

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS
WORD

VOLUME 113

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THE RACE YOU RUN
IS HIS RACE TOO

Let's run the great race;
You need not be a seer.
Keep a good steady pace;
From the start we're nearer
 To the end, to the goal.

A wreath of righteousness
For those who run aright.
It is not won by swiftmess;
Keep the end in sight,
 One day we will be whole.

A great example is our Father
Whose race began eons ago.
There's eons yet in order to gather
All above and all below
 Gathering all from pole to pole.

So when you get weary
From running the race,
His goal won't miscarry;
He'll finish with grace
 Under His loving control.

Tony Nungesser

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EDITORIAL

IN THESE DAYS and increasingly in the days to come we need to set our minds and hearts on God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. That God spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32)—that thus Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15), is the critical point of our faith. Indeed it is the critical point of God's eonian operations. The entrance of sin and death into the world, the promises of life to come apart from sin, of kingdom, both terrestrial and celestial, of salvation and reconciliation of all (p.30), are empty and meaningless apart from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All the revelations of "The Glory of His Grace" (p.4), made known through our apostle Paul (p.40), all that Scripture makes known about God's ways and achievements (p.9), all these riches of truth concerning which this magazine gives so much attention, are dependent on this one act of faith and love (p.27) described in 1 Timothy 1:11 as the evangel of the glory of the happy God. And for us as we live in present times, so brief and ever changing and insecure, this message of overwhelming grace is our daily source of joyful expectation and peace.

In this issue we present our revision of Paul's two letters to Timothy (as they presently stand). Even here in personal letters where the pronoun "I" naturally occurs often we perceive the spirit of "yet not I, but the grace of God" (1 Cor.15:10) throughout in the many reminders of the evangel of God centered in Christ. Therefore we are led to say with Paul: "The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit! Grace be with you! Amen!" (2 Tim.4:22).

D.H.H.

THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE

GOD, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, Who chooses us in Christ before the disruption, is “in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved” (Eph.1:5,6). In this rich revelation we find the basis of all our blessing in the love and will of God. His love predestinated us to sonship, His will is to display that love by an exhibition of His grace, possible only through the disruption and the entrance of sin. We were in the Son of His love in the beginning, according to His purpose; we are in the Beloved through the grace glorious which now graces us in Him.

IN LOVE

God begins all in love. The very universe was created in the Son of His love (Col.1:13-16). If the eyes of our hearts were open to this great truth, we could not help seeing that His goal must consist in the display of His affection. We would not be blinded by the intermediate processes, but recognize that these are the necessary background for its revelation. God is love, hence He must commence and consummate all in love, even though the path between is wet with weeping and hard with hatred and dumb with dread and death. Love is the root and love is the fruit of God’s whole purpose. Let us, who are privileged to enjoy a taste of its entrancing sweetness before the goal is

gained, look back to its inception, and fix our hearts firmly in that primeval plan.

All this is Godlike. It transcends our human ways and thoughts. Man knows little of what he is about, and he does not understand, far less control, the process. The future is hid in darkness. Whence he comes or whither he goes he knows not, neither does he know the way. But, with God, the end was the beginning. The final outcome determined the commencement and the course of its accomplishment. If He is to end in being beloved by all His creatures, He must begin in love. The substratum of every step He takes, no matter how it may appear on the surface, is love. It is not simply the silver lining of the cloud, the ameliorating circumstances which attend evil, but the burden of woe is itself imposed by love, for a time, in order to procure its own appreciation when it is removed.

PREDESTINATION

Let us not confuse predestination (predesignation, CV) with election. God's election or choice, one of the most precious pearls in the Scriptures, has been foully soiled in the mire of human theology. It has been divorced from service and associated with salvation. From a means of blessing to those outside its range, it has been made a curse. Theology leaves the "non-elect" to hopeless, endless retribution. Scripture makes them the beneficiaries of the blessings bestowed on the elect. Theology, as a rule, knows no distinctions between the various classes of the elect.

In the Scriptures there are at least five distinct spheres where God's choice has been exercised, so that all the elect are also nonelect with reference to some other service. Thus it comes to be that, if all the nonelect are damned, as theology teaches, then all are doubly damned, and none are saved!

Predestination deals with a distinct aspect of God's

choice. It designates beforehand the destiny of God's creatures during the eonian times. It assigns them their proper relationship to God and His Christ. It defines the exact place accorded them in the process of redemption. The Greek word is a compound of *pro*, BEFORE, and *horizō*, SEEize. From the latter word we have our word *horizon*, the line which defines the boundary between earth and sky. Its force is to *designate*, define.

SONSHIP

In the evangelical effort to emphasize the necessity of the new birth we have lost the much greater truth of sonship. It is only as we see that the birth from above is an earthly thing, confined to the Kingdom proclamation concerned with the nation of Israel, and foreign to the truth for today, that we are prepared to enjoy the much higher honor of sonship. We are too much given to illogical "reasoning" and spoil many a figure of speech by smothering its point in false inferences. The new birth is a figure of the inception of life. Sonship is a figure of investiture with the honors and dignities of maturity.

In ancient times sonship was a recognized social institution and was never confounded with birth. Girls as well as boys were born, but they never were given the place of honor. A man may have had many boys, but only one could attain to the dignity of his father. He was usually the eldest, though this was not always the case. But real sonship comes before us clearly only in case a man had no children. If he had wealth and honor, he must choose someone to be his heir. A slave was often chosen for sonship. Such a case is portrayed in "Ben-Hur." This is the place that love has given us. We are designated for the place of a son through Christ Jesus.

When the one thus chosen came of age there was usually a magnificent ceremony and entertainment to celebrate the

event. And this is what we are awaiting. Nor are we alone in our expectancy. The whole creation is looking for the day when we will openly assume the place of sonship. "The hopefulness of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God" (Rom.8:19). "The entire creation is groaning together and travailing together until now. Yet not only so, but we ourselves also who have the firstfruit of the spirit, *we* ourselves also are groaning in ourselves, awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body" (Rom.8:22,23). We shall have the thrice-blessed place of being delivered and by our deliverance delivering the groaning creation.

Throughout Scripture the word *son* is used in a much higher sense than child. Those who are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God. Only in the measure in which this is true of us today can we claim to be *sons*. In the resurrection we will always be utterly under the control of His spirit. This will conform us to His character; it will make us true representatives of His glories. Then He will be truly displayed in us and through us. And this is the object of sonship and predesignation. It is not simply negative salvation from sin but positive possession of flawless holiness and high honors which will reveal the glory of His grace to the celestial hosts.

In the Scriptures "son" is an index of character. Paul did not call Elymas a "*child* of the devil" (Acts 13:10, AV), but "*son* of the Adversary." We are not "*children* of light, and the *children* of the day" (1 Thess.5:5, AV). We are "*sons* of the light and *sons* of the day" (CV). We were "*sons* of stubbornness" (Eph.2:2; 5:6; Col.3:6), not "*children* of disobedience" (AV). We are not "*children* of Abraham" (Gal.3:7, AV), but "*sons* of Abraham" (CV). It is a pity that most versions should have obscured the great truth of sonship by such frequent perversions. Hundreds of times we read of the "*children* of Israel." It should be the "*sons* of Israel." Those who use these translations are at their mercy. It is

practically impossible for them to apprehend and enjoy the great truth of sonship, for the passages in which it is especially displayed have been degraded to the lower relationship of children.

THE DELIGHT OF HIS WILL

The word "will" has been hardened by opposition. It suggests stern inexorable adamantine determination. But, before there was aught to clash with it, God's will had no such iron aspect. Then it was immersed in love. Its decrees were its delight. As the servant of love it determined that its master should not only be known, but should receive the heartfelt adoration of all who were the objects of its affection. God's will does not delight in its power or inevitability, but in the fruit of His favor. It seeks the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved (Eph.1:6).

No epistle is so full of grace as Ephesians. It not only begins and ends with grace, as most of Paul's epistles do, but strains the capacity of human speech to express its lavishness. Ephesians presses salvation *in* grace (Eph.2:5,8). This is the grace which is the result of being saved. It is the vast storehouse of *grace* on which we may draw at any time. The forgiveness of our offenses is in accord with the riches of His *grace* (Eph.1:7). Our future will display its transcendent wealth (Eph.2:7). Thus the eons will be dazzled with its glory.

The grace glorious has two distinct aspects, deliverance and dominion. From the lowest place in the universe the saints are taken and raised to the highest in this administration of God's grace. Sinners from the depths and darkness of divine displeasure are exalted to the highest pinnacle of His favor. From being a curse to themselves and all who came near them, they are transformed into a blessing to the utmost bounds of God's creation.

A. E. Knoch

HUMAN LOVE AND FREEDOM

ALL is to God's glory (Rom.11:36). "Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, *to Him* be the glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus" (Eph.3:20,21). We do not at all have and never will have any *independent* glory in an absolute sense. God's creatures are constituted to manifest *His* glory, not to create their own.

There is nothing unseemly in the fact that God makes this present world (SYSTEM) and *all* that is in it (Acts 17:24). And it is certainly not unsuitable that it should be in His counsels to make all that is good, especially our love for Him. This love is still ours to possess and enjoy, though His by achievement: "For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:10). Though God certainly has not forced us to love Him, or rather merely to pretend to do so, nonetheless, He has introduced a myriad of *influences* into our lives which He has wisely designed in such a way that they are certain to affect us so that we genuinely and voluntarily love our Subjector. Greater is the efficacy of our Lord's grace unto righteousness than the (albeit) formidable force of sin's flesh unto unrighteousness (*cf* 1 Tim.1:12-16; 1 Cor.15:10).

All causal synonyms are of the same basic significance. They point us to that which occurs or comes into being as the product of the agency which produces it. Effects are *determined* by causes. Once a cause occurs, its effect

becomes necessary; it cannot not occur. It makes no difference whether the occurrence in question is that of a nail being driven into a board or of a man being influenced to make a choice. The existence of causality is not dependent upon one's awareness or acknowledgement of its presence.

It is only a matter of idiom when we say that an object falls to the ground "due to" the "pull" of gravity, that electrical "force" "makes" a motor operate, or that a man is "influenced" by his associates. Whenever we speak of such things as good "influences" or bad "effects," we are making reference to the presence of causative agencies.

Influences are always fully causal in nature, even if, in many cases, in themselves they are only *necessary* causes, not *sufficient* causes. Regardless, an influence that does not influence is not an influence. A cause which effects nothing and affects no one, is not a cause.

The verbs "influence" and "affect" are often used as figures of association in reference to collective causative factors which, when acting synergistically, together cause a certain event to occur or a certain effect to result. This is to say that when these *necessary* (which is to say, indispensable) *causes* causally interact and coalesce, they constitute a *sufficient cause*.

All genuine influences *produce* their own effects. They make certain things necessary, even if they do not make certain other things necessary.

When we ask the question, Why? we are often inquiring concerning the purpose of something that has occurred. That which has a purpose is *purposed* to occur—it is *caused* to occur *for* a specific purpose. It is evident that whatever occurs for a purpose takes place due to a cause, for it is absurd to conceive of a thing of chance having a purpose. Why? is frequently asked as well when seeking for an explanation, for that which will account for or reveal the particular cause or reason of an occurrence. The word "why,"

in itself, always presupposes causality; it merely seeks to know the particulars involved in a certain matter. Anyone who believes in free will should never ask, Why? concerning any of life's affairs.

GOD'S OWN COUNSELS;
MAN'S CHOSEN DEEDS

In Romans 14:12, the apostle Paul says, "Each of us shall be giving account concerning himself to God." It is foolish, however, to think of this accounting as an occasion for divine retribution upon free will sin. For if, as claimed by the advocate of free will, we are *not* caused to choose and act as we do, then we are certainly no more "responsible for" (able to avoid) our deeds than if we are caused to do them. Indeed, it would be impossible to give any *account* whatever for a free will or uncaused event, in the sense of giving an explanation for its occurrence. If we are wise, we will not dread the day when we will give an account of ourselves to God, but anticipate it, yearning to learn of His good purpose concerning all.

God's gracious workings certainly are the greatest "force," or power, in all the universe. The voluntary love and service which they produce are created just as effectively and surely as any compelled, involuntary servitude could ever be. For they are the product of God's own counsels, channeled through His achievements in the cross of Christ, and He would not have them fail.

That which is "voluntary" is that which we volunteer to do, as contrasted with what is compulsory. We *choose* to do such things, actually preferring them (however wisely or unwisely) over other activities. They are not simply the consequence of our choice of certain things, but to us they are "choice" in themselves, in the sense of preferable, in accord with our current desires, however excellent or awful our current desires may be. The fact that voluntary acts

are those that we do by choice has no bearing whatever on the question of whether their presence is necessary or unnecessary, avoidable or unavoidable. That for which we volunteer is a voluntary act or a chosen course of action. Whether our preference is itself the product of a cause or a thing of chance will not have any bearing upon our having chosen it. For this will remain true in either case.

It is not as if the Scriptures, whether by declaration or corollary, actually affirm the notion of free will. Free will is merely presupposed, and is therefore read into the Scriptures. It is not that it is found there; it is rather that advocates of that view, inferring its presence and abhorring any thought of its absence, unwittingly seek to put it there.

Since both determinism and indeterminism (or any combination of the two) preclude free will, free will, therefore, cannot be true. Further, since in all possible worlds, free will is precluded, it is impossible to give any objective account of how it might exist. That which is necessarily unreal, cannot be made real by the mere force of rhetoric. All that one can do in the interests of free will is to engage in circular arguments on its behalf, special pleading, on the assumption of a necessarily incorrect premise.

Actual self-determination would only be a rejection of divine determination. This would simply mean that man determines his own future instead of God. It would constitute polytheism instead of monotheism. But at least it would not be a notion of literal, actual chance. It would still be a deterministic concept. But if, as is also confusingly claimed by the advocates of conventional free will, nothing determines man—even from within himself—to choose and act as he does, then so-called “self-determination” itself would finally be but a thing of sheer chance, uncontrolled and uncontrollable. No one could be commended or criticized for such acts, for their presence would be due to nothing at all.

Under such a system, all instruction—whether entreaties, discipline, warnings or incentives—would be in vain. For none of these could *affect* even a single person. They could have no affect at all upon anyone whomsoever; there would be no advantage to their presence, and no disadvantage to their absence. Therefore, it is free will (in its actual “chance” nature), not divine determination, that would make human effort and endeavor to be useless.

We thank God for *all* things, including our love for Him; it is not a thing of caprice or chance, but the product of a cause. Blissfully, and actually, we “can’t help” loving Him: “We are loving God, *for* He first loves us” (1 John 4:19)!

FREEDOM VS. FREE WILL

Scriptural freedom—freedom worthy of the name—is not a power of “free will.” No one can be what he is not. Neither personal maturity nor progression in the understanding of scriptural administrations brings the power of contrary choice, or, as popularly expressed, “free will independence.” The era in which any particular man may live relative to the various administrations, has no bearing on this issue. For the idea known as “free will” is false in itself, and therefore cannot be true at any time or under any conditions. This is so even though many who do not understand, and yet imagine that such a power is essential to spiritual adulthood, have claimed that it is the hallmark of maturity. To the contrary, the mature believer, first of all, will *recognize*, and then glorify and thank, God *as God*, Who alone is the Subjector of all (*cf* Col.1:10; Rom.1:21). Certainly, he will not care to champion “free will.” In the meantime, belief in free will no doubt will continue to prevail in the lives of those who are “puffed up” by their fleshly minds (*cf* Col.2:19; 1 Cor.4:6,7).

Just because it *is* sound, sound teaching concerning God’s deity will not be tolerated, and certainly will not be

widely accepted. The foolish cannot recognize its validity and wisdom, and "minors in Christ" are *not able* for solid food (1 Cor.3:1,2). It takes wisdom even to recognize truth, and much grace to follow it. God alone can supply these.

No one, including God Himself, ever chooses by means of freewill chance. In choosing as He does, God is subjected neither to chance nor to sinfulness. He chooses what is best, *because* of His own wisdom and righteousness. Out of His own perfection, He is caused to choose as He does. His preferences do not exist by chance! It is certainly no dishonor upon the Deity for His choices to be caused, especially when we see that their only cause is His own perfection. Would we prefer instead for them to be due to the operation of some competing power to whom He must be subject, or even to be a thing of actual chance and so due to nothing at all? Yet these are our only conceivable alternatives.

It is evident, therefore, that the actual notions advocated under the clever and confusing banner "free will," namely the absence of causality and the presence of avoidability, are claims which not only fail to attend even a single created being at any time and concerning any thing, but are things from which no one is any further removed than the Supreme Deity, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory.

Even God cannot deny Himself (2 Tim.2:13); He is not "free" to be foolish or sinful in any way, but enjoys the "bonds" of His own righteousness, goodness, love and grace, in which He is always constrained to do what is best and act ideally. Whatever God chooses to do is chosen because He conceives its presence to be preferable to its absence. However, God's choices, unlike our own, are never shortsighted, or the product of sinful desires, but are the reflection of the perfection of His Being.

Scriptural freedom, of which we enjoy a small measure

by the power of the holy spirit of God, is freedom from Sin, not abandonment to chance. Each of us experience this freedom even now, though in a limited way. This is reflected in the disposition and walk of all those who are truly "in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1-4). But we long for the day when we will enjoy its fullness. Then we will possess such unbounded liberty that we will *not be free* to sin (*cf* Rom.8:29; *cp* 1 John 3:9; John 8:31-36).

FOR FREEDOM CHRIST FREES US!

As those who were obeying from the heart the type of teaching given over to them by the apostle Paul (*cf* Rom. 6:17), the Romans had *not* gotten "slavery's spirit to fear again" (Rom.8:15).

The foolish Galatians, however, had again become "enthralled with the yoke of slavery" (Gal.5:1a). They wanted to be under law (Gal.4:21). God's message to them was "grace and peace" (*cf* Gal.1:3), but in their apprehensions, they had fallen out of grace (Gal.5:4b). Therefore, the apostle shouts to them, "For freedom Christ frees us! *Stand firm, then*, and be not again enthralled with the yoke of slavery" (Gal.5:1).

It is vital that we heed Paul's counsel. For the power of Sin is the law (1 Cor.15:56). Those who were under law and yet not in the grace of God, were ever "in fear of death," for through their entire life they were liable to slavery (Heb. 2:15), subject to all the law's curses at their least infraction of its precepts (*cf* Deut.28:15). Anyone who should be keeping the whole law, yet should be tripping in one thing, becomes liable for all (James 2:10).

Living in such an environment, rather than eliminating sin, actually leads to its increase. "At the coming of the precept Sin revives" (Rom.7:9). "Sin, *getting an incentive through the precept*, deludes me, and *through it*, kills me"

(Rom.7:11). We need to be in a realm which is “apart from law,” where “Sin is dead” (Rom.7:8).

God has put us in just such a place. In His grace, He has justified us apart from law, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:21,24) and has placed us “in Christ.” Here we are safe. Our life is hid together with Christ in God (Col.3:3).

In Romans 6:13 we are entreated to present ourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and to present our members as implements of righteousness to God. Yet if the apostle’s words following this statement were to accord with the popular beliefs of today, the passage would have to read, “You must do this, for Sin *shall* be lording it over you if you do not.” His inspired words, however, are just the opposite of this: “[Be heeding my words,] For Sin *shall not* be lording it over you, *for* you are *not* under law, but *under grace*” (Rom.6:14).

The ground and strength of the apostle’s entreaty is our freedom from Sin’s lordship. Since we are “under grace” and Sin shall not be lording it over us any longer, we are free from the deleterious influence which Sin produces in us through its insistent misuse of the law of God. Law is laid down for the lawless and insubordinate (1 Tim.1:9), which, in ourselves, includes us all. But it is not laid down—even to the slightest degree—as a means toward the achievement of our righteousness. Righteousness is not out of law (*cf* Gal.3:21b). If righteousness is through law, consequently Christ died gratuitously (Gal.2:21).

Those who are resting on law, on man’s obedience to legal precepts, are doomed to despair. In speaking of himself and his fellow—Israelites, Paul says, “We were garrisoned under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed. So that the law has become our *escort to Christ*, that we may be justified by faith” (Gal.3:23,24). Indeed, “the scripture locks up *all* together under

sin, that the promise *out of Jesus Christ's faith* may be given to those who are believing" (Gal.3:22). We do not *seek* a righteous standing before God by our obedience. Instead, through the work of Christ, all God's chosen ones *find* such a privileged position.

THE GLORIOUS FREEDOM OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD

The entire creation has been subjected to vanity, the slavery of corruption, of which the sufferings of the current era are the result. None of God's creatures volunteered for this; all were subjected to it because of God (*cf* Rom.8:18-22). But He has subjected us to this experience in which we groan and travail, "in expectation that the creation itself, also [not only believers], shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:21). Therefore, we are expecting what we are not observing, and are awaiting it with endurance (*cf* Rom.5:3-5; 8:25).

If we would be faithful, our primary desire must not be for the elimination of our miseries, but for the ability to be active in our love for God even if our trials should remain. If we would be true, it is absolutely out of the question for us to give first place to personal gratification (*cf* 2 Tim.3:4,8). All manner of secular schemes and "Christian" concoctions may well alleviate our pains, but only at the terrible price of imbibing their spirit and coming under their sway. They are "affording exactions rather than God's administration which is in faith" (1 Tim.1:4).

The only wise counsel, then, "for all endurance and patience with joy" (*cf* Col.1:11b), is the advice which Paul gave to Timothy. It is this: "*Be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus*" (2 Tim.2:1). There is much *grace* for us in Christ Jesus. This grace is able to deal with our troubles and failings *in the way that God intends* (*cf*

2 Cor.12:9). It comes to us through our active and grateful mindfulness of the sacrifice of Christ in which He died for our sakes. Invigorating grace also comes to us through our believing, understanding and rejoicing in the unbounded benefits which God will surely bring to all through Christ's saving work.

All have been subjected to vanity, and, at the consummation, all will become subjected to God, that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28). It is necessary to suffer in the vain bonds of corruption in order to reveal the glory of the great God Who alone can deliver from such a fearful condition. There must be sinners if sinners would be saved. If God would be glorified as their Saviour and if they would know the unspeakable blessing of salvation from all sin and shame, they must experience a short season of evil. It is in view of such considerations that our apostle joyously declares, "I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us" (Rom.8:18).

The obedience of Christ unto death, even the death of the cross, has only led to His exaltation. God is love (1 John 4:8b). "If He afflicts, yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His kindnesses" (Lam.3:32). He is the Saviour of *all* mankind (1 Tim.4:10). God highly exalts His Christ, "and graces Him with the Name that is above every name ["Jesus," Yahweh-SAVIOUR], that in the Name of *Jesus* every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:10,11). All are *bound*, that they might enjoy this freedom. And, all are bound to enjoy this *freedom*! God has given us His word on this. We long for the consummation, and await it in expectation, with joyful confidence in "the kindness and fondness for humanity of our Saviour, God" (Titus 3:4).

J.R.C.

PAUL TO TIMOTHY (I)

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, according to the injunction of God, our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Expectation, ² to Timothy, a genuine child in faith:

Grace, mercy, peace, from God, our Father, and Christ Jesus, our Lord.

³ According as I entreat you, remain^o with them in Ephesus, when going^o into Macedonia, that you should charge "some not to be teaching differently, ⁴ nor yet to be heeding myths and endless genealogies, which^a are affording exactions rather than God's administration, the administration which is in faith.

⁵ Now the consummation of the charge is love out of a clean heart and a good conscience and unfeigned faith, ⁶ from which "some, swerving, are turned aside into vain prating, ⁷ wanting to be teachers of the law, not apprehending "either what they are saying, "or that concerning "which they are insisting^o. ⁸ Now we are aware that the law is ideal if ever anyone should be using^o it lawfully, ⁹ being aware of this, that law is not laid^o down for the righteous, yet it is for the lawless and insubordinate, the irreverent and sinners, the malign and profane, thrashers of fathers and thrashers of mothers, homicides, ¹⁰ paramours, sodomites, kidnapers, liars, perjurers, and if any ^dother thing is opposing^o "sound teaching, ¹¹ in accord with
the evangel of the glory
of the happy God,
with which I am entrusted.

¹² Grateful *the* am I to Him Who invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our Lord, for He deems^o me faithful, assigning^o

me ^{io} a service, ¹³ I, 'who formerly 'am a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager: but I am shown mercy, seeing that I do it being ignorant, in unbelief. ¹⁴ Yet the grace of our 'Lord overwhelms with faith and love, the faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Faithful is the saying, and worthy of ^eall welcome, that

Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners, foremost of whom 'am I'. ¹⁶ But therefore am I shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ should display° ^eall His 'patience, ^{td}for a pattern of 'those who are 'about to be believing on Him ^{io}for life eonian.

¹⁷ ^yNow to the King of the eons, the incorruptible, invisible, only, and wise God, be honor and glory ^{io}for the eons of the eons! Amen!

¹⁸ This 'charge I am committing° to you, child Timothy, according to the preceding prophecies ^{on}over you, that in them you may be warring the ideal warfare, ¹⁹ having faith and a good conscience, which ^asome, -thrusting° away, make shipwreck ^{ab}as to the faith; ²⁰ of whom 'are Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I give up to 'Satan, that they may be trained not to 'calumniate.

2 I am entreating, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanksgiving be made° ^{ov}for all human beings, ² ^{ov}for kings and all 'those being in a superior station, that we may be leading a mild and quiet life in ^eall devoutness and gravity,

3 For this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our 'Saviour, God,

4 Who 'wills that all human beings be saved And come into a realization of the truth.

5 For there is one God,
And one Mediator of God and human beings,
a Human, Christ Jesus,

6 'Who gives Himself a Correspondent Ransom ^{ov}for all
all

(the testimony in its own eras), ⁷ ^{io}for which I' am appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying°), a teacher of the nations in knowledge and truth.

⁸ I am intending°, then, that 'men be praying° in every place, lifting up benign hands, apart from anger and reasoning. ⁹ Similarly, women also are to be adorning themselves in raiment, decorously, with modesty and sanity, not ⁱwith braids and gold, or pearls or costly vesture, ¹⁰ but (what is becoming to women professing° a reverence for God) thwith good works. ¹¹ Let a woman be learning in quietness ⁱwith °all subjection. ¹² ^yNow I am not permitting a woman to be teaching nor yet to be domineering over a man, but to 'be in quietness ¹³ (for Adam is first molded, thereafter Eve, ¹⁴ and Adam is not seduced, yet the woman, deluded, has come to be in the transgression). ¹⁵ Yet she shall be 'saved through the child bearing, if ever they should remain in faith and love and holiness with sanity.

3 Faithful is the saying: "If anyone is craving° the supervision, he is desiring an ideal work." ² The supervisor, then, 'must be irreprehensible, the husband of one wife, sober, sane, decorous, hospitable, apt to teach, ³ no toper, not quarrelsome, but lenient, pacific, not fond of money, ⁴ controlling° his 'own household ideally, having his children in subjection with °all gravity—⁵ ^ynow if anyone is not °aware how to control his 'own household, how will he 'care° for the ecclesia of God?—⁶ no novice, lest 'being conceited, he should fall ⁱinto the judgment of the Adversary. ⁷ Yet he 'must 'have an ideal testimony also from 'those outside, that he should not fall ⁱinto the reproach and trap of the Adversary.

⁸ Servants, similarly, are to be grave, not double-tongued, not 'addicted to much wine, not avaricious, ⁹ having the secret of the faith in a clear conscience. ¹⁰ ^yNow let these also first be 'tested°: thereafter let them be serving, being

unimpeachable. ¹¹ The wives, similarly, are to be grave, not adversaries, sober, faithful in all things. ¹² Let servants ¹be the husbands of one wife, controlling^o children and ¹their own households ideally, ¹³ for ¹those who serve ideally are procuring^o for themselves an ideal rank and much boldness in faith, the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁴ These things I am writing to you, though expecting to come to^d you more quickly, ¹⁵ yet if I should be ¹tardy, that you may be perceiving how one ¹must ¹behave^o in God's house, which^a ¹is the ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth. ¹⁶ And avowedly^o great ¹is the secret of ¹devoutness,

Which is manifested in flesh,
Justified in spirit,
Seen by messengers,
Heralded among the nations,
Believed in the world,
Taken up in glory.

4 ¹Now the spirit is saying explicitly, that in subsequent eras ^asome will be withdrawing^o from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons, ² in the hypocrisy of false expressions, ¹their own conscience having been cauterized^o; ³ forbidding to ¹marry, abstaining^o from foods, which ¹God creates ^{io}to be partaken of with thanksgiving by ¹those who believe and ^orealize the truth, ⁴ seeing that every creature of God is ideal and nothing is to be cast away, being taken^o with thanksgiving, ⁵ for it is being hallowed^o through the word of God and pleading. ⁶ By suggesting^o these things to the brethren, you will ¹be an ideal servant of Christ Jesus, fostering^o with the words of the faith and of the ideal teaching which you have fully followed. ⁷ ¹Now ¹profane and old womanish myths be refusing^o, yet be exercising yourself ^{td}in devoutness, ⁸ for ¹bodily exercise ¹is beneficial ^{td}for a few things, yet devoutness ¹is beneficial ^{td}for all, having promise for the

life which now is, and that which is impending.

⁹ Faithful is the saying and worthy of ^eall welcome ¹⁰ (for ¹⁰for this are we toiling and being reproached^o), that
We ^orely on the living God,
Who ¹is the Saviour of all human beings,
Especially of believers.

¹¹ These things be charging and teaching. ¹² Let no one be despising your youth, but ¹become a model for the believers, in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity.

¹³ Till I ¹come^o, be giving heed to ¹reading, to ¹entreaty, to ¹teaching. ¹⁴ Be not neglecting the gracious gift which is in you, which is given to you through prophecy with the imposition of the hands of the eldership. ¹⁵ On these things be meditating. In these ¹be, that your ¹progress may ¹be apparent to all. ¹⁶ Be attending to yourself and to the teaching. Be persisting in them, for in doing this you will be saving yourself as well as ¹those hearing you.

5 An elderly man you should not upbraid, but be entreating him as a father, the younger men as brethren, ² the elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters, in ^eall purity. ³ Widows be honoring, ¹who are really widows.

⁴ ⁹Now if any widow ¹has children or descendants, let them ¹learn to be ¹devoted to ¹their own household first and reciprocate by paying ¹their progenitors, for this ¹is welcome in ¹God's sight. ⁵ ⁹Now ¹one really a widow, and ^oalone^o, ^orelies on ¹God and is remaining in ¹petitions and ¹prayers night and day. ⁶ Yet she ¹who is being prodigal, though living, is ^odead. ⁷ These things also, be charging, that they may ¹be irreprehensible. ⁸ ⁹Now if anyone is not providing for his ¹own, and especially his family, he has disowned^o the faith, and ¹is worse than an unbeliever. ⁹ Let no widow be ¹listed^o of less than sixty years, having been^c the wife of one man, ¹⁰ ¹attested^o ⁱby ideal acts: if she nourishes children, if she is hospitable, if she washes the saints' feet, if she relieves the ¹afflicted^o,

if she follows up with every good work. ¹¹ Yet the younger widows 'refuse°, for whenever they should be restive against 'Christ, they are wanting to be marrying; ¹² having judgment seeing that they repudiate 'their first faith. ¹³ Yet at the same time they are learning to be idle also, wandering° about the homes. Yet not only are they idle, but gossips also, and meddlers, speaking 'what they 'must not. ¹⁴ I am intending°, then, that younger widows are to be marrying, bearing children, managing the household, giving an 'opposer° nothing as an incentive favoring reviling, ¹⁵ for already "some are turned aside after 'Satan. ¹⁶ If any believing woman 'has widows with her, let her be relieving° them, and let not the ecclesia be 'burdened°, that it may relieve 'those who are really widows.

¹⁷ Let elders 'who 'have presided ideally be counted 'worthy° of double honor, especially 'those who are toiling in word and teaching, ¹⁸ for the scripture is saying: "A threshing ox you shall not be muzzling," *Dt 25:4* and "Worthy is the worker of his 'wages." *Lut 10:7* ¹⁹ Against an elder do not 'assent to an accusation outside and except ^{on} before two or three witnesses. *Dt 19:15* ²⁰ Those who are sinning be exposing in the sight of all, that the rest also may 'have fear. ²¹ I am conjuring°, in the sight of 'God and Christ Jesus and the chosen messengers, that you should guard these things, apart from prejudice, doing nothing ^{ac} from bias. ²² On no one be placing hands too quickly, nor yet be participating in the sins of others. Be keeping yourself pure. ²³ No ^{nt} longer be drinking water only, but be using° a sip of wine ^{bc} for your 'stomach and your 'frequent infirmities. ²⁴ "Some human beings' 'sins 'are taken for granted, preceding them into judging, yet "some are following up also. ²⁵ Similarly the ideal 'acts also are taken for granted, and 'those having it otherwise 'can° not be hid.

6 Whoever 'are slaves under the yoke, let them be deeming° 'their own owners worthy of 'all honor, lest the Name

of 'God and the teaching may be 'blasphemed°. ² Yet let 'those having believing owners not be despising them seeing that they 'are brethren, but rather let them be slav-
ing for them, seeing that they are believing and beloved, 'being supported° by the slave's benefaction.

