

WRITINGS OF WILLIAM PETTINGILL

by William Pettingill

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by William Pettingill, compiled for study and devotional reading.

47 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 00.00. Pettingill, William - Library
2. 01.0.1. Simple Studies in the Revelation
3. 01.0.2. Preface
4. 01.1. Structural Plan of the Revelation
5. 01.2. Introduction (Chapter 1: 1-8.)
6. 01.3. Part 1.—The Things Which John Saw (Chapter 1:9-20.)
7. 01.4. Part 2.—The Things Which Are (Chapters 2 and 3.)
8. 01.5. Part 3.—After These Things
9. 01.6. Conclusion.
10. 02.00.1. Simple Studies in the Romans
11. 02.00.2. Foreword
12. 02.01. Prologue
13. 02.02. I. The Salutation (1-7).
14. 02.03. II. The Introduction (Rom_1:8-17).
15. 02.04. First Main Division: The Sin of the World
16. 02.05. I. The Guilt of the Gentiles (i: 18-32).
17. 02.06. II. The Guilt of the; Jews (2:1-29).
18. 02.07. III. Every Mouth Stopped (3:1-20).
19. 02.08. Second Main Division: The Righteousness of God
20. 02.09. I. Gospel-Righteousness is by Faith (3:21-31).
21. 02.10. II. Gospel-Righteousness is not Contrary to the Old Testament (ch....
22. 02.11. III. Gospel-Righteousness Provides for the Believer's Eternal Secu...
23. 02.12. IV. Gospel-Righteousness Does Not Produce a Sinful Life (ch. 6).
24. 02.13. V. The Law Cannot Produce a Holy Life (ch. 7).
25. 02.14. VI. Gospel-Righteousness Provides for a Holy Life by Means of the ...
26. 02.15. Third Main Division: The Vindication of God's Ways
27. 02.16. I. Israel's Failure and Rejection acknowledged (Chapter 9.)
28. 02.17. II. Israel's Rejection Is the Result of Israel's Failure (Chapter ...
29. 02.18. III. Israel's Rejection Is Neither Complete nor Final (Chapter 11)...
30. 02.19. Fourth Main Division: The Christian Walk
31. 02.20. I. The: Living Sacrifice (12: 1, 2).
32. 02.21. II. The Yielded Life in Service (12:3-8).
33. 02.22. III. The Yielded Life in Fellowship (12: 9-16a).
34. 02.23. IV. The Yielded Life in Relation to the World (12:16b-21).
35. 02.24. V. The Yielded Life in Relation to Civil Government (13:1-7)..
36. 02.25. VI. The Law of the Yielded Life (8-14).
37. 02.26. VII. The Yielded Life in Relation to Weak Brethren (14:1 to 15:7).
38. 02.27. VIII. Confirming Promises and Showing Mercy (15:8-13).
39. 02.28. The Epilogue

- 40.** 03.0.1. Simple Studies in Thessalonian, Timothy, Titus and Philemon
- 41.** 03.0.2. Table of Contents
- 42.** 03.1. Simple Studies in First Thessalonians
- 43.** 03.2. Simple Studies in Second Thessalonians
- 44.** 03.3. Simple Studies in First Timothy
- 45.** 03.4. Simple Studies in Second Timothy
- 46.** 03.5. Simple Studies in Titus
- 47.** 03.6. Simple Studies in Philemon

00.00. Pettingill, William - Library

Pettingill, William - Library Pettingill, William - Simple Studies in Revelation Pettingill, William - Simple Studies in Romans Pettingill, William - Simple Studies in Thessalonian, Timothy, Titus and Philemon

01.0.1. Simple Studies in the Revelation

THE UNVEILING OF JESUS CHRIST Simple Studies in the Revelation BY WILLIAM L. PETTINGILL

01.0.2. Preface

Preface THE last book of the Bible is "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ." Here, as nowhere else, is our adorable Saviour and Lord manifested in all His glory, "the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14.) To know Him fully, it is needful that we should study this book. As this eighth edition goes to press, we are thirty years nearer the goal than when the first edition appeared. In these closing months of 1939 the world is torn by war, and as the Times of the Gentiles approach their end, it becomes more and more obvious that man is helpless to rule, and that "He whose right it is" must come again and take the scepter of world empire. "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Eze 21:25-27; Luk 1:31-33; Heb 10:37.) And let it be remembered that, even before His coming to reign, He must come into the air to catch us up to meet Him. Before He can come with the saints, He must come for them. We are waiting for the shout, the voice and the trump that shall sweep us up out of this scene and gather us about His pierced feet. (1Th 4:13-18.) The Second Advent of the Son of Man must be preceded by certain signs, times and events; but the Lord's coming for His own is a signless and timeless event which may transpire at any moment of any day or any night. For this we wait with joyous expectancy.

KEEP LOOKING UP!

William L. Pettingill.

October, 1939.

01.1. Structural Plan of the Revelation

Structural Plan of the Revelation

Preface Introduction (Rev 1:1-8) Part 1.—The Things Which John Saw (Rev 1:9-20) Part 2.—The Things Which Are (Rev 2:1-29 and Rev 3:1-22) Part 3.—After These Things Section 1 — The Rapture of the Saved (Rev 4:1-11) Section 2 —The Great Day of Redemption (Rev 5:1-14)

Section 3 —The Wrath to Come (Rev 6:1-17, Rev 7:1-17, Rev 8:1-13, Rev 9:1-21, Rev 10:1-11, Rev 11:1-19) Section 4 —The Trinity of Evil (Rev 12:1-17 and Rev 13:1-18) Section 5 — Encouragement and Warning (Rev 14:1-20 and Rev 15:1-8) Section 6 — The Seven Last Plagues (Rev 16:1-21) Section 7 — Babylon the Great (Rev 17:1-18 and Rev 18:1-24) Section 8 — The Two Great Suppers (Rev 19:1-21) Section 9 — The Millennial Reign (Rev 20:1-15) Section 10 — The New Heaven and the New Earth (Rev 21:1-8) Section 11 — Our Saviour's Parting Word (Rev 21:9-27, Rev 22:1-21)

Conclusion.

“Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by His blood; and He made us a Kingdom, priests unto His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

01.2. Introduction (Chapter 1: 1-8.)

Introduction (Rev 1:1-8)

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the Prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand.” (Rev 1:3.) The Revelation is the most neglected book in the New Testament, despite the fact that God has offered very great inducements for its study. In addition to the general blessing attending any intelligent study of the Scriptures, special blessing is promised to those who give attention to this last book in the Bible. Rev 1:3 says: “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein.”

There is a general impression that the book of The Revelation is exceedingly hard to understand, because it is so full of signs and symbols. Every book in the Bible is hard to understand, from the natural human standpoint. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1Co 2:14.) The Revelation is no exception—it can be understood only by those who yield themselves to the Spirit of Truth that He may guide them into the truth. As for the signs and symbols, we ought not to object to them, for they are always explained, either where they are employed, or elsewhere in the Bible. Men call this book a riddle, but God’s name for it is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” Unlike the Prophecy of Daniel, this book is not sealed. The Old Testament seer was commanded to shut up the words and seal his book to the Time of the End, but the writer of The Revelation was told to “seal not up the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the Time is at hand.” (Compare Dan 12:4; Rev 22:10.)

Rev 1:1-8 are introductory. The nature of the communication which follows is given in Rev 1:1-3. It is the revelation, or unveiling, of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass. It comes to us through John, who got it from an angel and who bears record of the Word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessing is here for whoever shall read or hear the words or keep the things written herein, for the time is at hand. The salutation, which follows, is from John the Exile, to the seven churches in Asia. It is also from the Eternal God, from Him Which is, and Which was and Which is to come. It is also from the Spirit of God, in all His fullness—the seven Spirits which are before His throne. This is the first symbol in the book, and it is not explained here, because of the similar symbol of the Holy Ghost in Isa 11:2. It is also from Jesus Christ, the Faithful Witness, the First begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth. These titles are all significant in this place. They set forth our Lord’s threefold office work as Prophet, Priest and King. In His prophetic office He is the Faithful Witness; it was as the Great High Priest over the House of God that He came forth from among the dead, the First-fruits of them that slept; and as King He is the Ruler of the Kings of the Earth, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

John breaks out into doxology in Rev 1:5-6, “unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory

and dominion for ever and ever, Amen!” Then in Rev 1:7, the central theme of the book rings out with trumpet sound: “Behold, He cometh with clouds! And every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him! And all kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of Him!” It is not the Rapture of the Church that John speaks of here, but the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from Heaven. It is not His coming for His saints, but His coming with them. Not of our being caught up to meet the Lord in the air, but of the glorious appearing of the Son of Man at His coming afterwards in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory—as Enoch prophesied: “Behold, the Lord cometh with myriads of His saints to execute judgment upon all.” This is the center of The Revelation. The words, “Even so, amen!” in Rev 1:7, probably belong to Rev 1:8. The Lord Himself is speaking and He says, “Even so, amen! I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, Which is, and Which was, and Which is to come, the Almighty.” This is an unusual title in the New Testament. It is El Shaddai, the name by which God revealed Himself unto Abraham. It is significantly brought in here, for this book is filled with wonders which could be brought about only by almightiness, and God is to demonstrate in this book that He is still the Lord God Omnipotent Who reigneth, the Eternal God, the Almighty.

01.3. Part 1.—The Things Which John Saw (Chapter 1:9-20.)

Part 1.—The Things Which John Saw (Rev 1:9-20)

“Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass after these things.” (Rev 1:19.) The Revelation is divided by our Lord Himself into three parts. The first division proper begins at Rev 1:9 of the first chapter. John, who was a prisoner on the island of Patmos for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day. This is the only time the expression, “the Lord’s Day” is found in the Bible. There should be no doubt, however, as to its meaning, for from the earliest times of the Church this term was applied to the first day of the week, on account of the resurrection of our Lord on that day. The testimony of those living in John’s time and thereafter in unbroken line is unanimous on this subject. What John means by being “in the Spirit” is probably similar to Paul’s meaning in 2Co 12:2-4, where he speaks of one—“a man in Christ,” meaning himself (Rev 1:7) — being caught up into Paradise, whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell. While in this state John heard a voice like a trumpet saying: “What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches.” The apostle turned toward the voice and there burst upon his vision such a sight that he was immediately stricken to the earth. It was Jesus, his beloved Lord, but O, what a change! Once before John had seen Him in a transfigured state, but that was not like this. This was Jesus in all His glory, even the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. He appeared in the glorious apparel of the Great High Priest and around and about Him were seven golden lampstands representing the churches. It is an apt symbol, for the churches are in the world to shine as lights, holding forth the word of life. There is undoubted reference here to the golden lampstand in the Tabernacle, which was a figure of Christ and the Church which is His body. The difference is that here the type is of the separate outward visible churches, as they appear in the world in the sphere of testimony.

There is an immense difference between the Church and the churches. The Church consists of all believers from Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47) to the Rapture (1Th 4:1-18) They are members of His body, all baptized by the one Spirit into the one body. The churches include all who profess His name. The Church is always indivisible and ever energized by the life of Him Who is its Head. The churches are split into a thousand fragments and are often energized by the activities of the flesh. The Church is the habitation of God by the Spirit. The churches are in many instances apostate from Christ and separate from God. The glorified Lord had in His right hand seven stars, which, He explained, typified the angels (i. e., messengers) of the churches; and as judgment must begin at the House of God, out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword (See 1Pe 4:17, Heb 4:12; John 12:48), and His countenance was as the sun shineth in His strength. John was prostrated by the vision, until the Lord Jesus laid His right hand upon him, renewing his strength. “Fear not,” He said, and these words must have had a familiar sound in John’s ears. “Fear not; I am the First and the Last and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and of Hades. Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass after these things.” This verse (Rev.

1:19) is the key to The Revelation. In this threefold analysis we shall find the clearest possible outline of the structural plan of the book, as follows:

First—"The things which thou sawest." This refers to John's vision of the Son of Man walking among the golden lampstands, given in Rev 1:1-20.

Second—"The things which are," This section includes the second and third chapters, as indicated by Rev 1:20 : "The things which are"—that is, the present things, the things of the present dispensation—"are seven churches." In the seven letters to the Asiatic churches our Lord seems to have given in advance a historic preview—a prophetic fore view—of the earthly career of the churches, from John's time to the end of the age.

Third—"The things which shall come to pass after these things." This is the final section, taking in the remainder of the book, chapters 4 to 22. In this last main division we have the story of what shall transpire at the end of the present course of things—that is, after the wind-up of "the things which are,"

01.4. Part 2.—The Things Which Are (Chapters 2 and 3.)

Part 2.—The Things Which Are (Rev 2:1-29 and Rev 3:1-22)

“The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.” (Rev 1:20.) The seven churches addressed by our Lord in the messages of Rev 2:1-29 and Rev 3:1-22 were not chosen from among the whole number of churches in Asia on account of their relative importance, for it is apparent that, excepting Ephesus, most of them were comparatively unimportant and obscure. These seven churches were evidently selected because they represented, in their spiritual condition, the seven successive phases of the professing church throughout the present Age. Seven is the number of completeness and these seven letters gave beforehand a complete view of what the churches should be during the seven successive periods of the Dispensation.

First. Ephesus stands for the latter part of the apostolic era—that is, at the time John wrote. The letter gives commendation for good remaining, but warns against the evil that threaten. Judaism had shown itself, for evil men had already attempted to introduce the doctrine of apostolic succession—they said they were apostles, and were not, and were found liars—but they had been rejected by the Church. There were Nicolaitans there also. This term doubtless describes those who sought to establish a separate order of priesthood among believers. The word means conqueror, or ruler, of the laity, or people. In our day this sin is so prevalent that it occasions no comment whatever. The churches set their pastors in a class by themselves and call them “Divines” and “the Clergy.” They apply titles to them, as “Reverend,” “Very Reverend,” “Right Reverend” and on through the list, until the pope is blasphemously called the “Holy Father.” All this is most unscriptural and dishonoring to God. “Holy and reverend is His name” only, and He Himself is the only “Holy Father.” (See Psa 111:9; John 17:11.) As for the Church of God, it is an equal brotherhood, and whoever divides it into unequal parts, as clergy and laity, is introducing schism into the body and is guilty of Nicolaitanism. Our Lord Jesus hates the deeds of the Nicolaitans and commends the Ephesian Church for hating these deeds also. Nevertheless, there is spiritual declension already noticed, for this Church had left her first love. The warning is sharp—Remember, repent and do the first works. Otherwise there is judgment awaiting the Church, whose lampstand will be removed. As for those individuals who should survive the wreck, the real believers or overcomers, they are promised the joy of the Tree of Life in the Paradise of God.

Second. The Smyrna period immediately followed the apostolic era. Great suffering is threatened, but the crown of life will be the reward of faithfulness. Judaism is rampant during the Smyrna period, men claiming to be Jews who are of the synagogue of Satan. The tribulation ten days probably refers to the ten distinct attempts during two hundred years to crush out the infant church. The sentence, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,” is found many times engraved on the walls of the catacombs of Rome.

Third. The Church of the Pergamum period showed in its early stages the purifying effects of the Smyrna sufferings. Dwelling where Satan's throne was, the whole world lying in the Wicked One, the Church held fast the name and the faith of Jesus. But just then Emperor Constantine's professed conversion occurred and the Church yielded to the temptation her Lord had overcome and allied herself with the world and settled down at ease. Church and State were united and the Church became the world's mistress. Whole legions of soldiers were marched to the rivers and baptized—not into Christ indeed, but “into favor.” Heathen temples became “Christian churches” and heathen priests became “Christian priests.” This alliance with the world is the doctrine of Balaam so strongly condemned and the deeds of the Nicolaitans are now based upon a recognized doctrine, which thing the Lord hates. Judgment is again threatened for the corrupt Church and deliverance for the overcomer.

Fourth. The Thyatiran period showed a great preponderance of evil. The Lord did not fail to see and commend works and love and service and faith and endurance. But the woman Jezebel was suffered there. This marks the rise of the papacy and the awful descent of the Church into the dark ages of medieval Rome. The Old Testament Jezebel was the heathen wife of a Jewish king who upheld idolatry, set up an idolatrous priesthood, and put to death the Lord's prophets. She carried out the doctrine of Balaam to its full extent. It is written of her husband in 1Ki 21:25, that he sinned so that there was none like unto Ahab which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of Jehovah, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. The history of the Thyatiran period corresponds perfectly with all this. Professing to be the bride of Christ, the so-called Church became married to heathenism and stirred up more wickedness than can be found in any other period of Church history. No one who reads that history can doubt that this is a picture of Rome, the wicked Jezebel.

Fifth. Sardis comes next. The Protestant Reformation brought the dawn of the morning from the dark night of the middle ages. But the Reformed churches soon lapsed into cold lifeless formalism and the picture in the epistle to the Sardian Church is of this latter phase of that period. “Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead.” There was the form of godliness but little of its power. A few names were left, however, whose garments were not defiled and they shall walk with Him in white.

Sixth. Philadelphia is a phase of the Church growing out of the Reformation period. The word means “brotherly love” and the Philadelphia Church is made up of the few names that were left in Sardis—the remnant who are keeping themselves unspotted from the world. He that hath the key of David is watching over them. He finds no fault in them, but commends them because they have a little strength, having strengthened the things which remained. “Because thou hast kept the word of My patience,” says the Lord to them, “I will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” This is His definite assurance that the Church of God will not pass through, nor even into the terrors of The Great Tribulation. We are delivered from the wrath to come (1Th 1:9-10). “Behold, I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

Seventh. Laodicea is the last period of Church history. All who are not of Philadelphia are of Laodicea. The word “Laodicea” means “the people's rights,” and surely many of the churches of these last days have become the “people's churches.” Nominally the Lord Jesus is their Head, but really He is shut out. He says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” Lukewarm is the exact word

to describe the condition of many so-called Christian churches of these days, and He who is about to come will spue them out of His mouth. Meanwhile if any man hear His voice and open the door, the Lord will come in unto him and sup with him and he with Him. “To him that overcometh” —and the overcoming is by the blood of the Lamb —“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.” Can there be any doubt in view of the import of these letters to the churches, that we are now living in the last days, the days of the apostate Church, the Church of the Laodiceans? And if that be so, then our Lord is about to come. May God help us to be ever ready for His coming—ever “serving the living and true God and waiting for His Son from Heaven.” He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

01.5. Part 3.—After These Things

Part 3.—After These Things Section 1 — The Rapture of the Saved (Rev 4:1-11)

“But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” (1Th 4:13-18.)

We have now reached the third and final main division of our book. The things which John saw on that memorable Lord’s Day in Patmos were described for us in the first chapter. The earthly career of the churches and their failure as a center of testimony— “the things which are”— were set forth in the seven letters of Rev 2:1-29 and Rev 3:1-22. The third section begins with Rev 4:1 and includes all the rest of 10 the book. It is a detailed description of what shall follow the close of the Church age— “the things which shall come to pass after these things.”

“After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard, a voice as of a trumpet speaking with me, One saying, Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must come to pass after these things.” (Rev 4:1) The door opened in Heaven is a symbol easy of understanding, for there is but one door into Heaven—even Jesus Himself, who said, “I am the Door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” The voice, as of a trumpet, is the voice of Jesus, as John explains, the first voice which he heard. The words, “Come up hither!” are possibly the very words we shall hear when “the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout.” (1Th 4:16.) When He raised Lazarus from the dead He shouted with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” When He comes for His people, His dead and living saints, He will again shout with a loud voice, saying, “Come up hither!” It is hard for John to describe what followed. “Straightway,” he says, “I was in the Spirit.” He was, like Paul’s “man in Christ,” caught up into Paradise, to see the Lord face to face. There are some experiences which words cannot define, and this was one of them. So will it be for every Christian when Jesus comes. All shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. We shall never be able to tell anyone all about it; it is too great for human language. “The dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them.” It is our hope that we may be among those who are alive at His coming. True, it will be glorious to be brought out of the grave by His shout of triumph, but,

“O Joy! O delight!

