cput ^{Abner} son of Ner to death.

³⁸ +Then the king ^{said} to his servants, Do you not ^{know} that a chief, ⁺ a great man in Israel, has fallen ^{this} ^{day}?

³⁹ And today I am timid, ⁺even though anointed^l king; ⁺as for ^{those} ^{men}, the sons of Zeruiah, they are too obstinate ^ffor me. May Yahweh repay ⁺ the one doing ^{evil} according to his evil.

IMPERFECTIONS IN LIFE

Polygamy was a current practice by kings of the east, and it was followed by Saul and David and many others, even though it was forbidden in the law (Deut.17:15-17). David's polygamy became a source of severe trial to him in later years. He had a daughter raped by a half brother,

a son murdered by a half brother, and several sons contending for the throne. The jealousies in his house would be deep and bitter.

But there are other lessons in these verses as well. As with Abraham, Sarah and Hagar, the names of David's wives and children speak of various qualities of life that are brought forth when one embraces different virtues and principles. Embracing law produces a life of restrictions and failure, and embracing grace produces a life with joy and freedom.

It is significant that the mention of these names comes when David begins to reign. It is when the "Beloved" rules in our lives that we bring forth fruit. The meanings of the names speak of faithfulness, peace, sufferings, rejoicing in the Lord, providential protection and growth. Such things we realize in our own lives when Christ rules in us. Yet, while we continue in this flesh, we will have areas in our life—like Joab in David's life (v.9)—which seem to defy rule.

THE INTRIGUE OF ABNER

When the Philistines defeated Israel, the power of the twelve tribes was broken, and the unity of the country was disintegrated. There were many throughout the land who believed that David should be king, and there were many who had close ties to Benjamin and Saul's house. Most of the tribes vacillated, waiting to see what would happen, refusing to risk any action themselves.

Abner was the dominant figure left from Saul's regime. He set up Ishbosheth, a weak son of Saul, as a figurehead king. Later, when the time was right, he intended to take over the rule himself. Abner was "strengthening his hold on the house of Saul" (v.7), and appropriated to himself Rizpah, a member of Saul's harem. Ishbosheth objected to this, because it was an established custom that the past king's harem belonged to his successor, along with the rest

of the kingdom. Thus Abner was showing that his intention was to become king himself.

Though Abner had no fear of Ishbosheth, evidently he thought he needed his support to accomplish his scheme. Angered by the weak king's complaint, Abner changed his course of action. He decided there was probably a better position for him in David's court than in the house of Saul. Abner sent messengers to David, and agreed to bring the heads of the tribes together with David, and establish David as king over the whole nation. God was using Abner's ambition and influence to draw the whole kingdom together to David.

DAVID'S RESPONSE

David had only one requirement in his agreement with Abner. David required that Michal, Saul's daughter, who had been given to him in marriage, be restored to him. Apparently David was concerned with diplomacy at this point. With six wives already, it is not likely that love was his motivation.

David's desire was to show an outward joining of his house with Saul's. By acceding to the throne in this way, David could be more readily accepted by the whole nation without intimidating loyalties to Saul.

Abner brought Michal, along with an embassy of twenty elders of Israel, to contract a covenant with David. David received them splendidly with a banquet.

JOAB AND ABNER

Joab was Abner's counterpart in David's administration. Joab returned victoriously from a raid to discover that David was contracting a covenant with Abner. Joab was infuriated, and warned that Abner was dangerous and was conspiring to overthrow David. Unbeknown to David, Joab sent a message after Abner, recalling him in David's

name. On his return Joab murdered Abner to avenge the death of his brother Asahel, whom Abner had killed at the battle of Gibeon.

THE BURIAL OF ABNER

David pronounced a curse on Joab for killing Abner, but he inflicted no other penalty. David was conspicuous in his attendance of Abner's funeral, and he mourned him vehemently. When some urged David to cease his mourning and take nourishment, he refused and proclaimed he would fast all that day. He also composed a dirge to be sung, lamenting the nation's loss.

David showed a genuine sorrow for the loss of Abner. In recognizing and honoring Abner's service to the country as a whole, David showed his love for all of Israel. This helped to strengthen the bond of the country under his new leadership.

J. Philip Scranton

FRANK ORTON

Brother Frank Orton, of Nottingham, England, was a man of zeal for God's Word and perseverance in toil for the spreading of its truth. He served diligently and boldly as our British agent for many years and relished every opportunity to let others know about the Concordant Version and the ministry of this magazine. Along with his wife, Joyce, he welcomed many visitors to his home and encouraged fellowship among the brethren in England. For those of us who knew his vitality and keen interest in the Scriptures, the announcement of his death early in the morning of March 19, at age 89, was especially sobering, even though we knew of his increasing infirmities. But, as our brother anticipated with joy, mortality will be replaced by immortality, and death swallowed up by victory (1 Cor.15:51-55). And the dead in Christ shall be rising first (1 Thess.4:16).

We extend our condolences to his wife Joyce, their children and their families, and his many fellow believers in Great Britain. Thanks be to God for His blessings in Frank's own life and for the testimony of faith granted through him to others.

Concordant Version of The Former Prophets

(JOSHUA, JUDGES, 1 SAMUEL, 2 SAMUEL, 1 KINGS, 2 KINGS)

The *Concordant Version of the Former Prophets* endeavors to follow a pattern of consistency in translating the Hebrew words and thoughts of the Original. Hence there has been an effort to avoid the use of any English term for more than one Hebrew term, even though several English words may be required to do duty for a single Hebrew term. Boldface and lightface type, superior symbols and abbreviations and footnotes are all used to clarify the meaning or to represent some unique features that are otherwise difficult to express in English.

Boldface type is used for words (or parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. The regular, lightface type is used for words (or parts of words) which have been added to help express the Hebrew thought in more idiomatic English.

Symbols and abbreviations are used to indicate variant readings in the various Hebrew manuscripts or ancient Versions or to provide more complete information concerning the literal expressions in the Hebrew. These symbols and abbreviations are identified on the inside covers of the book.

We cannot press too strongly that the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings belong among the *prophecies*. They foretell nothing, it is true, yet the histories they contain all revolve about the man of God who was the one link which still united Israel to their God.

We will get very little if we read these merely to increase our knowledge of ancient history, or the annals of the Hebrew nation. But if we fix our hearts on the fact that Yahweh is here displaying Himself in the various vicissitudes of His people, and that He deals with them through His spokesmen, the narrative takes on life and meaning.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2002
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

As the apostle Paul's "dissolution" became imminent he declared, "I have kept the faith" (2 Tim.4:7). Faith was given to Paul as a matter of grace that overwhelmed him (1 Tim.1:14), and his faithful toil was not of himself but of God's grace which was always there together with him, and it was not for naught (1 Cor.15:10).

During the first week of this month, two close associates of our work were put to repose (see p.112). Both our dear sister, Dorothy Johnson Hibberd, of Baldwin, Michigan, and our good friend and brother, Robert B. Killen, of Centerville, Ohio, were strong in the faith and unswerving in support of the evangel of God's grace. It was my privilege to testify, at their respective funerals, to the faith God had given them. I would like to speak of this faith in this editorial, not simply as a memorial to these good friends, whom I will miss very much, until that day, but also hopefully as an encouragement to those of us who still remain.

In her missionary work with children in rural areas, Dorothy often told the story of Lydia whose heart was opened by the Lord to heed what was spoken by Paul (Acts 16:13-15), for she felt a kinship to this woman of Thyatira, not far from Philippi. There was no dramatic experience such as Saul had on the road to Damascus, but there was the happy and assuring *discovery* that she believed Christ died for her sins.

For Bob Killen also, God opened the eyes of his heart to the evangel which declares he was saved "in grace, through faith," and this was not out of himself, but was God's approach present, not of works, lest he should be boasting (Eph.2:8,9). For him also there was a strong desire

to share the evangel of God's love and righteousness with others. (Ironically, before his death, which was quite unexpected, I had selected for this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, the first installment of a series of introductory studies on the value of the Scriptures which our brother had written for his grandchildren.)

In commenting on Romans 1:8-12, elsewhere in this issue, I suggest that when Paul thanked God for the announcement of *the faith* of the Roman believers "in the whole world," he was not thinking so much of their personal faithfulness (or even only of the fact of their believing), as of the message of good news from God that they believed. I spoke of this evangel which composes "the faith" at both funerals, but, at Brother Killen's prior request, I particularly dwelt on what he believed. The following are some extracts from that message:

THE FAITH BEING BELIEVED

Our friend believed in the existence of the invisible God of all the universe. He believed that the God Who exists has spoken to us in the Scriptures. He believed that the God Who speaks in His Word is a God Who knows what He is doing and is reaching toward a goal which He has purposed to achieve. He believed that what God has spoken concerning His operations and purpose centers in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, especially in His death for sinners, His resurrection and exaltation. He believed, that what God is doing in and through His Son will bring everyone to a glorious consummation that could not be achieved in any other way.

As it is expressed in Hebrews 11:6, *God is*. This has serious implications for anyone who notices that everything is not perfect in this world. How can God exist and evil exist? Is it possible that things have gotten out of hand, that God was surprised by the entrance of sin into the world and

is forced to accept many things He does not like? Or on the other hand, perhaps: Does God, for some inscrutable reason, want an eternity of evil in some form and place? It surely cannot be.

God has spoken to us in the Scriptures. Although God's invisible attributes of power and intelligence are revealed in the creation (Rom.1:20), His attributes of power for salvation, and of righteousness and wisdom and love are unfolded in the Scriptures, especially in the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.1:1-5,16,17; 8:31-39; 1 Cor.1:18-25). All of Scripture points to Christ and His obedience in faith unto the death of the cross and to the blessings that result from this great work.

What a happy favor to believe the Scriptures when they teach God has a purpose, with a goal in view, and knows what He is doing. Jesus once asked the throng, following Him, "For which of you, wanting to build a tower, is not first seated to calculate the expense, to see if he has the wherewithal?—lest at some time, he laying a foundation and not being strong enough to finish up, all those beholding should begin to scoff at him, saying that 'This man begins building and is not strong enough to finish up!'" (Luke 14:28-30). Likewise, God has a purpose which is made in Christ Jesus and covers all the eons (Rom.8:29; Eph.1:10; 3:11).

God's purpose centers in Christ Jesus, most importantly in His death, resurrection and exaltation. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15). The believer finds continuing joy and peace in the truth that we are being justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). He believes that God, Who chooses us in Christ (Eph.1:4), is commending this love of His to us, seeing that while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). Consequently, like Paul, the believer is persuaded that

neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, would be able to separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.8:38,39).

Furthermore, because of the death and resurrection of Christ God will achieve His goal of becoming All in all. God, Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11) wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). The One Who came into this world to save sinners gave Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:6). "Even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

But why all these ages of sin and suffering and death? Here our faith in God Who has spoken in His Word concerning His purpose made in His Son, Who died for sinners, directs us most marvelously to the glory of God. In Ecclesiastes 1:13 we read, "I applied my heart to inquiring and exploring by wisdom concerning all that is done under the heavens: it is an experience of evil Elohim has given to the sons of humanity to humble them by it." In contemplating God's operations with Israel and the nations, at different times blinding the one and blessing the other, Paul declares, "God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32). In His great wisdom and grace, God manifests His righteousness and love against the dark background of our present experience.

"O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33-36).

D.H.H.

INSUBJECTION IN THE LINE OF CAIN

(Genesis 4:17-24)

¹⁷ + Cain 'knew 'his wife; + she became 'pregnant and gave 'birth `to Enoch. +Then he 'bengaged in building a city and 'called the city's name ^{as}by the name of his son Enoch.
¹⁸ + To Enoch was 'born 'Irada, and Irada begot 'Mehujael, and Mehujael begot 'Methusael, and Methusael begot 'Lamech.

¹⁹ + Lamech 'took to himself two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah.
²⁰ +Then Adah gave 'birth `to Jubal; he' became the father of the tent dwellers! and the cattlemen. ²¹ And the name of his brother was Jubal; he' became the father of all who handle! the harp and the shepherd's pipe. ²² +As for Zillah, she' ^{mr}too gave birth `to Tubal-cain who forged! every artifact of copper and iron. + Tubal-cain's sister was Naamah.

²³ + Lamech 'said to his wives:

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice!

Wives of Lamech, 'give ear to my saying!

'Truly a man I have killed for my injury,

And a boy for my welt.

²⁴ 'If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,

+Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.

THE LINE OF CAIN

Insubjection is the leading theme at the commencement of human history, even as the subjection of all is the culmination at its close. It begins by introducing the Deity

in the character of Subjector, and humanity is made in His likeness in this regard. Yet almost the first recorded act was motivated by *in*subjection! Moreover, Cain, the very first human who was born, committed the crime of crimes, the murder of his brother. Beyond that he generated a whole line which so corrupted humanity that it had to be drowned with a deluge of water. This line is worthy of our close consideration, for it is the primal background by which to apprehend and appreciate the final subjection of all.

One of the greatest tragedies in the history of humanity was staged by the line of Cain. It began with the murder of Cain's brother and ended by the ruin of the whole race in the deluge.

GOD, THE SUBJECTOR

The discovery that the title, usually translated “God,” denotes Subjector or Placer, has shed much light on the whole course of divine revelation, from the creation to the consummation, when all will be subject. The *in*subjection of Adam and Eve, and their first descendant are the primary pictures we are given by the Subjector in order to teach us the tragic results of conduct which is contrary to His will and His Word. By developing this to include the whole line of Cain, we are greatly helped in grasping the purpose and plan of God in the eonian times. The background of all is the *in*subjection in the first eon, which led to the adjudication of the deluge.

Adam not only sinned and introduced death, but he also failed in his family relations. Not only did he obey the serpent instead of Elohim, but he did not sufficiently train his son in obedience to Yahweh, or to himself. We do not read of a single effort on his part to restrain Cain or the race of which he was the head. We see the same sins on all hands today. If these things were understood and taught in the

homes it might help to stem the tide which is rushing the world into another cataclysm, which the Scriptures compare with the deluge of that day.

SACRIFICE

True subjection is based on sacrifice and worship. It was because Cain would not acknowledge his own *in*subjection, his mortal incapacity to reach the divine standard, that he refused to bring an acceptable present to Yahweh. This revealed his inner state of self-righteousness, which built a barrier between him and the Subjector, and led his whole line to live in opposition to His will and way, until it spread to the rest of mankind, and brought on the deluge, which swept them all away. Cain did not only kill his brother, but inaugurated a line of conduct which eventually led to the violent execution of nearly the whole race. None of his line survived the deluge, or are living today.

Adam, for his offense, was excluded from the garden of Eden. Cain, for killing his brother, was still further banished from the divine presence. The ground was cursed for Adam's sake. Cain was driven far away from Yahweh. Adam evidently stayed near the garden, but Cain was sentenced to be a rover and a wanderer far from his father's home. In every way his fate was more fearful than that of his father. But there was worse than this. Adam was doomed to be dying, along with his offspring. But Cain was marked as a murderer, and in constant fear of his life, so had to receive a sign lest his fellows kill him. Let us not fail to note the rapid *deterioration* of human society in the very first generation.

THE SUBJECTOR'S DEALINGS WITH CAIN

We have here an excellent example of the great difference in the Subjector's dealing in various eons. In the present world, after the deluge, Cain's killing would have

cost him his life. It was first degree murder. Instead, he becomes the forefather of a long line of evildoers, principally responsible for the ruin of the earth. Had he been executed, there would not have been a line of Cain, nor would all have been corrupted. The evil might have been stamped out at the beginning. But, evidently, Elohim did not wish to do this. A line like this was absolutely necessary, at the very beginning, as a foil for the display of the line of Abel, or Seth, and to provide a background for the final subjection of all.

That the primal pair had a numerous offspring beside the two lines of Cain and Seth is nowhere directly stated, but it is clearly implied when Cain expressed his fear that someone would kill him, and the fact that he married a wife (Gen. 4:14,17). But what an enormous book the Bible would be if it contained a short sketch, or merely the names of all who lived before the deluge! Therefore we are given a brief, but characteristic account of the principal characters only, with some of their deeds and their sons. This suffices to give us a faithful picture of the times, and especially of men's attitude toward the Subjector.

PREHISTORIC MAN?

We hear much of "prehistoric man," and have been shown skulls and skeletons supposed to go back millions of years, long before the time of Adam. We have come to the era when men are turning away from the truth and are turned aside to myths (2 Tim.4:1). There were no "prehistoric" men. There is no valid evidence whatever for the presence of humanity on the earth before Adam. On the earth today there are millions of men far more backward than the men before the deluge. The terrific upheavals indicated by the pre-adamic disruption, when the earth became waste and vacant (Gen.1:2), and the later deluge, account fully for the condition of the earth's surface

today. In fact, these fully confirm the inspired record, rather than confute it.

Most of us have been taught that mankind gradually emerged from a condition akin to that of the beasts, and has ascended through barbarism to what we call "civilization," in which there are great cities, centers of culture, of music and the arts. But the short sketch given us of the line of Cain tells a very different story. The first *city* was built by Cain, the first man to be born, in the opposition to the will of the Subjector—It seems to have been the home of several generations, until Lamech and his sons left the city to dwell in tents and herd cattle. The city goes back almost to the beginning of humanity's sojourn on the earth.

If believing parents would teach their children these simple truths clearly and intelligently, it might save them from being deceived by the many myths which parade as "science," and are taught as such in our higher institutions of learning. These fantastic fancies, however, are never related to the purpose or the plan of God. They reverse the downward trend of humanity, so that there was no need for a deluge. They blind their dupes to the grave realities of these degenerate days, when men are once more facing the fearful terrors of divine indignation, rather than a restored paradise due to human achievements and cultural advancement.

CAIN'S LINE INSUBORDINATE

Cain refused to offer the sin offering provided by Yahweh Elohim for his restoration (Gen.4:6,7). The sacrificial lamb was subject to his will (he was "dominant in authority over it"), but he was not subject to his Subjector. Instead of slaying the lamb for his *restoration*, he slew Abel, to his *degeneration*. The very ground, which had opened its mouth to receive his brother's blood no longer would give its vigor to him. Indeed, he was afraid that he would be

killed, even as he had killed Abel, so he was given a sign, so that no one should kill him. He was banished to the land of Nod (Wandering), east of Eden. There he was supposed to rove about for a livelihood. But, at a distance from the Subjector, he continued his career of insubjection, and built a city, contrary to the sentence passed upon him.

It has been suggested that the sentence of Cain, that he should be a rover and wanderer, was passed in order to keep the way of Cain from becoming established in the earth. On the other hand, Cain desired to give it a permanent foothold. This is confirmed by the builders of Babel. They said: "Building are we for ourselves a city . . . lest we are scattering over the surface of the entire earth" (Gen. 11:4). They wanted to make a name for themselves. Probably Cain also had such a selfish motive.

Why did Cain build a city? He was afraid, even with the sign given him to protect him. He had no confidence in it, and wished to live in a safe place, where he could defend himself. In ancient times cities were built for protection. Indeed, the names of many of them still have endings, such as -fort, or -burg, which show that they began as a shelter from dangerous foes. Ancient cities were walled to keep out enemies, and the gateway was guarded, to prevent their entrance. So it was that Cain, refusing divine protection, denuded a spot of its vegetation (such is the meaning of the word "city"), and built a walled enclosure in which to live, instead of wandering about in the country east of Eden, as he had been charged to do. He was more afraid of his fellows than of the Subjector. The first city was built to shield a murderer from the vengeance of his fellows!

There is very little definitely declared as to the history of Cain's descendants, but we are given their names for some purpose. These all have a meaning, and, as in the case of Adam and Eve, it may give us a clue to their place in God's plan. So we will consider their significance

and see if they may help us to comprehend the course of events. We know their end was in the deluge, so the general trend was insubjection. This will help us to give the names the proper slant, especially where the same name occurs in the line of Seth also.

ENOCH

Cain named both his son and his city Enoch, that is, "Dedicated." Later on, there was another of this name, in the line of Seth. He was the seventh from Adam, and prophesied concerning these early days (Jude 14,15). He speaks of "their irreverent acts in which they are irreverent, and concerning all the hard *words* which irreverent sinners speak against Him." We have seen the irreverent act of Cain in building a city contrary to the Subjector's decree. Now we find Cain's irreverence expressed in a *word*. The term "dedicate" usually has a good or even reverent usage. Yet Cain's son, Enoch, and the city were *dedicated* to the way of Cain. Later, when the temple was built in Jerusalem, it was *dedicated* to the way of Yahweh Elohim (1 Kings 8:63; 2 Chron.7:5).

IRAD-CITY SUFFICES

Irad (*Oird*) is the name Enoch gave his son. The stem, (*ord*) is used of the wild donkey (Dan.5:21) in Chaldean. But it is not easy to see any connection with this context, especially not with the city. On the contrary, the first three letters (*oir*) denote "city," so seem most appropriate. The last letter (*d*) elsewhere has the force of *suffice*. May this not be another irreverent insult, to indicate the apparent success of the city in protecting and sustaining Cain and his descendants? The Subjector had doomed them to a roving, wanderer's life, such as the Bedouin live today, but they made a city suffice them, in spite of His words.

MEHUJAEI

Mehujael, the next in the line of Cain, is a compound including the title of the Subjector (El), so seems out of place among Cain's descendants. But it appears that the patience of the Subjector, in allowing the city to exist, led them to further defy Him, so they used His title. The first stem (*Mch*), denotes Wipe, and the last (*El*), means Subjector. The two letters in between may give the thought of causation—wiping-(out)-Subjector! In view of the future deluge, when Elohim would wipe mankind off the surface of the earth (Gen.6:7; 7:4,23), this seems a very appropriate challenge for one of Cain's descendants to make. All of Cain's line were wiped off. Noah was of the line of Seth.

METHUSAEI

Methusael (*Mthushal*) is the next in the line of Cain. The first stem (*mth*) can only mean DIE, and the second (*shal*), ASK. In contrast to this, Seth had named his son Enosh, which means *mortal*. A free rendering of Methusael would be *Death-is-questionable*. When we realize that no one, not even Adam, had died of natural causes up to this time, as well as their attitude of unbelief, it is no wonder that they prefer the saying of the serpent, "Not to die shall you be dying" (Gen.3:4), to the Subjector's emphatic statement to Adam. For us it is easy to acknowledge that death reigns, for we see it operating on all sides, and our cemeteries are filled with innumerable graves. But to them it was something outside their experience.

LAMECH

We now come to a crisis in the history of Cain's line. This seems to be suggested by the name Lamech (*L-mk*), which may come from the prefix (*L*) TO-, and the word (*mk*) REDUCE. It means *impoverish*, or *reduce to poverty*,

and is rendered *become poor* in the AV (Lev.25:25). He and his family seem to have left the protection of the city, for, of his sons, Jabal is the forefather of the tent dweller and the cattleman, while his brother Jubal made the music of a shepherd, and Tubal-Cain became a maker of copper and iron tools. Such men must have been rovers and wanderers, so that they carried out the Subjector's decree in spite of their violent insubjection.

This is the sixth generation of humanity in the line of Cain, and the narrative, as well as the living conditions, change greatly. No longer have we a simple list of the succeeding sons, of which we know nothing except what can be gathered from their names, but a whole family, with two wives, three sons, and a daughter. Descendants of the sons are not named. Two of the sons are called forefathers of occupational classes, connected with cattle and sheep, living in tents. This shows that they no longer live in the shelter of a city, but protect themselves by means of weapons made of copper and iron, made by the third son.

JABAL, JUBAL, TUBAL

The remarkable feature of the names given to the sons of Lamech is this: they all have the same stem, *-bl* (*I-bl*, *Iu-bl*, and *Thu-bl*), with the basic idea of DISINTEGRATE. Coming, as this does, at the end of the line of Cain, it may indicate the break-up of the family as a unit. It is certainly most appropriate as a register of the result of insubjection to Elohim. If Jabal was a cattleman, living in tents, he would be forced to leave the city. And so with Jubal with his shepherd's pipe. To get his iron and copper, Tubal also would probably need to depart. The whole family of Lamech (For-reducing) was *disintegrated*.

We have arrived at a similar condition today.

Never have men been so proficient in killing one another or in ruining the earth, so that there is pressure of nations

and perplexity and chilling of men from fear and apprehensiveness of that which is coming on the inhabited earth (Luke 2:25,26), even before the celestial signs have appeared that herald the coming of the Son of Mankind. The whole race has gone through a test, as before the deluge, and stands before a judgment, from which its great ability to destroy will not save it.

TUBAL-CAIN

The word *thbl*, from which the first part of this name is derived, is used many times of the earth as the habitation of mankind. It is usually mistranslated "world" in popular versions, but refers to the fact that the surface of the present earth, unlike the new earth of the future, is continually crumbling to pieces. Sun and wind and water from without, and internal heat and upheavals from within, are destroying it. These forces also formed the mineral deposits. As Cain means *acquire*, Tubal-Cain may indicate that he had acquired mineral deposits from which he obtained his iron and copper ore.

These, moreover, provide a fruitful basis for strife. Even the graziers of Abram and Lot had a contention (Gen. 13:8). Wherever there are cattle ranges and flocks of sheep there is a possibility of dispute. The same is true of mines of metal. Tubal-Cain seems to have been the first to make metal implements for fighting. This gave Lamech a considerable advantage, and he used it to kill some who injured him or struck him hard enough to leave a welt. He is so elated over this that he immortalizes it in a poem, and threatens all comers that, if they harm him in any way he will avenge himself seventy times as much as Cain would be. Here we have the beginning of armaments, and the proud boasting of those who possess superior weapons.

Until we come to Lamech we are not given the name of any of the wives in the line of Cain. His wife is men-

tioned but not named. But Lamech has two wives, and these are named. From his overbearing attitude toward them, in his grandiloquent eulogy of himself, we can see that he considers them of no more account than an Ornament (Adah), or his Shadow (Zillah). We suspect that these names are not intended so much to describe the wives, as to heighten the picture of haughty Lamech. So with his daughter, Pleasant (Naamah).

LAMECH AND NOAH

In some respects there is a similarity between the end of the line of Cain and the line of Seth. In both cases, in place of a single successor, a whole family of three sons is brought before us. But in one there is *disintegration*, and they disappear from the scene in an environment of strife and death. In the other, there is *salvation* and a fresh commencement and a new life in a renovated world. One was the fruit of *insubjection* to the voice of Elohim, the other of persevering *faith* and works. Cain refused to offer the lamb for his restoration, Noah labored for years in building the ark for his preservation.

One of the important lessons that the course of Cain should teach us is that lenience is not a cure for disobedience. It does not lead to subjection. Cain and his line were allowed to go their way without divine interference until they had done their part in ruining the earth. Evil had accumulated until nothing but a great catastrophe could restore order. How much better will it be in the Kingdom of Christ when judgment will be swift and summary! And how unutterably ecstatic will it be in the consummation when subjection will be constant and instinctive!

The line of Cain is, perhaps, the blackest and best background for the final subjection of all. It begins with the refusal of Cain to kill the present offering and the murder of his brother, who was subject to Yahweh; it ends

with the murder of two men by Lamech, the manufacture of metal weapons of death, and the threat to murder more, leading to the death of all except those in the ark, by means of the deluge. In front of this dark backdrop of insubjection, hatred and death, the Subjector, with wonderful wisdom, will stage the highlights of life, love and universal subjection.

A. E. Knoch

DOROTHY HIBBERD

Our dear sister, Dorothy (Johnson) Hibberd, widow of Brother Lloyd Hibberd, was put to repose on May 3 at age 81, in Baldwin, Michigan. Along with her three brothers and four sisters she became acquainted with the sacred scriptures through her mother, much like Timothy of old (2 Tim.1:5). Later, she herself acquainted hundreds of children in rural schools and at the Grace and Truth Chapel in Baldwin with God as He is made known in His Word and through His Son. Scriptural songs, summer Fellowship Conferences, weekly meetings at the chapel, hospitality, visits and letters, these were her delights as well as realms of service. But she would always recognize her labors were not of herself, but graciously granted to her by God, as well as the inevitable hardships. To her such expressions as: "saved in grace," and "God All in all," and "to God be the glory!" became not simply words of hope, but of assurance, confidence and expectation. In this she was greatly blessed by God, Who made her also a blessing to others.

ROBERT B. KILLEN

Brother Killen died suddenly in his sleep in the early hours of May 7, 2002. For many years, following the death of his mentor, Frank Lyons, he had taught a Bible Class in his home in Centerville, Ohio. Methodical and thoughtful, humbly solicitous of the needs of others, he held fast to the word of truth in the evangel. It was his special joy to speak of God's grace and love with his wife, Amber, and their two sons and two daughters, all of whom survive him and are comforted by the same truth that so invigorated him. His son, Timothy, and three grandchildren participated in the funeral service, in word, prayer and song. A brief introductory article on the Word of God, which he wrote for his grandchildren, appears in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*.

GOD'S KINDNESS, FORBEARANCE, AND PATIENCE

ELOHIM CREATED the entire world in which we live, and when it was finished, “behold, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31). He alone is responsible for it. When He spoke of what would come to be, it came to be so. What He did was done. And when He saw what was done, He saw that it was good. As Paul wrote in Romans 1:20, God’s invisible attributes of power and divinity are described from this achievement of creation. God is responsible for the planet on which we live, for the light and its separation from darkness, for the air and the water and the dry land and their separation from each other, and for all living creatures. With His vast knowledge and supreme power He made living plants and animals and crowned His work with the creation of humanity in His image and likeness.

What a marvel is a kernel of grain or a grapevine full of fruit! And what a marvel are creatures of the sea and air and land . . . and a human being! Intricate and filled with multitudinous components each seed and fruit meets a need that the human requires. Even more marvelous and complex in body, the human is a living soul that responds to sights and sounds and touch and taste and smell, being made so by God Who breathed into us the breath of the living. All of God’s works in Genesis 1 show forth His intelligence and ability beyond compare, and His power and divinity beyond imagination. This is what is revealed about God from the creation of the world. He is the Creator, Who is blessed for the eons! Amen! (Rom.1:25).

Yet it has come about that human beings are filled with irreverence and injustice (Rom.1:18); they are vain in their reasonings and darkened is their unintelligent heart (Rom. 1:21). God has given them over to uncleanness and dishonor; they are filled with all injustice, wickedness, evil, greed, distended with envy, murder, strife, guile, depravity, whisperers, vilifiers, *detesters of God* (Rom.1:14-32)!

How can this be? And what does it say about the Creator?

“I MAKE ALL THESE THINGS”

Since God is so powerful and so intelligent that He was able to create the world in which we live, in such a way that it was very good, how can it be that it has become corrupt and filled with death? We can answer that Adam and Eve were disobedient, and that is true. But they are part of *His* creation, the very climax of His creation as recorded in Genesis 1. God needs to be taken into account in any answer to questions about the existence of evil.

Even without Genesis 2 we would need to bring God into our answer. But with the revelation in Genesis 2 that God formed man in such a way that he became a living *soul*, that God planted the garden and placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden, where he placed the human, the question is made more pressing. Yahweh testifies of Himself that He is “Former of light and Creator of darkness, Maker of good and Creator of evil, I Yahweh make all these things” (Isa.45:7).

We ask the question with all reverence, apart from any thought of dishonor to God, and, in fact, only because of His honor. The reality of our experience and the record of God’s Word both force the question upon us. He Himself asked Job, “Where were you when I founded the earth?” (Job 38:4). We were not there. God would have us be aware that He founded the earth, and He alone bears ultimate responsibility.

Consequently, we have looked honestly at Genesis 2-4 and noted carefully what God did, accepting every action as something that God wants us particularly to know He Himself was responsible for. But we have not looked at these actions apart from the testimony of Genesis 1.

Some of the verbs associated with God in Genesis 2-4 are the same as those associated with Him in chapter 1 (e.g. *make* and *place* and *say*), but the immediate results are often quite different. When God speaks in Genesis 3, what He says does not so clearly become so. There is no finishing and no seeing of good. In blessing humanity whom He had created, Elohim said, “Be fruitful and increase; fill the earth and subdue it. Hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over every domestic animal, over all the earth and over every animal that is moving on the earth” (Gen.1:28). Then in verse 30 we read that this “came to be so,” and in verse 31 that “it was very good.” Nevertheless, beginning with the subjection of the human pair to the serpent in Genesis 3 it is clear that this place of humanity has not continued to be so. Again in Genesis 2:15 humanity is placed in the garden to serve and keep it, and this has been made impossible by their later expulsion from Eden. Furthermore, this definitely has not been maintained, in any ideal way, in other locations where mankind has been settled on the earth apart from that luxurious environment.

In addition to this blessing of humanity as subjectors of the animals and caretakers of the earth wherever they are placed, God’s words of judgment upon sinful humanity have also not always immediately come to be so, and much is still held back. This is very noticeable in the case of Cain and his line of descendants listed in Genesis 4:17-24. Cain’s avoidance of Yahweh’s sentence to become a rover and a wanderer on the earth (Gen.4:14) and Lamech’s defiant boast of murder in Genesis 4:23,24 are particularly strik-

ing. Why did God protect Cain from the avenger and permit his line to develop as it did?

LEADING TO REPENTANCE

Part of the answer is certainly provided by Paul in Romans 2:4, when he writes of the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience in reference to the withholding of His indignation. This *kindness* of God is said there to be leading to repentance (change of mind). But even this is clearly not the whole explanation, for Paul then speaks of the human "unrepentant heart" by which indignation in the day of indignation is being hoarded up. For the most part, God's patience and forbearance and kindness have not led to repentance.

The Ninevites in Jonah's day were not led to repentance by God's kindness in holding back judgment, but by the proclamation of immediate destruction. In Noah's day the descendants of Cain did not change their mind even in the face of his heralding, "when the *patience* of God awaited" (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5).

It is most evident that Cain and his descendants were not led to repentance by God's delayed indignation, but to greater wickedness, multiplied until the earth was ruined before God (Gen.6:11).

Nevertheless, the testimony of God's Word is that in holding back His indignation God *is leading* the sinner to a change of mind. This change did not occur for Cain and his line, but it is what God's kind delay of judgment had in view.

SALVATION IN OUR LORD'S PATIENCE

Peter also expresses much the same thought, using the term "patience": "The Lord . . . is patient because of you, not intending any to perish, but all to make room for repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Whereas Paul related God's patience

and kindness directly to a delay in *executing His indignation* and also had a wider view, including all humanity in his consideration, Peter focused on the nation of Israel and the delay of *the coming of salvation* which God had promised. Consequently, he spoke of "deeming the patience of our Lord salvation" (2 Peter 3:15). God does not immediately bring about the fulfillment of His promises, but He is not tardy in doing so, for repentance and salvation will come in God's own time.

When Peter wrote, the nation of Israel had not come into repentance despite the focus on that change of direction in mind and heart in the ministry of John the Baptist and then of Jesus Himself (*cf* Matt.3:2; 4:17). Indeed they would soon experience the effects of God's indignation, and even yet have much to endure in that respect. Nevertheless, God's object in all this was for repentance and salvation. God's intention in delaying the fulfillment of His promises is to make room for repentance. It is not done in order that there be greater indignation, even though it necessarily involves greater measures of indignation. But it is done in order to bring repentance and salvation.