These things be teaching and entreating. ³ If anyone is teaching differently and is not approaching° with 'sound words, even 'those of our 'Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching in accord with devoutness, ⁴ he is °conceited°, 'versed in nothing, but 'morbid about questionings and controversies, out of which is ^bcoming° envy, strife, calumnies, wicked suspicions, ⁵ altercations of human beings of a °decadent° 'mind and °deprived° of the truth, infer-
ring that 'devoutness 'is capital. ⁶ ¶Now 'devoutness with contentment 'is great capital; ⁷ for nothing do we carry ^{to} into the world, and it is evident that neither 'can° we carry anything out. ⁸ ¶Now having sustenance and °shelter, with these we shall be 'sufficed. ⁹ ¶Now 'those intend-
ing° to be 'rich are falling ⁱ into a trial and a trap and the many foolish and harmful desires which^a are swamping 'human beings ^{io}in extermination and destruction.

¹⁰ For a root of all of the evils 'is the fondness for money, which ^asome, craving°, are led astray from the faith and try themselves on all sides with much °pain.

¹¹ ¶Now you', O human of 'God, be fleeing from these things: yet be pursuing righteousness, devoutness, faith, love, with endurance, suffering, and meekness. ¹² Be contend-
ing° the ideal contest of the faith. Get hold° of 'eonian life, ^{io}for which you are called, and you avow the ideal avowal in the sight of many witnesses.

¹³ I am charging you in the sight of 'God, 'Who is viv-
ifying 'all, and of Jesus Christ, 'Who testifies in the ideal avowal ^{on}before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴ that you keep 'this pre-
cept unspotted, irreprehensible, unto the advent of our 'Lord, Christ Jesus, ¹⁵ which, to its own eras, the happy

and only Potentate will be showing:

He is **King of 'kings**
And Lord of 'lords,
 16 **'Who alone 'has immortality,**
Making His home in light inaccessible,
Whom not one of =humanity perceives
Nor is being able to perceive,
To Whom be honor and 'might eonian! Amen!

17 **'Those who are rich in the current eon be charging**
not to be 'haughty, nor yet to °rely on the dubiousness of
riches, but on God, 'Who is tendering us all things richly
*io***for our enjoyment; 18 to be doing good acts, to be 'rich in**
ideal acts, to 'be liberal contributors, 19 treasuring up for
themselves an ideal foundation *io*for 'that which is impend-
ing, that they may get hold° of 'life really.

20 **O Timothy, 'that which is committed to you, guard,**
turning° aside from the profane prattlings and antipa-
thies of 'falsely named "knowledge," 21 which "some are
professing°. *ab*As to the faith, they swerve.

'Grace be with you! Amen!

PAUL'S PERSONAL EPISTLES

Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus are concerned with conduct in service. Not only are they given instructions for their own guidance, but rules are laid down for the selection and service of elders, or supervisors, and servants. These two classes were officially recognized and appointed and their functions defined. Besides this there are exhortations for all the various classes in the ecclesias, old and young, the rich and the dependent widow, and slaves. Indeed, these epistles contain the constitution of the out-calling. The second epistle to Timothy is especially applicable to the last days.

A. E. Knoch

FAITH AND LOVE IN CHRIST JESUS

MUCH has been lost by taking passages referring to Christ's faith to speak of our faith in Him. This also may well be so with certain passages in I and II Timothy where faith is said to be "in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 1:14; 3:13; 2 Tim. 1:13; 3:15). Does Paul speak here of the believer's faith in Christ Jesus or Christ Jesus's own faith, that faith which is in Him? (Or perhaps are both applications somehow in view?).

This article is meant to be introductory to the matter, and not at all a thorough investigation. And it will consider it primarily as it appears in 1 Timothy 1:14 where not only faith is in view, but love as well.

Previously the CV has indicated that Paul speaks of his faith and love in Christ Jesus. It is true that the grace of our Lord overwhelms [Paul's former hateful calumny, persecution and outrage, and his unbelief] with faith and love in Christ Jesus (that is, his hate is replaced by love, and his unbelief by faith). Yet that is not what Paul says here.

There can be no doubt that there was a change in Paul. The context, as it leads from verse 12 makes this clear. But also the context as it leads from verse 11 makes it clear that the evangel of the glory of the happy God is in view as well, and this is brought before us in plain and striking terms in verse 15. "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that *Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners.*" And then Paul brings himself back into the picture by saying he is the foremost of sinners.

Let us note, therefore that Paul refers to himself by

the personal pronouns “I” and “me” in verses 12 and 13 six times (as translated in the CV), and often before. But he does not do so in verse 14, and not again until the end of verse 15¹. We may well assume, on the basis of verse 13 that the grace of our Lord overwhelms Paul’s unbelief and hate. But Paul says only and simply: “the grace of our Lord overwhelms” [OVER-MOREIZE]. This opens up the application not only to Paul, but to all sinners as brought out in verse 15 (and later affirmed in 1 Timothy 2:4,5).

To repeat, verse 14 does not bring over the personal pronouns of verse 13, but rather refers to “our Lord” as in verses 1 and 12, and to “Christ Jesus,” as in verses 2,12 and 15.

THE IN CHRIST JESUS

The Greek construction “the in Christ Jesus,” is an appositive to “faith and love.” The words “faith and love” are to be understood following the definite article “the,” hence: Grace overwhelms “. . . **with faith and love, the faith and love in Christ Jesus.** Yet surprisingly (here and in 2 Timothy 1:13) the definite article is singular in Greek, so that the “faith and love” is considered to be one thing here, hence “the faith and love thing.” It is, perhaps, the faith and love *character* (or *mindset* [“*disposition*”]) as in Philippians 2:5), or the faith and love *way of operating*, that is in view. Christ’s faith is His loving faith.

The evangel of the glory of the happy God is being brought before us as a matter of faith and love which as a single quality is in Christ Jesus. It is faith joined with love that leads Christ Jesus to come into the world system as it exists, to *empty* Himself and *humble* Himself in *obedience* even to the death of the cross (Phil.2:5-8) in order to save sinners!

1. The pronoun “our” includes Timothy and relates them to Christ Jesus as Lord.

Yet of course this appositive can be taken as a reference to Paul's own faith and love (*cf* 1 Tim. 1:5) as given to him in Christ Jesus, just as grace is given to us in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 1:9). Nevertheless, to receive grace in Christ Jesus it must first be in Christ Jesus (*cf* 2 Tim. 1:9). So also faith is first (and of primary importance) to be understood as *in* Christ Jesus.

Indeed this appositive construction often is clearly alternative to the genitive "of" construction. Paul addresses the Corinthians as "the ecclesia of God, the [ecclesia which is] *in* Corinth" (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:2), while he writes to the Galatians as "the ecclesias *of* Galatia." Thus "the faith and love *in* Christ Jesus" would likely be understood as equivalent to "the faith and love *of* Christ Jesus."

And once again, there is no direct reference to Paul in 1 Timothy 1:14 while there is double reference to our Lord Christ Jesus. We must give first place to what is said, over and above what may be assumed.

Once we see the emphasis on Christ Jesus's faith (joined with love) in 1 Timothy 1:14 we can make the connection with passages in Romans, Galatians, Ephesians and Philippians which speak of Christ's faith. God's evangel is first of all a message of Christ's loving faith in emptying Himself, humbling Himself, giving Himself to the death of the cross. This is His faith following the will of His God and Father Who sends and gives and spares not His only Son for the sake of sinners. This is Paul's testimony throughout his epistles. The evangel is "out of faith, for faith" (Rom. 1:17)—out of the Righteous One's faith, Christ Jesus's faith, for our faith.

Paul's hateful unbelief has become loving faith, but he is not thinking of himself in 1 Timothy 1:14, but of that which he is believing, our Lord Christ Jesus's own grace and faith and love.

WORTHY OF ALL WELCOME

(1 Timothy 4:9-11)

SOMETIMES when we are wearied of unfulfilled promises, unfinished endeavors and unsatisfying possessions we look about us and wonder, Is there nothing that is of lasting consequence? Everything seems to come short of our expectations. We even let ourselves down.

But, when we turn to God's Word, all our longings are met. Human words and schemes fail, but God and His sayings are faithful. Consider this: *Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all human beings, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching* (1 Tim.4:9-11).

All of God's words are faithful and call for eager acceptance, but here is a saying which is marked off with special emphasis and magnified with special importance. And then by coupling this passage with its parallel in 1:15, our consolation is complete: *Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners.*

Nothing else, perhaps, is so vital to us and so revealing of God as this pronouncement of God's work of salvation. Will we not welcome such overwhelming grace, coming as it does with Christ Jesus's faith and love, sending Him into this world of shame, to save ignorant, calumniating sinners like us? With open arms, with humbled spirits and with receptive hearts, we grasp these words gladly. If there is reproach in welcoming such joy, inexplicable

as such reproach might be, there is also reliance. If there is toil in holding faithfully to such faithful sayings, there is also the peace and satisfaction of becoming acquainted with the living God.

Strangely, however, the majority of humanity have habitually welcomed what is unfaithful, untrue, and ultimately dishonoring to God. This is the tragic record of human history, and it is at the very core of human distress. Eve hearkened to the Adversary's lie. Cain refused to avail himself of God's provisions. And down through the centuries it has remained the same. Men prefer the false to the faithful.

GOD IS THE SAVIOUR

It is good news to our hearts that entirely apart from our own efforts, God Himself is the Saviour of all human beings. This word dispels all our worries. Nevertheless, some would secretly nourish the idle fancy that God needs certain additions to His grace from us. The Galatians, for example, by turning their backs to the goodness that is in grace and welcoming instead that which was worthless (Gal.4:9) were suffering much loss of inner joy and peace.

Salvation is God's favor. He purposes, and He performs. And we receive.

This is worthy of our fondest and fullest acceptance. It is the most persuasive evidence there could be of the life and activity that is in God. In the midst of testing we are refreshed by placing our complete confidence in this God Who saves. On Him we can rely!

GOD IS THE SAVIOUR

There is no comfort in maintaining what is not true. Yet some have claimed that God has limited Himself as to the time of salvation. Of course we would not deny that today is a day of salvation (2 Cor.6:2) and that this era is limited (1 Cor.7:29). Yet God never ceases to be the Saviour of all

human beings. This is what He *is*, and He always remains faithful to this designation.

Some of the Thessalonians evidently became shaken and alarmed, fearing that God's work of salvation had ceased (2 Thess.2:1-5). Yet even in the day of His indignation God continues to save. And He does not stop until all are delivered safely to Himself (1 Cor.15:24-28).

It is only by embracing this faithful word that fear and doubt can be removed. That God's character continues to be that of the Saviour is worthy of our warmest welcome. Does it not secure and strengthen us? Even though His enemies increase, yet God, nevertheless, is their Saviour. We are thus assured that what He *is* will someday be fully effected. All human beings will then know God in truth as their Saviour.

GOD IS THE SAVIOUR

Perhaps in all the annals of human history no declaration so deserving of acceptance has been so neglected or opposed as this, that God is the *Saviour* of all mankind. Some among the Corinthians attacked it by denying the resurrection, its very foundation (1 Cor.15:12). Today, men continue to reject the reality of our danger. Death is not a friend; it is the greatest of all enemies (1 Cor.15:26). From it and its sting of sin (1 Cor.15:56) we must be saved.

God is the *Saviour*. That means He actually delivers us from the perilous position in which we are born as sons of Adam.

These words have tremendous power to comfort and soothe our every anxiety and rejoice our dejected spirits. This is our God, the One Who is the *Saviour* of all human beings. What positive quality does He lack? Power? Wisdom? Love? All of these are seen in the God Who does such a great work as this! There is no room for failure in

Him. There can be no weakness and no indifference in the One Who saves all. Yet He is especially the Saviour of those who are believing this evangel as worded so well in 1 Timothy 2:5,6. *For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and human beings, a Human, Christ Jesus, Who gives Himself a correspondent Ransom for all.*

As believers who receive God's special eonian salvation, we should find particular pleasure in keeping this faithful word, and even more so in sharing it with others. There is One on Whom we can rely. There is a truth that will never let us down. There is a place where we can go when we are distressed and be filled with satisfaction and happiness. Faithful is our God. Faithful is His work. Faithful is His Word. And Faithful is the saying that He is the Saviour of all.

D.H.H.

GERALD W. UPTON

Our fellow worker and brother in the Lord, "Jerry" Upton was put to repose on January 26, 2022, at age 87. Born and raised in the industrial area of southeast Detroit, he lived most of his life in the Detroit area, finally settling with his wife, Alta, north of the City, not far from our office in Almont. A laborer who did not finish public school, he nevertheless was an avid reader, mostly on scriptural topics. His journey of faith took him from storefront "charismatic" attendance to a more sober law-centered association focused on the Old Testament and the "circumcision" writings, and then finally to fellowship centered on Paul's evangel of grace and God's present administration in faith.

In recent years Jerry enthusiastically aided us in proofreading chores, and encouraging fellowship, as his confidence in God's purpose of love through our Lord Jesus Christ for each and every individual grew. We will miss him greatly.

PAUL TO TIMOTHY (II)

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, through God's will, in accord with the promise of life, the life which is in Christ Jesus, ² to Timothy, a child beloved:

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

³ Grateful I am I to God, to Whom I am offering divine service from my ancestors ⁱwith a clear conscience, as I have an unintermittent remembrance concerning you in my petitions, night and day, ⁴ longing to ^psee you, remembering^o your tears, that I may be filled full of joy, ⁵ getting a reminder of the unfeigned faith which is in you, which^a first makes its home ⁱin your grandmother Lois, and in your mother Eunice. ⁹Now I am persuaded^o that it is in you also.

⁶ ^{bc}For which cause I am reminding you to be rekindling the gracious gift of God which is in you through the imposition of my hands, ⁷ for God gives us not a spirit of timidity, but of power and of love and of sanity. ⁸ You may not be ashamed, then, of the testimony of our Lord, nor yet of me, His prisoner, but suffer evil with the evangel in accord with the power of God,

**⁹ Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling,
Not in accord with our acts,
But in accord with His own purpose and grace,
The grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus,
before times eonian,**

**¹⁰ Yet now manifested through the advent of our
Saviour, Christ Jesus,
Who indeed abolishes death,
Yet illuminates life and incorruption**

through the evangel ¹¹ *io* of which I' am appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher of the nations. ¹² *be* For which cause I am suffering these things also, but I am not 'ashamed°, for I am °aware Whom I have believed, and I am °persuaded° that He is able to guard 'what is committed to me, *io* for that 'day.

¹³ *l* Have a pattern of 'sound words, which you hear *b* from me, in faith and love, the faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ The ideal thing committed to you, guard through the holy spirit 'which is making its home *i* in us.

¹⁵ Of this you are °aware, that all 'those in the province of Asia are turned from me, of whom 'are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

¹⁶ May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, 'for he often refreshes me and is not ashamed of my 'chain, ¹⁷ but, 'coming° to be in Rome, he seeks me diligently and finds me. ¹⁸ May the Lord grant to him to find mercy *b* from the Lord in that 'day! And how much he serves in Ephesus you' 'know quite well.

2 You', then, child of mine, be 'invigorated° *i* by the grace, the grace which is in Christ Jesus. ² And what things you hear *b* from me through many witnesses, these commit° to faithful human beings, who^a shall 'be competent to teach *d* others also.

³ Suffer evil with me as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus.

⁴ No' one who is warring° is 'involved° in the 'business of a 'livelihood, that he should please the one who enlists him.

⁵ *g* Now if anyone should be competing in the games also, he is not given a 'wreath° if ever he should not compete lawfully. ⁶ The toiling farmer 'must be the first to 'partake of the fruits. ⁷ 'Apprehend what I 'say, for the Lord will be giving you understanding in it all.

⁸ 'Remember Jesus Christ, 'Who 'has been roused° °from among the dead ones, is out of the seed of David, in accord with my 'evangel, ⁹ in which I am suffering evil unto bonds

as a malefactor—but the word of 'God is not °bound°.

¹⁰ Therefore I am enduring all because of 'those who are chosen, that they' also may happen upon salvation, the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with glory eonian.

¹¹ Faithful is the saying:

For if we die together,
we shall be living together also;

¹² If we are enduring,
we shall be reigning together also;

If we are disowning°,
'He' also will be disowning° us;◇

¹³ If we are being unfaithful,
'He' is remaining faithful—
He 'cannot disown° Himself.

¹⁴ Of these things be reminding them, conjuring° them in the Lord's sight not to engage in 'controversy ^{io}for nothing useful, ^{on}to the upsetting of 'those who are hearing.

¹⁵ Endeavor to present yourself to 'God qualified,
An unashamed worker,
correctly cutting the word of truth.

¹⁶ Yet from 'profane prattlings 'stand° aloof, for they will be progressing ^{on}to more irreverence, ¹⁷ and their 'word will 'spread as gangrene, of whom 'are Hymeneus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who^a swerve ^{ab}as to 'truth, saying that the resurrection has already occurred, and are subverting the faith of ^asome.

¹⁹ Howbeit, the solid foundation of 'God °stands, having this 'seal: The Lord knows 'those who 'are His, and, Let everyone 'who is naming the Name of the Lord withdraw from unrighteousness.

²⁰ ^yNow in a great house there 'are not only gold^{en} and silver utensils, but wooden and earthenware also, and ^wsome indeed ^{io}for honor, yet ^wsome ^{io}for dishonor. ²¹ If, then, anyone should ever purge himself from these, he

will be a utensil ^{io}for honor, °hallowed° and useful to the Owner, made °ready° ^{io}for every good act.

²² ¶Now from °youthful desires be fleeing: yet be pursuing righteousness, faith, love, peace, with all °who are invoking° the Lord out of a clean heart. ²³ ¶Now °stupid and crude questionings be refusing°, being °aware that they are generating fightings. ²⁴ ¶Now a slave of the Lord °must not be fighting°, but be gentle toward all, apt to teach, bearing with evil, ²⁵ °with meekness training °those who are antagonizing°, seeing whether °God may give them repentance to be coming into a realization of the truth, ²⁶ and they may sober up out of the trap of the Adversary, having been caught° alive by him, ^{io}for that one's °will.

3 ¶Now this °know, that in the last days perilous periods will be °present°, ² for human beings will be selfish, fond of money, ostentatious, proud, calumniators, stubborn to parents, ungrateful, malign, ³ without natural affection, implacable, adversaries, uncontrollable, fierce, averse to the good, ⁴ traitors, rash, °conceited°, fond of their own gratification rather than fond of God; ⁵ having a form of devoutness, yet °denying° its °power. These also be shunning. ⁶ For ° of these °are °those who are slipping ° into °homes and are leading into captivity little women, °heaped° with sins, being led° by various lusts and gratifications, ⁷ always learning and yet not at any time °able° to come into a realization of the truth. ⁸ ¶Now by the method by which Jannes and Jambres withstand Moses, thus these also are withstanding° the truth, human beings of a °depraved° °mind, disqualified ^{ab}as to the faith. ⁹ But they shall not be progressing ^{on} more, for their °folly shall °be obvious to all, as °that of those also becomes°.

¹⁰ ¶Now you° fully follow me in my °teaching, °motive, °purpose, °faith, °patience, °love, °endurance, ¹¹ °persecutions, °sufferings, such as occur° to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra: persecutions such as I undergo, and

out of them all the Lord rescues^o me. ¹² And all ^y who are wanting to 'live devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be 'persecuted. ¹³ Yet wicked human beings and swindlers shall 'wax ^{on} 'worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived^o.

¹⁴ ^y Now you' be remaining in what you learn and are convinced of, being ^o aware ^b from ^{=a} whom you learn it, ¹⁵ and that from a babe you are ^o acquainted with the sacred scriptures. the scriptures which are 'able^o to make you wise ^{io} for salvation through faith, the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶ ^e All scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial

^{td} for teaching,

^{td} for exposure,

^{td} for correction,

^{td} for discipline 'which is in righteousness,

¹⁷ that the human of 'God may 'be equipped, ^o fitted^o out ^{td} for every good act.

4 I am conjuring^o you in the sight of 'God and Christ Jesus, 'Who is 'about to be judging the ⁼living and the ⁼dead, in accord with His 'advent and His 'kingdom:

2 Herald the word.

Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely,

Expose, rebuke, entreat,

ⁱ with ^e all patience and teaching.

³ For the era will 'be when they will not be tolerating^o 'sound teaching, but, 'their hearing being tickled^o, they will be heaping up for themselves teachers in accord with 'their own desires, ⁴ and indeed, they will be turning 'their hearing away from the truth, yet will be 'turned^o aside ^{on} to 'myths.

⁵ Yet you' be 'sober in all things; suffer evil as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus; do the work of an evangelist; fully discharge your 'service. ⁶ For I' am already a 'libation^o, and the period of my 'dissolution is ^o imminent. ⁷ I have contended^o the ideal contest. I have finished my 'career.

I have kept the faith. ⁸ Furthermore, there is 'reserved' for me the wreath of 'righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will be paying to me in that 'day; yet not to me only, but also to all 'who °love His 'advent.

⁹ Endeavor to come to^d me quickly, ¹⁰ for Demas, 'loving the current eon, forsakes me and goes ^{io}to Thessalonica, Crescens ^{io}to Galatia, Titus ^{io}to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Luke only 'is with me. 'Taking ^{up} Mark, 'lead him back with you^{sf}, for he 'is useful to me ^{io}for service. ¹² yNow Tychicus I dispatch ^{io}to Ephesus. ¹³ When you 'come°, 'bring the traveling cloak which I leave in Troas ^bwith Carpus, and the scrolls, especially the vellums. ¹⁴ Alexander the copper-smith displays° to me much 'evil: the Lord will be paying him in accord with his 'acts—¹⁵ whom you' also 'guard° against, for very much has he withstood 'words of ours. ¹⁶ ⁱAt my 'first defense no' one comes° along with me, but all forsake me. May it not be reckoned against them!

¹⁷ Yet the Lord stands beside me,

And He invigorates me,

that through me the heralding may be fully discharged, and all the nations should hear; and I am rescued out of the mouth of the lion.

¹⁸ The Lord will be rescuing° me

from every wicked work,

And He will be saving me

^{io}for His 'celestial 'kingdom:

To Whom be 'glory ^{io}for the eons of the eons.

Amen!

¹⁹ Greet° Prisca and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus remains in Corinth, yet Trophimus, being infirm, I leave in Miletus. ²¹ Endeavor to come before winter. Greeting° you is Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren.

²² The Lord Jesus Christ be with your 'spirit! 'Grace be with =you! Amen!

FULLY FOLLOW PAUL (2 Timothy 3:10-13)

PAUL encouraged Timothy in *fully following* him in his teaching (2 Tim.3:10). This was the ideal course. In the past Timothy had “fully followed” “the ideal teaching” (1 Tim.4:6). Now Paul seeks to remind him that by continuing to do so, he will save both himself and those who hear him from withdrawing from the faith (*cf* 1 Tim.4:1,6,16).

Only a very small percentage of believers seem to have a practical awareness of the importance of following Paul in his teaching, in the heralding of his evangel. And fewer still have been able to do so, for most have not “followed” (understood) his words. Sadly, they have not, to adapt Luke’s words on a different theme, “fully followed all accurately” (*cf* Luke 1:3). However, since we are aware that God is working all together for good, we recognize that all our disappointments are actually but His appointments, in His great wisdom and love. Therefore let us be gracious toward those who are blind to the evangel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor.4:4), realizing that “*all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed*” in God (Col.2:3).

God must *reveal* His truth to us; otherwise we cannot grasp it. Those who herald and teach the Word faithfully are mere “servants . . . , *through* whom you believe.” Yet, “God’s farm, God’s building, are you” (1 Cor.3:5-9). We are “His achievement” (Eph.2:10). And we are all members of Christ’s body. But, “all the members have not the same function” (Rom.12:5). Likewise, even those of similar services can only serve “in accord with the grace which

is given to [them]" (Rom.12:6). God is "apportioning to each his own, according as He is intending," "operating all in all" (1 Cor.12:6,11). All do not make the same progress, or grow at the same rate. However, "the entire body . . . is growing in *the growth of God*" (Col.2:19). As with the seasons of the year, "For everything there is a stated time, And a season for every inclination under the heavens" (Ecc.3:1). This is the way that it is, and we will do well to accept it, for human murmurings and reasonings will not change God. Indeed, they make it evident that those who engage in them do not "fully follow" Paul.

PAUL'S DISTINCTIVE MESSAGE

All scripture is a revelation of truth concerning the subject with which it deals. Therefore we must not confound different subjects. It is foolish to suppose that the Lord's own words to the disciples and the throngs (as in "red letter" Bibles) are on a higher level than His words through His apostles. Neither is it true that He gave an identical message to all who were His apostles. For the nature and purpose of the ministry of the twelve was quite different than that of Paul's ministry. It is not pleasing to God for us to take to ourselves things which He has given to Israel alone. It needs to be appreciated that stealing the belongings of others is no more to be applauded than is the dereliction of one's own duties.

It is a great advance to recognize the fact that all in the "New Testament" except for Paul's epistles is concerned with the establishment of the kingdom of God upon the earth. It is all according to the ancient Hebrew prophets, and concerned with *Israel's* affairs, both in the conclusion of this eon and in the impending one. Apart from Peter's brief allusion to Isaiah as to "new heavens and a new earth" and John's vision of the new earth, nothing is said of any matters beyond the terrestrial events of the com-

ing eon. And only as the nations of the earth are blessed *with* Israel in that day, do they even come into the picture. Therefore, only by grasping Paul's teachings, especially his mature unfoldings, can we, as believers of the nations, become informed of those things which concern ourselves. For Paul "was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher *of the nations*" (2 Tim.1:11).

To enter into life in the Messiah's kingdom, one must be just and worthy, having demonstrated a satisfactory measure of personal righteousness according to both Moses' law and the precepts of the Lord which He proclaimed during His ministry to the sons of Israel. For those of that calling, these things are essential. They were never rescinded, nor could they be (*cf* Matt.5:20), on behalf of the disciples or any of those reached through their ministry. And, in the coming era of the conclusion of this present eon, they will become equally applicable to the believing Israelites and proselytes of that day. None can enter into the kingdom on earth except under these conditions. Thus, it is "a cramped gate and narrowed way . . . leading away into the life" thereof, "and few are those who are finding it" (Matt.7:14).

Now the fact is that of the many groups which suppose that the scriptural promises concerning the kingdom of the heavens are for themselves, none even attempt to keep but certain parts of the law, and that not apart from a confused admixture of things from Paul. If life in the terrestrial kingdom were their calling, they would all be disqualified for it. Worst of all, they conceive of man's obedience, finally, as a human contribution through which he qualifies himself for "eternal" life. Yet this is contrary to the genuine evangel of the Circumcision, which is a message of *grace* to all those of that administration who are in Christ. Though under law, they are nonetheless in the true grace of God, in which He provides all that is needed for

their obedience, through His marvelous workings in the lives of His people. But today, hardly any of this is perceived. Instead, believers are subjected to a terribly confused and corrupted “gospel,” which is not a message of grace at all, but a travesty, for the most part a perverted caricature of the evangel of the Circumcision.

But we rejoice to know that neither darkness nor disbelief can annul the completeness in Christ (Col.2:10) which is the possession of all the members of His body. Its members have this blessing and all its benefits, even if they have never heard of it, or even if they should deny and oppose it. For in our calling it is not a matter of our knowledge, nor of our walk, but of the fact that *God* in His grace, apart from law, justifies us gratuitously and *places* us in the body (1 Cor.12:18), having chosen us in Christ so long ago (Eph.1:4). Though our service to Christ as our Master (“in the Lord”) may be quite deficient, God’s ability to gain and maintain for us our secure place as members of Christ’s body, is most efficient.

But it is only as we are able to “follow” Paul’s writings as to their actual teachings, that we can be in a position to follow him in such a way so as to be teaching accordingly ourselves. May we be included among those who “are not as the majority, who are peddling the word of God” and “adulterating” it. Let us become qualified, competent workers, speaking “as out of sincerity¹, . . . as of God, in the sight of God, in Christ” (2 Cor.2:17; 4:2).

IMITATING PAUL

Not only are we to follow Paul, we are to “imitate” him as well (*mimeomai*, “attempt the same thing in the same manner,” KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.154). This entreaty

1. *eilikrineia*, SUN-JUDgment, that which is “free from falsehood,” KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.272.

is presented in several passages (*cp* 2 Thess.3:6-9; 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil.3:17; *cf* 4:1,9). Paul explains why we should do so: "Become imitators of me, *according as I also am of Christ* [imitating]" (1 Cor.11:1). Though Paul's service was not perfect, as the Lord's own would have been, had He carried out Paul's ministry personally instead of through the apostle, he was still an unusually faithful servant and is worthy of our imitation. There was much accord between Paul's actual service and those entreaties which the Lord had revealed to him to give to the members of His body. Therefore, immediately upon having declared matters of the greatest consequence as to his evangel and its service, he says: "Become imitators together of me, brethren, and be noting those who are walking thus, according as you have us for a model" (Phil.3:17).

Paul's evangel is only "his" in the sense that it is the distinctive message which the Lord first entrusted to him (*cf* Gal.1:6-12; 1 Thess.2:13). It is also "the evangel of Christ" (e.g., 1 Cor.9:12). Indeed, in the highest sense, Paul's evangel is "God's evangel" (e.g., Rom.1:1). But it is not the same evangel of Christ, or of God, which is presented elsewhere (e.g., Mark 1:1; 1 Peter 4:17). It is true that it has a number of *similar* features, and, when given its proper place, is in *harmony* with all other revelation. Nonetheless, likeness is by no means identity. In various respects, Paul's evangel is unique, and presents us with revelations that are quite different and far more glorious than those found elsewhere. We become aware of this as God *establishes* us in accord with Paul's evangel (Rom.16:25).

Now you fully follow me in my teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings, such as occur to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra: persecutions such as I undergo, and out of them all the Lord rescues me (2 Tim.3:10,11). We will still be very deficient in our service, even if our teaching itself should

find full accord with Paul's, if we fail to follow those things which attended his teaching.

Let us consider Paul's *motive* and *purpose*. The nature of that which causes us to act, and the goal we have in mind in so doing, determine the character of our actions. For an act is neither sinful nor upright of itself, but due to the motives which produce it and the reasons for which it is done. One may well act in a way that results in certain benefits, and yet still fail to perform a good act. For if our acts, merely as a by-product thereof or as a veil to hide our true designs, should result in certain benefits to ourselves or others, this is no indication of their uprightness. For whenever we do helpful things, but as those who are motivated by selfishness or otherwise sinful gain in so doing, our acts remain essentially sinful ones. This is due to our unworthy reasons for so doing and their motivating effect upon us. Paul, however, was graciously constrained by the love of Christ, and sought only to boast in the cross of Christ, while seeking the welfare of others, unselfishly and gladly giving the glory for all things to God (2 Cor. 5:14; Gal.6:14; Rom.11:36).

Paul was singleminded for God and His Word: "... of nothing have I a word, nor yet am I making my soul precious to myself, till I should perfect my career and the dispensation which I get from the Lord Jesus, to certify the evangel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24). Timothy imitated him in "seeking . . . that which is of Christ Jesus" (Phil.2:21), instead of selfish interests.

Paul's *faith* was genuine, firm, settled and unmovable. He was persuaded by the truth, and had a strong expectation concerning all of God's promises. Since his faith was stable and sure, he could face the terrible reality of so many of his circumstances, being confident of the Lord's saving power, even if He was not presently exercising it.

All true faith in God and in His Word, is His gracious gift; He alone is able to dispense and sustain it.

The apostle's *patience* is a marvelous model for us to imitate. For example, among the Thessalonians he was gentle, as a nurse cherishing her own children (1 Thess.2:7), waiting for God to perfect His work among them. Of course, those outside had contempt for his message, were stumbled by it and considered it foolish, often causing him great personal injury as well (2 Cor.6:3-10). But the worst pains came to him daily, and were not from the outside but from within. They were the result of his heartfelt solicitudes for all the ecclesias (2 Cor.11:28), in all their doubts, departures, neglect, ingratitude and otherwise shameful deeds. Yet to such ones Paul could say, out of much patience, "Being reviled, we are blessing; being persecuted, we are bearing with it; being calumniated, we are entreating" (1 Cor.4:12,13).

Paul's *love* was one of "being ardently attached to you, . . . delighting to share with you not only the evangel of God, but our own souls also, because you come to be beloved by us" (1 Thess.2:8). In criticizing the Corinthians, Paul said, "Not to be abashing you am I writing these things, but as my children beloved am I admonishing you . . . I am entreating you, then, be becoming imitators of me" (1 Cor.4:14,16). In his love, he taught the truth, seeking not to please men, but to edify his fellow believers through the word of God's grace. He did not compromise, and because of this, being true to the brethren and their best interests, he appeared to some to have become their enemy (Gal.4:16). Above all else, we must be walking in love, for without it we are nothing (1 Cor.13:2).

Paul's ministry was a great wonder of *endurance* in the face of so many afflictions of the worst sort. Yet his endurance produced testedness, which, in turn, resulted in "expectation" (Rom.5:4). Trials often serve to increase

expectation, our reliance upon God, and an increase in our trust. Besides actual expectation, which must be confined to our confidence in God's glorious promises for ourselves and for all in the times ahead, we may have figurative expectation concerning even our trials. That is, we may have the positive and joyful *outlook* which we *associate* with our literal expectation in God's happy promises, concerning even those affairs of life which would otherwise mortify us. For, in themselves, indeed, our failings and sufferings are humiliating and painful, sometimes even disgraceful.