Should we go without dying!

No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying!

Caught up through the clouds with our Lord into glory,

When Jesus receives His own!"

John is at once occupied with the glorious Occupant of the throne. We shall never be done looking at Him. Eternity will hardly suffice for our gazing upon Him. What a glorious time will that be, when we shall always behold the face of our Father, which is in Heaven! But there are other thrones, four-and-twenty of them. The number of these thrones and the elders occupying them is the number of the courses in the Aaronic priesthood. Thus these elders are enthroned priests. They wear golden, incorruptible crowns. All these marks indicate that here we have the Church of God enthroned in Heaven with her Lord. He hath made us kings and priests and we shall reign with Him. The lightnings and thunders and voices proceeding from the throne show that the throne of grace has become a throne of judgment. And yet there is the rainbow around and above, all speaking of grace to follow the flood of wrath about to burst upon the rebellious earth. "In wrath" He will "remember mercy." The glassy sea is typical, as the laver and molten sea of the Tabernacle and the Temple, of the Word of God. The four living creatures appear elsewhere in Scripture, and are always in connection with the manifestation of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. They first appear as the cherubim with the flaming sword at the east of the Garden of Eden, guarding the Way of the Tree of Life. Then we see them as they overshadowed the mercy-seat in the Tabernacle of Moses, and the Temple of Solomon; they were embroidered on the vail, which typified His flesh (Heb 10:19-22); they were seen in Ezekiel's vision of the glory of God, and they correspond with the four Gospels, in which we see Jesus showing forth, in a fourfold way, the glory of the Father. In Matthew He appears as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the King of Israel—"the first living creature was like a lion." In Mark He is the devoted Servant, toiling patiently, according to His Father's will, and finally laying down His life for others—"the second living creature was like an ox." In Luke He is seen as Son of Man, the representative of a lost race, identified with it and bearing its sins—"the third living creature had a face as of a man." In John He is the Son of God, the Heavenly Visitor, coming forth from Heaven and returning to Heaven—"the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle." The names of Deity employed in the song of praise of the four living creatures, "Lord God Almighty"—Jehovah Elohim Shaddai—are all Hebrew names and connected with Jewish covenant relations, showing that the Church is not now in view, having been taken from the earth, and that God is about to resume definite relation with His people Israel. In the song in which the elders join at the close of the chapter He is addressed as "Our Lord and our God," which is far more appropriate to the Church. However, when He shall come in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory, they which pierced Him shall recognize in their Messiah the Jehovah of the Old Covenant and the Jesus of the New, and He will then be their Lord as well as ours, and their God as well as ours—our Lord and our God! Blessed be His holy name for ever and ever!

Section 2 —The Great Day of Redemption (Rev 5:1-14)

"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward." (Rom 8:18.)

Rev 4:1-11 closes with a glad chorus of praise and thanksgiving to God. As the fifth opens, our prophet is gazing with rapt ecstasy upon that glorious One sitting upon the throne. "And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book (or scroll) written within and on the back, close

sealed with seven seals.” (Rev 5:1) Whatever this scroll was, it was clearly a complete record of something. It was completely filled, for it was written within and on the back; it was completely sealed, for it was sealed with seven seals. It is also obvious that the opening of the scroll was a matter of intense importance. No one was found worthy either to open the book, or to loose its seals, or even to look thereon. John was greatly overcome by this fact, and wept much because no one was found worthy to open the book or look thereon.

Then one of the elders spoke. The elders, as we have seen, represented the enthroned Church, and surely the Church knows Who is the worthy One. If it be a question of who is worthy, there can be but one answer. “Weep not,” said the elder. “Behold, the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome, to open the book and the seven seals thereof.” (Rev 5:5)

Well do we know Him. He is the Root and Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star. Surely, He hath overcome. But how? “And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the Earth.” (Rev 5:6) He overcame as a Lamb (Isa 53:7), and all our overcoming is by the blood of the Lamb. (Rev 12:11.) John saw Him as a Lamb standing. He now sits for us at the right hand of God; in that day “He shall stand as an ensign for the people” (Isa 11:10); “Jehovah standeth up to plead; He standeth to judge the peoples.” (Isa 3:13.) But how strange is this language! He was as a Lamb standing, “as though it had been slain.” Blessed be God, the Lamb slain was not holden by the bands of death! He was dead, but He is alive again; He was slain, but He standeth! And He has all power, as shown by the seven horns, and all wisdom, as shown by the seven eyes, “which are the seven Spirits of God”—a figure of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. (Compare Zec 3:8-10, Zec 4:1-10.)

“And He came, and he taketh it out of the right hand of Him that sat on the throne.” (Rev 5:7) Whatever the significance of this act, so briefly described, it must have been tremendously important, for all Heaven straightway burst into joyous acclaim, the moment it was accomplished. “And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a Kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the Earth.

“And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

“And every created thing which is in the Heaven, and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever.

“And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped.” (Rev 5:8-14) From the character of these remarkable songs, and by comparing with other Scriptures, we may find the meaning of the mysterious book and the circumstances surrounding its transfer into our Lord’s hands. The book is very evidently nothing else but the title deed to this “Earth and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein.” His at the beginning by right of creation, it now becomes His forever by right of redemption. Jesus appears in this picture as the Goel or Kinsman-Redeemer, claiming and establishing His right of redemption. In Dan 7:1-28 there is a prophetic description of the transfer of universal dominion into the hands of the Lord Jesus. Beginning at the ninth verse, Daniel says: “I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, Whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. * * * * I saw in the night visions, and, behold, One like the Son of Man came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. ***** And the Kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.” (Dan 7:9-10; Dan 7:13-14; Dan 7:27.) In Php 2:10-11, it is declared that, according to God’s eternal purpose, the time is coming when at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in Heaven, and things on Earth, and things under the Earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father The fulfillment of that word is seen in the chapter before us. An illustration of this great event is given in the thirty-second chapter of Jeremiah. (See especially Rev 5:14-15.) The incident described there is very likely recorded as a type.

Another very beautiful illustration is seen in the story of Ruth. Jesus is our Boaz—our Mighty Man of Wealth. He hath redeemed us. No one else could have done it. He alone was able and He alone was worthy. His right will be unquestioned in that day. No one but Him could loose the seals. We are all by nature in bondage to the Prince of this World—in the power of the enemy—sold under sin. He hath prevailed for us and bought us back.

This, then, is that for which everything waits and towards which everything tends—the great Day of Redemption. This is the day in Paul’s mind when in the midst of affliction he cries out, “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. * * * The creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” (Rom 8:18-23.) Our eyes should ever be on that Day, as the apostle exhorts us, in Eph 4:30, to “grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by Whom ye are sealed unto the Day of Redemption.” May we not, then, join in the glad alleluias of the heavenly choirs? for we are amongst those who, “having believed, were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the

earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of the purchased possession.”

Section 3 —The Wrath to Come (Rev 6:1-17, Rev 7:1-17, Rev 8:1-13, Rev 9:1-21, Rev 10:1-11, Rev 11:1-19)

“Ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, Who delivereth us from the wrath to come.” (1Th 1:9-10.) The law of structure in The Revelation is exactly similar to that in Daniel’s Prophecy. The opening vision in Daniel, the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, gives the full history of the Times of the Gentiles, or the period of Gentile political domination in the Earth, beginning with Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar and reaching down to the Beast-King of the End Time and even to the Christ Himself as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, sitting upon David’s throne. The succeeding visions in Daniel are mostly parallel with this dream of the Chaldean monarch, each successive vision, however, taking up the story at a new point and proceeding with greater detail. This principle is found also in The Revelation. The seven seals give the complete history of the awful judgments to come upon the world after the Church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Then the seven trumpets run parallel with the seals, though from a new view point and in greater detail. So with the seven vials or bowls also. These successive groups of sevens are but three pictures of what will go on in the Earth during the seven years defined as the seventieth week of Daniel and spoken of by the prophet, and by our Lord Jesus in Mat 24:1-51, as the time of The Great Tribulation. This period includes “the wrath to come” (1Th 1:9-10), “the day of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer 30:7). It will be the time of God’s great and sore judgment upon the world for the rejection of His Son. The Church of God will be delivered from passing through this furnace of affliction by the Rapture which precedes it, though there will be so-called churches in the world through it all. Many institutions are called churches which have no right to the name, and there are multitudes of persons professing to be Christians who have never been born again. All these will be left behind when He comes for His people, but every child of God by the new birth will surely go with Him. All the judgments of “The Great Tribulation” will be witnessed from Heaven by the enthroned and glorified people of God, as they were thus witnessed by the Apostle John as their representative. The Seven Seals. In Mat 24:1-51 our Lord Jesus gave a summary of the judgments of “The Great Tribulation,” which we shall find to correspond precisely with the story of the seven seals. He pointed out that in that day there should be, first, false Christs, deceiving’ many. In connection with the first seal the rider on the white horse is a false Christ, doubtless the Beast-King of Rev 13:1-18, presenting himself as a great and triumphant ruler, having great success, going forth conquering and to conquer. Secondly, our Lord said there should be wars and rumors of wars. The second seal brings forth a rider on a blood red horse, who takes peace from the Earth. Thirdly, we are warned of that inevitable follower of universal war, that is, universal famine. And under the third seal there is seen a rider on a black horse, bringing great famine, during which it will take a whole day’s wages to buy a quart of wheat or three quarts of barley. The oil and wine, being luxuries instead of necessities, are not affected. Pestilences and earthquakes are the next thing on the programme in Mat 24:1-51 and the fourth rider is Death on a pale horse with Hades following, the very Earth opening wide her greedy mouth for the unwonted harvest of death, the result of war and famine and pestilence. The seven seals are divided into groups of four and three, the reason for which will appear as we go on. Under the fifth seal we find our Lord’s words true again, for He said there should be afflictions, many killed for their witness to the truth, the Gospel of the

Kingdom being preached, for a testimony unto all nations. So here we see the souls of these martyrs under the altar crying for vengeance. Their language identifies them as Jews, and Jews will be the evangelists of that day. The Lord Jesus, in His Olivet discourse, next went on to describe the great convulsions of nature to follow these afflictions of His people. He said that the sun and moon should be darkened, the stars falling from Heaven and the powers of the Heavens shaken. The sixth seal brings all this to pass. The silence for a half hour in Heaven, followed by thunder and voices and lightnings and an earthquake, all the signs of judgment, is, I doubt not, the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven—to be followed by His coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory to set up His throne and reign. The Tribulation Saints. In the seventh chapter we have a parenthetical passage, telling us of the Tribulation saints who are turned to the Lord in the midst of the awful scenes of judgment described in this book. There are the 144,000 of the Jewish remnant and then the innumerable company of palm bearers, those who have come up out of The Great Tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Thus we see that by means of judgment God will bring multitudes to Himself out of the heathen nations and that then, as always, in wrath He will remember mercy. The seventh seal (Rev 8:1-5) shows the prayers of the saints, uniting with the incense from the golden altar, and bringing down upon the rebellious world the terrible judgments immediately preceding the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. The Seven Trumpets.

Trumpets are typical of convocation, and the judgment of the trumpets is preparatory to the regathering of Israel to their own land. The siege of Jericho, when the seven blasts upon seven trumpets by the seven priests after the sevenfold march about the city on the seventh day were followed by the destruction of the city, finds its antitype in the trumpet judgments of the Apocalypse. Jericho, the accursed city, is ever a type of this world abiding under the curse and wrath of God.

There is great danger in supposing everything in The Revelation to be symbolical. While there is no doubt that symbols abound in the book, they are carefully distinguished, and our rule of interpretation holds good here as elsewhere. "If the plain sense make good sense, seek no other sense." The seven trumpet judgments, as in the case of the seals, are divided into two groups. Four is the Earth or world number, and the first four judgments are seen to affect the natural world and men only indirectly. The phenomena are such as are usually explained away as due to natural causes, leaving God out of the calculation. The last three, and three is the Trinity number, are called the woe judgments, and are such as cannot thus be explained, as in them the hand of God is more directly discernible. God cannot always be explained away, much as His enemies may desire it. The first trumpet brings hail and fire, mingled with blood, and results in terrible devastation in field and forest. God thus begins to speak to men in His sore displeasure, the Day of Grace having passed. The second judgment affects the sea, turning part of it into blood and destroying life in a third part of it. So far, these judgments resemble those brought upon Pharaoh when God had determined to deliver His people Israel. A greater Exodus will follow the judgments of the trumpets. The star falling from Heaven in the third judgment symbolizes Satan, whose expulsion from Heaven is described in detail in chapter Rev 12:7-12. (Compare Isa 14:12-15.) The wormwood judgment is in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prediction in Jer 9:12-16, of his Prophecy. Israel and Palestine seem to be more especially involved. The fourth trumpet is similar to the sixth seal, except that it is limited to a third part of the sun, moon and stars. From Amo 8:9-10 Israel seems to

be especially concerned here also.

Under the fifth trumpet the first of the three great woes comes upon the Earth. The star fallen to the Earth is the same as in the third judgment, that is, Satan. He releases from the Abyss a terrible army of "locusts, like unto horses prepared for war." This army is seen in Joe 2:1-32. The leader is called "Abaddon" in Hebrew and "Apollyon" in Greek, both meaning "Destroyer" in English. He is doubtless the Beast-King, the "man of sin," the "son of perdition," the "angel of the Abyss." We shall become better acquainted with this terrible character in the succeeding chapters. He is the same as the rider on the white horse under the first seal judgment.

Two hundred millions is the amazing number of the army seen under the sixth trumpet in the second woe judgment. They are demons from the abyss, sent forth to torment men, "as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man." The third woe and the seventh trumpet are parallel with the seventh seal, bringing us up to the point of the coming of Messiah to reign on the Earth. Our Lord Jesus describes the same event in Mat 24:29-30. In Rev 10:1-11 and Rev 11:1-19 we have a parenthetical passage which comes in between the sixth and seventh trumpets. The Strong Angel in Rev 10:1-11 is none other than the Lord Jesus Himself. A comparison with Dan 10:5-6; Dan 12:6-7 will explain this paragraph. Jerusalem is seen in chapter 11, with the Temple restored, as in Eze 40:1-49, but the city is to be trodden down of the Gentiles forty-two months, or three and a half years, the latter half of the seven years mentioned heretofore. (Compare Luk 21:24.) The two witnesses of Rev 11:1-19 are probably Elijah and Enoch, who were translated without death in view of their coming death in the streets of Jerusalem in the great Day of Tribulation.

Section 4 —The Trinity of Evil (Rev 12:1-17 and Rev 13:1-18) "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." (2Th 2:11) Our studies so far have brought us to the end of the seven trumpet judgments, simultaneous with the end of the seven seal judgments and also, as we shall see later, with the end of the seven vial or bowl judgments. Each of the sevenfold series of judgments brings us to the end of the period of seven years following the Rapture or catching up of the Church and to the very eve of the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from Heaven with myriads of His saints to execute judgment upon all.

Rev 12:1-17 takes us back again, and not only to the beginning of the seven-years period, but away back to the beginning of the Christian era, now nineteen centuries ago, and nearly a hundred years before John's exile to Patmos. The woman arrayed with the sun, having the moon under her feet and upon her head twelve stars, travailing in birth, is Israel "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came." The sun is symbolical of the Son of God Who to Israel is the Sun of Righteousness. The moon is the Church of God, shining with the reflected light of her absent Lord. The woman appears between the sun and moon, showing Israel's place historically. The crown of twelve stars stands for the twelve tribes of Israel, seen as a unit from God's standpoint. These symbols are familiar to Bible students as coming from the Old Testament Scriptures. (Compare Rev 1:14-18; Gen 37:9-10; Mal 4:2.) The Great Red Dragon. The Devil is next seen, as a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns. The seven heads doubtless suggest the perfection of diabolical subtlety and wisdom, while horns are everywhere a type of kingship, and there are diadems on the seven heads. The horns are ten, being the number of government. We have here, in short, Satan in full regalia and pomp as the Prince and God of this World. He is also seen as

Prince of the Power of the Air, for his tail draweth a third part of the stars of Heaven and did cast them to the Earth. As we see from the next chapter, these stars are the fallen angels or demons who are to be cast down to the Earth with him. The dragon stands before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her Child. Thus did Satan stand, prior to our Lord's birth in Bethlehem, ready to destroy the Holy Child Jesus. Herod the Great was actuated by satanic energy when he slaughtered the infants in the vain hope of killing the Heir to David's throne.

"And she was delivered of a Son, a Man Child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron." We well know Him. It is He Who died on the cross for us that we might live and reign with Him. It is He of Whom the prophet sang, "Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon His Kingdom." (Isa 9:6-7.) It is He of Whom Gabriel announced, "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." (Luk 1:33.) It is He to Whom the promise was given: "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psa 2:8-9.) The next thing told to us is that "the Child was caught up unto God, and unto His throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand, two hundred and threescore days." This shows that the woman in the type is not the Virgin Mary, and the fleeing into the wilderness is not Mary's flight into Egypt, for the woman does not flee into the wilderness with her Child, but after her Child has been caught up to Heaven. And her flight is not for the safety of her Child, as was Mary's, but for her own protection. The woman is the Jewish people in a figure. (See Isa 9:6; Isa 26:17; Isa 66:6-9; Mic 4:9-10.) But the student is apt to find great difficulty here, and there is much need of following very diligently as the Spirit of Truth guides us in our study, ever remembering the divine rule of interpretation to "compare spiritual things with spiritual." We are surprised, perhaps, at finding no mention of our Lord's earthly life or His death on the cross. This is because He is presented here not in His humiliation as the Man of Sorrows, but rather in His exaltation as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Of course, John knew all about the thirty-three years of our Lord's earthly career, but John's pen was guided by the Holy Spirit and it was aside from His purpose to speak here of the sufferings of Christ. He is occupied, instead, with the glory that shall follow them. (See 1Pe 1:11.) The catching up of the Man Child unto God and unto His throne does not speak of the Ascension of Jesus from Mount Olivet, for that would be out of its proper place here. The ascension in the Spirit's mind is rather the catching up of the spiritual body of Christ, the event described in 1Th 4:1-18 and elsewhere. The Man Child is not yet complete. Up there in Heaven there is our Lord Jesus in His physical body, but in the spiritual sense His body is still here. The Church is "His body, the fullness of Him which filleth all in all." (Eph 1:23.) "We are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones." (Eph 5:30.) "For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1Co 12:12-13.) The Man Child is still in the process of birth. Thus the apostle writes in Gal 4:19, "My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you." The Holy Spirit is now in the world, working in the Church both to will and to do of His good pleasure, building up the body of Christ,

and this will go on “till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Php 2:13; Eph 4:11-13.) This truth, as to the relation between the head and the body of Christ, is seen in 1Ti 3:16 : “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; He Who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory.” The order preserved here shows that Christ is seen as not yet received up in glory. That is yet future and will be fulfilled at the Rapture of the Church. And the woman, that is, Israel, is still suffering. It is ever true that salvation is of the Jews and it is through the suffering and humiliation of Israel that the Man Child is coming to perfection. Let us never forget our debt to the Jews and let us see to it that so far as in us lies, our debt is paid by the faithful preaching of the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. The great red dragon is still seeking to devour the Man Child. The true Church of God, in the midst of the mass of lukewarm profession, is well known to our enemy and as cordially hated and cruelly persecuted as ever. The period of 1,260 days, during which Israel is nourished in the wilderness, is the former half of the seven-years period following the taking out of the Church. During the remaining three and a half years the nation will suffer terrible judgments. In Rev 12:7-9 we have a description of a war in heaven between the opposing armies of Michael and Satan, resulting in the Devil and his angels being cast down to the Earth. There follows rejoicing in Heaven and a warning of coming woe to the Earth. This brings us to the middle of Daniel’s “seventieth week,” when The Great Tribulation proper will begin. The Man of Sin. The Beast-King appears in connection with the revived Roman Empire in Rev 13:1-10. The picture is identical with that of the beasts of Daniel’s vision, the Beast-King comprising the features of them all. His reign as the world’s monarch will be the logical heading up of Gentile dominion and he will reign over all lands by the energy of Satan. The world will then throw off its mask and openly worship the dragon and the beast. The seven heads and ten horns of the dragon are seen here, showing that Satan has given all his power to the man of sin. The ten horns have crowns on them, corresponding with the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image. The Beast King thus appears as a Roman prince, ruling over the ten-fold form of the revived Roman Empire. He is seen in our chapter as reigning over the whole Earth. He is at the height of his power, and has forty-two months or three and one-half years yet to reign. He now breaks his league with Israel and begins those relentless persecutions so often foretold in the Word of God. He blasphemes God and makes war with the saints. Universal dominion, which was offered to the Lord Jesus and refused, is given to the false Messiah and all that dwell on the Earth shall worship him, save only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. This evil king is the “little horn” of Daniel’s prophecy. He comes up out of the sea of the Gentile world and is the prince of a Gentile power, though Dan 11:37 intimates that he is an apostate Jew. The False Prophet.