Again we must stress the object of these acts of divine kindness, forbearance and patience. These acts may involve much temporary affliction for the believer and much indignation on the unbeliever, but they nevertheless have as their ultimate object the change of human hearts and salvation from suffering and infirmity and sin.

CARRIES WITH MUCH PATIENCE

Paul brings up the matter of God's patience again in Romans 9. And here he sheds further light on the purpose of God's forbearing actions toward even the most hardened sinners (who are hardened by God Himself, Rom. 9:18). "Now if God, wanting to display His indignation and to make His powerful doings known, carries with much

patience, the vessels of indignation, adapted for destruction, it is that He should also be making known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He makes ready before for glory” (Rom.9:22,23).

This is so clear and so blunt that most people who read these words try to make them say something else than what they are saying. Here the word “carries” conveys much the same sense as “forbear.” God holds on to His indignation for awhile, not bringing it upon the sinner. He patiently puts up with those He has hardened in order to display the greatness of His power and indignation on them later, and in order to make known, by contrast, the riches of His glory on the ones He has chosen for mercy and honor.

Translating this principle into the events of Genesis 4 we see that God was patient and forbearing to Cain in order to display His indignation on him in no uncertain terms, as a foil to the greatness and glory of God’s mercy to Abel. Again, God was forbearing toward the wicked descendants of Cain and multiplied their numbers in order to display His power in the deluge and His grace to Noah and his family.

But again, this is not the whole story.

PERCEIVE THEN

In Romans 11 Paul brings the entire discussion begun in Romans 9 to its conclusion. “Perceive, then, the kindness and severity of God!” (Rom.11:22). We see God’s *kindness* to some, such as Abel and Noah and Israel in the past, who are shown mercy, but we also see His severity to others, such as Cain and Pharaoh and even Israel at present in apostasy, who are locked up in stubbornness. But God will show mercy again in the future to Israel. “And thus all Israel shall *be saved*” (Rom.11:26).

Abel and Noah and we ourselves were born into stubbornness and irreverence and injustice, but God showed them and us the kindness of His choice and gave us the

kindness of His grace. Cain and Pharaoh and countless others of Israel and the nations have been born into stubbornness which, in God’s forbearance, grew, and grows for many today, into stronger and stronger defiance and irreverence. But they will be led to repentance and be saved on the basis of the blood of Christ Jesus. “For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all” (Rom.11:32).

Here are clear words that somehow even fewer than those who accept the clear words of Romans 9:22,23 seem to be able to accept. Yet the “all” of Romans 11:32 are all the stubborn, including Pharaoh, mentioned in Romans 9, and the nations and Israel, indeed every human being, for stubborn is what we all are apart from God’s grace.

The reason for God’s kindness and forbearance and patience to Cain is for the display of God’s power in judgment and a contrastive revelation of His mercy and grace on Abel and Noah and all God’s chosen ones. But once that goal is achieved, then God can proceed, as indeed Romans 11:32 declares He will, to bring His kindness to Cain leading to Cain’s repentance and salvation. This will be so, as it can only be so, on the basis of the blood of Christ, Who came into the world to save sinners, spoken of in type by the sin offering Cain refused.

IN THE FORBEARANCE OF GOD

Therefore, recalling again the lessons of Genesis 1 where we learned that what God says comes to be so and is seen as good, we are bold to see the words and acts of God in Genesis 4, as also having a good and certain goal.

How does God accomplish this? We who believe the evangel know the answer as it relates to His chosen ones. In Christ Jesus there is deliverance and propitiation for a display of God’s righteousness “because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in

the *forbearance* of God” (Rom.3:25). God’s *forbearance* in not bringing the penalties of their sins on His chosen ones is now displayed as righteous because of the blood of Christ Jesus.

But does this evangel concerning Christ, which is so powerful for the salvation of believers, and indeed for Abel and all in his “line,” have any significance ultimately with respect to those (like Cain) who are not chosen and who must endure God’s indignation, even though that judgment itself is delayed in God’s forbearance, patience and kindness? We have seen evidence for this in the principle that God’s kindness leads to repentance, and in the conclusion that God locks up all in stubbornness that He might be merciful to all. But the most decisive evidence is supplied by the evangel concerning Jesus Christ and His shed blood for sinners.

FOR ALL MANKIND

Romans 1:18-3:20 has the evangel of God in view. Romans 2:4 is incomplete without the evangel being proclaimed later in chapters 3 through 8. So also, Genesis 4:15-24 is incomplete without this evangel, particularly as it is presented in Romans 5:18,19. “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.”

The view of God given in Genesis 1 has prepared us for this great result of God’s forbearance worked out through the obedience of Christ Jesus.

Thus what God said about humanity will come to be so, and God will see that it is very good.

D.H.H.

Things of Consequence

GOD HAS SPOKEN

IN this brief outline, we will show the ways God has spoken in the past, and how He is speaking to us today. The student will be helped by looking up the scripture references, carefully considering their context. God has spoken in creation, through the prophets, in His Son, through the apostles and through the Sacred Scriptures.

IN HIS CREATION

In an elementary and general way, God is manifested in His creation. For those who are unfamiliar with (or do not have) God's Word, "that which is known of God is apparent among them, for God manifests it to them. For His invisible attributes are described from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements . . ." (Rom.1:20). One of the shames of mankind is to attribute the creation to impersonal, theoretical processes such as evolution and other theories which do not glorify God as God, the Source of all, "seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all" (Rom.11:36).

THROUGH PROPHETS

Before the Scriptures were completed, God spoke directly to men who then relayed His messages to mankind. Examples abound. He spoke to Noah (Gen.7:1), to Abram (Gen.12:1), to Moses (Ex.2:2; John 9:29).

Sometimes the Speaker was in the form of a man; sometimes a voice came from a burning bush or a cloud. But the word that came had its ultimate source in God. If we were

to examine all of the revelations to prophets, we would come to realize that most became concentrated toward one nation, Israel.

IN HIS SON

"By many portions and many modes, of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets, in the last of these days speaks to us in a Son . . ." (Heb.1:1).

When the Lord Jesus was transformed before several disciples, "a luminous cloud overshadows them, and lo! a voice out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. Hear Him!'" (Matt.17:5).

The Lord Jesus said: "My teaching is not Mine, but His Who sends Me" (John 7:17). ". . . from Myself I am doing nothing, but, according as My Father teaches Me, these things I am speaking" (John 8:28).

Even the deputies sent to arrest Him knew that He was not as other men. They testified: "Never speaks a man thus!" (John 7:46). "The declarations which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life" (John 6:63).

THROUGH THE APOSTLES

God spoke not only through the prophets of old but also through apostles (commissioned-ones). Some apostles (and prophets) not only delivered God's messages orally, but were also inspired by God to write portions of His Word. Apostles had an official, authoritative commission. Our standing as members of God's family is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the capstone of the corner being Christ Jesus Himself" (Eph.2:20).

The Scriptures which the prophets and apostles wrote were inspired words. For example, Paul could write that: "in accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God . . ." (1 Thess.2:13).

THROUGH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

Whereas God once spoke directly to men and women, to prophets and apostles, He is not now doing so. The Scriptures are completed (*cf* Col.1:25). He is not speaking directly to humanity, or revealing His will by dreams and signs. The reason is not far to seek: *In the Scriptures* He has revealed Himself and His will, and now He is proceeding to fulfill His will.

His Word is inspired. "All scripture is inspired by God [GOD-SPIRITED]" (2 Tim.3:16). Just as God breathed into Adam, and he became a living soul (Gen.2:7), so God has put His spirit into His Word so that it is "living and operative" (Heb.4:12). The evangel "is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing . . ." (Rom.1:16). There is something in those words ". . . 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.15:3,4), that changes a person who is believing it, that changes his behavior, that changes his life both now and for the future.

We should "have a pattern of sound words, which you hear from me [Paul] . . ." (2 Tim.1:13). Be careful to express your beliefs in the language of the scripture. That practice will protect you from errors.

Robert B. Killen

FOR FURTHER READING:

We suggest the following materials for further information on the topic, "God Has Spoken."

1. THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, by A. E. Knoch, pages 97-155 (various commissions).
2. GOD'S EONIAN PURPOSE, by Adlai Loudy, pages 9-53 (The Sacred Scriptures).
3. *Unsearchable Riches*, July 1989, vol.80, pages 145-192 (articles on creation).

FEAR, IN ITS RELATION TO LOVE

*

PERCEIVING WHAT IS SPIRITUAL

Question:

There are many things in this world that cause me fear. I would like to be less afraid, not more afraid than I already am. This is why, frankly, it disturbs me to learn that in the marriage union, it is important that "the wife may be *fearing* the husband" (Eph.5:33). And, it seems just as strange (as this same verse indicates) that the wife's *fear* of her husband would result from the husband's *love* for his wife. Love and fear; fear and love. These things do not seem to belong together.

Also, should I love my husband more than I love my children?

Answer:

FEAR (*phobos*, as in "phobia") literally means to "be afraid." In many passages of Scripture it is actual fear that is obviously in view when this word is used. Yet in others, "fear" is used as a figure of speech which points us to such associated thoughts as *attentiveness*, *obedience*, and *commitment*, even to *reverence* and *awe*.

Figuratively (by the figure of metonymy), one who is motivated not by being literally *afraid* of another, but by simply being *devoted* to him, may be said to "fear." Such a person, it is true, may also literally fear to offend, yet not out of terror of retribution, but out of a desire to please and serve. In many passages, the idea of actual fear itself as well as that of these associated ideas are both present.

An example would be Psalm 111:10: "The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom." This is true not only for Israel of old, but for believers today as well.

A measured fear of God is expedient for all who are not perfected in love, even for those who are under His grace. Though *we* are saved from the *coming* indignation (Rom.5:9; 1 Thess.1:10; 5:9), we are by no means exempted from the present consequences of our fleshly desires, those *things* concerning which God's indignation is *being* revealed at present (*cf* Rom.1:18-32).

Each passage in which the word "fear" appears must be considered in its context, with consideration given to the nature of the case, especially to the scriptural administration under which the event spoken of has occurred. The *meaning* of the word "fear" does not change, but its application, or *usage*, certainly does.

In all our writings concerning God's saving grace, much stress is laid upon service, even though this is not done from the vantage point of those who see man as the key to his own welfare. As to *motive*, deeds that are upright in themselves yet done out of self-reliance and with pride in the flesh, are as bad as outwardly wicked deeds. Our service in the Lord must be out of love and with gratitude toward God; in devoutness, with a recognition and appreciation of grace. In a word, it must be effected with reliance upon God, not man.

This approach is never more important than in the area of marital responsibility, whether concerning the duties of the husband or the wife. As with all ideals, we can only commend them and entreat concerning them; God must raise up people to do them.

In Ephesians 5:33, the apostle Paul gives a word of entreaty to believing husbands, saying, "Moreover, you also individually, each be loving his own wife thus, as himself, yet that the wife may be *fearing* the husband."

In light of the woman's place of subjection under her husband (1 Cor.11:3; Eph.5:22-24), even as the weakness of the old humanity, a measure of fear may well be expedient. Therefore, the idea of actual fear (of the wife toward the husband) is no doubt included in the apostle's words in this passage.

Of course, the husband's headship over the wife is confined to domestic matters, to practical marital and familial relations. It must never include the believing woman's service in the Lord. Christ alone is her Head in matters of faith. *Faithfulness* is simply the practical outworking of *faith*; it is impossible to separate the two. If the husband should either command the wife to accept teachings which she considers false or demand that she commit immoral acts, she is under no obligation whatever to follow after him in his sin and wickedness. Practically speaking, Paul's instructions concerning headship are only for saneminded believers who have some power to live uprightly. They are not intended to cover hypothetical situations involving deranged individuals of a depraved mind.

A good marriage is one which is under the leadership of a *loving* and *faithful* husband, a man who loves his wife as his own body, nurturing her and cherishing her as Christ nourishes and cherishes the ecclesia. And, a good marriage is one in which the wife is *fond* of her husband and *subject* to him as to the Lord in everything. She is sane, chaste, domestic, good (Titus 2:5). Such a woman, then, will become much less occupied with actual fear and much more occupied with its noble associations, *obedience* and *devotion*.

"Fear is not in love, but perfect love is casting out fear, for fear has *chastening*. Now he who is fearing is not perfected in love" (1 John 4:18). Fear, itself, is no part of love. Indeed, *perfect* love may freely toss it to the winds, never to know fearfulness again. It is true that anyone experi-

encing fear has not been perfected in love. Yet fear, *for those who are not yet perfect*, "has chastening." "Chastening" (*kolasis*) entails suffering; it is discipline which is dispensed "with a view to amendment" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.47). Properly instilled, and within the sphere of love, fear can be an expedient leading toward obedience. Yet true love can well afford to be casting fear aside, more and more, day by day.

Insubjection and lack of devotion, however, require fear's chastening hand and salutary discipline. Perhaps no married couple within the ecclesia today has matured sufficiently for the wife to consider fear of her husband completely unnecessary.

The problem is, of course, that even as most women have very little desire, or even sense of duty, to be subject to their husbands, most husbands are perhaps even less concerned with actually *loving* their wives, loving them according as Christ loves the ecclesia, loving them *self-sacrificially* and in *grace*, expecting nothing in return (*cf* Eph.5:25; *cp* Luke 6:34).

Concerning both husbands and wives, each can see the other's obligations quite clearly indeed. But it may well be that we do not possess a commensurate longing and sense of duty toward our own responsibilities. In any good marriage, there has to be a great deal of patience, bearing with one another in love (*cp* Eph.5:32). Yet it is true as well that, over the years, there must also be a significant measure of obedience to these instructions of the apostle Paul by *both* partners in the marriage, *each* one heeding his or her part in these entreaties, any failures along the way notwithstanding.

Rather than saying that a wife should love her husband *more* than her children, I would say that she should surely love him *no less* than her children. The woman who has natural love both for her husband and for her

children, will have that love which gives to each his own. Love never incites competition or jealousy. Neither are its resources either limited or partial. After it gives its all to its beloved, it finds its stores not depleted but replenished, yet only that it might spend them again on still other objects of its affection.

“Love is patient, [love] is kind. Love is not jealous Love is not self-seeking, [love] is not incensed” (1 Cor. 13:4,5). “Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in love” (Eph.5:1).



Question:

I find your ministry oriented far too much toward technicalities and not nearly enough toward spirituality. Christians need to center upon their *relationship* with the Lord, not upon complicated issues of language and intellect. I agree that truth is important; but our main need is for an awareness of Christ *living* in us, not for us to be living in constant examination of complicated issues.

The gospel itself is really very simple. If we will just accept Christ and make Him the Lord of our lives, then we will be saved; but if we choose not to do so, then He has no alternative but to let us do what we want, even though this means leaving us to suffer the eternal consequences of our disobedience. Beyond these basics of the gospel, we should mostly just worship the Lord and let Him have His way with us (“Let go, and let God”). Can’t you see that the gospel is so simple that even a child can understand it?

Answer:

Actually, I would agree that the evangel itself is indeed so simple that even a child—an enlightened child—can

understand it. But I would insist that the evangel consists in the fact of Christ’s death for our sins, together with His entombment and resurrection (1 Cor.15:3,4), not in the notion, as you claim, that, “If we will just accept Christ and make Him the Lord of our lives, then we will be saved; but if we choose not to do so, then He has no alternative but to let us do what we want, even though this means leaving us to suffer the eternal consequences of our disobedience.”

Now you cannot have it both ways. You cannot simply claim that what you say here is, or is the corollary of, the evangel itself, and then charge us with being unspiritual and unduly attentive to mere technicalities should we beg to differ.

Your précis of faithfulness, as summarized in the slogan, “Let go, and let God,” literally, is to the effect: (1) Stop doing what is wrong, and (2) permit God to do in you what is right.

While we surely concur in the spirit of much that you say here in our own affirmation that it is ideal for us all to cease from what is wrong, even as not to resist God’s operations of righteousness in us, this, in fact, is not the same thing as is usually intended by the sentiment, “Let go, and let God.” But again, the difference between the common notion here and our own is significant. It simply will not do for you merely to insist on the validity of your own opinion by appealing to its simplicity, while effectually precluding our questioning of it on the grounds that if we should attempt to do so, in so doing, we will necessarily embroil ourselves in unspiritual, needless complexities. In fact, it is largely because of your claim that the evangel is of such a nature as you affirm it to be, that laying hold of the truth here may not be as simple an undertaking as either one of us might wish.

We too desire a stronger faith and a closer walk with our Lord. We long to see our own soulish tendencies subdued

and subjected to that which is truly spiritual. Yet we are aware that “all that glitters is not gold,” and wish to remind our fellow believers of this as well.

Truly, I rejoice to note your emphasis on the importance of the believer’s awareness of Christ living in him. But I would suggest that the scriptural pattern for those who are walking by faith, not by perception, is that this awareness will come as the fruit of consecrated *faith*. This, then, entails that “awareness” here be understood essentially metaphorically, not experientially. Conviction of faith and resultant reliance upon God, even with much joy in holy spirit, is not in itself phenomenal; hence it cannot be empirically discovered. Therefore, to hold up those who exhibit a certain religious zeal and mannerism as exemplars of personal spiritual awareness is to confound spirituality with soulishness, even according to human sentiment and tradition.

Zeal, good intentions, and devoutness are extremely important. Yet misdirected zeal—zeal that is not in accord with *recognition* (which itself results from *knowledge* of *facts*)—is misplaced zeal. It is a grave and indeed irrational error to minimize the importance of knowledge. Even so, “knowledge puffs up” (1 Cor.8:1b). That is, while this is not literally true, it is all too true in a certain sense, that of the metaphor.

As to feeling, it is *as if* knowledge itself is the guilty culprit and is the cause of our pride. It is instead, however, that *we* are at fault when we become puffed up with respect to our knowledge (even if our knowledge itself should be faultless) because we do not have love. This is because it is love that builds up, or edifies.

It is not that knowledge is bad and love is good; that while love is constructive, knowledge is destructive (or at least not very important), hence we should seek to have as little of it as possible. It is rather that knowledge—an

entity which in itself is vital and essential to our true welfare—when in the presence of the *flesh* and devoid of love, can only lead to pride, not to any true edification worthy of the name. Thus, “Knowledge puffs up, yet love builds up.” May we be humble and thankful to God concerning our ability to understand this very verse, while bearing with those who claim it as a proof text in support of the notion that all knowledge beyond the most rudimentary is unneedful and *unspiritual*.

Humility, however, can *only* come as a product of *recognizing* God’s love *and* God’s deity. That is, if there are things that must be done and we must do them, humility will see that only God can provide the “A to the Z” of whatever may be necessary unto such an end. Yet pride will want to do its part, and insist on making the difference between failure and success, even if, often, it is not manly enough to present its true colors forthrightly.

To the extent that we see something of ourselves (such as cooperativeness or non-resistance) as the key to faithfulness or to the spiritual life in general, to that extent also we will not actually be being faithful and we will not actually be having a spiritual life.

We are entreated to obey; we are not entreated to create those influences which will produce our obedience. This fact is as undeniable as it is revolutionary.

If we must look at things on the surface, and if we cannot express ourselves except by means of popular jargon, we at least need to get the order straight: Cooperativeness and non-resistance are not the key to God; God is the key to cooperativeness and non-resistance. If we are “cooperative” or “non-resistant,” it is only because God has made us so through the influence of His grace, in which we are what we are (1 Cor.15:10) and in which we glory.

It is better to have a little that is significantly faithful—and therefore *spiritual*—than much that appears ever so

grand and yet is not truly *spiritual* at all. Therefore, let us cease looking at things simply on the surface, but according to their actual nature (*cp* 2 Cor.10:7; Luke 20:21).

We can hardly expect to be led into the truth by those who are disqualified as to the faith. Such ones are in no position to lead others into light. Some, initially, will put great stress upon their claim that they do not emphasize “doctrine,” but merely seek to promote the unity of the spirit. Yet, in fact, such indeed have their own specific teachings, quite as much so as anyone else, and are often among the most demanding of all in matters of church authority and group conformity.

Laying hold of these principles and considerations, and keeping hold of the message of *grace* whether for our place in Christ or our service in the Lord, is the most *spiritual* thing you can do. This is so regardless of whatever measure of peace and joy you may enjoy as a result. These blessings, as such, are not determinative of truth, and will vary according to God's particular graces for each individual.

Do not seek simply to “feel good,” selfishly seeking to be at peace or to experience joy: *seek to be faithful*. Seek *first* the kingdom and its righteousness, and these coveted blessings—all in God's time and measure—shall be added to you (not, “by” you; *cp* Matt.6:33).

Though it is humiliating to the flesh, the fact is that if we would do what is pleasing to God, God alone must bring to pass any such endeavors. While this is disastrous to our pride, it is essential to the glory of God's grace. God not only does not need our help, but He will not have our help. He will bless us as He intends and when He intends, not otherwise or before. God is our Source; He is not a resource.

In due time you will learn that there is simply no such thing as anyone suffering the “eternal consequences” of sin. Indeed, the only permanent consequences of sin will be that of blessed deliverance therefrom, and this eventually will be enjoyed by all (1 Cor.15:22-28). J.R.C.

SAUL'S DYNASTY ENDS

4 +When Saul's son ^lheard that Abner had died in Hebron, ⁺then his hands ^lslackened, and all of Israel were flustered. ² +Now to Saul's son ^bbelonged two men, chiefs of raiding parties; the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the second was Rechab, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, ^fof the sons of Benjamin, ⁺since Beeroth ^{mr}too was ^lreckoned ^{on}part of Benjamin. ³ + The Beerothites had run ^laway to^d Gittaim and had ^lbecome sojourners^l there until ^lthis ^lday.

⁴ + Saul's son Jonathan ^lhad a son, smitten on both feet. He ^bwas five years old ⁱwhen the report about Saul and Jonathan came[~] from Jezreel, and his foster^l mother ^lcarried him and ^lfled. + It ^lcame about ⁺as she hurried away[~] to flee ⁺that he ^lfell and was ^llamed. + His name was Mephibosheth.

⁵ +Now Rechab and Baanah, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, ^{lgo}started out and ^lcame ^{as}in the warmth of the day to the house of Ishbosheth ⁺while he was lying ^labed at ^lnoon. ⁶ ⁷ +Now the gatekeeper of the house had been cleaning wheat from stones^l; ⁺yet she ^lslumbered and ^lslept[~]. And ^{bd}so they ^lcame ^{fr}to the midst of the house and ^lsmote him ^lon the fifth rib. ⁺Then Rechab and his brother Baanah slipped away. ⁷ + They had ^lentered the house ⁺while he was lying on his couch in his bedchamber ⁺where they ^lsmote him and ^cput him to ^ldeath. + They ^ltook off ^lhis head and ^{lgo}traveled the Arabah road all ^lnight. ⁸ + They ^lbrought ^lthe head of Ishbosheth to David ^lin^s Hebron and ^lsaid to the king, ^{bd}Here is the head of your enemy^l,

Ishbosheth son of Saul, who sought `your soul. + `This `day Yahweh has `given to my lord the king vengeance ^fupon Saul and ^fhis seed.

⁹ **+But David `answered `Rechab and `his brother Baanah, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and `said to them, As Yahweh lives, Who has ransomed `my soul from all distress: ¹⁰ ^t The one who told^l > me, > saying⁻, Behold, Saul is dead, + he^l ^bwas in his own eyes ^{as} a ^mbearer of ⁷good⁰ tidings^l. +But I took `hold ⁱon him and `killed him in Ziklag, to whom I ought to have given⁻ a reward for the tidings. ¹¹ How much more, then, ⁱwhen wicked men have killed `a righteous man on his bed in his own house! + ^{now}Therefore, should I not seek `his blood from your hands and ⁻wipe you out from the earth! ¹² +Then David `instructed `his lads, + who `killed them, + `cut away `their hands and `their feet and `hanged ⁷them⁰ ^{on}by the reservoir ⁱat Hebron. And they took `the head of Ishbosheth and `entombed it in Abner's tomb ⁱat Hebron.**

DEATHS OF ABNER AND ISHBOSHETH

The first verse of chapter 4 shows how truly Abner was the head of Israel. He may not have been their king by title, but it was a fact, accepted by everyone, that he was the man who ran the country. At the news of Abner's death, king Ishbosheth was trembling and all the tribes were flustered. If Abner had not already laid the foundation for the country to unify under David's leadership, there could have been a significant delay in reaching that goal.

This chapter relates the final events leading up to the coronation of David as king of all Israel. Verse 4 supplies information about Mephibosheth for two apparent reasons: (1) there were no more suitable candidates in the house of Saul to sit on the throne; (2) it lays the foundation for showing David's faithfulness to his covenant with his

beloved friend, Jonathan. The sad demise of Ishbosheth is a commentary on the times and gives us a window of understanding into what life was like in Israel in those days.

MURDERERS

The murderers of Ishbosheth were men of Beeroth. Beeroth was originally one of the cities of the Gibeonites (Josh.9:17), whom Saul slew (2 Sam.21:1) in violation of the treaty made between Joshua and the Gibeonites (Josh.9). At this time Beeroth was considered part of the territory of Benjamin (2 Sam.4:2,3). Baanah and Rechab may have received properties in the city of Beeroth from Saul (1 Sam.22:6,7), and in view of that were called Beerothites. The native Beerothites had fled for their lives. The heinous murder of Ishbosheth by two of his captains is sobering evidence that loyalty is often unstable and something which cannot be bought.

THE CIRCUMSPECT LEADERSHIP OF DAVID

David's behavior through these difficult years was key to the uniting of Israel under his leadership. His refraining from taking vengeance on Saul, his mourning for Saul and Jonathan, his honoring and mourning for Abner, and his public execution of Ishbosheth's murderers all showed that his heart was set on a peaceful unification of his whole country that would strengthen and secure it. David's respect for the previous administration provided assurance of his good motives to all the tribes.

THE FLESH AND THE PHILISTINES

We have maintained throughout that Saul represents the rule of the flesh as it would strive to please God in its own power. His intentions were mostly good. Early in his career Saul experienced some great victories. But the task of rule is too difficult to be achieved by efforts of out-

ward control. Successful rule must spring from the heart. Ishbosheth, a mere puppet king, shows the final impotence of the flesh to rule. Like his father, he was beheaded.

Saul was never able to deliver Israel from the Philistines; in fact, the Philistines crushed him and scattered his country. The Philistines are descendants of Mizraim (1 Chron. 1:11,12), which is the Hebrew name for Egypt. Egypt, of course, was the place of Israel's slavery and oppression. So the Philistines may typically represent those who would bring the rule of Egypt upon God's chosen in the land of promise. But the Philistines themselves seek to exercise this rule without passing through the Red Sea or Jordan themselves. They would rule without ever experiencing the baptism or death of the flesh. Such are like the Pharisees of whom Christ said, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are locking the kingdom of the heavens in front of men. For you are not entering, neither are you letting those entering to enter" (Matt.23:13). It is the coming of the Beloved Son of David that brings deliverance from such domination and frees us into a rule which springs from our hearts.

J. Philip Scranton

HELENA "FAITH" CHRISTENSEN

Our dear friend of many years, Faith Christensen of Hillsboro, Oregon, age 95, was put to repose on February 22. A strong believer in our Lord Jesus Christ and in His saving work on behalf of all mankind, Faith was a loyal friend and generous supporter of our work. She is survived by her daughter Esther and her husband Robert Hiatt, who are also our friends in faith.

CLAIRE FÄSSLER

We sorrow to hear of the recent death of Claire Fässler, a retired nurse from Chicago, Illinois, who for many years, subsequently, was a resident of Zürich, Switzerland. The letters we received from Claire were always elevated in tone and full of encouragement, as she shared words of spiritual grace with us. Both in her deeds and demeanor, she was a teacher of the ideal, in love, in faith, in endurance.

THE APOSTLE'S CONCERNS

As God's gift, through Jesus Christ, Paul *obtained* grace and apostleship (Rom.1:5). This was the operation of God, Who severed him from his fleshly kinship in order to unveil His Son in this former calumniator (*cf* Gal.1:15; 1 Tim.1: 12-14). All believers have obtained grace from God, in fact, "superabundance of grace" (Rom.5:15), but Paul obtained both grace and *apostleship*.

PAUL AND US

Paul's apostleship was directed among all the nations, for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ (Rom.1:6). This included believers in Rome, most of whom Paul had not seen, and to whom he had not directly ministered. But it also includes us in the twenty-first century, whom also Paul had obviously not seen when he composed this epistle. The special relationship, however, that existed between Paul and the believers in Rome, which is manifested throughout this letter, exists between him and us. He is the one God commissioned to deliver to us a message of justification and peace and love concerning God's Son and sinful humanity, and concerning our calling in grace.

All of God's Word is beneficial for us. But what Paul writes is marked out specifically *to* us, for he is our apostle.

Hence, before the apostle Paul turns directly to the evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ, he turns his attention, in a personal way, to his God, Who gives the evangel, and to his fellow believers, who are believing the evangel (Rom.1:8-13). In a real way, he writes to us.

These first thoughts of personal concern can be arranged as follows in a fivefold structure:

*First, indeed, I am **thanking my God** through Jesus Christ concerning all of you, that your faith is being announced in the whole world.*

*For God is my Witness, to Whom I am **offering divine service** in my spirit in the evangel of His Son,*

*how unintermittingly I am making mention of you, always in my **prayers** beseeching, if somehow, sometime, at length I shall be prospered, in the will of God, to come to you.*

*For I am **longing to see you**, that I may be sharing some spiritual grace with you, for you to be established: yet this is to be **consoled together** among you through one another's faith, both yours and mine.*

FAITH, THE EVANGEL AND PRAYER

We see from the above arrangement that verse 8, dealing with *thanksgiving* regarding *faith*, is related to verse 12, dealing with *consolation* by means of *faith*. Then verse 9, dealing with *offering divine service*, in *spirit*, by means of heralding the *evangel*, is associated with verse 11, dealing with *longing to share spiritual grace*. The pivotal point is *prayer* (verse 10).

This is not a matter of Paul's personal advancement, but a personal expression of devoutness and genuine solicitude. Paul's thanksgiving is to God, and it concerns the faith which God has granted. The apostle's divine service, in spirit, is centered in making known the evangel of God's Son, the message of good from God, which lies behind Paul's prayer. In making mention of the believers in prayer, Paul beseeches God that he might come and share further aspects of the divine revelation which he terms "spiritual grace." These thoughts from Paul's heart

console the believers because they focus on, and accord with, the faith which we all share.

The evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ which we believe is constantly in view in Romans. The message of justification and grace, conciliation and peace, through the blood of Christ, is carefully laid out before us in this letter. It is a matter of certainty. It speaks of what God has done, is doing and will achieve, and in making God's works known, it reveals what God is.

But we are human beings, and we do not determine the future. This does not mean there are no certainties in our lives, for indeed the evangel speaks wholly of certainties since it speaks of God's achievements in Christ. Nevertheless, as far as our own wants and hopes are concerned, no matter how selfless and good they may be, "A man's heart devises his way, yet Yahweh establishes his steps" (Prov.16:9).

Paul exposes here the devisings of his heart. He writes of his concerns in a world of uncertainties. But he writes in accord with the evangel which speaks of certainties, that is, in accord with the revelation of God's power, righteousness and love given in the evangel. Hence he is led to beseech God for the opportunity to come to Rome and share spiritual grace. The point is not whether this plan becomes realized (in fact, it was mostly realized, but not exactly as Paul had envisioned it), but that this is the sort of thinking that the evangel produces in the believer. Because Paul centers on faith and the evangel of God's Son he does not pray without thanksgiving and a solid recognition of the determining place of God's will.

THANKSGIVING REGARDING FAITH

Paul's references to the Romans' faith (literally, "the faith of you") in verse 8, and to each other's faith (literally, "the in-one-another faith") in verse 12, direct attention to

the fact of believing which God has brought about, as a gift implanted in the heart (*cf* Rom.12:3; Phil.1:29). Consequently, Paul thanks God for it, rather than praising the Romans. Whenever and wherever there is faith, our hearts are led in thankfulness to God.

Yet also the words, “the faith,” as a figure of association, are sometimes used of that which is believed (see, for example, Rom.10:8; Eph.4:13). And that is certainly in Paul’s mind as well in this passage. The verb “announce” is generally used in the sense of presenting a message, and then, most always, a message of good concerning Christ (*cf* Acts 13:38; 16:17; 1 Cor.9:14; 11:26). The announcing of the faith of the Roman believers included, not simply the fact of their faith, but the message itself which composed their faith. In this sense too, the apostle is expressing thanks to God, for in its very substance the message believed is of God and concerns His glory and grace.

If this is so, Romans 1:8 brings us into Paul’s thanksgiving, not just as spectators to the miracle of faith in Rome nineteen hundred years ago, and its testimony throughout the world at that time, but as participants in that miracle ourselves. We join Paul in this word of thanksgiving, not simply for something occurring so long ago, but for the continuance of the faith, as a message concerning Christ Jesus, in our own day and its spread “in the whole world.”

OFFERING DIVINE SERVICE

“Cut off, in large measure, from the ceremonial worship of his nation at Jerusalem, Paul carries it on wherever he is, in spirit, by the proclamation of this evangel, for the exaltation of Christ’s sacrifice in the evangel is a far sweeter fragrance to God than the literal offerings of the law.”¹

We know very little of our fellow believers who lived in

1. A. E. Knoch: CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.230.

Rome nearly two thousand years ago. But, because of his apostleship, extended by way of his letters into our times, we are acquainted with Paul, almost as well as they were before he came among them. He was commissioned by God to bring the evangel to us, as surely as to the chosen among the nations of his day. We read the personal words of our apostle, long ago, to the “called of Jesus Christ” (Rom.1:7) in Rome, and we feel included with the Romans as objects of Paul’s labors and of the concern and longing of his heart, just as personally as our brethren of ancient times.

Consequently, we are comforted and consoled by Paul as the faithful dispenser of the revelations of God for us (*cf* Eph.3:7). We are also much encouraged, for he was graciously granted faith, and so are we, and God’s grace operated in him, and so does it operate in us. God may not have parted the same measure of faith and faithfulness to us, but God nevertheless has given us a measure as He wills, just as He did for our apostle.

Now he writes of his efforts and prayers as matters of “offering divine service.”² Paul’s divine service was in spirit. He did not bring animal sacrifices, but he approached God with boldness and access on the basis of the blood of Jesus Christ by which he was justified. This could not be seen by eyes of flesh. If it was mostly invisible to physical sense, it still was very real.

This service as it is expressed in Romans 1:8-13 involved prayer and beseeching and longing. But also it involved much labor in evangelizing, in teaching and ministering to the believers throughout the world as he knew it. In

2. For a helpful scriptural study of the term “divine service,” the student is referred to Paul’s use of it in Romans, here in 1:9 in reference to the *apostle’s* attention to the honor of God in his prayers and deeds, in 1:25 in reference to *irreverent humanity* in its worship of the creature rather than the Creator, in 9:4 in reference to *Israel’s* service under the law, and in 12:1 in reference to us as *believers* in our daily living.