But we believe that God will bring great good out of them all, such good as would have been quite impossible had they never occurred! At the deepest level, it is God Who makes our trials, and Who promises to give us sequels to them all someday (1 Cor.10:13). To enable us to undergo them at present, Paul would have us accept and be attentive to these things. Out of a deep appreciation of these very matters, Paul could say, "Now expectation is not mortifying, seeing that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is given to us" (Rom.5:5).

Even the persecutions and sufferings, such as those which Paul underwent in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra,² were trials concerning which he could say, "out of them all the Lord rescues me" (2 Tim.3:11). Though we may not be called upon to suffer the degree of pain and persecution which was Paul's, still, to fully follow him, we will need to undergo those which are appointed to ourselves.

2. In Antioch, Pisidia, the Jews were filled with jealousy and "were contradicting the things being spoken by Paul, blaspheming" (Acts 13:45). They roused up persecution for Paul and Barnabas, and ejected them from their boundaries (Acts 13:50). In Iconium, the same thing occurred" (*cf* Acts 14:1-7). In Lystra, "Jews from Antioch and Iconium come on, and persuading the throngs, and stoning Paul, they were dragging him outside of the city, inferring that he is dead" (Acts 14:19).

DEVOUTNESS AND PERSECUTION

And all who are wanting to live devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted (2 Tim.3:12). Persecution (CHASing) can take many forms. May we cause no one to “chase” after us with evil intent because of our own foolishness or offensiveness. We are to suffer evil “with the evangel” (2 Tim.1:8), not precipitate persecution by being obnoxious. Yet in some way, and to some degree, all those who are wanting to be living devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted. Like Paul, we will suffer “for His sake” when others misunderstand and mistreat us due to our firm stand for “the faith of the evangel” (*cf* Phil.1:27-30).

Yet wicked human beings and swindlers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived (2 Tim.3:13). Many of these may not be wicked in their deportment, or committed to swindling others through their message. God alone knows the heart. With some, such deceptions may be intentional, though not often obviously so. Yet in many cases, and with those who may otherwise be commendable individuals, there will only be a certain likeness to the patently wicked man and the swindler.

Such things as these “*shall*” occur, for that is what the future holds. However, we may be certain that God has a good purpose in them all. After all, He is ideally good and full of power, and yet it is in His universe that these things exist. Concerning our God, the only true Subjector or Placer, Paul has said, “This One am I announcing to you. The God Who makes the world [human society as presently constituted] and all that is in it He Himself *gives to all* life and breath and all” (Acts 17:24,25).

May it please our God and Father to direct our steps in such a way that we may be characterized as those who “fully follow” the apostle Paul, for the glory and laud of God.

J.R.C.

EDITORIAL

“SIN brings misery on mankind; *transgression* calls down indignation; but an *offense* is the wound that aches God’s heart” (p.56).

“We are having the *forgiveness* of *offenses* in accord with the riches of [God’s] grace, which He lavishes on us” (Eph.1:7). God forgives us for having offended Him, for having wounded His feelings.

God loves us with a vast love (Eph.2:4); as his children, we belong to Him. Hence it is unsurprising that in our distressing deeds and fleshly foolishness we *offend* our God and Father. Howbeit, how wondrous it is that it is as we become more sensitive to our offensiveness to Him in respect of our multitudinous failings, that we gain a greater desire to be well pleasing to Him in the casting aside of these selfsame wrongful ways. Even if at best our progress in so doing is measured, for this progress we are unspeakably thankful to Him in His kindness to us.

“No epistle in the Scriptures is so full of harmonies as Ephesians. There is a continual assurance that each phase of our blessing is in accord with all the rest” (p.59).

“When, in Greek, the definite article (“the”) follows the word or words it modifies, we are being led to pause, repeat in our mind what has just been said, and reflect on it as it is further defined” (p.70).

“Much of our thinking is distorted by pride. Even if we have been graced to come to Christ as our Lord and Saviour, that is no indication at all that we are particularly inclined to repudiate our trust in the flesh as to our daily affairs” (p.71).

Pages 80-83 contain our revised Concordant Version of Paul's epistle to Titus, with translation notes.

"Paul saw Titus as 'a genuine child in accord with *the common faith*' (1:4). What we have in common is not the same measure of faith (*cf* Rom.12:3), but the truth we are believing. It is 'the faithful word' (Titus 1:9)" (p.84) "The common faith is the evangel of which Paul is not ashamed, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it (Rom.1:16)" (p.85).

"The *advent* of God's grace is the *intervening, rescuing and glorious appearance* of God's joyful favor to humanity in the gift of His Son" (p.87). "What could be more sane? What could be more productive of righteousness and devoutness than a faith centered upon the blessed advent of God's grace for salvation to all which is revealed in the evangel?" (p.91)

"It is true that 'righteousness' encompasses many particulars. Yet in our wider pursuit of 'righteousness, faith-[fulness], love, [and] peace' (2 Tim.2:22), there are certain things that are basic to our approach, besides being practical necessities along the way" (p.92) "It is critical, then, that we become '*concerned*' to be presiding for ideal acts' (Titus 3:8). Indeed, we cannot very well 'be *learning*' to preside over ideal acts for necessary needs' (Titus 3:14), unless we first become *concerned* to do so" (p.93).

On page 94, we present an Introduction to Philemon, which is "the only private, personal letter from the pen of the apostle Paul . . . a perfect specimen of its kind. Its powerful yet pathetic appeal is the ripe fruitage of that overwhelming grace which Paul dispensed from his Roman prison. Himself a prisoner, he captures the runaway slave and gives him the freedom of Christ, yet sends him back to the master from whom he had escaped."

On pages 95-96 we close this issue with our revised Concordant Version of Paul's epistle to Philemon. J.R.C.

DELIVERANCE BY BLOOD

IN THE BELOVED 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 . . . (Eph.1:7,8).

Those who have the sublinear of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT will note why the word deliverance is used, rather than redemption. Redemption or ransom is LOOSENING. Deliverance is far more; it is FROM-LOOSENING. Its special force is evident in the fourteenth verse of this chapter, where the sealing of the holy spirit (which is only for those who have been redeemed) is until the *deliverance* of that which has been procured. Deliverance by blood is not simply a guaranty of future good, but a present realization and enjoyment of freedom from God's indignation. It is not that we *will* have this, but we *are having* it now. This word is peculiarly Paul's. He uses it seven times out of its ten occurrences.

Deliverance is by blood and by power. It averts God's just sentence and it rescues from the evil circumstances of human life. In Egypt, the firstborn were delivered from the death stroke of the destroying messenger by the blood of the lamb (Exodus 12). The whole nation was delivered from the armies of Egypt by the outstretched arm of Yahweh.

All Israel was shielded from the inflictions that fell on Egypt by the divine mercy alone. But if Egypt's firstborn are to be slain, justice demands that Israel's firstborn suffer a like penalty. Their only escape lay in a release acceptable to Yahweh. As the firstborn are to be delivered, a lamb is taken for each household. There was not one lamb for each person, nor yet one for the whole nation, as in the Antitype. There was, roughly speaking, one lamb for each firstborn.

So we see that the *firstborn*, and they alone, *were delivered by blood*. They form a select company in the wilderness. No wonder that Yahweh does not wait a day before He tells them: "Hallow to Me every firstborn male . . . It is Mine" (Ex.13:1,2). And no wonder that it became a statute in Israel that every firstborn animal was to be sacrificed to Yahweh. Only the firstling of an ass and the firstborn of mankind might be ransomed, and each with a lamb. If not, then the animal's neck was to be broken (Exodus 13:13).

Thus it was when they came out of Egypt. But when Yahweh pitched His tent in their midst in the wilderness the ransom of the firstborn passed over to the tribe of Levi. They were hallowed and set apart from the rest of the nation to wait on Him. They were numbered by themselves (Num.3:12). This is a precious picture of Yahweh's estimation of the blood, and it shows how He has only those near Him who know a blood deliverance. *All* Israel were delivered from Egypt by *power*, but only those hallowed by blood could draw near to Him. The rest were kept outside His habitation.

We would miss much, indeed, if we did not see in this history a type of God's Lamb and the blood He shed on Golgotha, which is the sole ground of confidence of the ecclesia of the firstborn (Heb.12:23). It portrays that later exodus, as told us in the treatise called Acts. Once the nation was identified with Moses. Then marvelous power was put forth to deliver them from the bondage of Egypt and bring them into the promised land. Now "the powers of the impending eon" (Heb.6:5) are put forth on behalf of the people, not only to indicate deliverance from their enemies, but as a prelude to the coming Kingdom.

Once the land lay but a short journey across the desert sands. Now the Kingdom has drawn very near. No long deferred delay is necessary. But, even as they spent forty years in the wilderness for lack of faith, so now, for forty

years, they try God's patience by refusing to trust in His Prophet, of Whom Moses had told them (Deut.18:15-18). Once a few entered Canaan and brought back some of its goodly fruit. So now they are given a taste of the celestial gratuity (Heb.6:4).

But, alas! The majority never reached that delectable land! All lacked confidence in Yahweh except Caleb and Joshua. So now, the nation fails to enter the Kingdom because of unbelief. They cling to the law and their own dead deeds. The majority, in both cases, never knew deliverance by blood, though surrounded by tokens of His ability to deliver them by His power. If we dwell too long on deliverance by power, it is only to keep it distinct from blood deliverance, and to note its contrast. Deliverance by power will come before us again. For us it is future. Deliverance by blood, however, is our present portion.

The treatise on the Kingdom of God, called the "Acts of the Apostles," will never be fully understood until these two distinct deliverances are perceived. The whole nation of Israel partook of a measure of blessing, even in unbelief. The Circumcision epistles, Hebrews, James, Peter, John, and Jude, should be read in this light. How many of God's dear people, sheltered by the blood, have needlessly shuddered under the dark shadows of the sixth and tenth of Hebrews! These apply to those who had known only the premonitory evidences of a future deliverance by power. They have no bearing on those beneath the blood.

Deliverance by power is brought by *strength*; the blood is a memorial of *weakness* and *suffering*. The soul of the flesh is in the blood (Lev.17:11). Sensation is situated in the crimson stream. There is nothing in the actual substance of the blood which has any intrinsic value. The animals slain under the divine ritual did not suffer, it is true, for the blood was poured out so that sensation fled. But in the great Antitype, when God's Son *poured out His soul*

unto death, it was not until after He had suffered that the blood was shed. The blood figures the abiding efficacy and value of His sufferings.

Deliverance by power needs no memorial other than its own effects. Deliverance by blood reminds us of a Sacrifice. In the tabernacle types, there was an annual repetition of the great day of Atonement, or Shelter. The victim was slain but once a year, but its blood was efficacious for a twelve month. The crimson spots upon the Propitiatory preserved all its value for the eyes of God. So with the great Antitype. The virtue and value of His death, and all its precious fragrance will never cease. Though the actual blood has long since been lost, in figure it will remain forever, the memorial of the sufferings which will deliver the whole creation.

They crucified Him. Little did they dream that thus their foulest deed would bring them fairest favor. Little did they know that the physical agony was but the sign of far sorer sufferings, due to His severance from God's face. Yet now the suffering all is past. This fact alone should make our hearts a well of gratitude, not because of what it brings to us, but what it means to *Him*. The wormwood and the gall have been displaced by perpetual pleasures at God's right hand. The sufferings, the darkness and despair, are far beneath our fathoming. And so are the glories also—higher than our eyes can reach, though we yet shall see and share them with Him.

A suitable reward for all He did we never could have offered Him. But God has given Him a place and a portion which it should be our delight to trace and bid our hearts confirm. His death is past, yet, though eons draw upon the resources of His blood, they never will exhaust its potency or drain the wealth it brings to God. Upon His sufferings, upon the blood which speaks of it, reposes this deliverance, rich and rare. But the severance from a doom

well merited, wondrous as that blessing is, is but the lower score of the divine harmony. Before touching the higher keys, let us sound these lower notes.

SIN

The whole creation is under law. All else would be confusion, chaos. Breaking the laws of nature brings on a retribution none can stay. Failure to conform to law in any sphere is sin. Had man not swerved from his lawful course, he would be perfect, and would measure up to the standard God Himself had set. To lack aught of this ideal condition is proof positive of sin, of lawlessness.

All failure is sin. In the olden time there were men in Israel so expert with the sling that when they shot they never "sinned" (Judges 20:16). That is, they never *missed the mark*. This is the essence of sin. It is not confined to overriding known commands. It includes every failure to attain perfection, in every sphere, material, mental, or moral. Let us, in spirit, transport ourselves into the consummation, when sin shall be banished. Suppose (which cannot be) that in that bright scene a single ray of light should depart from its appointed, God-given path. Suppose that one thought should stray into devious ways. Suppose that a solitary act should be unholy. Such lawlessness, such sin, would once again drag down all to wreck and ruin. In the beginning a single sin brought about the moral chaos that we see.

TRANSGRESSION

Adam's guilt was far heavier than this. He did not merely fail, for he transgressed. Before He sinned God had spoken, showing him the boundaries of obedience and where sin's territory began. God had said, "you must not." Yet he did. He walked right over the prohibition God laid down. He trespassed into the realm of the forbidden. This was

more than sin. It was not the lawlessness of failure or of ignorance, but of light. It was a *transgression*.

OFFENSE

Yet a deeper, darker side than even this marked Adam's act. God had been with him as a friend. He had supplied a present bounty for every need. He had given Adam a place superior to every creature that he knew. He had done everything to win his heart. The serpent knew what would most wound God's affections. It aims directly at these deeper feelings, and insinuates that God is dealing deceitfully with His creatures. And Eve believes the lie! *Sin* brings misery on mankind; *transgression* calls down indignation; but an *offense* is the wound that aches God's heart.

THE FORGIVENESS OF OFFENSES

Perhaps the word "forgiveness" here should be put in quotation marks, for it suggests the pardon granted in the proclamation of the Kingdom, though it is now adapted to a higher sphere. That pardon, however, was in line with the limited mercy dispensed at that time, this is in accord with His *grace*, yes, the *riches* of His grace. Hence, though the word "forgiveness" is used, the thought is immeasurably above its former usage. Moreover, this is connected, not with sins, but offenses. Sins may be pardoned, but offenses against the feelings must be forgiven.

THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE

The forgiveness of offenses seems to be so far below the sphere of truth in the Ephesian epistle that those who are most enlightened are tempted to look askance at the phrase and wonder if it is well founded in the ancient text. They have learned that pardon, or forgiveness (it is the same word) is probational. It belongs to the proclamation of the terrestrial Kingdom. Many who gained pardon, like

the ten thousand talent debtor, lost it through misconduct. The great mass of pentecostal believers, by their refusal to allow pardon to be preached to the gentiles, had their own pardon revoked.

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

Ephesians does not deal with the pardon of sins, but the forgiveness of *offenses*. It is not in the sphere of government, or of the courtroom, but of the home. It has reference, not to God's rule, or His righteousness, but His *feelings*. We are not forsaking justification for a lower benefit. We are going on to a higher, even if one of the terms is borrowed from the lower. We have not only sinned and are justified, but we have offended God, and are forgiven.

This forgiveness, however, is not measured by the mercy shown to the Circumcision. That, as we have seen, was comparatively stinted and probational. It sprang from pity rather than love. It was temporary because its term depended on its possessor instead of on God. This forgiveness is *according to the riches of His grace*. It were wise never to leave off this phrase. We have *not* "the forgiveness of sins" but "the forgiveness of offenses *according to the riches of His grace*." *This raises it to the level of its context. This makes it glow with glory.*

The grand gulf between the probational pardon of sins granted to the Circumcision and this rich deliverance is best seen in their results. The majority of those who were pardoned fell away and forfeited eonian life. We, who receive the forgiveness of offenses, not only remain in grace, but

are the recipients of its lavish gifts. We alone are associated with Christ in the administration of the complement of the eras, in which He attains His highest eonian dignities. We were last. We are destined to be first.

A. E. Knoch

A NOTE ON FORGIVENESS

In Ephesians 1:7 Paul speaks of our present deliverance through the Beloved One's blood which he defines as the forgiveness of offenses. Yet it seems to me that Brother Knoch's comments on this forgiveness lacks the clarity of his explanation of the deliverance through Christ's blood. He seems to suggest that "forgiveness" is not the best term for Paul to have used in this context, although he upholds it in its contextual sense "in accord with the riches of [God's] grace which He lavishes on us."

Forgiveness is not justification, but the forgiveness of offenses which we are having accords with the rich grace of justification which has been procured through the suffering and death of God's beloved Son. To be reckoned righteous (*cf* Rom.4:5,24) is not the same as being constituted righteous (Rom. 5:19). Conciliation is not the same as reconciliation, but in that it comes about through the death of God's Son (Rom.5:10,11; 2 Cor.5:18,19), it accords with the grace of reconciliation which has been procured (indeed for all) through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:13,20). Had Paul used the word "conciliates" here in Ephesians as he does in Romans and 2 Corinthians, his point might be clearer to us, for forgiveness and conciliation speak of our present blessing of peace toward God and removal from His indignation on the basis of the suffering death of God's Son. These are temporary, but as Brother Knoch points out they are not provisional and cannot be retracted. They are secured unto the full enjoyment of righteousness and reconciliation (when we shall not offend or sin) is delivered to us.

D.H.H.

THE SECRET OF HIS WILL

AT PRESENT most of God's creatures are out of harmony with Him. He is either unknown, ignored, or defied. The ideal relationship with God is well expressed by the word "complement." We should combine with Him to make one harmonious whole. All that is in Him should find a response in us. There should be such mutual reciprocation in every relationship of life as will be most delightful to both. As Creator we should take our place as His creatures. As Father we should be His beloved sons: He the Reconciler, we the reconciled. He the Deliverer, we the delivered. But, more than this, we are accorded a place with Christ in His work of revealing Him to the celestial hosts. It is only as we ourselves are *filled with His affection* that it can overflow to others.

HIS GLORIOUS RICHES

No epistle in the Scriptures is so full of harmonies as Ephesians. There is a continual assurance that each phase of our blessing is in accord with all the rest. Our sonship suits the delight of His will (1:5). The "forgiveness" of our offenses harmonizes with the riches of His grace (1:7). The secret of His will is consonant with His delight (1:9). Our predestination (predesignation) is in unison with His purpose (1:11). Paul's dispensation agrees with God's grace which, in its turn is attuned to His powerful operation (3:7). The insight of the celestials is in line with the purpose of the eons (3:11).

God's riches are glorious. In these last days riches have increased. There are many men of vast wealth, and for-

tunes have been amassed which are amazing. Great as is their material magnificence, they are sadly lacking in moral glory. Much of our unrighteousness and crime is connected with money. It occasions far more misery than it alleviates. In general, riches are a menace to society. Yet all will acknowledge that wealth has power. It is fast becoming the paramount force in human affairs. It overrides social prestige and political influence. What could we not accomplish with an unlimited command of means! Yet one thing cannot be bought by all the wealth of all the world. That is *love*. God's wealth alone has the moral glory that influences the affections.

Outwardly we may be as weak as Timothy, with his frequent infirmities. We may be clothed in rags and live in the meanest of shelters. There may be nothing to indicate that we are rolling in the real riches. This wealth is not for the outer man at present. It is spiritual, and for the spirit. It is for the man within. Men behold the external appearance, God looks on the heart. Through His spirit our hearts become the habitation of Christ. This is the ground of our strength, for our vitality and stability depend upon the apprehension of God's love which has been poured out into our hearts through His holy spirit (Rom.5:5). As a plant seeks its sustenance and strength in the soil, so we should search for our sustentation and support in the subsoil of God's activities, the fact of His affection. We can flourish in no other ground. Here alone can our roots find nurture and our trunk find strength. Both of these are necessary for fruit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control (Gal.5:22).

CHRIST'S UNIVERSAL HEADSHIP

To those in the embrace of the glory of His grace, God makes known the secret of His will to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up the uni-

verse in the Christ (Eph.1:9,10). He presses Wisdom and Prudence, with all the resources at their command, into the service of this great secret. Christ has many eonian glories. This is the highest of them all. He is the Son of Adam, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David. He is the King of Israel, the Owner of the land, the King of kings. All of these glories are not only confined to the earth, but find fulfillment in the day of the Lord. They do not enter the final eon, when, as the Son of God, He administers the whole universe.

The clearest intimations of the eon after the day of the Lord found in the Old Testament may be summed up in the statement that, in that era, Christ will continue to reign over the earth, even after His priestly functions vanish. The secret here revealed also definitely assigns Him the headship over the earth, and consists in enlarging the scope of His reign to include the heavens (Eph.1:10). *Christ is to be the Head of the universe!* That Messiah's rule included all the earth was a secret the initiates have known from early times. To be with Him in this earthly Kingdom was the high hope He put before His own. Even Paul, at first, had looked for this earthly paradise. But now, as we have seen, he longs for blessing in the heavenly spheres. His hope is no longer fixed on earth, but among the celestials.

It is not possible that there can be a blessed place, anywhere, apart from Christ. Our hearts have no heaven but where He is. So it is essential, at this point, to insert this secret of Christ, lest it seem that we are exalted and He is left beneath upon the earth. If our blessings are among the celestials, if we are to reign in regions supernal, it follows that these are beneath His sway, for we have naught without Him. Before this, God's revelation was confined to the earth. There was no necessity for revealing His higher glories, for His saints were not partakers in them. Now that our destiny is celestial, we are entrusted with a secret

so staggering, so superb, that few of His saints have ever heard of it, almost none believe it, and these are unable to measure or even imagine its immensity.

Christ will be Head, not on the earth alone, but over the highest heavens. His sway will include the vast universe in its embrace. The heavenly realms, which men are only beginning to explore, will all be beneath His pierced feet. Look with me, on some dark night, into the starry sky and behold a few of His domains. Come with me to the desert and see them double their number in the clearer air. Join me on yon mountaintop and peer through the greatest glass that man has made to search the star-strewn firmament. A thousand times as many stars swim past our wondering gaze. But mortal eyes are far too weak, even with the greatest of telescopes. Let us allow the stars to set their seal upon a photographic plate. So many millions more appear that our spirit falls upon its face in awe, for we have begun to glimpse the grandeur of His celestial kingdom.

The headship of Christ must not be confounded with His salvation. The rule of our Lord should never be confused with reconciliation. Universal reconciliation cannot occur until He *abdicates* the throne. His headship *ceases* when He hands over the Kingdom to God the Father. The universal sovereignty of the Son of God *precedes* the consummation. Universal reconciliation follows it. His headship is in the last eon. Reconciliation does not become universal until after the eonian times are past. The complement of the eras lies between the judgment era of the great white throne and the close of all the eras, for it must be the last.

The word *plêrōma* is somewhat difficult to translate correctly. The usual rendering of the Authorized Version is *fullness*. But it never denotes the state of being full, but rather, as they have translated it in its first occurrence, that *which is put in to fill up* (Matt.9:16). It is *that which fills*,

or the *complement*. The eras of human history will some day fulfill, their cycle. The final era, which completes their number and rounds out their ministry, is characterized by the rule of one Human over the whole universe. He Who descended into the lowest depths to save, ascends to the highest place in order to rule.

It is worthy of note, in passing, that the Circumcision epistles never mention a *plêrōma*, for their ministry was not final. Paul speaks of the complement of the nations (Rom. 11:12,20), of love as the complement of law (Rom. 13:10), of the ecclesia as the complement of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 4:13), of Christ as the complement of God (Col. 2:9) and of all else (Col. 1:19). Only in Paul's epistles do we find God's work brought to final fullness. He alone adds the finishing touches. These are indicated by this word *plêrōma*, or complement.

The only indication of this era we have in the Old Testament is that rule, the reign of Christ and His saints, is to continue *further* than the priestly millennial reign. Priesthood is only for *olam* ("forever"). Kingship is for *olam va ad* ("forever and ever"). This is in exact accord with the clearer details given us in Revelation. There we find that the reign of the saints as kings *and* priests is limited to the thousand years (Rev. 20:6). They still continue to reign in the next eon, but there is no temple and no priesthood. This is the complement of the eras. The throne of God and the Lambkin is upon the earth. John has no vision of the heavens. It is a secret reserved for Paul and the celestial saints. We have no part in the new Jerusalem. Our portion is in the high heavens.

From our present viewpoint we are apt to get a most distorted view of God's dealings in the eonian times. We look back at almost seven and a half thousand years of human history and find it written with tears and blood. We look forward hopefully to a thousand years of bliss for

suffering mortals, but even that blessed era will close in revolt and fire. Is this the full cycle of the eras? Has God accomplished all He set out to do? Has humanity been fully tested? Mankind has fully manifested its sin. We are satisfied on that score. But we are not sure that Christ has done all that He can do. He is a Human, and as a Human we are sure that He can bring humanity to the very summit of perfection. This He does not accomplish in the day of the Lord. Hence this is what is before Him in the day of God, which follows it.

How long will this final era be? There is no definite revelation given to us. We feel sure that the thousand generations of which the Psalmist speaks must be within the eonian times. This would give the eons a period of at least twenty thousand years. Perhaps it coincides with that great astronomical cycle, the precession of the equinoxes. That would be about twenty-four thousand years. During this period the sun seems to shift its crossing of the ecliptic, through all of its signs. In twenty-four thousand years the polar star seems to make a complete circle. If the eonian times are so long, we have only begun them, and there will still be nearly sixteen thousand years left at the end of the millennium. This leaves a long, long time for the final eon, the era which completes the cycle.

There is no such thing as chance in God's sight. A lottery, in Israel, was not an appeal to blind fate, but to Yahweh. We who believe, in this present era of grace, were taken by lot to share the celestial honors of our Lord. When the yearly meeting of farmers occurred in each community in ancient Israel, they divided into groups, and first of all the allotments were divided among the heads of these groups, who allotted them to the others. We belong to Christ. He is our Head. He has been allotted the heavens: our lot is cast in Him.

At this point it is well to draw the attention of our read-

ers to the fact that *nothing in the first twelve verses of Ephesians is directly concerned with the nations*. We have been taking this for granted, for reasons which will presently appear. But, first of all, it applies to Paul and those of the Circumcision who received his message. It is all in the first person. Six times he speaks of *us*, twice of *we*, once of *our*. In contrast to this he begins verse thirteen with an emphatic *you*—the Uncircumcision, the nations. It is necessary to note this in order that we may understand fully one statement which, while true of the aliens, was especially important in connection with the Circumcision who were chosen for this grace.

THE COUNSEL OF HIS WILL

Yahweh had counselled with His people Israel concerning their blessing and destiny. It was quite clear even to the apostle Paul that he would have his place in the earthly Kingdom of which the Hebrew prophets and our Master Himself had spoken. How could he look forward to aught else but what Yahweh had revealed? But now, without explanation, *his blessing and destiny both are changed*. What right had God to make this alteration? Did He confer with Paul about it first? Did He consult anyone affected by it? We may be sure He did not do it without competent advice. But to whom could He go? Who was able to advise Him? *No one!* So He takes the counsel offered by His own determination. In this crisis He retires into the privacy of immanent and absolute deity and bases this fresh departure on the immutable sovereign will which underlies every activity in the universe.

How Godlike is this thought! He does not apologize to Paul. He does not even explain. Why should He? He is the Deity. He does what He wishes. Notwithstanding appearances, this is precisely what He is doing everywhere and at all times. He is not hindered by His own revelations.

He is operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His own will. It always was His intention that Paul (and we) should be associated with Christ's heavenly headship. And it was His will that this should be kept secret until Israel had been thrust aside. To Paul, to us, He wishes to be known as the only and absolute Deity, Who is working our welfare even when we are not aware. He would have us trust in Him, not merely His promises.

THE LAUD OF HIS GLORY

The revelation of God is a synonym for His fame or glory. What He does is so marvelous and what He is is so wonderful that no glory could exceed His unveiling. Let us not be satisfied with a knowledge of His acts, or an acquaintance with His ways. These are but the pathway to a knowledge of Himself. Let us go on until we no longer "stand on the promises," but rest in God. Hitherto God had stressed His ways and words and demanded faith in their fulfillment. Now He makes known His secrets, which deal with previously unknown activities. From these we learn His inmost motives, and we learn the great lesson of the eons, to trust all to Him. The *future*, beyond the consummation, is unknown. But the *God* of the post-eonian eternity we know, and that is all we want to know!

THE PRIOR EXPECTANCY

Here we have an entirely new destiny. How are these elect to get to their celestial allotment? Israel's saints will be recalled to life on the earth just before the millennial reign. The day of the Lord will have commenced more than seven years before. During this period God's attitude toward the earth will not be one of conciliation, as it must be in this economy of grace. He will be indignant and visit this scene with the terrors of His vengeance. We cannot be here then. It follows that the celestial company

here revealed must be taken from the earth at least about a decade before Israel's saints are roused, hence they have a prior expectation (Eph.1:12).

The ancient prophets, our Lord, and His apostles, give no hint of any coming prior to His presence in person on the mount of Olives (Zech.14:4; Acts 1:12). This teaching is confirmed by Peter and James and John, and the unknown author of Hebrews. All expected a furious time of affliction, through which those who call upon the Name of Yahweh would be saved.

But there is a very real sense in which Christ has already come in glory. He was present to Paul, on the Damascus road, in blinding splendor, long before the time predicted by the prophets. And it is to this same apostle that He later reveals His presence in the air before the time of Jacob's affliction. To the Thessalonians, who were sorrowing for their dead, and who supposed themselves to be overtaken by the time of trouble, Paul reveals the presence of the Lord *in the air* before that dread day. As a consequence, those who received this teaching through him had the expectation of meeting the Lord before He would come to Israel. They were called *pre-expectants*, they had a prior expectation.

As we have already seen, the great truth of the "mystery" came only to this class. It was not sent to, nor intended for, nor received by, the bulk of the Circumcision. The calling above was a fitting prelude to the celestial destiny later revealed. In a very real sense it left the saints "in the air." They could not come back to earth beneath the black thunderclouds of raging wrath. They could hardly remain in the atmosphere. The matter was left in suspense. All that was revealed was that they would ever be with the Lord (1 Thess.4:17). Now we have the logical outcome. He is exalted to celestial supremacy. Hence we must share it with Him.

Before the apostle sums up and defines the present

secret administration in the third chapter, he refers us to this mystery again. After mentioning the administration of the grace of God that is given to him for us (Eph.3:2), he inserts a parenthesis to show the relation which Christ's celestial headship sustains to the present secret administration, introducing it by the connective *according as*: "according as I write before [in Eph. 1:10], in brief, by which you who are reading are able to apprehend my understanding in the secret of Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it was now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets" (Eph.3:3-5). This reference to *the secret of Christ* is usually confused with the secret administration, which is the main subject of the chapter. These two are quite distinct. This concerns Christ's headship over the earth, which had been revealed in the prophets, and His headship over the heavens, which was only now made known to the apostles, including Paul. The secret of the present administration of grace, was made known through Paul alone, and had been hid in God. No one can have a satisfactory grasp of the present grace who does not distinguish between the secret of Christ, gradually unfolded during the past eons, and the secret economy, securely locked up in the very heart of God, and not revealed until Israel was set aside.

To Paul, and to those of the Circumcision who received this message, the celestial allotment was a marvelous advance. To be sure, if Paul should claim His due in the Kingdom, some would give him the place for which John asked. Perhaps he would be entitled to the seat at Christ's right hand. I know of no one who could successfully dispute his right. Yet he, who might have had the highest place on earth, is merely a member of the joint body in this new secret administration of the grace of God. But every member of this body is graced with a glory which grants him a place superior to the highest of earthly honors.

If this means much to Paul, what does it mean to us, sinners of the nations? We have no claim to the lowest place in the terrestrial Kingdom. We have no allotment at all in that administration. We have no deserts whatever. God is not obliged to bless us. He has not bound Himself by any such covenant with the nations. Yet such is His passion for the display of His grace, that *BECAUSE Paul was His worst enemy*, *BECAUSE* we have no deserts but destruction, *BECAUSE* we are lowest and last, we shall share with Christ, His highest and His best. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so is grace, and its gifts, higher than the rewards of righteousness in the earthly Kingdom.

Hence “do not cause sorrow to the holy spirit of God by which you are sealed for the day of deliverance.

“Let all bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny be taken away from you together with all malice.

“Yet become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, *dealing graciously among yourselves*, according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you!” A. E. Knoch

THE HUMAN

In the introduction to the first edition of the CONCORDANT VERSION, A. E. Knoch expressed the hope that the English word “human” could be used consistently for the Greek word *anthrōpos* in a revision of the CV “at no distant future.” That was about one hundred years ago. Whether or not this conforms well with current usage (it certainly does so more readily than in the 1920’s), we are using it more consistently in the current revision to distinguish it from *anēr*, the Greek word for “man.” This is especially important when God’s Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord is referred to as an *anthrōpos*, as in 1 Timothy 2:4, and (already rendered this way) in Philipians 2:8. His association with humanity as a human, capable of dying and being made sin, is critical to His place as the Mediator between God and the entire human race. In accord with this change in translation we have adjusted the preceding comments on the Greek word *plērōma* where Christ’s rule over the universe is in view (top of pages 63 and 64). His exaltation comes by way of His humbling of Himself as a human.