Still another beast is seen in the remaining paragraph of Rev 13:1-18. This is the false prophet, taking the place in the Trinity of Evil occupied by the Holy Spirit in the Godhead. This is the consummation of the Devil’s work. He is a liar and the father of lies and his most subtle form of deception is to imitate the things of God. God has His wise virgins, Satan has his foolish ones; outwardly they appear alike. God sows good seed, Satan sows tares. God plants the true vine, Satan plants “the vine of the Earth.” God has a bride, Satan has a harlot. God has a city, the New Jerusalem; Satan also has a city, the corrupt Babylon. God has a Man, the Lord Christ; Satan has a man, the Beast-King. God’s Man is the Son of God; Satan’s man is the son of perdition. Finally,

God is manifested in the form of the Holy Trinity; Satan is manifested in the form of the Trinity of Evil. The second beast is seen coming up out of the Earth, which probably intimates his connection with Israel, the earthly people. He poses as a prophet. He is the Devil's messenger, coming forth as an angel of light and a minister of righteousness. There are two horns, like a lamb, in imitation of the Lamb of God, but his speech savors of the fires of Hell—"he spake like a dragon." He directs the worship of the world to the Beast-King. He does great miracles, even calling down fire from Heaven. Finally he sets up an image of the Beast-King in the Holy Place of the Temple of God at Jerusalem, causes the image to breathe and to speak. This is the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet and by our Lord Jesus. All people are compelled to worship the image on pain of death and to receive the mark of the beast upon their hands and foreheads. Those who refuse find themselves unable to buy or sell anything anywhere. This will be the logical heading up of the boycott system. The number of the beast, 666, is, of course, symbolical, being the number of incompleteness thrice repeated. It is ever short of the perfect seven, showing that however the Beast King may try to show himself forth as God he will fail to deceive at least the very elect. It is significant that the numerical equivalent of the name of Jesus is 888, eight being the number of resurrection and eternal triumph.

It may seem a strange thing that the world, with all its wisdom and culture, could be so deceived by the man of sin, and be led into the worship of such a character. But all becomes clear when we remember that man by wisdom never knew God, and that the seeming triumph of Satan is really a judgment upon this unbelieving and ungodly world from the hand of God Himself. It is because men will not have the truth that they are turned aside to error. As it is written, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie; that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2Th 2:11-12, 1911 Bible).

Section 5 — Encouragement and Warning (Rev 14:1-20 and Rev 15:1-8) "Fear God and give Him glory; for the hour of His judgment is come." (Rev 14:7.) The opening paragraph of Rev 14:1-20 show us the Lamb standing on Mount Zion and with Him 144,000 having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. There seems to be no reasonable doubt that this company is the same as the 144,000 sealed Israelites seen in Rev 7:1-17. They are doubtless the Jewish remnant so often seen in the Psalms and Prophecies. There is great joy in Heaven manifested by the music heard by John, for the time is come for Israel to "blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit." (Isa 27:6.) They are spoken of as virgins, as in Mat 25:1-46, for they not guilty of that friendship with the world which is enmity toward God and which the Scriptures call adultery. They turn to the Lord during the time of The Great Tribulation and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. The vision of the Lord Jesus on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, the place of God's earthly rest and the place of grace for Israel, is anticipative, and is given just here as showing the sharp contrast between God's King upon His holy hill of Zion, and Satan's creation, the Abomination of Desolation, in the Temple of God, showing himself forth as God. (2Th 2:4.) The same contrast is drawn in Isa 41:21-24 and Isa 42:1-4. In the former paragraph God is addressing the gods of idolatry: "Produce your cause, saith Jehovah; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth and declare unto us what shall happen: declare ye the former things, what they are, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or show us things to come. Declare the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods; yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Behold, ye are

nothing, and your work is of naught; an abomination is he that chooseth you.”

Now note the contrast in Isa 42:1-25 : “Behold, My Servant, Whom I uphold; My Chosen, in Whom My soul delighteth. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry, nor lift up His voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will He not break, and a dimly burning wick will He not quench. He will bring forth justice in truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged till He have set justice in the Earth, and the isles shall wait for His law.” The promise is that “a Redeemer will come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob.” (Isa 59:20.) “Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. Thus saith Jehovah, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of Jehovah of Hosts, the Holy Mountain.” (Zec 8:2-3.) In that day it will be a great honor to be called a Jew and to be identified with the city of Jerusalem. “Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: It shall yet come to pass that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying: Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of Hosts: I will go also; Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold, our of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.” (Zec 8:20-23.)

All that, however, must be preceded by terrible judgments upon Israel and upon all the nations, for this world has yet to answer for the murder of the Son of God. These judgments are depicted in the book of The Revelation, and we have this anticipative vision of the Lamb on Mount Zion to remind us, as we are again and again reminded in the book, that in wrath God remembers mercy. The Sevenfold Warning.

Rev 14:6-20, Rev 15:1-8, there is a sevenfold series of warnings for those yet upon the earth after the Church is caught out. These final alarms immediately precede the last series of judgments, the seven vials or bowls, containing the seven plagues.

First, there is an angel flying in mid-heaven preaching the eternal Gospel unto them that dwell on the Earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he saith with a great voice, “Fear God and give Him glory; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made the Heaven and the Earth and sea and fountains of waters.” This is very different from the Gospel we preach to-day. Now, it pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. And for preachers He chooses the weak things and despised. In that day the preacher will be an angel flying in mid-heaven. Our message is, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” The angel’s message is, “Fear God for the hour of His judgment is come.” Men are fond of saying that they have not sufficient evidence of the truth of our Gospel; in that day they will not be able so to reply to the flying angel. But they will not believe then, any more than now. The fact is that the world hates God and the Word of God, and men did not believe, even when One rose from the dead. The second angel brings warning of the fall of Babylon, that great ungodly system in which men seek refuge rather than turn to God. “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great, that hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” The collapse of Babylon is not actually seen here, but simply announced beforehand, that men may not say they were not

warned in time to separate from her. It is prophetic, like the words of Jesus, when He said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven," a prophecy which still awaits fulfillment. The third warning also comes from an angel, following the others; that is, flying in mid-heaven, and saying with a great voice, "If any man worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of His anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

What a terrible alternative will be presented to men during those dreadful days! They must choose between worshipping the Devil and the Beast-King on the one hand, and worshipping God and His Christ on the other. If they give their allegiance to the only true God they must lay down their lives for the testimony of Jesus; if they bow to the man of sin there is the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of His anger! Very likely these people are living all about us to-day. Asleep are they and will not be aroused; they are blind and in love with darkness. O, that God may breathe His own mighty power into the message as we cry into their ears—Fly for your lives! The end of all things is at hand! God's hour has struck and the Judge is at the door! Flee from the coming wrath! If they ask, Whither shall we go? Whither, indeed, but unto Him who bore the wrath of God for us? Jesus invites us, and He alone can save. We need not fear to trust Him for He is the Mighty God and He is able. The fourth warning is given in the audible words of the Holy Spirit of God, speaking from Heaven, and commanding His servant John, to write, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them." This warning is given for the benefit of the witnesses in that day who may be tempted to compromise with evil in order to preserve their lives. It is always true that those who die in the Lord are blessed; but this Scripture is for the Lord's suffering ones in the awful scenes of The Great Tribulation. Blessed, indeed, shall be those who count not their lives dear to them, but lay them down for the love of the truth. Of these it is written later (Rev 20:4-6) "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."

Now this series of seven warnings, like all the sevenfold groups in our book, is divided into two parts, quite perceptibly. As usual, the first group contains four warnings and the second one consists of three. Four is the world or Earth number and three the heavenly, the Trinity number. The first four of these warnings come in the form of words—the words of God addressed to men. They seem more natural, so to speak, than the final three. Men will explain them away as due to perfectly natural causes, as when God spoke out of Heaven in the days of Jesus' earthly ministry men said it was thunder, a perfectly natural thing. The last three of the warnings are very different. Men shall not be able to explain them and leave God out. They are plainly supernatural and the hand of God is clearly seen in them. The fifth warning is the reaping of the harvest of the Earth by the sharp sickle of the Son of Man, Who maketh the cloud His chariot. It is the harvest at the end of the Age, to which Jesus referred in the parable of the wheat and the tares in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. "In the time of the harvest," said He, "I will say to the reapers, gather up first

the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn. * * * * * The harvest is the end of the Age, and the reapers are angels. As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the Age. The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears, let him hear." This makes our study perfectly clear. The angels are seen in Rev 14:1-20 of The Revelation gathering out the tares and binding them in bundles for burning; the wheat we shall see, gathered into the barn, in Rev 15:1-8. The sixth warning is the vintage of the Earth reaped with the sharp sickle of another angel. The vine of the Earth is Israel, planted and faithfully tended by the Lord, Who looked for grapes, but found only wild grapes. It was the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts at the beginning, even His pleasant plant; but he looked for justice, and, behold, oppression; for righteousness, and, behold, a cry. (Isa 5:1-30) "I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness," saith Jehovah in Hos 9:10, but after all His care He had to say, "Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself." (Hos 10:1) When the Lord sent for His fruit, His messengers were beaten and stoned and killed. Then he sent His Son and they took him and cast Him forth, out of the vineyard and killed Him. (Mat 21:33-46.) Thus Israel became the vine of the Earth and Jesus Himself, after being cast out of the vineyard, was planted by His Father the Husbandman as the true Vine. (John 15:1-27) As for the coming judgment, God has said, "They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine." (Jer 6:9.) We have here a picture of the last great war of the nations against Israel and Jerusalem described in Joe 3:1-21 : "Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle for the vintage is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great." This will be Jerusalem's last baptism of blood. "Jehovah shall roar from Zion and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the Heavens and the Earth shall shake: but Jehovah shall be a refuge unto His people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion My holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her anymore." (See also Zec 14:1-21.)

Sixteen hundred furlongs, or two hundred miles, is the distance from Dan to Beersheba, that is, the length of Palestine. The whole land is pictured as submerged in a sea of blood from the winepress of the wrath of God trodden without the city. There would be no need for such a judgment if men would but have taken refuge under the blood of Jesus. They hated Him, and killed Him, and there is nothing for them but that He shall tread down the peoples in His anger and make them drunk in his wrath and pour out their life-blood upon the earth. (Isa 63:1-19) The seventh warning is set aside for a moment by a parenthetical paragraph in Rev 15:1-8, in which we are given a glimpse of the wheat in the Lord's granary. I doubt not that this is the identical company seen in Rev 7:1-17, the great multitude which no man could number, they that come out of The Great Tribulation, from every nation and tribe and people and tongue. They sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, a sevenfold psalm of holy joy and praise.

Then comes the seventh warning in the elaborate preparations for the seven last plagues, the bowl judgments. There it stands, the written word, throughout the centuries, and the world rushes heedlessly on, pausing only to curl the lip and hurl the sneer at the poor little company of expectant ones, the “stargazers,” who are seeking feebly to warn the crowd and stem the awful tide. “Where is the promise of His coming?” is the jeering question heard on every hand. May God help us to be faithful and cry aloud, whether they hear or forbear. Let our loins be girt about and our lamps burning and we ourselves like unto men who wait for their Lord to return. His last word to us was “Behold, I come quickly.” Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Section 6 — The Seven Last Plagues (Rev 16:1-21)

“Now therefore be ye not scoffers, lest your bonds be made strong; for a decree of destruction have I heard from the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, upon the whole Earth.” (Isa 28:22.)

Seven is the numerical key to the book of The Revelation. Seven is the complete number and the whole book is made up of sevenfold, that is complete, narratives of different phases of the coming judgments. Each series of seven is complete in itself, telling the story from its own point of view. We shall utterly miss the drift of the book if we fail to see this uniform law of structure pervading it throughout.

Again, the seven is always divided into four and three, the Earth number and the Trinity number, for perfectly obvious reasons. In the fourfold group God is seen but indirectly, as He works upon or through nature, and not directly upon men. In the threefold group God comes out into the open and works directly, in such a way as to compel men to see that God is and that He cannot be explained away.

Still further, the sevens will always be found divided into sixes and ones, a parenthetical passage being placed between the sixth and seventh point in the series. Six is the number of incompleteness and one is the unity number, setting forth the oneness of the Godhead. God, before completing the series in each case, pauses to remind men that He will not forget mercy and He will not make a full end. It is thus He spoke to Israel in Mal 3:6 : “I am Jehovah, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

Now all this is seen in the sixteenth chapter. Just as was the case in the seven seal judgments and the seven trumpet judgments, so also in the seven vial or bowl judgments, we are brought right down to the end of the period of The Great Tribulation, and in the later chapters we shall find unfolded in detail what is here given in summarized and condensed form. It may also be noticed that in the first four of these last plagues God deals with the things of nature and through them deals indirectly with men, while in the last three plagues His hand is made bare as He lays it heavily and directly upon rebellious men themselves. The parenthesis is also seen between the sixth and seventh judgments, as before.

There is every indication that the world is just now on the eve of the great crisis of the end-time of this Dispensation. The seven letters to the Asiatic churches in Rev 2:1-29 and Rev 3:1-22 our book show that the churches are finishing their earthly career and our expectant Lord is about to come for His waiting people. After that, all these dreadful and direful judgments will burst upon the Earth and God will reckon with men for their rejection of the Christ. This world must answer for the murder of the Son of God. Our business in this little while is to be serving the living and true God

and waiting for His Son from Heaven.

“Even so, Lord Jesus, come;

Hope of all our hopes the sum,

Take Thy waiting people home.”

According to Daniel's prophecy, it will be remembered, a period of seven years is yet needed to complete the Jewish Age in which Daniel lived and prophesied. The Church, like Peter's sheet, has been let down from Heaven and must be taken up again into Heaven before the seven-years period will begin. Immediately after the Rapture or catching-up of the Church, the Beast-King, the last great Gentile ruler, will make his appearance at the head of the nations. Israel also will bow down to him and he will make an alliance with the Jews for the seven years. He will keep his part of the compact for three and a half years and at the end of that time he will break his league, stopping the Judaic worship in the restored Temple at Jerusalem and substituting the grossest idolatry. Then will begin The Great Tribulation proper, the Day' of Wrath, the time of Jacob's trouble. Israel shall suffer awful persecutions at the hands of the proud king, and finally all men everywhere will be compelled on pain of death to worship the king and receive the mark, 666, the number of his name, branded upon their foreheads or hands. Those who refuse will be boycotted everywhere, and unable to hold commerce with their fellow-men; no man shall be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name. On the other hand, those who yield allegiance to the great king and allow themselves to be branded with his mark, shall suffer eternal torment, drinking of the wine of the wrath of God, prepared unmixed in the cup of His anger. The point of beginning in the seven last plagues is plainly indicated in Rev 16:1-21. The first bowl of the wrath of God is poured out and a noisome and grievous sore appears upon the men that have the mark of the beast and that have worshipped his image. This fixes the time of the beginning of these plagues at a point subsequent to the middle of the seven years period. The seven last plagues, therefore, are all confined to the time of The Great Tribulation itself. The sea is affected by the second plague, its waters turning into blood like the blood of a dead man, and every living thing in the *ea dies. The rivers and springs are next in order and the third plague turns all their waters into blood. The angel of the waters is heard justifying this awful catastrophe as a righteous act of God in judgment upon the world which has poured out the life-blood of saints and prophets; it is now meet that the blood-shedders should have blood to drink. The altar of the Temple is also heard speaking out, saying, “Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments.” In this our Day of Grace the altar is speaking out better things than the blood of Abel; but we are studying of the Day of Judgment, when the doors of grace shall have been shut, and in that Day the only judgment for men will be righteous judgment; and who shall be able to stand? The sun is next touched by the hand of God and it scorches men with fire. That great orb of day which has been for the many centuries the source of all good for physical man—light, life and health—will become an unbearable plague, killing men with its intense heat. Just so will the Son of God, the Light of the World, the Life of His people, and the Sun of Righteousness, become in that day a destroying, blazing flame, bringing awful vengeance to those who refuse to honor His Father. “For our God is a consuming fire.”

What will be the effect of all this upon the hearts of men? It will only harden them more and more. As the Word goes on to say, “they blasphemed the name of God, who hath the power over these

plagues; and they repented not, to give Him glory.” The Word of God is as a fire and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. If hearts resist the mighty power of the Gospel of Christ, so will they resist the terrible visitations of judgment. “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.”

Four plagues have been described and all of them are what men would try to explain away as natural phenomena, due to natural causes. Just so do men to-day seek to account for the acts of God in His world upon purely natural grounds, as if such an explanation disposed of God. Is not God in nature? Is He the God of the supernatural only? Is He not also the God of the natural? We have not yet learned to know God if we suppose that anything, either natural or supernatural, can happen without Him.

Well, He will not always be so easily explained away and men will not always be able to reckon without Him. In the final three of the plagues the phenomena will be of such a character as to compel men to acknowledge the workings of the Almighty One, even as the magicians of Egypt reached a limit beyond which they could not go and at which they had to say, “This is the finger of God.” The fifth plague affects the Beast-King’ throne and his Kingdom becomes darkened and his subjects gnaw their tongues for pain. They are now face to face with the great fact that they have the living God to deal with. What is the result? Just this: “They blasphemed the God of Heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they repented not of their works.” The sixth judgment dries up the bed of the great river Euphrates that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sun rising. What is this for? We shall see directly. Evil spirits now go forth from the dragon, the beast and the false prophet, spirits of demons working signs, or miracles; which go forth unto, or upon, the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the Great Day of God Almighty.

Just here our parenthesis comes in and very sweet and precious it is. Jesus speaks, interrupting the narrative just long enough to say, “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” It is just like our precious Lord to give this timely word of encouragement and admonition to His faithful remnant who shall be longing for His glorious appearing in that dark hour.