Romans 15:16 Paul speaks of his work as "the minister of Christ Jesus for the nations, acting as a priest of the evangel of God." This was divine service which blesses us today, many of us living in areas of the world that Paul surely knew nothing about. Yet he was thanking God for our faith, that is, for our believing, and for the message we believe.

Perhaps we can feel the love of our apostle toward each of us personally as we note it here expressed toward our ancient brethren in Rome. We cannot have the experience of him physically coming to us. But we do have the opportunity of learning through the printed page, not only what he wrote to those in Rome in this epistle, but what he later wrote in the grand epistles he penned to other believers *from* Rome.

IN PRAYERS

Later in this letter Paul wrote, "... what we should be praying for, to accord with what must be, we are not aware" (Rom.8:26). But the "spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rom.8:15) aided the apostle in this infirmity. God, Who searches the heart, was aware of the disposition of the spirit in Paul (Rom.8:27) as he made mention of his fellow believers and beseeched God for the opportunity to share spiritual grace with them.

It may seem unwarranted to see in Paul's prayer of over nineteen hundred years ago something that concerns us personally. He could not have mentioned us by name or have the slightest inkling his prayer would remain relevant this far into the future. But it is a great comfort and source of consolation to know that our apostle was so deeply concerned to share the spiritual revelations given to him for the believers in all parts of the world, so concerned that he made mention of the believers unintermittingly. The prayer does truly extend to us.

Paul prayed for one thing, and, in accord with what must

be, God gave much more than Paul could have imagined. The apostle prayed with the consciousness that the *will of God*³ would be done. And in this case, God's will was in full accord with Paul's longing. Through multiplied years Paul has come by way of his letters to places throughout the world, and he still comes with "some spiritual grace." We are eager to read in written form what we cannot hear directly from his mouth. And we thank God for this prayer.

SHARING SPIRITUAL GRACE

In this passage, the expression "spiritual grace" corresponds with "the evangel of God's Son" which Paul proclaimed with great sacrifice as he offered divine service to God "in his spirit." The spiritual grace Paul longed to share with the believers in Rome was associated with the evangel concerning the death and resurrection of Christ.

This message of spiritual grace has not been lost. Much of it is surely found in Romans, especially in that great unfolding of the evangel given from 3:21 to the end of chapter 8. We hear his words: "Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2).

But even further, this spiritual grace is found in the letters Paul wrote after he got to Rome, when what he then shared with the Romans was set down in writing. There we hear our apostle's voice on the printed page, in revelations such as the following: "In *spirit* the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the

3. "Prosperity is found only in the will of God, and in all the wide world there is only one safe place for the child of God, that is where God places him" (George Rogers: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.20, p.88).

evangel of which I became the dispenser, in accord with the gratuity of the *grace* of God” (Eph.3:6,7). And: “The Son of God’s love . . . is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens” (Col.1:13,18-20).

CONSOLED THROUGH ONE ANOTHER’S FAITH

The word “console” comes from the Greek word literally meaning *BESIDE-CALL*. It speaks of being called close to one’s side. When the need is comfort in sorrows and distresses it is rendered “console,” and when the need is guidance and good counsel, it is rendered “entreat.” We are *called* close *beside* each other and our apostle, because of our mutual faith. Again, as in verse 8, the term *faith* seems to refer not simply to the fact that we are believing but especially to the message we believe. We believe that “Christ died for our sakes” (Rom.5:8). “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).

The revelations of grace which Paul still brings by way of his letters, and which compose your faith and my faith, even as they composed the faith of our apostle and of our Roman brethren some nineteen and a half centuries ago, are our great sources of consolation and entreaty. As we call each other close and speak of God’s grace to each of us in Christ Jesus we are consoled in our distresses and guided rightly in our conduct.

We are thanking our God and Father for this faith and its announcement everywhere.

D.H.H.

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JULY, 2002

Volume XCIII

Number 4

Reprints from the series:

He Shall Save His People

by Dean Hough

When our Lord came into this world He came to save. This was the meaning of the name given Him, Jesus, which according to its roots in the Hebrew language signifies: Yahweh-Saviour.

Therefore, when Mary "was found pregnant by holy spirit" (Matt. 1:18), the messenger of the Lord said to Joseph, "Now she shall be bringing forth a Son, and you shall be calling His name Jesus, for *He shall be saving* His people from their sins" (1:21).

This promise is a most important declaration of God's intention. It forms a solid basis for all that is recorded throughout the book of Matthew. Indeed it must never be forgotten in the midst of stern warnings and fearful events, least of all in the account of the evil and darkness surrounding the rejection and crucifixion of this One Who came to save. The promise remains alive and true even though it is left unrealized at the close of Matthew's account.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2002
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

AT the height of World War II, Brother A. E. Knoch wrote: "God stands at the helm, and is steering the course He laid out before the eons. His eye is on the star that leads to the predetermined goal. The winds may rave and the waves may roar, but all is under the control of His almighty hand. As we enter one of the greatest crises which mankind has ever faced, let us do it in calm reliance upon our God, knowing that it is all a part of His plan and will fulfill His intention. More than that, let us seek to understand His ways so that we may rejoice in spirit in that which seems to defeat His purpose" (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol.35, p.3).

It is not that the present is filled with such warfare and distress as the time when Brother Knoch wrote these words. Yet times of crisis are always with us in one form or another during this eon. Not just political and economic turmoil, but within everyone's personal life there are afflictions and perplexities (*cf* 2 Cor.4:8) as well. Readers of this issue of our magazine will see that this was so of Adam and Eve, of Seth and David, and of Paul and those who hold to the word of truth which he brought.

Consequently, our days, too, provide excellent opportunities to be relying on the living God. There are sufferings in the current era that sharpen our anticipation of the glory about to be revealed for us (*cf* Rom.8:18). All is under the control of God's almighty hand.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has purposed to head up all in the Christ, and Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:3-11).

D.H.H.

SUBJECTION IN THE LINE OF SETH

SUBJECTION is the underlying subject in the line of Seth (SET) who was substituted in the place of Abel, whom Cain had killed. It is worthy of note that nothing is said of Seth and his line until Cain's whole line is out of the way. The two lines were not chronicled together, for they will not mix. We are not told how long Cain's descendants lived, though there is little doubt that they lasted till the deluge. But time is not reckoned when out of fellowship with Yahweh. So the narrative drops the Cainites and goes back to Adam and Eve. It commences afresh with Seth, whom Elohim *set* in place of Abel. They are the first in the lines of faith, in which the firstborn according to the flesh are rejected, as in the case of Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob. Abel and Seth together form the first type of Christ in death and resurrection, for it is through them and their line that salvation comes.

The difference between the two lines seems to be this: Cain and his line failed because of *in*subjection to the Subjector, Yahweh. Seth and his line failed in subjecting *oth-*ers. Adam's first failure, also, was as the subjector of the serpent and of Eve, who were in his domain. His own sin in eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil followed later. So it was in his line. Each member lived about two hundred years after the death of his predecessor, when he took over the place of Adam as the head of humanity. Yet, at the end of the line, only Noah, with his family, are free from the prevailing insubjection.

This same method of having two lines on the scene

at the same time continues throughout the evil eons. In general, they might be termed the lines of faith and of unbelief, or of subjection and insubjection. The contrast between them, even when faith also fails, is essential to reveal their character fully. A prominent example is found in the divided kingdom, Judah and Israel. Judah was true to the royal line, and should have retained the sovereignty over all Israel. Israel was not in the line of faith, so was deported long before Judah, and will not return until they are united again in Messiah's kingdom.

"Subjection" is a term of wide significance, which includes many forms. Therefore it is used to express the final state in which all are *set under* the Subjector. It not only includes swaying (Gen.1:26,28) over the animals, but our obedience to the superior authorities (Rom.13:1), and wives to husbands (Eph.5: 22), and also the conduct of younger men to elders (1 Peter 5:5), and children to fathers (1 Tim.3:4). Even Jesus was subject to Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:51). Adam was subjector over all his children, and passed on to his successors the subjection of the whole race.

SETH'S LINE

²⁵ + Adam ¹knew ⁷Eve^c his wife ^fagain. ⁷She became 'pregnant^{cs} and gave 'birth to a son. + She 'called 'his name Seth, ⁷ saying⁻⁰: 'Truly Elohim has set for me another seed "instead of Abel, for Cain killed him. ²⁶ + As for Seth, to him ^{mr}too a son was born; and he 'called 'his name Enosh. Then ⁷this one⁰ ~was wounded; ⁷yet he called~ 'on the name of Yahweh.

There are two records of the line of Seth (Gen.4:25,26 and Gen.5:1-32). The first one is very brief, and seems to be prophetic in its implications, for it ends with Seth's son Enosh. As this cannot be seen in the usual versions, we will seek to find a better rendering of the Hebrew. In

the AV of Genesis 4:26 we read: “And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enosh; *then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.*” The last sentence the CV renders: “Then *this one was wounded*; yet *he* called on the name of Yahweh.” There is no evidence whatever for the word *men*. Indeed, the men of the line of Cain did *not* call upon the Lord at this time. The Septuagint reads “*this one*,” and the context confines the statement to Enosh.

The stem of the Hebrew word which the AV translates “began” is *chl*, which conveys the general idea of PERFORATE. By the addition or insertion of other letters it is used for many related ideas, as tunnel *mchluth*, and illness *chli*, travail *chil*, violate or wound *chll*, as in “He was *wounded* because of our transgressions” (Isa.53:5). We suggest that this is its meaning here. Enosh, like Abel, was attacked, but was saved from death by calling on the name of Yahweh Elohim. Following, as this does, the triumphal song of Lamech, who killed those who injured him (Gen. 4:23), it is a striking testimony to the faith of Enosh, and in full harmony with his name, which means “Mortal.”

GENESIS FIVE

5 This is the **scroll** of the **genealogical** records of Adam. **On the day** Elohim created Adam, in the likeness of Elohim He ^dmade him. ² Male and female He created them and **blessed** them and **called** their name “human” on the day they were created. ³ + Adam **lived** 7230⁰ 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** 7700⁰ years, and he **begot** sons and daughters. ⁵ + So all the days of Adam which he lived came to **be** 930 years; + then he **died**.

⁶ + Seth **lived** 7205⁰ years and **begot** Enosh. ⁷ + After his begetting Enosh, Seth **lived** 7707⁰ years and **begot**

sons and daughters. ⁸ + So all the days of Seth came to **be** 912 years; + then he **died**.

⁹ + Enosh **lived** 7190⁰ years and **begot** Kenan. ¹⁰ + After his begetting Kenan, Enosh **lived** 7715⁰ years and **begot** sons and daughters. ¹¹ + So all the days of Enosh came to **be** 905 years; + then he **died**.

¹² + Kenan **lived** 7170⁰ years and **begot** Mahalalel. ¹³ + After his begetting Mahalalel, Kenan **lived** 7740⁰ years and **begot** sons and daughters. ¹⁴ + So all the days of Kenan came to **be** 910 years; + then he **died**.

¹⁵ + Mahalalel **lived** 7165⁰ years and **begot** Jared. ¹⁶ + After his begetting Jared, Mahalalel **lived** 7730⁰ years and **begot** sons and daughters. ¹⁷ + So all the days of Mahalalel came to **be** 895 years; + then he **died**.

¹⁸ + Jared **lived** 162 years and **begot** Enoch. ¹⁹ + After his begetting Enoch, Jared **lived** 800 years and **begot** sons and daughters. ²⁰ + So all the days of Jared came to **be** 962 years; + then he **died**.

²¹ + Enoch **lived** 7165⁰ years and **begot** Methuselah. ²² + Enoch **walked** with the One, Elohim. After his begetting Methuselah, Enoch **lived** 200⁰ years and **begot** sons and daughters. ²³ + So all the days of Enoch came to **be** ^{ns}365 years, ²⁴ + while Enoch was walking with the One, Elohim. + Then he was not found, for Elohim took him away.

²⁵ + Methuselah **lived** 187 years and **begot** Lamech. ²⁶ + After his begetting Lamech, Methuselah **lived** 782 years and **begot** sons and daughters. ²⁷ + So all the days of Methuselah came to **be** 969 years; + then he **died**.

²⁸ + Lamech **lived** 7188⁰ years and **begot** a son. ²⁹ + He **called** his name Noah, ^ysaying: This one shall console us ^fbecause of our ^{ncs}7doings, and ^fbecause of the grief of our hands resulting from the ground ^wthat Yahweh has cursed. ³⁰ + After his begetting Noah, Lamech **lived** 7565⁰ years and **begot** sons and daughters. ³¹ + So all the days of Lamech came to **be** ^{ns}7753⁰ years; + then he **died**.

³² + Noah came to ¹be 500 years old; + Noah ¹begot ⁷three sons⁰, ¹Shem, ¹Ham and ¹Japheth.

GENEALOGICAL RECORDS

The second record of the line of Seth gives us more than the “generations” of Adam. It not only states the names of the succeeding patriarchs in the line of faith, but gives the number of years they lived, and such particulars as are needed to round out the record (Gen.5:1-32). So we prefer to call it the “genealogical *records*.” The first one of these concerned the heavens and the earth in which there were no *generations* at all (Gen.2:4). The third one is the record of Noah (Gen.6:9). In this book there are eleven of these altogether. The remaining nine deal with individual patriarchs or their sons, Noah, his sons, Shem, Terah, Ishmael, Isaac, Esau, his sons, and Jacob. The annals of Adam include the whole line of Seth, up to and including Noah before the deluge.

Twice Adam is said to be in the *likeness* of the Subjectors. In the first case he is to sway over the lower soul life in the sea and air, and on the land (Gen.1:26). Now, once again, we read of Adam, “in the likeness of Elohim (Subjectors) He made him.” But here there is no reference to the lower soul life, which entitles all humanity to sway over the animals, but it is connected with those who have the position of firstborn in Adam’s line, with Seth and Enosh, etc. Indeed, of Seth himself we read that Adam begot him in his likeness, according to his image (Gen.5:3). This seems to show that, first of all, Adam was the subjector of *humanity* while he lived, and that he passed this on to all those mentioned in his annals. Later they are called sons of the subjectors (Gen.6:2).

SON OF ADAM

Christ is presented as the Son of Adam in Luke 3:23-38.

In this list we have all the names of the sons of Adam, as the subjector, given in the genealogy of Adam’s successors, or firstborn sons. As they were the channel through which Christ’s right to rule all mankind has come to Him, they, themselves, must have possessed this right, or they could not have channeled it on to Him. Not only in ancient times, but today, also, regal rights pass to the oldest son as a rule, and are reckoned even if they are in abeyance. In English we use the term “successor” to express this, hence we can call a long line of them “successors.” The title Son of David limits His rule to Israel. But Son of Adam, enlarges His realm to include all humanity. This also was the case with the firstborn sons in the line of Adam before the deluge.

THE LINE OF SUCCESSION

Not until we see that the line of Seth gives us the succession to the headship of the race, can we understand why so little is said of the later ones. Only the vital facts are usually given. This list later leads up to Christ, in Whom they all end. In the genealogy of Jesus all of these names appear again (Luke 3:23-38), but there we have nothing but the names. Yet these alone prove His claim to be the Son of Adam or Mankind, and so the Head of the race. Here we have the names of Adam’s immediate successors, not merely to establish their own title as heirs of Adam, but to be a link in the chain of final subjection to Adam’s greatest Son.

Here however, more is necessary than the mere names, for only one was subjector at a given time. In order to fix the time when they were subjectors of the race, following the death of their fathers, we are given the age of each father when his firstborn son and successor is born, and thence on to his death. These are two vital events. In this way there were usually four successors in training, before the oldest was at the head. Each one was nearly seven hun-

dred years old before he took office and kept it about two hundred years, to his death.

CHRONOLOGY

No chronology was given in connection with Cain's line, for time out of fellowship with Yahweh is wasted and cannot be counted. But, in the line of faith, every year spent beneath the sun is reckoned. Yahweh had planned all beforehand, and everything has its proper season. Therefore we are given the comparative time for the appearance of all the principal actors in the history of humanity on the earth. Each man is connected by an interlocking chain link to the one before and the one after him. As we are given his age at the birth of his firstborn son, the sum of the years to all the firstborn will give the length of the whole period.

SONS AND DAUGHTERS

There can be no subjectors without subjects. So there is always an addition to the effect that there were further sons and daughters. As this is a list of subjectors only, their wives are not even mentioned. But in referring to their subjects, both sons and daughters are referred to. These later-born sons would be subjectors of their own families, but they did not inherit the headship of the whole race, as the successive firstborn did.

ADAM

While much is told us of Adam's early experiences, when the whole race was in him, very little is said of his personal affairs after the birth of Seth, except that he had further sons, and also daughters. He lived seven hundred years after that, but may not have exercised his office for the last hundred and twenty. Mankind was all one great family, and all should have been subject to him, as well as their own

fathers. On a smaller scale this form of rule still continues among some peoples. It is, indeed, the ideal and final form, for the Subjector Himself will eventually become the loving Father of all at the consummation. It seems that matters gradually grew much worse, especially after his death, when his sons were left in full control. Nations are not mentioned until after the deluge. They belong in the present eon. There were none then. The rule was paternal or patriarchal.

THE LINE OF FAITH

The line of faith and subjection really began with a dead man, Abel. We have an intimation here of the death and resurrection of Christ, for His death is the greatest example and basis of all true subjection. Abel was the victim which Cain slew in place of the sin offering. In type, the line of Seth began as believers do, crucified with Christ, and risen in Him. The name "Set" does not tell us what he was like or what he did. Eve acknowledged that Elohim had given him, to take the place of Abel, who was righteous (Matt. 23:35) and a man of faith (Heb.11:4). So the line of faith started with death rather than with life. This is shown in its double beginning in Abel-Seth. Abel was not allowed to continue, but the name "Set" indicates that he was securely established as the living progenitor of those who were subject to the Subjector, through whom, on the physical side, all the race today has come, for all others, including the whole line of Cain, were wiped out in the deluge.

ENOSH

Enosh means *mortal*. In naming his son thus, Seth recorded his faith in the death sentence passed upon Adam and the race (Gen.4:25). It is just the reverse of Methusael (Death-is-Questionable), who was in the line of Cain (Gen. 4:18). We must remember that life was long in those days.

All those mentioned in this list had a life span of close to a thousand years. When “Mortal” was born it would be about half that much before Adam succumbed to mortality. So it took faith to give a son such a name. Today it would take none at all. Now it takes faith to believe that some of us may not die at all, in case we live until the Lord calls us to be with Him in the air (1 Thess.4:13-18).

CAINAN

Enosh named his son Cainan. This is a lengthened form of Cain. In the case of Cain it seems clear that Eve claimed she had *acquired* him (Gen.4:1), that is, she did not take him as a gift, but rather as a purchase, for which she had paid the price. The affix *-n*, added to a stem, usually makes it a noun, so the name Cainan would mean *Acquisition*. It is used in Genesis 31:18 of the acquisition which Jacob acquired in Padan, Syria. But this difference does not help much. However, there is a similar word in Hebrew which means *dirge*. This is so appropriate for a son of Mortal, that we are tempted to suggest this as the probable original. The next name follows Dirge much better than Acquisition.

MALALEEL

Malaleel means Praiser-of-Subjector. As in the line of Cain, the opposition to El reached its summit in the name Mehujael (Wipe-out-Subjector!), so, in the line of Seth, the highest point is indicated by this name, which calls on all, not only to acknowledge and obey the Supreme Subjector, but to *praise* Him. Adam was still alive, but he died before Malaleel's son Jared was born. Adam's death seems to have been the principal crisis in the ante-diluvian eon.

As we have noted above, the name Mehujael (Wipe-out-Subjector) expressed the desire of Cain's descendants to wipe out the Subjector from the earth. And they came near being successful, for only Noah's family seem to have

remained who worshiped Him. So it was only right that Elohim should wipe *them* off the surface of the ground by means of the deluge.

JARED

Jared (It-is-descending) was born soon after the death of Adam, so that the father of humanity no longer exercised control. As a result there was a downward trend. The name does not clearly indicate just who or what was going down, whether it is a call for Yahweh to descend as later predicted by his son Enoch, or simply that *humanity* is deteriorating. It cannot refer to Jared himself, but fits the times perfectly. These were described by Enoch, his son, as most deplorable.

ENOCK

Enoch (Dedicated) was dedicated to the way of Seth, even as Enoch, son of Cain, was dedicated to his father's way (Gen.4: 17). Abel, Enoch, and Noah are the great examples of faith in the ante-diluvian era. “By faith Enoch was transferred, so as not to be acquainted with death, and was not found, because God transfers him. For before his transference he is attested to have pleased God well” (Heb.11:5). We have his prophecy in Jude 1:14,15 as follows: “Lo! the Lord came among ten thousand of His saints, to do judging against all, and to expose all the irreverent acts in which they are irreverent, and concerning all the hard words which irreverent sinners speak against Him.”

METHUSELAH

Methuselah means “Dying-He-sends.” The faith of Enoch was clearly exhibited and certified by making his son a living witness to his prediction concerning the coming judgment, for the deluge came only six years after

Methuselah's death. At the same time he is an example of the longsuffering of the Subjector, for he lived longer than any other of the patriarchs, and even outlived his son, which was very unusual at that time.

LAMECH

Lamech (To-Reduce), the last name in the line of Seth, before Noah begins a new genealogical record, is the same name as the sixth in the line of Cain. It is evident that, by this time, the condition of mankind was very much *reduced*. When naming Noah, Lamech said, "This one shall console us because of our doings, and because of the grief of our hands, resulting from the *ground* that Yahweh has cursed" (Gen.5:29). The curse on the ground had been in effect for over a thousand years by this time. Continuous cropping would not be likely to improve it. Even the line of Cain, who originally was a server of the ground, turned to cattle at the end. After the deluge this curse was lifted. Yahweh Elohim said, "Not anymore will I maledict again the ground on account of humanity" (Gen.8:21).

NOAH

Noah (STOP) was so named because his father believed the predictions of Enoch. The end of the eon before the flood was like that which will close this eon. In the days just before the flood the people were restless, self-seeking, without faith in the future. Noah's name carried him beyond all this into the restful era which followed the deluge. At the same time the literal meaning, STOP, predicted the end of that eon.

A. E. Knoch

E. BARTON BELL

E. Barton Bell of Hamilton, Ohio died on February 7. For many years Brother Bell together with his wife Lillian who survives him, attended Concordant Bible classes at the home of Robert and Amber Killen in Centerville, Ohio, rejoicing in common faith.

GOD SETS

WHEN Seth was born, Eve gave him the name which means “Set.” This was her testimony that “Truly Elohim has *set* for me another seed instead of Abel” (Gen.4:25). She had in view the words of Yahweh to the serpent in Genesis 3:15 where He spoke of *setting* enmity between the seed of the serpent and her *seed*, an enmity which would culminate in the hurting of the head of the serpent’s seed and the heel of the *Seed* of the woman.

Although God had set an operation of enmity He also sets the One Who will both experience that enmity to its fullest extent and bring it to an end.

THE BIRTH OF SETH

Since the time of the promise concerning her seed, Eve had learned much. By means of her experience with Cain she had learned that the fulfillment of the promise was not dependent on her. It was true that the promised seed would not come apart from her and the burdensome travail of giving birth, but this was graciously granted to her by God. When Cain was born, Eve boasted, “I have acquired a man through Yahweh” (Gen.4:1). Even though she recognized Yahweh in this first experience of the miracle of human birth, Eve saw the birth of Cain, at most, as a cooperative achievement between Yahweh and herself, and the “I” of Eve took precedence.

Now, with the birth of Seth, she sees herself only as one who is blessed by Elohim, and she rejoices in what *He* has done and yet shall do.

WHAT GOD SHALL DO

Eve's "I" of Genesis 4:1 came back to haunt her when Cain murdered his brother. Her exultation in her accomplishment through personal suffering brought her human frailty and ignorance to light when Cain was caught up in the ways of insubjection in which the serpent had earlier entrapped her.

Yahweh's "I" of Genesis 3:15 ("I shall set enmity . . .") is another matter altogether. Elohim's promise of setting enmity, followed by that of increasing the grief and groaning of Eve in her pregnancy (Gen.3:16), are parts of His judgments upon the serpent and the human pair. They are among the many sad effects of the events of Genesis 3:1-6. Nevertheless, by His own words in Genesis 3, all of these evils must be traced to God. He imposes these experiences of enmity and pain upon these particular creatures of His hands, the forces of deception represented by the serpent, and the human race as included in Adam and Eve.

THE SETTING OF ENMITY

We are concerned especially here with God's operation with respect to the serpent. The serpent was expressing enmity against God when it brought the woman into subjection to its lie. God's response is, first of all, to set enmity between it and the woman, whom it had brought under its own headship. For the woman this enmity has come to mean added woe due to the stratagems of the Adversary in seeking to prevent the birth of the promised Seed. For the serpent, it has meant vigilance in forestalling and opposing that particular birth through a woman which would bring it hurt.

But it is in the enmity which God set between the serpent and the seed of the woman that the great issue lies. This will eventually lead to the annulling of all the works of

the Adversary (1 John 3:8) and of all its authority (1 Cor.15:24) by means of Christ as the great Seed.

It is Elohim Who sets this enmity. Just as He planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden, so He sets a struggle of enmity in the world after the human pair had eaten of its fruit and had begun to die. This enmity brings *hurt*, that is, a painful experience of trouble and loss.

EVE AND GOD'S WORD

In Genesis 3 Eve was deceived by a *denial* of God's word, putting herself under the authority (headship) of the serpent. In doing this she was failing to follow the instruction of Yahweh concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen.2:16), and she was also acting contrary to the instructions given to Adam to sway over the lower animals (Gen.1:28). But these instructions had not been given directly to Eve. They had been given to Adam before Eve was formed.

In the case of the naming of her first son, Eve is not involved in a *denial* of God's word, but a *misunderstanding* of what He had said. Let us note again the words of Yahweh Elohim to the serpent: "I shall *set* enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He shall hurt you in the head, and you shall hurt Him in the heel."

When Yahweh Elohim said this to the serpent, Eve was standing right there and heard every word firsthand. There was no room for denial of what God said. But also there was no temptation to alter what He said. Nevertheless, unless God opens up our understanding, the human mind is so constituted that it manages to misinterpret what is said by Him.

No doubt Eve was very interested in these words concerning the hurting of the one who had deceived her and the fact that she would play a special part in that develop-

ment. But Yahweh Elohim's words, "I shall set [this development of] enmity" did not seem to catch her interest like the words "the woman . . . and her seed."

Then also, although she might have been glad to know the serpent would get hurt (in relation to its usurped headship), we can question whether she appreciated anything about the Seed also being hurt from all this enmity. The naming of Cain indicates Eve was more interested in what the words of Genesis 3:15,16 said about *her* than in what they said about God and about the hurt of her Seed.

But what is said about God and the hurting of the Seed are *the* major points of this passage.

EVE'S ENLIGHTENMENT

Let us review some of the points of enlightenment which were given to Eve and manifested now in the naming of Seth:

After Cain killed Abel—after all the shock and turmoil and humiliation of that experience—then, when a third son was born, Eve named him *Seth*, which means "set," the very word God had used with the pronoun "I" in Genesis 3:15. Thus she exulted, "Truly Elohim has set for me another seed instead of Abel" (Gen.4:25).

Furthermore, not only does she use the word "set" from Genesis 3:15, she also uses the word "seed" from the same verse. She is doing better in using a pattern of sound words.

For "I" in reference to herself, she now uses the word "Elohim" as the One doing the action.

For the verb "acquire" in reference to herself she now uses "set" in reference to Elohim.

For "man" in reference to Cain, she now uses "seed" in reference to the one God had set to contain within himself (like a seed) that which will lead to the Promised One.

Instead of "Yahweh" as an object in association with her acquiring a man ("through Yahweh"), she now speaks of

what "Elohim" does *for* her. She now sees herself only as an indirect object, for whom Elohim had done something full of comfort and expectation.

GOD IS FAITHFUL

Now let us look at some passages of Scripture speaking of the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15, a fulfillment that occurs beyond the birth of Seth by several thousand years and which is not even yet fully realized. Clearly it is a fulfillment which is wholly due to God in the gift of His Son.

"This One, given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, gibbeting by the hand of the lawless, assassinate" (Acts 2:23).

"Now when the full time came, God delegates His Son, come of a woman" (Gal.4:4).

"For this was the Son of God manifested, that He should be annulling the acts of the Adversary" (1 John 3:8).

"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" (1 Cor.15:22-25).

" . . . looking off to the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, Who, for the joy lying before Him, endures a cross, despising the shame . . ." (Heb.12:2).

"He 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 . . . that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaim-

ing that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God the Father” (Phil.2:7-11).

“ . . . through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens” (Col.1:20).

In all these passages, as in Genesis 3:15, the emphasis is on God operating through Christ Jesus for the good of human beings. What God does in dealing with enmity is setting enmity against His Son for the establishing of peace and reconciliation.

But it all takes time.

And it is done in God’s own way—always through the death and resurrection and exaltation of Christ.

Seth is the seed of the woman: Within Seth were all his descendants, including Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ would be hurt in the death of the cross. Sin removes sin; enmity removes enmity; hurt removes hurt.

Jesus Christ is the Seed of the woman: In Christ there is deliverance for the human and an eventual annulling of the headship and authority of the Adversary.

The enmity which Yahweh Elohim sets leads to an annulling of that enmity by the Seed Whom Elohim sets.

TRULY ELOHIM HAS SET

In our translation of Genesis 4:25, we render the Hebrew term *ki* by the word “truly.” The Hebrew term is a conjunction usually corresponding to the English connective “that” or “for,” but it is often used to indicate emphasis, as is suggested by the English words “indeed” or “truly.” The context of Genesis 4:25 supports this note of exclamation and emphasis. In naming Seth, Eve was honoring God and His promise, not herself and her self-centered interpretations of His Word.

“Now let God be true, yet every human a liar” (Rom.3:4).

D.H.H.

**IN FLESH, APART FROM CHRIST,
AND WITHOUT GOD**

Question:

Why do you translate the Greek word for “stranger” as “guest[s]” in Ephesians 2:12 and 2:19? This seems especially strange (pardon my pun) since you yourselves translate it as “stranger” in Matthew 25:35 (“a stranger was I and you took Me in,” CV). Your translation of this word as “guests” in Ephesians 2 seems without merit, and appears only to expose your own bias, in favor of your own variety of dispensationalism.

After all, it is plain that in Ephesians 2:11-19, Paul is simply saying, to quote the Authorized Version, that “in time past,” the Gentile Christians were “without Christ,” and, “having no hope,” were “without God” (v.13).

This obviously refers to the time before they became Christians. At that time, they were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise” (v.12). “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (v.13) “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (v.19).

Once they became Christians, the Gentile Christians became “fellowcitizens” of Israel, which is to say, they themselves, spiritually speaking, became Israelites, hence heirs to Israel’s blessings.

All Christians, therefore, spiritually, are “Israelites,” which is to say that God reckons them as Israelites. What this amounts to is that He therefore grants them Israel’s blessings. Of course since the literal nation of

Israel, itself, is not Christian, its non-Christian citizens forfeit Israel's blessings which are therefore given to the church instead. Like all non-Christians, non-Christian Israelites as well, will be eternally doomed. Neither your fanciful dispensationalism nor your heretical universalism will be able to save them.

Answer:

First of all, I would suggest that you seriously take to heart the fact that simply because our translation seems "strange" to you, this does not make it wrong. The question is not what does or does not seem strange to any certain person, but what does the Scripture truly reveal.

Likewise, it does not follow because we ourselves translate by the term "stranger" in Matthew 25, that we are therefore doing something improper in our rendering "guests" in Ephesians 2. Again, the fact that the way we translate here, *to you*, "*seems* without merit, and *appears* only to expose [our] own bias, in favor of [our] own variety of dispensationalism," is merely a speculation of your own, born of excessive suspicion of what you are not well acquainted with and do not understand, being mindful only that our translation is deemed unscholarly and our teaching heretical by those whom you highly esteem.

You say, "Of course since the literal nation of Israel, itself, is not Christian, its non-Christian citizens forfeit Israel's blessings which are therefore given to the church instead." In reply I would simply ask, how does it follow from the fact that evidently only a small percentage of the descendants of Jacob today are believers in Christ, that therefore the promises which God made to that nation will not be given to that nation after all, but will instead be given to "the church"? I would suggest to you that in making this illogical claim you are simply repeating a popular tradition of men, one that is without basis in fact.

Similarly, you likewise claim, "Once they became Christians, the Gentile Christians became 'fellowcitizens' of Israel, which is to say, they themselves, spiritually speaking, became Israelites, hence heirs to Israel's blessings."

In response I would point out that even in the Authorized Version translation of Ephesians 2, there is nothing said that states or entails that the Gentile believers became—whether spiritually speaking or otherwise—effectual Israelites; much less is anything said from which it would follow that they somehow further have become "heirs to Israel's blessings." The believers of the nations now became "fellow-citizens" (which is to say, enjoyed equal standing and privileges) together with the Israelite believers, not in the nation of Israel but within the body of Christ. Hence your claim that they instead became, effectually, Israelites and so heirs to their blessings, is far from the mark.

In closing, you said, "Like all non-Christians, non-Christian Israelites as well, will be eternally doomed. Neither your fanciful dispensationalism nor your heretical universalism will be able to save them."

Since you are already aware that we believe that all mankind will eventually be saved and vivified, and also believe that the evangel brought by Paul is, in certain respects, unique, and is distinct from the teaching of the twelve, we would simply commend to you a careful study of our writings on these respective themes. Mere scornful claims that our views are "fanciful" and "heretical," neither help us nor intimidate us. Similarly, your mere insistence that all unbelievers will be "eternally doomed," says nothing in support of this claim. Even if you should find gratification in thus giving us "a piece of your mind," I suggest that you try another approach.

Now, I would like to begin to address the substantive subject of your enquiry by setting forth the text of this portion of Scripture under consideration, as it is translated in the Concordant Version:

Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations in flesh—who are termed “Uncircumcision” by those termed “Circumcision,” in flesh, made by hands—that you were, in that era, apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world. Yet now, in Christ Jesus, you, who once are far off, are become near by the blood of Christ. For He is our Peace, Who makes both one, and razes the central wall of the barrier (the enmity in His flesh), nullifying the law of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace; and should be reconciling both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in it. And, coming, He brings the evangel of peace to you, those afar, and peace to those near, for through Him we both have had access, in one spirit, to the Father. Consequently, then, no longer are you guests and sojourners, but are fellow-citizens of the saints and belong to God’s family. (Eph.2:11-19)

You asked, “Why do you translate the Greek word for ‘stranger’ as ‘guest[s]’ in Ephesians 2:12 and 2:19?” The Greek word in question, *xenon*, is *not* “the Greek word for ‘stranger,’” in the sense that one is the equivalent of the other, as if *xenon* itself signifies “stranger.” *Xenon* is often *used to refer to* one who is a stranger; this, however, is not its essential meaning.