PAUSE, REPEAT AND REFLECT

WHEN, in Greek, the definite article (“the”) follows the word or words it modifies, we are being led to pause, repeat in our mind what has just been said, and reflect on it as it is further defined. This most often occurs in Paul’s writings when the subject is grace. Note how this is done in the following verse portions as rendered in our revised CV:

... **the grace of God and the gratuity in grace**, the grace which is **of the One Human, Jesus Christ** . . . (Rom.5:15)

... **graces excelling in accord with the grace**, the grace which is **given to us** . . . (Rom.12:6)

... **the grace of God**, the grace which is **given to you** . . . (1 Cor.1:4)

... **and knowing the grace**, the grace which is **given to me** . . . (Gal.2:9)

... **in accord with the gratuity of the grace of God**, the grace which is **given to me** . . . (Eph.3:7)

... **His own purpose and grace**, the grace which is **given to us in Christ Jesus** . . . (2 Tim.1:9).

... **be 'invigorated' by the grace**, the grace which is **in Christ Jesus** . . . (2 Tim.2:1).

This construction with grace in view also occurs in Romans 15:15, 1 Corinthians 3:10 and 2 Corinthians 8:1.

In every case the grace points in one way or another to God’s evangel concerning His Son, His death and resurrection, and its effects. The more we pause, repeat in our mind and hearts and reflect on such passages, the more surely we will be *invigorated* by this grace, in walk and thankfulness with praise to God.

D.H.H.

to avoid, or prevent, their actions. May God cause us to remember this when we begin to boast in ourselves, or, to grovel in undue self-condemnation. Let us not foolishly use the freedom of this truth as an incentive to the flesh, yet let us not deny or neglect it out of fear of so doing (*cp* Gal.5:13). And when others offend and injure us, may God bring us to our senses by powerfully impressing these things upon our minds once again, that we may be enabled to be much more sympathetic to all, "bearing with one another and dealing graciously among yourselves, if anyone should be having a complaint against any. According as the Lord also deals graciously with you, thus also you. Now over all these put on love, which is the tie of maturity" (Col.3:13).

We, who in ourselves are nothing and useless (Rom.3:12; Gal.6:3), are nonetheless called upon to live by these lofty ideals, and a great many others. They are our duties (or, in this sense, our "responsibilities"), and it will be our loss to the degree we fail to carry them out. It is evident, then, they are not given to us so that we might glorify ourselves through our faithfulness, but to leave us no recourse than to turn to our God and Father for His saving grace if we would fulfill them at all.

Divine indignation is a "theophany," a *manifestation* of the Deity. God's "indignation" is a figure of *likeness*; expressed in ordinary language, we have called it "condescension"—a matter in which God condescends to being "spoken of as if 'He' were human . . . so that He may reveal Himself in terms within the range of human perception" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.358).

In the day of His righteous judgment, God will pay each one in accord with his acts (Rom.2:6). For their evil deeds, they will receive "indignation and fury, affliction and distress" (Rom.2:9). Through this wise and expedient exhibition, He will present Himself thus. The technical term for such figures as divine "indignation and fury" (even as divine

“regret” or “repentance”) is *anthropopatheia* (human emotion). As with all divine manifestations, this theophany will be effected through His Son, “Who is the Image of the invisible God” (2 Cor.4:4), “the Effulgence of His glory and the Emblem of His *assumption*” (Heb.1:3), to Whom He has given all judging (John 5:22).

GOD DESIGNS ALL FOR GOOD

God is—literally and absolutely speaking—angry at no one at all. At the deepest level, God is love (1 John 4:8) and love is not incensed (1 Cor.13:5). All is out of, through and for Him, occurring in accord with the counsel of His will according to which He operates all. Thus all accords with “what must be” (Rom.8:26).

This divinely assumed role in which Christ will be manifested as the righteous God Who can only be indignant with those who are “persuaded to unrighteousness” (Rom.2:8), will prove to be an altogether wise and expedient exhibition. For, at once, it will commend God’s own righteousness (when set in contrast to man’s unrighteousness; Rom.3:5) and chasten (2 Peter 2:9) those of whom He is fond in a way that is best for them. We mortals cannot become indignant without also becoming sinful (*cf* Eph.4:26). But God is able to manifest Himself in such an assumed role for the sake of His own glory and the benefit of all concerned, while all the while acting in and being motivated by love and perfect righteousness. His motives are of the highest order, and His purpose is for the greatest good.

The story of Joseph and his brothers clearly illustrates the fact that since God operates all together for good, there is therefore no ground whatever for literal, absolute indignation toward anyone. At the human level it was a sordid tale of jealousy and hatred, wickedness and guilt. Though at first the brothers had plotted to put him to death (Gen. 37:18-20), they finally sold him into the hands of Midianite

merchants (Gen.37:28). Years later, however, after having been brought there as a slave, Joseph rose to a very high station in Egypt and was finally appointed its governor by the Pharaoh.

Yahweh was with Joseph and gave him the wisdom to recognize that *He* had devised his evil experience, doing so for the good of all concerned. Joseph, perceiving the hand of God in it all, realized that his brothers were but the men of His counsel, instruments in His hands. Therefore, not only was Joseph not angry with his brothers, but he did not want them to be upset with themselves either: "And now do not be grieved nor let it be hot in your eyes that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you for the preservation of life Elohim sent me on before you to set up for you a remnant on earth and to preserve lives in a great deliverance. So now, *not you sent me here, but the One, Elohim*" (Gen.45:5,7,8). "You devised evil *against* me, yet Elohim, He devised it *for* good in order to accomplish, as at this day, to preserve many people alive" (Gen.50:20).

It was not that God merely (as some will say) "allowed but did not cause" the actions of Joseph's brothers. No, to the contrary, God actually *designed*—He planned and brought to pass—the brothers' evil (and sinful) deeds. But He did so for good, in the best interests of all concerned and for His own glory.

The apostle Paul reveals that the Hebrew scriptures—"whatever was written before"—are to be understood as *representative* of God's ways with ourselves (Rom.15:4). For, if not, they could hardly afford us "endurance," "consolation" and "expectation" as to our own trials and sufferings.

GOD'S WILL AND INTENTION

These matters, undoubtedly, are among "the depths of God" (1 Cor.2:10). While He is able to reveal them, He is

surely able to conceal them: "I am acclaiming You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for You hide these things from the wise and intelligent and You reveal them to minors. Yes, Father, seeing that thus it becomes a delight in front of You." (*cp* Matt.11:25-27).

The Lord Jesus made this acclamation of praise to God at the very time when He had just reproached the cities in which most of His powerful deeds occurred, "for they do not repent" (Matt.11:20). Our Lord recognized that it was God's intention (or decretive will) that His preceptive will—Christ's own call for repentance—should be withstood.

Christ speaks of God as acting intentionally, actually *hiding* His truth, not merely "allowing" men to remain ignorant of it. Similarly, by removing our blindness (while we are yet minors in faith), He *reveals* His truth to us. God is leading us toward maturity, "to all the riches of the assurance of understanding, unto a realization of the secret of the God and Father of Christ, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed" (Col.2:2,3).

In order to "hide" the truth from us, no other means are needed than our own flesh, the Adversary, and the influences which come upon us from this deceived world in which we live. We will do well to follow the Lord's example and entrust ourselves to God, not to mortal flesh: "Jesus Himself did not entrust Himself to [the Jews], because of His knowing all human beings, for He had no need that anyone should testify concerning humanity, for He knew what was in humanity" (John 2:24,25).

Since God is good, we know that He has a good purpose not only in the good, but in the evil as well, in darkness even as in light. For God is operating all together for good. May He grace us to perceive His glory concerning all (*cp* John 12:41).

The words "counsel" and "will" are common nouns. In

some passages they are used in reference to God's counsel, or advice, which men will do well to heed that they might receive the benefits attending such a course. Such passages speak of God's preceptive will, those things which He has *chosen* for man's *instruction*. They point us to "the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect" (Rom. 12:2; *cp* 1 Thess.5:18).

In other passages, the terms will and counsel reveal the divine plans, those things which God has decided should occur. These passages speak of God's decretive will, what He has purposed to happen or transpire. God is operating all according to the counsel of His own will. Concerning all things, He has decided what should occur. Consequently, He acts accordingly, operating all, causing everything that happens to come to pass (Eph.1:11). The only advice acceptable to Him is that of His own decisions (*cp* Rom.11:35). Concerning all, God has decided what is best, and, He will do what is best. For He is God.

GOD IS LOVE

It is not that His indignation is not "real," but that it fails to reveal His inmost Being. It is a genuine divine *assumption*, one of many roles the Deity assumes during the eonian times. Each one is full of wisdom and according to His purpose. The purpose of this assumption is to make a "*display*" of indignation, "and to make His powerful doings known" (Rom.9:22). God *is* love. He is not indignation.

"We are never told that God is justice, or God is power, or God is wisdom. These are His attributes, not His essence. The distinction is of vital import, in the conflicting maze of reasoning concerning God's ways and words. Righteousness and power and wisdom are relative, but love is absolute. He is never so just as when He justifies the unjust, for that is in line with His love. He is never so strong as when His weakness overpowers human strength, for that links it

to love. He is never so wise as when His foolishness confounds the wisdom of men, for that glorifies love.

"All His attributes appear and withdraw at the beck of love. All serve it and never go counter to its commands. We cannot reason that God will do thus and so because He is just, or strong or wise. Love may not give leave. But we can safely lay our heads on the bosom of His love and there learn the great lesson that He *is* love, and has both the power and wisdom to carry out the dictates of His affection. What clearer proof can be given that all that He has done and is doing is leading up to that grand ultimate when He will be All in all, and love will rest in being loved?"¹

God's judgments are not in opposition to or a denial of Paul's evangel, the *good* news of life's justifying for all mankind, being constituted righteous one day through the obedience of Christ (Rom.5:18,19). For God *is* the Saviour of all mankind, and all *will* be made alive (1 Tim. 4:10; 1 Cor.15:22). The glorious fact is, our Saviour, Christ Jesus, "indeed abolishes death" (2 Tim.1:10), and God "*is* vivifying *all*" (1 Tim.6:13)!

In the midst of speaking of God's severity in the day of judging, Paul rejoices to interject that even this is "according to" his *evangel* (Rom.2:16; that is, "in accord with," or founded upon his evangel; *kata*, DOWN). The indignation and death which precede the glorious consummation are only temporary and will soon pass; love and life are permanent and will never lapse.

We who are members of Christ's body have not been appointed to indignation, but to salvation (1 Thess.5:10). We shall be saved from the indignation of God through Christ (Rom.5:10). For in the oncoming eons, God has purposed to display the transcendent riches of His grace in us (Eph.2:7). For ourselves, *Grace reigns* "for life

1. Concordant Commentary, p.371; A. E. Knoch.

eonian" (Rom.5:21), even if our work is a loss and we get no wages (1 Cor.3:14,15). Therefore, God's good news to us is, "Where sin increases, grace superexceeds" (Rom. 5:20). "Now thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity!" (2 Cor.9:15). J.R.C.

WHAT IS JUDGMENT?

It is a sad commentary on the human race to find that the word "judgment" is so unstable and liable to deterioration. This must be because men are so unjust and vindictive themselves. The word has come to mean condemnation and punishment almost exclusively, when it ought to be neutral. How seldom is it used in a good sense among us! It will be worth a good deal of effort to restore its true meaning, if only to keep us from distorting it in connection with the great white throne. Let us note first what company it keeps in the Greek Scriptures.

The Pharisees were not slow to *condemn* others. Yet our Lord rebuked them for passing over *judgment* and the *love* of God. They neglected the reparatory side of judgment. The *poor* (Prov.29:14; Psa.72:4) they failed to judge, and the *fatherless* (Isa.1:23; Psa.10:18), that is, they did not protect them in their rights. Our Lord combined *judgment* with *mercy* and *faith*. These, the weightier matters of the law, they neglected. Such a "judgment" certainly did not mean punishment. Instead of so judging, the scribes devoured widows' houses, though they were swift to condemn those who did not keep the traditions (Mark 12:40).

Perhaps the best place to show that judgment is always *right*, is found in Abraham's appeal to the Lord, when He spoke of the state of Sodom. The Authorized Version reads, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do *right*" (Gen.19:25)? I agree that they expressed the sense correctly, yet I deplore the fact that, in doing so, they passed up a notable opportunity of anchoring the true meaning of the word *judgment* in our language. The Hebrew reads, "The Judge of the whole earth, is He not doing *judgment*." It is clear that anything wrong would not be judgment in Abraham's eyes. If anyone in Sodom should suffer unjustly that would not be *judgment*, and would be wrong. *There is absolutely no injustice in divine judgment*. It is rather, *the righting of what is already wrong*.

A. E. Knoch

PAUL TO TITUS

1 Paul, a slave of God, yet an apostle of Jesus Christ, in accord with the faith of God's ⁼chosen ones, and a realization of the truth, the truth which accords with devoutness, ^{2 on}in expectation of life eonian, which 'God, Who does not lie, promises° before times eonian, ³ yet manifests His 'word in its own eras 'by heralding, with which I' am entrusted, according to the injunction of God, our 'Saviour, ⁴ to Titus, a genuine child according to the common faith:

Grace and peace from God the Father, and Christ Jesus, our 'Saviour.

⁵ On this behalf I leave you in Crete, that you should amend the things that are lacking and constitute elders city ^{ac}by city, as I' prescribe° to you. ⁶ If anyone 'is unimpeachable, the husband of one wife, having believing children (not ⁱunder the accusation of profligacy or insubordinate)—⁷ for the supervisor 'must 'be unimpeachable as an administrator of God, not given to self-gratification, not irritable, no toper, not quarrelsome, not avaricious; ⁸ but hospitable, fond of that which is good, sane, righteous, benign, self-controlled; ⁹ upholding° the faithful word according to the teaching, that he may 'be able to be entreating ⁱwith 'sound 'teaching as well as to be exposing those who are contradicting.

¹⁰ For many 'are insubordinate, vain praters and imposters, especially those ° of the Circumcision, ¹¹ who 'must be 'gagged, who° are subverting whole households, teaching what they 'must not on behalf of sordid gain.

^{12 a}One ° of them, their own prophet, says: "Cretans are ever liars, evil wild beasts, idle bellies." ¹³ This 'testimony

'is true. ^{be}For which cause be exposing them severely, that they may be 'sound in the faith, ¹⁴ not heeding Jewish myths and precepts of human beings who are turning° from the truth. ¹⁵ All indeed is clean to the clean, yet to the °defiled° and unbelieving nothing is clean, but their 'mind as well as 'conscience is °defiled°. ¹⁶ They are avowing an °acquaintance with God, yet by 'their acts are disowning° Him, being abominable and stubborn, and disqualified ^{td}for every good act.

2 ⁹Now you' be speaking what is becoming to 'sound teaching. ² The aged men are to 'be sober, grave, sane, 'sound in the faith, in 'love, in 'endurance; ³ the aged women, similarly, in demeanor as becomes the sacred, not adversaries, nor °enslaved° by much wine, teachers of the ideal, ⁴ that they may bring the young wives to a 'sense of their duty to 'be fond of their husbands, fond of their children, ⁵ sane, chaste, domestic, good, 'subject° to 'their own husbands, that the word of 'God may not be 'blasphemed°. ⁶ The younger men, similarly, be entreating to be 'sane ^{7 ab}as to all things, tendering° yourself a model of ideal acts, in 'teaching with uncorruptness, gravity, ⁸ with words sound, uncensurable, that the ° contrary one may be abashed, having nothing bad to 'say concerning us.

⁹ Slaves are to be 'subject° to their own owners, to be well-pleasing in all things, not contradicting; ¹⁰ not embezzling°, but displaying° 'all good faithfulness, that they may be adorning the teaching 'that is of God, our 'Saviour, in all things.

- ¹¹ For the grace of 'God makes its advent,
Giving salvation to all human beings,
- ¹² Training us that, 'disowning° 'irreverence
and 'worldly desires,
We should live sanely and righteously
and devoutly in the current eon,
- ¹³ Anticipating° 'that happy expectation,

†Even the advent of the glory of the great
 God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,
 14 Who gives Himself ^{ov}for us,
 That He should redeem^o us from ^eall lawlessness
 And cleanse for Himself a people to be
 about Him,
 Zealous for ideal acts.

15 Be speaking of these things and be entreating and
 exposing with every injunction. Let no one be slighting
 you.

3 Be reminding them to be ^lsubject^o to sovereignties,
 to authorities; to be yielding, and to ^lbe ready ^{td}for every
 good act, ² to be calumniating no one, to ^lbe pacific, lenient,
 displaying^o ^eall meekness toward all ⁼humanity. ³ For we^l
 also ^lwere once foolish, stubborn, being deceived^o, ^lslaves
 of various desires and gratifications, leading a life in mal-
 ice and envy, detestable, hating one another.

4 Yet when the kindness and ^lfondness for humanity
 of our ^lSaviour, God, makes its advent,

5 Not ^ofor works, the works in righteousness
 which we^l do,

But according to His ^lmercy, He saves us
 Through the bath of renascence and renewal
 of holy spirit,

6 Which He pours out on us richly
 through Jesus Christ, our ^lSaviour,

7 That, justified in that One's ^lgrace,
 We may become enjoyers ^{ac}in expectation
 of the allotment of life eonian.

8 Faithful is ^lthis saying, and I am intending^o you to be
^linsistent^o concerning these things, that ^lthose who ^lhave
 believed God may be ^lconcerned to be presiding^o for ideal
 acts. These things ^lare ideal and beneficial for ⁼humanity.

9 Yet be standing^o aloof from stupid questioning and gene-
 alogies and strifes and fightings about law, for they ^lare

without benefit and vain. ¹⁰ A sectarian human, after one and a second admonition, be refusing, ¹¹ being °aware that ‘such a one has turned° himself out, and is sinning, being self-condemned.

¹² Whenever I shall be sending Artemas to^d you, or Tychicus, endeavor to come to^d me ^{io}in Nicopolis, for there have I decided to winter. ¹³ Send Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollos forward diligently, that nothing may be lacking to them. ¹⁴ ¶Now let ‘those who are ours also be learning to preside° over ideal acts ^{io}for ‘necessary needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

¹⁵ Greeting° you are all ‘those with me. Greet° our ‘friends in faith. ‘Grace be with =you all. Amen!

TRANSLATION NOTES

1:5 The second aorist verb, “I leave,” and the first aorist, “I prescribe” are both *fact* verbs referring indeed to past actions, but giving them emphasis, apart from time. They are *not* present tense verbs as we are apt to take them, but simple statements of truth. The context tells the time. The verb tells the facts.

2:11 The verb, “makes its advent” (literally “on-appears”) is also a fact verb. Again the time of the appearing is established by the context, but the verb simply and wholly is concerned with the evangelical fact of God’s grace making its advent.

Furthermore, by the Greek syntax (in most ancient manuscripts) we are to connect the term “saving” (or “salvationing”) with the words “to all humans.” Paul does not say that the advent is made to all people, but rather the grace as a saving operation is to all.

3:8 The faithful saying, in this case, is surely the evangel as stated in 3:4-7. That message of God’s kindness, fondness and mercy and Jesus Christ’s grace for justification and a future allotment speaks of things of which we (like Titus) are to be insistent.

D.H.H.

THE COMMON FAITH

IN writing to Titus Paul does not go very far without mentioning faith. What he is and does is "in accord with the *faith* of God's chosen ones" (Titus 1:1). So also he closes with the fond reminder: "Greet our friends in *faith*" (3:15). Like the word *grace*, which is also there in the beginning (1:4) and end (3:15), *faith* occupies a prominent position in Titus as also in all of Paul's epistles, and it generally recalls in one way or another, the evangel.

Paul saw Titus as "a genuine child in accord with *the common faith*" (1:4). What we have in common is not the same measure of faith (*cf* Rom.12:3), but the truth we are believing. It is "the faithful word" (Titus 1:9). In Romans, the foundation letter, our apostle calls this "God's evangel" (Rom.1:1), and in 1 Corinthians he presents it by these words: "Christ dies for our sins in accord with the scriptures, and . . . He is entombed, and . . . He has been roused the third day in accord with the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3). Now also to his genuine child in faith Paul brings the common faith (which Titus already has accepted and believes) before him as our Saviour Jesus Christ's *giving of Himself for us*, that He should redeem us from all lawlessness and cleanse for Himself a people to be about Him, zealous for ideal acts" (Titus 2:13,14).

The common faith is therefore the message we are believing, the message of the faith of Jesus Christ Who gives Himself in obedience unto the death of the cross (Phil.2:8) for our sakes. This message is "truth, the truth which accords with devoutness" (Titus 1:1). To uphold it is to be "sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13; 2:2). Thus what this

JUDGMENT AND INDIGNATION

MUCH OF OUR THINKING is distorted by pride. Even if we have been graced to come to Christ as our Lord and Saviour, that is no indication at all that we are particularly inclined to repudiate our trust in the flesh as to our daily affairs. Indeed many seem to become much more proud and self-reliant after “conversion” than ever before.

When our minds are puffed up by concepts of free will and self-satisfaction over our “decision for Christ,” we lose any real appreciation for God’s grace in choosing us before the disruption of the world and calling us entirely apart from anything in ourselves that might make us more worthy than anyone else. We begin to think that we at least are more “willing” and sufficiently disciplined than others, and so it is only right that the unbelievers should be condemned to unending torment or loss.

Just think of it! For all “eternity” we can say, “All those miserable sinners burning in hell could have gone to heaven too. Certainly the work of Christ saved no one at all, including myself. It wasn’t supposed to. All it did was make salvation possible. Besides, every single one of those sinners deserves to be in everlasting burnings, for, unlike me, they didn’t do what they should have and could have done. And here I am, in eternal bliss, perfectly good and perfectly happy, even though billions of my fellow creatures are perfectly miserable and doomed to stay that way forever! Yet, in the end, I only got here myself because of what I did, not because of the sacrifice of Christ. *I chose* to meet God’s demands for His so-called ‘free gift’ and did so. I wasn’t given any special grace; it wasn’t any easier for me

than for anyone else. It's too late now anyway, so let them burn. Too bad for them, but not for me. I'm happy, and so is God. In fact we're all happy here."

Many do not seem to realize that one does not succeed in avoiding boastfulness by simply being modest. For such a person is still a boaster, albeit a modest and pleasant boaster instead of a haughty and vocal boaster. *One can only avoid boasting in self by truly ceasing to believe, think and say things that are inherently of a boastful nature.* It is only the word of the cross that effectively and wisely trains us in this true humility (*cf* 1 Cor.1:18-30) so that if anyone is boasting, "in the Lord let him be boasting" (1 Cor. 1:31; *cp* Gal.6:14). It is an empty gesture to go through the motions of "giving all the glory to God," while at the same time continually believing, thinking and often even insistently declaring that good decisions and acts are things which ultimately owe their existence to one's own self, God having but made them "possible." May He enlighten us to see, truly, that it is "in the grace of God" that "I am what I am" (1 Cor.15:10).

It is wonderful to know that man's rebellion, including all our proud imaginings, are no problem to God whatever. For whenever He exercises His strong and saving hand, His people volunteer: "Your people will be willing in the day of Your potent power" (Psa.110:3). "Alas, my Lord Yahweh! Behold, You Yourself made the heavens and the earth by Your great vigor and by Your outstretched arm. Nothing at all is too marvelous for You" (Jer.32:17). He is saying, "All My counsel, it shall be confirmed, And all My desire shall I do" (Isa.46:10).

SUBJECT TO HIS JUDGMENT

Men are *accountable* to God; they are subject to His wise judgment, for the sake of His own purpose and their good. They are *not* "responsible" in the sense of being able

faith, its grace and glory, its revelation of God and what He achieves in the sending of His Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin for the condemnation of sin (*cf* Rom.8:3), becomes a training force in our lives for living sanely and righteously and devoutly in the current eon of chaos, vanity and darkness. ("Not that I already obtain [this], or am already perfected," says Paul, "Yet I am pursuing, if I may grasp also that for which I am grasped also by Christ Jesus," Phil.3:12.) The common faith is the evangel of which Paul is not ashamed, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it (Rom.1:16).

TWO FAITH PASSAGES

Thus, then, in this brief, personal letter concerned with practical matters of the believers' lives and assembling together, the evangel itself is the dominant force, often in single words or phrases, but also in two notable passages where it is presented explicitly in fuller detail. These two passages are Titus 2:11-14 and 3:4-7.

These passages stand apart from instruction for sound teaching and ideal acts in that they explicitly tell us what the sound teaching is and what empowers ideal conduct. The focus is wholly on God as He is made known through Jesus Christ's giving of Himself. It is not our righteous acts that are in view, but God's grace and glory, His kindness and fondness for humanity, His mercy. God is the Saviour through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. We are the saved, who are cleansed in spirit, anticipating that happy expectation of life eonian. This is true of us as chosen ones out of all human beings, all of whom are objects of God's grace of salvation and will ultimately know and enjoy His kindness and fondness.

We need to be speaking of these things (2:15) and be insistent concerning them (3:8). They are the common faith which trains us in sanity and ideal acts. D.H.H.

THE ADVENT OF GOD'S GRACE

THE BASIS of the salvation of all mankind is Christ's death for sinners, followed by His resurrection and exaltation. The faithfulness of the One Who sheds His blood for all is what brings about life's justifying for all (Rom.3:22; 5:8,18,19). It is in Christ Who dies for our sins and is roused that all who are dying in Adam will be vivified (1 Cor.15:3,4,22). The exaltation of Christ with all bowing in the Name of Jesus, the Saviour, and all acclaiming His Lordship for the glory of God the Father arises from His obedience to the death of the cross (Phil.2:8-11). The reconciliation to God of all on earth and in the heavens is accomplished through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:13-20). That God is the Saviour of all mankind is God's accomplishment through Christ Who gives Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:4,6; 4:9,10). It is all of God through Christ, gratuitous and full of grace.

Paul's concern in writing is the edifying of the believers. Consequently he focuses on the evangel of God as it particularly relates to us. But since our blessings are based on God's purpose for all human beings, on what Christ has done for the entire human race, it is altogether natural that he will bring this wider view forward at significant points.

For example, the apostle guides us toward a prayerful concern for all mankind on the basis of God's will to save all (1 Tim.2:1-4), and encourages us in devoutness in light of the fact that God is the Saviour, not only of the believers, but of all human beings (1 Tim.4:8-12). A similar pattern is displayed in Paul's letter to Titus.

THE GRACE OF GOD

In Titus 2:11,12, Paul writes, "For the grace of God makes its advent, giving salvation to all human beings, training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and righteously and devoutly in the current eon."

The *advent* of God's grace is the *intervening, rescuing and glorious appearance* of God's joyful favor to humanity in the gift of His Son. In Titus this revelation of God's grace focuses, as it does throughout Paul's ministry, on the death of Christ and its effects. It is the evangel that Christ "gives Himself for us, that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness" (Titus 2:14); it is the saving and justifying work of God which is channeled through Jesus Christ (Titus 3:4-7). This is God's evangel concerning Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:1-5), that Christ dies for our sins and is entombed and has been roused the third day (1 Cor.15:1-4). This appearance of God's grace in Christ's death for sinners lies at the very root of what Paul calls *the faithful word* and *sound teaching* (cf Titus 1:1,4,9,13; 2:1,8,10).

This grace of God is consistently presented throughout Paul's epistles in the clearest of terms:

1. It reveals God's righteousness (Rom.1:17; 3:21) rather than demanding our righteousness, and it commends God's love (Rom.5:8) and is His wisdom and power (1 Cor.1:23-25) rather than being conditioned on human acts.

2. Not only is God's grace of justification and salvation wholly of God, through His Son, it fully recognizes that we are sinners (Rom.3:23), and even features this fact by the type of people being called today, so that no one can boast in themselves (Rom.3:27; 1 Cor.1:29; Eph.2:9).

3. God's grace is founded solely on the faithfulness of Jesus Christ in His death for human beings, all of whom are sinners (Rom.3:23; Gal.2:16; Col.1:20,22).

Even in this letter to a “genuine child according to the common faith” (Titus 1:4), to one well acquainted with the revelation of God’s grace which Paul was heralding, this evangel is everywhere assumed and specifically recounted at least twice. Throughout this letter it is the grace of God in saving sinners that shapes and directs the apostle’s thoughts and words. He hardly can entreat and instruct and guide Titus in the concerns of his own tasks without continued reference to this foundational message of the grace that saves.

SALVATION TO ALL HUMAN BEINGS

Paul’s principal concern in this passage is to remind Titus of the practical power of the evangel in the believer’s life. The evangel of God’s grace trains *us*. But in referring to God’s grace, the apostle makes special reference to its relation to *all*. This connection of God’s purpose for all with His special purpose for us is found in other passages from Paul’s writings, such as Romans 3:21-28; 5:17-19; Ephesians 1:10-14; Colossians 1:20-22 and 1 Timothy 4:10. Now once again we find that the disciplining value of God’s grace in our lives is related to the truth that this grace involves the salvation of all human beings.

Note how this is brought out in Darby’s translation where we read: “For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us . . .” and the New Revised Standard Version: “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us . . .” No doubt it is because such renderings seem to the traditionalist to say too much about the effects of God’s grace that the Jerusalem Bible paraphrases the passage as follows: “You see, God’s grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race;” and, giving a different slant, the New World Translation has: “For the undeserved kindness of God which brings salvation to all sorts of men has been manifested.”

Of course Paul did not use the word “possible” or speak of “all sorts of” people, and even if he had it would not mean that what is “possible” for God to do will not be done (especially since He wills this very salvation of all humanity, 1 Tim.2:4), or that Christ’s death for all sorts of people excludes any of the human race. But such attempts to qualify Paul’s actual words appear designed to preserve a doctrine that *not* all humanity will be saved. The effect is to suggest that Paul used an expression that seemed to honor God’s grace more than he intended.

Why mention salvation in relation to all humanity in this context at all if these or other qualifications are to be understood? The use of the term “possible” seems intended to suggest that what God has done in saving sinners is not sufficient for saving anyone unless we do our part. It implies that nothing was actually achieved for anyone when Christ died for sinners, and that it depends on the human being for the cross to have any meaning to the sinner.

The use of the gloss “all *sorts of*” is equally puzzling. It is generally defended by noting Paul’s reference to “aged men” and “aged women” and “younger men” and “slaves” in Titus 2:1-10. These are certainly different sorts of people. But the fact that those being saved today include old people and young, slaves and free, only confirms the truth that Christ died for everyone and that salvation is not at all dependent on human works or standing. We rejoice that God’s present calling includes sinners of all ages and positions, all nationalities and races, male and female, young and old. But if a corollary of this present inclusiveness is that many people of every sort will eternally be excluded from God’s gratuitous grace, then the joy and strength we get from this passage is considerably dimmed and our comprehension of God’s grace considerably confused.

When this feature of diversity among believers is associated with a conviction that present unbelievers can never

be saved, the whole point of the passage becomes twisted. This sort of thinking is more likely to train human beings in callous self-satisfaction and hypocrisy, or, on the other hand, in crippling anxiety and anguish over the lost, or even more likely in continued fluctuation between these evils of mind, than in a spirit of sanity, righteousness and devoutness.

It is the grace of God as manifested in the death of Christ and its effects for the salvation of human beings that is in view here, and it is this that serves to discipline the believer in his and her daily living. The words "salvation to all human beings" must not be made to draw attention away from God or distort and confuse the meaning of His wisdom and righteousness and love.

TRAINING US

The apostle is concerned with the effects of the grace of God on believers in their present lives. These effects are reflected in our thinking as well as our action. The grace of God trains the believer in a good and sane state of mind as well as good conduct. It leads to sanity and devoutness as well as right behavior.

These are qualities that are essential to Titus' service. But in pointing to God's grace, which motivates such thinking and acting, Paul is concerned that God's grace be seen in relation to its significance for all people. God's grace (to use various connecting terms inserted by different English translations) "brings" or "comes with" or, even better, *gives* salvation to all human beings. The grace of God which has made its appearance in the death of Christ for sinners *means* salvation to all humanity. And in that God's grace has this wide and glorious significance it has a powerful impact on us who believe, a sure and effective impact of sanity in relation to the world in which we live, and right-

eousness in our deeds, and a healthy and growing reverence toward God.

Paul has already drawn attention to this. Slaves who are believing that in His grace God is their Saviour and that His grace means ultimately the salvation of all mankind are led appropriately and naturally to a sane and righteous subjection to their owners and a devout and faithful walk before God (Titus 2:9-13). Under the effects of God's grace, they are not obsessed with fears and resentment and covetousness as so often happens in human affairs. Their realm is inherent in the heavens. God is working all together for good. Their afflictions are momentary and light in relation to the glory to come. But beyond themselves, they are aware that God's grace means salvation for everyone, including their masters who may not be presently saved from dependency on their transitory riches and power, having no enjoyment of Christ as their expectation. God's grace means salvation for them as well, in God's own time.

What could be more sane? What could be more productive of righteousness and devoutness than a faith centered upon the blessed advent of God's grace for salvation to all which is revealed in the evangel?