Rev 16:16 follows the parenthesis and informs us of the work of the evil spirits. It is to gather the kings of the Earth to Har-Magedon for the great battle against the Lord and His people. The battle is not seen here; it is only that the kings are assembling to get ready for the battle. Now we understand why Euphrates was dried up: that made possible this gathering of the kings of the East with those of the rest of the world, with their armies, for the last great struggle in rebellion against the Lord and His Christ. The battle itself is described later on. The seventh angel pours out his bowl upon the air; and there comes forth a great voice out of the Temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done.” The wrath of God is finished in the seventh plague. This brings us again to the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, just on the eve of His glorious appearing with His saints to execute judgment upon all. The last plague is accompanied by lightnings and voices and thunders; and also by “a great earthquake, such as was not since there were men upon the earth, so great an earthquake, so mighty.” The fall of Babylon is again mentioned as occurring in connection with the last plague; the full description of her fall is given in the next two chapters. “And every island fled away and the mountains were not found.” Finally, “a great hail, every stone about the weight of u

talent, cometh down out of Heaven upon men.” A talent is about a hundred pounds. The law of God to Israel provided that blasphemers should be stoned to death. This law will be executed in the last plague by the descent of these enormous hail-stones out of Heaven. The result of this judgment is that men go on blaspheming God, because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof is exceeding great. Thus it appears that these judgments are not remedial, but punitive, in their purpose and effect. And this is the goal towards which this world is hastening on! The fool is saying in his heart, ‘(“There is no God;” and he goes on saying it until he makes himself believe it. The world is rushing pell-mell into the whirling vortex of the awful wrath of God, and to the feeble voice of warning the reply comes, “Let us alone; we are too busy to think of such things.” The old indictment still stands—they will not have God in their knowledge. But our God is faithful and He has never left Himself without a witness. Beginning with Enoch, the seventh from Adam, the prophets have been crying out, “Behold, the Lord cometh with myriads of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” For those who may be troubled by the teaching that the Church of Christ must pass through The Great Tribulation before she is caught away to meet her Lord, it should be sufficient to observe that, according to the Word of God, The Great Tribulation is a visitation of God’s wrath upon His enemies. In the seven last plagues “is completed the wrath of God” (Rev 15:1); and the seven vials connected with those plagues are “the vials of the wrath of God” (Rev 16:1). This is “the wrath to come” from which our Lord delivers us (1Th 1:9-10; 1Th 5:8-10).

It is true that tribulation is our appointed portion here. Our Lord Himself has so warned us, saying, “In the world ye shall have tribulation” (John 16:33), and the Apostle to the Gentiles declared that “through much tribulation” we must enter into the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22); but the tribulation thus appointed to us is inflicted by God’s enemies upon God’s people. The Great Tribulation is quite another matter, for it comes from God Himself, and is His judgment upon His enemies. It can never touch us who are under the blood, for we are not to come into judgment (John 5:24).

Too, in the holy reckoning of the Righteous Judge of All the Earth, we have already, in the person of our Substitute, endured the woes of Calvary, where the billows and waves of God’s wrath passed over us. We are now “accepted in the Beloved,” being “members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones;” and we need have no fear, for “He keepeth all His bones: not one of them is broken.”

Section 7 — Babylon the Great (Rev 17:1-18 and Rev 18:1-24) “True and righteous are His judgments; for He hath judged the great harlot.” (Rev 19:2.) The fall of the great Babylon has been announced twice in The Revelation before we come to the detailed account of it in Rev 17:1-18 and Rev 18:1-24. This is the Spirit’s method all through the book, as has been shown in our previous studies. Babylon appears in these chapters in two figures; first, as a woman, and then as a city. This is to show, first, Babylon’s character, and then the results of her crimes. The same rule obtains in the succeeding chapters, where another woman and city are seen in a double figure. Great contrast, however, is observed between the two women and between the two cities. Babylon is shown as a filthy and dissolute harlot and a wicked and doomed city; the New Jerusalem is a spotless and faithful bride and a holy and glorified city. John is taken into the wilderness to see the judgment of the great harlot, while the bride of the Lamb is seen coming from Heaven. Both are mysteries, however, and both are seen by the seer of Patmos only while he

is in the Spirit. So if we are to discern these things we must see to it that we are "in the Spirit." The New Jerusalem is a figure of the true Church of God, the Lamb's bride. The great Babylon is a type of the false Church. This false Church is left in the world after the true Church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and here we see the harlot in all her shame. She is seated upon the beast with the seven heads and ten horns, which is easily recognized as the Beast-King of the first part of the 13th chapter. It is the revived Roman Empire with the Beast-King on the throne, but he himself ruled and controlled by the professing Church. This, of course, is early in the seven years period following the Rapture and before the Beast-King tears off his mask. He for the time being is subject to the woman. His seven heads and ten horns, therefore, are without crowns in this picture. The woman is arrayed in costly apparel, but she is drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. Posing as the "mystery hid in God," and holding in her hand the golden cup, she sets herself forth as the faithful spouse of the heavenly Bridegroom; but her cup is not the cup of blessing, for it is full of abominations and uncleannesses. Abominations are a Bible type of idolatries, and this professing Church is idolatrous and abominable, in spite of her fair outward appearance. In this woman seated upon the beast there are combined the two principles of Balaam and Jezebel. Balaam led the Lord's people into unholy alliance and criminal intercourse with the world, and Jezebel forced the Lord's people into gross idolatry; and both acted under the cover of religion. Nothing in the wide world is so hateful to God as religion when used as a cover for corruption. In the angel's explanation to John we find that the seven heads stand not only for seven kings, but also for seven mountains on which the woman sitteth. Then in verse 18 we see that the woman is the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. This cannot mean the literal ancient Babylon, for that city was built not upon mountains, but on the plain of Shinar, and it had, long before John's day, ceased to reign over the kings of the Earth. The city which wielded universal sovereignty in John's time was Rome, and everybody knows that Rome was built upon seven hills.

Why is the city called Babylon? For the same reason that old Jerusalem is called Sodom and Gomorrah in the earlier part of this book. Jerusalem had become so corrupt and blinded with sin that when her Lord came to her, she nailed Him to the cross. So Rome in its last state is to partake of the spirit of Babylon. Beginning with Nimrod's city and the tower of the Babel builders, Babylon always stood for opposition to God and His people. Babylon began with man exalting himself as an individual in Gen 10:1-32, and with men combining for mutual glory in Gen 11:1-32. Its logical figure-head is seen in Nebuchadnezzar, walking in his royal palace and saying, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling place, by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?" Now, this Nebuchadnezzar was a religious man. We must not think that because he did not know the true God, therefore he had no religion. On the contrary, all his acts were done in the name of religion. But his religion was that of the natural man and was opposed to that religion which is pure and undefiled before our God and Father. His religion was to exalt himself and to count God out. The image he set up on the plain of Dura was an image of himself, all of gold. God had made known His purpose, and that purpose was that Babylon should constitute but one of four great Gentile world-powers. It did not suit Nebuchadnezzar that he should be the head of gold merely—he proposed to be the whole thing; so he set up his image in defiance of the eternal purpose of God. God had said Babylon should die and pass away; man said Babylon should never die. The issue was thus joined. Now note the result: In due time Nebuchadnezzar passed from the scene, and one night Belshazzar, his grandson, had a great feast with a thousand

of his lords. He became drunker than usual and defiled the vessels of the Temple of God, which had been taken from Jerusalem. In the same hour Babylon's doom was written upon the wall and in that same night Belshazzar was slain and Darius the Mede received the kingdom.

Thus will it be with the mystical Babylon. She has a great deal of religion, and claims to be the sole fountain of divine authority in the earth. The Lord's purpose for His Church is that she should live as a stranger and pilgrim in the earth during the days of His rejection. But she has settled down upon the Earth and forgotten her Lord. Outwardly she is gorgeously arrayed and men look upon her and say, Surely, this is the bride of Christ. Nay, she is full of rottenness, despite her fair appearance. God called her to a place of suffering and sorrow, but she has chosen the path of ease and luxury. God's plan for her was that she should hate even the garment spotted by the flesh, but she has played the wanton and brought disgrace upon His name. God's desire for her was that she should be separated from the world, but she has joined herself to the world, which lieth in the Wicked One. World-hatred and persecution were marked out for her, but she thought she knew a better way. The way of the cross is a lonely way and she greatly preferred the way of worldly triumph. The Prince and God of this World once offered to the Son of God all the Kingdoms of the world for a moment of worship. The Christ put the devilish suggestion from Him with loathing. Yet here we see His professed bride actually seated on the beast, ruling the Kingdoms of the world, having ascended the defiled throne once spurned by the Lord Jesus.

Babylon is worldwide in its extent. The waters which John saw where the harlot sitteth, "are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." The center of the system, however, is the seven-hilled city, and thus the so-called Roman Catholic Church is identified as the thing signified by the miserable woman sitting in the seat of temporal power. No one will deny that this has ever been and now is the aim of the papacy. The picture is perfect and no detail is missing. Surely, she is arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with gold, precious stones and pearls. Idol-worship is a part of her system, and alliance with the world is her great desire. Claiming to be the sole representative of Christ on Earth, she has guilty relations with His enemies. Drunken, indeed, is she, with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, for she is guilty of the murder of many millions of them—and all this in the name of religion! But the spirit of Babylon is by no means confined to the Roman Church. Wherever there is fellowship with the world on the part of the professed followers of God, there is Babylon. The woman on the beast, mark you, is not only a harlot herself, but she is the "mother of harlots and of the abominations of the Earth." She has many daughters, and Babylon includes every religious institution, whether Catholic so-called or Protestant so-called, which seeks to mix godliness with worldliness. This world is under the sentence of God's wrath and is hastening to its execution, and wherever there is among God's people, either a guilty subjection to the world, or a guilty supremacy over the world, there is Babylon, and God hates Babylon, wherever found. Our Lord does not will it that His bride should be either the world's slave or its mistress. The word Babylon means "confusion," and God is not the God of confusion. He would have the line of demarcation drawn deep between His friends and His enemies. He calls us to separation, and mixture of the clean with the unclean can only result in uncleanness all through—"the whole lump leavened." An almost universal mark of Babylon is seen in our day among the so-called Christian churches in the constant appeal to unbelievers for money "for the support of the Lord's work." It is a sight to make angels weep and demons laugh when the bride of Christ is seen by the roadside with arms outstretched, seeking alms from her Lord's

enemies. What a grievous thing it must be in His eyes to behold His betrothed wife posing as a beggar before an ungodly world! Mark this well: Wherever the world's support is resorted to or accepted in connection with the name and work of the Lord, there is Babylon. The principle of Babylon is apparent everywhere, the mystery of iniquity already working. There is a great lust even among the Lord's people for worldly position and power. We want people to be converted and brought out of the world into the Church, especially "our Church"—but we want them to bring their worldly influence and power along with them. This is the Babylonish garment and wedge of gold, which has ever been a snare to the people of God, marring their fellowship and spoiling their testimony. But there is to be an enormous development of the mystical Babylon after the real Church of Christ has been caught away. The restraining power of the Holy Spirit will then be removed and there will be no hindrance to the workings of the Evil One. There will still be a so-called "Christian Church" in the world, having elaborate formalities and alluring ritualism—the form of godliness without its power. There will be much eloquent preaching and entrancing music, and the harlot will be arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. There will then be perfect union of Church and State, with the so-called Church on top—the woman sitting on the beast. The growth of this false Church will be amazing and everybody will rush to join its membership, including possibly even those who are turning to God under the judgments of seals, trumpets and bowls. Then shall the voice be heard out of Heaven, saying "Come, forth, My people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." This command, I say, is for that future time when the Church of God shall have been taken to Heaven and this false pretending Church is in the world. As for the present day, we are to shun Babylon wherever we find her, and hate even now the polluting and withering blight of contact with her. We may not separate from the sphere of profession—we cannot do that without openly denying our Lord—but we may and we ought to keep ourselves from idols. It is not for us to spue the Church out before the Lord does, but we surely must keep ourselves unspotted from the world. May God help us to know His will and do it! The disgraceful collapse of the ancient Babylon of the Chaldees was a faint foreshadowing of the miserable end of the mystical Babylon the Great. After the confederated kings under the Beast-King have made war against the Lamb and suffered defeat, they turn against the woman and utterly destroy her. The eighteenth chapter is almost entirely occupied with the mourning of the world over the great and terrible fall of the ungodly system which for all the centuries has taken the place in men's hearts and thoughts that rightly belongs to God alone. The kings of the Earth, the merchants of the Earth and the shipmasters and sailors and traders by sea, all unite in the general weeping and wailing. A long list of articles of merchandise is given as characterizing the great city. Twenty-eight separate things are enumerated, arranged in seven classes. There are, first, costly ornaments of gold, silver and precious stones and pearls; second, costly raiment of fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet; third, costly furniture, all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; fourth, costly perfumes, cinnamon and odours and ointments and frankincense; fifth, costly food, wine and oil, fine flour, wheat, beasts and sheep; sixth, costly equipages, horses and chariots; and finally, the seventh class, men's bodies and souls—"slaves and souls of men."

Babylon evidently lived in luxury if we may judge from this glimpse into her store-house. The list begins with gold, and ends with the souls of men. Gold is the chief object of man's desire, while

human souls are the least valued thing, even in the estimate of nominal Christianity. Her end is according to her works, for with her sorcery were all the nations deceived, "and in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the Earth." May God hasten the day when all these things shall come to pass!

Section 8 — The Two Great Suppers (Rev 19:1-21) "And He hath on His garment and on His thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords." (Rev 19:16.)

Rev 19:1-21 opens with a grand hallelujah chorus in which are heard the joyous acclamations of the heavenly hosts. The cause of the outburst is the destruction of the great false Church, seen in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters as the miserable harlot sitting in the place of temporal power, and as the great city reigning over the kings of the Earth.

"After these things," John tells us, "I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in Heaven, saying, 'Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God: for true and righteous are His judgments; for He hath judged the great harlot, her that corrupted the Earth with her fornication, and He hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand.'" And a second time they say, 'Hallelujah!'"

There are those who object to this word, Hallelujah, nowadays, for it offends their sense of propriety and seemliness; but if they ever get into Heaven they will hear a great deal of it and it behooves them to get used to it here, so it will not shock them when they get there. It is a beautiful word, transliterated from the Hebrew, meaning "Praise ye Jehovah," and that is Heaven's keynote for time and for eternity.

"And her smoke goeth up for ever and ever." What a solemn word is this! But a moment ago the professing Church was enjoying her guilty triumph, saying in her heart, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning." Therefore, according to the eternal Word, in one day have her plagues come, death and mourning and famine, and she was utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judged her. (Rev 18:7-8) And now we see her smoke—the smoke of her torment—going up for ever and ever. Another heavenly word comes forth in the adoring worship of the four-and-twenty elders and the four living creatures: It is "Amen," together with the "Hallelujah!" So be it; praise ye the Lord! This is their response to the acts of God in judgment upon the revolting thing which called itself Christian while living in guilty intercourse with the anti-Christian world and the Beast-King himself. A voice from the throne—that is, the King's voice—is now heard, saying, "Give praise to our God, all ye His servants, ye that fear Him, the small and the great." Evidently the foregoing praises, however great, had come from but certain selected companies of the Lord's servants; but immediately, at the command of the great King on His heavenly throne, we hear the transporting strains, in which all His servants join, the small and the great—"the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, 'Hallelujah! For the Lord, our God, the Almighty, reigneth.'" That will be a glad day for the Lord's servants. We could not sing such a song to-day, for though the Lord, our God, even now is the Almighty One, and though the God of this World, our arch enemy and adversary, is restrained by the hand of our God; yet it is still true that the whole world lieth in the Wicked One, and we are still called upon to wrestle, not against flesh and blood indeed, but against principalities and powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the hosts of wicked spirits in the heavenlies. It will be different in that day, for the Lord our God, the Almighty,

will make bare His arm and take to Himself His great power and reign. The long suffering of God is the great mystery of this present time, but His might and majesty will not always be concealed from view. For the present:

“Careless seems the great Avenger.

History’s pages but record

One death-grapple in the darkness

’Twixt old systems and the Word:

Truth forever on the scaffold;

Wrong for ever on the throne—

But that scaffold sways the future,

And, beyond the dim unknown,

Standeth God, within the shadows,

Keeping watch above His own.” But the mighty song of the heavenly choir has a forward aspect as well as a backward. There is joy not only over the final overthrow and destruction of the false Church, but also because of the glorious manifestation of the true Church: “Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give glory unto Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.” Blessed be God! He will not forget His promise to His children. He will exalt them in due time. From this point we see no more of the four and-twenty elders, representing the Church of God, for the Church is now given its true place as the wife of the Lamb. The Judgment of Believers’ Works before the bema or judgment seat of Christ has taken place, for here the Church is seen arrayed in fine linen, bright and pure, the fine linen symbolizing the righteous acts of the saints.

There are guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb and John is specially commanded to write of them, “Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” The Old Testament Prophets will be there, headed by John the Baptist, the last and greatest of them—the friends of the Bridegroom rejoicing greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice. There will be the great company of Old Testament believers, the spirits of just men made perfect. The General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn will constitute the radiant bride, shining forth in the glory of the Father, God the Judge of all, and owing everything to her Lord and Husband, even Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel.

These are great things and overpowering to the finite mind, and we need the reminder just here—“These are the true words of God.” We are not following a cunningly devised fable. We are reading the true words of God. He is not a man, that He should lie. His Word is settled for ever in Heaven and is true from the beginning. May He graciously deliver us from the awful sin of making Him a liar, and help us to believe Him. The apostle is well-nigh overcome by these wonderful visions and falls down before his angelic guide in worship. He is quickly rebuked, however, and warned that worship belongs to God alone. His attention is directed to Jesus as the center of all these apocalyptic visions and theme of the prophetic Word, “for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit

of prophecy.” It is well to ponder this statement carefully and to learn from it that the written Word is not to be understood except as unfolding to us the person of Him who is Himself the Living Word. This is the key to all prophecy, and prophecy in its broadest sense includes the whole of the Scriptures. The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. And now what a glorious sight meets our eyes! The Heavens are opened and riding upon a white horse we see our Lord Himself, the Faithful and True, coming forth with power and great glory, to judge and make war. He is very unlike that poor despised peasant carpenter with marred visage and humble mien, for “His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He hath a name written which no one knoweth but He Himself.” But it is “this same Jesus,” for He is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood; and His name is called, “The Word of God.” His bride accompanies Him in the armies which are in Heaven, following Him upon white horses. This is “the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from Heaven with His messengers of power, in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be marveled at in all them that believed in that day.” (2Th 1:7-10) His followers are on white horses like His own, for they share His glory, according to the promise, “When He shall be manifested we shall also be manifested with Him in glory,” (Col 3:4), and again, “When He shall appear, we shall be like Him.” (1Jn 3:2) The sharp sword proceeding out of His mouth is the eternal Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, and by which the world shall be judged—with it He shall smite the nations, and He shall rule them with a rod of iron. He comes as King of Kings and Lord of Lords and in establishing His Lordship He treads the winepress of the wrath of God, the Almighty. This was all told out by the prophet Isaiah in his sixty-third chapter, as we saw in a former study. It is the great battle of Har-Magedon, referred to in Rev 16:1-21. This awful battle, in which the satanic hordes, led by the Beast-King at the head of the kings of the Earth, are gathered together to make war against Him that sits upon the horse, and against His army, is preceded by the announcement of an angel standing in the sun and calling to the birds flying in mid-heaven to come and be gathered together unto the Great Supper of God, that they may eat the flesh of kings, captains and mighty men, and of horses and horsemen, and of all men, freemen and slaves, small and great. The battle is a short one and the issue is quickly settled. It is the Lord Himself who does all the fighting against the confederated armies of the world, and all the killing is by the sword proceeding from His mouth. The Beast-King and the False Prophet are cast into the lake of fire and brimstone and their armies are slain by that Word of God which is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword; and all the birds are filled with their flesh.