Concerning Ephesians 2:11-19, most merely reason that since the idea in view in passages with which they are familiar in which this word in question appears, such as Matthew 25:35 (“a stranger was I and you took Me in”), is “stranger,” and since, to them, this same idea makes sense in Ephesians 2:12, 19, therefore, in our translation of these same verses by the term “guests,” we must necessarily be mistaken and biased.

Those who would dismiss the Concordant Version, will

find it easy to do so, being afforded an abundance of seemingly legitimate reasons for so doing. Yet others, ones who may be more open-minded, are still often hindered from understanding the true issues and principles involved in the resolution of various important questions of translation. Careful thinking and discernment are essential; yet these are the fruit of God’s gracious operations.

It is certainly true that the *usage* of *xenon* in Matthew 25:35 is in reference to one whom we would term a “stranger.” This, however, is not the issue. It is beside the point that “stranger” is the thought in view in such a passage. In the *Concordant Version*, in such cases, *we do not render it thus because this is its meaning but because of the demands of idiomatic, good diction.*

Usage is not meaning and is not inherently transferable from passage to passage. Yet most, not discerning the unvarying essence of a word nor distinguishing meaning from usage, confidently assume that our translation must be wrong and the usual renderings correct.

The meaning of any original Hebrew or Greek word is not determined by the subjective practice of merely noting the clearest idea that seems to fit a certain passage or passages. Instead, meaning is discerned through the objective testing of all occurrences of a word with a view to the determination of the *essential* idea that is *common to all* occurrences of that word—whether or not this idea can be smoothly and uniformly expressed in another language.

Every Scriptural expression has a basic meaning or essence. This is constant, even if the many usages of a word (whether literal or figurative) should vary considerably. It is vital to grasp the *meaning* or *denotation* of a word and to distinguish it from the word’s own varied *usages* and *connotations* which often attend it, in certain contexts.

Xenon (LODGER, noun; also *Xenizō*, LODGize, verb, and *Xenia*, LODGING, verbal noun) is an excellent example of

what I have in mind.¹ In fact, problems of translation which may appear at first to reflect the “bias” of the Concordant Version translator, may later on be seen to point simply to the inadequacies and shortcomings of those translations which present contrary renderings. Indeed, in consideration of what we may suppose a translator’s own perspective to be, if in the case of a certain translator the possibility of “dispensational bias” cannot be ruled out, in the case of another translator, neither may the possibility of lack of administrative enlightenment (whether or not the product of anti-dispensational bias) be ignored.

The meaning of this term in question, *xenon*, is simply, “lodger,” as a noun, and “lodge,” as a verb. For example: “This man is *lodging* with a certain Simon, a tanner, whose house is beside the sea” (Acts 10:6). Similarly, “And, shouting, they inquired to ascertain if Simon, surnamed Peter, is *lodging* in this place” (Acts 10:18). And, “Send, then, into Joppa, and call for Simon, who is surnamed Peter. He is *lodging* in the house of Simon, a tanner, beside the sea” (Acts 10:32).

All the occurrences of *xenon* which demand “stranger” in an English version are figurative. Indeed, since figurative usage depends on literal meaning for its force, the fact that, as a figure, the thought intended is that of one with whom one is unfamiliar, which is to say, a stranger, is itself proof that *xenon* means “lodger,” which, idiomatically, is “guest.”

In most cases, the noun, *xenon* (LODGER), is used with the connotative idea in view of that of one who is a “stranger.” This is a compound figure, both of association (metonymy) and likeness (simile/metaphor). Fully expressed, the sense of “a *stranger* was I [and you took Me in]” (Matt. 25:35), is “I was *like* a lodger—with respect to the asso-

1. See Keyword Concordance, entries “guest,” “lodge,” and “lodging”; pp.136,137; 182).

ciated thought that I was *unfamiliar*, which is to say, a *stranger*—to you [and (yet) you took Me in].” This could be expanded into, “I was one who reminds one of a lodger, and yet you took Me in.”

Nevertheless, *xenon* does not mean “stranger”; and, neither can it always be rendered by this expression. We cannot say, “Greeting you is Gaius, my *stranger*” (Rom.16:23), but must translate, “Greeting you is Gaius, my *host*,” for Gaius was Paul’s “lodger” (lit., “GAIUS THE LODGER OF-ME”). As the one by whom Paul was lodged, Gaius was his “host.”

Similarly, if we give this word its proper sense, we can hardly speak of “repatriated *strangers*” (Acts 17:21). In this verse, the Authorized Version translates “the Athenians and the *strangers* which were there,” practically ignoring the word *repatriate* (which it renders by “which were there”). Confounding the issue still further, in Acts 2:10, the AV translates the Greek for “repatriates” (*epidêmeō*) *strangers*, even though it clearly refers to returned Jews or proselytes who had come back to their own country. So, in Acts 17:21, the repatriated Athenian “lodgers” were probably those who, incidentally, had *been* “strangers” in other countries, but now had returned to their own land, but lived as lodgers (which is to say, as *guests* of their hosts) in Athens. Hence we translate, “repatriated guests.”

EXTENDED CONNOTATIONS OF USAGE

Actually, if it is a question of a translator’s own bias in the case of a passage such as Ephesians 2:11-19, this would be reflected not by the translation “guest” but by the rendering “stranger.” “Guest,” unlike “stranger,” covers both possible classes of lodgers (namely, familiar and unfamiliar guests); hence it is neutral, *not* interpretative.

Similarly, we should only conclude that a word is used figuratively when its literal meaning is necessarily prohibited. To insist upon a figurative sense when, rightly under-

stood, a word's literal sense clearly fits the context, is simply misinterpretation. Yet this is just what is done by those who insist that in Ephesians 2:11 and 19 *xenon* should be rendered "strangers."

Even further afield from the meaning "lodge," the idea being developed first from "lodge" and then second from "stranger," is the practice of using this same word for the thought, "be strange."² These occurrences are marked as figures of association (note the small cap "A") in the Keyword Concordance, which explains: "As lodgers were usually wayfarers from distant places, [*xenizō*] came to signify 'be strange,' [even] as our [English] 'far fetched.' As there were few public khans in ancient times, a traveler was at the same time a guest and a stranger in the private family where he found entertainment [i.e., lodging, hospitality]."³

IN RESPECT TO FLESH

Few seem to be able to grasp what the actual "rule" of concordant rendering truly is. It has to do with grasping the essence of a word and always keeping that in mind, even where it cannot be ideally expressed. Also, one must distinguish between the most *common* English lexical *definition* of a word which appears in a translation, and the *intended* thought which the translator wished to convey. An example of what I have in mind here may be found in the preceding paragraph in the word "entertainment." Upon hearing this word, most would conceive the idea of amusement or diversion, and yet that is not the intended thought at all.

The point of our Ephesian 2:11-19 passage is that "in

2. e.g., "... Can we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by you? For *strange* is what you are bringing to our hearing . . ." (Acts 17:19,20); and, "Beloved, do not think *strange* the conflagration among you, which is becoming a trial to you, as of something *strange* befalling you" (1 Peter 4:12).

3. Keyword Concordance, p.182.

that era" to which Paul refers, *in flesh* (i.e., *in this respect*, as Paul even repeats himself for emphasis), those of the nations who are members of the body of Christ were without God *in the world*. In the system of things (i.e., "the world"), in the era of which Paul speaks, such ones (namely, the "Gentile believers")—*in the sense to which the apostle refers*—were apart from Christ, *being alienated from the citizenship of Israel*. Then, they could only be termed temporary "lodgers" (or "guests") of the promise covenants of old (*cp* Rom.9:4; 15:27).

The context (see verse 11) deals with the believers of the nations as a group ("you," plural), in an era in which they were, corporately, mere "guests" of the promise covenants, in contrast to "now"—at the very time of the penning of this epistle with its mature revelations—when they have become fellow-citizens of those saints of Israel who were themselves members of the body of Christ.

In flesh, such ones had no expectation given to them; therefore, in this respect and considered corporately, they had no expectation. Hence, *in flesh* and *in the world*—in ethnic heritage, and in the system of things as then constituted—they were indeed "without God" ("without" is plural; they were the "without's"; that is, in flesh and in the world, then they were outside that sphere of blessing which pertained to Israel and to her proselytes alone).

Now in the period before they first believed, they certainly had not had even this much of a standing. That is, they were by no means then, in the days of their unbelief, lodgers or guests of the promise covenants! Therefore, the phrase "in that era," to which Paul refers, cannot refer to the time before they believed, as popularly assumed.

Even if we were to translate as "strangers" (instead of "guests") the sense would not be that of those who had no connection with the promise covenants at all (as most assume is the sense of the passage, from the Author-

ized Version's misleading rendering "strangers *from*"), but rather, that of those wayfarers who had a certain "temporary dwelling" *with* these divine provisions (inasmuch as they were "strangers" or "guests" *of* them).

The Authorized Version in particular and perhaps all versions whose translators have not recognized the nature and place of Paul's evangel and ministry, have corrupted the true sense of this passage. The Greek word for "from" (*apo*) is not in the text; and, the case is not dative (which signifies "to," which, by extension, could entail a similar thought to "from"), but genitive (which signifies "of").

Neither should the genitive form be interpreted in an ablative sense (i.e., "from"), for at least three good reasons:

(1) Paul is referring to a period in which what he says of these Gentile believers was true concerning them simply in a specific, limited sense, "in flesh." (2) Considering this passage objectively, there is no reason to suppose that in characterizing the believers of the nations as being then, literally, "lodgers of" the promise covenants, the apostle has in mind any connotative thought in which he contemplates them especially as "strangers" with respect to these covenants, especially in any sense which would wholly bar such persons from any positive connection with them. And (3), within the wider context which Paul has been considering throughout the epistle even unto this point, the phrase "in *that* era" naturally refers back not to the days of their unbelief, but to the period in which they first believed: "In Whom you also—on hearing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation—in *Whom on believing also*, you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers . . ." (Eph.1:13,15). Clearly, *that* is the era to which the phrase "in *that* era" refers.

This entire passage (Ephesians 2:11-19) concerns a *physical* difference between the Uncircumcision and Circumcision members of the ecclesia which is Christ's body. This difference was once ("in that era") significant among them, but now, it is no longer so. It has nothing to do with the *spiritual* blessings which the Uncircumcision believers once enjoyed.

Paul's point is that while those of the Uncircumcision who were blessed according to his evangel in that early era of the revelation of his evangel surely had a certain range of blessing (though a position that precluded any place for them before God "in flesh"), now, with the fullness of his message made known, they have become fellow-*citizens* of their fellow believers in the body of Christ, who are Israelites; now they are no longer mere sojourners or guests at Israel's board but men of full rights themselves. (The AV rendering "foreigners" in Ephesians 2:19 is false and misleading; it should read "sojourners," as the AV translators themselves sometimes render the Greek; *cp* Heb.11:9; Acts 7:6.)

Even in flesh, the Israelite member of the ecclesia now has no ascendancy over the non-Israelite member, for he himself has no standing in flesh (*cp* Phil.3:4-9). Indeed, neither does he need any such standing in flesh, for the privileged position which he now enjoys *in spirit* renders all such fleshly advantages wholly redundant.

This great truth had not yet been revealed at the time of Paul's earlier writings. Only "now" has it been made known. It should especially be noted that this glorious benefit—accomplished through the work of Christ's cross—is not a blessing of the evangel of the Circumcision, which precludes all who are not proselytes and demands circumcision even of these (*cf* Isa.56:1-7).

"This section deals only with the place that believers among the nations occupied *in flesh*, as physically uncir-

cumcised, in the era before this epistle was penned *Physically* only may it be said that they had been apart from Christ, aliens, having no expectation, without God. Trophimus, the Ephesian would understand this, for when he was in Jerusalem the mere rumor that he had approached as near to the reputed dwelling place of God as a Jew, caused the whole city to rise up against Paul who, they supposed, had brought him into the sanctuary (Acts 21:29). What Paul was accused of doing then, physically, he does now, in spirit, and far more, for we have free access to the Father's presence.

"[As to Christ's razing of the central wall of the barrier in Ephesians 2:14, we note that] the central wall of the barrier was the so-called 'soreg,' a stone wall, for a partition, with inscriptions which forbade any foreigner to go in under pain of death. One of these was recently unearthed with the following inscription: 'No alien is to enter within the balustrade and embankment about the sacred place. Whoever is caught will be responsible for his death, which will ensue.'" ⁴

Paul speaks as well of Christ as "nullifying the law of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace; and should be reconciling both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in it" (Eph.2:15,16).

Here I would especially note the decrees issued from Jerusalem by the apostles (Acts 15:20; 16:4). While these dogmatic directives once may have had their place, this is no longer so for the members of the body of Christ.

Also I cannot help but think as well of the innumerable "authoritative decrees" which have been issued down the centuries, set forth by church leaders, to which they ever sought to subject their followers. If even the decrees of the

4. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.290.

Jerusalem apostles are now to be deemed null and void, since Christ alone is our Head apart from any human hierarchy, how much more should we repudiate all the myriad claims of the hosts of others who would seek to lord over us in matters of faith and faithfulness?

Christ dealt with "the enmity," by dealing with it "in His flesh." He did so by "killing" it through the cross (*cf* Eph. 2:15,16). This enmity, which has been justly *killed* through the cross of Christ, is the national or race hatred between Jew and Gentile. Since God reckons it as killed, it can have no legitimate place in the body of Christ, in which there is neither Jew nor yet Greek, for we all are one in Christ Jesus (*cf* Gal.3:28).

"Our teaching that the believers of the nations, in flesh, were *guests of*, rather than *strangers to* the covenants is fully confirmed by coupling it with *sojourners* in verse 19. Now to sojourn in a place you must *be there*, as Abraham was in the land of promise (Heb.11:9), or as the sons of Israel in the land of Egypt (Acts 7:6; 13:17), or Moses in Midian (Acts 7:29). Abraham was in the land and lived on its produce. Israel was in Egypt and found sustenance there. So the believers of the nations were *sojourners* in that which belonged to Israel. This is only a slightly different aspect of their guesthood. Those who sojourn in a land can hardly be strangers to it in the sense of having no part of it."⁵

It is the secret of God's will to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth. And, through Christ, it is God's purpose to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Eph. 1:10; Col.1:20). Since this is so, how I rejoice in meditating on this most glorious truth.

J.R.C.

5. A. E. Knoch, from our companion study on this passage: "Guests Of or Strangers To?" *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.31, pp.149-160.

THE ESTABLISHING OF DAVID'S HOUSE

5 + All the tribes of Israel 'came to David at^d Hebron and ^{lsa}declared, > saying-, Behold us, your bone and your flesh are we! ^{2 mr} Heretofore, ^{mr i} while Saul ^b was king over us, you' ^b were the one ^c bringing Israel forth to war and 'bringing it in; and Yahweh 'said to you, You' shall shepherd 'My people 'Israel, and you' shall become > governor over Israel. ³ + So all the elders of Israel 'came to the king at^d Hebron; and 'king David 'contracted a covenant > with them in Hebron before Yahweh; and they 'anointed 'David 'as king over Israel.

⁴ David was thirty years old ⁱ when he became king-, ⁷ and ^{cs} he reigned forty years. ⁵ In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

⁶ + After this 'king ⁷ David ^{cs} 'went + with his men to Jerusalem > against the Jebusite dwelling in the land, + who ^{lsa} declared to David, > saying-, You shall not enter ^{bd} here, for ^{if} even the blind and the lame will ward you off-, > ^{sa} thinking-, David shall not ever enter ^{bd} here. ⁷ + Yet David 'seized 'the fastness of Zion, ^s which is now the City of David. ⁸ + David 'said ⁱ on 'that day, Whoever would smite^l the Jebusite should assault ⁱ through the conduit + both 'the lame and 'the blind, hated^l by David's soul. Therefore they 'say, The blind and the lame shall not enter > the House.

⁹ + David 'dwelt in the fastness and 'called > it the City of David. + Then David 'built up the surrounding area, from the Millo bulwark + inward. ¹⁰ + Thus David 'went on ^{go} get-

ting- + greater, and Yahweh Elohim of hosts was with him.

¹¹ + Hiram king of Tyre 'sent messengers to David + with cedar timber, + carpenters and sidewall masons + who 'built a ⁱⁿ palace for David. ¹² + Thus David 'realized that Yahweh had established him 'as king over Israel and ^t had uplifted his kingship 'for the ^p sake of His people Israel.

¹³ + After coming- from Hebron, David 'took ^{fr} more concubines and wives ^f in Jerusalem, and ^{fr} more sons and daughters were 'born to David. ¹⁴ + These are the names of 'those born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, + Shobab, + Nathan, and Solomon; ¹⁵ + Ibhar, + Elishua, + Nepheg, and Japhia; ¹⁶ + Elishama, + Eliada, and Eliphelet.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER gives a summary of several events in David's reign and does not list them in chronological order. The building up and fortifying of Jerusalem, the commercial ties with king Hiram of Tyre, and the growth of David's family are all things which developed over a number of years. The contents of chapter five are all preparatory for chapter six, which begins a new page in Israel's history, with the coming of the coffer of the covenant to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was about to become the place with which the name of God would be associated for all future time (Psa.132, esp. vs.13,14).

THE THRICE ANOINTED KING

David was anointed king by Samuel (1 Sam.16:1-13) when he was but a youth. Later, he was anointed king over the house of Judah (2 Sam.2:4). And, finally, he was anointed king over all Israel. These anointings divide David's career into three segments which typically represent different aspects of the reign of Christ. The Lord Jesus was born King of the Jews (Matt.2:2). Yet, like the period of David's first anointing, the Lord reigned only

over those who were burdened and poor and dissatisfied with the current regime. Similar to the second anointing, Christ will be seen as King at His return as the Lion of the tribe of Judah when He comes to lead Israel and rule with the millennial rod of iron. And finally He will rule as the Lamb, when He brings all into subjection to God with the blessings of life and peace.

The first three verses of 2 Samuel 5 and 1 Chronicles 11 relate the fact of David's coronation, but the scope of the inaugural celebration is passed over. 1 Chronicles 12:23-40 records numbers of military hosts from the different tribes that were in attendance. Some 350,000 warriors and their leaders were counted. There was a three day festival of celebration with great joy for the whole country. It was a most notable time, and may be a representation of a future reception of David's greater Son in Israel.

THIRTY

"David was thirty years old when he became king" (2 Sam.5:4). There is some symbolic significance attached to this age. Joseph was thirty when he became co-regent with Pharaoh (Gen.41:46). Thirty years was commonly the age for beginning Levitical service (Num.4:3,23,30; 1 Chron.23:3). And Jesus Christ was thirty years old when He was baptized by John and commenced His public ministry. All of these associations with the age of thirty have in common the idea of a fresh or new beginning, and of an anointing or dedication for special service.

David, being the eighth son of Jesse, speaks of a new beginning. He received this new commission after his long persecution by Saul which culminated in self-exile to another country. Joseph was brought to the throne after being symbolically killed and cast into a pit by his brothers, and after being condemned and sentenced to prison. The Levites were a fresh beginning in that they were the

replacements for all of the firstborn of all the tribes of Israel (Num.8:14-18). And they were dedicated especially to the service of the tabernacle and the priesthood.

All of these thoughts come before us in Christ at the age of thirty. His baptism suggests several things. With the descending of the Spirit of God in the form of a dove is His anointing. The baptism also speaks of the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom.6:4). And His death and resurrection, in turn, bring to mind His persecution and murder by jealous brethren, His condemnation for sins He did not commit, His birth as Firstborn from among the dead, His entry into heaven itself performing the service of the Melchizedekian priesthood, and the absence of the long awaited King.

CAPTURE OF THE IMPREGNABLE FORTRESS

David's first recorded action upon his final anointing, was the capture of Jerusalem (2 Sam.5:6-9). The parallel in Christ's ministry would be the reign during the eon of the eons. The first event of that final eon recorded in John's vision is the new Jerusalem descending on a new earth through a new heaven.

The account in 1 Chronicles 11:4-9 informs us that David's campaign was supported by all the tribes. Apparently David made the acquisition of the new capital the determining factor for selecting the commander in chief for the nation's armed forces. David had pronounced a curse on Joab for the murder of Abner, and he opened the position of commander in chief to the leader who was first in storming the stronghold of Zion. Joab succeeded in winning the position.

The terrain of the area made Jerusalem virtually impregnable. From the time Joshua brought Israel into the promised land, Jerusalem had never been completely subjected to Israelite control (Judges 1:21). The name "Jerusalem"

means the “tenancy or possession of peace.” With this in mind, the personal application is beautiful. The elusive possession of peace is something for which all humanity strives. It is only with the coming of the Beloved, Who knows the secrets of the water of life, that this great acquisition of peace can be made.

The Jebusites held Jerusalem. “Jebus” means “trodden,” or, “trample.” Certainly the situations and pressures of life trample any hope we have of obtaining a lasting peace by ourselves. This may also hold future prophetic significance since Jerusalem is to be “trodden by the nations, till the eras of the nations may be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). The Jebusites were so confident of their security that they boasted it could be safely guarded by the blind and the lame (vs.6-8). There is a similarity between this and the condition of Jerusalem when the Lord Jesus came there. He should have been received as their King—the King of Righteousness and King of Peace. But Jerusalem was held by those who were blind to the truth and those who would not walk in the truth they understood. Jerusalem continues to be trodden, because, in her condition of callousness, Israel is like savorless salt—fit for nothing except to be cast out and trampled by men (Matt.5:13).

But David captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites. He did so by gaining access to the fortress through a conduit (*cf* 2 Sam.5:8), most likely to the city’s only natural water supply, the spring Gihon. The site of Jerusalem is so high and rocky that it could not have been a fortress if there had not been a perennial water supply. But the spring Gihon has been such a supply, enabling Jerusalem to be a continual habitation for several millennia. Warren’s shaft, a forty foot vertical access shaft, is believed to have been the Jebusite water access that Joab used to make a surprise entrance into Jerusalem. Later king Hezekiah had another passage dug through the hill and had the spring

covered over to deprive the Assyrians of water and provide Jerusalem with water during Assyrian siege (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron.32:3,4). The pool of Siloam was then created as the receptacle for the spring’s flow (2 Chron. 32:30). The idea of “conduit” is very similar to “sent” or “commissioned.” This explains this name “Siloam” (meaning SENT) referred to in John 9:7. Today Gihon is known as the Virgin’s Fountain.

The name “Gihon” means “to gush forth.” The spring received this name because once or twice daily the flow of the spring increases and gushes forth a large quantity. In wetter seasons it may gush forth several times a day. Gihon is also the name of one of the four original rivers from the fountainhead of Eden (Gen.2:13). The thought of gushing waters comes to us throughout the Scriptures. “Now on the last, the great day of the festival, Jesus stood and cries, saying, ‘If anyone should be thirsting, let him come to Me and drink. He who is believing in Me, according as the scripture said, out of his bowels shall gush rivers of living water’” (John 7:37,38).

Paul speaks of “gushing grace” in the last half of Romans 5 when he uses the word “gratuity.” The thought is a giving that gushes forth freely. And if that were not enough, he heightens it further with his use of the words “superabounds,” “superabundant,” and “superexceeds,” to show that the “gush-giving” of God is of an “all-encompassing” nature. Christ is the channel of God’s Gihon of grace.

This theme flows throughout the scriptures, whether it be found in the passages mentioned, or in the river that issued from the sanctuary in Ezekiel 47:1-10. Again, in Revelation 22 the river issues out of the throne of God and the Lambkin. “To him who is thirsting I shall be giving of the spring of the water of life gratuitously” (Rev.21:6). The river Gihon encompasses the whole land of darkness (“Cush” means *dark*; *cf* Gen.2:13). The throne of the Maj-

esty in the heights is the true source of this spring of grace that gushes forth, and its flow encompasses all. In Christ is the peace of God that is superior to every frame of mind, the peace that garrisons our hearts and apprehensions in Christ Jesus (Phil.4:7).

The Beloved has won the impossible battle that secures our permanent possession of peace, freely giving us the water of life. One day Israel too will bathe off the double blindness of her callousness that was added to the natural blindness we mortals inherently possess. This is pictured in the mud Christ applied to the eyes of the man born blind, which he was instructed to wash away in the pool of Siloam, fed by the spring Gihon (John 9). When the Beloved secures Jerusalem, Israel will fulfill her commission, and Jerusalem will become the place of the fountain from which the world's thirst is quenched. The mention of Hiram is typical of the future subjection of the nations to Israel in that time of blessing. There is another chapter to the Beloved's acquisition of Mt. Zion from the Jebusites, but that must await the final chapter of 2 Samuel.

THE INCREASE OF DAVID'S FAMILY

In the third chapter the sons born to David were all listed with their mothers. We noted how this typified the fruit borne in one's life when various virtues are embraced. In the fifth chapter the mothers are omitted because the emphasis is not on the experiences of life and how these things shape us. Instead the emphasis is that which follows experience—the realization of Who God is and glorying in Him. The gifts of peace and new life which result from God's choice bring forth a glorying evidenced in the "Eli-" names: "God of supplication," "God of hearing," "God [is] knowing," and "God of deliverance." These things characterize our lives more as we progress in maturity.

J. Philip Scranton

PAUL'S WILL FOR US

PAUL leaves us in no doubt what lies at the center of his mind. He is a slave of *Jesus Christ*, a called *apostle*, severed for the *evangel of God* concerning *His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord*. He obtained *grace and apostleship* for faith-obedience among *all nations*. He offers divine service to God in the *evangel of His Son*. His prayers focus on the sharing of *spiritual grace* with the *called of Jesus Christ*.

The apostle has a WELL-MESSAGE, an evangel, a good word concerning Jesus Christ, to bring for those God has called among all nations. It is a message of grace to be taken by faith (which is the source and foundation of obedience). As such it is unique, surprising and unexpected. As Paul continues to unfold this message in this epistle it becomes abundantly clear that it has to do with what Christ has done, not what we must do. And it is concerned with what Christ has gained for us, not with what God requires of us.

NOT WANTING IGNORANCE

Paul does not want us to be ignorant of his single-minded focus on his commission to bring God's evangel of grace concerning Jesus Christ to the nations. The Greek word for "want" is generally rendered "will" in the CV, and speaks of a choice of the mind. It parallels the word "purposed" in the following clause. Both one's *will* and one's *purpose* are decisions of the mind which direct one's actions. Of course only *God's* will and purpose are certain to be achieved, and the human will and purpose may

be thwarted. But that does not change the fact that Paul's will in this case is not simply a wish, but a decisive choice which engages both his mind and action.

Paul is clear in what he wants and what he does not want for the believer. Elsewhere he states he does not want the believer to be ignorant of the secret concerning Israel's callousness (Rom.11:25), of the types in the Hebrew Scriptures which are for our admonition (1 Cor.10:1-13), of the spiritual endowments (1 Cor.12:1), of his affliction in the flesh and confidence in God (2 Cor.1:8-11), and of our expectation of being always together with our Lord (1 Thess.4:13-18). Now here in Romans 1:13 we learn that Paul's will for us is that we not be ignorant of his focus on the evangel and its proclamation. These all are concerns that occupied the apostle's heart and directed his deeds, and they all relate to the evangel and its meaning to the lives of the believers.

ROMANS 1:13-16a

We have seen in Romans 1:1-12 that Paul was focused on the good news from God concerning His Son, and fully aware that God had sent him to bring it, not simply to those who had not heard of Christ before, but as a word from God that went beyond anything that had been heard before.

*Now **I do not want** you to be ignorant, brethren,
that often **I purposed** to come to you (and was
prevented hitherto)
that **I should be having** some fruit among you
also, according as among the rest of the nations.
To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and
foolish, a **debtor am I**.
Thus this **eagerness of mine** to bring the evangel
to you also, who are in Rome.
For **not ashamed am I** of the evangel . . .*

Paul is not occupied with himself but with the commission God had given him. What Paul did not want, what he purposed, what he would have, his feelings of indebtedness and eagerness and lack of shame, all centered on the evangel. Beginning at verse 8 and ending here with the opening clause of verse 16 almost every verb is in the first person with the pronouns *I* and *mine* predominating. But this is always in connection with the message of grace that Paul had received from the risen Lord. The apostle does not boast in himself, but he is acutely conscious of what God has set before him to do. Paul is not a boaster, but, as he acknowledges here, a debtor.

What Paul writes here corresponds with his insistence in Galatians that "the evangel which is being brought by me is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it [by a man], but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal.1:11,12). This was so crucial that he exclaimed, "If ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema!" (Gal.1:8).

Hence it was important that the evangel as Paul accepted it (*cf* 1 Cor.15:3) be brought to Rome. Furthermore, Paul's recording of this evangel by pen in this and other letters, would become God's means for conveying it to us. Paul's stress in the first chapter of Romans on his will and purpose and eagerness to carry out the commission God gave him should serve to draw our frank and serious attention to what he has to say. The apostle's intensity calls for our concentration.

PURPOSE OFTEN PREVENTED

It is as true of the believer as of the unbeliever that "A man's heart devises his way, yet Yahweh establishes his steps" (Prov.16:9). Paul's will and purpose were fully in accord with his commission and reflected the spirit of the

evangel. It was a message of grace and love and power, and with such it motivated Paul's heart. Nevertheless, for a long while, he was prevented from carrying out his purpose.

This prevention must finally be attributed to God. Circumstances, indeed, the stratagems of the Adversary, were more immediate causes. But Paul was aware that all is out of God, and God has His reasons for hindering (*cf* Rom.15:22) Paul's coming to Rome for the time being. God would see that he later came to Rome, but it would be in God's own time and under unusual and humanly unforeseen circumstances which God would clearly arrange for all to see.

Looking back, we can see that Paul had to come to Rome through the furious turbulence in Jerusalem, recorded in Acts 21:27-36, which was underlined by the united voice of Israel, saying (hauntingly reflecting their cry against the Lord), "Away from the earth with such a one, for it is not befitting for him to live!" (Acts 22:22). Paul would come to Rome, but as a prisoner who had testified as to the evangel before kings and soldiers and sailors, through riot and storm and shipwreck, in humility and dishonor. Although Paul often was prevented, nevertheless God was to assure him, through a messenger, "Fear not, Paul! Before Caesar you must stand" (Acts 27:24).

"And thus to Rome we come . . . Now when we entered Rome, Paul was permitted to remain by himself together with the soldiers who guarded him" (Acts 28:14,16). "Now he remains two whole years in his own hired house, and he welcomed all those going in to him, heralding the kingdom of God, and teaching that which concerns the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unforbidden" (Acts 28:30,31).

HAVING FRUIT

By the time Paul came to Rome, this letter, with its spiritual grace, would have reached them, and fruit would have begun to be borne in their lives. The fruit which Paul wanted

to have among them was not an increase in the number of his converts for his boasting. It was indeed fruit from his labors in bringing the evangel, but it would never exist at all unless God made the evangel effective in them. "Now what is Paul? . . . I plant . . . but God makes it grow up" (1 Cor.3:6). Paul's "living in flesh" meant "fruit from work" (Phil.1:22), but it also meant fruit for their account (Phil. 4:17). It was the results of the operation of God's spirit in those who are believing His word to them. "Now the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Gal.5:22,23).

The spirit of God bears this fruit in the ground of the evangel. It comes "by the hearing of faith" (Gal.3:3,5). The message of grace concerning the faith of Jesus Christ, brought by Paul and accepted in faith by those chosen by God, brings love and joy and peace into our lives.

In this letter to the Romans, Paul will already speak of this fruit. "Now thanks be to God that you were slaves of Sin, yet you obey from the heart the type of teaching to which you were given over . . . For when you were slaves of Sin, you were free as to Righteousness. What fruit, then, had you then?—of which you are now ashamed, for, indeed, the consummation of those things is death. Yet now, being freed from Sin, yet enslaved to God, you have your fruit for holiness" (Rom.6:17,20,21). And, as he shares more riches of spiritual grace in this letter, the fruit would increase as God imparts faith.

In not wanting the Romans to be ignorant of his continuing purpose to come to them, he was wanting them to know the power of the evangel for salvation even in their present lives. He wanted to see the fruit of the spirit being borne in their hearts and actions. The evangel Paul was bringing was the means, as God graciously granted faith, for love and joy and peace and patience, for kindness and goodness and faithfulness and meekness, and for self-con-

trol to become established in the character of the Romans and in us as well.

PAUL THE DEBTOR

No one really likes to be a debtor, least of all this proud Hebrew of Hebrews, who as to the righteousness of the law was becoming perfect. Under the sway of a strong military regime in a world dominated by the wisdom of the Greeks and Roman legalism, Saul of Tarsus had stood aloof in his superiority and privilege of birth and knowledge of the Scriptures and the offering of divine service.

But God had made Paul a debtor to these people who were so ignorant of God and far off from Him, not just Greeks but Barbarians as well. It was the evangel God had revealed to Paul that made Paul the debtor of such sinners. The evangel recognized that all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God, and this was the background for the revelation of gratuitous justification and peace. As it rescued Saul out of his own wretchedness, so would it rescue sinners, regardless of fleshly relationships, in accord with God's own purpose.

We can understand Paul's conviction of indebtedness as we read his testimonies to God's grace in his own life. "A wretched man am I! What will rescue me out of this body of death? Grace! I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.7:24,25). "Grateful am I to Him Who invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our Lord, for He deems me faithful, assigning me a service, I, who formerly was a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager: but I was shown mercy, seeing that I do it being ignorant, in unbelief. Yet the grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, foremost of whom am I. But therefore was I shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ should be display-

ing all His patience, for a pattern of those who are about to be believing on Him for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:12-16).

THE EAGERNESS OF FAITH

This message of overwhelming grace produced an eagerness in Paul to share it with others. When Paul cited Isaiah 52:7 in Romans 10:15, "How beautiful are the feet of those bringing an evangel of good!" he was expressing the happiness the evangel brings to both the evangelist and those who are believing it. But whether or not God gives faith to the hearer, there is an eagerness in heralding the evangel that stems from the evangel itself.

We observe also that Paul's eagerness to bring the evangel given to him, stirs a response of eagerness in the believer to listen to and heed its every detail, an eagerness such as the Bereans had for the Sacred Scriptures (Acts 17:11). This also, like Paul's eagerness to evangelize, is an eagerness which stems from faith. What we believe is such good news, so exactly what is needed in this world of greed and struggle, selfish prejudice and hypocrisy, turmoil and death, that we long to become well acquainted with it. We believe this great message of good is true, and because it is true we are eager to know its every feature and encourage its proclamation.

NOT ASHAMED

When Paul expresses his enthusiasm for the evangel here, he expresses it negatively. In Galatians 6:14 he speaks of boasting in the cross of Christ Jesus. But here at the beginning of Romans he expresses this same thought in a way that boldly denies the most common objections to it. The evangel is a message of the shameful death of the Son of God. It is a message of gratuitous justification, apart from demands of human works and self-improvement. It speaks of human weakness and God's power. It

speaks of human unrighteousness and God's righteousness. It speaks of human enmity and of God's love. It is contrary to our religious notions of giving to God so that He can give to us. By saying he is not ashamed of the evangel, Paul is saying that none of these aspects of the evangel, which would have stunned him as Saul of Tarsus, cast the slightest shadow on the message he is bringing.