Hence Paul instructs Titus to "be speaking what is becoming to sound teaching" (Titus 2:1). It is the sound teaching which centers on the advent, the coming into this world, of God's grace for salvation to all humanity, even on His kindness and His fondness for humanity (Titus 3:4), that will guide the believers, both aged and young, both men and women, into sober and sound and good lives (Titus 2:1-8).

It is this evangel which ultimately embraces the whole of humanity in the saving work of God that *trains* us who are believing. At the root of the Greek word for "train" is the term *hit*. Nothing can hit us so constructively and effectively as the grace of God in its vast scope and rich blessedness.

D.H.H.

IDEAL ACTS

THE ESSENCE of “the kingdom of God,” whether in its present governance within our hearts, or in its future implementation, under Christ, over the nations of the earth in the coming eon, is “*righteousness and peace and joy in holy spirit*” (Rom.14:17). Hence it is that “he who in *this* is slaving for Christ, is well pleasing to God and attested by humanity. Consequently, then, we are pursuing that which makes for peace and that which is for the edification of one another” (Rom.14:18,19).

It is true that “righteousness” encompasses many particulars. Yet in our wider pursuit of “righteousness, faith-[fulness], love, [and] peace” (2 Tim.2:22), there are certain things that are basic to our approach, besides being practical necessities along the way. Thus, through his epistle to Titus, the apostle Paul speaks concerning these as follows:

“Be reminding them to be subject to sovereignties, to authorities; to be yielding, and to be ready for every good work, to be calumniating no one, to be pacific, lenient, displaying all meekness toward all humanity” (Titus 3:1,2).

It is necessary for us to be subject to those in authority over us, whether in the civil government under which we live, in our employment, or within our own families.

We must not “calumniate” (i.e., defame or disparage) others, but instead be pacific and lenient, “displaying all meekness [i.e., mild-manneredness] toward all humanity.”

“For we also were once foolish, stubborn, being deceived, slaves of various desires and gratifications, leading a life in malice and envy, detestable, hating one another” (Titus 3:3).

Therefore, if we would now become “well pleasing” (Rom.12:1) to God in our walk, we must be “*transformed*” by the renewing of [our] mind” (Rom.12:2).

It is critical, then, that we become “*concerned* to be presiding for ideal acts” (Titus 3:8). Indeed, we cannot very well “be *learning* to preside over ideal acts for necessary needs” (Titus 3:14), unless we first become *concerned* to do so.

In order to inculcate this concern within us, having first frankly stated how sinful and detestable “we also” once were, our apostle then interjects:

“Yet when the kindness and fondness for humanity of our Saviour, God, makes its advent, *not for works, the works in righteousness which we do, but according to His mercy, He saves us* through the bath of renascence and renewal of holy spirit, which He pours out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that, justified in that One’s grace, we may become enjoyers in expectation of the allotment of life eonian” (Titus 3:4-7).

“Faithful is this saying, and I am intending you to be *insistent* concerning these things, *that those who have believed God may be concerned to be presiding for ideal acts*. These things are ideal and beneficial for humanity” (Titus 3:8).

“*Not for works . . . which we do, but according to His mercy, He saves us*”! And, as concerns His mercy, as related by Paul, God is saying: “I *shall* be being merciful to whom-ever I *may* be being merciful, and I *shall* be pitying whom-ever I *may* be pitying” (Rom.9:15). In the original text to which Paul refers, it is: “I will be *gracious* to whom I am being gracious and will show *compassion* to whom I am showing *compassion*” (Exodus 33:19). Thus mercy accords with *grace*, even as pity accords with compassion.

“Consequently, then, it is *not* of him who is willing, *nor* of him who is racing, *but of God, the Merciful*” (Rom.9:16).

Hence, then, “that those who have believed God may be *concerned* to preside for ideal acts,” “I am intending you to be *insistent* concerning these things” (Titus 3:8).

J.R.C.

INTRODUCTION TO PHILEMON

THIS, the only private, personal letter from the pen of the apostle Paul, is a perfect specimen of its kind. Its powerful yet pathetic appeal is the ripe fruitage of that overwhelming grace which Paul dispensed from his Roman prison. Himself a prisoner, he captures the runaway slave and gives him the freedom of Christ, yet sends him back to the master from whom he had escaped.

This note was doubtless written at the same time as the epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians. Onesimus accompanied Tychicus (Eph.6:21) to Ephesus and Colosse (Col. 4:7-9). From the fact that Onesimus is spoken of as "one of you" (Col.4:9), we may infer that Philemon belonged to the ecclesia at Colosse, and that he was given the message to masters in that epistle at the same time (Col.4:1). But this precious little letter goes far beyond what is "just and equal" so far as Onesimus is concerned. No picture of God's grace can better this. Not only a slave, but subject to torture and death for stealing from his master, he is first reconciled to God through Paul's preaching, and then is reconciled to his master through Paul's pleading. He is caught upon the very crest of the great tidal wave of grace which was just then ready to overflow the whole world. The transcendent grace of Paul's perfection epistles was doubtless his precious possession even before it was delivered to Philemon. Can we realize what this must have meant to him? To be taken from the deepest depths of social degradation and to be seated with Christ in the celestial realms, by faith, almost exhausts the possibilities of grace. And now upon all this, he is given this precious passport to his master's heart! Is it not a lovely little letter?

A. E. Knoch

PAUL TO PHILEMON

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and 'brother Timothy, to Philemon, the beloved, and our fellow worker, ² and to 'sister Apphia, and to Archippus, our 'fellow soldier, and to the ecclesia ^{ac}at your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I am thanking my 'God always, making^o mention of you ^{on}in my 'prayers, ⁵ hearing of your 'love and the faith which you 'have toward the Lord Jesus and ^{io}for all the saints, ⁶ so that the fellowship of your 'faith may become^o operative in the realization of every good thing 'which is in us ^{io}for Christ Jesus. ⁷ For much joy do I have and consolation ^{on}in your 'love, seeing that the compassions of the saints are 'soothed^o through you, brother.

⁸ Wherefore, having much boldness in Christ to be enjoining you as to 'what is proper, ⁹ because of 'love I am rather entreating, being such a one as Paul the aged, yet now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ I am entreating you concerning my 'child, whom I beget in my 'bonds, Onesimus, ¹¹ 'who once was useless to you, yet now is useful to you as well as to me, ¹² whom I send back to you. Him—this ^{is} means my very 'compassions—take^o to yourself, ¹³ whom I 'intended^o to be retaining ^{td}for myself that, ^{ov}for your sake, he may be serving me in the bonds of the evangel. ¹⁴ Yet apart from your 'opinion I want to do nothing, that your 'good may not be as ^{ac}of compulsion but ^{ac}voluntary. ¹⁵ For perhaps therefore is he separated ^{td}for an hour, that you may collect him as an eonian repayment, ¹⁶ no' longer as a slave, but above a slave, a

brother beloved, especially to me, yet how much rather to you, in the flesh as well as in the Lord! ¹⁷ If, then, you 'have me for a mate, take^o him to yourself as me. ¹⁸ yNow if in anything he injures you, or is owing aught, this be charging to my account. ¹⁹ I, Paul (I write with my own 'hand), I' will be refunding it. (Not that I may 'say to you that you are owing me +even yourself!) ²⁰ Yes, brother, may I' "profit"^o from you in the Lord! Soothe my 'compassions in Christ!

²¹ Having confidence in your 'obedience, I write to you, being^o aware that you will 'do +even above what I 'say. ²² yNow at the same time, make 'ready also a lodging for me, for I am expecting that, through =your 'prayers, I shall be 'graciously granted to =you.

²³ Greeting^o you are Epaphras, my 'fellow captive in Christ Jesus, ²⁴ Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my 'fellow workers.

²⁵ The grace of our 'Lord Jesus Christ be with =your 'spirit! Amen!

1:20 "profit"^o: "Onesimus" means "Profitable."

CHARLES SHIRK

Our dear friend in the Lord, Charles Shirk, was put to repose on his birthday, May 8, at age 88. Charles resided in Lake View Terrace, California. He is survived by his wife Norma Jean, son Brian, and daughters Carolyn and Marilyn.

We first met Charles in 1979, forty-three years ago. He was a close student of Scripture, often sharing with us a word of his latest findings through the Concordant Version, even as the expository writings in *Unsearchable Riches* magazine.

For many years, Charles would come in to our office weekly, assisting my wife Suella in the processing and shipping of orders.

Charles enjoyed an unusually clear and consistent grasp of the *grace* of God, keenly noting its many and varied *usages* throughout Scripture, yet while ever maintaining its essential *meaning* of gratuitous favor. As Charles would joyfully relate on many occasions, "Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred!" (Rom.3:27).
J.R.C.

EDITORIAL

GOD is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). This operation and this counseled will are determined and settled in accord with God's *purpose*, of which there are no changes. Yet from our standpoint things keep changing. In September Jim Coram and I spoke by phone, as we have been doing for many years, concerning the next issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (this third issue for 2022). It was our last conversation, for within days he was in the hospital with severe intestinal pain, and within weeks he was taken from us in death (see p.99). Of course, for us, there are always changes, changes in plans, changes in associations, changes round about us in human ways and thinking, some hardly noticeable, others very evident. But with God, Who brings about changes, there is no change of purpose toward which He is operating all "for the laud of His glory" (Eph.1:6,12,14).

The writer of Hebrews takes notice of an adjustment of the eons occurring in his days (Heb.11:3). In the article entitled "The Boundary Line," A. E. Knoch discusses this adjustment in terms of a change in God's administration (pp.101-107). This change brings many rich blessings, but it does not come without trials, which, as Brother Coram shows from the Scriptures, are made by God for our good (pp.108-114).

It was given to Paul to be severed from Judaism and the former apostles to make known the features of God's present administration, which brought about much change. This decisive separation is examined in the two articles, "Paul and God's Evangel" (pp.115-119) and "When it delights God" (pp.120-130). Consequently we center our-

attention on Paul's epistles, for he is our apostle, and he brings God's evangel with a fulness that corresponds with the features of God's present administration which is in faith (1 Tim.1:4).

But these changes all are dependent on the greatest changing event of the eons, the death and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Without that no promise can be fulfilled and no purpose of good can be achieved. Therefore the announcement of this astounding occurrence is called "God's *evangel*," His welcome and good and triumphant announcement of what happened in that brief time of three days nearly two thousand years ago, and its results.

In the last two articles Jim Coram and I contemplate some features of this message (pp.131-144). We cannot exhaust its riches of revelation. But in this we must begin: "The evangel is not good advice; the evangel is good news" (p.142). As certain scholars put it these days, the "gospel" is not 'contractual' but is "apocalyptic," by which is meant it is not "God will save you if you do such and such," but is revelatory, that is, a revelation (or "unveiling") of what has been done, its present significance and future results. This has been set forth anew where the Greek genitive construction "faith *of* Christ" is seen to be exactly that, and not "faith *in* Christ" as usually translated. Our faith is not something to boast in as though it arises from ourselves and is the source of deliverance from sin and death. Rather it is something to be thanking God for, and praying that it might grow along with growth in realization of God's righteousness and power and love in His sending of His Son and the faith and obedience of His Son to the death of the cross. This has called for changes in the CV translation (as in Ephesians 2:8, see *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.112, pp.111-118) which hopefully can be discussed further in these pages, God willing.

D.H.H.

James Robert Coram

OUR fellow worker, Jim Coram, was put to repose early in the morning of October 10, 2022. He had been in and out of the hospital several times in recent months because of recurring intestinal pain, and previously it always seemed he could be restored to normal. He spoke with me by phone cheerfully as we discussed finishing plans for this third issue of *Unsearchable Riches* for 2022 just days before he suffered what proved to be his final relapse.

He was born on April 13, 1946 in Columbus, Ohio and grew up in that general area. A talented musician, he yet turned to printing as a vocation. After a stint in the military reserves, he became interested in the Bible and joined an association which centered its attention on law observance. There he met and married his faithful companion, Suella Beth, who survives him. Soon after their marriage they left the religious organization they belonged to and were directed to the teachings of the Concordant Publishing Concern. It was the great contrast between grace and law that changed the direction of their thinking and provided answers to many perplexing questions.

A quick learner, Jim started a Bible class and became acquainted with other teachers and groups in the midwest, corresponding also with others at a distance. He did some printing for the Concern, and in connection with his own ministry. But in 1981 circumstances brought about the loss of the Coram's home where also the printing establishment was centered. It worked out, however, that they were to move to California, printing equipment and all, with their young son, Marc, and Tony Nungesser who had been assisting Jim in his work.

That opened up a forty (plus) year association with the CPC and *Unsearchable Riches* magazine which was not without troubles and trials, but of which he would assess (speaking for us all) in 2005 as follows:

“As concerns our own personal faith and as concerns our publication *Unsearchable Riches* as well, we can only say that we are thankful for the faith God has given us and for the little place of service He has allowed us to be in.”¹

Concerning “the little place of service” which God gave him we give God thanks for much that enlightens and encourages in his writings and recorded messages. He took up many scriptural issues and shared spiritual truth with boldness and meticulous scrutiny. His studies on Galatians in particular and the series “His Achievement are We” will be consulted often with profit. His “Questions and Answers” examine a variety of subjects that have become obscured by tradition and popular misconception. Perhaps above all else his thoughts on causation, pointing all to God as First Cause, leading to final glory, call for our serious attention.

Yet it would be wrong to speak only of his many contributions to scriptural understanding and not that, like us all, he was a human being who knew the suffering and groaning of Romans 8:18-23. For that is what gives the scriptural revelations of God’s purpose and operations through Jesus Christ their continuing value.

His son Marc, read from 1 Corinthians 15 at the graveside service held on October 28 near Mission, Texas, where he had been living with his wife, Suella. He rests now in peace, waiting for that shout of command, and that glorious change into the image of his Lord, of which our apostle has written.

D.H.H.

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.96 p.262.

THE BOUNDARY LINE

WHERE is the boundary line between the Pentecostal era and the present secret administration of God's grace? What part of the Scriptures applies to us and what was written to the Circumcision? The scriptural line is clear cut and conclusive. It may be briefly stated thus: *All of Paul's writings are for us: all the rest are primarily for the Circumcision.* This is as simple as it is satisfactory. It will stand every test. Those who take *all* of the New Testament as truth for *today* are in error. The great foundation for Christian doctrine is supposed to be the book of Acts. To learn that this treats of the terrestrial *Kingdom* is a vast step in the right apportionment of the truth. With it go the writings of James, Peter, John and Jude, which are based on the Gospels and addressed to the Circumcision.

There is a tendency on the part of some who have gone thus far, to question whether all of Paul's writings may be for us. This applies only to his earlier letters. All are agreed that his prison epistles apply to the present. But his pre-prison letters, which were penned during the era covered by the book of Acts, are questioned. It is found that the later epistles contain much which the early ones do not reveal. Where shall we draw the line?

Those who have lived near the boundary line of two different countries will understand some of the difficulties connected with this subject. Twice have I stood on the line between the United States and Mexico. Once, many years ago, I could not see just where the line was, for there seemed to be no artificial indication. The country on either side looked alike. Both Spanish and English were current speech above and below the border. But there was a sub-

tle change in the moral atmosphere. Rows of guns were stacked before the adobe custom house in Mexico. The mud-walled church was over a hundred years old. The greatest differences were invisible. I hardly realized that I was under another government, among a people with distinct customs and a different mode of life.

It were well if we could learn the lesson of the border in dealing with borderland writings. We once thought that the mere mention of the word "church" in Acts proved that it was for us. Let us not imagine that language settles such things. The Thessalonian letters were the first of Paul's epistles to be written during the Acts era. We must expect the language to be like that on the border. Because I use some Spanish words in my conversation does not prove that I am in Mexico. It may suggest that I live near that country. So the presence of Kingdom expressions in border epistles proves nothing except that they are such.

We should be prepared to find much in the latter part of Acts, in connection with Paul's ministries, which has a strong leaning toward present truth. The very call of Saul is far more in keeping with the grace now shown to the nations than the Kingdom administration of Acts. His turning to the nations points in the same direction. The raising of Eutychus is a specially strong intimation of something beyond the Kingdom proclamation. It is all border truth. But, in Acts, Paul never steps over the border. *This he does for the first time, when he writes his letter to the Thessalonians.* There the evangel is reduced to its gracious simplicity. All that they did was to *receive it*. They became imitators of Paul, which is quite contrary to Kingdom teaching, and in thorough accord with the present. They are taught to *wait*, not watch, for God's Son out of the heavens, not after the great affliction when Christ comes to Israel, but before God's indignation is poured upon the earth (1 Thess. 1:3,6,10).

Perhaps, to elaborate the illustration, it would be more correct to say that he is *on* the border in his preparatory epistles. I well remember visiting the international boundary line a second time where it was clearly defined by a high wire fence. I made a point of standing on foreign ground with one foot back whence I had come. Though I still stood partially on home soil, I was headed for another land. So is Thessalonians, and Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians. The political superiority of Israel lingers slightly in these letters. Israel's dominance is discounted, yet her ascendancy is still acknowledged in some respects. The full entrance of the nations into their present position of highest privilege is not made known until it is revealed in the first chapter of Ephesians. We shall now consider the first full revelation of the present place of the nations. This is not border truth. This is not transitional. It is the final definition of our position in God's purpose.

In the opening paragraphs of Ephesians (1:3-12) we have been reading of the supreme place accorded to some of the Circumcision, who are associated with Paul. We have taken it for granted that the same is true of us. We have anticipated Paul's inclusion of the nations (Eph. 1:13, 14). Let us now meditate on this memorable declaration: "In Whom *you* also [the Uncircumcision]—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 (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of His glory!"

These words are of supreme import to us, sinners of the Gentiles. They should be graven on our monuments, they should be preached from our pulpits, they should be harbored in our hearts. They mean more to us than the Magna Charta to the English or the emancipation proclamation to the southern slaves. They are our fortune, and our fame.

They bring us more of wealth, of power, and of prestige than the highest flight of our ambition dares to dream. Yet how little have the nations noticed them! How seldom are they mentioned! How generally are they ignored!

The logical argument is this: The transcendent blessings Paul had outlined are *spiritual* (Eph.1:3). The nations had received the spirit, by faith, when hearing and believing the evangel. Now this spirit is an earnest of the very allotment which he has been revealing. Hence they also are included in the grace glorious, and are blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials! They had enjoyed the *earnest* of this allotment from the day that they believed. But they did not dream at that time that the possession of the spirit had any promissory value. Now it becomes the title to high celestial honors and makes them joint allottees with the celestial section of the Circumcision.

To stop here and fully investigate the spirit and its operations would break the thread of thought. Hence we will return to this aspect at a later time. While we have the clue fresh in our minds, let us hurry on to the next unfolding, for it commences with a "therefore." Translators are at a loss to render "**THE according-to YE BELIEF**" (Eph.1:15). The Authorized Version ignores the preposition (*according-to*). The Revisers seek to express it by "the faith . . . which is *among* you," but they show their indecision by suggesting "in" in the margin. Rotherham makes it the faith "on your part." But a little consideration will show that Paul cannot be writing of their act of faith in receiving the evangel, for he had known of that for many years, when he was among them in person. Why should he bring it up at this late date? He is dealing with something new, something recent.

Paul here refers to the teaching which he has just enunciated in the preceding verses 1-14. What he has in mind is that peculiar body of truth which was *theirs* to receive,

and he calls it "this faith of *yours*" or "this faith which relates to you."

THE CELESTIAL FAITH RELATING TO YOU

The Greek text of Ephesians 1:15 differs from Colossians 1:4. The most ancient and almost complete manuscripts, the three used in compiling the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, did *not* have the word "love" in Ephesians 1:15. It was added by a later editor in Sinaiticus. On many occasions the additions of this editor are of great value. But in Ephesians 1:15 he seems to be recording the attempts of some early expositors to make this epistle understandable after its message as a circular letter was lost; even though some of the Church Fathers (Origen, Pelagius, Jerome, Augustine, Cyril) *omit* the word "love" when they quote from Ephesians.

Colossians is by no means a repetition of Ephesians. The two paragraphs that seem to be parallel have minute variations which, sympathetically examined, will show how exquisitely the separate details harmonize with the special subject of each letter. In both epistles Paul presents himself as an apostle, for he has been commissioned, and has authority to write and set forth the truth and reveal the secrets which it contains.

In Ephesians Paul appears *alone as apostle* in his salutation. Here his full authority is necessary to certify to his words of *teaching*. Colossians is the complement of the doctrinal section of Ephesians. Two secrets dominate both. Ephesians elaborates the present secret administration of the grace of God with celestial blessings for us, the *members* of the body of Christ: Colossians dwells upon the secret of Christ, Who is the *Head* of that body. In Ephesians, Paul *teaches* the truth, while he *corrects* departure from it in Colossians.

Epaphras seems to have been the principal teacher in

the Colossian ecclesia. It was from him that *Paul and Timothy* had heard of the faith and love which they exercised. Hence he writes, "We are thanking . . . on hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints." Considering the circumstances, the simple term "your faith" was appropriate.

Ephesians, however, was a circular letter, copies of which were sent to a number of Pauline ecclesias. Here Paul writes of "the according to ye faith" or *the faith which relates to ye*, for which the CV has *this faith of yours*. He does not speak of the act of faith which the believers in all his ecclesias had been exercising ever so long, but rather of that body of faith which was especially theirs, namely *the message of this epistle*, which Paul alone had heard from his Lord and which he is now passing on to all his readers: "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 . . ."

After having outlined it in Ephesians 1:1-14, the apostle is not changing the subject when he comes to verse 15, but is rather continuing it as is evident from the use of the conjunction *therefore*. There is one body of faith for us, of the celestial, spiritual allotment, and another, a terrestrial inheritance for the Circumcision and all the nations who are going to be blessed with and through them. We are not dependent on the national restoration of Israel any longer, for our blessings are supernal, among the celestials. In those days this new body of faith was in contrast to the [faith that was] for all the other saints. If the first half of verse 15 were understood, there would have been no need for inserting the word "love" in the second half.¹

1. The *Unsearchable Riches* issue No.1 of volume 31 contains 5 pages (40-44) dealing with the grammatical evidence for our rendering of Ephesians 1:15.

When the time came that the twelve apostles in Jerusalem were assembled to their fathers and the last of their followers had died and the proclamation of the Kingdom was no longer authorized, then “this faith of yours” became indeed the faith *for* all the saints, even though not *of* all the saints, for they had lost all knowledge of their own special celestial faith, and could not understand any reference to it. Even during Paul’s lifetime all his ecclesias in Asia had turned away from him.

In Ephesians 1:15, the apostle does not give thanks because those to whom he writes had believed, but because they have become the recipients of the grace glorious. He was grateful that they also were included in its embrace. His prayer is just as definite in its scope. It all refers immediately to God’s calling, His allotment, His power. The need for this prayer certainly ought to be apparent in these days, for spiritual wisdom and realization of God’s will are needed today more than ever. Hence let us pray for it so as to perceive the expectation of God’s calling, and the transcendent greatness of God’s resurrection power for Christ and for us, also to perceive the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of God’s allotment among the saints.

A. E. Knoch

WITH FAITH AND EXPECTATION

Gleeful, yet unostentatious in their giving, the Yoder family of Hemet, California, Maurice and Anita, and their five children, were instrumental in the continuance of the Concordant Publishing Concern in the early years by financial support and much encouragement. We now learn of the deaths of the eldest son, **Charles Yoder** at the age of 99 years and the younger daughter, **Evelyn Tatton** at the age of 93. They were blessed with faith and expectation, while walking in love.

Together with their extended families and many friends we mourn their loss with the happy expectation of being together with our Lord always.

GOD MAKES OUR TRIALS

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

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

The standard PROBE accurately represents the central idea in the stem *-peir-*, from which we get *peirasmoa*, PROBING, trial, and *peirzaō*, PROBIZE, try. Its most elementary sense is shown in the passages that speak of attempting to do something. Thus, Saul *tried* to join the disciples in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26); Paul and Timothy *tried* to go into Bythynia (Acts 16:7); Paul was charged with *trying* to profane the sanctuary (Acts 24:6). The essence of the term, then, points us to the idea of *attempting* to do something. And, in the nature of the case, the purpose of such

an endeavor also involves the thought of probing. In some passages it is the essence of *-pier-* (to attempt) which is in view. In others, we are directed toward its purpose (to discover) and the means which it employs toward this end (probing, into the unknown).

POWER PROMISED TO ENDURE

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

James speaks ideally when he says, "Let no one undergoing trial be saying that: 'From God am I undergoing trial' . . ." (James 1:13a). He by no means, however, declares that the reason no one should be saying "From God am I undergoing trial" is because (as most believe) He has neither made our trials nor given them to us. To the contrary, since God *has* made our trials and given us *all* that we have, it cannot be that James is hereby denying God's deity with regard to our trials. To the contrary, he explicitly tells us why he says what he says. We are not to be saying, "From

God am I undergoing trial,' for God is not tried by evils, yet¹ He is trying no one" (James 1:13).

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

We are not to be putting God on trial (1 Cor.10:9), attempting to make Him prove Himself; we are to be believing His Word and trusting His promises. However, while confidently relying on Him, we are to be *testing* God (examining and testing out His ways) that we might have Him in recognition and discover the goodness of His ways (cp Rom.1:28; 12:2). But we must never be so foolish as to put Him on trial, to contend with our Maker out of our own unbelief (e.g., Ex.17:1-7).

It is true that we are not being tried by God, as if He were trying to discover something about us (for He already knows all; 1 John 3:20). Consequently, in *this sense and for these reasons*, when being tried, we should not be say-

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

ing that "From God am I undergoing trial" (literally, we should not say, "From *God* [the *Placer*] I am being *tried*," CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT sublinear, James 1:13). This is quite true. For the Placer does not "try" (attempt and probe), He *subjects*.

TRYING OR PROBING

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

"The meaning of *try* or PROBE involves ignorance. The outcome is questionable. Whenever the men of His day tried our Lord they manifested their own blindness as well as their lack of confidence in Him. Yet in the contrary instance, when Philip was tried by our Lord (John 6:6), it is immediately explained that He was aware what He was about to do. His words tried Philip. He practically brought him into trial. Once we see this essential element in the word "trial," which we have tried to express by the standard PROBE, it becomes evident that God cannot try anyone, except in a figurative sense (e.g., Gen.22:1). The teacher in a classroom may "experiment" before the pupils, but that is a vastly different matter from the experiments of an inventor or investigator. God brings trials to demonstrate. This should be abundantly clear from the fact that with each trial He makes a sequel as well. He is like a novelist who determines first of all what the end of the

tale is to be, and then brings on all the dangers and difficulties which will lead up to the sequel, but hold this back for the second volume.”²

IF THE LORD SHOULD EVER WILL,
WE SHALL BE DOING

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

This scriptural teaching, through James, is obviously transadministrational in nature. Indeed Paul presents himself as our model in this matter as well: e.g., "I shall come back again to you, God willing" (Acts 18:21). Similarly, "I shall be coming to you swiftly, if ever the Lord should will" (1 Cor.4:19). Upon hearing the prophecy that at Jerusalem the Jews would put the apostle in bonds and give him over to the Romans, the brethren declared, "Let the will of the Lord be done!" (Acts 21:14). They realized that this was the will and work of the Lord, for, "Would there come to be evil in a city, and Yahweh not have done it?" (Amos 3:6b).

It is not that we may never use the future tense concerning ourselves under any circumstances, but that we

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

are not to do so when speaking predictively where God has not promised. When it is evident we are simply speaking *ideally*, as an example of a commended course, the future tense may freely be used by itself. For example, Paul said, concerning all who were announcing Christ, "I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing nevertheless" (Phil.1:18). He is not boasting of the morrow, but setting us an example.

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

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

It is extremely helpful to realize that our trials, with all their human failings (or "sin") do not happen by free will. Instead, they occur according to the wise counsels of

our God and Father. This realization becomes a powerful influence upon us, giving us an ability to undergo many an unhappy matter that we would otherwise never have. Like Job, we can take these things from the hand of our *God*, our Subjector. For we know, though they find no place whatever in His *heart* of love (*cf* Jer.32: 35; *cp* 44:21), His wisdom dictates their ephemeral presence, and His *hand* brings them to pass, according to His counsels (e.g., *cf* Acts 4:28; *cp* Isa.53:10). This is so that we might one day have the blessing of deliverance from all evil, and glorify and thank Him accordingly.

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

James R. Coram

OUR PRESENT TASK

Our future testimony may be brief. Our opportunity for service may be very short. When our Lord calls us to Himself the ministry of suffering will be over, and give place to the glory. Shall we not make the most of the time that still remains?

There is nothing we can do in the world comparable to making known God. That was the mission of Christ. That will be our work in the coming eons. That is our task now. And what truths in the Scriptures are so necessary to a knowledge of Him as His transcendent grace to His saints in this administration and His limitless favor to the whole universe in the consummation? What is more derogatory to His great Name than the defeated, vindictive, vengeful god revealed by the doctrine of eternal torment? Let us do our utmost to exalt the love and power and wisdom of our God and the potency of the cross of His Christ by showing what they will accomplish when the eons have been harvested. Let us deem it an inestimable privilege to suffer in the proclamation of the truth that thus we may bring pleasure to Him Who suffered for our sakes on the accursed tree.

A. E. Knoch

PAUL AND GOD'S EVANGEL

HERE I wish to begin a review (and note anew in some cases) of certain important details relating to God's evangel as Paul contributes them in Romans and beyond. First of all let us look closely at what Paul says about himself in relation to this good and highly welcome message of God.

Using the "sublinear" of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT as a basis (with some changes) it might be helpful to render Romans 1:1 in English, word for word and grammatical form for grammatical form¹ as Paul expressed it in Greek, thus:

PAUL SLAVE OF-ANOINTED-One JESUS CALLED FROM-PUT-ed-one HAVING-*been*-FROM-defined INTO WELL-MESSAGE OF-God

JESUS CHRIST'S SLAVE

Paul was a slave of Jesus Christ . . . for God's evangel. A slave obeys [UNDER-HEARS], that is, he submissively listens to what is said to him by his Master (*cp* Rom.6:16,17). He was making known the evangel which came to him, not from a human but through a revelation of Jesus Christ (*cf* Gal.1:11,12). His testimony was, "For if I should be bringing the evangel, it is not for me to boast in, for necessity is lying on me, for it were woe to me if I should not bring the evangel! For if I am engaging in this voluntarily, I have

1. The words or parts of words in SMALL CAPS represent the English root STANDARDS chosen in the Concordant System. Those in lower case letters (with capital letters beginning names and titles of Deity) represent terms used in translation or more readily understandable meanings.

wages, yet if involuntarily, I have been entrusted with an administration" (1 Cor.9:16,17; 1 Tim.1:4b).

Few have understood what Paul is saying in Romans 7:25 concerning the enslavement of his mind, but it is in full accord with his position as a slave of Christ Jesus for God's evangel. It is by God's grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord that Paul will be rescued out of his body of death. "Consequently, then," Paul declares concerning his present life, "I myself, with the mind indeed am slaving for God's law, yet with the flesh for sin's law." Paul plays on the word "law" throughout this context. There is the law of God, given at Sinai, for which Paul is gratified as to his inner self (v.22). And there is a different law in his fleshly members which wars with that inner gratification of mind (v.23). Yet in view of the evangel of God's grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Paul himself now enslaves his mind to God's law. That is not *the* law of God imposed upon Israel, but God's own "law," the law by which God operates in not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all (Rom.8:32), even God's evangel. Consequently even while sin's law operates in his flesh, Paul enslaves his mind, day by day, hour by hour, to God's law of grace through Jesus Christ.

A CALLED APOSTLE

Furthermore, Paul was a called apostle . . . for God's evangel. The sublinear of the CV Greek Text uses the English word "commissioner" for the Greek word *apostolos*. A commissioner is not one who commissions, but one who is sent with a commission "with authority for the execution of some task."² This is its usage. Accordingly Paul declares, "Christ does not commission me to be baptizing, but *to be bringing the evangel*" (1 Cor.1:17).

Yet according to its elements, the commission was not

2. cf KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.55, under the term *commission*.

only a placement (“putting”) *to* some task, but also *from* some situation, or activity. The twelve apostles were put into a new service *from* an old work. Paul was put into the execution of a new task, the work of bringing the evangel, which was just the opposite of his former activity. “For I am the least of the apostles, who am not competent to be called an apostle, because I persecute the ecclesia of God” (1 Cor.15:9). Nevertheless he was a *called* apostle, commissioned for the task of evangelizing God’s evangel.

In this we see what is most certainly a telling feature of God’s evangel (that is, God’s “law”) “. . . the stupid things of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise ones, and the weak things of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the strong, and the ignoble things and the contemptible things of the world God chooses, and the things which are not that He should discard the things which are, so that no flesh at all should boast in God’s sight” (1 Cor.1:27-28). In accord with His own law God calls the very one most unlikely from the world’s standpoint to be the apostle for His evangel.