What a terrible picture this is! Let it be remembered that the Artist who painted it is God Himself. He has in His great compassion told us beforehand concerning things not seen as yet, and He tells us that all these things must shortly come to pass. What does it all mean to you? I ask you, my friends out of Christ, is it wise for you to put away from you God’s gracious offer of present and eternal salvation? What will it profit you to make the most of this world, if in the next you find yourself forever banished from the presence of the Lord and plunged in the depths of eternal misery and torment? And you, my worldly Christian friend—can I call you Brother? Are you a Christian in fact as well as in name? Were you ever born again or did you just experience some indefinite temporary emotion? Is your name written in Heaven or merely on the roll of some of the churches? The churches, for the most part, are hopelessly apostate, and the Lord is about to spue

them out of His mouth: where will you be then? You are lusting after the things of the world—are you sure that you are not of the world? You are miserable among the Lord’s people and your soul loathes the light Bread of God sent down from Heaven; you are hankering for the cucumbers and leeks and onions and garlic of Egypt—are you certain that you ever really left Egypt? You say a man must live, even if to do so he resorts to the tricks of the Devil—are you perfectly satisfied that you are not of the Devil’s brood, after all? What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith. Look well to your foundations, for the floods will soon come and if your foundation be wrong, your fair building will go down. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Build only upon Him —trust only in Him—and then you need not fear the coming of the Day of Wrath. Blessed be His Name for ever and ever! Amen.

“O, that Thy Name may be sounded

Afar over Earth and sea,

Till the dead awaken and praise Thee,

And the dumb lips sing to Thee!

Sound forth as a song of triumph

Wherever man’s foot has trod.

The despised, the derided message,

The foolishness of God.

Jesus, dishonored and dying,

A felon on either side—

Jesus, the song of the drunkards,

Jesus, the Crucified!

Name of God’s tender comfort,

Name of His glorious power,

Name that is song and sweetness,

The strong everlasting tower.

Jesus, the Lamb accepted,

Jesus, the Priest on His throne—

Jesus, the King Who is coming—

Jesus, Thy Name alone!"

Section 9 — The Millennial Reign (Rev 20:1-15)

“With righteousness shall He judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the Earth; and He shall smite the Earth with the rod of His mouth; and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of His waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.” (Isa 11:4-5.)

It is important in the study of the prophetic Word to keep in mind the order of events. Let us remember that the first thing on the program, as revealed in the Scriptures, is the catching out of the Church to meet the Lord in the air. This great event is the hope of the Lord’s people, and a blessed hope it is. We are not to look for the conversion of the world through the preaching of the Gospel. The world will not be saved in that way. We are not told to expect any such thing, but we are exhorted to be expecting Him. He is at the very door, and at any moment He may come for us. Nothing could be plainer than the testimony of God upon this subject. “The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” We believe God and we are looking, moment by moment, for our Lord’s return. Every Christian should occupy this attitude—serving the living and true God and waiting for His Son from Heaven. The departure of the Church from the Earth will be but temporary. She will return with her Lord when He comes in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory to judge the world and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Wherever He goes she will go, for she is His bride and the promise is “so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Following the Rapture of the Church—that is, her catching up to meet the Lord in the air—there will take place in Heaven the Judgment of Believers’ Works, described in 1Co 3:11-15. After this will come the Marriage of the Lamb. On the Earth there will be the terrible judgments of the seals, trumpets and bowls, of which we have been studying in this book. An innumerable multitude out of all nations will turn to God, and millions will suffer martyrdom for the name of Jesus. A remnant of Israel will be converted and God will use these Jewish believers to evangelize the Gentile world. They will go everywhere preaching and saying, “The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. What that end is, we saw in our last study. It is the fulfillment of Enoch’s prophecy—“Behold! The Lord cometh with myriads of His saints to execute judgment upon all.”

What a contrast between the first and second advents of our Lord! He will come, not now as a helpless babe, but as a mighty warrior; not now as a Man of Sorrows, to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, but as a glorious King and Potentate, to judge and to make war.

"He is coming! He is coming!

Not as once He came before

Wailing infant, born in weakness,

On a lowly stable floor;

But upon a cloud of glory,

In the crimson-tinted sky.

Where we see the golden sunrise
In the rosy distance lie.
"He is coming! He is coming!
Not in pain and shame and woe:
With the thorn-crown on His forehead
And the blood-drops trickling slow;
But with diadem upon Him
And a scepter in His hand,
And the saints all ranged before Him,
A transfigured happy band.

"He is coming! He is coming!
Not as once He wandered through
All the hostile land of Judah,
With His followers poor and few;
But with all the holy angels
Waiting 'round His judgment seat,
And the chosen twelve apostles,

Sitting, crowned, at His feet." The Battle of Har-Magedon occurs immediately upon His glorious appearing, and the Beast-King and False Prophet are cast alive into the burning lake, while their armies are slain by the breath of His mouth. The Great Supper of God follows, all the birds of the air being filled with the flesh of the slain. The analysis of the twentieth chapter is sevenfold. We are told here (1) of the binding of Satan; (2) of the first resurrection; (3) of the Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus and His saints; (4) of the loosing of Satan; (5) of the last war; (6) of the judgment of Satan; and (7) of the second resurrection and second death. The Binding of Satan.

There is a widespread notion that Satan is a myth; and it is safe to say that nothing could please him more. Being a liar from the beginning, doubtless he has manufactured this most subtle and artful of lies—that there is no Devil; for it is entirely according to his purpose that men should not believe in his existence. This mysterious personage figures very largely in Scripture. He is not only a very real person, as shown by the personal names, personal pronouns and personal acts attributed to him, but he is a very great person as well. In nature he is a spirit—"the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." He is evidently the spiritual king described in the wonderful language of Eze 28:11-17. He is a fallen being, for Jesus says of him in John 8:44, that he abode (or, continued) not in the truth, and in 1Ti 3:6, it is written that pride was the cause of his fall. He is not one of the fallen angels spoken of in Jude 1:6 and 2Pe 2:4, for they are in everlasting bonds, while he is still at large, and goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

He has a Kingdom, and Jesus spoke of it in Mat 12:26. He has agents in the unseen world, including angels, principalities and powers, the hosts of wicked spirits in the Heavens, the demons of the air. He also has agents in this visible world. Men and women who are in rebellion against God are referred to in the Scriptures as children of their father, the Devil. He has ministers also, but these are always in disguise, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ and ministers of righteousness. (2Co 11:13-15; Rev 3:9.)

Satan has great power. He is the Prince of this World, the God of this World, the Prince of the Power of the Air. But his power, though great, and even supernatural, is not divine and is not unlimited. Satan is hastening to a terrible fate, which is described in our chapter. He has already been judged and the wrath of God will presently overtake and overwhelm him. Meanwhile, though the whole world lieth in the Wicked One, he is nevertheless restrained by the hand of Omnipotence, and our God has set the bounds, beyond which he cannot pass, and He Who is able to make the wrath of men to praise Him is even using the arch enemy himself to test the human heart and accomplish the divine purpose.

It is hardly necessary to say in this place that the popular notion that the Devil is a king in Hell has no foundation in the Scriptures. He has never yet had his headquarters in Hell, though that place is specially prepared for the Devil and his angels. And when he does go into Hell, it will not be as a king, but as the most abject sufferer there. His dwelling place at this present time is in the Heavens; and he has access from time to time into the presence of God Himself, where he accuses the brethren day and night. He will be cast out of Heaven with his angels after the Rapture of the Church, as prophesied and described in the twelfth chapter of The Revelation. He will raise up and energize the Beast King and the False Prophet, as seen in chapter thirteen. He will gather the world's armies to battle against the Lord and His saints at Har-Magedon in Palestine, as set forth in chapter nineteen; and He will be cast into the Abyss for a thousand years, as we read in the opening paragraph of chapter twenty.

It seems to be a very easy matter to chain the Devil. When the time comes the Lord just sends an angel with a chain and the thing is done. Sometimes you have despaired and been tempted to think that our God has been overpowered by our strong enemy. Never fear; that issue was settled long ago at a personal meeting between our Lord and the adversary. When God is ready it will be a perfectly easy matter to shut the Devil up in a cage for a thousand years. He would be put into the lake of fire at once, along with the beast and false prophet, but the Lord has further use for him after a while and in the meantime one angel is quite sufficient to care for him. The First Resurrection.

Then comes the glorious vision of the blessed and holy ones that have part in the first resurrection. There are the enthroned saints who come forth out of Heaven with the Lord. There are also the witnesses of Jesus who have laid down their lives for Him during the terrors of The Great Tribulation. Their bodies are raised from the dead and they are given a place among the enthroned ones. They live and reign with Christ a thousand years. Literally, the word here is "they came to life, and were kings with Christ for a thousand years." The lost dead—the rest of the dead—remain in their graves during the Millennial Age; they live not again until the thousand years shall be finished. This is the first resurrection, and only the saved ones have part in it. This is surely very plain language and it would seem impossible to misunderstand it. And yet men go on

talking and writing of "the general resurrection." There will never be such a thing. The resurrections will be a thousand years apart. All will be raised from the dead, "but every man in his own order." Only they that are Christ's at His coming; only those who are in Jesus, either asleep in Him or alive and remaining unto His coming, will have part in the first resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." The Millennial Kingdom. And what shall be said of the Millennium itself? This word, derived from the Latin "mille" and "annum," meaning "a thousand years" has for all the ages been the theme of poetry and prophecy. Though not the eternal state, it will be an age of indescribable blessedness. Think of it! Satan restrained and Jesus on the throne! The whole world one vast empire, its capital at Jerusalem; and absolute righteousness and perfect peace everywhere! The curse removed from the human race and the whole creation redeemed from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God! The wilderness blossoming as a rose; thorns and briers giving away to fir-trees and myrtle trees! The whole Earth filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea! When the Son of God will be no longer despised and rejected, but honored and acclaimed as the Ruler of the World. The horrible butchery of war stopped—for He shall judge between the nations and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore!

O may God hasten the glad day! We long for our Lord to come, for all this awaits His coming. He will bring joy and gladness. He will bring peace and salvation.

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed—

Great David's Greater Son!

When to the time appointed

The rolling years shall run,

He comes to break oppression.

To set the captive free,

To take away transgression And rule in equity.

"The heavens—which now conceal Him

In counsels deep and wise—

In glory shall reveal Him

To our rejoicing eyes;

He Who with hands uplifted

Went from the Earth below,

Shall come again all gifted,

His blessing to bestow.

“He shall come down like showers
Upon the new-mown grass,
And joy and hope, like flowers,
Spring up where He doth pass;
Before Him, on the mountains,
Shall peace, the herald, go;
And righteousness, in fountains,
From hill to valley flow.

“Kings shall fall down before Him,
And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore Him,
His praise all people sing;
Outstretched His wide dominion,
O'er river, sea and shore,
Far as the eagle's pinion

Or dove's light wing can soar.” The Loosing of Satan. The remainder of the chapter reveals again the dark background of sin and its awful work. Satan is temporarily released and the evil of the human heart is again demonstrated. Innumerable millions of men and women have been born during the Millennial Age, but many of them have not been born again, and their hearts are far from God, though yielding outward obedience. The loosing of Satan is to sift out the wheat from the chaff. An immense army is gathered together in rebellion against the Lord, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. The Last War.

Gog and Magog is doubtless a symbolic expression, based upon the name of the foe of Jehovah's people Israel, as found in Eze 38:1-23, Eze 39:1-29. Gog is the Prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, which are all included in the Russian empire. God has already begun dealing with the empire of Russia, bringing it into judgment for its cruelty toward His ancient people, and this is but a foretaste of the coming judgment. The prophecy of Eze 38:1-23, Eze 39:1-29, however, have to do with events before the Millennium, while our chapter is dealing with the great Post-Millennial conflict. Satan leads his armies up over the breadth of the earth and surrounds the camp of the saints and the beloved city—Jerusalem—and fire comes down out of Heaven and devours them. Surely, “our God is a consuming fire,” The Judgment of Satan. The Devil's work is ended now, and we see him consigned to the lake of fire, where are also the beast and false prophet; “and they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.” The Second Resurrection and the Second Death.

Finally, we are called upon to view the awful scenes of the Judgment of the Wicked Dead. This is not the general judgment, for there is no such thing in Scripture. Only the lost are seen before the Great White Throne in this Judgment. The saved have all been gathered into their Father's house long ago, and now the wicked, the impenitent rebels against the goodness of God, are to be called to account. What a solemn sight now meets the gaze of our apostle! Nowhere in all literature is there such a majestic and awful description as this:

"And I saw a Great White Throne, and Him that sat upon it, from Whose face the Earth and the Heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and Death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man, according to their works. And Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the Book of Life, he was cast into the lake of fire." That is all. How very brief—and yet how comprehensive and full of terrible meaning! Not a soul saved out of all that vast throng of humanity! And why? Is it because they were sinners? Surely not; for, then must we all perish. Judged only according to our works, we should all sink into Hell. What then? Are they lost because they were greater sinners than others? Nay, not that, for sin is sin, and our holy God cannot look upon it in any degree nor in any form. These perished, not because they were condemned by the books, but because their names were not found in the Book of Life.

O, my reader, is your name there? Is it there? Are you sure of it? Is there any slightest doubt of it? Let me beg of you, let me beseech you, let me implore you—give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. O, that I might shout it in your ears so that it would reach your heart—are you saved? Have you eternal life? What are you trusting? Don't be deceived! Look not to yourself—your life will damn you. Look not to your neighbor—no man can by any means redeem his brother. Look not to your baptism or your Church-membership or to the many works, mighty or otherwise, done in the Lord's Name—to many such workers He will say in that day, "I never knew you! Depart from me, ye that work iniquity!"

Thanks be to God, there are many who are resting on the Rock which the floods can never move. How precious is Jesus to these! They speak not of the filthy rags of their own righteousnesses. They sing rather,

"Oh, I am my Beloved's

And my Beloved's mine!

He brings a poor vile sinner

Into His house of wine.

I stand upon His merit,

I know no other stand,

Not e'en where glory dwelleth

In Immanuel's Land."

These shall not be ashamed before Him at His coming. May God grant that every one of us may thus put our trust alone in Him! For He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them, Section 10 — The New Heaven and the New Earth (Rev 21:1-8)

"Behold, I create new Heavens and a new Earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isa 65:17.)

Rev 21:1 has reference to Rev 20:11. In this latter John told us that he saw a Great White Throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the Earth and the Heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. Then after describing the Judgment of the Wicked Dead, he goes on to say, "I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth; for the first Heaven and the first Earth are passed away." In 2Pe 3:10-14, the same thing is described in greater detail. Peter writes: "The Day of the Lord will come as a thief, in which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the Earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the Day 106 of God, by reason of which the Heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. But, according to His promise, we look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in His sight."

We notice that Peter places all this in the period called the Day of the Lord, and from this and other Scriptures we learn that the Day of the Lord, beginning with the coming of the Son of man to judge the world, goes right through the Millennium itself and to the very end of time and the threshold of Eternity. Man has his day at this present time—the Day of the Lord is surely coming, and coming "as a thief," to those who are out of Christ and not ready for its coming. The word to His own people is, "Ye are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1Th 5:4.) The new Heaven and Earth will doubtless be the present Heaven and Earth in their renewed and final condition. To quote Peter again (2Pe 3:3-7): "In the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willfully forget, that there were Heavens from of old, and an Earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the Word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the Heavens that now are, and the Earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the Day of Judgment and destruction of ungodly men."

Thus the Earth and Heaven which come out of the flood, though really the same as those which passed into and through it, are spoken of as new, for they were renewed and renovated by the purifying waters. The change that awaits them will be decidedly more radical, for they will be made new by the baptism of fire. The Heaven and Earth which now are must be purified, for they have long been the abode of Satan and sin. In the new Heaven and the new Earth righteousness is to dwell. Righteousness is a rare thing in the Earth now —indeed, God plainly declares that "there is none righteous; no, not one." In that day there will be no unrighteousness. Righteousness is preached now; it is God's gift to him that believeth; but that has to do with our position rather than

our condition; our standing rather than our state. In us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing. In the Millennium righteousness will reign; but in the eternal state righteousness will dwell, or abide, forever. Evil is rampant now; it will be re[^] strained during the Thousand Years; but in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times there will be no evil—for the former things are passed away.

All this will be brought about by the mighty hand of the Lord Jesus Himself. This is shown by the words addressed by the Father to the Eternal Son in Psa 102:25-27, and quoted in Heb 1:10-12 : “Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the works of Thy hands: they shall perish; but Thou continuest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a mantle shalt Thou roll them up, as a garment, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.” No More Sea.

“And the sea is no more.” The ocean would seem to be a necessary thing for the present Earth, but in the renewed Earth the sea will have disappeared. This is doubtless true in both the literal and the spiritual sense. The sea in the Bible is ever a type of the restless, rebellious world, as in Isa 57:20-21—“The wicked are like the troubled sea; for it cannot rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace; saith my God, to the wicked.” For the present it is Jehovah who shuts up the sea with doors, making clouds the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, and marking out for it His bound, setting bars and doors and saying, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. (Job 38:8-11.) Once He allowed the sea to swallow up the Earth, and the waters stood above the mountains, but at His rebuke they fled and at the voice of His thunder they hasted away; and He hath set a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the Earth. (Psa 104:6-9.)

Thus does God deal with the sea of waters and the sea of sin. But the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and it will be a glad day when there shall be no sea and when the Earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters now cover the sea. The Holy City. In Rev 21:2 John says: “I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.” This is the bride, the Lamb’s wife, whose description in detail we have in our next study. In the glorious times that are coming everything will center about the two Jerusalem’s. There will be the restored and greatly enlarged earthly Jerusalem, the center and metropolis of the Millennial kingdom, and there will also be the heavenly Jerusalem, the bride of the Lamb. I doubt not that the renewed Earth will be the possession and dwelling-place of the people of Israel in the eternal state, and that the Church of God, which is even now His heavenly people, will reside forever in the heavenly city.

Isaiah cheered his brethren in Israel by his glowing prophecies concerning the future glory of the earthly city. In Isa 65:17-19, God speaks through His servant, saying: “Behold, I create new Heavens and a new Earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in her people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying.” The Eternal State. The great voice out of the throne, so often heard in this book, the voice of the Great King, is now heard, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God; and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain,

anymore; the first things are passed away.”

This, then, is the consummation of all things. And He that sitteth on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And then, just as the poor heart seems ready to burst for the very greatness of the revelations, He speaks again, saying, “Write: for these words are faithful and true.” Well He knows how prone to unbelief is the human heart. We are constantly saying to ourselves that it is all too great, too wonderful for us; it is surely too good to be true. Nay, but it is all true. These words are true and faithful, for they are from Him Whose name is the True and Faithful Witness. They are so true that all is as good as done already—“And He said unto me, they are come to pass.” He knows the end from the beginning, for He Himself is the A and the Z, the Beginning and the Ending. And He says, “They are come to pass!”

And, oh, how His heart goes out for the sinner! He cannot give you up, my unsaved friend. Listen to Him: “I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.” Are you longing for these things? Your longing is your title to them: they belong to “him that is a thirst.” There is no stint. All is given and all is given freely. “He that overcometh shall inherit these things and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.