In speaking of Christ's shameful death as the Sin Offering (2 Cor.5:21), the evangel declares that this alone saves humanity from sin and death. This is entirely apart from human contributions, apart from law and human works, apart from any human achievements. It says we are hopeless and helpless in ourselves. And it says that our most shameful sin, the crucifixion of God's Son, is the very channel of our deliverance from sin.

There is so much bad and bleak about humanity. But this message says that we cannot do any good to make the slightest change in our ultimate situation. Paul's letter to the Romans will make this clear. The evangel says that God Himself must deliver us and do so gratuitously in His grace, and that *He does so* in and through the death of His Son at the hand of sinners. The consequence is "life's justifying" (Rom.5:18).

The evangel recognizes the shame of humanity, and it spells it out clearly, but Paul is not ashamed of the evangel. That is because, in speaking of the shame of humanity, the evangel makes known the glory of God in saving and justifying the sinner.

With this thought at the beginning of Romans 1:16 we leave the theme of Paul's enthusiasm for the evangel and come to the evangel itself of which the apostle and the believer are not ashamed. With eagerness we are prepared to listen to it once again.

D.H.H.

CREATION BY GOD

IN THE FIRST instalment of this series, we listed five ways God has spoken to humans: in creation, through prophets, in His Son, through the apostles, and presently through the Sacred Scriptures. In this second brief article on things of consequence, we want to examine in more detail the creation of God.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD

We commonly think that in Genesis we find reference to the absolute beginning: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen.1:1 AV). It is puzzling, therefore, at first, to find these words in Revelation 3:14, “Now this is saying the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, and *God’s creative Original*.”

There was Someone Who was the beginning of the creation of God. He could speak, and was the First of creation. Who was this? Who was speaking to the messengers of the ecclesias?

It was Christ, Who is “the First and the Last, and the Living One: and I became dead, and lo! living am I for the eons of the eons” (Rev.2:18). There can be little doubt that God’s Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the speaker Who was the beginning of the creation of God!

This is further supported by a passage in Colossians: “. . . the Son of His love, in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of sins, Who is the Image of the invisible God, *Firstborn of every creature*, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the

visible and the invisible . . .” (Col.1:13-16). Examine the context here; the Subject again is surely Christ, Who is identified here by the significant and magnificent title, “the Son of God’s love.”

The facts set forth in the Colossians context are truly awe-inspiring. Christ is God’s Complement! He is visible, and the Image of *the invisible God*. In Him is *all* created. He is Firstborn from among the dead. He is First in the universe, not only in time but in position as well. *All* will be reconciled through Him. He will reconcile not only mankind but the celestials as well. All of this, and more, is found in only a few verses in Colossians 1:12-20. Read them carefully and prayerfully.

Both of the two paramount points in all history are recorded there: the creation (“Firstborn of every creature” in Whom all is created) and the resurrection of the Son of God (“Firstborn from among the dead”). His creation was *long* before His birth in Bethlehem *and before* the creation of the heavens and the earth.

FOR IN HIM IS ALL CREATED

God put into the Son of His love the power and the resources to create *all*. The remainder of creation was Christ’s work. That included not only the earth, but the heavens, the visible and the invisible, the beings grouped under “. . . thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him” (Col.1:16-18).

Robert B. Killen

FOR FURTHER READING:

1. GOD’S EONIAN PURPOSE, by Adlai Loudy, pages 55-64 (“The Beginning of Creation”).
2. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.70, pages 245-260 (“The Secret of Christ,” by A. E. Knoch).

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New Edition:

The Divine Calendar

As in the affairs of daily life, we need the kindly offices of a calendar to tell us the day or week or month or year, so, God has given us a calendar in order that we may locate ourselves in His grand affairs with which we are identified and in which we take an active interest.

Universal history may be considered from various viewpoints. Its divisions vary according to the special aspect. It falls into: (1) TWO GRAND CREATIONS (besides three special creations); (2) THREE HEAVENS AND EARTHS (as to its material basis); (3) FIVE WORLDS (as to moral Constitution); (4) FIVE EONS (as to the duration, character and disposition of each world); (5) TWELVE ECONOMIES (for purposes of human administration); (6) A WEEK'S WORK (for the restoration of the second earth); (7) FOUR MONARCHIES (in regard to governing principles); (8) THREE DAYS (as regards the direction of affairs), besides various Periods or Eras, concerned with special occurrences or extraordinary dealings which arise.

In order to group these grand arrangements at a glance, we have prepared a chart synchronizing the various divine activities.

Accordingly, this new publication features a high-quality reproduction of our original, large wall chart, now in reduced 11" x 17" format. This chart may also be viewed or printed on line, linked from:

<http://concordant.org/expohtml/TheEons/TheDivineCalendar.html>

The Divine Calendar (chart with booklet)

(\$6.00; includes 11" x 17" color chart and companion booklet; shipping and handling: add 10%, \$1.50 minimum; California residents please add sales tax; foreign orders payable in U.S. funds).

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2002
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

WHEN two passages of Scripture concerning God seem to clash, the one which most truly reflects His power and wisdom directed to a good end, as presented in Genesis One, must govern our understanding of the other. In 1 Samuel 15:11 and 35 we read that Yahweh regretted making Saul king, but in verse 29 of the same chapter we read that the Holy One of Israel does not regret (or repent). Because 1 Samuel 15:29 regards the rejection of Saul and the choice of David, and thus points ahead to Christ, we see that it must shape our understanding of verses 11 and 35. Similarly, we read in Genesis 6:5-7 that Yahweh regrets and grieves that He made humanity and intends to wipe them off from the surface of the ground. But this is immediately followed in the next verse by the announcement that Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh (Gen.6:8) so that humanity is actually preserved through him and his family. Here we must again understand the divine regret and also the divine acts of condemnation in light of divine grace. What is said about God's purpose in Christ shapes our understanding of what is said about His interim attitudes toward and dealings with humanity (see the articles starting on pages 195 and 201).

In connection with David and Noah, and God's dealings with them, we find types of Christ and of divine deliverance and subjection which are centered in Him. In Noah's contemporaries and in Saul, and in God's dealings with them, we see evidence of the temporary processes which make the glory of God's achievements in Christ manifest. The great bulk of Scripture testifies to these processes involving human irreverence and unrighteousness and failure and to

the divine judgments that result. Nevertheless, throughout God's Word there are continuing reminders of God's gracious and triumphant and good purpose in Christ Jesus. Indeed it is true that the prophets "focused ultimately on Christ" (see p.238), and this is true of all Scripture. We see this in Genesis 6:8 and more fully and plainly in the direct message of the evangel of God's grace given to the apostle Paul (see the articles starting on pages 207 and 219).

We find this pattern even in the accounts of conflicts between Israel and the Philistines (see p.232). In David's seeking of direction from Yahweh and in Yahweh's going before Israel in battle, we are pointed ahead to God's defeat of human irreverence and the instituting of the true worship and appreciation of God which will ultimately be established through David's greater Son.

God's grace is absolute; His regret and indignation are relative. In like manner, the sufferings of the current era are not to continue forever. They only serve to make known the glorious freedom God has purposed for His entire creation (see p.229).

As we are believing we are growing in realization of God as He shall manifest Himself in the consummation. This is how God is unchangeably and absolutely, apart from the current and temporary presence of sin and failure in the world. This is how He is made known in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This is how He is made known in His love commended to us even while we are still sinners, in the death of Christ for our sakes. What shall separate us from this love of God in Christ Jesus? Like Paul, we are persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

D.H.H.

THE INCREASE OF HUMANITY

6 ⁺Now it had ^hoccurred ^twhen ^hhumanity had started to increase on the surface of the ground and daughters had been born to them, ² ⁺the sons of the elohim ^hsaw ^hthe daughters of the human that they were good-looking. ⁺So they ^htook wives for themselves from any whom they chose.

³ And Yahweh ^hsaid: My spirit shall not abide in the human for the eon, in ^wthat he ^{mr}too is flesh. ⁺So his days will ^bcontinue 120 years.

⁴ ⁷ ⁺Asⁿ for the distinguished, they ^bwere ⁱon earth in ^hthose days and ^{mr}also afterward, ^wwhen the sons of the elohim were coming to the daughters of the human, and they bore ^hthem offspring. They were the masterful ones, who were from the eon, mortals of ^hrenown.

⁵ And Yahweh ^hsaw that the evil of humanity was multiplying ⁱon earth, and every form of the devisings of its heart was surely evil all the day. ⁶ ⁺Yahweh ^hregretted that He had ^dmade ^hhumanity ⁱon earth, and He ^hgrieved ^hin His heart. ⁷ ⁺So Yahweh ^hsaid: I shall wipe out ^hhumanity ^wthat I have created, off the surface of the ground, from human unto domestic beast, unto the creeper and unto the flyer of the heavens; for I regret that I have ^dmade them.

⁸ ⁺Yet Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh.

FAMILY RULE

EXPOSITORS and students have found the first few verses of the sixth of Genesis exceedingly difficult to understand.

This arises partly from discordant versions. As far back as the Septuagint, two words, meaning “distinguished” and “masters,” were both translated “giants.” This has led to fallacious fables. The phrase “sons of God” was taken to mean spirit beings, resulting in unnatural monstrosities. Even the earnest and reverent student, sincerely desiring to get the truth by careful attention to detail, may not be able to arrive at a satisfactory solution. To these we commend a study of the structure of Genesis, and a comparison of the complementary parts:

5:1-5 Sons and Daughters

5:6-31 Firstborn

5:32 Noah begets Sons

6:1-3 Daughters and Sons

6:4-7 Distinguished

6:8 Noah finds Grace

Note that the first section, Genesis 5:1-5, is concerned with Adam and his wife, *personally*, their creation, lifetime, sons and daughters. The corresponding section, Genesis 6:1-3, should also be applied to Adam and his wife and their daughters and sons. The theme here concerns the *subjection* of the great *multitude* to which Adam and his wife had increased by the time he was eight hundred and ten years old.¹ Adam himself, as head of his great family, was the subjector of all. But, when they became too numerous, he would naturally associate his firstborn sons with him, as his assistants. So they were sons of the *elohim*, the subjectors (the Adams). In order to keep this function in the family they married the daughters of these subjectors. This custom has often been followed in royal houses, in order to perpetuate their social superiority.

1. Taking Yahweh's words of Genesis 6:3 in reference to Adam (the “human”) who would live 120 years longer.

The name *Adam* may be used of one human alone, or of the first man and his wife, or of all humanity. When it is followed by a plural pronoun, *they* or *them*, it usually denotes all mankind, yet it may be limited to the first man and his wife in the beginning. In 5:2 we read that He is calling *their* name *Adam* (“human”). The parallel passage (6:1) may be rendered: “The Adam had started to increase on the surface of the ground, and daughters had been born to *them*.” Until we come to these sections nothing is said of daughters, although it is self-evident that there were such, or where would Cain and Seth have found their wives? They married their sisters. This was not as close a relationship as that between Adam and Eve, for she was largely a part of him. This method of marriage seems to have continued within the family of Adam and gave rise to an inner ruling class, which took over after his death.

THE TO-SUBJECTORS

As it was in Israel later, the term *elohim* (“judges,” AV) was used of men, before the deluge (Ex.21:6; Gen.6:2,4). Adam, the head of humanity, had probably kept his large family in some order, until they became so multitudinous that the firstborn sons were needed to help him rule them, even when he was still alive. These are “the sons of God” or Adam (as *like* *Elohim*), and so also subjectors. These sons greatly strengthened their positions by marrying the daughters of Adam, for the closer the relationship to him the better. They evidently sought to make a name for *themselves*, not for Yahweh, and so contributed to the ruin of the race before the deluge. These titles seem to show that there was family rule in those days, rather than an entire lack of control, or anarchy, as is generally supposed.

SONS OF GOD

The fact that the title *Elohim* means Subjector, and

that Adam was made a subjector, in His image (Gen.2:27), should help us to understand the phrase “sons of God,” as it is usually rendered. If Adam was made a subjector, then his firstborn son, was the son of a subjector. The word *son* denotes far more than *child*. In the case of Christ, Who is also the Son of Adam, it does not merely assert that He *descended* from him, but that He *inherits his titles and the right to rule*. And this has come to Him through a long line of ancestors, the first of whom exercised these rights, in antediluvian days. Since the change in the form of subjection in Noah’s day, it has been in abeyance, but will be revived in Christ, when He reigns over all humanity.

This genealogy does not include all the male children of Adam and all theirs, for then every man would have been a subjector, and there would be no subjects! Then all would be distinguished, and mortals with a name! So this is restricted to the firstborn. Adam was the first and supreme subjector so long as he lived, or possibly until 120 years before. After that Seth took over, and then his firstborn son, and the successive firstborn grandsons.

THE DISTINGUISHED

According to the skeleton, Genesis 5:6-31 balances Genesis 6:4-7. That is, the line of Seth to Noah are the “distinguished” who were in those days. These were not physical “giants,” or “Nephilim” (fallen), but the *firstborn* sons of each succeeding generation from Seth. Their names are given us, Seth, Enosh, Cainan, Malaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech and Noah. The fact that there is a record of their *names*, and the length of their lives should be enough to show that they really *were* “distinguished.” Their place as firstborn in a direct succession from Adam was sufficient to give them a special place. They were “successors” to the Adamic dignities. They were also distinguished *from* the line of Cain.

The special relationship of these men to the head of the race set them apart, and secured to them the succession, *distinguishing* them from the rest and made them the supreme subjectors of humanity when their own father died. They were the masters, and so distinguished from the rest, that their *names* have been preserved and have come down to us in the annals of Adam, for they took over the position of subjector after his death. They alone channeled Adam’s office of subjector to Adam’s greater Son, Who inherited it through them (Luke 3:23).

For us, indeed, they surely are distinguished, for they are our grandest fathers, next to Adam. Every one of them is in our genealogy, they adorn our family tree. Their names occur twice in the Bible, not only in the book of the Beginning, but also in the genealogy of our Lord, Jesus Christ. That alone, should distinguish them! We did not come through any others of the antediluvian. Moreover, we were saved from the flood while in Noah, and came through it in the ark. Not only we, but all men today have been saved once already, while they were in him. The miracle is, not that so many single kinds of creatures could be saved in the ark, but that all that have lived since and live today, including all mankind, were in the ark, and were saved through the flood.

GIANTS

The deluge was due to the evil of *humanity on the earth* (Gen.6:5-7), not to an intrusion of spirit beings, sometimes called angels, or nephilim, or giants, etc., which produced a hybrid race. Mankind lived very much longer in those days than at present, so it may well be true that they were of extraordinary size and strength, for such men, as Goliath, lived in David’s day. The name *nphlim* comes from the same stem as is used in Exodus 11:7: Yahweh is *distinguishing* between the Egyptians and Israel. This did

not consist in size or race, for Egyptians as well as Israelites were of average stature.

FAMILY RULE A FAILURE

Adam and Eve were tested in the garden under ideal conditions, and failed. Their *family* was tested on the cursed ground, and failed. The line of Cain was in open opposition to the Subjector. The line of Seth was *headed* by distinguished men who kept in touch with the supreme Subjector. Indeed, Enoch walked with Him, and was taken away without being acquainted with death. *Nevertheless*, humanity, *as a whole*, became utterly, incurably evil. This is the first great lesson taught by the history of humanity. It has been recorded for future generations, but how seldom is it taken to heart! Paternalism, the natural and ideal form of government, which will be most successful in the consummation, when the Subjector Himself is at the head, was a dismal failure apart from His presence and power. Such is humanity!

We must never judge the former eon by the present one, for now subjection is on an entirely different basis. At that time there was no organized political government, no nations, no kings, no judges. When Cain shed the blood of Abel, his blood was not shed. On the contrary, he was given a sign, so that he should *not* be killed. He was sentenced to wander on the cursed earth at a distance from Yahweh Elohim, but there was no provision for the enforcement of this sentence, so he barricaded himself behind city walls. Lamech, at the end of his line, was even worse. He killed two men, and threatened to kill more if he were held to account. Such a lax control filled the earth with violence. It teaches the great lesson that insubjection brings destruction and ruin on mortal men, and subjection to the subjector is the only way of safety and happiness.

A. E. Knoch

YAHWEH REGRETS AND GRIEVES

IN GENESIS ONE, God reveals Himself by mighty and successful works of creation. Every verb is a triumphant one despite the fact that they are mostly common and general terms such as *say*, *do* (make), *become*, *see* and *call*. All that God says comes about, and all that He does is seen to be good.

The picture of Deity in charge of all things is continued in the second chapter with God's actions of planting and placing and instructing, but the goodness and even the success of His works are less obvious. Nevertheless, in considering the second chapter, the pattern displayed in Genesis one reassures us that God's preparations for the human failure and loss of chapter three must be necessary for an outcome of good. We then hold firmly to the words of promise concerning the Seed of the woman as we follow the events through Genesis three and four. We especially find confidence and expectation in Eve's testimony upon the birth of Seth, "Truly Elohim *has set* for me another son instead of Abel" (Gen.4:25).

The present may be filled with grief and sweat and travail, and humanity corrupted with pride and greed, but God as He is first revealed in Genesis one is still supreme. The fact that these evils are so obviously associated in these early portions of His Word with deliberate preparations of God should only strengthen the believer in assurance that they have a wise and good purpose, that they will not be permanent and will serve His end of glory.

Yet as we follow the record given in the Scriptures it

becomes easier to forget the elementary lessons of Genesis one. What God does appears more and more to be reactive to what the human does, actions of disapproval and judgment, and, as we now will note in Genesis 6:6, of regret and grief. Hence it becomes increasingly important that we remind ourselves of the deity of God, of His power and wisdom and of the goodness of His ways.

It is depressing for us to read in Genesis 6:5 of the multiplication of evil as humanity increased, however much our own experience supports the likelihood of this account. Yet how are we to understand the words of the next verse concerning God's response to this situation: "Yahweh *regretted* that He had made humanity on earth, and He *grieved* in His heart" (Gen.6:6)?

We must not conclude that these verbs place limitations on God or on His purpose of creating humanity in His image and likeness. The limitations instead must be placed on the application of the verbs.

DIVINE REGRET

The Hebrew STANDARD for the word translated "regret" is WARM. The particular verb form used in Genesis 6:6 (also in verse 7) corresponds generally to the English passive, suggesting the literal rendering: "Yahweh was warmed." But, while that may help us in understanding the force of the word in Hebrew, it does not solve the problem. The sense of the verb in this particular form is shown to be close to our idea of "regret" in other passages where it is used of human actions (e.g. Ex.13:17; Jer.8:6). Even the sense of "repent," speaking of a change in one's thinking, is indicated in Job 42:6, where we read that Job recants and *repents* on soil and ashes.

Since the use of this Hebrew verb (listed on page 808 of ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW AND CHALDEE CONCORDANCE) in certain contexts calls for the sense of "comfort"

or "console," it becomes evident that it embraces a wide range of ideas under the general concept of *warm* feelings or actions. The grammatical form of the verb sometimes helps in identifying the particular sense, but context must finally be the decisive factor.¹

The warm feeling of regret is certainly in view in Judges 21:15 which tells of Israel's attitude toward the decimation of the tribe of Benjamin. But how are we to understand "regret" on the part of Yahweh?

FIGURE OF SPEECH

We have previously noted that there is a figure of speech here (called anthropomorphism), "in which God assumes human attributes in order to reveal His attitude."² But the figure stands for something literal *within the viewpoint* of the context. In view of His glorious goal involving humanity God does not regret creating them. But in view of the temporary evil, however necessary and determined by God it may be (and is), God is not impassive and unfeeling. God's regret in Genesis 6:6,7 is associated with what He *sees* (v.5). Within the confines of that evil, apart from its ultimate purpose, He truly feels something akin to human regret and grief.

This distinction of viewpoint is brought out in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Samuel. With respect to the temporary evil of Saul's reign over Israel, Yahweh expresses "regret" in making him king (1 Sam.15:11,35). But Yahweh, as the *Permanent* and Holy One of Israel, was not regretting (or, repenting) with respect to tearing the kingship from Saul (1 Sam.15:29). The setting up of Saul as king (at the peo-

1. For an enlightening study on the translation problems connected with this Hebrew term, see A. E. Knoch's article, "Regret or Repent, Comfort or Console?" *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.40, p.61.

2. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.18, p.234.

ple's request) represented a delay in establishing the royal line leading forward to Christ. But the removal of Saul as king opened the way to the line of David, which is directly associated with God's goal for Israel. With this goal in view, nothing akin to human regret would be appropriate.

Similarly, in Genesis 6, God's "regret" for creating humanity is wholly confined to the temporary condition of the multiplied evil of humanity. In view of the completion of humanity in the image and likeness of God, the Permanent One does not repent or even regret.

These outbreaks of the "way of Cain" which dominate human history during the preceding and present eons are necessary, as we have noted, for the eventual appreciation of the glory of God's goal. But they are not permanent; once their purpose has been served, they will no longer be a part of human experience. There will no longer be occasion for expressions of regret and grief on God's part.

Nevertheless, while the evils are present, even though God knows the outcome He has purposed, He feels the force of the temporary evil with an acuteness and depth that corresponds fully with His character. That is what Genesis 6:6 is saying. It is not literally regret and grieving (as humans regret and grieve, which is often associated with despair and despondency) over creating humanity. God's "regret" is an expression of a revulsion that burns warmly (to use human terms again in a figurative way) in God with respect to the (temporary) condition of that race of creatures called humanity which He brought into being.

DIVINE GRIEF

That God should be said to grieve is no less a figure of condescension (anthropomorphism) than that He should be spoken of as regretting. The grieving of God, mentioned in Genesis 6:6, is not identical to human grieving. But it does reflect a true sadness over the temporary sit-

uation of evil to which His creation of humanity has now led. God does feel the evil involved in the process He planned beforehand. To express that divine emotion for human understanding, the Scriptures must, of necessity, use terms commonly used to describe human attitudes. There can be no sense of hopelessness in divine regret, and no sense of helplessness in divine grief. But there is genuine divine concern for, and genuine divine comprehension of the evil.

DIVINE FEELINGS AT THE CROSS

The cross of Christ is the touchstone of all that concerns God. With respect to the experience itself, God expressed His displeasure, we may even say, His grief, by means of the darkness and storm that covered the scene. But with respect to the *outcome* of the the wounding of His Son, God *desired* (another anthropomorphism) to crush Him (Isa. 53:10). By all these, and similar terms, commonly used to describe human feelings and attitudes, truth is conveyed to us about God, when kept in context.

THE WIPING OUT OF HUMANITY

The context of Yahweh's regret and grief in Genesis 6 is also the context of His pronouncement of judgment. Hence He *says* that He will *wipe out* humanity, whom He had *created* (Gen.6:7). This, however, is still within the confines of the viewpoint of a temporary situation. It is assuredly not an eternal condition which would keep God from completing His purpose for mankind. All of God's pronouncements of condemnation are relative; that is, they are limited to the process which leads to the goal. The preservation of Noah and his family shows us that Yahweh did not intend to wipe out humanity in an absolute sense.

This vast operation of divine indignation is to be understood in light of a further operation of God which is hardly

noticeable at first, but which keeps the destruction of humanity from being absolute as well as the regret and grief of God from being despair. There is a little word of good news which sets these terms of condemnation and sadness into proper perspective.

NOAH FOUND GRACE

Hence we read that “Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh” (Gen.6:8).

Of all the acts of God mentioned in Genesis 6:5-8, this is the most important. Yet it is stated indirectly. *Yahweh* is the One Who acts here, but *Noah* is the grammatical subject of the sentence. Nevertheless, what Noah does is to find what Yahweh gives. Noah’s righteousness and flawlessness, mentioned in Genesis 6:9, must be seen as relative, in comparison with all the rest, and even then it was the result of God’s grace, not the cause. The grace came to Noah as an act of God.

God’s grace to Noah governs the meaning of His regret and grief and shapes the significance of His condemnation of humanity. We can see now, looking back, that it pointed to Christ and God’s achievements through Him. While experiencing sorrow and expressing indignation over the evil that had infested His creation, God continues to operate toward the removal of that evil and the completion of His purpose for humanity. But He does so quietly in almost hidden ways.

We will look further at this crucial act of God in showing grace to Noah, and why it should be stated indirectly, in our next article. But we see it makes all the difference in understanding God’s regret and grief and His great work of indignation in wiping out humanity. These latter acts are not ironclad. They are limited by the requirements of grace and the glorious purpose of the Permanent One.

D.H.H.

THE GRACE OF GOD IN TRUTH
*
SAVING GRACE FOR ALL MANKIND

Question:

I have noticed that all churches teach that salvation is “by grace.” Well, true enough, no one would dare to say that salvation is *not* by grace. But still, since one group differs from another as to how salvation is obtained, it must be that they actually likewise differ in what they mean by “grace.” Can you point me to what the Scriptures themselves mean by this important word?

Answer:

YOU make an excellent observation in noting that all Christian groups wish to affirm that salvation is by grace. Your point is also well taken that no one would say explicitly that salvation is *not* by grace. This is so, even if one’s actual position should represent salvation as not being a matter of grace. Any teaching, however, that *represents* salvation as *not* being by grace, effectually denies—even if tacitly and unwittingly—the very thing which it seeks verbally to affirm. After all, for all who wish to claim that salvation is “by grace,” the question remains, Just what do you mean by grace?

These facts make it clear that we are interested solely in genuine, true grace, not in nominal, spurious grace, which is “no longer grace” (*cp* Rom.11:6), or rather, which never was grace in the first place.

Most will say that grace is “undeserved favor.” By “favor” they correctly have in mind the thought of “blessing” or “benefaction.” This, however, is an entailed thought, not the meaning, as such, of “favor,” which itself is simply a close synonym of “grace.” Similarly, when they say that grace is “undeserved,” they are saying something that, as far as it goes, is certainly true. After all, if we were to receive what we *deserve*, we could never be saved, and could only be committed to death (*cf* Rom.1:32), never to live again.

While these considerations related to grace are correct and important, even so, they are *not* constitutive of the scriptural definition of grace.

This fact becomes especially significant when we see that most wish to claim that while grace is “undeserved,” it is *not* “unconditional.”¹ It is felt that even if God is the Saviour, still, the notion of man’s moral responsibility must somehow be maintained. Even though it is formally acknowledged that we do not *deserve* to be saved, it is artfully insisted that we must nevertheless *qualify* to be saved.

Fundamentally, however, this is a distinction without a difference; indeed, it is one which was only introduced in the first place in a labored attempt to maintain a worldly, ethical notion.

The reason why there is no fundamental difference between “deserve” and “qualify,” is because the essential idea common to both of these expressions is that of *eligibility*. The question is not whether parity obtains between the intrinsic worth of man’s obedience and God’s blessings, but whether or not we must do something in order to make ourselves eligible for salvation. If so, then salva-

1. The idea is that man, even by his strongest faith and most virtuous behavior, could never truly *deserve* (which is to say, be *worthy* of) the unspeakably great blessing of salvation. Even so, it is claimed that man must still “do his part” by meeting the “conditions” (i.e., requirements) of salvation.

tion is a reward, not a gracious gift. If not, then salvation is a gracious gift, not a reward.

Therefore, while it is true that no sinner deserves the blessing of salvation, this is simply not the point, when it comes to defining what grace *is*. Any question of “just deserts” aside, the actual position that most wish to maintain, is that grace is the *conditional* blessing of God.

In consideration of ultimate issues, this is an altogether mistaken notion. Even under the evangel of the Circumcision, where personal righteousness and endurance to the consummation are the proximate (i.e., nearest) cause of salvation, the ultimate cause is nevertheless the *grace* of God, according to God’s own *choice* (Rom.11:5).

Grace, rather than being something that acts reciprocally, in response to works, is that which precludes and debars works, insofar as its own power both to initiate and to achieve is concerned.

Since it is from the day on which we hear and realize the grace of God in truth, that the word of the truth of the evangel is bearing fruit and growing in us (Col.1:5,6), it follows that a correct perception of God’s grace is foundational to a correct perception of God’s evangel, in the glorious truth which it reveals.

The apostle Paul’s entire career, indeed the burden of his ministry, was both to “certify” (in the sense of explicate, that is, clearly “mark out” so as to set forth the facts) and “conjure” (which is to say, “solemnly entreat”) concerning “the evangel of the *grace* of God”: “But of nothing have I a word, nor yet am I making my soul precious to myself, till I should be perfecting my career and the dispensation which I got from the Lord Jesus, *to certify the evangel of the grace of God*” (Acts 20:24; *cp* 1 Tim.5:21).

In an attempt to imitate Paul in conveying to others vital, salient facts concerning the meaning of “grace,” I have prepared the following brief meditation:

PERCEIVING THE MEANING OF GRACE

“And if you are loving those loving you, what *grace*² is it to you? For sinners also are loving those loving them. And if you should be doing good to those doing good to you, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are doing the same. And if you should ever be lending to those from whom you are expecting to get back, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are lending to sinners, that they may get back the equivalent. Moreover, be loving your enemies, and be doing good, and be lending, *expecting nothing* from them, and your wages will be vast in the heavens, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Become, then, pitiful, according as your Father also is pitiful” (Luke 6:32-36).

Here our Lord makes it clear that grace rather than being a response to the love and the goodness of others directed toward ourselves, is instead one's own gift of love and goodness to others in spite of the fact that they have *not* exhibited love and goodness to us. Similarly, we are by no means “doing a favor,” or extending grace, to those to whom we lend for the purpose of getting something back for ourselves as a consequence of our original action. Grace is exhibited not in loving one's friends and doing good for one's benefactors, but in loving one's opposers and doing good for one's enemies. We manifest grace when we *expect nothing* in return for the blessings which we bestow.

It is in walking thus that we become imitators of God, comporting ourselves in a love that accords with grace. In respect to our practical walk, only then do we become “sons of the Most High,” of the One Who is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Even as our Lord declares, “Become, then, pitiful, according as [i.e., in the same basic *kind* of way] your Father also is pitiful.”

2. “Thanks,” literally, is “grace.”

“Thus, then, in the current era also, there has come to be a remnant according to the choice of grace. Now if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace. Now, if it is out of works, it is no longer grace, else the work is no longer work” (Rom.11:5,6).

Grace, then, is that which *graciously* brings joy, which itself, in Greek, is practically the same word as grace. In simplest terms, grace is that which is *not out of works* (Rom.11:6), which exists in order to bring *joyous* blessing to its beneficiaries (*cp charis*, JOY, “grace”; *charisma*, JOY-effect, “[the result of] grace”; *chara*, JOY, “joy”).

While grace is not *partial* (i.e., unjustly preferential), it is nonetheless *purposeful*. Any gracious gift, then, that is not intended for all, through its very purposefulness, necessarily excludes those for whom it was not designed, as much so as would be the case if its motivation were that of sinful preferentiality.

In relation to God, “grace” refers to God's *work* or *action* of grace; it is the work which He does for us and in us, *as a favor* or gracious gift.

As ordinarily used, the expression “God's grace” is a figure of speech. It is a metonymy (i.e., figure of association) for “God's *work* of grace,” in reference to whatever gracious gift may be in view. That is, literally, grace is not an action, but the *character* of an action.

The grace of God is *effective*, for it, like everything else, only exists according to God's own intention and purpose (*cf* Eph.1:11; Ex.33:19; Isa.46:10,11). Indeed, it is the *saving* grace of the *Almighty* God (Titus 2:11; Rev.11:17).

Consequently, then, since it is effective, grace is a *causal* entity. This entails the necessary and inevitable existence of its achievements. That is, *grace cannot fail*.

Grace is the very antithesis of a wage, reward, or requital in response to service or cooperation (Rom.4:4). Instead, it constitutes a *favor*.

In the Scriptures as in everyday life, wages (or “reward”) are that which accrue to the *worker* in consideration of his labors. Specifically, they are *not* to be viewed as a favor or gracious gift, but instead, according as they are: as a debt which is owed, to which one is entitled (Rom.4:4). Therefore, nothing is more incongruous than formally to speak of “grace” when the idea one has in view, in fact, partakes of the nature of a reward.³

Grace acts in order to bless. It does not offer to bless, but actually effects blessing. Therefore, at the deepest level, grace always *initiates*, out of its own intrinsic virtue. Though it responds to need, it is never under extrinsic obligation to do so, and can never be put under such obligation.

Popular affirmations of grace are lacking the contents of true grace. This is because popular conceptions of grace are, at bottom, indistinguishable from a reward.

In the Scriptures, in cases under law where obedience antecedent to blessing is commanded, the fulfillment of that very obedience is ultimately the work not of man but of God in turning the hearts of His creatures to heed His directives (*cf* Isa.26:12). It is ever the work of God to *bless* us by *turning* away each one of us from our own wickedness (*cp* Acts 3:26). This is so, for, in consideration of any virtue we may enjoy, it is in the *grace* of God that we are what we are (*cf* 1 Cor.15:10).

Our God is in the heavens: He has done whatsoever *He* has pleased (Psa.115:3; *cp* Psa.135:6). Though He loves His creatures and provides for them ideally, He is never beholden to them. “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

3. Few things evince the darkness and irony of the teaching of nominal grace more clearly than the virtual “Freudian slip” popular saying in reference to the believer’s death, that he has now “gone to his reward.”

Him and for Him is *all*: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!” (Rom.11:36).

“The word of the truth of the evangel . . . is bearing fruit and growing . . . [in] you”; that is, this is so, “from the day on which you hear and realized *the grace of God in truth*” (Col.1:5,6).



Question:

Your point is well taken that a saviour is one who actually saves, and that God is the Saviour of all mankind. I believe that He will eventually vivify all and become All in all. My question is, however, Is all mankind already saved or will they only finally become saved at the consummation?

Also, can you tell me what are the basic teachings of Calvinism and Arminianism concerning salvation, as well as what are the differences between these two systems?

Answer:

THE simple answer to your first question is that, in some respects, all mankind are already saved, and that, in some other respects, they are not already saved. Therefore, we cannot say categorically and without explanation, either Yes, all mankind are already saved, or No, all mankind are not already saved.

Let me begin by more fully addressing your second question, and then, afterward, commenting further on your first question.

The two great questions concerning the work of the cross are: (1) For whom did Christ die, some or all, and, (2) Does His sacrifice actually achieve salvation, or only make salvation possible, for those for whom He died?

If Christ did not die for all, that is, if His sacrifice were

not made on behalf of all but only on behalf of some, then it would be impossible for all to be saved. Similarly, if His sacrifice did not secure salvation but only made salvation possible, then, from a consideration of the work of the cross alone, we could not know whether even a single person would ever be saved.

Yet thanks be to God, the true evangel affords us a far more glorious perspective on human destiny than that of the Calvinist's *gloomy* perspective from which it is deemed certain that many will never be saved since Christ's sacrifice was not even made for all but only for some. Similarly, the true evangel also affords us a far more glorious perspective on human destiny than that of the Arminian's *ignorant* and *prideful* perspective from which, from a contemplation of Christ's work itself, it cannot be known whether even a single person will ever be saved; all that can be known is that if any should ever be saved, they will finally have themselves alone to thank for it.