SEVERED FOR GOD’S EVANGEL

Paul had been *severed* for God’s evangel. The Greek verb *aphorizō* refers to a decisive separation. In his “expanded translation” of the New Testament, Kenneth S. Wuest has “permanently separated to God’s good news” here in this passage.³ And in his (“expanded, amplified, multiple rendering) translation, Jonathan Mitchell has “being one having been marked off by boundaries (parted away and determined by bounds separated away and limited off, delineated, defined).⁴

3. The New Testament, an Expanded Translation, Eerdmans, 2001, ISBN 0-8028-0882-4.

4. The New Testament, copyright 2009, by Jonathan Mitchell, ISBN 978-1-4507-0505-9.

Many modern versions use "set apart" here. This is better than "separated" by itself as in the AV (which uses "sever" in Matthew 13:49). Luke 6:22 clearly refers to a strong separation, even as some note, an *excommunication*, (many modern versions use "exclude"). The CV uses "sever" consistently, and this is especially fitting in Galatians 1:15 which is parallel to Romans 1:1 regarding Paul's relationship to the evangel:

¹⁵ **Yet when it delights 'God, 'Who severs me 'from my mother's womb and calls me through His 'grace . . .**

Here, as he often does, Paul uses terms from the Hebrew Scriptures (as rendered in the Septuagint translation), making changes as suits his purpose and adapting them into his present flow of thought. Paul does not speak of what God did for him when he was in his mother's womb (or was given birth out from his mother's womb), as was the case of Jeremiah or the Servant of Yahweh (*cf* Jer. 1:5; Isa. 49:1-5). He refers to God's severing of him from Judaism when God called him in His grace. This severing was like that of a baby being decisively separated from its mother's womb in birth. Elsewhere Paul speaks of that which was gain to him in flesh, both by birth "of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin" as well as his development in Judaism "in circumcision the eighth day, . . . in relation to law a Pharisee, in relation to zeal, persecuting the ecclesia, in relation to the righteousness which is in law, becoming blameless. But things which were gain to me, those I have deemed a forfeit because of Christ" (Phil. 3:5-7). These were a forfeit to him because God had severed him from them when He called him through His grace to unveil His Son in him.

Having told the Galatians of this severance and call, Paul recounts, in carefully wording, his avoidance (complete for three years, and qualified after fourteen years) of the apostles and leaders in Jerusalem.

Clearly, in introducing himself and his concerns, Paul makes it clear that all is directed to the progress of God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And in this he is set apart from his former life, and his commission is to be distinguished even from that of those former apostles who remain within the sphere of Judaism. In this way we will begin to see why he sometimes calls the evangel, "my evangel."

Paul is our apostle, and we need to give careful attention to what he says concerning the revelations made known to him by the risen Lord.

D.H.H.

GOD FILLS OUR EVERY NEED

Now my God shall be filling your every need. I can hardly think of any passage we might need more than this one, because we see so many things in our lives that we tend to think are our needs, you know, and they don't become filled, deficiencies, our own weaknesses, the trials, the things that happen to our family and friends. And we really feel that, well, we needed this person who died, or we needed this good relationship, or we needed a better habit at this time, or we needed to be this or that, you name it. Well, if it was your need for you to have had it, you would have had it, because God fulfills our every need, and it must be in His wisdom that these other things are present when they are things that are so disappointing to us.

James. R. Coram

On hearing of the death of James Coram, our friends, Daryl and Bonnie Jo Reedy, who struggle with their own serious illnesses, sent out the preceding word for word extract from one of his recorded messages. We feel it is an ever-timely reminder for us all.

“WHEN IT DELIGHTS GOD”

Galatians 1:10-17

For, at present, am I persuading men or God? Or am I seeking to be please men? If I still pleased men, I were not a slave of Christ. (Gal.1:10, CLNT)

With these words, having completed the introductory, preparatory portion of the epistle to the Galatians (1:1-9), Paul now begins his personal defense. The dominant theme of the entire epistle is *Paul's defense of his own evangel*. On this behalf, he would first defend his apostleship. If he has been commissioned by Christ Himself to proclaim this evangel, then it is a true evangel. Therefore, it is to be accepted accordingly by all who are in Christ; and, it is to be heeded and personally applied by all who come under its blessing.

The epistle began with the words, “Paul, *an apostle*, (*not from men, neither through a man. . .*)” (1:1, CLNT). Now, beginning in verse 10, Paul begins to demonstrate the truth of this initial affirmation. He does so through the word “for,” which refers us to his repeated, insistent declaration, “If anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be anathema!” (1:8,9, CLNT). That is, the reason why an “anathema” (i.e., a certain, adversative judgment) must fall upon any who bring a *different* evangel (*cp* 1:6b) to those whom God is actually blessing according to *Paul's* evangel, is because, in announcing his evangel, the apostle is not persuading “[as to] human beings,” but “[as to] *God*.”

Idiomatically, the Greek word for “persuade” (*peithō*,

PERSUADE) is also rendered "*have confidence*" (e.g., "those who *have confidence* in money," Mark 10:24; *cp* Gal.5:7-10).

No one would imagine otherwise than that in performing his evangelistic labors, Paul was seeking to persuade *men*, not God. If, however, the word "persuading" is taken literally, without allowance for an ellipsis such as "as to" (i.e., "persuading [as to]"), the sense would then be merely the trite fact that Paul was seeking to persuade men, not God. In that case, however, the causal conjunction "for," in relating us back to verses 8 and 9, would introduce an illogical statement. The sense would then be that the reason why an anathema must befall those who bring a different evangel, is because, in performing his ministry, Paul sought to persuade men! Of course it does not follow from the mere fact that Paul's ministry was on behalf of all *men* (not God), that *this* constitutes grounds for the pronouncement of an anathema upon Paul's opposers.

Therefore, the elliptical "as to" ("persuading [as to] men or God?") or "in" ("having confidence [in] men or God?") must be understood when considering Paul's words here. Then, the sense is, "Am I having confidence (in) men or (in) God?" or, when expressed using the English "persuade": "Am I persuading (as to) men or (as to) God?" The point then becomes that in proclaiming his evangel, *Paul* is confident in (or persuaded as to) the truthfulness of his message, for his message, first of all, is *God's* message. And, because *that* is so, *therefore* ("For," 1:10a) it follows, "if anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be being anathema!" (1:9, CLNT).

In proclaiming his evangel, Paul's persuasion is with *God* in view. Therefore, the apostle's ministry of seeking to persuade others was first of all founded upon his own persuasion as to what God had revealed to him through Christ.

Hence, Paul must further add, "If I *still* pleased men, I were not a slave of Christ" (1:10b, CLNT). Paul's words

here should be considered in connection with his related declaration in Galatians 5:11: "Now I, brethren, if I am *still* heralding circumcision, why am I *still* being persecuted? Consequently [i.e., "In that case, then;"], the *snare of the cross* of Christ has been nullified."

For a time, after Saul of Tarsus (as Paul was originally known) first became acquainted with the Lord on the Damascus road (Acts 9:27), he continued on, seeking the righteousness which is in law, according to Moses (Phil.3:6; John 7:23). Saul anticipated the restoring of the kingdom unto Israel, according to the times and eras which the Father placed in His own jurisdiction (Acts 1:6,7).

During this period, Saul was a member of the ecclesia of believing Jews at Antioch. All such ones lived in expectation of Israel's promised kingdom, according to the writings of their prophets, while seeking to become blameless themselves according to the law, in anticipation of that day. Believing Jews were zealous for the law (Acts 21:20); they practiced circumcision and sought to keep the law of Moses (*cp* Acts 15:5). Jesus Himself had warned that any of that calling who were "workers of *lawlessness*," had no relationship with Him and would not enter into the kingdom of the heavens (*cp* Matt.7:21-23; James 2:10).

Therefore, during that early period, before Saul was *severed* from his law-observing brethren for the work to which God ("the holy spirit") had called him (Acts 13:2), Saul too must have heralded circumcision. In so doing, he, in a righteous sense, *pleased men* by doing that which those who were seeking to establish their own righteousness according to law (*cp* Rom.10:3, 4), rightly deemed essential to entrance into life in the terrestrial kingdom.

Were Paul, *now*, however, to *still* "please men" by continuing to herald circumcision, as he says, "I were not a slave of Christ" (Gal.1:10b).

After having been severed from his past associations,

that he might now be engaged in the service of that glorious evangel of God which, apart from law, bestows a declaration of righteousness on *all* who are *believing* (Rom. 3:21,22), it would be entirely out of place for Paul still to be pleasing men by heralding circumcision.

That is, such service, now, by Paul, could only "please human beings" in the case of any who continued to deem such a rite essential for themselves, even though they erred in supposing that it should be imposed as well on the believers of the nations (Acts 15:1,5). In connection with the evangel of the Circumcision and its service, such a rite was indeed essential; even so, it has no place whatever in connection with the evangel which Paul was heralding among the nations (Gal.2:2). Hence, were Paul now to continue to enjoin circumcision even on those of the nations, doing so out of a motive merely to please those who imagined that this was necessary, he could not be "a [worthy] slave of Christ."

Today, when we ourselves become persuaded as to the evangel which God first revealed to Paul, our confidence too is in God. We can no longer have confidence in the false, human traditions which we first embraced. We must now set aside various ceremonies and observances, ones which we should never have practiced in the first place. If we would be faithful, legalistic scrutiny of days and foods, besides giving heed to sundry do's and don'ts as prerequisites to salvation, must all be repudiated. This is so, even if in so doing we should incur the *displeasure* of man as a result.

NOT IN ACCORD WITH A HUMAN

For I am making known to you, brethren, as to the evangel which is being brought by me, that it is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man, nor am I taught it, but it comes through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (1:11,12, CLNT)

Again, the reason why ("for") Paul was not *seeking* to please men, and was *not still* pleasing *men*, was because the evangel which he brought was not in accord with a *human*. And, in turn, the reason why his evangel was not in accord with a human, was because he neither accepted it from a man nor was he taught it by a man.

"Those who were disturbing the Galatians had no message except what they had received [and corrupted and misapplied] from the twelve apostles. But Paul is unwearyed in his insistence that he received nothing from them (*cp* Gal.2:6). His revelation was a fresh revelation made known to him by the Lord Himself. If Paul merely proclaimed what the twelve taught, why did he not receive it through them? What need for the Lord to descend and call him on the Damascus road? Why should he be severed from the rest at Antioch? Why did the *believing* Jews in Jerusalem oppose his ministry among the nations?"¹

Just as in verse 1 Paul declares that his apostleship is neither of human origin nor derivation, he now makes a similar claim concerning his evangel. Paul's evangel is not "in accord with (*kata*, DOWN) a *human*." That is, his evangel itself is not based upon some preexisting message which was already being taught by someone else. Paul—unlike ourselves, who take our evangel from him—did not simply repeat some extant message which was already in the hands of those who were in Christ before him.

This was because "*neither do I accept [his evangel] from a man, nor was taught it [by a man], but he accepted it through a revelation of Jesus Christ, and he was taught it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*"

The way this text is rendered in the Concordant Literal New Testament, is expedient for the ordinary reader in an idiomatic version. Yet with the added words "it came,"

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.280.

even as with no indication of either the ellipsis or of the parallel construction which obtains in the Greek, it lacks the forcefulness and clarity of the more precise sense, as we have sought to bring out in the preceding paragraph.

Paul did not accept his evangel "from [*para*, BESIDE] *a man*," nor was he taught it by *a man*. The word "man" is in the singular, as in the phrase "through *a man*," in verse 1. In accepting and learning his evangel, since Paul did not stand "beside" *any* man in so doing, neither did he thus stand beside any particular man.

The emphatic intimation here, however, through the repeated, singular form, is implicative of a *particular* man. "It points unmistakably to Peter who figures so prominently in this recital. The circumcisionists asserted Paul's dependence on the elder apostles and the Jerusalem church. They insinuated that he had received his gospel from Peter. Whence, said they, could Paul have derived his knowledge of Christ, but from this fountainhead? This was the fulcrum of the argument which Paul foils."²

In a wider sense, neither is Paul's evangel in accord with man, with respect to the entirety of the human race. The Hebrew term for human being is *adm* ("Adam"). The Circumcision evangel is very much concerned with the human race, not just Israel, and God's purpose for it on the earth and in the flesh. So Paul has in mind to distinguish his evangel from that of the Circumcision (which is in accord with humanity). The apostle does not simply make a general contrast between a message from God that is divine in nature, and one concerned with ordinary human thinking and philosophy. It is not only that Paul's evangel was not "secular" or was not in accord with human wisdom (this *is* in view in 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, for instance). But Paul's evangel is also different from that of the Circumci-

2. V. Gelesnoff, PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, p.35.

sion which has much that accords with humanity, though indeed being of God and concerned with Christ.

It seems that broadly considered, "not in accord with humanity" incorporates both these ideas: (1) not in accord with human wisdom and thinking (as in 1 Corinthians 1), and also (2) not in accord with God's message concerning Israel and the nations, the earth, and the place of humanity as promised from Adam and on through the prophets. Yet the context of Galatians makes it clear that (2) is what Paul has predominantly in view here, "at present" (1:10).

While Paul is indeed relating "his story" in chapters 1 and 2, nevertheless his account focuses on "the grace of Christ" (1:6), "Jesus Christ's revelation" (1:12), that is, "the evangel which is being brought by me" (1:11). So both Paul's story, and the message given to him, have this one pattern: not in accord with humanity, and being in accord with God and a revelation of Jesus Christ that came from God.

SEVERED FROM JUDAISM

For you hear of my behavior once, in Judaism, that I inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it. And I progressed in Judaism above many contemporaries in my race, being inherently exceedingly more zealous for the traditions of my fathers. (1:13,14, CLNT)

Paul's use of the term "Judaism" in itself by no means implies any disparagement (*cp* his related expression, "judaizing," Gal.2:14; *cf* Acts 15:21). Under Judaism, Paul had been circumcised the eighth day, and, in his majority, had become a Hebrew of Hebrews. In relation to the righteousness which is in law, he had been becoming blameless (Phil.3:5,6), even if he was a member of the sect of the Pharisees, which had added many vain traditions to the law.

The point is that "Judaism" simply refers to the institutions of the Jews, the observance of the law of Moses as understood and practiced beginning with the Babylonian

exile. The traditions of Paul's "fathers:" were by no means all vain traditions of men, but were, in many respects, a devout and intelligent observance of the law, as handed down from one generation to the next.

Though the expression "Judaism" was perhaps originally coined by non-Jews, of whom some doubtless used the word with a connotation of contempt it would, when naturalized among the Jews themselves, lose this idea, and even become a title of honor. The case of the term "Christian," which was likewise originally a term of reproach (*cp* Acts 11:25; 26:28), is a parallel case: "For let not any of you be suffering as a murderer, or as a thief, or an evildoer, or as an interferer in other's affairs; *yet if as a Christian*, let him not be ashamed, yet let him be glorifying God in this Name . . ." (1 Peter 4:15,16).

Paul's *behavior*, however, once, in Judaism, in the days of his unbelief, was another matter. As he says, "I inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it." Indeed, not only had he endorsed Stephen's assassination (Acts 8:1), but he was continually "breathing out threatening and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1). He had supposed himself bound to commit much contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarene, and so had acted accordingly. He locked up many of the saints in jails, and even deposited a ballot to despatch them. At all the synagogues, often punishing them, he compelled them to blaspheme. Being exceedingly maddened against them, he persecuted them as far as the outside cities (Acts 26:9-11).

Yet it was *also* true that he had progressed in Judaism itself, above many contemporaries in his race, being inherently exceedingly more zealous for the traditions of his fathers (1:14).

Paul's point is that there was nothing in his former career to account for his becoming a herald of the cross. "His prechristian career was such as to exclude all possibility of

his receiving any doctrine from the followers of Jesus Christ, least of all from Peter, whom, as leader of the Nazarenes [Acts 24:5], he could only regard as an arch-heretic to be hunted to death.”³ Thus the apostle proves that it was simply absurd to suggest as certain of his enemies were insinuating, that he had received his evangel from Peter.

Now, when it delights God, Who severs me from my mother's womb, and calls me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me that I may be evangelizing Him among the nations . . . (1:15,16a, CLNT).

The particle *de* (YET), though sometimes, as here, rendered “now,” is often translated “yet,” which captures more of its essence. For example, “Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . .” (Rom.3:21); or, “yet God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us . . .” (Eph.2:4). Though sometimes only slightly so, *de* is an adversative connective, in the sense that that which follows this expression and to which it refers (e.g., God's righteousness, or, His mercy and vast love) stands against the subject which precedes it. just as God's righteousness, mercy, and vast love, blessedly stand against human sin, thus also God's “delight” to unveil His Son in the foremost sinner (1 Tim.1:15,16), Saul of Tarsus, stood against Saul's Judaism, in which, in his unbelief, he had so ferociously persecuted the ecclesia.

To clarify this point, instead of saying, “Now, when it delights God . . .” we will say, “Yet when it delights God.” Then the sense becomes more apparent: It is true that, as Saul, Paul had once been engaged in *Judaism*, and had progressed in *Judaism* above many contemporaries in his race. “Yet when it delights God,” He *severed* Paul “from his mother's womb and call[ed him] through His grace” (1:15).

Thus it becomes evident that “mother's womb,” here, is

3. V. Gelesnoff, PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, p.37.

not literal but figurative. Indeed, through the severing of the umbilical cord, all infants, when first born, are severed from their literal mother's womb. But Paul, in the considerations before us, was severed from *Judaism*. Judaism was that which had long been *nourishing* him, as well as being that in which he had enjoyed much *growth*. Hence, he speaks of it as having been his "mother's womb."

Thus, Paul was severed *from* Judaism, and even *from* those of its practitioners who were believers in Christ (*cp* Acts 13:2). Yet Paul was "severed *for* the [i.e., that] evangel of God . . . concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom.1:1-4), which, in its most complete form, has been preserved for us in the epistle to the Romans. This evangel of God—which is also the evangel of Christ (Gal.1:7)—was revealed to Paul by Jesus Christ Himself. Hence, with reference to the one to whom Christ had revealed this evangel, Paul termed it "my evangel" (Rom.16:25). This is the evangel *which* Paul brought (1:11); the evangel *which* he heralded among the nations (2:2).

god unveils his son

When it delighted God to unveil His Son in Paul, He simply did so. Nothing is too marvelous for Him (Jer.32:17,27). In this, Paul becomes "a pattern of those who," even when they do not as yet believe, "*are about to be believing* on [Jesus Christ] for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:16). Even in the days of their unbelief, it may be truly said of them that their faith is "*impending*." Thus it was that "whoever were *set* for life eonian," "*they believe*" (Acts 13:48). It is those for whom eonian life has been *arranged*, who believe on Christ. This is because the Lord "overwhelms" the unbelief of "those who are *chosen*" (2 Tim.2:10), "with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:14).

I did not immediately submit it to flesh and blood, neither came I up to Jerusalem to those who are apostles before

me, but I came away into Arabia, and I return again to Damascus (1:16b,17, CLNT).

Paul had not received his evangel from those who were apostles before him, and was acting under a sense of a unique divine call that admitted of neither human validation nor supplement. Therefore, rather than seeking out one or more of the twelve *for any reason whatsoever*, Paul instead came away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

James R. Coram

GALATIANS 1:10-17 (CVNT)

¹⁰ For at present am I persuading as to human beings or 'God? Or am I seeking to be pleasing human beings? If I still were pleasing human beings, I ^hwere not a slave of Christ. ¹¹ For I am making known to ⁼you, brethren, as to the evangel, the evangel which is ^{ev}brought by me, that it ^his not in accord with a human. ¹² For neither do I' accept it ^bfrom a human, nor am I taught it by a human, but I accept it and am taught it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹³ For ⁼you hear of my 'behavior once, in 'Judaism, that I ^{ac} inordinately was persecuting the ecclesia of 'God and ravaging it. ¹⁴ And I was progressing in Judaism above many contemporaries in my 'race, being ^hinherently exceedingly more zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

¹⁵ Yet when it delights 'God, 'Who severs me ^ofrom my mother's womb and calls me through His 'grace, ¹⁶ to unveil His 'Son in me that I may be evangelizing^o Him among the nations, I do not immediately submit^o it to flesh and blood, ¹⁷ neither come I up ^{io}to Jerusalem to^d those 'who are apostles before me, but I come away into Arabia, and I return again ^{io}to Damascus.

God's Evangel Concerning His Son

THE MESSAGE

1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, having been severed^o ^{io}for

God's evangel

2 (which He promises^o before through His 'prophets in the holy scriptures)

3 concerning His 'Son

(Who ^bcomes^o out of David's seed

according to the flesh,^{2 S 7:12; 1 C 15:25-28}

4 'Who is designated God's Son ⁱwith power,

according to the spirit of holiness,

^oby dead ones' resurrection),^{1 C 15:20-24; 35-57}

Jesus Christ, our 'Lord,

5 through Whom we obtain grace and apostleship

^{io}for obedience of faith

among all the nations,

^{ov}for His 'Name's sake,

6 among whom ⁱare ⁼you' also, the called of Jesus Christ:

7 to all 'who ⁱare in Rome, beloved of God, called saints:

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

THE WORDS "God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, for obedience of faith among all the nations, for His Name's sake," are distinguished here, as a title for Paul's letter to the Romans. It is suggested by this that all that is written in this epistle is centered in and developed from this message. Of course Paul did not set

these words out this way. But it is well for us to see them thus. Indeed it can aid us greatly if we relate these words to all of Paul's letters as his leading theme.

GOD'S EVANGEL

The Greek is *eua[n]ggelion Theou* ("evangel of God"). There is no "the." The only modifier of "evangel" is the genitive form of "God" (*of-God*), which can be expressed in English by the possessive case, "God's," bringing it into an equality of prominence with the first noun, "evangel." This is also true of "Son of God" (God's Son) in verse 4, "power . . . of God" (God's power) in verse 16 and "righteousness of God" (God's righteousness) in verse 17, as well as numerous other such constructions here and throughout Paul's writings.

However, at the end of Romans Paul calls this message "the evangel of the God," referring to *the* evangel as it has been presented, and to *the* God as He has been made known in this letter (Rom.15:16).

CONCERNING GOD'S SON

God's evangel concerns His Son. Jesus Christ stands alone in the middle between God and us. "For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and human beings," and this Mediator is Christ Jesus come as a Human, Who gives Himself as a Correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:5,6). The tendency, however, is for us to insert ourselves along with Christ Jesus (even sometimes replacing Him) in this mediatory position. That must not be.

Before we look at Romans 1:16,17, connected with 3:21-28 let us jump ahead to God's evangel as Paul presents it in Romans 5:8, where Christ clearly stands between God and us, that is, between God and sinners.

God is commending this love of ^{sf}His ^{io}to us,

Seeing **that**, while **we** ^{are} **still sinners**,
Christ dies ^{for} **our** sakes.

God's evangel here is that He loves us, and this is made known in a particular way. That way is that He spares not His Son (Rom.8:32), Christ Jesus, Who dies, and this is for us. Paul does not say here that Christ dies for us who put our faith in Him (or us as God's chosen ones), but that He dies for us who are sinners. *He* does the thing that is done. We contribute nothing to God's commendation of His love except to be what we are: sinners.

Paul continues in 5:9-11 to speak of what Christ's act of dying does for us, that is, "over us" (translated into English idiom: "for our sakes"). The suffering death of Christ is the cause of justification ("justified in His blood") and the channel of conciliation in this life and present glorying ("boasting") in God along with the enjoyment of conciliation ("we may be having peace toward God," Rom.5:1). This then will be exceeded by the future salvation in the life of Christ.

All of this is to be traced to the death and resurrected life of God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is not due to our faith or acts of any sort (though reckoned at present to us who are believing it).

"Therefore!" Since justification and conciliation, future salvation and present glorying in God, and enjoying the peace of conciliation are all *through our Lord, Jesus Christ*, "therefore," the situation is "even as" the situation which entered into the world "through one human," Adam (whose name in Hebrew is "Human"). Adam, through whom sin and death entered into the world is a type of Jesus Christ in that they both affect all human beings in a radical way with opposite results. Thus all eyes are focused on Jesus Christ in Romans 5:18,19, the One Mediator between God and human beings:

¹⁸ **Consequently, then, as it is through one offense**

- ^{io}for all human beings ^{io}for condemnation,
 Thus also it is through one righteous response
^{io}for all human beings ^{io}for life's justifying.
 19 For even as through the disobedience of the one
 human the many are constituted sinners,
 Thus also through the obedience of the One
 the many shall be 'constituted righteous.

This, then, is the commendation of God's love to us, the righteous response to God's message concerning Him of the One, Jesus Christ. That is, the obedience (submissive hearing) of that One, His faithful obedience unto the death of the cross.

In seeing this we now in the twenty-first century should be made ready for Romans 1:16,17; 3:21-28. (The Roman believers would have understood Paul already in the first and third chapters, but poor translation and accumulated tradition have gotten into the way for us.) God's evangel concerns the *obedience*, the *faith* of Jesus Christ, His death for sinners as the channel to the salvation of sinners and the revelation of God as never before made manifest.

The evangelical pattern of God first, Christ in the middle, and the human third is seen in Romans 8:3,4 and 8:32-34 as well as many other places throughout Paul's epistles (and elsewhere as well). It is our joy to encounter them. But for now we go back to Romans 1 for a brief look at God's evangel concerning His Son as it appears in verses 16 and 17.

¹⁶ For not 'ashamed° am I of the evangel:

For it 'is God's power ^{io}for salvation to everyone 'who is believing it—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well.

¹⁷ For in it God's righteousness is being revealed°
 out of faith, ^{io}for faith,

according as it is °written°:

°Now the Righteous One, ^{Is 53:11}

out of faith shall He be living^o.*Hk 2:4*

With these words Paul introduces God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, for which Paul was severed with grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the nations. It is a message of God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it. Salvation is a work of God's power, not of human believing, but it is for those who are believing it, who, at present, are those who have graciously been granted a measure of the spiritual endowment of faith (*cf* Rom.12:3; 1 Cor.13:13; Phil.1:29). Paul's evangel concerning His Son is a message of power, not human power, but of God's power. What this is saying, in effect, is that the death of God's Son in pain and ignominy and *weakness* is God's power. "For the word of the cross is stupidity indeed to those who are perishing, yet to us who are being saved it is *God's power*" (1 Cor.1:18).

This is the first reason why Paul is not ashamed of the evangel. It leaves no room for the human to boast (which is contrary to all religion; it seems shameful that we do not "help out"). But it does save sinners, and this is the only way this can be done righteously.

The weakness of the cross, its shame and suffering, its darkness of forsakenness, reveals God's righteousness as it truly is. The justification of God is the issue of issues. Thus Romans 1:17 is the verse of all verses in the opening chapter. It must be in accord with Romans 5:8-19 and 8:3 and 8:32. And this can only be done by the faith of Jesus Christ. Hence we read in Romans 3:21,22:

21

**Yet now, apart from law,
God's righteousness has been made manifest^o
(being attested^o by the law and the prophets),**

22

**yet God's righteousness
through Jesus Christ's faith**

**^{io}for all (and on all who are believing it), for there 'is no'
distinction . . .**

It is in God's evangel concerning His Son, in the exercise of God's power for salvation that God's righteousness is manifested. Previously Paul points out that in God's righteous *judgment* every sin of every human being is taken into account (Rom.2:5-16a). But no one is saved (Rom.3:9-20). In the death of God's Son every act of sinning of all human beings is put to death (Rom.5:18; 2 Cor.5:14) resulting in life's justifying of all human beings so that all shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19). Hence the living God is the Saviour of all human beings (1 Tim.4:10), and God is displayed as the righteous Justifier (Rom.3:26).

God's righteousness is revealed "out of faith," and manifested "through faith," and this faith which is the source and channel of this revelation is the faith of the Righteous One, prophesied in Habakkuk 2:4. The Righteous One is God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (*cf* Isa.53:11; Acts 7:52; 22:14).

This is what we are believing. It is *for* our faith.

ROMANS 8:3

Let us turn now to God's evangel concerning His Son as presented in Romans 8:3.

³ **For what is impossible to the law, in which it was 'infirm through the flesh—**

God, sending His own Son

in the likeness of sin's flesh

And concerning sin,

Condemns sin in the flesh,

Here God's evangel concerning His Son appears as it serves the believer as a spiritual force in behavior and mental state. It is obvious that Paul is contrasting the impossibility of the law to rid us of sin (because of the infirmity of the flesh) with what God *does* in the sending of His Son. But he leaves out the verb "does" and rushes us immediately to what it is that God does. God sends His Son. God

sends His Son in the likeness of sin's flesh. And God sends His Son concerning sin. In doing these things He condemns sin in the flesh.

The three principals are here, God, His Son, and the human, now represented by "sin's flesh." But the evangel focuses on what God does, and that is what we need to focus on in mind and heart.

Paul uses a fact participle, "sending," reaching forward to a fact verb "(He)-condemns." God sends His own Son in two particular ways. He sends Him "in the likeness of sin's flesh," and in doing this, He sends Him "concerning sin." And by these two features of God's sending of His Son God puts sin in the flesh under condemnation, so there He may rid us of sin in the flesh. He does what law could never do, that which is impossible for law to do because of the infirmity of our flesh.

Fact verbs do not, in themselves, identify the time of the action of which they speak. They simply speak of the fact of the action. We know that God's sending of His Son occurred about two thousand years ago. That is made clear from the scriptural context. So also sin in the flesh was condemned to destruction, to abolishment, indeed to annihilation when Christ died, and this is assured by His resurrection. But sin is still with us, in our flesh. So it is that while we continue to walk through life we need to set our minds on the facts of God's evangel. For in this there is spiritual power for growth in worthy walk and peace of mind.

Nevertheless, the way to present, worthy walk and peace is not God's evangel. God's evangel is what trains us in that direction (*cf* Titus 2:11-13). God's evangel speaks of what has been done—done by God in the sending of His Son. This is apart from us, and it is not at all what we would have advised Him to do (*cf* Rom.11:34). God sent His Son to deal with sin, not in visible power and glory but in the likeness of sin's flesh, in the likeness of the very state

which brought about the trouble in the first place and which keeps us in it. He was like Adam, capable of sinning. Indeed our Lord did not sin as Adam did, but He was made to be sin (2 Cor.5:21), and this is a matter we can hardly begin to grasp.

Yet this is what is being brought before us by the words "concerning sin." These two words in Greek, *peri amartias* are the very words the Septuagint Version of the Hebrew Scriptures, uses for what has been traditionally translated "for a sin offering" (e.g., Lev.5:6,7,11; 16:3,5,9; Num. 6:16; 7:16; 2 Chron.9:23,24, etc. *cp* Heb.10:6,8), although the word "offering" is not there in the Hebrew or Greek. God's Son was sent by God as the Antitype of that offering which is called SIN.

SIN CONCERNING SIN

Perhaps no article by A.E. Knoch reaches to the heights and depths of God's evangel as the one entitled "Sin for Sin."¹ It is mainly based on 2 Corinthians 5:21, which, following Paul's beseeching, "Be conciliated to God!" is translated in the CVNT as follows:

²¹ **For the One not knowing sin, He makes to
be sin ^{ov}for our sakes
That we' may become^o God's righteousness
in Him.**

Formerly the CV inserted the word "offering" in light-face type ("makes to be a sin offering"). This was to help many of us who are not aware that the sin offering is simply referred to in Scripture as *sin*. But now it seems best to render it here as in Hebrew and Greek and add a footnote of explanation. The type of Christ's death in the

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.15, p.131-138; vol.99, pp.127-134; also THE PURPOSE OF EVIL AND THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD, pp.24-41.

Old Testament offerings was a sin. So also the Antitype, is made to be sin.

In summing up his study Brother Knoch writes: "... God settles sin by sin. Every sin is transmuted by the sin of sins into an act essential to God's highest glory and the creatures' greatest good. All the righteousness and glory and honor which are Christ's, either before His incarnation or after His glorification, do not offset sin. His undeserved humiliation and distress and shame and death are sufficient to transform all sin into righteousness and holiness and bliss."²

A. E. Knoch did not bring the words "concerning sin" in Romans 8:3 into this exposition, but they surely belong there to be considered under the heading, "Sin Concerning Sin." God sends His Son in the weakness of sin's flesh, and this is as (a) sin (offering) concerned with the condemnation of sin. This is God's evangel as it spiritually affects the walk of those who set their minds on it even while, like Paul, their flesh is enslaved to sin (*cf* Rom. 7:25 where "God's law" is used for "God's evangel" by word play).

ROMANS 8:31-34

³¹ **What, then, shall we be declaring to^d these things?**
If 'God is ^{ov}for us, ^awho is against us? ³² **Surely**

He Who spares^o not His own 'Son,
But gives Him up ^{ov}for us all,
how shall He not, together with Him, also be graciously^o
granting us 'all?

³³ **Who will be indicting ^{ag} God's chosen ones? God, the**
'Justifier? ³⁴ **Who is the 'Condemner? Christ Jesus,**

The One Who dies,
Yet rather is roused,
Who 'is also 'at 'God's right hand, Who is pleading also
^{ov}for our sakes?

2. *Unsearchable Riches* vol.99, p.134.

In Romans 8:31-34, Paul sums up God's evangel concerning His Son (that evangel which is for our submissive hearing of faith) in a joyous, glorious, majestic passage in praise of God's love which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. It is mostly focused on the present and future by "act verbs" (progressing actions), but three times, twice in verse 32, and once in verse 34, Paul employs fact verbs (expressing truth apart from time) to bring out features of the core evangel as it speaks of God and His Son on Golgotha, so long ago. (The verb "loves" in verse 37 is also a fact verb, drawing the verbs, "spares not," "gives up," and "dies" into itself).