How shall you overcome? There is but one way; it is by the blood of the Lamb. He is the great Overcomer and He has overcome for you; and you have but to take freely of the water of life. He has labored and you need only to enter into His labors. And if you do not enter in—what then? Ah; what then? There is a dreadful alternative. May God cause these words to sink down into your ears and even into your very heart. There is enough and to spare for the thirsty comer—for he is the overcomer; he shall inherit these things. “But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.” This horrible punishment, though prepared especially for the Devil and his angels, is nevertheless surely in store for men who will not receive the love of the truth that they may be saved. Men are going down to Hell like a flock, only because they hate God and Heaven. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and an unregenerate man would soon turn a Heaven into a Hell. Whoever goes down to the pit will have himself to blame for it, for no man will suffer damnation but for the one sin of rejecting the light of the knowledge of God which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. (See John 1:9; John 3:18-19; John 5:9-12.) Jesus bore all the sins of the human race in His own body on the tree and the only sin which can now consign men to perdition is the sin of making God a liar and counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. To such, “our God is a consuming fire;” for, though He is kind and merciful. He is also righteous and holy, and He will not hold guiltless the haters and despisers of Jesus. In Mark 3:1-35 there is a significant incident bearing upon this point. The Lord Jesus was working miracles, which His enemies felt called upon to explain. Of course, the true explanation was that He was filled with the Holy Spirit of God, Who wrought these wonders through Him. Unwilling to admit this, “the Scribes which came down from Jerusalem” said that Jesus had the Prince of the Demons indwelling Him. In reply, the Lord Jesus uttered a most solemn warning: “Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation; because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.”

Essentially, this sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit was pure hatred toward the Son of God. It was a fitting, though awful, climax to all that He had endured from these “blind guides.” It shows to what terrible lengths the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, will go. Everything depends upon this greatest of all questions: What will you do with Jesus, Which is called Christ? He is the Fountain: come to Him and drink. “Let Him that is athirst come!” Come just as you are and whoever you are, for He has said, “Him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out.”

“In the great and terrible wilderness
I wandered in thirst and dread;
The burning sands were beneath my feet,
And the tierce glow overhead.
The fiery serpents and scorpions dire
Dwelt in that lonely land,
And around and afar, as a glimmering sea,
The shadowless, trackless sand.
“Then came a day in my journey drear
When I sank on the weary road,
And there fell a shadow across the waste—
The shade of the wings of God.
The shadow solemn, and dark, and still,
Lay cool on the purple sand;
The shadow deep of a mighty Rock,
In a weary, thirsty land.
“Of old from Heaven the thunder fell,
And that mighty Rock was riven,
And a river of water flowed down to me—
A stream of the rain of Heaven.
And the hand that reft with the thunder dread
The Rock of the Ages hoar,
Down to my lips the waters led,
And I thirsted never more. For out of the great eternal deep
Those glorious waters flowed;

They flowed from the fathomless depths of joy,
They flowed from the heart of God.
From the depths of the tenderness all unknown,
That passeth knowledge, they flow;
I know it as ages of bliss roll on,
Yet I never shall say, 'I know.'
"And there, before the Rock that was riven,
At the feet of the Lord who died.
I drink of the depths of the love of Heaven, The mighty, exhaustless tide.
Drink, drink abundantly, O beloved!
I was smitten, accursed for thee.
O, lips as lilies, O mouth most sweet
That tell Thy heart to me!"

Section 11 — Our Saviour's Parting Word (Rev 21:9-27, Rev 22:1-21) "Surely, I come quickly."
(Rev 22:20.)

Some questions may have risen in the reader's mind with reference to the details of the Millennial period. We must be careful not to run before the Lord and seek to become wise above that which is written, for it has not pleased Him to reveal to us as yet all the things which shall come to pass. He has, however, graciously opened His heart to us regarding these things and we must be equally careful not to lag behind Him as He seeks to lead us into the truth. The true principle was given to Israel, through Moses, in Deu 29:29—"The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." In answer to these questions it may be pointed out that the whole world will not be converted at the opening of the Thousand Years. Satan will be bound, but the flesh will still be here, and the mind of the flesh is not subject to the law of God. Righteousness will rule, for the Earth shall then be under the scepter of the Lord Jesus as King of Nations, and He will be able to enforce His decrees. Those who rebel He "will break in pieces like a potter's vessel," and willingly or unwillingly, every knee shall finally bow and every tongue confess His lordship, His power and His right to rule.

Israel will be converted to God in advance of the other nations. And probably not all Israel at once, for as David reigned first over Judah for seven and a half years in Hebron and then thirty-three years over all Israel in Jerusalem; so, doubtless, the dispersed of Judah will be the first to look upon Him whom they pierced and hail Him as their King. The work of building the great metropolitan city of Jerusalem, with its immense Temple and other buildings, will be begun, and in due time the Lord Jesus will gather together all Israel in such a way as to astonish and amaze the world. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and

a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the Earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, 'The Lord Our Righteousness.' Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, 'The Lord liveth, Which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; no but, 'The Lord liveth, Which brought up and Which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries/ whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land." (Jer 23:5-8.) The Earthly Jerusalem. The restored earthly Jerusalem, the metropolitan capital and commercial and political center of the Millennial Kingdom of Heaven, which will then be established in the Earth, must not be confused with "the Holy City, New Jerusalem," which will not be situated on the Earth, but rather in the air, over the Earth. The earthly city is fully and circumstantially described in Eze 40:1-49,, Eze 41:1-26, Eze 42:1-20, Eze 43:1-27, Eze 44:1-31, Eze 45:1-25, Eze 46:1-24, Eze 47:1-23, Eze 48:1-35, together with the restored Temple and the surroundings of the city. The present city of Jerusalem, trodden down of the Gentiles, is a small thing compared with the city shown to Ezekiel and described by him. The restored city will be over nine miles square, with a circuit of thirty-seven miles. The present city has never exceeded four or five miles in circumference. The Temple of the Millennial city will be a mile square. The city will occupy a plain including the site of old Jerusalem and much more, which will be prepared for it by a great earthquake when the Lord's feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives at His coming to take His great power and reign. "And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof, toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." (Zec 14:4.) The earthquake will open a great water-way connecting Jerusalem with the Mediterranean Sea on the one hand and the Dead Sea on the other. "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be King over all the Earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem; and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses." (Zec 14:8-10.) The Dead Sea and its surrounding waste land will be reclaimed from their present barrenness by these great physical changes and the Syrian Desert will be irrigated into a garden of verdant beauty and rich fruitfulness. (Eze 47:8-12.) The restored Land of Palestine will be much larger than that over which David reigned and will occupy all that territory lying between the Mediterranean Sea on the west, the Red Sea And Persian Gulf on the south, the River Euphrates on the east, and the Caspian and Black Seas on the north. It will be the most advantageously located land in the world and all nations shall gravitate towards it. The Lord Jesus will reign in visible majesty and power, occupying the throne of David in the great restored city. The whole Earth, redeemed from the curse, will be a fruitful field of luxuriance and beauty. The Heavenly Jerusalem. The Holy City, New Jerusalem, will be all this time located over the Earth and visible from it, as the sun is now visible from it. The Church of God, the Lamb's wife, will be associated, as queen, with her Lord in His reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The throne, as the seat of universal power, will be located in the heavenly Jerusalem, while the throne having local and special relation to Israel will be in the earthly city. The nation of Israel will then become a Kingdom of Priests and through them the knowledge of God will be disseminated

amongst the nations. In that day they that come of Jacob shall take root: Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit. (Isa 27:6.) Of that day it is written: "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindred of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the Kingdom is the Lord's; and He is the Governor among the nations. A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this." (Psa 22:27-31.) And again: "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear Thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the Earth." (Psa 72:3-8.) The heart fails as one seeks to grasp the glories to be revealed in these things not seen as yet. Language breaks down as one attempts to describe the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. And what then? Shall we say that because these things are too great for us, therefore they are too great also for God? Nay, for our God is a great God and it is He that hath created the Heaven and the Earth by His mighty power and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Him.

Well, then, let us look at this wonderful city, which hath the foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. We must go away in the Spirit with John to a mountain great and high, for this wondrous spectacle must be seen in the right perspective. From Rev 21:9-27, Rev 22:1-5 we have a description of the city as it will appear during the Millennium, located above the Earth and visible from it. Its final and eternal state is seen in our previous study, in Rev 21:1-8.

Now, look at it. It is not a shadow, but a substantial reality—the only real city in the universe, for it will continue forever. It is seen, fresh from the hands of its divine Maker and Builder; "descending out of Heaven from God," and "having the glory of God." The prayer of Moses, the man of God, for his people, is always the prayer of God's chosen ones—"Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." This prayer will be fully answered in the New Jerusalem, for when the bride, the Lamb's wife, bursts upon the wondering gaze of the nations it will be as "having the glory of God." That being true, it follows, as a matter of course, that "her light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." The city is surrounded on its four sides by a wall great and high, but the gates are always open in every direction. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel are written on the gates of pearl, for "salvation is of the Jews," and it is not God's purpose that we shall ever forget it. The gates would never have been opened but for that salvation coming to us through the now despised and dispersed nation. God will yet show that He hath not cast away His people forever, and in that day all Israel shall be saved. The twelve apostles of the Lamb are named on the foundations of this great city, for the Church of God is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone. (Eph 2:20.) This is a literal city, an actual city, a material city. I am sorry for the man who feels bound to dispose of this great city by the means of "spiritualizing," falsely so-called. God has told out His heart to us here, and far be it from us to toss His word aside as a light thing. Here are walls great and high, radiant with all the glorious jewelry of heaven. Here are gates and foundations, with names deeply engraved upon them. Shall we say that these are unreal and without actual existence? We have

not so learned the Word of the Living God. Our apostle now witnesses the measurement of the heavenly Jerusalem, as did Ezekiel in the case of the restored earthly Jerusalem. It is done with a golden reed—surely a true measurement. The city is foursquare, being twelve thousand furlongs, or fifteen hundred miles long and fifteen hundred miles wide, covering an area of two and a quarter millions of square miles. This is over two-thirds as great as the total area of the United States, omitting Alaska. Such a city as this, set down upon the earth, would stretch from Portland, Maine, to New Orleans, Louisiana, and from Savannah, Georgia, to Denver, Colorado. It would cover the whole continent of Europe with Russia left out, and have a half million square miles to spare. It is over half as large as the whole Chinese Empire, being nearly one-third larger than China proper, and one fourth larger than India. Side by side within the walls of this city there would be more than room for forty-nine Pennsylvania's, fourteen Delawares, one Rhode Island and two Districts of Columbia. The whole city is surrounded by a wall 144 cubits, or over two hundred feet, in thickness. But these figures have to do only with the flat area of the city. The record declares that the height of the city is equal to its length and breadth. I do not know what this can mean, unless it means what it says. The city is a cube, or perhaps a pyramid, 1,500 miles in length and breadth and height: the Word of God solemnly assures us that "the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal." It was this city that Jesus had in mind when He said: "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." He is now at work upon our building, not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. In due time He will come again to receive us unto Himself. God speed the day! The New Jerusalem will contain no Temple, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple thereof. The city will have no need for sun or moon, for the Lamb is its lamp. And the nations shall walk in the light thereof. Nothing unclean or unholy shall enter those portals, but only they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. This heavenly city, like the earthly one, will have a river. It is the River of the Water of Life, flowing out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Its banks will be shaded by the Tree of Life, bearing fruit every month, the heavenly food for the heavenly people, and its leaves will be for the healing of the nations. The curse is forever wiped out to give place to the throne of God and of the Lamb. He is seen there surrounded by His servants rendering glad service, with His name on their foreheads. How much better this than the horrid mark of the beast! "And they shall reign for ever and ever."

"These Words Are True"

O, Master, is it all true? Is it all true? Listen: Jesus Our Lord is speaking through His angel and John is writing it down: "And He said unto me, 'These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly come to pass. And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is He that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.'"

John forgets himself and again falls in adoration at the angel's feet, and is again rebuked, with the warning, "Worship God!" Then the apostle is commanded not to seal up the words of the prophecy of this book "for the time is at hand." Daniel was given exactly opposite instructions concerning his book (Dan 12:4): "Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the Time of the End." The Time of the End is upon us, and neither Daniel nor The Revelation is now sealed. It is the privilege and the duty of every Christian to know and understand them. When the end of the Millennial Age is come, the door of grace will indeed be shut. After that time is passed there will be no more invitations for men to come to God. The condition of the sinner will then be fixed and

unchangeable, except that it may grow worse and worse. The unrighteous and the filthy will do unrighteousness and filthiness still or “yet more” (R. V. margin). On the other hand, the righteous and the holy shall be privileged to grow in righteousness and holiness still or “yet more.” This is the decree of the Coming One, the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Within the city are the blessed, and without are the accursed. The testimony is plain and it is sure.

These things are for the Christian; they are the message of the Lord Jesus “for the churches.” “I Jesus have sent my angel to testify unto you these things for the churches.” “I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright, the Morning Star.” (Rev 22:16) He is the Sun of Righteousness to Israel, but to the Church He is the Bright and Morning Star, rising long before the Sun, to herald the dawn of the approaching day. And yet there is room! Is any sinner out of, Christ reading these words? To such “the] Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” That “Come!” is from the very heart of God and it has been sounding out for thousands of years. “And he that heareth, let him say, Come!” Pass along the word, “Come!” “And he that is athirst, Come!” O, how He wants you! He cannot give you up, and His long suffering leadeth you to repentance; His long suffering is salvation. And yet again: “He that will— whosoever will—let him take the water of life freely.”

Now comes a warning. Men must not meddle with God’s book. If any man alters it in any way, his doom is irretrievably sealed, for God shall add the plagues to him and take away his part from the Tree of Life and the Holy City. His Parting Message.

We have reached the end of The Revelation and of the Bible itself. There is but one more word, and in that word we shall hear the parting message of our Saviour. For centuries there is to be deep silence. The Word of God is to be precious, for there will be no open vision in those days. (Compare 1Sa 3:1.) We strain our ears to catch the final word from the lips of our blessed Lord. What shall it be? Now He speaks and as we listen we hear: “Surely, I come quickly!”

Blessed words! Forgotten, indeed, and set at naught by the world and even by hosts of His own professed followers, but precious to many who have been privileged to realize in some measure the power of the blessed hope!

“Quickly?” someone asks. What did He mean by that, when He must have known He would not come for nearly two thousand years? Did He mean to deceive? God forbid! No; for this word translated “quickly” does not necessarily mean “soon,” but, rather, “suddenly.” He did not promise to come soon, but He meant us to understand that when He comes it will be suddenly and without further warning. We are to be ever prepared, with our loins girt about and our lamps burning. This is ever our place and position “serving the living and true God and waiting for His Son from Heaven.”

“Surely, I come quickly!” This is His word; and our hearts leap with the responsive echo voiced by the beloved disciple—“Amen! Even so, COME, LORD JESUS!”

“Lord Jesus, come!

Nor let us longer roam

Afar from Thee and that bright place

Where we shall see Thee face to face.

Lord Jesus, come!

“Lord Jesus, come!

Thine absence here we mourn;

No joy we know apart from Thee,

No sorrow in Thy presence see.

Come, Jesus, come!

“Lord Jesus, come!

And claim us as Thine own;

With longing hearts the path we tread

Which Thee oft high to glory led.

Come, Saviour, come!

“Lord Jesus, come!

And take Thy people home;

That all Thy flock, so scattered he*

With Thee in glory may appeal.

Lord Jesus, come!”

01.6. Conclusion.

Conclusion.

Reluctantly do we turn, even for a moment, from this wonderful book, convinced that we have only barely touched the edge of its riches and that “there is yet much land to be possessed.” It is surely to be hoped that these studies we have had together they stimulate each of us to give more and more attention to this blessed Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Seven times within the book the word “blessed” occurs, thus speaking to us of the completeness of the blessing laid up for them that love God, for them that are the called according to His purpose:

First—“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” (Rev 1:3) This word ought to drive every child of God to a careful and prayerful study of The Revelation.

Second—“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works do follow them.” (Rev 14:13) This is God’s word of sympathy and encouragement for His faithful servants suffering under the beast and false prophet.

Third—“Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” (Rev 16:15) There is reference here to the old Eastern custom of taking away the garment of a sentinel sleeping at his post, and thus disgracing him. Let us watch, lest that day overtake us as a thief.

Fourth—“Blessed are they which are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” (Rev 19:9) Blessed, indeed! And woe to that man who neglects the invitation until it is too late and the door is shut!

Fifth—“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.” (Rev 20:6) Thus is our blessed hope ever kept before us.

Sixth—“Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.” (Rev 22:7) They are His words, and to whom else can we go? He has the words of eternal life.

Seventh—“Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to the Tree of Life and may enter in by the gates into the city.” (Rev 22:14) A very important correction has been made here by the revisers. It is not a question of gaining an entrance by the keeping of commandments, else we should all miserably perish; but the blessing is for those who wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.

“The blood! The blood!

Is all my plea.

The blood! The blood!

It cleanseth me.”

“The Grace of the Lord Jesus

Be with the Saints. Amen.”

02.00.1. Simple Studies in the Romans

Simple Studies in the Romans BY WILLIAM L. PETTINGILL

02.00.2. Foreword

Foreword

It is fitting that Romans should be located at the beginning of the New Testament epistles, because of its fundamental character, setting forth as it does in logical order of sequence the things that are elementary in the faith which was once delivered to the saints. In these studies the purpose is to help the children of God to a clear understanding of the wonderful truths set forth in Romans, to the end that they may be established. In the final chapter of the book it is declared that God is able to establish His people, and it is pointed out that His means of thus establishing them is according to what Paul calls his own gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery. Paul's gospel, including the revelation of the mystery, finds its beginnings in Romans. The body of truth revealed to Paul had been kept secret since the ages began, but now is made manifest, starting with Romans (Rom 16:25-26; Eph 3:5-7). The Thessalonian epistles, and some others, were written before this book, but it is hard to resist the conclusion that the Holy Spirit has superintended the arrangement of the books of the New Testament, and that among the epistles, Romans is rightly first. The late Dr. Stifler, whose admirable outline we have followed to a considerable extent, used to tell his students that the chief difficulty connected with the study of Romans was that the Lord's people would not believe it. It is not, said he, that the book is hard to understand, but that so many who read it refuse to believe what it says. Doubtless this is the main difficulty with all Bible study: how can we understand what God has said unless we begin by believing it? May God Himself bring us to this study in the right attitude of mind and heart, and deliver us from the sin of unbelief, which doth so easily beset us! For we may not forget that this book speaks to us with authority. Penned by the accredited representative of the risen Christ, it is as if He Himself had written it. The words we read here are God's words, written by God's man as he is moved by the Holy Spirit. With all the Scriptures, they are God-breathed (2Ti 3:16).

Dr. C. I. Scofield says (Correspondence Course): Not one word of the New Testament had been written when Christ departed from the earth; but we have His express authority for receiving it as the inspired Word of God. (a) He said plainly that He would leave the revelation of truth unfinished (John 16:12); (b) He promised that this revelation should be completed after His departure (John 16:13); (c) He chose certain persons to receive such additional revelations, and to be His witnesses, preachers and teachers after His departure (John 16:13; John 15:27; Acts 1:8; Acts 28:19-20; Acts 9:15-17); (d) Knowing beforehand what they would write, He gave their words precisely the same authority as His own (Mat 10:14-15; Luk 10:16; John 13:20; John 17:20).