How glorious, then, it is to know that Christ died not for some only but for *all*—for all mankind (“Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all,” 1 Tim. 2:5b,6a; *cp* “God . . . wills that *all mankind* be saved . . .” 1 Tim.2:4).

And, how glorious as well to know that the sacrifice of Christ—which was made on behalf of all mankind—is a matter of “the *grace* of God and the *gratuity* in *grace*” (Rom.5:15); hence its benefits cannot be a reward for obedience. Therefore, Christ's sacrifice, rather than merely making salvation possible, actually *achieves* salvation for those for whom it was provided, namely, *all mankind*.

Now in an era in which men will be withdrawing from the faith in which sound teaching will not be tolerated, it must be that these primary, foundational truths of the evangel be rejected and opposed, scorned and dismissed, even ridiculed and mocked.

To accord with His purpose of providing a foil for His truth, God has ordained that two basic theological systems should prevail within Christendom, the one, termed Calvinism, and the other, known as Arminianism. While these respective schools of thought, in certain ways, are deeply opposed not only to the truth but to one another as well, in at least one very important respect, they are fully united, joined in soul even as in commitment.

Their united front coheres in their common affirmation of the doctrine of eternal punishment. Though they account for this frightful prospect differently, each group, one as insistently as the other, claims that vast numbers of God's own human creatures (as most claim, that indeed the great majority of the human race) will be permanently consigned to some type of unspeakably horrible punishment.

Calvinists and Arminians alike affirm that this awful allotment will consist either of unspeakable pain or eternal destruction. In addition, it will be unspeakably defeating and ruinous of all life-hopes simply in consideration of its duration, which, it is insisted, will be interminable: never ceasing, ever enduring onward throughout the entire endless future. But, as referred to above, Calvinists come to this astonishing conclusion by one road, while Arminians do so by another.

Calvinism teaches that Christ the Saviour did not die for all but only for the “elect.” Under Calvinism, it is claimed that Christ died only for certain chosen ones for whom salvation is certain inasmuch as God, through Christ, has graciously determined to save them—and them alone. Thus Calvinism denies the truth as to the *scope* of Christ's work (its provision on behalf of all mankind) while affirming the truth as to the *nature* of Christ's work (its gracious character, in which God alone is the Saviour and man is not at all the saviour).

Conversely, Arminianism insists that Christ died on

behalf of all mankind, that His sacrifice was made with a view to providing salvation for each and every member of the human race. But, it is *also* insisted that Christ's sacrifice was only made on behalf of all provisionally: with the proviso that men must make themselves eligible for the salvific benefits of the cross by doing whatever it is that God requires of those to whom He will grant these salvific benefits. However expressed, the notion is that those who fail to save themselves from ineligibility for the benefits of the cross, will be refused the benefits of the cross. Thus Arminianism affirms the truth as to the *scope* of Christ's work (it's provision on behalf of all mankind) while denying the truth as to the *nature* of Christ's work (its gracious character, in which God alone is the Saviour and man is not at all the saviour).

Ironically, Calvinists and Arminians alike have convinced themselves that it simply cannot be that Christ died for all *and* that salvation is by grace. After all, if that were so, why, all would finally be saved—and that just can never be!

After all, is there not a second death (Rev.20:14,15)? Is there not a sin that is not being pardoned (Luke 12:10)? Is it not so that those who are being stubborn as to the Son shall not be seeing life, but that the indignation of God is remaining on them (John 3:36)? And certainly, do not Christendom's most renowned oriental scholars affirm that by *kolasin aiōnion* (Matt.25:46) we are to understand, "everlasting punishment"?⁴

Instead of fighting among themselves besides dismissing as heretics those whom they both scornfully term "univer-

4. To these rhetorical questions, we would add only one more, one of our own: Is it not true that in our Concordant literature we address each of these scriptural texts (and many more) thoroughly and with great care, showing plainly that in fact there is nothing whatsoever in any such verses that precludes it being so that Christ died for all and that salvation is by grace, hence that God will finally become All in all?

salists," what is needed instead is to concentrate on these two critical issues of soteriology, namely, (1) that it was in the *grace* of God that Christ tasted death, and (2) that in tasting death, Christ did so for the sake of *everyone*. This is so, even as it is written: "Yet we are observing Jesus, Who has been made some bit inferior to messengers (because of the suffering of death, wreathed with glory and honor), so that, in the grace of God, He should be tasting death for the sake of everyone" (Heb.2:9).

CRUCIFIED TOGETHER WITH CHRIST

To return now to your first question: All that is necessary for the realization of all aspects of "salvation," has already been accomplished in the death and resurrection of Christ:

"Christ Jesus . . . 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 . . . and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:5-11).

Christ has already died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3). In perceiving Jesus, we observe the One of Whom it is truly declared: "Lo! the Lamb of God Which is taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). This is even as John affirms: "He is the propitiatory shelter concerned with our sins, yet not concerned with ours only, but concerned with the whole world also" (1 John 2:1,2).

Accordingly, the word of the conciliation is that "God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, *not reckoning their offenses to them* . . ." (2 Cor.5:19).

Similarly, ". . . 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); and, ". . . one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7). Through the death of Christ

suffered on their behalf, *God reckons sinners as having been crucified* (cp Rom.6:6), thus satisfying the claims of Sin which would otherwise stand against them.

One who dies, is now “*freed* from Sin” (Rom.6:22), which Paul terms being “justified [i.e., declared righteous] from Sin” (Rom.6:7). This is said, for surely the only *right* relationship to Sin is one in which we are now declared to be freed from its lethal grasp even as from its fearful claims against us.

Each and every human being, then—be he ever so unworthy of and ignorant concerning—already possesses the *positional* salvation of one for whom Christ died, namely, (1) that of having had one’s sin’s taken away by the great Propitiatory; (2) that of having been conciliated (i.e., united) to God Himself accordingly, through the death of Christ, with the concomitant blessing that his *offenses* are not being reckoned against him; and (3) also through Christ, that of being accounted by God Himself as one concerning whom the claims of Sin have now been satisfied, of whom it may truly be said that he is *freed* from Sin. As Jesus Himself plainly declares, “If ever, then, the Son should be making you free, you will be really free” (cf John 8:36).

These invaluable *positional* aspects of salvation are the portion of all the descendants of Adam even today. Therefore, the future *constitutional* aspects of salvation in the provision of immortality and vivification, one day, will be fully granted as well.

The fact that instead of eonian life, various severe judgments even as the second death, lie ahead for unbelievers—ones who decidedly are not in Christ, who neither know Him nor wish to know Him—in no way militates against this glorious salvation which, even now, has been gained by God for all humanity. Truly, the Most High God, the Saviour of all mankind, is kind indeed, even to the ungrateful and the wicked (Luke 6:36). J.R.C.

THE GOD OF THE GOOD NEWS

THE EVANGEL OF GOD makes God known. It does so more truly and fully than any other message in Scripture. In his letter to the Romans, Paul presents this message of good with particular emphasis on its fundamental features and, therefore, on what he calls elsewhere “the depths of God” (1 Cor.2:10).

THAT WHICH IS OF GOD

Consequently, when the evangel *of* God is presented in Romans it is first presented in terms of *God's power* and *God's righteousness*. Furthermore, what the evangel says about God's power and righteousness is then set against the background of human irreverence and injustice, which long has led to the revelation of *God's indignation*. In every way the evangel focuses on God, both in its positive and contrastive features. The evangel itself speaks of God's power and God's righteousness; the revelation of God's indignation brings this evangel of God into high relief.

The evangel indeed tells us about good things given to us. But these good things are given to us by God. Because they are of God, it is certain that the full measure of salvation, justification, peace, which God has gained, will be enjoyed in the future. But, in God's grace, there is a measure of enjoyment of these even now, which stems from the assurance that the full measure of blessing, having been gained for us, is certain of future realization.

In Romans 1:16,17, Paul speaks most particularly of the blessing of salvation as it relates to the believer's pres-

ent life. But if he were speaking more of what the evangel says about our future life, the same stress on God would be needed. The most vital matter of the good news is that it is God's good news and it makes us acquainted with Him as He truly is.

A WORD OF SPIRITUAL GRACE

For not ashamed am I of the evangel

*For it is **God's power for salvation** to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well.*

*For in it **God's righteousness** is being revealed, out of faith for faith, according as it is written: "Now the just one by faith shall be living."*

For God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of men . . .

Here, accordingly, in a series of four clauses, each beginning with the conjunction "for," Paul introduces the evangel of God to us in terms which focus our minds on God. The first clause catches our interest: The apostle says he was not ashamed of this message which so obviously centers on the shameful humiliation of God's Son. The expressions, "God's power for salvation" and "God's righteousness," are closely associated here and set in the center of the passage as key aspects of the evangel itself. They provide paramount, positive reasons for Paul not being ashamed of this message. The last clause here begins a detailed account of the dire situation surrounding humanity which has created the great need of God's powerful and righteous salvation of which the evangel speaks.

The whole section explains Paul's eagerness to bring the evangel. It is because ("for") he is not ashamed of this message, and he is not ashamed, first of all, because ("for") the evangel is identified with God's power for salvation, and, in the second place, he is not ashamed of the evan-

gel because ("for") it speaks of God's powerful work of salvation in such a way that God's righteousness is revealed. Finally, he is not ashamed of this message, which focuses on an event that apparently is full of dreadful weakness and injustice, because ("for") it actually speaks of God's power and righteousness in dealing with desperate circumstances involving human irreverence and unrighteousness and divine indignation and judgment.

THE EVANGEL

The message *seems* to be badly named. Why should an account centered upon the death of the Son of God be called good news (literally, WELL-MESSAGE), even *God's* good news? The basic message, as Paul summarizes it in 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, is: "Christ died for our sins . . . He was entombed . . . and He has been roused the third day" (1 Cor. 15:1-4). To be sure, the resurrection of Christ keeps the death of Christ from being an unmitigated disaster, but still, that God should have allowed (actually intended!) His Son to be crucified in the first place suggests, by every human standard, weakness and stupidity as Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 1:18,23.

Is Paul struggling to put the best face possible on a message that has dark aspects of mystery? By no means! In Galatians 6:14 he even writes, "Now may it not be mine to be boasting [glorying], except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Indeed he has much to say about the good news that Christ has been roused from among the dead. But his message clearly is solidly built on the death of Christ, on His blood, on His obedience (indeed His faithfulness) to the death of the cross, on Him being not spared and being given up by God.

No, we do not have the message wrong. It is a message from God telling of something superabundantly good which involves at its very core the ignominious death of His Son.

Why, then, was Paul so eager to bring this message and so utterly unashamed of it, even declaring that it was the very substance of his steadfast boasting?

In 1 Corinthians 15:3, the answer lies in the words “for our sins.” Here in Romans 1:16,17, the answer lies most particularly in the words concerning God’s power and His righteousness. For us, it certainly also lies in the word “salvation” which has past, present and future aspects as God’s powerful and righteous work for us. All that God does powerfully and righteously for sinners is the subject of the evangel, and many details of this gracious work will be given in the rest of this epistle.

GOD’S POWER

God exhibits His power in impossible situations by means which involve, to all appearances, the greatest of weakness. What was impossible to the law, God did, and He did so by sending His own Son in the likeness of sin’s flesh (Rom.8:3). The evangel tells of One Who was inherently in the form of God, Who did not deem it pillaging to be equal with God, but He did not come in this exalted form; He came in the form of a slave and in the likeness of humanity; He emptied Himself and humbled Himself to the death of the cross (Phil.2:6-8). This was how He came to save sinners, and this is the basis by which He shows even richer mercies to certain of those sinners who are least deserving (1 Tim.1:15,16).

God’s Son came in weakness and was crucified out of weakness (2 Cor.13:3). He was crucified, which is to say without possibility of contradiction that He died in humiliation and shame.

This was the means by which God does for humanity that which human beings could never do. The history of the nation of Israel makes this indisputable. Even after their deliverance from Egypt, and with the highest of inten-

tions and strongest of determinations, they immediately began to grumble against God. In the wilderness, under the direction of the clearest of instructions given under the most secluded conditions apart from distractions they turned from God to idols. With all necessary provisions and with the presence and guidance of the Lord visibly evident to them day and night they continued in irreverence and unrighteousness. And so do we of the nations today, despite God’s mercy and the blessing of the conciliation. The power for salvation must be all of God, or it will not exist at all.

In grace are we saved, and this is not out of us; it is through the faith of Jesus Christ. It is God’s present, His oblation, bringing us near to Him; it is not of human efforts whether great or infinitesimally small, lest anyone should boast in themselves. For us to be saved is God’s achievement (Eph.2:8-10; *cp* Rom.3:21-28).

FOR SALVATION

But humanity goes on in sin and irreverence. The complete realization of salvation is future. When God is called the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10), this means that in God’s power He has done that which assures the salvation of all mankind. Nevertheless it remains for this to be realized and manifested and enjoyed to the full in His purposed time still to come. Even the believers are not yet experiencing the perfection of salvation that God has gained for them by His power. We know it only by faith and by the powerful effects of that faith on our lives.

But that acquaintance by faith with God’s power for salvation and His righteousness in dealing with sin, is no small thing. Because He has granted us faith today, He is our Saviour in a *special* way.

On believing the evangel of our salvation, we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is an *earnest* of that

which has been procured by the power of God (Eph.1:13,14). God's power for salvation has entered the lives of the believers as an earnest, or pledge in kind, of the full deliverance of that to come.

BEING SAVED

The evangel speaks of God's powerful work of salvation involving the giving up of His Son. Now in Romans 1:16 Paul tells us that this message concerning God's powerful defeat of sin and death in the death of Christ brings power for present salvation into the lives of those who are believing. In speaking of the evangel as God's power for salvation to those who are believing, the apostle is going beyond making the announcement of God's powerful achievement of the salvation of sinners established when Christ died on the cross. Now he speaks to the believers of the effects of believing that evangel on their lives.

Here in Romans 1:16,17, Paul turns to those in Rome and to us all who have heard and accepted this message of good news, and he says that this message is God's power for salvation in our daily actions and thoughts, as we are *believing*.

There is a figure of speech here as indicated by the Greek word translated "is." When a doctor reports to worried parents that their sick child will fully recover, the report brings happiness to the parents. We can say, figuratively, that the report *is* happiness to the parents. In a similar way, the evangel *is* God's power to those who are believing, in that it brings God's power for salvation to them as an earnest of that which is to come. That which speaks of God's power in saving us through the shameful crucifixion of Christ brings God's power for salvation into our minds and behavior even while we encounter disappointments and depression and stumble in human weaknesses.

ALL OF GOD

It is all of God that we have been saved (Eph.2:8). This is what the evangel of God actually says. It is all of God that what has been procured will be fully and gloriously delivered to us.

But more than this, the evangel which announces that Christ was given up because of our offenses and was roused because of our justifying brings God's power for salvation into our lives while we still are in the flesh. The message that tells of the powerful achievement of God in saving sinners, and doing so righteously, operates in us now. And this is still all of God. This ongoing salvation is *God's* power, not human power. It does not arise from fear of judgment or human determination to reach a goal or the force of the law or conscience. It arises from the force of God's grace in our hearts.

God has packed His power for ongoing salvation in His evangel concerning His Son. And it comes into the lives of those who are believing as He imparts faith to them (*cf* Rom.12:3).

Let us look at Ephesians 1:13,14 again, where this word of truth, the evangel of our salvation achieved by God in the death of His Son, is associated with "the holy spirit of promise" which is described as an "earnest," a pledge of the full deliverance of spirit and life which has been procured and will come. In 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, with language that is very similar to Romans 1:16, the apostle testifies that "the word of the cross," which is a message of stupidity and weakness to the unbeliever, "is" the power of God and the wisdom of God "to us who are *being* saved." Again in the opening verses of 1 Corinthians 15, where Paul reminds the Corinthians of the very words of the evangel as he had brought it to them, he is concerned that they might be retaining that message through which they

are *being* saved. (as the verb in verse 2 literally expresses it). What a happy blessing, to be retaining the evangel in mind and heart!

PAUL'S TESTIMONY

Paul himself testifies to this earnest of God's power in the evangel of God's grace for salvation with respect to his own personal needs. God's *grace* changed wretchedness to thanksgiving (Rom. 7:24,25) and distress to delight (2 Cor. 12:7-10). Throughout Romans (and all his epistles), the apostle points to the message of God's powerful work of salvation in the giving of His Son for sinners, as the channel through which God directs His power to us now in our fleshly infirmities. God has placed His power for the ongoing salvation for us who are believing in the message of His powerful and finished salvation that we are believing.

This present operation of God's power in the evangel is particularly in view in Romans 1:16. Paul had been talking of "fruit" among the Romans in verse 13, and now in verse 16 he uses the present participle active form of the verb *believe* to refer to the believers. The believers are those *who are believing*.

THOSE WHO ARE BELIEVING

The reason we need to stress the words "power of God for salvation" in Romans 1:16 is that the words "everyone who is believing" in Romans 1:16 can easily become the major point of interest distracting attention from the evangel itself. It is important to understand the significance of this reference to believers, but we must keep what is said here about *us* firmly connected with what is said about *God*. The power for salvation is God's, not ours in our act of believing. It is for everyone who is believing, but our believing does not do the work of salvation. The work is done by God, by His power, and it is a finished

work, whether we believe it or not. It is done, effectively and righteously in the death and resurrection of Christ, long before we believe.

Our believing does not actually save us. Our believing is that gracious provision of God which He gives to us in the current era, by which He brings the salvation He has gained into our present lives, and by which He distinguishes us for the special salvation both now and in the oncoming eons. Believing the evangel and its effects for the present and the future is a marvelous, astounding, blessed and glorious gift of God, which is not given to every human being. But it is not itself the power which brings salvation about. It is the channel of that power.

Believing is a gracious gift of God (Phil. 1:29), parted to us by God in measure as He wills (Rom. 12:3). As He did for Lydia in opening up her heart to the evangel which Paul spoke (Acts 16:10,14), so *God* has opened up our hearts in believing this message concerning what God has done through His Son. All our considerations of the matter of believing should remain in the context of what God has done for us. They should never lead us away from recognition and appreciation of faith as a gracious provision of God which directs attention to His glory.

Even in speaking of believers the emphasis needs to be placed on God. Paul speaks of believing as a blessing given to us by God, not a challenge that we must meet. God parts to each the measure of faith which he or she has. And on this basis the power of God for salvation is becoming operative in our lives.

If this is not so, and faith is not a gift, it is a human achievement which opens the way to self-congratulations. Then boasting is no longer barred.

If we look at our believing as it truly is we come to see it as a matter of joyful surprise. It certainly is not a matter involving self-congratulation any more than the message

we are believing calls for human works. I am believing; to God be the glory!

REVEALING GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The powerful impact of the evangel on the thinking and acting of the believer arises first of all from the fact that God Himself has saved us by His power, in dealing with sin by giving His Son for sinners. But this impact, great as it is, is even increased as we begin to realize this gift of God is not simply a work of power without considerations of divine justice and righteousness. The evangel reveals God's righteousness. And it is revealing God's righteousness to us as we are believing it.

The revelation of God's righteousness issues out of Jesus Christ's faith, and it is for our faith. Jesus Christ was fully and perfectly faithful and obedient unto the death of the cross. In that stupendous act of faith God was righteously ridding the world of sin. God does not save arbitrarily, simply by decree as an act of divine proclamation. There must be a righteous basis. And since that basis cannot be in human efforts, it must be established by God Himself. And so it is, as the evangel declares. "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:21,22). The basis of God's righteous salvation is the faith of Jesus Christ, Who endured the cross and despised the shame (Heb.12:2), in giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:6).

This theme of the revelation of God's righteousness in the evangel and its importance to the believer in these current times is stressed in this epistle to the Romans, especially the first half. It likely holds a prominent place in what Paul termed "some spiritual grace" which he longed to share with the Romans (Rom.1:11). It seems best to give this subject more attention as it is treated in verse 17 in our next installment.

D.H.H.

Among you is God

WHY ALL THE SUFFERING?

THE world is full of suffering. “The entire creation is groaning and travailing” (Rom.8:22). The question is, *Why* is there all this suffering? In view of the fact that God exists, why is His creation burdened down with pain and struggle and sorrow?

The Scriptures do not allow us to separate suffering from God. We cannot be like Cyrus who had been taught there were two gods, one the god of good, and the other the god of evil and suffering. Hence the prophet spoke these words to the Persian ruler long before he was born (Isa.45:6,7):

*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.*

And Yahweh added:

*Only among you is El,
And there is no other, no other Elohim.*

God tells us that He is among us, and He makes our sufferings. But in doing so, He does not sin, for sin is a failing. All have sinned and are *wanting* of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). We lack the glory of God, the glory of never failing to accomplish the good He has purposed. God will hit the mark He has set; He will achieve His goal.

What is His goal?

“For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the First-fruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ’s in His pres-

ence; 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.15:22-28).

God's goal is to become *All in all!*

THE PROCESS OF DYING

In order for God to become All in all death must be dethroned. It has entered into our world through the disobedience of Adam. Yahweh Elohim had instructed: "... as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17). Consequently there has come a long drawn-out process of suffering, of groaning and grief, for each human being. "... until you return to the ground, for from it were you taken. For soil you are, and to soil you shall return" (Gen.3:19).

What then is it to be living now? It is to be in a process of dying, which involves suffering.

Yet dying ends with "to die." To die is to *return*. Job said, "I know that You are returning me to death" (Job 30:23). At death the spirit returns to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7); the soul returns to the unseen (*cf* Psalms 9:27; Acts 2:27,31); and the body returns to the soil (Gen.3:19).

But at present, God, Who is among us, has appointed that we should be dying, which means that we will be suffering during this life. Nevertheless, God, Who is among us, has not made suffering an everlasting condition or as

an end in itself. It is temporary, and it will serve, by way of contrast, to make His glory known.

THE GLORY OF GOD

We are now wanting of the glory of God. For God has subjected the creation to vanity. But He has done so in expectation.

"For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us. For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God."

J. W. Goerzen

IN EXPECTATION

Brother Jacob W. Goerzen, of Edmonton, Alberta, was put to repose on August 18, 2002, at the age of 86. Our condolences in their loss go out to his wife, Suzanne, and their seven daughters and their families.

He had prepared the notes on the purpose of suffering arranged in the article above for a talk several years ago. That God had subjected the creation to vanity *in expectation* of the whole being freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God was a source of deepest joy to him. Born in an ethnic German village in the Ukraine, fleeing in his youth with his family to a pioneering, farm life in Canada, eventually becoming a student and teacher of languages, he increasingly became occupied with the treasures of God's Word. Combining this love of the Scriptures with his interest in languages, he prepared a Concordant translation of several portions of the Word into his native "Low German" tongue. There were many struggles, but he saw that these also were given to him by the faithful God. And along the way, God gave him many hours of pleasure among the mountains and prairies and with his family.

His translation of portions of Scripture into *Plautdisch* is still available. Inquiries concerning it should be sent to: Saviour of All Fellowship, 6800 Hough Rd., Almont MI 48003

CONFLICTS WITH THE PHILISTINES

(2 Samuel 5:17-25)

¹⁷ + When the Philistines heard that they had anointed David as king over Israel, then all the Philistines marched up to seek David; but David heard of it and went down to the fastness. ¹⁸ + As for the Philistines, they came and were deployed in the vale of Rephaim. ¹⁹ + David ask inquired of Yahweh, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand? + Yahweh answered David, Go up, for I will give, yea give the Philistines into your hand. ²⁰ + So David entered Baal-perazim, and David smote them there. + He said, Yahweh has breached through my enemies before me like a breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim. ²¹ + Since they had forsaken their fetishes there, + David and his men carried them off.

²² + fr Once again the Philistines came up and were deployed in the vale of Rephaim. ²³ + So David ask inquired of Yahweh; yet He answered, You shall not go up to meet them. Go around behind them, so that you come against them opposite the aspens. ²⁴ + Let it come to be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the aspens, then make your decisive move, for by then Yahweh will have gone forth before you to smite the army camp of the Philistines. ²⁵ + David did so, just as Yahweh had instructed him; and he smote the Philistines from Geba as far as your entry to Gezar.

THE COFFER TAKEN

THE early chapters of 1 Samuel tell of the corruption of the priesthood, particularly that of Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli. This corruption occasioned serious conflicts with the Philistines. Israel suffered a debilitating loss to the Philistines, and her elders counseled to bring the coffer of the testimony to the battle front. At the coming of the coffer, the Israelites shouted with one voice—a shout that shook the earth and struck terror in the Philistine camp. Nevertheless the Philistines encouraged themselves and determined to fight. They succeeded in defeating the Israelites soundly, and even captured the coffer of the covenant (1 Sam.4:1-11). They brought the coffer back into their territory where it plagued them on every hand. For Israel, this initiated a period of “Ichabod,” a period when the glory was departed from Israel.

YAHWEH GOES BEFORE THEM

The passage in 2 Samuel 5:17-25, quoted above, also details two battles between the Philistines and the Israelites. In the first battle, Israel was victorious, and the fleeing Philistines left behind a large collection of their idols. The Israelites collected these, and, at David's command, burned them (cf 1 Chron.14:12; Deut.7:5,25).

As with the first battle, David, the servant of Yahweh, consulted Him before advancing to fight the Philistines in the second battle. But this time they were to go around behind the Philistines rather than meeting them at the fore. In contrast with Israel's earth-shaking shout in 1 Samuel 4:5, God instructed David and his army to listen for the sound of marching in the tops of the trees. When hearing this, they were to advance, knowing that God was going before them into battle.

These battles preceded the time when Israel would

enjoy greater glory and Jerusalem would be established as the place of Yahweh's Name.

PSALM 78

The final twelve verses of Psalm 78 tie 1 Samuel 2:12-7:2 together with 2 Samuel 5:6-6:19. There are a number of interesting parallels between these passages. The earlier conflicts with the Philistines resulted in the loss of the coffer. In accord with this we read that Elohim "sent His strength into captivity, and His beauty into the hand of the foe" (Psa.78:61). But in these later battles, described above in 2 Samuel 5:17-25, "He smote His foes backward" (Psa.78:66). God's abandonments are never permanent and serve a purpose for eventual blessing.

J. Philip Scranton

NEW PUBLICATIONS

We are glad to announce that UNSEARCHABLE RICHES VOLUME 92 (2001) is now in stock (bound in green cloth, gold-stamped, 288 pages; \$23.00). Nearly all *UR* volumes from volume 1-92 are available in print (\$23.00 each, 1-10 volumes; \$18.00 each, 11+ volumes).

THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF UNIVERSALISM is now back in print (by Hosea Ballou, 2nd; paperback, ivory book paper, 328 pages; \$15.00). This ancient history of universalism covers the period from the apostles, to its condemnation in the fifth general council, 553 A.D., with an appendix tracing the doctrine down to the era of the Reformation.

In 1828, the author wrote, "Thus far, I may venture to pronounce this History complete, in one sense: it contains an account of every individual of note, whom we have now the means of knowing to have been a Universalist By the popular terms *orthodox* and *heretic*, I mean, not the true and the false creed, but the predominant, or catholic, and the dissenting, or anathematized. To conclude, I have frequently spoken of the *Western* or *Latin* Churches, in distinction from the *Eastern* or *Greek*; though they were not actually separated from each others' communion, till the ninth century."

Please specify book or volumes you wish to order (shipping and handling; add 10%; California residents add sales tax; foreign orders payable in U.S. funds).

THROUGH THE PROPHETS

GOD SPEAKS in creation, through prophets, in His Son, through the apostles, and presently through the Sacred Scriptures. In this article we will concentrate on His communication to and through the prophets.

In the past, prophets not only foretold the future, but they also gave out God's word to man in their day. Israel's history in the land is dominated by the succession of prophets speaking for God. It distinguishes Israel's history from any other nation.

CHRIST AS A PROPHET

Christ was a Prophet (Luke 24:19). We speak of Him first in our discussion because God has placed Him first in all (Col.1:19,20). But we will not include very much material on His ministry here because our next instalment will be exclusively on God speaking through His Son.

Perhaps we don't think often of Jesus Christ as Prophet, for we know Him best as the Son of God's love and as our Saviour. Yet it is well to be aware of His prophetic role, as He walked the land of Israel.

He started this work by interpreting the time to His listeners. His first public announcement soon after reaching His majority age, and after severe testing, was this: "Repent! for near is the kingdom of the heavens!" (Matt. 4:17). The primary theme of His earthly ministry was the offer of the kingdom of the heavens, and its characteristics. In that ministry Christ became "the Servant of the Circumcision [the Israelites] for the sake of the truth of

God, to confirm the patriarchal promises" (Rom.15:8). The kingdom was promised early in Israel's history and was the subject of much of the Old Testament.

Well could He make such an offer—He was to be the *King!* (Matt.2:6). Although His offer was rejected, He will yet be King (Rev.11:15). *The promised kingdom will yet be established, and Israel shall receive it willingly* (Psa.110:3).

Christ had more than the role of Prophet, for He will be King, and also He will have another role, that of Chief Priest (Heb.2:17). Not only so, He was to be the Sacrifice! With the Scriptures complete and the veil removed, we now see that God purposed from the beginning the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. "Yet what God announces before through the mouth of all the prophets—the suffering of His Christ—He thus fulfills" (Acts 3:18). And we see that He was "given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). So the removal of the pervasive sin of mankind is provided for. The sin that Adam introduced upon the race will be thus justified. "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense [Adam's] 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).

OTHER PROPHETS

In the Hebrew Scriptures many books are classified as *The Prophets*, including the *Former Prophets* (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings) and the *Latter Prophets* which are, in turn, often divided into the *Major Prophets* (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) and the *Minor Prophets* (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi).

Abraham was called a prophet (Gen.20:7). Moses was a

prophet (Deut.34:10). These were among the first we read of in the Scriptures. God progressively revealed Himself through these and other prophets.

We often wonder about the world. Where is it headed? Will mankind ever be taught to behave? Will mankind ever be brought into righteous government?

Yes! And one of the first hints of this is given to Abraham. About nineteen hundred years after the creation of Adam, God singled out Abraham and told him: "In you all the families of the ground will be blessed" (Gen.12:3). He also told him He would make of him "a great nation" (Gen.12:2).

God moved this along through Moses. It was through Moses that the Israelites started on their tedious journey back to Canaan, which God had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as a home for their descendants.

The kingdom on earth, its development through Israel in relation to the nations, is the major theme of prophecy in the Hebrew Scriptures. Christ will be King. When He walked the earth, He instructed His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come" (Matt.6:10). Then righteousness will reign, and sin will be suppressed. The knowledge of Yahweh will cover the earth (*cf* Isa.11:9; Hab.2:14). In the messages of the prophets the thought is reiterated that Yahweh will visit His people Israel and restore them to their land and bless them through the Saviour, and will extend blessings to the nations. In fact, several of the prophets' names reflect this. Joshua means *Salvation of Yahweh*. Isaiah has practically the same meaning. Hosea also means *Salvation*. These names are all linked to the Greek name *Jesus*.

PICTURES OF CHRIST

God often used events as prophetic pictures of the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ. One that will immediately occur to the reader is the instruction God gave to

Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac. Although he was stopped, what a picture it gave of the supreme sacrifice when God gave His only Son! (*cf* Gen.22). There are similar prophetic messages in the story of Joseph in Genesis 37-45 (where Christ's death, entombment, resurrection, and even His exaltation are foreshadowed). Jonah was in the sea monster three days and three nights, a picture of the entombment of Christ.

These prophetic events give us confidence that God is in control, that He is in the process of revealing Himself and has provided a Saviour Whom He purposed at the very beginning of history, *before* mankind had compiled the sorry record of sin.

All that was said through the prophets and shown through prophetic events is focused ultimately on Jesus Christ, Who reveals the heart and purpose of God.

Robert B. Killen

HEBREW PROPHECY

IN the national structure of Israel there were two prominent institutions: priesthood and prophecy. Each had its special characteristics, and performed distinct functions.

The priestly office was hereditary. From the very outset it was invested with the character and insignia of official rank. Prophecy, however, was not bound to office and order, but was subject to God's pleasure: He chose whomsoever He would.

The first meeting of Saul and Samuel affords a striking illustration of the function of prophecy (1 Samuel 9 and 10). Kish lost his donkeys and sent Saul to recover them. Who would have thought that God's purpose relating to the kingdom hinged on this insignificant occurrence? Who would have discerned in this common incident the turning point

in Israel's fortunes? Donkeys have been lost many a time before and since; but this is the only instance when their loss was fraught with developments of most momentous consequences to the whole world. God opened the mind of the prophet Samuel so that he readily distinguished this occurrence from others of a like kind; he discerned that it served ends beyond itself, grasped its bearing on current developments, and handled the situation accordingly.

Prophecy was a gift bestowed on men by the Spirit of God. The endowment of seers and prophets consisted in an extraordinary heightening of the perceptive faculty. The prophets were primarily observers; they watched the unfolding of events, and their perception enabled them to discern the significance of particular events and visualize the effects emanating therefrom. This accounts for the ability of the prophets to sharply sever the things perceived from their own feeling and opinion. How differently Nathan was instructed by divine revelation from what his individual opinion suggested (2 Sam.7:3,4)! The contents of prophecy are consequently not something thought out, inferred, hoped, or feared by the prophets, but something directly perceived by the revelation of God. This explains the categorical certainty with which prophets announced their messages. They knew these messages to be independent of their own subjectivity.

What had thus unfolded to the prophet as divine certainty, he then felt compelled to utter. The divine causality which enabled the prophet to see, impelled him to tell what he saw. This compelling power of utterance is pictured most vividly in Amos: "The lion roars—who will not fear? My Lord Yahweh speaks—who will not prophesy?" (Amos 3:8). Just as involuntarily as one starts in terror when the mighty voice of the king of beasts roars, must the prophet prophesy when God's revealing word came to him. Only false prophets were led by outward human con-

siderations to proclaim what pleased the crowd or brought gain to themselves.

But when the prophet had discerned in the events a thought which he clearly distinguished from his own thoughts and feelings, he proclaimed it not as his own conviction, but as a divine revelation, demanding the obedience and trust due to God. He was God's speaker, bringing a message, the organ through which the Invisible God spoke audibly to His people. This is evident from the fact that the Hebrew word for *prophet* is interchanged with the word *mouth* in Exodus 4:16.

While it is a necessary part of the character of the true prophet to be a seer of God and His spokesman, it is not equally necessary that what he saw and announced should relate to the *future*. The popular idea that the prophet was a prognosticator may appeal to people of a wonder-loving frame of mind, but affords no aid in understanding their writings. We find that prophetic writings which illumined the foretime were called *annals* because they recorded God's ways in the past (2 Chron.9:29).

The essential element to be maintained in prophecy is, that it traces and makes known God's ways of working in the world. Prophecy is significant for the future only because it reveals the unchanging principles of divine working. From the initial fulfillment in the prophet's day, it looks forward to some consummating event in the distant future.

Prophecy is not abstract teaching regarding the future independently of the historic circumstances of the time. It had a basis in concrete facts: in personal experience, and historic situations; it had a near object as well as a remote goal. The prophets saw the absolute in the particular and finite, saw the working of God in nature, His action in history, and thus spoke to the intelligence and conscience of individuals.