God loves in that He spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all. The giving up of His own Son is the giving up to death. Christ Jesus *dies*. Strange love! Astounding obedience! Yet this is God's evangel concerning His Son. But it is not the whole of this WELL-MESSAGE. Christ Jesus dies. "Yet rather He is roused!" He is roused from among the dead *ones*—from among all the dead ones from Abel to Lazarus, who was briefly roused and died again, and all those who have died since God's Own Son dies and is roused.

Paul speaks of God here as the One Who loves *us*. He speaks of Christ Jesus as the One Who dies and is roused, Who rather than condemning us because of our sins and offenses is pleading (present tense) for *our* sakes. We should not have to ask, but wrong teaching and established tradition have made it necessary: Who are the "us"? For whose sakes is the death of the One Who dies, and for whom is He roused?

The question has already been answered. All sin (fact verb) and are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). God rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones, Jesus our Lord Who is given up (fact passive verb) because of our offenses, and is roused because of our justifying (Rom.

4:25). Consequently, then, as it is through one offense for all human beings for condemnation, thus also it is through one righteous response for all human beings for lifes justifying (Rom.5:18).

Yes here in Romans 8:30 Paul speaks of and addresses Gods chosen ones, who are designated beforehand for a special glorification. Yet if we who have the firstfruit of the spirit are presently groaning in ourselves it is a groaning known by the entire creation (Rom.8:22,23). What is true of the chosen ones is true of all in relation to Gods counseled will (Eph.1:10,11), which shall be attained to His glory.

Nevertheless for now Gods evangel shines forth in the hearts of those who are believing it. May God make it known more and more in its purity and power, removing the crusts that have accumulated about it, mixtures of law works (which have their place in the evangel of the Circumcision, Gal.2:7) and traditions of human beings, so that we may see it truly as Gods achievement through the death and rousing of His beloved Son.

FOR OUR FAITH

We have traced God's message of gladness and triumph (so extremely welcome and desperately needed), as it is set forth in the first eight chapters of Romans by means of five passages, Romans 1:16,17; 3:21,22; 5:8-14; 8:3 and 8:32-34. These point first to God, and then to His Son, and last of all to us God sends. Christ dies. And this is for the sake of the sinner.

There are many further references to the message in Romans 1-8, and it is not left behind in Romans 9-11 concerning Israel, nor in chapters 12-16 with reference to practical matters of our present lives. It is there in every letter of Paul's, and in noting how essential and critical it is, we find it is traceable throughout Scripture. D.H.H.

IT IS GOD WHO IS OPERATING

THE EVANGEL is not good advice; the evangel is good news. Nor is the evangel some hazy thing called universalism. The evangel is that Jesus, the Nazarene, is the very Christ of God, and that since Christ has died for our sins, our sins have been died for. The evangel is that those of us who now find ourselves believing in Christ, by the grace of God were long ago already chosen for our present place in Christ as well as for our coming eonian allotment, an allotment which will surely be ours in that day.

GOD OPERATES ALL FOR GOOD

The evangel is that since God, Who is love, is truly operating all, He is operating all together for good. Therefore, this world is the best possible world, and our own individual allotment therein is exactly as it should be. The evangel is that God is our Saviour and we are not at all our own saviour. The evangel is that we owe all to His grace and that boasting in self is debarred. Best of all, the evangel is that we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God, our God and Father, Who will finally abolish death and become All in all.

We cannot possibly give proper attention to these glorious themes, however, if we are distracted and led away from them, either through false and contrary human tradition, through pleasure seeking, or through our own jealousy and competition. Then it will be, just as surely as with the Galatians, "Where is your happiness?" (Gal.4:15; *cp* Gal.5:15). The evangel is good *news* not good *advice* for our behavior. But the good news operates in us with power for joy, peace and self-control.

WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING

Yet as much as we want to be rid of sin and to avoid suffering, we must not lose sight of the fact that God alone is our Saviour. We will therefore remain in our weaknesses until God graciously delivers us. We cannot "help Him out." Even so, *as God's means of saving us*, He may well awaken us and cause us to do many things, to "save ourselves".

"On these things meditate. In these be, that your progress may be apparent to all. Be persisting in them, for in doing this you will *save yourself* as well as those hearing you" (1 Tim.4:15,16). By persisting in the teachings of the apostle Paul, Timothy would be saving himself, as well as those hearing him, *from withdrawing from the faith*. This practical salvation is the salvation of the context (*cf* 1 Tim.4:1).

In no sense do we save ourselves with respect to our *positional* salvation, our place in the ecclesia as members of Christ's body. We neither gain nor maintain this salvation. It is ours entirely apart from our acts.

Yet practical salvation, remains very important to us, even so. This is the salvation which is in view in Philipians 2:12b: "With *fear and trembling*, be carrying your own salvation into effect" Here the subject is not so much our faith but our faithfulness; our obedience *through* faith, that we might be becoming "blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse" (Phil.2:15).

Our "fear" is not a fear of divine indignation. We shall be saved from the indignation of God through Christ. This is one notable way in which God is "especially" the Saviour of those who are believing (1 Tim.4:10b; Rom.5:9; 1 Thess.5:9). It is not because we fear divine wrath, but because we are constrained by divine love that we fear to offend our God and Father. Similarly, in a spirit of reverence, not of terror, we "tremble" in His glorious presence.

It is only fitting, then, that we should approach our practical salvation in such a spirit of reverence and devoutness—"for it is *God* Who is operating in you [the] to be willing as well as [the] to be working." It is *God* Who is "operating" both our willingness and our actions, whenever we are *graced* to be "effecting" (or "carrying out") our practical everyday salvation!

This work of God is "for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:13b). Many of God's operations find no place in His heart, even though they are the work of His hand, according to His wise counsels. Yet our faithfulness is also God's work, and it delights Him to accomplish it in us. The phrases "the to be willing" and "the to be working" are the strict readings, as indicated in the CV by the superior periods (for the definite articles) and by the vertical strokes preceding "Will" and "work" (in order to indicate the incomplete form).

The self-control, which, indeed, is requisite to good character and constitutes the key to its possession, is itself a fruit of the spirit, not a work of the flesh (Gal.5:23). It is only our pride, in a veiled attempt to deny the truth, that seeks to complicate this simple fact.

May it be our heartfelt privilege to join with the apostle Paul in affirming the glorious *good news* of 2 Corinthians 1:12: "Our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity of *God*, not in fleshly wisdom, but *in the grace of God*, we behaved ourselves in the world, yet more superabundantly toward you" (2 Cor.1:12).

James R. Coram

PAUL EVELY

Our friend, **Paul Evely**, recently of Wilmore, Kentucky, was put to repose on September 12, as the age of 99. Paul was in many ways a happy man of Romans 4:8, having the happy expectation of Titus 2:13. He will be greatly missed by us, his family and many friends

EDITORIAL

ONCE again, although late and far from what was hoped for, we bring another volume of *Unsearchable Riches* to a close. And as always, we are thanking God for His enabling.

Volume 113 marks the death of a co-editor, even as volume 13 did one hundred years ago. Many questions arise as to the future of this work, but we continue, and prospects are encouraging.

This issue opens with A. E. Knoch's comments (with deep appreciation) on Paul's first prayer in Ephesians. This needs to be read in instalments, it seems to me, for so much is said that it seems impossible to summarize. Yet some selected quotes may point the way: "It is our highest duty and privilege to pray this prayer" (p.148). "The spirit of wisdom and revelation is desired for . . . the special realization of the celestial faith which is now ours in the Lord Jesus" (p.149). "Our blessings are spiritual among the celestial hosts" (p.149). "We are His complement Who completes the entire universe" (p.154).

On pages 155-162 James Coram takes up the subject of our choosings, reminding us that "Our choices are not things of chance, but the *effects* of their causes" (p.156). Hence, "Only those who are called and chosen actually choose Christ" (p.158).

We have tried in preparing this magazine (not always with success) to keep in view what A. E. Knoch unfolds in his article entitled "The Knowledge of Good" (pages 163-174). That the knowledge of evil is necessary for the knowledge of good is a fundamental fact. "The contrast between the two is the only means the creature has for the realization of God's goodness and the appreciation of His love" (p.174).

The rest of the issue is occupied with my own studies, which have centered so long on Romans and God's evangel as Paul unfolds it "apart from law" (Rom.3:21), yet still traceable through God's prophets in the holy scriptures (Rom.1:2; *cp* 3:21b). Most clearly this was attested in Habakkuk 2:4, which Paul cites in Romans 1:17 and again in Galatians 3:11 (as does the writer of Hebrews in 10:38). God's power for salvation, in which His righteousness is revealed, is employed out of (i.e. sourced in) and through the faith of Jesus Christ, which is His obedience unto the death of the cross. This is the basis of all present spiritual blessings and the glories to come. Early on, A. E. Knoch noted this, but with some diffidence, and without translating Romans 1:17 with Christ in view as the Righteous One.

I believe with all my heart that the subject of the faith *of* Christ Jesus needs to be recognized wherever context and grammar bring it forward, even in Ephesians 2:8 and 3:12,17. It is not that we have been wrong concerning the importance of our faith, but that the clear teaching that our faith is in the evangel concerning Christ's faith has been obscured by mistranslation. God's righteousness is revealed out of Christ's faith, and this evangel is for our faith. This is the basis of all blessings. Even if we have believed this, we may have missed it in some important passages which bring it out.

We are not alone in testifying to the faithful, wise, powerful and righteous operation of God in bringing all to Himself in reconciliation and love—testifying as well that He is doing this through the faith and obedience of His beloved Son, even unto the death of the cross—and giving special testimony to God's glorious purpose for us as members of the body of Christ. Yet I feel it is well that in God's grace this little effort of magazine and translation of God's Word may continue. To God be the glory. D.H.H.

THE FIRST EPHESIAN PRAYER

“Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours [which relates to you] in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him . . .” (Eph.1:15-17)

THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM

The two prayers in this epistle (cf 3:14-21) are like the two wings of an eagle which soars into the empyrean, bearing us aloft on its pinions. We do not know what it is proper to pray for (Rom.8:26). Here we have God’s Spirit inditing a petition. It is the unceasing prayer of Paul and, at the same time, God’s expressed desire on our behalf. It is a pattern prayer. How pleased would He be if we follow the spirit of these petitions! Let us note carefully his first request. It is for *a spirit*—a wise spirit, a revealing spirit. *Nothing is more needed by His saints today.* But how few even realize their lack!

This is not a prayer for the holy spirit. The title of those addressed to this letter and to the allotment it conveys was the spirit by which they had been already sealed. They had God’s spirit in measure, just as we have it. The capacity it gave them was not unlimited, as it was with our Lord. This prayer is an appeal that its limits might be enlarged in the direction of wisdom. God’s spirit alone can give capacity to enter into divine affairs. God’s wisdom, as displayed in the

grace glorious, would be concealed from them apart from this spirit. Such amazing, multifarious wisdom needs an especial enduement, an overflowing measure, an enlarged capacity, to entertain it.

THE SPIRIT OF REVELATION

The apostle has been imparting a secret to them which not only displays God's wisdom, but is so novel, so different, so far above the reach of mortal mentality, that their spirits not only need enlargement, but an entirely new apartment must be added, as it were, to house it properly. He prays for a spirit to accommodate the new disclosure, the new revelation. This request would be quite superfluous if those to whom he is writing had received the "mystery" while he was among them in person. He had declared the whole counsel of God to the Ephesians (Acts 20:27), but the purpose he now unfolds could not be publicly revealed during the period of his itinerant ministry.

It is our highest duty and privilege to pray this prayer. Long years ago the writer urged the believers to make this their special petition, not only for themselves, but for all saints, and particularly for himself. Since then his insight into the prayer itself has been revolutionized. He has been delivered from the tyranny of unspiritual translations. He has discovered its intimate relation to the preceding unfoldings. He has found its harmonious concord with the remaining revelations of the "mystery" in this epistle. We cannot expect such high and hidden unfoldings to blaze upon us and blind us in a moment. Let us covet this revealing spirit, so that we may gradually discern that supreme secret wisdom, which the "mystery" alone reveals.

THE EYES OF THE HEART

"... the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of

His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints . . .”
(Eph.1:18)

The spirit of wisdom and revelation is desired for a specific object, the special realization of the celestial faith which is now ours in the Lord Jesus (Eph.1:15). Nor is it a mere matter of mental speculation, a philosophical tidbit for wise savants, which does not affect the practical affairs of life. It is not perceived by merely mental processes or grasped by minds of more than normal brilliancy. It is for those whose hearts have eyes, the core of whose being can photograph the ultra rays of God's revelation. The eyes of the head are limited to the spectrum. The eyes of the heart have a much wider range.

THE EXPECTATION OF GOD'S CALLING

We must remember that, at the time this was written, the destiny of believers among the nations was not at all clear. Before Paul's epistles were penned, the nations had no expectation, except as subordinates of Israel in the Kingdom on the earth. Paul brings in the truth of the Lord's presence in the air and teaches a sudden change in resurrection. Still there is no definite destiny. The prospect before them is veiled and vague. Are they to come back to earth? If not, what is their expectation? Now it is revealed that our lot is cast with Christ in His headship of the universe. *Our blessings are spiritual, among the celestial hosts.*

ITS GLORIOUS RICHES

This allotment or "inheritance" is supernal. High as the heavens above the earth are our blessings above the most magnificent mundane display of wealth or glory. We are denied equal participation with the Circumcision in the coming eons on the earth. They must be first down here

below. The nations of that time must be inferior in place and portion. To have a similar position among the celestials would place us above the highest of the Circumcision in the Kingdom, for the meanest saint in the celestial allotment will be superior to the highest on the earth. But we are *not* subordinate in the heavens! We are below neither the Circumcision nor the celestials themselves. We are superior to the heavenly hosts and of equal rank with the few of the Circumcision who are members of Christ's body.

It is intensely human to desire property and position. Men literally spend their lives in pursuit of them. And then, when they are within our grasp, they afford but little real satisfaction, for they cannot shield us from corruption and death. In the coming eons, the actual wealth of mankind will be much greater than now, for they will be able to enjoy their riches and maintain their rank. In this evil eon, men hurt their health to win their wealth, and then they can't enjoy it. So they waste their wealth to hunt their health, and often just destroy it. The wisest of men tried all that rank and riches could bring and he summed it all up as a feeding on wind. All is vanity, until One Who is greater and wiser than Solomon takes the helm in the eons of the eons.

Only that is ours which we enjoy. He alone is truly rich whose eager senses claim a generous tribute from the world about him. He may not have a legal right to aught the earth contains, yet revel in its benefits and beauties beyond the power of many a millionaire. In this, the truest sense, we are the wealthiest of God's creatures. All is ours. Our estates are not confined to earth. The universe is spread before us. In Christ, the Owner and Redeemer of all, we have a double title to everything that heart can wish or heaven can provide. As joint enjoyers of the celestial allotment we have entered into an inheritance so vast that we may never fully explore its riches or compute its wealth.

THE TRANSCENDENT GREATNESS OF GOD'S POWER

"... and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength, which is operative in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him at His right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending: and subjects all under His feet, and gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body . . ." (Eph.1:19-22)

For the Circumcision the might of Messiah is measured by His resurrection and His return in majesty to administer the government of the earth. They also will be raised, and they will rule. So may we measure His might for us. So may we gauge the power which is operating on our behalf. It is not limited to His resurrection. It is not confined to His earthly sovereignty. The transcendent greatness of the power available on our behalf is displayed in the ascension and seating of Christ at God's right hand among the celestials, over every political power in the empyrean. It took Him from beneath the confederated forces of evil, Satan, the high priests, and Rome, from an infamous death, from the curse of God Himself, to the supremest place of power and glory. This is what it can do for us.

Blessed it is to trace the steps of Christ's descent to the cross. Every move He makes has a meaning. Every step He takes has a tongue. Much more delightful and full of significance is His return to the glory. His earthly pilgrimage was the perfection of weakness. It ended in a tomb. His heavenly march is omnipotence perfected. It attains its royal rest at God's right hand. There are three stages to his exaltation. These are His rousing, His ascen-

sion, and His rest. Resurrection brought Him back to life among His beloved disciples. Ascension sees Him again in God's presence, whence He had been sent to do His will. Rest seats Him at God's right hand when His work has been accomplished.

On that marvelous resurrection morning He meets Mary in the garden, and says, "Do not touch Me, for not as yet have I ascended to My Father" (John 20:17). Not many days later He invited Thomas to put his hand into His side (John 20:27). It seems evident that He ascended to the Father on the very day He rose, to receive the acclaims of heaven and His reward and rest at God's right hand. This is the clue for us. The forty-days' reappearance was not concerned with His heavenly kingdom but with that on earth. Even His public ascension was related to His return to Olivet rather than His celestial session.

In Acts He is active, not seated. Stephen saw Him, *standing* at God's right hand (Acts 7:56). In days to come He will be *walking* among the assemblies in Yahweh's day (Rev. 2:1). The Lambkin will *stand* in the midst of the throne (Rev. 5:6). When He descends, His feet will *stand* in the mount of Olives. When all His enemies are subdued He takes His *rest* upon His glorious terrestrial throne. His active career on earth's behalf gives place to tranquil rule.

Power must still be exercised before Messiah sits on the throne of David. Not so in the empyrean. There He is already seated. The work has been accomplished. There is no waiting there for an apostate people. There is no patience with a wicked world. There is no necessity for delay. The superexcess of power has swept Him from the deepest depth of infamy to the highest heights of glory, and He is at rest. Such is the power appropriate to our case, which is available to those whose faith is in Christ Jesus, the glorified celestial suzerain, rather than in Jesus Christ, the rejected sovereign of the earth.

Even as the power needed for our faith (for endurance and patience with joy, Col.1:11) is greater than that of the Circumcision, so also is our relationship to Christ nearer and dearer. They are figured by a bride, we are His body. There can be no closer, no more vital or indissoluble union. The love of a man for his own body has persisted when all other forms have failed. Israel's union with Yahweh goes through many vicissitudes—coldness, rejection, divorce, reunion—but no such history is possible for the body of Christ. A man's fondness for himself is fixed in the very nature of the universe. Such is the illustration used to show our relation to Christ's celestial headship. He is Head over all *to* the ecclesia which is His body. This is not His headship of the body. It expresses the fact that He will exercise the headship through the body, as a man uses his members to carry out the dictates of his mind. He, with us, will administer the celestial realms.

THE COMPLEMENT OF THE ONE
COMPLETING THE ALL IN ALL

“ . . . the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all.”

(Eph.1:23)

Since sin has entered, God has put into operation the necessary agencies to cope with it, and, after it has fulfilled its function and completed its course, to remove it from the scene. The story of earth's restoration should be familiar to us all. God chose Abraham and his seed, that through them He may deal with the earth and bring it back to Himself, through Christ. This will suffice for the earth. No such provision was made for the heavens. No celestial family was chosen to reach the rest. No messengers are given this honor. Their primal place is too high for them to fully appreciate God's grace. We, who were last and are first, are alone fitted to dispense the grace glorious.

In this way Christ and His body fill up the last lack in God's great purpose of the eons. We are His complement Who completes the entire universe. No other company of saints is needed to carry God's plans into effect. Israel on earth and the body of Christ in the heavens, with Him as their head, will bring all back to God by their ministrations during the eons of the eons. Thus, in God's wisdom, shall the earth, the plague spot of the universe, supply the alchemy by which He will transform Himself from a Creator into an affectionate Father and His creatures into fond and loving children. We, uncovenanted, unconsidered, scorned by the chosen nation, become the universal complement because we are the supreme achievement of God's grace.

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S OPERATIONS

- A. The operation of the might of [God's] strength (Eph.1:19)
- B. The grace given to [Paul] in accord with [God's] powerful operation (Eph.3:7)
- C. The operation in accord with each one's part [in the body of Christ] (Eph.4:16)
- C. The operation which enables [Christ] to subject all to Himself (Phil.3:21)
- B. [Paul] struggling in accord with [God's] operation (Col.1:29)
- A. Roused through the faithfulness of the operation of God (Col.2:12)

The "A" declarations speak of God's operation, both mighty and faithful, first in rousing Christ and then the believer from among the dead. The "B" declarations refer to God's operation with regard to Paul's dispensing the evangel and announcing Christ in accord with a secret. The "C" declarations refer to God's operations, involving human beings, first in regard to our part in the body of Christ, and then regarding the enabling of Christ to subject all to Himself.

These are all positive and glorious operations. In 2 Thessalonians 2:11 we hear of God's brief, negative operation of deception sent in response to Satan's operation through the lawless one (2 Thess.2:9) in the closing era of the current eon.

D.H.H.

CHOOSING WHAT IS CHOICE

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHOOSING CHRIST

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

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

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

not I choose you, the twelve . . . ?” (John 6:64-70). Indeed, “Not *you* choose Me, but *I* choose you” (John 15:16a).

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

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

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

Only those who are called and chosen actually choose Christ. How marvelous it is that God has *revealed* His Son to us: “This is My Son, the *Chosen*; Him be hearing” (*cp* Luke 9:35). No one can genuinely choose Christ who does not find Him *Choice*, or to be preferred above all others. Likewise, anyone to whom Christ *is* Choice, cannot but choose

Him during the time in which He is deemed Choice. For example, when it delights God to *unveil* (FROM-COVER) His Son in us (*cf* Gal.1:15,16), and while He continues to do so, we choose Christ and cannot reject Him. For we are no longer blind; we now see Him as He truly is: *choice* indeed. And we are getting to know Him as well, for God has unveiled Him in us.

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

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

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

THE NATURE OF VOLITION

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

“From their fruits you shall be recognizing them. Not from thorns are they culling grapes, nor from star thistles figs. Thus every good tree ideal fruit is producing, yet the rotten tree noxious fruit is producing. A good tree *can not* bear noxious fruit, *neither* is a rotten tree producing ideal fruit” (Matt.7:16-18). “Shall a Cushite transform his skin, or a leopard its spots? Then you yourselves shall be able to do good, who are taught to do evil” (Jer.13:23).

Since there is therefore no hope from within, let us look only to our God and Father, but not, craftily, to ourselves. Our *humble* prayer, serious and heartfelt, should be that *God* might be “adapting [us] to every good work to do His will, doing in us what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory for the eons of the eons. Amen!” (cp Heb.13:20, 21). It is glorious to know that we are making our requests known to *One Who is able*. And so, to the One “Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be the glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of

the eon of the eons! Amen!" (Eph.3:20,21). Only thus can our outlook and attitude accord with the truth. May God enable us to say from the heart and with understanding, even as it is written, "He who is boasting, *in the Lord* let him be boasting" (1 Cor.1:31).

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

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

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

Christ is the Head of the ecclesia, and He is the Saviour of the body (Eph.5:23). He "gives Himself up for its sake that *He* should be hallowing it, cleansing it in the bath of the water ([that is,] *with His declaration*) that He should be presenting to Himself a glorious ecclesia, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that it may be holy and flawless" (Eph.5:25-27). He is "nurturing and cher-

ishing" the members of the ecclesia, "... for we are members of His body" (Eph.5:30). Though the course is often arduous, slow, and disappointing, nonetheless, the entire ecclesia is growing in the growth of God (Col.2:19). We *will* be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make us stand (Rom.14:4). And it is by the *power* of these words of faith, because of their influence upon us, that we are learning to be choosing what is choice.

James R. Coram

PAUL THE UNASHAMED

THE only things of which man may speak without a blush or an apology are the things of God. Man may laud his achievements in certain matters. He may prate of noble buildings, mighty symphonies, famous paintings and such like products of human skill and industry, but he can hardly do so without having a lurking sense of the superficial nature of such "glories."

We learn of man's free will in theology, but the doctrine seems to be absent from history, at least in the history that Paul inscribed for us in Romans 1:18-3:20. Here, as far as man is concerned, is a law which clamps iron chains of grim necessity upon the race. Why did not at least *one* generation arise who by virtue of their "free will" would not yield obedience to sin's command? Why was there not *one* nation who would as gladly rebel against sin as the race had rebelled against God? Why did not *one* family arise who with their "free wills" would have broken the monotony of evil's rule over the race? And if individuals had done so why were not these exceptions to the rule noted by Paul when he penned this indictment of man? How obvious it is that Romans gives the history of a race enslaved. A race whose slavery was not enforced from without, but an internal slavery, moral and mental, a slavery to self in its finiteness and separateness from God. It does not look as if there was much "free will" to spare in the race whose deeds are recorded by Paul.

How much we should thank our blessed God for showing us the meaning of *grace*! A grace we had nothing to do with but to accept and then only and when that same grace gave us the will and the power to receive it. The whole alphabet of salvation by grace is an alphabet without a capital I.

Alan Burns

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD

BEFORE they sinned, Adam and Eve had no knowledge of good. Good lay all about them, unmixed with evil. Health, strength, honor, and companionship with one another and with God was their constant possession and privilege. Yet they knew nothing of the blessedness of these boons. This we learn from the name given to the tree which bore the forbidden fruit. To many minds it suggests only the knowledge of evil, rather than good. Yet, first and foremost, it was the tree of the knowledge of good (Gen.2:9; 3:4-14).

Thus at the very forefront of revelation we have the principle suggested which is the key to unlock the great problems that most perplex us. It is this: Our knowledge is relative; it is based on contrast. The knowledge of good is dependent upon the knowledge of evil. Hence the tree in the garden was not, as we usually think of it, merely the means of knowing evil, it was the means, primarily, of the knowledge of *good*. Adam and Eve had good but did not realize it because they had had no experience of evil.

The perfection of Eden's garden was greatly lacking in the one element most dear to God's heart. Adam did not and could not apprehend God's goodness. There is not the slightest hint of Adam's appreciation or thanks, or worship or adoration. He received all as a matter of course and was quite incapable of discerning or responding even to that measure of divine love which lies on the surface of His goodness. If *we* should suddenly be transformed into glorious sinless beings and transported to such scenes of sylvan perfection, we would exult and praise the author of

our bliss. Not so Adam. He knew no joy, for he knew no misery. He knew no good, for he knew no evil.

This point is most important, and we press it because it seems to be universally ignored and misrepresented. The garden of Eden has become a symbol of perfect bliss. We are always being reminded of its delights, and the happiness of the first pair has passed into a proverb. Yet there is not the slightest reason to suppose that Adam was delighted or enjoyed the bliss ascribed to him.

The mere possession of good does not give a knowledge or realization of it. Even today, when there is so much evil to contrast with the good, many do not appreciate their blessings until they lose them. Adam had perfect health, but what was that to one who never had even heard of disease? He had abundant food, but that was nothing to him, who had never felt a famine. Even pleasure had no appeal to one who had known no pain.

The fatal lack in all the perfection of Eden was the utter absence of any note of praise or thankfulness. Knowing no good, and utterly unacquainted with mercy or grace, Adam's heart was absolutely incapable of love or adoration or worship. God's goodness did not receive the least response, because it was unknown. All that He had bestowed on Adam failed to kindle the affection for which He longed, and which is the goal of all His gifts.

How could this grave defect be remedied? There was but one way, and that way was, in the wisdom of God, provided by the tree which He placed in the midst of the garden. Had Adam and Eve known good they would have treasured God's goodness and never would have forfeited it by disobeying His command. Yet, when they did eat of the tree, they set in motion the very forces which would remedy the defect which caused them to do it. What divine wisdom do we see here displayed! God's blessings being unappreciated, they offend Him by their deed and

in so doing pave the way for an appreciation which satisfies both. Love is a marvelous schemer!

Shall we pause here to insist that this primal sin is the archetype of all succeeding acts of sin? We may not realize it now, but there can be no doubt on the part of those who have a mature knowledge of God that sin is now, as then, the fruit of the ignorance of good and evil and the lack of appreciation of God's gifts. Moreover, now, as then, sin itself, in the wisdom of God, sets in operation the very forces which lead to a knowledge of good and evil and the appreciation of God and His love.

Light, then, is nothing, were it not for darkness. Love is lost but for hate. Strength is unknown where there is no weakness. Wisdom leans on folly for its display.

Where is the glory of the stars at midday? Their light is not dimmed, but they have no darkness to reveal their splendor. And we would not appreciate even the sun were it not for clouds, and its daily disappearance. All things are known by contrast. Creature knowledge is not absolute, but relative.

God did not plant two trees, one for the knowledge of good and another for the knowledge of evil. In the nature of things these are dependent on one another, and neither can be known without the other. Let us bow to the divine wisdom which planted one tree, so that it was impossible to know good apart from the knowledge of evil.

Having in mind God's great purpose to fully engage the affection of all His creatures, it is evident that the prime ingredient of their response to His love is a knowledge of Him. The process of revealing God is the problem of the eons. If God should be always seeking to reveal Himself He would never succeed in His purpose. Indeed, if infinity were needed to make Him known, then His creatures would always be infinitely short of such knowledge. God never speaks to us in terms of infinity, for we cannot

understand it. He has provided a definite period for self-revelation, called the eonian times. When these are past, the process is complete, God is All in all, and all the factors (such as sin and evil) which are no longer needed, are discarded.

The great purpose of God during the eons is to provide a background for the display of His love. What would be the simplest plan to produce this? Shorn of details, all that is needed is that each of His creatures should have, according to his capacity, such an experience of evil and its fruits as will enable him to appreciate the good which God will provide after the eons are past.

Thus we have established the necessity and utility of evil in God's universe for the period of the eons. We will now consider the details of the divine operations in connection with the sinner. The groundwork of the plan is very simple. The sinner experiences evil that he may know good. He knows good that he may love God, the giver of good. The result is intensified by making the evil, not only calamities and misfortunes over which mankind has no control, but by making evil the result of the sinner's sins, and by hedging him in with law, leading to transgression, and by giving sin a quality which offends the feelings of God.

No one can, or will, object that God should be good to His creatures after the consummation—the real beginning of the perfected universe. But that goodness would all be lost on creatures who know no evil. Hence no one will question the justice of any plan for making that goodness effective by filling their hearts with gratitude to God, and in satisfying His heart by their response. So that God is just—far more than just—in sending each one of His creatures into a world of sin and sorrow, grief and pain, and in using any means which impresses upon them the lesson taught to our first parents in the garden. We must digest the knowledge of evil ere we can enjoy the knowledge of good.

The process through which God is putting mankind, in preparation for their place in the consummation, is very complex. We can best understand it by grasping first the grand outlines and leaving the dimmer details for later contemplation.

We have said that all that would be absolutely *necessary* for the realization of God's purpose would be the introduction of each of God's creatures into the sphere of unmixed evil for a limited time, away from God. Yet practical experience teaches us that such a method would demand a very long period and produce comparatively meager results. It lacks that great force which is the prime factor in the acquisition of all knowledge. Evil alone lacks contrast. It must be seen in the light of good. Wrong must be viewed in the presence of right. Hence the eonian existence of every man is divided into three stages characterized by destruction, judgment, and salvation. He glimpses evil in the world by the feeble flicker of conscience or human justice until it involves him in death. In resurrection he sees evil in the light of God's justice. In the consummation, he contrasts it with God's salvation. These three grades completely equip each one for the enjoyment of God's goodness and love.

It is necessary to pause at this point to vindicate God's justice in His dealings with those who are not saved until the consummation. If all mankind should die in sin and should stand before the great white throne to be judged and none saved until the consummation, the righteousness of God's way with them could readily be justified, on the grounds already set forth. The very nature of endless bliss is such that those can quaff the cup of bliss most deeply who have drained the dregs of evil. Sin is an essential precursor and preparation for endless happiness.

But strong objection has been raised to the length and intensity of suffering as unwarranted and severe. This may be met in two ways. The difficulty depends upon an exag-

gerated, unscriptural impression of the length and terrors of judgment and a failure to see it in its proper proportion to the bliss to which it leads.

The happiness into which the eons usher mankind will be endless. Hence, in the light of eternity, no period of suffering, whatever its limits, can be deemed excessive. Indeed, it is not at all probable that the average sinner will suffer for one hundred years, including his life on earth and the judgment period. So that even such a period, which we may practically reduce to zero in comparison with infinity, may be seen, rather than being excessive, to be absurdly short in comparison with the boundlessness of bliss.

In this degenerate age we connect all value with money. If an investment of a dollar should produce a million dollars, no one would say the initial sum was excessive. Everyone would gladly pay it, even if the outcome were not absolutely assured. No one would question the right of it even if the dollar were lost. The *right* amount to receive for a dollar is about six cents a year, according to human standards. All above that is more than right.

We must acknowledge, then, that God is transcendently just in His dealings with all His creatures, and that He would be warranted in making their term of suffering much longer without impairing His justice.

The severity of suffering is so varied that it is not wise to say much concerning it at this point. It belongs, rather, to the discussion of the degrees of judgment, and the varied glories of the elect. Yet we must not overlook a merciful provision which tempers the severity of sin. Evil makes men callous and obdurate. If they had the supremely sensitive nature which will be theirs in vivification for the enjoyment of good, the slightest touch of evil would make them shudder. Their loathing of sin would be unbearable. Now they almost enjoy, in a way, the bitter burden that they bear.