All this, of course, applies equally to the writings of Paul, who received his commission from the hands of the risen and glorified Christ. Paul comes to us with the very words of Him Who is Head over all things to the Church. To again quote Dr. Scofield:

We conclude, upon the testimony of Christ, and of the writers themselves, that the Scriptures are verbally inspired—that the Holy Spirit gave the words. The notion that 'the inspiration is in the

concept,' and not in the words, is contrary to the express declaration of the witnesses who knew. Our epistle falls naturally into four great parts, which may be indicated and easily remembered by the use of four key-words, namely;

Sin. Here we are told the naked truth about sin; here we see the awful guilt of man, and his utter helplessness. This division reaches to Rom 3:20, where every mouth is stopped and the whole world brought in guilty before God.

Righteousness. Having shown the desperate need resulting from the ravages of the dread disease of sin, the Spirit of God comes to pour oil and wine into the wounds, and to show how our need is fully met in the gospel. This division extends to the end of Rom 8:1-39.

Vindication. Rom 9:1-33, Rom 10:1-21 and Rom 11:1-36 are a vindication of the ways of God in His dealings with Israel.

Walk. Growing out of the doctrines of the epistle, and based upon them, are the exhortations of the final chapters, Rom 12:1-21, Rom 13:1-14, Rom 14:1-23, Rom 15:1-33, Rom 16:1-27, calling upon Christians to walk in the way of holiness. This is ever the Holy Spirit's method: first He tells us the truth about our position, and then He seeks to bring us practically into conduct befitting that position. For example, in Eph 5:8 it is written:

Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.

Indeed, this should be the object of all Bible study. Truth itself is valueless except it be transmuted into life. Knowledge, by itself, puffeth up. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

02.01. Prologue

Prologue

(Rom 1:1-17) The prefatory paragraphs in Rom 1:1-17, are two:

02.02. I. The Salutation (1-7).

I. The Salutation (Rom 1:1-7).

1. Paul, Jesus Christ's slave (1). This is the true meaning of the opening phrase. The word translated servant in the common versions is literally bondman, that is slave. Thus this man at once identifies himself: he is the Lord's slave; he has taken His yoke upon him, and is His willing bondservant. He has known the bondage of sin, but this is a bondage of love. The yoke he now wears is easy, and the burden is light (Mat 11:28-29).

2. A called apostle (1). Not merely called an apostle, and much less called to be an apostle. Many of the commentators, and even the translators, break down here. Most of them have called to be, and the Twentieth Century New Testament goes so far as to render it called to become an apostle. Alford points out that in Paul's case, his call to the apostleship was a very special one. He was called, and that to the very highest office, of an apostle; and even more—among the apostles, not one by original selection, but one specially called. And on this point Bengel says: The rest of the apostles were educated by long intercourse with Jesus, and were called first to follow Him, and obey Him, then put forth as apostles. Paul, beforetime a persecutor, was suddenly made an apostle by special calling. In like manner, the Jews were God's people by promise; the Greeks, by simple calling. Thus the called apostle had a similitude and relation to the called saints (Rom 1:7).

Paul, then, was an apostle by call, even the call of the risen Christ. It becomes us, therefore, to heed well the message he brings us. He speaks, not as a mere messenger, but as an apostle—a legate, as Murdock puts it. The word apostle means a sent one, but in its New Testament sense it stands for one who is sent clothed with full authority to speak and act for the divine Sender.

3. Separated unto the gospel of God (Rom 1:1). Paul had no difficulty in classifying himself; he knew where he belonged, and to Whom. He was the Lord's slave, and his particular business was in connection with the gospel of God—God's good news. He was a chosen vessel, dedicated to a certain particular use (Acts 9:15). His work was marked out for him even from his birth (Gal 1:15), though it took a long time for him to discover that fact. The theme of Romans, says Dr. Scofield (Reference Bible), is the 'gospel of God' (Rom 1:1), the very widest possible designation of the whole body of redemption truth, for it is He with Whom is 'no respect of persons;' and Who is not 'the God of the Jews only,' but 'of the Gentiles also' (Rom 2:11; Rom 3:29). Accordingly, 'all the world' is found guilty (Rom 3:19), and a redemption is revealed as wide as the need, upon the alone condition of faith. Not only does Romans embody in the fullest way the doctrines of grace in relation to salvation, but in three remarkable chapters (Rom 9:1-33, Rom 10:1-21, Rom 11:1-36) the great promises to Israel are reconciled with the promises concerning the Gentiles, and the fulfilment of the former shown to await the completion of the church and coming of the Deliverer out of Zion (Rom 11:25-27). The key-phrase is 'the righteousness of God' (Rom 1:17; Rom 3:21-22).

4. Which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures (Rom 1:2). In the Greek there is no article preceding Holy Scriptures, though the Old Testament is clearly indicated by the mention of God's prophets, and the insertion of the article is therefore perhaps warranted. The point in the statement is that the gospel was revealed in fulfilment of promises which God had made (compare 1Pe 1:11).

5. Concerning His Son (Rom 1:3). The person of Christ is the very substance of the gospel of God. According to the flesh He is, as the prophets predicted, a descendant of David. According to the Spirit of Holiness, He was shown to be the Son of God with power by resurrection: not His own resurrection merely, but that of others also, such as were dead (1911 Bible, margin). Mr. Darby says (Synopsis): The subject of this gospel is, first of all, the Son of God. He has accomplished a work; but it is Himself Who is the true subject of the gospel. Now He is presented in a two-fold aspect: 1st, the object of the promises, Son (of David according to the flesh; 2d, the Son of God in power, Who, in the midst of sin, walked by the Spirit in divine and absolute holiness (resurrection being the illustrious and victorious proof of Who He was, walking in this character). That is to say, resurrection is a public manifestation of that power by which He walked in absolute holiness during His life—a manifestation that He is the Son of God in power. He is clearly shown forth as Son of God in power by this means. Here it was no question of promise, but of power, of Him Who could enter into conflict with the death in which man lay, and overcome it completely; and that, in connection with the holiness which bore testimony during his life to the power of that Spirit by which He walked, and in which He guarded Himself from being touched by sin. It was in the same power by which He was holy in life absolutely that He was raised from the dead.

“In the ways of God on the earth He was the object and the fulfilment of the promises. With regard to the condition of man under sin and death, He was completely Conqueror of all that stood in His way, whether living or in resurrection. It was the Son of God Who was there, made known by resurrection according to the power that was in Him, a power that displayed itself according to the Spirit by the holiness in which He lived.

“What marvelous grace to see the whole power of evil—that dreadful door of death which closed upon the sinful life of man, leaving him to the inevitable judgment that he deserved—broken, destroyed, by Him, Who was willing to enter into the gloomy chamber which shut in, and take upon Himself all the weakness of man in death, and thus completely and absolutely delivered him whose penalty He had borne in submitting to death! This victory over death, this deliverance of man from its dominion, by the power of the Son of God become man, when He had undergone it, and that as a sacrifice for sin, is the only ground of hope for mortal and sinful man. It sets aside all that sin and death have to say. It destroys, for him who has a portion in Christ, the seal of judgment upon sin, which is in death; and a new man, a new life, begins for him who has been held under it outside the whole scene. The whole effect of his former misery—a life founded on the value of that which the Son of God had there accomplished.

“In fine, we have, as the subject of the gospel, the Son of God, made of the seed of David after the flesh; and, in the bosom of humanity in death, declared to be the Son of God by resurrection Jesus Christ our Lord.

6. Jesus Christ our Lord, through Whom we receive grace and apostleship (Rom 1:4-5, R. V.). Mr. Darby continues: The gospel was the gospel of God Himself; but it is by Jesus Christ the Lord that

the apostle received his mission. He was the head of the work, and sent forth the labourers into the harvest which they were to reap in the world. The object of his mission, and its extent, was the obedience of faith (not obedience to the law) among all nations, establishing the authority and the value of the name of Christ. It was this name which should prevail and be acknowledged.

“The gospel according to Paul, says Dr. Stifler, is universal. It is not Jewish, but worldwide, a gospel for the Gentiles, for by resurrection Jesus transcended all Jewish connection and became the world’s Saviour, a Saviour not by the obedience to law which was Mosaic, but by the power of an endless life. Life is universal. Thus Paul, by linking his apostolate with the raised Christ, gives first the character of his epistle, and secondly its scope. It is the epistle of divine life in Christ for all nations, on the condition of faith.

7. Among whom are ye also (Rom 1:6-7). The children of God are here defined as:

(1) The called of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:6). Not, as in R. V., called to be Jesus Christ’s: they were already His—His called ones, His bidden ones. Also, they are:

(2) Beloved of God (Rom 1:7). Surely they are that. As Jude puts it, all who have come to God by Jesus Christ are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ (Jude 1:1, R. V.). But, further, they are,

(3) Called saints (Rom 1:7). Here again we have the question raised in Rom 1:1. Christians—God’s children by the new birth—are saints. They are not called to become saints; they became saints, instantaneously, at their new birth. This fact is set forth everywhere in the New Testament; and yet there is much confusion among the translators. Weymouth, for example, after rendering the phrase in Rom 1:7, called to be saints, without intimating that he has supplied the words to be (which are certainly not in the original), says in a footnote,

Herein consists the supreme glory and supreme difficulty of the Christian life—that we are not simply to speak of Christ to others, and, if need be, do and dare great things for Him. By the power of His own most holy Spirit within us we are to be saints.

Undoubtedly we are called upon to live as becometh saints (Rom 16:2), but it is highly important to see that if we have received the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord we are already saints—God’s holy ones, set apart for Him, belonging to Him, saints by His own designation, His own calling—called saints. As Mr. Darby observes, ‘called to be saints’ is not the meaning of the passage. He translates, with Young and many others, called saints, and defines the phrase as meaning saints by calling.

8. Grace to you and peace (Rom 1:7). This is ever the message for the saints, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

02.03. II. The Introduction (Rom_1:8-17).

II. The Introduction (Rom 1:8-17).

1. First, I thank my God, etc., (Rom 1:8). It is the Spirit's way to first of all point out things to be commended; and this is true even in the case of epistles containing much severe censure, as, for example, 1st Corinthians. The occasion for thanksgiving in the case before us is that the Roman Christians were widely known for their faith. That was surely something for which to be thankful. If the faith is held pure, the works will be forthcoming.

2. I long to see you (Rom 1:11). There were those who declared that Paul had neither desire nor intention to visit Rome. His message, they said, might do well enough for the provinces, but it would never do in Rome. Rome was too well informed, too cultured, too sophisticated, to be caught with such a message! But Paul here expresses a sincere longing to come to Rome.

3. I purposed to come unto you and was hindered hitherto (Rom 1:13, R. V.). In a similar passage (1Th 2:18), Paul had declared that he had been hindered by Satan from visiting Thessalonica; doubtless that is his meaning here (compare also Rom 15:22).

4. I am debtor (Rom 1:14). To be sure! And so • is every Christian a debtor, to give the gospel to the whole world as rapidly as possible.

5. I am ready (Rom 1:15). That is a splendid companion-piece to the I am debtor.

6. I am not ashamed (Rom 1:16-17). No one can be ashamed of the gospel, though it is natural to be ashamed of some things that pass for the gospel. Paul was not ashamed,

(1) Because of the nature of the gospel: it is the power of God. It is unthinkable that any man should be ashamed of power—least of all, God's power; and the gospel is just that: God's power. Again, Paul was not ashamed,

(2) Because of the aim of the gospel: it is unto salvation. And it always brings salvation—from the penalty, from the power, and finally from the very presence of sin—wherever it is received. Moreover, Paul was not ashamed,

(3) Because of the scope of the gospel: it is to everyone that believeth." No one is barred; whosoever will may come. Further, Paul was not ashamed,

(4) Because of the sole condition attached to the gospel: it brings salvation to everyone that believeth. This is all worked out in detail further on in the epistle. Finally, Paul was not ashamed,

(5) Because of the revelation of the gospel: For therein is the righteousness of God revealed. This gospel revelation of God's righteousness, bestowed as a gift to men of faith, is all worked out in its proper place further on. Here it is mentioned as the fulfilment of an Old Testament prophecy: The just shall live by faith (Hab 2:4), and perhaps also to mark the sharp contrast between this gracious gospel revelation and the terrible revelation of God's wrath so vividly described in the

language that follows.

02.04. First Main Division: The Sin of the World

First Main Division: The Sin of the World

(Rom 1:18-32, Rom 2:1-29, Rom 3:1-20)

Sin is now brought before us. The naked, horrid facts are dragged out and made to stand forth in the blazing light of God's holy wrath. This is needful and wholesome: for if we are ever to know the blessedness of God's remedy for the evil, we must first know something of the reality of the evil, and realize in some measure its enormity. This terrible arraignment of guilty man at the bar of God is set forth in three subdivisions: (1) The guilt of the Gentiles; (2) The guilt of the Jews; and (3) Every mouth stopped.

02.05. I. The Guilt of the Gentiles (i: 18-32).

I. The Guilt of the Gentiles (Rom 1:18-32).

1. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven (Rom 1:18). There are, then, two revelations from heaven (compare Rom 1:17-18). And, until the matter is explained, these revelations bring only terror to guilty man. The very last things he wants to be reminded of are God's righteousness and God's wrath. He has yet to learn the marvel of the gospel, by which God's righteousness actually becomes God's gift to sinful man, and God's wrath gives place to God's loving-kindness. Meanwhile the divine wrath is directed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Ungodliness is the absence of conformity to the will of God. It leads to unrighteousness as to men's relation with each other. Being not right with God, they cannot be right in their dealings with one another. Then, too, they will not heed the facts. They hold the truth in unrighteousness. Literally, it reads, as in the Revision, that they hold down the truth in unrighteousness. The natural heart is desperately wicked (Jer 17:9), and it will not fairly face the truth. This is the universal rule, whether the truth be revealed through the light of nature, or the moral sense, or the preaching of the gospel. Men hate the truth: the carnal mind is enmity against God; man holds down the truth in unrighteousness (compare Heb 10:26-31; 2Pe 2:21-22). In the passage we are just now considering it is shown that the Gentiles are thus guilty of turning from the truth, even before the gospel is preached to them. They are guilty, and the wrath of God is resting upon them. The reasons for this are strong ones.

2. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them (Rom 1:19). Men may speak of the dim light of nature, but God does not so describe it.

3. For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen (Rom 1:20). Not dimly, but clearly. And they are not only seen, but understood.

4. Being understood by the things that are made (Rom 1:20). This is the argument of Psa 19:1-14 : The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork. Two things about God are thus clearly seen and understood by the heathen, whether they be evangelized or unevangelized—two things, revealed by the things that are made (1) "even His eternal power and (2) His Godhead. That is to say, it is revealed through nature itself that there is a Creator, and that that Creator is God. He ought, then, to be worshipped.

5. So that they are without excuse (Rom 1:20). There you have, in a word, God's own pronouncement concerning the guilt of the heathen world: They are without excuse. This he proceeds to prove by setting forth in detail the awful facts of the world's history in connection with its relation to God from the beginning. There is here no Ascent of Man. According to this truthful record, man did not rise from protoplasm toward the likeness of God. Far from it! God Himself tells us here that man has been going downward instead of upward. In the beginning he was in fellowship with God. From this high estate he fell, and his fall was complete. The apostasy of the Gentile world is here set forth in seven stages. And these are given as seven sufficient reasons for

the declaration that men are without excuse. They were without excuse—

(1) Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful (Rom 1:21). This in itself is a scathing arraignment. Man in the beginning knew God: what a wonderful privilege! It is life to know Him (John 17:3), and this was surely great cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving; but man utterly failed to maintain himself in this position of grace. He glorified not God as God, and he was ungrateful. Real thanksgiving toward God is altogether absent from the heart of the natural man to this day; and even among the children of God it is all too rare (see Col 3:15).

(2) But became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened (Rom 1:21). The Revisers here read, became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Man is always prone to turn to reason, rather than to God. Preferring the tree of knowledge to the tree of life, the inevitable result is that he became vain and puffed up (1Co 8:1). The end of this process is darkness. The way into light is not by knowledge, but by faith. Men must believe God, or walk in darkness.

(3) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools (Rom 1:22). They were manifestly out of God's way, for it is never His way to reveal spiritual truth by means of worldly wisdom (1Co 1:18-25).

(4) And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man (Rom 1:23). This is the first step in idolatry—to represent God as being like man. It grows out of the lie of the serpent: Ye shall be as God.

(5) And to birds (Rom 1:23). For idolatry does not stop with its first step. It progresses, and its progress is always progress in degradation.

(6) And four footed beasts (Rom 1:23). Yet another downward step.

(7) And creeping things (Rom 1:23). The odiousness of idolatry, says Dr. Stifler, is not alone in the immorality to which it leads, but that it is a caricature of God and a slander. It belongs to His glory that He is imperishable. He was likened to that which is corruptible. The very material of the image was a dishonour, as if one should erect a statute to a distinguished man to-day not in marble or bronze, but in chalk or putty. To liken God to man is idolatry. Men were to make no image of Him. Had they preserved their original conception of Him they would not have attempted it. In due time He gave an image of Himself in a sinless Being Who was animated with eternal life, 'the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person' (Heb 1:3). If Jesus was not more than mortal, He was an idol. These professed sages did not stop with likening God to man; they figured Him as a bird, then as a quadruped, and finally as a reptile. There was the Apollo of the Greeks, the eagle of the Romans, the bull of the Egyptians, and the serpent of the Assyrians. Paul may be giving in this verse (Rom 1:23) the historical development of idolatry, from its highest phase to its worst; or he may be setting it forth in climactic form; but certain it is that all these phases of the sin existed. In this review of the world's religion from the beginning, Paul teaches that man at the first was not an idolater. The origin of this sin is not contemporaneous with the appearance of man on the globe. Man did not work his way from fetishism through polytheism up to monotheism and the worship of the true God. His course was the reverse. From the beginning he did not grow better religiously, but worse. The Bible gives no evidence of idolatry among the

antediluvians. Men in that age called on the name of the Lord (Gen 4:26). The earliest mention of idolatry belongs to the days of Abraham (Jos 24:2). Paul here gives the history and origin of idolatry. Men knew God and refused to worship Him. Idolatry followed as a psychological necessity. If there is a force of development inherent in man, a force trending upward, the gospel of the grace of God is an impertinence, and Paul might well be ashamed of it. And why has not this force manifested itself somewhat in the last two thousand years in Africa, in India, and in China? The idolatry of to-day is no better than that which grieved Paul (The Epistle to the Romans by J. M. Stiller).

6. Wherefore God also gave them, up to uncleanness (Rom 1:24-25). God's call is not to uncleanness but to holiness (1Th 4:7). And when there is response to His call, He directs our steps in the way of holiness. But when the truth of God is exchanged for a lie, and when worship is accorded to the creature instead of the Creator, it must follow that men become slaves to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity (Rom 6:19). And could anything be sadder than to read, Wherefore God gave them up?

7. For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions (Rom 1:26-27). Let Dr. Stiffler again speak here. This, he says (Ibid.), is the next long step downward. Originally man was chaste, but when he cast God off, his animal passions were unchained. Twice in these verses we are told that 'God gave them up,' not passively, but actively. The reason is again given: 'Who changed the truth of God into the lie' of idolatry. They did not change a lie into truth. Man's course was not in that direction. They took 'the truth of God' which He gave them and perverted it to the falsehood of idol-worship. This was the cause of that vileness whose hideous description we have here. 'For even their women!' There is point in that word 'even.' Woman is the purer, the more modest, of the sexes, has propensities less ardent; but even she became worse than beastly and equaled vile man in his depravity. The corruption that got into the blood of the race by the fall did not show itself at once. The earlier families and tribes of the world were pure; God kept them so. Whatever morality there is in the world is due not to human nature, but to the restraining power of God. 'When God 'gave them up,' the original corruption in the blood showed itself in foul moral ulcers, and human virtue proved to be less than that of the beasts of the field, among which the barriers of sex are not crossed.