V. Gelesnoff

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NOVEMBER, 2002

Volume XCIII

Number 6

New Edition:

The Divine Calendar

As in the affairs of daily life, we need the kindly offices of a calendar to tell us the day or week or month or year, so, God has given us a calendar in order that we may locate ourselves in His grand affairs with which we are identified and in which we take an active interest.

Universal history may be considered from various viewpoints. Its divisions vary according to the special aspect. It falls into: (1) TWO GRAND CREATIONS (besides three special creations); (2) THREE HEAVENS AND EARTHS (as to its material basis); (3) FIVE WORLDS (as to moral Constitution); (4) FIVE EONS (as to the duration, character and disposition of each world); (5) TWELVE ECONOMIES (for purposes of human administration); (6) A WEEK'S WORK (for the restoration of the second earth); (7) FOUR MONARCHIES (in regard to governing principles); (8) THREE DAYS (as regards the direction of affairs), besides various Periods or Eras, concerned with special occurrences or extraordinary dealings which arise.

In order to group these grand arrangements at a glance, we have prepared a chart synchronizing the various divine activities.

Accordingly, this new publication features a high-quality reproduction of our original, large wall chart, now in reduced 11" x 17" format. This chart may also be viewed or printed on line, linked from:

<http://concordant.org/expohtml/TheEons/TheDivineCalendar.html>

The Divine Calendar (chart with booklet)

(\$6.00; includes 11" x 17" color chart and companion booklet; shipping and handling: add 10%, \$1.50 minimum; California residents please add sales tax; foreign orders payable in U.S. funds).

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2002
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

“Now the infirm in the faith be taking to yourselves, but not for [i.e., in such a way so as to lead into] *discrimination of reasonings* The faith which you have, have for yourself in God’s sight. Happy is he who is not judging himself in that which he is attesting. Now he who is doubting whether he should be eating is condemned, seeing that it is not out of faith. Now everything which is not out of faith is sin” (Rom.14:1; 22,23).

“Reasoning” is the process of “lay[ing] facts in relation to one another so as to be the basis of opinion.”¹ Reasoning is something that we all do, and must do, continually. Whenever we reach a conclusion as to what to think or how to act, this is as the result of a process of reasoning. A logical conclusion is the result of the ratiocinative (i.e., reasoning) process.

The Scriptures by no means condemn reasoning, as such; instead, they condemn the *application* of reasoning which most make of it. Whenever our reasoning is ill-motivated, even if it should be logically sound, it becomes sinful or even wicked reasoning.

In so many cases, however, our reasoning is not even logically sound. And, even if it should be not only sound (i.e., deductively correct) but valid as well (i.e., also based upon true premises), it often fails to consider all that should have been considered. Common reasoning, then, as applied to scriptural themes, is often mistaken and perhaps even more often inadequate. It is even more disturbing to note of our reasoning that whether it is sound and adequate or

1. Keyword Concordance, p.240.

not, it is often motivated by sinful desires. Perhaps there is no better example of wicked reasonings than when we wish to exalt ourselves through demonstrations of our own correctness.

Therefore, while we *are* to take the infirm in the faith to ourselves, we are *not* to do so in any way which would further them in their “discrimination of reasonings,” which, to them, are important findings of truth. If they have not asked for our help and see themselves as in no need of it, we should not try to convince them to the contrary. Even if they should make mistaken charges against us or misrepresent our teaching, let us not seek to vindicate ourselves. This is unnecessary for most, and for others it may only foster strife.

“Discriminate,” means to make distinctions, or to distinguish. Like reasoning, discriminating is something that we can hardly avoid doing. Distinctions exist; and we need to distinguish between them. Indeed, “. . . solid nourishment is for the mature, who, because of habit, have faculties exercised for *discriminating* between the ideal and the evil” (Heb.5:14).

It is not at all that we should not seek to discriminate between the false and the true. It is simply that, even as most cannot properly reason, neither can they properly discriminate truth from falsehood. We must live with the reality that this is the way things are, while enduring the difficulties which this so often entails.

All such troubles notwithstanding, the object of our faith remains. Our faith is in “the *declaration* of faith” which is made known by God’s spokesmen (*cp* the words of the apostle Paul, “the declaration of faith which we are heralding,” Rom.10:8b). “Consequently, faith is out of tidings, yet the tidings through a declaration of Christ” (Rom.10:17). Fundamentally, then, when we believe, *we believe God*.

The fact that we may not believe the correct interpre-

tation of what God has said, does not preclude us from being among those who believe what God has said.

For example, there are many who teach that the Abrahamic promises are to be understood allegorically (i.e., symbolically) while others such as ourselves are convinced that they are to be understood literally. Both groups know what the Abrahamic promises are, and know as well what the words of which they are comprised mean, while accepting them as God’s own word accordingly.

Therefore, it would simply be incorrect to say that whichever group misinterprets the sense in which these promises are to be understood, are unbelievers as to these same promises. The allegorists know what the literal interpretation is; it is simply that they think that the literal interpretation is unwarranted in this case, being persuaded of the correctness of their own allegorical interpretation. Hence, even if the literalists should be correct in their interpretation of these promises themselves, they will nonetheless be mistaken and foolish in any dismissive claim that they may make to the effect that the allegorists are simply “unbelievers” as to the promises made unto Abraham.

In addition to in some cases misjudging the sense of God’s word, it may be that we also hold to certain mistaken notions which are contrary to the true interpretation of His word. Nevertheless, whenever we are convinced by His testimony and take His word to us accordingly, we become, by definition, believers.

That is, when “holy men of God speak,”² and we believe their testimony, we become believers in what God has said.

Beyond this, to the degree that we are “sane” (i.e., sensible, mentally sound and able), we will also accept the

2. “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture at all is becoming its own explanation. For not by the will of man was prophecy carried on at any time, but, being carried on by holy spirit, holy men of God speak” (2 Peter 1:20,21).

corollaries to (i.e., what follows from) what God has said, while likewise repudiating whatever is contradictory (i.e., contrary) to His testimony.

The recognition, however, on the one hand, of corollaries, and on the other hand, of contradictions, is a significant ability, one which is certainly a gift of God. While most have such abilities to some extent, not many have them—or at least not many are able to accurately employ them—with regularity and depth, point by point, when considering the scriptural testimony.

Yet in ever so many cases, where corollaries fail to be noted and contradictions go unrecognized, *inferences* nevertheless are freely made, believed, and accepted as truth. Strictly, “inference” is the comprehensive term for the formal drawing of conclusions. But, in the ordinary problematic sense we have in mind, an inference is the conclusion one draws when one *thinks* that a certain thing is “implied” by a speaker (in the sense of hinted at or at least somehow involved) within the compass of what he has said.

In this sense, an inference, at best, cannot be known to be correct, and so must not be believed as if it were known to be correct. And, as a practical matter, many such inferences not only cannot be known to be true but, in light of what *is* known to be true, can be known to be untrue, by those who are sufficiently skilled in critical thinking.

Yet inferences are very appealing. Their appeal is often an appeal simply to one’s vanity. But in any case, in the end, they can only be an appeal to, by whatever name, some sort of extra-scientific ability to detect and discern truth which one more or less fancies oneself to possess. Even so, those who thus “go by” what are in fact nothing more than purported involvements or supposed hints, usually view such inferences as if they were veritable truth.

In fact, such persons’ logic-related skills are inadequate, even though they suppose that they are adequate. They see

little need rigorously to *test* their ratiocinative skills, nor would they be able to do so accurately. Yet because of the *confidence* they have in their perceived intellectual proficiency (or at least sufficiency), they are unable to recognize what is actually their not inconsiderable deficiency.

In our dealings with any such persons thus confused, what are we to do? Explicitly inform them of our opinion as to their actual state? Certainly not, for that would be to confront a fool in his folly. What we are to do instead is to be patient, kind and humble, gentle and meek, “training those who are antagonizing,” training them at least in any way and to any degree that they will give any heed at all to our discipline.

While waiting for God to grant them a change of mind (i.e., “repentance”), we are to be “bearing with evil,” while remaining “apt to teach” (2 Tim. 2:25). We are to continue to be “TEACHic” (*didaktikon*), which is to say fitted or suited to teaching (as in the Latin *aptus* or the English “aptitude”), just in case God should one day make one of our opposers into a willing student, one of our own.

And, in the meantime, we would be apt to teach as well especially for the sake of those who are already our willing students even if they should sometimes be stumbled by certain of the claims of our critics.

The way that we respond to what, in our considered judgment, are but faulty discriminations of reasonings, is a matter of great practical importance. None of us are apostles or prophets; and, in ourselves, we are all prone to err. In response to Paul’s rhetorical question, “from *you* came out the word of God?” (1 Cor. 14:36), we must freely acknowledge, No, it most certainly did not.

Even if such “infirm” believers should acknowledge us as their fellow saints, this is all that they will acknowledge us to be, for at best this is all they perceive us to be; and, *this is all that we are*.

We are decidedly neither their apostle nor their prophet. Nor can we ever become even their teacher either, unless *they* should perceive in us a capacity well-suited to such a role. It would be useless and foolish for us to claim any such fitness before them, even if we should to some extent possess it. This is because, where a capacity for helpfulness is not perceived, for all *practical* purposes, it does not exist.

It is in light of these considerations, then, in our dealings with those whom we perceive as infirm in the faith, that while taking them to ourselves, we would do so in a particular way. And that way is in whatever way is suitable and viable so as to minimize any attention to their discriminations of reasonings, which is to say, to their mistaken judgments as to truth which are the fruit of their own faulty reasonings. If others would draw us into a “discussion” which if continued is bound to become a quarrel, may God give us the grace not to take the bait.

In personal exchanges, there is much else that can be discussed and ought to be discussed besides contentions over doctrine, which instead should be avoided. If we are asked for our opinions and for our reasons for our opinions, if it seems appropriate to do so, we may state them. But where receptivity to our thoughts is lacking and yet opposition is not lacking, we should not continue to argue for our opinion any longer.

Having failed in making such a worthy response many times in years past myself, and having seen countless fellow believers themselves similarly fail, doing so upon ever so many occasions, my only thought is that surely it is time that we resolve to do what is expedient and wise in this regard while giving no place to what is inexpedient and foolish.

May God graciously grant us the will to do what is expedient even as the heart to speak according to wisdom: imitators of God, beloved children, walking in love (Eph.5:1,2).

J.R.C.

IN THE DAYS OF NOAH

(Genesis 6:5-22)

⁵ + Yahweh 'saw that the evil of humanity was multiply-
ing ⁱon earth, and every form of the devisings of its heart
was surely evil all the day. ⁶ + Yahweh 'regretted that He
had ^dmade 'humanity ⁱon earth, and He 'grieved 'in His
heart. ⁷ + So Yahweh 'said: I shall wipe out 'humanity ^wthat
I have created, off the surface of the ground, from human
unto domestic beast, unto the creeper and unto the flyer
of the heavens; for I regret that I have ^dmade them.

⁸ + Yet Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh.

⁹ These are the genealogical records of Noah: Noah was
a righteous man; he became flawless in his generations;
Noah walked 'with the One, Elohim. ¹⁰ + Noah 'begot three
sons, 'Shem, 'Ham and 'Japheth.

¹¹ + Now the earth was 'ruined before the One, Elohim,
and the earth was 'full of violence. ¹² + ⁷Yahweh⁰ Elohim
'saw the earth, and behold, it was ruined, for all flesh
had ruined 'its ways on the earth. ¹³ + So ⁷Yahweh⁰ Elo-
him 'said to Noah: ⁷The era of⁰ the end of all ⁷human⁰
flesh has come before Me, for the earth is full of violence
^fbecause of their presence. + Now behold, I am about to
ruin^l them 'with the earth.

¹⁴ ^{ld}Make for yourself an ark of sulphur wood; with nests
shall you ^dmake 'the ark, and you will shelter 'it from the
inside and from the outside 'with a sheltering coat. ¹⁵ +
This is ^whow you shall ^dmake 'it: 300 cubits the length of
the ark, 50 cubits its width, and 30 cubits its rise. ¹⁶ ⁷Nar-
rowing~ ~from its middle~ shall you ^dmake it, and to a

cubit shall you ^{all}finish it from above. + You shall place the entrance **opening of the ark in its side** and ^{ld}make ^alower, **second and third** decks.

¹⁷ +Now behold, I Myself am about to **bring^l a deluge of water on the earth to wreck all flesh^f under the heavens** which has the **spirit of life in it**. All ^wthat is in the earth shall **decease**.

¹⁸ +Yet I will set up ^{My}covenant ^{with you}, and you must **come into the ark, you and your sons, + your wife and your sons' wives** ^{with you}. ^{19 7+} ^fOf every domestic **beast, + ^fof every creeper^o, + ^fof every wild animal, ^fof all flesh, you shall bring pairs from all into the ark to ^cstay alive** ^{with you}; they shall ^bbe male and female. ²⁰ ^fOf the **flyer according to its kind, + ^fof the domestic beast according to its kind, and ^fof every creeper of the ground according to its kind, from all shall they come in pairs to you to ^cstay alive**. ²¹ +As for you, take for yourself from every food which is to be ^{eaten}; + you must **gather it up for yourself, so +that it will come to be [>] food for you and for them**.

²² +Then Noah ^{ld}did according to all ^wthat ⁷Yahweh^o Elohim had instructed ^{him}; he **did** just so.

THE DELUGE prepared the earth for this eon, or world, in which we live, so is of special interest to us today. Before this, mankind lived under very different conditions, and usually ten times as long, and in a drier climate. They were in subjection to their fathers, under a very lenient form of family rule, without nations or political boundaries, or the resulting wars and hardships which we endure. That paternal form of subjection led mankind to ruin the earth in the days of Noah (cf Matt.24:37). The deluge inaugurated a much harsher system of subjection, which still continues.

Why was there a deluge? To really get a grasp of any event in human history, we should first seek to see the

Subjector's *purpose* in it, and the *result* He has in view. The first earth, in the first eon, seems to have been perfect in a sense, but not like the new earth of the future. Why wasn't humanity started on that? And when the race was begun on the restored earth, why was sin and death forthwith introduced? The answer is clear. Because the experience of evil is essential to the appreciation of good. It alone can produce the subjection and worship and adoration for which all was created. Even as the disruption prepared the earth for the first failure of human government under Adam and his sons, so the deluge set the stage for the present exhibition of human insubjection to God, and inability to govern himself or the race.

It seems to be the general impression that the deluge was sent as a punishment or judgment on all the inhabitants of the preceding world. But this cannot be, for it involved only the surviving residue, only a part of those who had lived in the preceding eon. Adam, for instance, and his succession of firstborn sons, had all died, except Noah and Shem, and these were saved through it. Noah and his sons and their wives were needed to start the race anew. Death had already reached most who lived in that eon, before those were drowned in the flood. Death was due to Adam's sin. Others, even murderers, as Cain and Lamech, were shielded from a violent death. All of these will be judged at the great white throne. During the evil eons, from the disruption by water (Gen.1:2) to its combustion by fire (2 Peter 3:7), the earth itself is disintegrating, as well as its inhabitants. In Hebrew the inhabited earth (CV "habitanace") is called the *disintegration*. The lesser disturbances, the flood and the period of fiery indignation, are similar in kind, but not nearly so destructive, or the changes so great, as the disruption after the beginning or the fiery cataclysm before the new earth.

In this light, the deluge of Noah's day is worthy of special

study, for it introduced a new method of human subjection, which exists at the present time. It will continue until further judgments destroy the kingdoms of this world, in order to prepare for the kingdom of Christ. This, our Lord told Pilate, is not to be of this world (John 18:36), but will be the characteristic feature of the next eon. There were no nations or kingdoms before the deluge. There are many in this eon, and there will be only one King of kings in the next. The Subjector is using all of these worlds and their various forms of rule to prepare humanity for its future and final subjection to Him.

Humanity, all flesh, ruined the earth, especially the surface of the ground before the deluge came. We read that all *flesh* ruins its ways on the earth. Only then are we told that the Subjector said to Noah, "Now, behold I am about to ruin them with the earth" (Gen.6:11-13). We are in a similar position today, so that there is actually much apprehension lest the latest of man's weapons of warfare may lead to a chain reaction which will explode the whole. That such a thing can be done, and will later take place, seems evident from Peter's reference to the end of the present earth, when it will be dissolved by combustion (2 Peter 3:10-13). But this cannot take place until after the next eon, so is not possible at present.

COSMIC CHANGES

In order to reveal Himself through His work and His ways, the Subjector uses five different "worlds," or arrangements as a background. The earth, as originally created, was perfect for the purpose of displaying the might and majesty of the Creator, but was not suited to set forth those deeper moral excellencies which demanded the presence of evil and sin as a foil for their display. To carry out this desire of His heart the first earth was caused to become chaos and vacant and dark (Gen.1:2). It was restored, but

only in part, with night as well as light, and water as well as land. The new earth of the future will have no sea and no night (Rev.21:1,25). But the intervening three worlds must have these, because they correspond to the imperfections which are in mankind at the same time.

The ancient world, from the disruption to the deluge (2 Peter 2:5), was designated to be a background to show the bitter and hopeless evil of the human race when under the control of Adam and his sons. Not only did the first man who was born kill his brother, but the last generation filled the earth with ruin and wrong. This present world, from the deluge to the coming kingdom, introduces control by means of *nations*, or human governments. The world wars, to which this has recently led, should show its hopeless failure. The need for a new set up is very evident. We seem to be near the great crisis, or turning point, when the Subjector puts the earth under *His own King* and a *chosen nation*. After that, in the new earth, as the Son of the Subjector, He brings all into subjection so that, at the consummation, all will be willingly subject.

The fact that the evil of humanity *grieved the heart* of Yahweh shows clearly that the deluge was not a vindictive and unfeeling act, dictated by disappointment or anger. So also with the further fact that He *regretted* that He had made humanity on the earth. As far as His *feelings* were concerned, He would not have had it so at that time. All His acts are dictated by love, with a view to the blessing of His creatures and their *eventual* happiness, so He *sympathizes* with them, and His heart goes out to them even when they are disobedient. He has the consummation always before Him in His dealings with humanity. It would be well if we also looked at them in the same light. Then we, too, would regret the need of such judgments, even though we know the future goal, and realize their absolute necessity to bring it about.

This grief is the cue to our attitude toward the superior authorities, to whom we are subject (Rom.13:1). We are not exhorted to seek to become one, for our rule is to be among the celestials, in the future, but we are to be sympathetic. Therefore our apostle entreats that petitions, prayers, pleadings, and thanksgiving be made, not only for all mankind in general, but especially for those in a superior station, that we may lead a mild and quiet life. They are in a difficult position. Their superficial function is to govern well, but their underlying function is to display their inability to rule ideally. We should be most lenient in our criticism of their acts, for they are quite helpless to subject those who are not subject to the supreme Subjector.

Mankind is now given an opportunity to display its utter incompetence to rule. This is so all imaginable forms of government may be tried in order to exhibit their weaknesses and shortcomings. For some time all the world was under one head. There have been many great empires and numerous smaller kingdoms. In some the authority is vested in a single head, in others in a group. In some it is exercised by the people. The trial has now lasted over four thousand years, and today there seems to be more contention as to the best form than ever. None have been entirely satisfactory, as God intended.

WHY A DELUGE?

If mankind has continually improved by evolution, why was there need for a deluge? The scriptural account reveals to us a Deity Who has a reason for all that occurs, but the evolutionists base their theory on willful ignorance of the historical facts. Humanity is inherently sinful, and needs to know this, and to be given a new start. Had there been no deluge, mankind would have become so saturated with sin that it would have rotted away by a much more painful and prolonged death than drowning. By God using the

best family as a new start, *they have been saved much suffering*. If the present trend were eternal, the world would become a theological "hell" for men *before* they die. It seems to be about time for a change, and a fresh start under a Ruler Who is destined to succeed!

NOAH

The name Noah (*Noe* STOP, rest), is usually explained as meaning *rest*. But its stem is used to cover a somewhat wider area of thought than simply desisting from labor or exertion, as may be seen in connection with the ark. We read, "resting is the ark . . . on the mountains of Ararat" (Gen.8:4). Figuratively this is a very fine rendering, but, literally, the ark was not weary, so that it needed rest. It *stopped* because it was no longer water-borne. Noah lived at the *end* of the second eon or world, which was *stopped* by the deluge, and it seems very fitting that Noah's name included a reference to this, one of the greatest crises in the earth's career. Lamech, his father, the son of Methuselah and grandson of Enoch, must have known of the terrible state the world was in, and was consoled by the thought that his son was the one who would see it *stopped*. Nothing that happened before this seems to have brought any cessation.

Noah, being a firstborn son in the line of Seth, belonged to the "distinguished" of those days (Gen.6:4). Not being in the line of Cain, who typify *insubjection*, but a head in the line of Seth, which was subject to Elohim, he was "flawless in his generations," and was chosen to start the new world, in which the great lesson of subjection would be further developed by a different method of enforcing it. Hitherto there always had been *several* of these first-born sons on the scene simultaneously. There were four before Adam died. Now however, at the time of the deluge, there were only Noah and his son, Shem. None of his sons were drowned in the deluge. Through his *three* sons Noah not

only commenced the present world in which nations and kings stage another failure, but, through Shem, he started one nation and one King, Christ Jesus, by which the *next* world will be a success in bringing humanity under the rule of the Subjector.

With this in view, Noah was shown *grace* in the eyes of Yahweh. This implies that he was favored, not because of any personal merit, but because of God's purpose. He needed such a man, and how else could He get one but by means of His own grace? Hence we find Noah listed with Daniel and Job, as highest examples of mortal righteousness (Ezek.14:14). The present race of humanity was given the best possible start by excluding all the men who were the cause of the deluge, from its line, and coming only through one who was graced with divine righteousness by faith. Later, when He began a special nation, Israel, He graced Abram with this righteousness. Now in this secret administration of transcendent grace, all His saints are given this gracious and glorious gift.

When we compare Noah with Adam, who started the previous world, we find a great advance. Adam was innocent, without the knowledge of good and evil, so that he failed at the very first test. But Noah was not only well acquainted with evil, but had overcome it. Adam had walked with Elohim in the midst of great goodness, but later hid from Him, and was driven from His presence. Noah lived in the midst of an evil generation, which was opposed to the Subjector. Nevertheless, he walked with Elohim in the midst of it all. Noah condemned the world about him by building the ark when there was no indication of any deluge. He embodied a great advance, due to the knowledge of evil, in being the inaugurator of the present world. It was commenced by a man of *faith* (Heb.11:7). He is like Adam in that he is the ancestor of us all.

NOAH'S FAITH

Noah displayed what is, perhaps, the most public and persistent exhibition of *faith* ever given. For a considerable period he was engaged in building a ship on dry land. If anyone should attempt this today, his sanity would be in serious doubt. Yet, in essence, believers in Christ are in the same position. Because of their faith they are not appointed to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess.5:9). We will not be saved by an ark from a watery deluge, but by being snatched away to meet the Lord in the air, and to rise to realms celestial. That will be the signal for the outpouring, not of a flood of water, but of divine indignation, to prepare the earth for the next world.

As shown below, the so-called "pitch" which was applied to the ark, was really a *sheltering* coat. The name *kphr* is often rendered *atonement* in our versions, *propitiatory shelter* in the CV. It was a type of Christ's sheltering sacrifice. The ark itself is the first illustration or type of propitiation. It should aid us in getting a good grasp of that much-misunderstood doctrine.

NOAH'S JUSTIFICATION

Noah was a *righteous* man who became flawless in his generations and walked with Elohim (Gen.6:9). How, then, need he find *grace* in the eyes of Yahweh? This is very important, standing, as it does, at the very portal of the present eon, in which the grace of God reaches its fullest exhibition. Abram, in the next administration, was reckoned righteous, although he seemed to fail occasionally. Since Noah, also, was strong in faith, and the recipient of grace, we can hardly escape the conclusion that his was a faith righteousness, based, not on his *acts*, but his *belief*, as it is today.

JUDGMENT BY WATER

Water and fire, the usual means of judgment, are cleansers or purifiers. When approaching the Deity in the tabernacle or temple, the priests must pass the brazen altar for burnt offerings, and the laver for cleansing. So is it with humanity as a whole. It was washed with water in the past, and must be purified with fire in the future (2 Peter 3:12). Superficially these judgments seem to be the result of vindictive vengeance, intended only to destroy. But this is not the case. Even as on the path approaching God's dwelling place, so also they are waymarks in human history, leading to divine presence at the consummation.

THE ARK

Noah was told to make an "ark" (Gen.6:14) It is a pity that our versions use this term also for the *coffer* of the covenant, which was in the holy of holies, for it was entirely different, in shape as well as use, and there is no connection between them whatever in the Hebrew.

The first specification given to Noah, when he was charged with building the ark, was the kind of wood to be used. Judging by its prominent position, this matter must be important, so we will seek to settle it satisfactorily first. The dictionary tells us that "gopher" is the unidentified wood used in the construction of Noah's ark. The name is usually applied to a rat-like animal which burrows in the soil. Luther tells us that the ark was built of *fir*. This seems likely, but is only a guess. Let us then, turn to the original and see if we can get a clue there. The Hebrew stem is *gphr*, and occurs thus here. But, with the affix *-ith gphr-ith*, it denotes SULPHUR, always rendered "brimstone" in the AV. It is associated with disinfection and is a symbol of the complete elimination of corruption. The ark was constructed of *sulphur* wood (Gen.6:14; 19:24).

SULPHUR WOOD

There is always a good reason for such things in God's Word, so we may ask, "Why did Noah use this kind of wood?" To house such a collection of mortal, decaying, putrefying flesh for a whole year in such a confined space would require a wood that will not rot, and, if possible, disinfect. There is a class of such woods, eminently suited for this purpose, some of which, most remarkably, are the only living things which have survived the thousands of years since the deluge. The big trees of California, closely related to the cypress and fir, and including the redwoods and the gigantea, are the oldest, largest, hence most incorruptible timber known to man. It may be that we get the name *cypress* from the Hebrew *gphr*. At first it was applied to the whole group, including both the cypress and the sequoias.

NESTS IN THE ARK

No *rooms* were in the ark. That would give the idea of spacious cabins, for which there would not be room within the ark. They were *nests* (Gen.6:14). This word not only indicates close quarters, but suggests that the animals were *young*. This was probably true of all the animals, but we may be quite sure that the clean animals were very young, for they were to be offered as a sacrifice a year later, and should not be much over a year old at that time (Lev.9:5, etc.). This seems to have provided ample space for a single pair of each species of animal, for it left room enough for seven pairs of the clean animals, six of which were not required for the purpose of future propagation.

"PITCH" OR SHELTER

We read that Noah was to "pitch," or "cover" (RV) the ark within and without with "pitch." Possibly Noah used some such substance to protect the wood of the ark from

the water and the weather, but there is nothing in the inspired text to indicate that it was *pitch*. The stem is *kphr* SHELTER (6:14). To this day it is used among the Jews, in the phrase *yom kippur*, the day of *atonement*. It is often translated *atonement*, but denotes a *shelter*. This first occurrence of the word gives us the key to its meaning. As this coating, which Noah put on the ark, *sheltered* it from the action of the elements, so Christ's propitiatory sacrifice *shelters* from divine indignation. The chief feature of the present world is the sacrifice of Christ, so at its very beginning we are given an illustration of it. This connection should be retained by translating, "*Shelter* it . . . with a *sheltering* coat" (Gen.6:14).

SIZE AND SHAPE OF THE ARK

As the approximate length of the cubit is eighteen inches, a foot and a half, half a yard, the ark was about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. After having given the dimensions, the next needed information is its *shape*. We cannot form any picture of the ark in our minds without this. The AV says, "A *window* shalt thou make to the *ark*, and in a cubit shalt thou *finish it above*." The Standard Revision has changed this to "Make a *roof* for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above" (Gen.6:16). The Septuagint reads literally ON-TOGETHER-LEADING in place of the Hebrew *tzer noon* (window AV, roof RSV). If we change this to *tzer*, CONstrict, then the Greek and Hebrew agree, and convey the sense of *narrowing*, rather than *window* or *roof*.

Just how a "window," or a "roof," is to be "finished in a cubit above," is not at all clear. Up to this point we have the dimensions of an oblong, box-shaped vessel, quite unlike any water-born ship of today. But the Septuagint suggests a constriction or narrowing. This must apply to the shape of the ark itself. Besides this, the Hebrew for the word ark, *thbe*, looks very much like *thk*, a stem which means *mid-*

dle. Trying this, we have, "Narrowing are you making it from the middle." That is, make it like a modern ship, with ends narrower than the middle. Then the next sentence is clear, "to a cubit are you to finish it from above." It was 50 cubits wide in the middle, at the top, but it narrowed to a single cubit, like the keel of a wooden ship. Briefly, the ends and the bottom would be narrowed to a cubit in width. We do not insist on this, but insert it as the most probable early form of the text.

Later on we read of a *porthole* in the ark (8:6), through which Noah sent the raven and the dove. What we would understand by "window" is not at all suited to the ark. But there must have been "Perforations" (as the Hebrew reads), or portholes, which could be opened when necessary, to admit air and light, and large enough for the dove to find its way. The real entrance, or opening of the ark was in its side. This seems to have been closed by Yahweh Elohim when the deluge began (7:16).

Unlike a ship, the ark had no masts or sails or steering wheel, so there was no need for a weather deck. All it had was some sort of a covering to shield the upper deck from the elements. This was taken off when the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat (Gen.8:4,13).

NO FLESH-EATING ANIMALS

Originally, green herbage was the food of all land life, and for every flyer of the heavens, and for every moving animal on the land (Gen.1:30). This continued throughout the second eon, up to the deluge. That this is by no means impossible is evident from the fact that it will be so again in the next eon (Isa.11:7). The present flesh-eating animals are abnormal, like much else which we mistakenly imagine to be natural. It would not be practical to take wild, carnivorous beasts into the ark, for they would devour all the rest. Man's control of the animals during the

preceding eon was much greater than at present. Wolves and dogs were not distinguished. The word “wild” does not occur in the Scriptures as a separate word. Noah had to store a supply of all the food needed. This could not include flesh (6:21).

UNIVERSALITY

The universality of the deluge is doubly affirmed. It was to wreck *all flesh* which has in it the spirit of lives from *under the heavens*. *All* that is *in the earth* expired. The only exceptions were found in the ark. If salvation could have been had by any other means, it failed of its purpose, which was to give the race a new start, under different conditions.

This is enforced by the fact that Noah and his household were the only righteous ones in that generation. After the deluge Yahweh Elohim made a covenant not to slight the ground for the sake of mankind, and this applies to *all* living flesh (8:21). In the deluge, death was by suffocation, the withdrawal of air. This corresponded to their spiritual state. They already lacked the spirit with which God inspires all who are alive to Him.

The ruin of the deluge is said to extend to *all flesh . . . from under the heavens*. The word heavens, in the plural, can hardly be confined to a limited location (Gen.6:17).

The word *flesh* is very wide in its range. It includes not only mankind, but “all which has in it the spirit of lives” (Gen.6:17). This is so comprehensive that no living, moving thing can be excluded. It is expanded into human and domestic beast, and creeper and flyer (Gen.6:7). All these cannot be found in a single “land.” Nor can we limit it to a single race of mankind. If only the animals in *one land* were drowned, there was little need of an ark, for many more could have escaped to other lands, especially the birds.

A. E. Knoch

IN THE EYES OF YAHWEH

EVEN THOUGH it is not worded directly as Yahweh's work, Genesis 6:8 speaks of what Yahweh did for Noah. For Noah to find grace in the eyes of Yahweh it must be that Yahweh Himself *graced* Noah. Furthermore, the words "in the eyes of Yahweh" speak of God's act of *seeing* the operation of grace as it applied to Noah's life, in faith and righteousness, as well as in his deliverance through the deluge. But more than this, the eyes of Yahweh saw beyond the immediate operation of His grace in Noah's life to its highest significance in relation to Jesus Christ, and thus to its broadest application in relation to all humanity.

This is a far different viewpoint from Yahweh's *seeing* humanity with *regret* and *grieving* (Gen.6:5,6) leading to His saying that He would *wipe out* the race He had made (Gen.6:7; see also verses 12 and 13).

These divine acts of gracing and seeing, implied in Genesis 6:8, ultimately dominate over and complete God's other actions in Genesis 6:6,7, which are attributed directly to Him. God's seeing in Genesis 6:8, expressed by the words, "in the eyes of Yahweh," corresponds to His seeing in Genesis 1:4-28 ("Elohim *saw* that [it was] good"). These words also correspond to the direct wording of Genesis 7:1 which speaks of God *seeing* Noah righteous in his generation. If Genesis 6:8 presented the divine viewpoint, as given in the first chapter and in Genesis 7:1, rather than the human viewpoint, it would read something like this: "Yahweh is saying, 'I give grace to Noah,' and He is seeing that it is good."

WHY INDIRECT?

But why should such a critical work of God be expressed indirectly? Why should it be expressed in terms of human finding, or receiving, rather than of divine providing?

This is wholly in line with Scriptural revelations after the opening chapters. Increasingly the focus is on what human beings do, and, by contrast, direct references concerning what God is doing, apart from reacting to human actions, are fewer and less prominent, although, as a consequence, most precious to the believer.

In Genesis 1 and the beginning of chapter 2, God's deeds reflect His deity and point to His goal. But beginning with the revelation that God *instructs* the human He had made (Gen.2:16), the account gives more and more space to the acts of humanity. And that which is said about God's activities is most often related to what the human does, as apparent reactions, in instructions and judgments.

This is surely because it is man's day.

Those acts of God which are noted after Genesis 2:16 are increasingly less absolute, and determinative. God says things that are not attended to by humanity, at least for the time being; He pronounces judgments that are not immediately carried out because of His patience and forbearance; He expresses feelings (such as regret and grief) that must be understood in a restrictive sense, seen in relation to limited situations. When the Scriptures do speak of God apart from direct response to human acts, as One Who initiates and implements in accord with His own purpose, such passages must determine our understanding of those passages which concern interim operations. The divine acts of patience and forbearance, of indignation and judgment, of regret and grief are subordinate to the divine acts of creation and salvation, choosing and calling, blessing and gracing.

For us, the divine activity lying behind the wording of Genesis 6:8 becomes more apparent because of the perception of our hearts in believing the evangel. Like Paul, we avow, "In the grace of God I am what I am," and to the extent in which our lives have been changed we trace that change to God's grace, which has not come to be for naught (1 Cor.15:10). If we have found grace, it is because we have been graced (*cf* Eph.1:6). Since Noah found grace, it cannot be otherwise than because God graced him.

We also come to suspect that if God had graced Noah, it must be that what God did for Noah was somehow related to Jesus Christ, to His crucifixion, resurrection and exaltation when He Himself is graced with the name that is above every name (Phil.2:10,11). And so it proves to be.