Were God to let mankind live in sin until they learn

its lessons, it would take a long and weary life, and might never reach the desired result. Hence He also introduced the death state, lest Adam and his descendants should live on in the accumulating effects of sin. They would become old and decrepit, weak and blind, driveling and idiotic, and live on, a living corpse of corruption. Imagine what a sickening world this would be if all our progenitors still lived with all their constantly accumulating senility and disease! Can we not see the marvelous wisdom that provided that evil should make men mortal? Evil that results in death is sufficient to teach the lesson. Death is not only the result of sin. It is the intermission between one lesson and the next. It is the divine method of impressing upon the sinner the sinfulness of sin, and is the necessary prelude to the resurrection, which introduces the sinner into an actual experience of God's power and justice.

The judging of the sinner at the great white throne deals with the evil with which he is acquainted in a twofold way. By contrast with the right, its true nature becomes apparent. By a just infliction, the evil itself will be counteracted. No one should confound judging with "punishment," in its usual acceptance. Men "punish" in the crudest fashion, with the single thought of discouraging a future repetition of the act. A child is "punished" for poor lessons at school by being kept in at recess, when fresh air and exercise are the very correctives which may be needed. We must not charge God with such silliness.

God's judgments, as are manifest from those that have already taken place, impose penalties which rectify the cause underlying the offense. Thus, Adam's offense was the result of his lack of appreciation of God's gifts. Flowers, fruit, and food fell into his hands without effort. Hence he is doomed to toil and discouragement in tilling the ground, so that he may be duly thankful for God's sustaining love. This principle is always present in divine judging. It is, in

fact, inherent in the very term, for judging is that which rights the wrong.

If this were not so, it would be difficult to account for God's motive in such a tremendous exhibition of power as is involved in the resurrection of the dead, and such a marvelous display of judicial force, in assigning their sentence. In each decision the sinner will gain such a knowledge of evil, by contrast with its corrective, as would be impossible in any other way. The judging of his own sins and that of all the rest will be the school in which his knowledge of evil will immensely increase.

The final consummation of the knowledge of evil is always found in bringing it into close contact with the supremest form of good. The salvation of mankind at the consummation is the final lesson in good and evil. The lessons of the latter which have been learned by experience are now enforced by the realization of a good for which their sufferings have prepared them. The God Who had been their Creator and Judge now becomes their Saviour. They are ready to enjoy His love and give Him the response, which is the basis of eternal bliss. In this light we can see how God is just in dealing thus with His creatures, and His creatures are justified, eventually, as regards their sin.

SALVATION

Thus far we have kept to the most elementary principles in outlining God's dealings with mankind. The subject of salvation has hardly been touched, especially the subject of eonian salvation, for the unbeliever has no salvation during the eons. His does not come until their close. Before taking up eonian ("everlasting" or "eternal") salvation, it will be necessary to inquire a little into the nature of the salvation of the unbeliever.

Our first inclination, when we learn of God's grand purpose to save all mankind (1 Tim.2:4), is to substitute their

sufferings for those of Christ. We have been told that He bore our punishment, and we surmise that they are judged for their own sin, hence need no saviour.

But this is far from the truth. Judging may correct the sinner, but it does not give him the power to undo his sins toward other men or toward God. The murderer may be taught the utmost horror of his crime, but he cannot restore the life he took. The blasphemer may have learned to abhor his sin, yet no amount of suffering on his part will efface his offense. If judging made it possible for all men to right their wrongs then it would not be followed by, or rather, end in, the second death. Mankind fully learns the lesson of evil, yet in learning, finds itself the helpless victim of death. Indeed, this is the climax of evil. This shows the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The sinner, though raised from the dead, finds that he is unfit to live, on the ground of justice, and enters the second death.

Here is where the need for a Saviour arises. He needs to be One Who can do far more than bear the penalty of sin. If He had simply become a "substitute" for men and had taken their sins upon Him, then He must not only die, but, like the denizens of the second death, there could be no return to life except through another Saviour. Christ is no mere "substitute" to bear the "punishment" in "the room and stead" of the sinner. He died *for*, or *on behalf of* the sinner. He turns his sins into acts of righteousness. This is justification. He recalls the murderer's victim to life, restores what the thief has stolen, and harvests good from the evil that condemns them.

Thus far we have confined ourselves to the contrast between good and evil, and the basic principle that both are necessary to the knowledge of either. The same principle of contrast is used over and over again in the complex process which prevails during the eonian times. As, in nature, power and passivity qualify the one universal sub-

stance so as to produce the infinite variety which we see in the world, so good and evil are used in endless combinations and contrasts to bring out the vast variety of God's wisdom and the limitless resources of His love.

All of the eons are characterized by the presence of evil, which was not ere they began and will not be once they end. Yet the eons themselves are divided into two classes, some of which are evil, while others are *comparatively* good. The next eon, in which the millennium occurs, holds evil in check, and the succeeding one, the last eon, segregates and banishes it. In contrast with these, the present eon and the one before the flood are evil eons. The secret of the difference is not far to find. In the former, Christ is absent, or, when present, is crucified. In the latter He is on the throne and evil is suppressed.

The question arises, how can God be absolutely impartial in His dealings with mankind when one person finds himself in Sodom and another has the privilege of hearing the Lord Himself? The answer to this lies in the equity which will characterize God's judgment throne. It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the cities visited by our Lord during His earthly ministry. Judgment will be tempered by consideration of opportunity and circumstance (Matt.10:15).

The gravest problem, to some, is the fact that God, in His mercy and grace, selects some for eonian salvation, so that they do not enter the judgment at all. Is it just of Him to favor them and pass by others no more undeserving? Why should some sorry sot secure salvation and eonian glory when a pure and pious philanthropist (Christ unknown) passes on to judgment?

Even from the human side the *justice* of it is apparent. Shortsighted though we are, we must not let this contrast destroy the conclusion already established that, first of all, the philanthropist is not to be the subject of any injustice.

In the judging he will get his due deserts, and in such a fashion that he himself will acquiesce and acknowledge their equity. More than this, in the consummation he will be unutterably thankful, in his measure, for the judging of his pious sins. *He* will have no charge to bring against God in that day. Then why should we, with a beam in both our eyes, seek to remove a seeming speck in God's?

God is not satisfied, nor is it sufficient for His purpose to reveal the excessive depths of His love, to save all men at the consummation. The contrast is not great enough. The distinction is not sharp enough. Such a course would leave depths unexplored, recesses unrevealed. So He proposes to compare the good with the best. The righteousness of such a course is manifested by our Lord in His parable of the laborers in the vineyard. Right demands the payment of a just equivalent. Yet this does not debar God from *giving* freely when He chooses (Matt.20:1-16).

God will be more than just to *all*. It is only the lurking impression that He is not just to unbelievers, the non-elect, which suggests that there is an element of partiality in His favor for the few. God, having provided for a full accounting with all His creatures, which is good, proposes to display the riches of His love, which is better, as well as the exceeding riches of His affection, which is best. In fact, it is this last which has been His aim in all the rest, only it takes a pyramid of love to rear its highest pinnacle.

First of all, by what process does God save men now? Is it not, in essence, the very same process as that which will save the unbeliever in the future? They are brought into the presence of the great white throne and learn God's judgment on their sins. We are brought into His presence at Golgotha and learn the same lesson through Him Who suffered there. No scene in all the universe of time or space will ever expose the hideousness of sin as does the cross of Christ. Even the great white throne with its

exposure of the sins of myriads of mankind, will not equal it. We know what sin is, not merely by our own sad experience, but by the place it gave Him. He was the Highest of heaven. It made Him the lowest of earth. He was the life and the light of all. It put Him into the darkness of death. That pole on which He was nailed is the real tree where we may gain the knowledge of good and evil. Knowing that, what need is there for us to enter into judgment?

But the cross reveals far more than the judgment. The evil is eclipsed by the good. The vivid and appalling contrasts between the limitless love of God and the wretched wickedness of man makes it both the judgment and the consummation for all who gaze upon it. He is our Judge and our Saviour all at once, and we enter into a foretaste of the bliss which will finally embrace all of God's creatures.

In God's administrative dealings we see the vast value of contrast, in order to pile up a pyramid to give expression to His grace. God did not call all nations, but chose one as the special object of His favor. With this as a background He turns to the despised aliens when His chosen people apostatize. By showing the highest honors to those who deserve the least, He has at last succeeded in producing an object lesson through which, not only mankind, but the celestial spheres as well, may learn and luxuriate in the lavishness of His love.

God Himself planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden of Eden. As both were combined in a single tree, it was impossible for Adam to know good, apart from evil. The contrast between the two is the only means the creature has for the realization of God's goodness and the appreciation of His love. For this cause evil and sin have invaded the universe temporarily. Their presence is appalling, but their stay is brief, and their ultimate effect, not only the knowledge of good, but the enjoyment and adoration of the God of all good.

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S EVANGEL FOR OUR FAITH

WE have seen that Romans 5:8, 8:3 and 8:32 express God's evangel concerning His Son explicitly:

'God is commending this love of ^{sf}His ^{io}to us,

Seeing **that**, while **we** [']are still sinners,

Christ dies ^{ov}for our sakes

³ **For** [']what is **impossible to the law, in which it was** [']infirm through the flesh—

'God, [']sending His ^{sf}own [']Son

in the likeness of sin's flesh

And concerning sin,

He condemns [']sin in the flesh

³² **Surely He Who spares^o not His own [']Son, but gives Him up ^{ov}for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also be graciously^o granting us [']all?**

It is God's evangel that He loves us and commends this love by means of Christ's death for the sake of sinners, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, and sending Him as the Antitype of the sin offering, thus putting sin under condemnation. In view of this astounding love, that of sparing not His own Son but giving Him up for us all, how shall God, together with His Son, not be gracing us with all that is good, even including righteousness and glorification (*cf* 8:28,30)?

GOD PROMISES BEFORE

God promises this evangel before Paul had been severed from Judaism and from the apostles in Jerusalem for its proclamation and defense. This evangel is not severed from the holy scriptures entrusted to Israel as their

foremost prerogative (Rom.3:1,2). It is traceable in them, although Paul, as his apostleship advances, unfolds the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ (Eph.3:8).

This is the first point Paul makes in Romans concerning that evangel of God for which he is severed. However, the CV sets it apart in parenthesis so that we may jump ahead to the words, "concerning His Son," which are of utmost importance. Yet in seeing that God's evangel concerns His Son it follows that those passages where it is promised before concern God's Son.

SEED OF DAVID AND SON OF GOD

Most of verse 3 and all of verse 4 are in the form of Hebrew poetry, not matched in length and rhythm, but with thought parallels. Here in verse 3, the prophecy of Yahweh through Nathan concerning Solomon found in 2 Samuel 7:12 is noted. The words "I will raise up *your seed* after you, . . . and will establish the throne of his kingdom," are seen to apply to God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. He comes in the humility of human flesh, God sending Him in the likeness of sin's flesh (Rom.8:3; Phil.3:8), yet He shall reign. This shall occur only after His emptying of Himself and coming in sinful flesh. Here God's evangel as the message of Christ's suffering in death is confined to the word "flesh," and His exaltation is given prominence. But Paul does not dwell on this matter of future rule in Romans as he does in 1 Corinthians 15:25-28, showing its expansion beyond King of Israel to all being subject to the Saviour as their Lord, and even further in Ephesians 1:10 concerning the complement of the eras when all will be headed up in the Christ—"both that in the heavens and that on the earth." What is made clear here in Romans 1:3 is that all the process of reigning and its glorious goal of God becoming All in all, are dependent on His coming as the Seed of

a very human king, good in heart but sinful in flesh. This speaks of Christ's humiliation prior to His exaltation.

Then in verse 4 where no explicit prophecy is cited, Paul speaks of Jesus Christ our Lord as He shall be designated (even *proven* to be) God's Son by His work of resurrecting the dead ones. This operation is clearly expounded in 1 Corinthians 15, especially in verses 20-24 with further details beyond. It is in the vivification of all in Him (1 Cor.15:22) that Christ Jesus, our Lord is designated without doubt and with full recognition to be God's Son. This indeed will take not simply *spirit*, but "*holiness of spirit*," spirit that most fully reflects God Who is spirit.

These two verses speak of God's evangel concerning His Son as it speaks of future results. But they are based solidly on the evangel of God's operations of salvation and of Christ's faith and obedience to which Paul now directs our attention.

OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

Paul and those apostles associated with him obtain grace and apostleship "for obedience of faith among all the nations." This is the object of their apostleship. Literally it is for UNDER-HEARING of faith, submissive listening of faith. This corresponds with Romans 6:17 "... you UNDER-HEAR from the heart the type of teaching to which you are given over," which in turn corresponds with "you are not under law, but *under grace*" (Rom.6:14). What Paul is dispensing is God's message of a very particular type—an evangel (WELL-MESSAGE) of gratuitous grace for our submissive hearing of faith.

The wording Paul uses here is in significant contrast to the words of Moses to Israel at Sinai: "Now this is the instruction You will hear . . . and you will observe to do it" (Deut.6:1-3). There, what is heard, is instruction which is to be carried out by Israel's doing. Now what is

heard is God's evangel of grace which is something quite different from the law given at Sinai. There it was instruction for human doing. Now it is *God's doing* through His Son which in His grace and by His spirit He writes on the heart (2 Cor.3:3) in accord with His will and purpose. Our doing is one of believing this evangel and the enslavement of our minds to this message of power, righteousness and love which Paul calls "God's law" (Rom.7:25), that law which God Himself follows in the sending of His Son.

OUR FAITH

In Romans 1:8-12 Paul thanks God for the faith of the believers in Rome and its consoling effects, both their faith and his. This faith was being announced in the whole world, and still today it is being announced and heard, although much encrusted by tradition and human philosophy in our translations and heralding. Yet God makes at least the core of His evangel shine in the hearts of those He has chosen. The faith here is the message the believers in Rome were believing which still needed further sharing of spiritual grace from Paul for them to be *established*. It is given to Paul not only to announce the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor.15:1-4) but to make known this evangel's ever-increasing spiritual grace for mutual consolation, and thus for ourselves as well.

THE EVANGEL

We come, then, to the evangel which is called "God's evangel." There is much that is different, or at least goes beyond what had been revealed, and which will leave certain matters behind during the current era. Nevertheless, at its core, it was promised before in the holy scriptures. Where they concern Jesus Christ, they very often speak as Paul speaks here of Him. He shall reign and resurrect the

dead with great power of spirit. Yet first He must come in the weakness of human flesh.

Humbling before exaltation—weakness before power—that is God's law! That is the pattern of God's evangel. Yet Paul is not ashamed of it and eagerly evangelizes it (Rom.1:14,15). And in verses 16 and 7 he tells us why.

¹⁶ **For not 'ashamed° am I of the evangel:**

For it 'is God's power^{io} for salvation to everyone 'who is believing it—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well.

¹⁷ **For in it God's righteousness is being revealed°
out of faith, ^{io}for faith,**

according as it is °written°:

⁹**Now the Righteous One,**

out of faith shall He be living°.

¹⁸ **For God's indignation is being revealed° from heaven on °all the irreverence and unrighteousness of human beings . . . ²³ for all sin and are wanting° of the glory of °God. ¹**

Here, in two positive declarations, in contrast to one (long) negative Paul sets forth God's evangel for which he is severed and concerning which he is not ashamed. It is the same message as we hear in Romans 5:8; 8:3 and 8:32, telling us what God does through His Son, the Righteous One, for our sake. It is a message which is itself God's power for salvation *for* us who are believing it—but not *caused* by our believing it (it is God's power because of Christ's dying for us—the cause is Christ's faith).

In this message God's righteousness is revealed—righteousness that is His and always has been His and always will be His, but which is not revealed until God sends His Son in the likeness of sin's flesh to bring sin into condemnation. Thus we can see that God, all along, through

1. Romans 3:23 is attached here to Romans 1:18 as the summation of 1:18-3:20.

the wicked eons is working out a purpose that involves evil so that His goodness of righteousness and love shall be known. All human beings sin. Christ Jesus dies. God's righteousness is revealed.

SALVATION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

The first two reasons Paul gives for not being ashamed of the evangel are that it is a message of God's power for salvation for those who are believing it, and that God's righteousness is being revealed in it. This salvation and this righteousness are sourced in (they come "out of") the faith of the Righteous One, Who is God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. The salvation is directed to everyone who is believing this evangel which concerns this Righteous One, Jesus Christ, our Lord. (In 3:21,22, after all are brought before us in 1:18-3:20, Paul makes known that this is directed toward all.)

APPRECIATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The fact that God's own, personal righteousness is made known in the evangel should help open up its glories to us and strengthen our appreciation for it. The insight into God's righteousness which the evangel provides is a guard against much wrong thinking about salvation.

The idea, often vaguely felt, and sometimes clearly expressed, that salvation is a matter of God's grace but not of His justice (which is His righteousness) is mistaken. God's grace harmonizes fully with His righteousness. In fact, because of the nature of His righteousness God's grace would not be exercised apart from a sure and righteous foundation. If the death of Christ on the cross does not provide an actual, righteous basis for salvation, then it accomplishes no more than the sacrifices of sheep and goats. Christ is the *Antitype* of the propitiatory shelter (Rom.3:25) and of the sin offering (2 Cor.5:21) and of the

approach present (Eph.2:8; cf 5:2). The types could only be a shadow of the operation of God which really brings an end to sin and offense, enmity and infirmity and death. God's righteousness in dealing fully and finally with sin is now revealed.

Salvation is all of God, entirely based on His giving of His Son. It is His power at work. But also in God's powerful work of salvation we see God's very own attribute of righteousness at work. The joy and peace of the believer grasps this revelation of God with tight hold.

PSALM 98

As he often does in his epistles, Paul employs the language of the Hebrew Scriptures here as he introduces the theme of righteousness. In this case he particularly borrows from Psalm 98 which anticipates the marvelous works of the kingdom and the praise of Yahweh the King. The psalm speaks of a "new song" (Psa.98:1) which is one of good news, and Paul speaks of the evangel of God (Rom.1:16):

*Sing to Yahweh a new song,
For He has done marvelous works;
His right hand and His holy arm
have brought His salvation.
For not ashamed am I of the evangel,
For it is God's power for salvation*

But Paul is speaking of the message of Christ's death for sinners, not of Israel's deliverance from their enemies and from the evil they represented. God's salvation of Israel was limited in extent. Yet indeed it was given with that absolute salvation which is announced in the evangel in view. Every divine operation of salvation is based on the truth of the faithful and welcome message that Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15). None of the promises of future glory concerning Israel, and reaching to the

nations of the earth as well, can be fulfilled apart from the cross of Christ. That is the real basis of all God's works of salvation and of the revelation of God's righteousness in His works of salvation. Apart from God's giving up of His Son for us all, there is no real and lasting salvation, and no possibility of a full revelation of divine righteousness.

Hence certain key words of Psalm 98:2 appear in Romans 1:17 in a wider and deeper context:

Yahweh has made known His salvation;

To the eyes of the nations

*He has **revealed His righteousness.***

For in [the evangel]

God's righteousness is being revealed

How is it that God's work of the salvation of Israel, by His powerful arm, revealed His righteousness to the nations? God's righteousness was seen in His dealings with the idolatry and wickedness of the nations. Yet the psalm does not focus on the defeat of the enemy but on Israel's salvation from the enemy's influence of idolatry and wickedness. God's righteousness was not seen so much in paying back the enemy for its wickedness as in ridding Israel of that wickedness. In effect, the wickedness was taken away. Hence what the nations learned was that God's righteousness demanded the removal of evil. Irreverence and unrighteousness would not be tolerated.

To be sure, these displays of God's righteousness in His acts of deliverance of Israel from idolatry and its wicked associations, were impermanent and incomplete. In relation to the general situation of humanity when, in His patience and forbearance God does not execute His judgments on human unrighteousness, these works of temporary salvation gave a glimpse of divine righteousness to the world. But it was not the full orb'd revelation that the evangel of God provides.

In addition of course, Israel itself was sinful, continually

falling into idolatry and participating in corrupt practices. The salvation given them internally and externally was neither perfect nor permanent, and consequently the revelation of divine righteousness was limited.

But that is not the case with God's work of salvation through the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ. This work deals with all unrighteousness and does so to a *finality*, as the writer to the Hebrews expresses it (*cf* Heb.10:1-14). When Christ dies, all die (2 Cor.5:14), for all is created in Him, through Him and for Him (Col.1:16). So also God delights, in His love and righteousness, through the blood of the cross to reconcile all to Himself (Col.1:19,20).

INDIGNATION AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

The third reason Paul gives for not being ashamed of the evangel is that, apart from its revelation, there is no salvation. Human beings are unrighteous and God is indignant (Rom.1:18). Human beings are irreverent and deserving of death (Rom.1:32). They cannot escape God's righteous judgment (Rom.2:3,5). This includes those of the nations and the Jew as well (Rom.3:4). Not one is righteous—not even one (Rom.3:10). In view of God's indignation and His righteous judgment no flesh at all shall be justified (Rom.3:20). All sin and are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23).

This is attested through the law and the prophets, even as God's evangel is promised and attested there (Rom.1:2; 3:21). But this is not God's evangel for which Paul is severed and which concerns God's Son and is a message of God's salvation, revealing God's righteousness.

God's indignation is not His power for salvation of human beings who are unrighteous, everyone of whom sins. That is a fact which goes far in explaining why Paul is not ashamed of the evangel. But it is in third place. His lack of shame is first of all what it *is* (it is God's power for salvation) and what it *reveals* (it reveals God's righteousness).

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS MANIFESTED
AND DISPLAYED

With Romans 3:21 Paul returns to God's evangel itself as introduced in 1:16,17. It manifests God's righteousness, which, according to Romans 3:26 is displayed by God being the righteous Justifier (Righteous-ifier) of the human (the irreverent one, Rom.4:5) the source of which being Jesus's faith. It is out of faith into faith. The route which the revelation, the manifestation, the display of God's righteousness takes is *out of* Christ's faith in dying for us and then coming *into* our faith. Yet in view of Romans 1:18-3:20 salvation, is now seen as justification not only *for* us who are presently believing the evangel, but *for all*, both Jew and Greek, "for there is no distinction, for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God." It is for the believer (chosen in God's grace) because it is for all. But, in that God is especially the Saviour of those who are presently believing it (1 Tim.4:10) God's righteousness in constituting all righteous (Rom.5:19) through Jesus Christ's faith (Rom. 3:22) is already "on all who are believing it." It is not yet *in* us; we are still dying in Adam. But it is on us, which is something less and temporary like God's spirit that came *on* those gathered on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4,17,18). The believers are not yet constituted righteous (Rom.5:19), but righteousness is *reckoned* to them (Rom.4:5,6,24) it is securely put to their account until the deliverance of what is procured and they are constituted righteous.

To sum up, God's evangel is one of salvation revealing God's righteousness by means of (out of and through) the faith of Jesus Christ, His suffering unto death. This is for all, but in a special way is for us who are presently believing it. All shall be constituted righteous while already God has put this righteousness to the account of the believer.

D.H.H.

THE RIGHTEOUS ONE

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS is being revealed by means of Christ's faith. This revelation comes to us *out of* Christ's great act of faith in His God and Father and obedience to His Word in dying for human beings while they are still sinners. In support of this evangel the apostle Paul cites the words of the prophet Habakkuk in Romans 1:17. He sees the prophecy of Habakkuk 2:4 as having its reference to Christ Jesus in His unwavering faith through the most difficult of situations, climaxing in His death on the cross. More than any other, Christ is the Righteous One, and more firmly and enduringly than any other He believed throughout His life of humiliation what God had spoken concerning Him.

Regarding this faith of Christ Jesus, our Lord, God spoke long ago through a chosen prophet, in an era of great distress.

THE HABAKKUK CITATION

Habakkuk lived in dark days when lawlessness and misery, devastation and violence, contention and quarreling were corrupting the entire society of Judea, centered in Jerusalem (Hab.1:2,3). The law which had been given to Israel so that they would fear the One Elohim and might not sin (Exodus 20:20) was torpid, and judgment was tortuous (Hab.1:4).

In such a time Habakkuk implored to Yahweh, crying, "How long [shall this go on], and You are not saving?"

And Yahweh replied with a message to the people:

- ⁵ **See, ⁷treacherous^l ones^{~cs}, and look,
And be amazed, be stunned,
For ⁷I ^leffect^{~c} a deed in your days
You would not ^lbelieve though it were being related.**

What would not be believed even though it was being related as Yahweh's word through the prophet? It was, to begin with, that Yahweh was raising the Chaldeans, "that bitter and hasty nation," who would come from afar, "coming for violence" (Hab.1:6,9). That nation would be centered in one individual who "is making sport of every fortress" and "whose vigor is his eloah" (Hab.1:10,11).

Yet this operation of Yahweh was not to be a work of salvation. It would be violence against violence, treacherous ones against treacherous ones, misery upon misery. It was in view of this multiplication of troubles that the prophet spoke again to Yahweh (with considerable boldness), saying (Hab.1:12,13),

- ¹² **Are You not from aforetime, O Yahweh?
My Eloah, my Holy One, ^sYou^{ph} shall not die.
O Yahweh, You have placed him for judgment,
And, O Rock, You have founded him for correction⁻.**
- ¹³ **You are of cleaner eyes ^fthan to see⁻ evil,
And to look [']at misery You are not ^lable.
Why are You looking at the treacherous^l,
Are ^lsilent ^lwhen the wicked person is swallowing⁻
up one more righteous ^fthan he?**

Habakkuk agreed that the judgment and correction were necessary, but what of salvation from Yahweh, Who is of cleaner eyes than to look at such things and is not able to look at misery indefinitely? Will He not bring this cycle of human violence followed by divine indignation to an end?

Hence Habakkuk stood on guard and ready for further word from Yahweh, "to see what He shall speak to me" (Hab.2:1).

- 2 **+Then Yahweh is answering me and saying,
Write the vision, and make it plain on tablets,
That he may run who is reading ⁱ it.**
- 3 **For the vision is ^{fr}yet for an appointed time;
And it shall ⁷bud~ [˘]at the end,
and it shall not prove a lie.**

A vision is set before Habakkuk, and he is to record it plainly on tablets "that he may run who is reading it." This may remind us of Isaiah 40:31 concerning those who are expectant in Yahweh, who shall *run* and not be wearied, and walk and not faint. So also we read in Isaiah 52:7, "How comely on the mountains are the feet of the tidings bearer, who is announcing peace, bearing tidings of good, announcing salvation."

Yet the vision does not seem to be made clear in the Masoretic (Hebrew) text which continues to speak *about* it, but offers no message of peace and good and salvation for one who is expectant in Yahweh, no evangel for the tidings bearer to bring with running feet. The third and fourth lines of Habakkuk 2:3 seem to repeat the thought of the first two lines. The vision is for an appointed time when it will bud forth and not prove a lie. But what is the vision? What is coming at its appointed time? What is it that if it be dallying, the faithful Israelite is to tarry for it? What is it that shall come, yea come, and shall not be late?

According to the Greek translation called the Septuagint the third and fourth lines of verse 3 do not speak of "it" (that is, the vision), but of "Him" (that is, the Coming One). The vision is of the Coming One Who shall come at the appointed time and not be late. That is an evangel of peace and good and salvation, worthy of the running feet of the tidings bearer who is expectant in Yahweh.

If this is so, then Habakkuk 2:4 also speaks of the Coming One, Who is now called the Righteous One.

With this in mind, we have presented an expanded translation of Habakkuk 2:4 as indicated by the Septuagint:

- ³ **For the vision is ^{fr}yet for an appointed time;
And it shall ⁷bud~ 'at the end,
and it shall not prove a lie.
If ⁷He~ be dallying, tarry for ⁷Him~,
For ⁷the Coming One shall come~,
⁷and^{cs} ⁷He~ shall not be late.**
- ⁴ *bd* **If He is made presumptuous,
His soul is not upright in Him;
⁷If He is shrinking,
My soul is not delighting in Him.⁰
⁺Yet the Righteous One ⁱby His faith, He shall live.**

With this reading we can see that Yahweh gives Habakkuk a vision of the Coming One, Who is the Righteous One Who will be living by faith. Yet the faith is no easy pathway, for the ordinary person would shrink from it and follow what would presumably be more beneficial. Yet the soul of the Coming One will be upright, and despite the immediate suffering will not be presumptuous and follow His own will. He will live “out of His faith” in accord with the word of God. In every way God will delight in Him.

In full accord with this, and surely with it in mind, Stephen, in reviewing the history of Israel's unfaithfulness, reaches a climax in shouting, “Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in your hearts and ears, you are ever clashing with the holy spirit! As your fathers, you also! Which of the prophets do not your fathers persecute? And they kill those who announce before concerning *the coming of the Righteous One*, of Whom now you became the traitors and murderers—who got the law for a mandate of messengers and do not maintain it!” (Acts 7:51-53).

There should be little doubt that, whatever words of the prophets Stephen had in mind, he most certainly had

Habakkuk 2:3,4 in view when he spoke of the coming Righteous One. From Stephen's view the Righteous One had already come and lived a life of faith, culminating in being killed by His own people. And we may add that this faith of the One Who came opened the way to His living again in resurrection.

Later, the writer of the book of Hebrews cites lines from the Septuagint version of Habakkuk 2:3 and 2:4 in order to encourage the Hebrew believers in endurance and faith in their own days when what is expected is not what is being observed:

³⁷ For still how very little, He 'Who is coming' will be arriving and not delaying. ³⁸ Now My 'Righteous One' by faith shall be living°, and If He should ever be shrinking°, My 'soul is not delighting in Him.

In this revision of the CV of Hebrews 10:37,38, we see that the reference is to God's Son, as His Righteous One. Again, the Righteous One has already come and exercised faith to perfection. But the writer cites the words of the prophet as they were written and understood by Stephen in order to draw attention to the strength and glory of Christ's faith. The Righteous One did not shrink, and God did indeed delight in Him (*cf* Matt.3:17; Matt.12:18 [*cp* Isa.42:1]; and Matt.17:5). And thus He becomes the First and Highest Example of faith for the Hebrew believers. No one could come up to His level, but all will be encouraged in faith by keeping His faith in view.

Consequently, after presenting the vast cloud of witnesses in living lives of faith, the writer returns to Christ as the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith in chapter 12.

This focus on the faith of the Messiah was provided in the vision given to Habakkuk. The prophet was not about to perceive the Coming One as He shall come in indignation and power, going forth for the salvation of His people

(cf Hab.3:12,13) after which the earth will be filled with the knowledge of Yahweh's glory as the waters are covering the sea (Hab.2:14). Instead the Coming One, Who would not be late, would come first as the Righteous One, Who shall live by faith. Before He comes in the day of God's indignation, with fierce and decisive action against enemies within and without, seen by all, He must come as One Who lives by faith. That is, He Himself would not fulfill the place of Conqueror and King in Habakkuk's day, but He would come at the appointed time, and even then would live under conditions where the glory is not yet realized. And when that time arrives, instead of entering immediately into the promised joy set before Him, it would be His place to live by faith in accord with the words spoken through Isaiah the prophet (Isa.53:7):

- ⁷ **Hard pressed is He, and He is humbled',
 +Yet He is not opening His mouth;
 Like a flockling to slaughter is He 'fetched,
 And as a ewe before her shearers' is mute,
 + He is not opening His mouth.**

In this we see the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, the Righteous One of Habakkuk 2:4, Whom Yahweh will desire to crush, and in Whose hand Yahweh's desire shall prosper (Isa.53:10). Yet as written in Isaiah 53:11, out of all this toil, God's **righteous Servant** shall justify many (Isa.53:11):

It is this coming, His coming, that rests on faith, that must occur before the coming Habakkuk longed for. It is because of His coming and living in faith that the prophet's prayer in chapter 3 will be fulfilled.

- ³ **Eloah is coming from Teman,
 And the Holy One from Mount Paran.
 His splendor covers the heavens,
 And His praise, it fills the earth.**

PAUL'S USE OF HABAKKUK 2:4

Ananias of Damascus told Saul, "The God of our fathers fixes upon you beforehand to know His will, *and to be acquainted with the Righteous One*" (Acts 22:14). Paul, in writing to the Romans, has not forgotten Who that Righteous One is.

As for Stephen in Acts 7:52 and the writer of Hebrews 10:37,38, so also for Paul in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11, Habakkuk 2:4 speaks as a prophecy of Christ, living in faith's obedience unto the death of the cross. It surely is one of the passages expounded by the risen Lord on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:27). It certainly is one of God's promises of His evangel made before through His prophets in the holy scriptures (Rom.1:2).

We do not discard the application of the passage to God's people in times of distress and, as it may be, seasons of violence and lawlessness and contention, and in fact we see how this fits our situation even more emphatically than those of Israel, for our walk is fully by faith and not by perception. Indeed we are believers who are being saved with much daily joy and peace as we retain, in faith, the evangel of Christ's faith through our lives (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-3).

But what has been missed is that here in Romans 1:17 Paul solidly bases our faith on the message of Christ's faith. Our faith is in His faith, which is "the deliverance in His blood" (Romans 3:24), in His giving of Himself for our sins, that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon (Gal.1:3).

Therefore, Paul writes regarding his present pathway of living in faith: "... that I should be gaining Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is [out of] law, but that which is *through the faith of Christ*, the righteousness which is [out] of God for [into] faith" (Phil.3:8,9).

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