THE EYES OF YAHWEH

In an earlier study I suggested that God's actions of *seeing* in the opening chapters of Genesis were with God's goal in view.¹ Of course God always has His goal in view. But this viewpoint of glory is not obvious in Genesis 6:5,12, where we read that God *saw* the evil of humanity. The evil is necessary for the glory of good to be manifested, but God was viewing the evil itself and not its lessons when He regretted and grieved over its presence in Noah's day. But the divine viewpoint of gratified achievement breaks through the darkness again here in Genesis 6:8, and certainly in 7:1.

In the eyes of his contemporaries as he built the ark, Noah did not appear to have been given much of a favor. As for Noah himself, we must suppose he sometimes was impatient at the very least. But the words, "in the eyes of Yahweh," assure us that God never lost sight of His operation of grace in Noah's life and the glorious results He intended to achieve.

1. "God Sees," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.92, p.157.

What Yahweh's eyes saw was more than a deliverance of eight souls through the deluge. He saw in this deliverance a definite connection with His purpose centering in the perfect faith and righteousness of One Who would deliver humanity from their corruption and evil ways once and for all. What He saw was grace that would even go beyond His grace to Noah. It would be apart from human works and any possibility of human boasting. It would be grace that would lead to justification, not merely a righteousness in comparison with other human beings. It would eventually result in the completion of humanity as envisioned by the Creator.

God's eyes, therefore, when they looked at the operation of His grace, looked beyond the hard and difficult times of the construction of the ark, and even beyond the long ordeal within the ark, to the association this rescue of Noah would have with our Lord Jesus Christ in His great work of rescue. God's grace always has Christ in view.

THE SENTENCE AND THE EXCEPTION

The judgment of Genesis 6:7 was that God would *wipe out* humanity, and every animal as well. This sentence is expressed in all-encompassing terms in Genesis 6:13, when Yahweh told Noah "The era of the end of *all human flesh* has come before me." But, God made an exception to the doom He had just announced. The sentence which is expressed in all-inclusive terms was not carried out in all-inclusive terms. This is not like Genesis 1:3 where God spoke, and what He said came to be so. The condemnation turns out to be relative. It was not absolute.

The operation of God's grace, however, is *expressed* in exclusive terms. It apparently applied only to Noah. But later we learn that this was understood to include Noah's wife and his three sons and their wives. And then, contemplating its extended significance, we become aware that

God's grace in Genesis 6:8 embraces all those millions of human beings who have since descended from Noah. All of humanity was evidently to be wiped out. Yet because of God's grace millions of human beings were not wiped out by that deluge proclaimed and carried out by God.

Included in those millions who have been born into this world because God gave grace to Noah was Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself a correspondent Ransom for all. Consequently, we read that the righteous effect of what Christ did is "for all mankind for life's justifying," and "through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just," and "in Christ shall all be vivified." Even the wicked of Noah's day will eventually be blessed, indirectly because of God's grace to Noah.

The sentence pronounced in all-inclusive terms turns out to be limited and temporary. The exception, expressed in limited terms turns out to be all-inclusive in its ultimate and permanent effects to the glory of God. This is because God's work of grace to Noah pointed ahead to Christ.

LAMECH'S PROPHECY

In accord with this divine viewpoint of the operation of grace in Noah's life is the prophecy which Noah's father made when he was born. Lamech said of Noah, "This one shall *console* us because of our doings, and because of the *grief* of our hands resulting from the ground that Yahweh has cursed" (Gen.5:29). It was given to Lamech to see that there would be a stopping of the grief that had come upon mankind because of Yahweh's curse on the ground given in Genesis 3:17-19. Hence he named his firstborn son, Noah, which means "stop." This prophecy saw Noah as a means of consolation.

But even though, after the deluge, Yahweh promised not to maledict the ground again as He had done when our first parents disobeyed (Gen.8:21), grief and sweat

are still our lot. There was a limited, immediate fulfillment of Lamech's prophecy. But its full meaning will come through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. "Surely our illnesses has He borne, and our pains—He was burdened with them" (Isa.53:4). "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.8:32). "Through Christ, our consolation . . . is superabounding" (2 Cor.1:5).

It is not without significance that Lamech used the Hebrew verb, *warm*, which has the sense of "console" in its active mode, but generally indicates the sense of "regret" when used passively (*to be warmed*). Hence there is a parallel in terminology between Genesis 5:29 and Genesis 6:6. Noah would be a means of *warming* (consolation) to humanity because of their *grief*. Yahweh also, in relation to the temporary situation, presents Himself as *being warmed* (regretting) and *grieving*. But in God's operation of grace, begun in the life of Noah, there will come to be an end to all grief, and all regret will be overwhelmed with consolation.

NOAH'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

In Genesis 6:9, *after* we learn that Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh, we are told that Noah was a righteous man who became flawless in his generations. Noah's faithful and exemplary walk was the *result* of God's grace, not the *cause*. If it is of grace it cannot be of works (*cf* Rom. 11:6). Noah became flawless among the generations of humanity in his day, because of God's grace in choosing him and calling him out from all the rest of humanity as a vessel for honor, granting him faith (*cp* Heb.11:7; 12:2), as a preserver of the race. God's grace operated in Noah's life, shaping his behavior and making him what he was in toil and faithfulness. But this was not the perfect right-

eousness that is gained through Christ and will eventually be granted to Noah in God's own time.

Genesis 6:9 speaks of Noah's relative righteousness because of God's grace to him. But later, as noted above, just before Noah enters the ark, God Himself speaks of Noah's righteousness as *He sees it* in His grace. The way in which the eyes of Yahweh viewed Noah in grace is most remarkable. "Come, you and all your household, into the ark, for I have *seen* you righteous before Me in this generation" (Gen.7:1). Similarly, the writer of Hebrews, declares of Noah that he "became an enjoyer of the allotment of the righteousness which accords with faith" (Heb.11:7). Genesis 7:1 anticipates Noah's justification in the blood of Christ (*cf* Rom.5:9).

God does not see those to whom He gives grace as He sees others. He did not see Noah as He saw the rest of humanity then living. He was fully aware that Noah was, in himself, a sinner; he was a part of the mortal and unrighteous race, *but God saw him righteous!* He saw Noah as he would someday be because of the (then future) death of Christ.

In giving grace to Noah and in doing so *in His eyes*, God was viewing Noah as he will be in the future when he will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19). Thousands of years before the "obedience of the One," Jesus Christ, led Him to die for sinners, God's eyes *saw* the good that would result from Christ's death as it applied to Noah.

This is God's good and gracious gift of justification through the blood of Christ (*cf* Rom.5:9). Genesis 7:1 expands on the thought of Genesis 6:8. Where Genesis 6:8 speaks indirectly of God's acts of giving grace and seeing it operative, Genesis 7:1 speaks of this directly. The grace of God affected Noah so that he was righteous and flawless in relation to the generations of people round about him. But, in *seeing* the full meaning of His grace to Noah, God

Himself *saw* Noah as he will be, righteous and fully justified through the faith of Jesus Christ.

Even though it was hushed, like the secret of Romans 16:25, the theme of God's grace, its gratuitous character and glorious results, begins here in Genesis 6:8. But it does not end with Noah. God's eyes never lose track of this great operation.

HOLY AND FLAWLESS IN HIS SIGHT

The astounding application of this divine viewpoint to us is strikingly described in Ephesians 1:3-7 (*cp* Col.1:22). God graces us in Christ, "according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless *in His sight* . . . for the laud of the glory of His grace, which *graces* us in the Beloved, in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us."

The apostle Paul speaks of this great work of God, as it applies to us, openly and directly, with exultation. The death of Christ for sinners has occurred. He has been roused and is exalted at God's right hand. The evangel has been announced and has reached us, and God has opened our hearts to believe. God's viewpoint of sinners justified, holy and flawless, is set before us. "In His sight" we are what we will be when we put on incorruption and immortality! "Now thanks be to God, Who is giving us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:52-57).

When this righteousness "which has been procured" is fully delivered (*cf* Eph.1:14), then God's sight will no longer be anticipatory. It will be realized in the keenest of experience.

And when God is All in all, He shall see the blessing of life's justifying enjoyed by all mankind (Rom.5:18) because of the obedience of Jesus Christ.

D.H.H.

Questions and Answers

“NEITHER WILL HE BE SPARING YOU!”

*

THE SOVEREIGN AND THE SUPREME

Question:

Does not Romans 11:19-24 show that the church is spiritual Israel, and that we should therefore obey Israel's law? Likewise, does not this passage also make it clear that we can lose our salvation?

Answer:

NO, Romans 11:19-24 does not show that the church is spiritual Israel, that we should keep the law, or that we can lose our salvation. Here is the complete text of that passage:

You will be declaring, then, “Boughs are broken out that I may be grafted in.” Ideally! By unbelief are they broken out, yet you stand in faith. Be not haughty, but fear. For if God spares not the natural boughs, neither will He be sparing you! Perceive, then, the kindness and severity of God! On those, indeed, who are falling, severity, yet on you, God's kindness, if you should be persisting in the kindness: else you also will be hewn out. Now they also, if they should not be persisting in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were hewn out of an olive wild by nature, and, beside nature, are grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much rather shall these, who are in accord with nature, be grafted into their own olive tree! (Rom.11:19-24).

Note that the nations (*cp* v.13) are not grafted in to Israel; they are grafted in to the olive tree! It is not true (as some claim) that “olive tree” is a figure of speech for

Israel. Instead, “olive tree” is a figure of speech for God’s agency of enlightenment in the world, and, in certain eras, this service is appointed unto the nation of Israel.

It is not at all that “gentile Christians” become, in the sight of God, effectually, “Israelites” (so-called “spiritual Israelites”), much less that if they should backslide they will “lose their salvation” and be sent to Hell. It is rather that, in this era, the *nations* (the non-Israelite national groups themselves) are “grafted in,” that is, *placed into a (temporary) service* which, “by nature” (i.e., by God’s original appointment) belonged to Israel, that of being God’s agency of enlightenment in the world. Even as the time came when Israel disqualified herself for such service and so was removed therefrom, the day will come as well when the nations, in the fullness of their own unbelief, will fully disqualify themselves for such service and will likewise be removed therefrom. Subsequently, however, as Paul explains, this service will return to Israel, whose ministry it is “by nature.”

The passage is not concerned with personal salvation, but with the respective service of both Israel and the nations, each in its own era, as the divine means of enlightenment among men. Israel has already lost this privilege (though they will regain it in the future; *cp* vs. 23,26), and those peoples, those of the nations, whose it has been during the past two thousand years to have been engaged in such service (in the figure, who have been “grafted in” to the olive tree) will lose it as well, in due time, as the conclusion of the eon approaches.

The common error is to claim that Israel is herein “identified” as the olive tree, and then to reason that therefore “the church,” in turn, is to be spiritually identified as Israel. It is true that Israel, in her own eras, *serves as* the olive tree, and that we may say that, in former and future eras, Israel will be “the olive tree.” But this is only to say that, in such instances, Israel “is” (representatively) the

olive tree; that is to say, that Israel, originally, was placed into the service of being God’s agency of enlightenment in the world, which of course is true. But it does not follow from this that *wherever* we read of the “olive tree” here, we are to think “Israel.”

Paul, effectually, merely says that Israel, by nature, and in certain eras, is *put into the service of* being “God’s olive tree.” He nowhere says that Israel, timelessly and abstractly, is God’s sole means of human enlightenment, and that hence if we would be faithful to Him we must become some sort of Israelites and then take up with Israel’s law!

It is not true that Israel is *abstractly and timelessly* to be identified as the agency of light—much less that believers of the nations are somehow to be reckoned as Israelites!

The nations’ service in the “olive tree” (their service as the present agents of divine enlightenment among men) has nothing whatever to do with the question of whether any individuals among such national groups should personally observe any certain portion of the law of Moses. To suggest that it does, much less to claim that it is because of such service that such ones must keep portions of the law, is simply illogical.

Paul, primarily, is the apostle of the *nations*, and his evangel, that of the *Uncircumcision* (Gal.2:7), even though, according to God’s choice, certain ones of Israelite descent enjoy its blessings as well. According to his evangel, we are chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world, and designated beforehand for the place of a son for Him (Eph.1:4,5). It is according to this evangel, that where sin increases, grace superexceeds, for life eonian (Rom.5:20,21). And, it is according to this evangel as well that God vivifies us *together* in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us *together* and seats us *together* among the celestials, in Christ, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:5-7). Consequently, then,

we would imitate Paul and deem the righteousness which is of law (the righteousness which comes from heeding the law's precepts) simply as refuse, as that which, however suitable and needful in its place, we now have no need of whatever (Phil.3:6,8).



Question:

You claim that "Ultimately it is the Deity Himself Who alone is our God and Saviour" [*Unsearchable Riches*, vol.79, p.267]. I feel that your words here do much damage to the cross of Christ. How can you justify this claim?

Answer:

OUR affirmation here in no way "damages" the truth of the cross of Christ. This is because Christ Jesus is not the Supreme God, but His Son even as His Christ.

It does not follow because God Himself was not impaled and did not die but instead appointed that His Christ should do so, that it is untrue that, *ultimately speaking*, the Father alone is our God and Saviour.

God is the Source of our salvation; *Christ* is the Agent of our salvation. All is *out of* God, and yet all is *through* Christ (1 Cor.8:6).

The statement that God is our Saviour is an absolute one. When we say that Christ is our Saviour, this is a relative statement. Like any other basic concept, this cannot be expressed at every turn. Instead, it is to be learned, and then, where such considerations arise, subsequently applied.

Under God, Christ is our Saviour. God alone is Supreme; Christ is Sovereign (in the sense of having the highest *delegated* authority), not Supreme. Apart from God, Christ could do nothing at all and would be nothing at all; much less could He be our Saviour.

J.R.C.

GOD SPEAKS IN A SON

GOD HAS SPOKEN. In this fourth article on this matter of consequence we will discuss some of the ways God has spoken, or will speak, to mankind in His Son. We stand in awe and bow in the name of Jesus Christ Whom God highly exalts, and graces with a name that is above every name, in Whose name every knee shall bow, and every tongue acclaim “that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father” (Phil.2:9-11). Thus it is a privilege, not to be taken lightly, to discuss this subject, and we pray it will accord with God’s Word.

THE BEGINNING OF COMMUNICATION

“In the beginning was the word, and the word was toward God, and God was the word. This was in the beginning toward God. All came into being through it, and apart from it not even one thing came into being which has come into being” (John 1:1-3). Hence we see that speech was the first of the ways God communicated with mankind. The “word” pointed toward and revealed God to mankind. The God of the Hebrew Scriptures spoke. The prophets heard the words, but the Speaker was usually unseen, or His glory was veiled.

Just Who was the Speaker of the words heard by the prophets and others that we read in the Old Testament? Of course you already know, for only a few verses farther we read: “And the Word became flesh and tabernacles among us, and we gaze at His glory, a glory as of an only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

It was Jesus Christ; indeed it was the Son of God's love! His was the voice "... of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets" (Heb.1:1). God was the word! This is the One "Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God" (Phil.2:6,7), representing God through the spoken word to the prophets, and later became flesh. He was not only the Word, but also the "Image of the invisible God" (Col.1:15; 2 Cor.4:4), and He represented God through sight as well. His glory was dimmed to accommodate the eyes of mankind when He walked in the land of Israel, but later Paul (then Saul) was temporarily blinded by a glimpse of Him when He appeared to him on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-9; 22:6-11; 26:13).

ALL CAME INTO BEING THROUGH THE WORD

We have already referred to John 1:3, that majestic statement that "all came into being through it, and apart from it not even one thing came into being which has come into being." So His words were not only the initial means of God's communication with mankind, they were also the means of creation.

All around us we see the results. The creation itself speaks to us of the power and wisdom of God. What a disgusting teaching of men is the insanity of evolution! But we should not be surprised, for when the Word became flesh, the world knew Him not. To His own He came, and those who are His own accepted Him not (John 1:10). Is it not a stupendous fact that the One through Whom all was created was unknown and rejected? He was the One Who created mankind. But we already know that this very rejection led to one of the two paramount points of history—the crucifixion of the Son of God! It was the greatest mistake (sin) of mankind, yet it will bring the highest blessing, not only to mankind, but to the celestial hosts as well.

HE SPOKE TO ADAM

Yahweh Elohim (AV "Lord God") planted a garden in Eden for the human He had formed, and placed there in the midst of the garden the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He instructed the human: "From every tree of the garden, you shall eat, yea eat. But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17).

This is one of the very earliest recorded communications from God to mankind. There are many circumstances we could profitably study here. Let us cite but two. First, the tree contained the knowledge of both good and evil. There is much to say about this fact, but suffice it for now to note that *mankind cannot have the knowledge of good without the knowledge of evil*. Second, there was something in that fruit which caused Adam and Eve to begin the experience of dying to the end that they would die. The AV has it: "... for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This is a mistranslation that has caused much confusion. The Hebrew gives the meaning that a process of dying started on that day which eventuated in death.

When Adam and Eve ate of that fruit and the dying process began in their bodies, it involved the whole race descended from them. It not only results in dying and death, but it so weakens mankind that we sin; mankind not only commits crime and the more spectacular sins, but makes constant mistakes, failures to reach perfection—sin. We are all involved!

How do we know this? Romans 5:12 tells us very clearly: "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*." What a valuable thing it is to know this. It explains so much of mankind's

behavior. The sequence is: Adam and Eve ate; the fruit so altered their vitality that the dying process started in their bodies, eventually causing death; their children, and so on to all their descendants, inherited this weakness of dying and death; and the weakness results in unrighteousness, irreverence, lawlessness and mistakes, called sin.

HE SPOKE CONCERNING A SAVIOUR

What is the solution to mankind's condition? *We* cannot solve it! It must come from Someone Who can give us *real* life—a Saviour. Many are the references in the Old Testament predicting Him. There are types, as well as words of God speaking to and through the prophets. Some are relatively veiled, and some are startlingly clear and direct. Look up the familiar words of Isaiah 7:14 (quoted in Matthew 1:23) and Isaiah 53:4,5. Of course, He spoke in these words concerning Himself.

These words were written over 700 years before their fulfillment. When the One Who spoke them to Isaiah was present on the earth He spoke to a throng: “Now is the judging of this world. Now shall the Chief of this world be cast out. And I, if I should be exalted out of the earth, shall be drawing all to Myself.” Now this He said, signifying by what death He was about to be dying” (John 12:31-33). He was “exalted” on the cross. He said: “And my soul am I laying down for the sake of the sheep” (John 10:15). When He spoke to His Father, saying, “Yet now to Thee am I coming” (John 17:13), He was contemplating His ascension after His approaching death on the cross and resurrection.

HE SPOKE FROM THE CROSS

That the scripture may be perfected, He said, “I thirst!” (John 19:29; cf Psalms 22:15; 69:22). At the moment He gave up the spirit, He said, “It is accomplished!” (John 19:30).

What was accomplished? Christ died for our sins! This

was so we should have *life*, not this process we are experiencing of dying, but life beyond the power of death, sinless! It will be ours upon our resurrection. It is accomplished, and will be realized. This is the greatest message of all given to mankind, not only by words but by the obedience of the Saviour.

It is accomplished! No works of ours are to be added. “And you are complete in Him” (Colossians 2:10). No law keeping, not even service will add to our standing in Christ Jesus.

HE WILL SPEAK AS FIRST IN THE UNIVERSE

We have previously mentioned the kingdom of the heavens, and that Christ will be King. It will be established *on the earth*, and then will be fulfilled: “The kingdom of this world became our Lord's and His Christ's, and He shall be reigning for the eons of the eons! Amen!” (Revelation 11:15). As King, He will speak often. John, one of the apostles, had a preview of a scene when new heavens and earth were created, and was instructed to write about it. Here is part of his report: “And He is saying, ‘Write, for these sayings are faithful and true.’ And He said to me, ‘I have become the Alpha and the Omega, the Origin and the Consummation. To him who is thirsting I shall be giving of the spring of the water of life gratuitously’” (Revelation 21:5-7).

Yes, the kingdom on the earth will be marvelous, and the government will be righteous. Living conditions, health, all will be ideal.

Yet our realm is inherent in the heavens (Philippians 3:20). Christ is destined to head up the earth, and that was made known very early. What had been a secret until it was given to Paul to reveal was that Christ would head up the heavens as well! Listen to these wonderful words: “. . . making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, *to head up*

all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth” (Eph.1:9,10).

We will be among the celestials under His direction, for we will have a job to do there. All of the believers, since Israel was temporarily set aside, have become members of an ecclesia (AV “church”) which is to make known to the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials, the multifarious wisdom of God (Eph.3:10,11).

“For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself” (Phil.3:20,21).

There, where we will be with Him in transformed bodies, He will speak to us!

Robert B. Killen

We suggest the following materials for further information on the topic, “God Speaks in a Son”:

John H. Essex: *The Purpose of God*, Concordant Publishing (CPC).

Robert B. Killen: “The Power of the Word,” *Unsearchable Riches* (U.R.), vol.81, p.163.

A. E. Knoch: *Christ and Deity*, CPC.

A. E. Knoch: *The Pre-existence of Christ*, CPC.

A. E. Knoch: “God was the Word,” U.R., vol.37, p.163.

Herman H. Rocke: “Aspects of Logos,” U.R., vol.61, p.60.

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THE RETURN OF THE COFFER
(2 Samuel 6)

6 + David ^{fr}again 'gathered 'all the choice^l men in Israel, thirty contingents. ² + Then David and all the people ^w 'with him 'set out and 'went ^{fr}to Baale of Judah to ^ebring up from there 'the coffer of the One, Elohim, over which the Name is called, the Name of Yahweh of hosts, dwelling over the cherubim. ³ + They ^elet 'the coffer of the One, Elohim, 'ride ^{on~Qs} a new cart and 'carried it away from the house of Abinadab ^w 'on the hill. + Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were leading 'the new cart. ⁴ + Thus they 'carried it away from the house of Abinadab ^w 'on the hill with the coffer of the One, Elohim; and Ahio was walking before the coffer. ⁵ + David and all the house of Israel were gamboling before Yahweh ⁱwith all their ⁷strength and ⁱwith songs~, + ⁱwith harps and ⁱzithers, + ⁱwith tambourines, + ⁱwith sistrums and ⁱcymbals.

⁶ + When they 'came ^{fr}to the threshing site of Nacon, + Uzzah 'stretched forth ⁷his hand^{Qcs} to the coffer of the One, Elohim, and took 'hold ⁱof it, for the oxen were restive. ⁷ And the anger of Yahweh grew 'hot ⁱagainst Uzzah. + The One, Elohim, 'smote him there ^{on}for his carelessness; and so he 'died there ^{wi}by the coffer of the One, Elohim. ⁸ + Now the distress 'of David grew 'hot ^{on}because ^wYahweh had breached a breach ⁱagainst Uzzah; and one has 'called > 'that ^{ri}place Perez-uzzah until 'this 'day. ⁹ + David became 'fearful 'of Yahweh ⁱon 'that day; + he 'said, How can the coffer of Yahweh 'come to me? ¹⁰ + So David

would not [>] take away [`]the coffer of Yahweh to himself ^{on}into the city of David; and David ^chad it [']turned aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. ¹¹ ⁺So the coffer of Yahweh ^{lsit}remained with the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and Yahweh [']blessed [']Obed-edom and [']his whole household. ¹² ⁺When it was [']told to king David, [>] saying [`], Yahweh has blessed [']the house of Obed-edom and [']all ^wthat he [']has [']for the ^psake of the coffer of the One, Elohim, ⁺then David [']went and [']brought [']up [']the coffer of the One, Elohim, from the house of Obed-edom to the City of David, ⁱamid rejoicing.

¹³ ⁺ It came to [']be [']when the bearers^l of the coffer of Yahweh had marched six steps, ⁺that he [']sacrificed a bull and a fatling. ¹⁴ ⁺ David was [']frisking [']with all his strength before Yahweh; and David was [']girded^l with a linen ephod. ¹⁵ ⁺ Thus David and all the house of Israel were [']bringing up [']the coffer of ^Mthe covenant of^s Yahweh [']with shouting and [']with the sound of trumpets. ¹⁶ ⁺ As the coffer of Yahweh ^bwas entering the City of David, ⁺ Saul's daughter Michal gazed out through the window shutters and [']saw [']king David prancing and frisking before Yahweh; and she [']despised [>] him in her heart.

¹⁷ ⁺ Thus they [']brought in [']the coffer of Yahweh and [']put [']it in its ^{ri}place in the midst of the tent ^wthat David had pitched for it. ⁺ Then David [']offered up ascent offerings before Yahweh, and peace offerings. ¹⁸ ⁺ When David had ^{all}finished ^foffering up [']the ascent offering and the peace offerings, ⁺ he [']blessed [']the people in the Name of Yahweh of hosts. ¹⁹ And he distributed [']portions [>]among all the people—^{among} the entire throng of Israel, [>] ^fboth man and ^{fr}woman—to each one perforated loaf of bread, ⁺ one date cake and one raisin cake. ⁺ Then all the people ^{go}left, everyone to his home.

OXCARTS

WE LEARN from 1 Samuel 5:1-6:18 that the coffer of the covenant caused great havoc in Philistine territory. The Philistines counseled to return it to Israel, with an offering, in a new, unattended oxcart. Their method was a test, designed to reveal if Yahweh was truly the cause of their plagues, and an expression of reverence. The reverence was shown in the cart being new, and in the recognition that a true Deity would have power to overrule the natural instincts of living creatures. In returning the coffer by this method, the Philistines were acknowledging their ignorance of Yahweh.

The Israelites received it jubilantly, but the sons of Jeconiah stared into the coffer, and God smote 70 of the men of that family for their irreverence. The jubilation was turned to fear and mourning, and the coffer was turned aside into the house of Abinadab in Kirjath-jearim (1 Sam.6:19-7:2).

After the battles described in 2 Samuel 5, David determined to bring the coffer of the covenant to Jerusalem. Again, the coffer was carried on a new cart. Israel's use of the oxcart betrayed a significant shortcoming in their realization of God. The coffer was attended by Ahio and Uzzah. When they reached the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen were restive, and Uzzah stretched forth his hand to steady the coffer. God smote him for this carelessness. This act showed less reverence than the Philistines had shown by leaving the cart unattended. The great jubilation of the event was turned to dread, and David was angry and fearful. The ark was turned aside into the house of Obed-edom, a Levite (*cf* 1 Chron.26:4-8), and the celebrating nation went home sorrowfully (2 Sam.6:1-10).

As noted in our last study, the language of Psalm 78 is especially interesting with respect to these events. This

psalm spans a long period of time, providing a snapshot of Israel's history, displaying it in the light of a surprising perspective. It reminisces how God had brought Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand and driven out many peoples before them. Still Israel was repeatedly unfaithful, making Him jealous. And here is the different perspective: "Then He [Elohim] abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent He had made to tabernacle among humanity. He sent His strength into captivity, and His beauty into the hand of the foe" (Psa.78:60,61). Notice that the emphasis is not on Elohim abandoning Israel. Elohim sends His strength into captivity, and His beauty into the hand of the foe. Israel remained in their land, and the throne of God on earth was taken captive. Why did God respond in this way?

APPROACH TO GOD

In the heat of distress, fear and anger, David asked an extremely radical question: "How can the coffer of Yahweh come to me?" (2 Sam.6:9). What is so unusual about this question?

The purpose of religion is to provide humanity with an approach to the Deity. In this respect, the law of Moses was very similar to all the religions of the nations. In fact, Paul placed Judaism on a par with pagan religions, from the perspective that both were dependent upon the elements of the world (Gal.4:1-11).

The approach to God which the law provided was very difficult. There were festivals and holy days to be kept, tithes to be paid, and offerings to be brought. But none of these things actually brought the worshipper into the presence of God. The ceremonies and rituals brought him to the priesthood, and of the priesthood, only one, the chief priest, entered the presence of God. This the chief priest did, only once a year, and then only with offerings and confessions and prayers and fastings.

The coffer of God was the tangible seat of God's presence in the holy place. The coffer functioned simultaneously as the throne of God and also as the propitiatory shelter. It was from above the coffer, from between the cherubim, that God communicated with Israel. The coffer is what made the "holy of holies" holy. And in brazen distress David asked, not how he might approach God, not how he might be sufficiently cleansed to enter before God, but how the very seat of God's holy presence might come to him!

According to the laws of religion, David had it backwards. But Paul also had it backwards, and, thankfully, so did God. "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present" (Eph. 2:8). It is God Who has provided the approach present—no one else. What grace!

PARALLELS

David's bringing of the coffer, or ark, to Jerusalem, and the return of the coffer from the Philistines, are paralleled in the Greek Scriptures most emphatically by the event referred to as the "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem. When the Christ came to His people, the priesthood was corrupt, as in the days of first and second Samuel. The coffer was placed on new carts, never before used, and Christ rode an ass's colt that had never before been ridden. When Christ came He was joyously received with shouts of "Hosanna!," just as there was joy at Beth-shemesh and pomp and rejoicing with David's approach to Jerusalem. But the joy was soon to become sorrow, as the sons of Jeconiah stared into the coffer and were slain (*cf* Psa.22:17), and Uzzah was smitten, and Christ was crucified. God abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh—the tent He had made to tabernacle among humanity (John 1:14; Psa.78:60).

God sent His Strength into captivity, and His Beauty into the hand of the foe (Psa.22:1,20; 78:61). These events

in Samuel prophesy typically the callousness of Israel and her being set aside, seeing that the coffer was not received to its proper place, just as Christ was not received as the Son of God.

Christ came in a most humble and uncharacteristic fashion for a king, and this was a stumbling block to Israel. Zechariah had prophesied of this humility and the peaceful nature of Christ's work (Zech.9:9,10). It is also interesting that the context of Zechariah's prophecy (verses 5-10) mentions the Philistines repeatedly and the Jebusites, seeing that they are involved in these contexts in Samuel which tell of the coming of the ark to Israel.

In the coming of Christ was the revelation of God to humanity. Yet this coming was so out of keeping with humanity's deluded concepts that Christ was not recognized for Who He was, and His Father was not recognized in Him. In Christ Jesus, we discover the quickening truth that the glorious and majestic God, Who is seated in the heights of the heavens, is a Fisher of men, a seeking Shepherd, and a patient and yearning Father of prodigals. God reveals Himself in Christ, just as Zechariah had prophesied. What grace!

ABANDONMENT

God abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh that the coffer of the covenant might bring the neighboring peoples under awe and reverence of Yahweh. God abandoned Christ on the cross to bring about a great deliverance for all creation, and to ultimately exalt Christ. God abandoned Israel to the Babylonian captivity, just as he had abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh (Jer.7:12,14; 26:6), yet it will ultimately be for the salvation of the world. God has abandoned humanity to the philosophies and religions of demons and humanity, yet it is temporary and preparatory for the joy and salvation of creation when it's premonition of the unveiling

of the sons of God is fulfilled (Rom.8:18-21). God's glory left Jerusalem in Ezekiel's vision (Ezek.11:22,23) for its time of abandonment, yet the glory of God will return to remain (Ezek.43:1-7). God abandons that He might later exalt and bless.

THE ENTRY ACCOMPLISHED

1 Chronicles 15 and 16 and Psalm 132 should be read with 2 Samuel 6:11-19. David came to realize that the coffer should only be borne by the Levites (1 Chron.15:2) as God had instructed Moses (Num.4:15). The Levites were representative of the firstborn of Israel. The significance of this symbolism is that only the Firstborn may bear the presence of God. Christ is the Firstborn of all creation (Col.1:15; Rev.3:14), and as Firstborn from among the dead (Col.1:18; Rev.1:5), He is also Firstborn of the new creation. He has experienced evil, redemption and deliverance. His resurrection is the basis for His being the "begotten Son," Who is the Firstborn (Acts 13:33; Psa. 2). As God's Firstborn, Christ alone is the Channel through Whom the Spirit of God may be received. "And there is no salvation in any other one, for neither is there any other name, given under heaven among men, in which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Israel experienced typically the bondage of sin and death, redemption, and deliverance in the exodus from Egypt. They came forth from Egypt symbolically as God's firstborn son (Ex.4:22) to conquer the world before them and enjoy the fullness of God's promises. Similarly, in fulfillment of these things, God will lead forth the Son, the Firstborn, into the inhabited earth in authority and glory (Heb.1:6).

Associated with Him, in the oncoming eons, will be those who are typically firstborn ones in Him (1 Thess. 4:14; Rom.8:19)—those who are firstfruits, having the firstfruit of the spirit (Rom.8:23). Then all will be brought into

subjection to the Son (1 Cor.15:28), and all will acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father (Phil.2:11).

The homing of God's Spirit in the believer is God's coming to us in peace. "Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ . . ." (Rom.5:1).

"Possession of peace" is the meaning of Jerusalem. So, to the believer, God's presence has "entered Jerusalem" upon our believing and the homing of God's Spirit within us. The goal then becomes the growth in maturity that is needed for us to "attain to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). When this goal is reached, we will truly reflect the image of the Firstborn in our lives.

Apart from God we experience a condition that may be termed "Ichabod," or, "the glory has departed." This is like Israel's condition without the coffer, and like Ezekiel's vision where the glory of God departed from the temple. "For all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23). But through the faith of Christ Jesus, "we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:2).

THE THRESHING SITE

"He Who is coming after me is stronger than I, Whose sandals I am not competent to bear. He will be baptizing you in holy spirit and fire, Whose winnowing shovel is in His hand, and He will be scouring His threshing floor, and will be gathering His grain into His barn, yet the chaff will He be burning up with unextinguished fire" (Matt. 3:11-12).

The purpose of threshing is to remove the chaff from the grain. This process is likened to the purifying of Israel that must take place before they receive their Messiah, and before the kingdom is established on earth. The end of this

eon is likened to a harvest (Matt.13:39; Rev.14:14-16; etc.), and threshing follows the analogy as the judgments necessary for setting up the kingdom. John the Baptist prophesied it. Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream used threshing to describe figuratively the destruction of the earth's kingdoms when they are replaced by the kingdom of God (Dan.2:31-45). Malachi also prophesied the same things, especially with reference to the priesthood, but he likened the judgments to a refiner's fire for purifying metals, and to the strong soap of a launderer (Mal.3:1-6).

UZZAH AT NACON

The smiting of Uzzah at the threshing site of Nacon (2 Sam.6:6,7) sets before us, in type, the purging that must accompany Israel's receiving of her King at Jerusalem. The name Nacon means "prepared," shadowing forth the preparing of the way of Yahweh (Isa.40:3-5; Matt. 3:1-3; Mal.3:1; etc.) Uzzah means "strength." "Perez-uzzah" (2 Sam.6:8) is the "breach," or, "breaking of strength." Israel must surely be broken (Isa.30:12-14; Jer.19:1-11), just as God's Strength, Jesus Christ, was abandoned when His body was broken. But God's Strength will return in power to break the nations. Like the broken walls of Jerusalem, Israel will be rebuilt to become strong and sound, and the implement of God's strength in the earth.

MICHAL

David's wife, Michal, the daughter of Saul, despised David as she saw him openly dancing before the Lord during the celebration (2 Sam.6:20-23). She is the descendant of him who represents the flesh. Her envy and jealousy represents those same feelings of the Jews toward Christ. And her childlessness represents the setting aside of fleshly Israel.

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