8. And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind (Rom 1:28-32). And behold where that reprobate mind has taken them. The climax is reached in the final verse of the chapter, which is also a summing up of the whole case against the Gentile world. Men know the judgment of God against sin, that its sure wages is death; and yet they not only go on in sin, but actually take pleasure in the depravity of others. This is the state of things as they are. To meet this condition calls for a remedy of tremendous power, even the power of God.

02.06. II. The Guilt of the; Jews (2:1-29).

II. The Guilt of the; Jews (Rom 2:1-29).

1. Therefore thou art inexcusable (Rom 2:1). In Rom 1:1-32 the Gentiles were shown to be without excuse, and here the same indictment is brought against the Jew—"thou art without excuse" (R.V.). The address, says Alford, passes gradually to the Jews. They were the people who judged—who pronounced all Gentiles to be born in sin and under condemnation: doubtless there were also proud and censorious men among the Gentiles, to whom the rebuke might apply, but these are hardly in the apostle's mind. This is evident by comparing the charge, 'thou that judgest doest the same things,' with Rom 2:21-23, where the same charge is implied in a direct address to the Jew. In depicting the sin of the Gentile in the first chapter, says Dr. Stifler,

Paul did not name him. It was not necessary. The picture was so true to life that no one could fail to see who sat for it. The author has been assured more than once by returned missionaries from China and India that when this first chapter was read to intelligent natives of these heathen lands they have hesitated to believe that it was from the missionary's sacred Book, suspecting that the missionary had written it himself as a description of what he had seen since he came among them. In this second chapter Paul has no one but the Jew in view. He does not mention his name until the discussion has advanced some distance. It was easy to prove the Gentile a sinner. He claimed nothing for himself, and his immorality was patent to every eye; Paul had only to point to the facts. But in the case of the Jew all was different. He had a divinely-given system of religion. In the letter it was never better observed than when Paul wrote. The Jew as a son of Abraham considered himself righteous by the law. To convince him of sin was no easier than it is to-day to convince a hollow Christianity of its fatal error. Paul has still his statement in view, that the gospel is the only power of God for salvation, and nothing to be ashamed of. If Judaism can save men, the gospel is an impertinence; hence the radical failure of the Jew must be shown.

2. The judgment of God is according to truth (Rom 2:2). This is the first of four principles here laid down as to the judgment of God. The Jew must not suppose that merely because he knew the will of God he therefore was safe from judgment. If he knew the Word of God, he must know that by that Word he should be judged (compare John 12:47-48).

3. To every man according to his deeds This is the second principle of judgment: it shall not be according to how much a man may know, but according to what he has done about it—according to his deeds. Of course, this is not the gospel: that is to come later; here the point is that the Jew, as well as the Gentile, is in sore need of the gospel.

4. For there is no respect of persons with God (Rom 2:11). This is the third principle of judgment: it will be strictly impartial (compare Deu 10:17; Eze 18:4; Acts 10:34; Rom 3:29-30; Rom 10:12-13) The Gentiles who have sinned without the law must perish, for the wages of sin is death; and the Jews who have sinned under the law must likewise perish, for the wages of sin is death. Do not make the mistake here of reading gospel for law. This is to miss the point entirely. What the Spirit

by the apostle is showing is that apart from the gospel there could no flesh be saved, either Gentile or Jew. He is paving the way for the gospel.

5. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel (Rom 2:16). This is the fourth principle of (judgment: according to my gospel. Not according to the law, thank God! for then no flesh could be saved. As for the Jews—"the hearers of the law" (Rom 2:13)—they could not be justified, for they had not done the law; and as for the Gentiles, who had not the law (Rom 2:14), they were nevertheless condemned, for all had sinned without law. This will all be brought out in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men. Ah, who can stand in such a day as that?—"the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God!" Only righteousness will pass muster in that day—real righteousness, righteousness of the heart, righteousness even as to the secrets of men!• Because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead (Acts 17:31). Except for the gospel, not a man could stand in that day. And we have not yet come to the gospel. Let us first see the great need for it.

6. Behold, thou art called a Jew (Rom 2:17). The implication here is that one might be called a Jew without being a Jew. Paul is proving that the so-called Jew is a helpless sinner in spite of all his boastings. He rested in the law, utterly failing to recognize it as an instruction in righteousness (2Ti 3:16); and made his boast of God, forgetting that God is a just God; he knew His will (Rom 2:18), and it never occurred to him that he ought to be obeying that will; he was a student of the Scriptures, able to distinguish the things that differ (Rom 2:18, R. V., margin), being instructed out of the law; he was therefore confident that he was a guide of the blind, a light of them (the Gentiles) which were in darkness (Rom 2:19), an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law (Rom 2:20). Here is a complete picture of what the Jew thought of himself. What God thought of him was another matter: the Holy Spirit is here proving him a lost sinner. Let us see.

7. Teachest thou not thyself? (Rom 2:21). Evidently the Jews had not thought of that. For the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles through them (Rom 2:24), as had been written of them beforehand (Isa 52:5; Eze 36:20).

8. For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law (Rom 2:25). A big and important if, surely! The Jew must learn that circumcision in itself could not save; it was after all only the sign of the covenant. 'But,' says the replier, 'circumcision is a great fact' 'I confess it' rejoins the apostle, 'but when? When a man has that which is inward in the heart. And see here the apostle's wisdom, how fittingly he has introduced his argument about it. He did not begin with it at once, since it was held in such great estimation: but when he has shown that they were offenders in a still greater matter, and were guilty of blasphemy towards God, then at length, having secured his readers' condemnation of them, and having lowered them from their pre-eminence, he introduces his argument about circumcision, confident that no one ever will be found as its unlimited apologist (Chrysostom).

9. For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly (Rom 2:28-29). This summing up should be connected with Rom 2:17. Behold, thou art called a Jew. Well, he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one

inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. This goes to the core of the matter. Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts (Psa 51:6). The circumcision which is merely outward is in God's sight only the concision. The true circumcision consists of those which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh (Php 3:2-3).

02.07. III. Every Mouth Stopped (3:1-20).

III. Every Mouth Stopped (Rom 3:1-20).

1. What advantage then hath the Jew? (Rom 3:1-2). Paul, in the question and answer given here, is dealing with an imaginary objector, as he often does in his writings. This objector, replying to the sweeping indictment against the Jew in Rom 2:1-29, asks what, then, is the use of being a Jew; what profit is there of circumcision?

If it does not save, what is the use of it? To this the answer is Much every way: first of all, that they were intrusted with the oracles of God (R. V.). That was surely a great honour.

2. For what if some did not believe? (Rom 3:3-4). The King James Version is decidedly weak here. The American Revision reads: For what if some were without faith? shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God? God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar. The 1911 Bible is even better: For what if some did not believe? shall their faithlessness destroy God's faithfulness? God forbid! nay, let God be true, though every man be false; as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged. This citation from Psa 51:1-19 voices the sentiment of every true child of God: Let God be justified at all events! The ways of Jehovah are right ways! He is faithful!

3. Is God unrighteous? (Rom 3:5). This from the objector: as Paul explains, I speak as a man. The issue raised is this: If God's righteousness is made manifest by men's unrighteousness, then God does wrong in taking vengeance. The answer is ready: God forbid! for then how shall God judge the world? This is a reference, doubtless, to Gen 18:25, where Abraham puts the question to Jehovah, Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? What an unspeakable calamity it would be if God should ever do wrong! Let God be found true!

4. Why yet am I also judged? (Rom 3:7-8). Again, the objector. His point now is that if the truth (i. e., the truthfulness) of God has been made more manifest and glorious by the untruthfulness of men, then men ought not to be condemned, but commended instead. And in that case it would be better to go on in evil for the Lord's sake! Indeed, some had slanderously reported that Paul himself advocated this course of conduct: Let us do evil that good may come. This principle of Jesuitism the apostle vehemently repudiates. Paul now with one stroke brings the whole objection to its logically absurd conclusion. If sin enhances the glory of God, and therefore is no longer guilt, why, the more we sin, the brighter this grace. Let us do all the evil we can, for the more evil the more praise to His name! Some had affirmed that this is the apostle's own doctrine. In their righteous condemnation of it they condemn themselves in the claim that God cannot punish sin, because it promotes His glory, for this claim is the very essence of the hateful sentiment. And thus he has come around in most skilful fashion to the assertion with which he began against the Jew: 'Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself' (2:1). He joins with them in repudiating the godless maxim, but he does not go with them in holding it. They 'slanderously report' him who say he does (Stifler).

5. What then? (Rom 3:9-20). The argument of the first main division is brought to a conclusion in this paragraph, and the whole world is declared guilty. The query of Rom 3:9, What then? are we better than they? is probably a wrong reading. The marginal rendering in the 1911 Bible is better, What then? do we excuse ourselves? The meaning of the question is evidently this: What then? Have we an excuse? Is there any excuse left? Is there any escape from the final verdict of universal guilt? This, at any rate, is the question answered in the verses that follow: No, in no wise! for we have before accused both Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin (Rom 3:9). He does not say, with the King James Version, that he has proved this: he has only laid it to their charge (R. V and he is now about to bring forth the proof. For this he goes to the Scripture:

(1) There is none righteous, no, not one! (Rom 3:10-12). The first proof, to the end of Rom 3:12, is taken from Psa 14:1-7, Psa 53:1-6. It is God's Word, and there is not so much as a single exception to the sweeping declaration. In the whole human race, not even one solitary individual can stand before God in his own merit. Not one! None righteous; none that understandeth; none that seeketh after God; all turned aside; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not so much as ONE! So much for human character. Now what of human conduct?

(2) Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness (Rom 3:13-14). This terrible count is taken from Psa 5:9; Psa 140:3; and Psa 10:7, and it deals with man's mouth, as to what he speaks. This is an important part of conduct. But there is another part. How does man act? What does he do? Let us go on.

(3) Their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known (Rom 3:15-17; compare Pro 1:16; Pro 6:17; Isa 59:7-8). Man's actions, then, are no better in God's sight than his words. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom 8:8). Long, long ago, the end of all flesh came before Him. O, what a need for the gospel! How utterly hopeless are we without it!

(4) There is no fear of God before their eyes (Rom 3:18; compare Psa 36:1). Here is given the reason for it all. It was because there was no fear of God before their eyes that men departed so far from Him. It was the same with the Jew as with the Gentile: When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful (Rom 1:21).

Now we have come to the end of the indictment against the world. As for the Gentile, he was declared guilty and without excuse in chapter 1; and the law itself settled the matter for the Jew: it speaketh to them that are under the law with the result that every mouth is stopped, and the whole world is brought in guilty before God. The word "Therefore in Rom 3:20 should read Because. The meaning is that the whole world is brought in guilty because no flesh is justified by works. Judged by their own merits, as to their deeds, Gentile and Jew alike are guilty. This is the end of the matter: God has spoken, and He is the righteous Judge of all the earth. He says: Guilty! This ends the first main division of the epistle. Sin has done its deadly work, and man is lost, and undone, and guilty before God. Unless grace find a way out, there is no hope. Through the law has come only the knowledge of sin; through the law there never can come salvation. But, thanks be to God! He has found a way out! This we shall see in the next section.

02.08. Second Main Division: The Righteousness of God

Second Main Division: The Righteousness of God

(Rom 3:21-31, Rom 4:1-25, Rom 5:1-21, Rom 6:1-23, Rom 7:1-25, Rom 8:1-39) In the foregoing studies it has been shown that by sin man had been ruined, and rendered utterly unable to help himself. He was guilty—every man, without a solitary exception—and could do nothing to make himself acceptable to God. Judged by his own works—surely a righteous judgment—he was condemned. The Gentiles were guilty, because when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; and as a result of this they had fallen into gross idolatry and indescribable immorality. The terrible picture of the state of things in the Gentile world, drawn by the Spirit of Truth in Romans 1, is reflected even in the writings of the heathen philosophers. We must say of ourselves, said Seneca, that we are evil, have been evil, and—unhappily, I must add— shall be also in the future. I am tossed, said the same writer, upon a sea of pure infirmity. The human mind is by nature perverse, and strives after what is forbidden and perilous. And he uttered a word almost prophetic when he wrote, Nobody can deliver himself; someone must stretch out a hand, to lift him up. As for the Jew, he was at least equally guilty with the Gentiles, for, with a fuller revelation of God, he failed miserably to walk in the light vouchsafed to him. The law had only emphasized his sorry plight, for through the law is the knowledge of sin. Tested by the law every Jew must ultimately find himself in the evil case of Saul of Tarsus—Judaism's finest specimen— and cry out, O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me? The situation in Jewry had become worse instead of better since the days of the prophets, who had declared that judgment was turned away backward, and justice stood afar off; for truth was fallen in the street, and equity could not enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey! (Isa 59:14-15).

Thus the whole problem was thrust back upon God Himself. And, blessed be His name! He found a way out. Jehovah saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no judgment. And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His arm BROUGHT SALVATION UNTO HIM; AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS it sustained Him (Isa 59:15-16). He it was that was gracious to man, and delivered him from going down to the pit; He it was that found a ransom (Job 33:24). Without sacrificing His own righteousness—which would have been, of course, impossible—He yet found a way to bestow righteousness upon unrighteous man. And that is the theme of the second main division of the epistle to the Romans: righteousness, gospel-righteousness, the gift of God.

02.09. I. Gospel-Righteousness is by Faith (3:21-31).

I. Gospel-Righteousness is by Faith (Rom 3:21-31).

1. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested (Rom 3:21). Gospel-righteousness is apart from the law. This is the meaning of the expression, without the law, in the King James Version. The Revision reads correctly: But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested. We have already seen that the law, instead of saving guilty man, only increased and emphasized his guilt. The righteousness of the gospel, then, is entirely apart from the law. This is only barely mentioned here, for it is to come up for fuller discussion further on in the epistle.

2. Being witnessed by the law and the prophets (Rom 3:21). Though gospel-righteousness is apart from the law, yet the law testifies to it. We shall come to this again. That the righteousness revealed in the gospel is not contrary to the Old Testament Scriptures, is the theme of the fourth chapter. There we shall see that salvation has always been by grace through faith—and that is the righteousness of the gospel; it is the revelation of it that is new.

3. Even the righteousness of God (Rom 3:22). This gospel-righteousness is God's own righteousness. And in the tenth chapter we shall see that the righteousness of God is just Christ Himself, Who is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. Under law, says Dr. Scofield (Correspondence Course), God required righteousness from man; under grace He gives righteousness to man. According to Cunninghame, the righteousness of God in this chapter is that righteousness which God's righteousness requires Him to require. Hodge's definition is that righteousness of which God is the Author, which is of avail before God, which meets and secures His approval. Brookes says it is that righteousness which the Father requires, the Son became, the Holy Spirit convinces of, and faith secures. Moorehead says it is the sum total of all that God commands, demands, approves, and Himself provides. And Paul defines it as Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us righteousness (1Co 1:30).

4. Through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe (Rom 3:22, R. VS). Gospel-righteousness is bestowed in response to faith. This is a restatement of Rom 1:16-17, and it comes in for full treatment in the tenth chapter. The point is that the righteousness of the gospel is not a by works righteousness, but a by-faith righteousness.

5. For there is no difference (Rom 3:22-26). The way was prepared for this statement by the preceding phrase, unto all and upon all them that believe. This also was said in Rom 1:16-17. The righteousness of the gospel is for all. As Stifler says, all need it, and no class of men has anything else to present before God for salvation. In Tit 2:2, it is written that the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. A universal need must be met by a universal remedy. There is no distinction (R. V.):

(1) For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). There is no distinction as to the need. This has been very clearly shown in the first main division. The glory of God here may

mean Christ Himself as God's standard, the brightness of His glory (Heb 1:3), and surely all have come short of the glory of God in this sense. But more likely it has the meaning of the identical expression in John 12:43, where it is translated the praise of God in the King James Version and changed to the glory of God by the Revisers. God cannot praise or approve anything short of perfect righteousness, and no man can therefore merit His approbation. All have sinned, and fall short.

(2) Being justified freely (Rom 3:24). There is no distinction as to the remedy. This phase of our Lord's redemptive work is reserved for the fifth chapter. But here Paul has arrived at his first statement in the epistle defining the gospel itself. We have been seeing something of its power, but we have now come to its description. The gospel is the good news of salvation. Of this salvation we here learn seven things: '

(a) That it is free. This is the force of the word freely, i. e., without cost to the saved one. He is justified (declared or pronounced righteous), and, so far as he is concerned, it is without money and without price.

(b) That it is by the unmerited favor of God, by His grace.

(c) That it is by means of Christ's redemptive work (Rom 3:24-25), through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a propitiation (1911 Bible). Redemption is a buying back—"a buying off, by means of a price paid" (Alford). Propitiation is the equivalent of mercy seat.

(d) That it is for those who believe (Rom 3:25); it is through faith.

(e) That it is based upon blood-shedding, through faith in His blood. There has been much theological hair-splitting as to whether this reading should not be changed to by his blood. Philosophy and theology have busied themselves here, without reaching unanimity, says Dr. Stifler, on a question which Paul does not hint at—the relation of the sacrifice to its end. God freely justifies men by means of the ransom power in Christ Jesus. He is such because God has set Him forth in His blood as a sufficient propitiation. Whatever reason may say about such a sacrifice, Paul is satisfied with it because it is God's own. God is satisfied with the offering, for He provided it. It becomes a propitiation 'through faith,' because faith says of it just what God does—I accept what God has provided for my sin. That ends the difference between God and the sinner, and they are at one in Christ Jesus. This is justification by faith. Dr. Scofield says: It was upon the mercy seat that the atoning blood was sprinkled on the great day of atonement (Lev 16:14). The idea is not that God was made loving toward the sinner by the shedding of sacrificial blood, but that the sacrificial blood evinced the sinner's acceptance of the righteous sentence of God's holy law, so that God could still be just and yet be propitious to the sinner. The sinner's faith in Christ includes 'faith in His blood' (Rom 3:25); that is, faith in Christ as 'the Lamb of God' voluntarily offering Himself on the sinner's behalf in vindication of God's holy law. The cross enables God to 'be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.'

(f) That it is retrospective in its effect (Rom 3:25), to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God. The King James Version is very faulty here: our quotation is from the Revision. The idea is that during the ages before the cross, God had apparently been lax with reference to sins. As Paul says in Acts 17:1-34, He winked at them. The death of the cross was needful to set God right in the eyes of men, to show

His righteousness. When the Lord Jesus died on Calvary, it was as much for the sins of Adam as for those of men living after the time of Calvary. God had for centuries labored under the suspicion that in the passing over of sins He had somehow sacrificed His righteousness. It might be supposed that He had shown mercy at the expense of justice. This, of course, is impossible with a righteous God, and the Lord Jesus must be lifted up, if for no other reason than to show that His Father was righteous. For four thousand years, says Godet, the spectacle presented by mankind to the whole moral universe was, so to speak, a continual scandal Divine righteousness seemed to sleep; one might even have asked if it existed. Men sinned here below and yet they lived. They sinned on and yet reached in safety a hoary old age. Where were the 'wages of sin?' It was this relative impunity which rendered a solemn manifestation of righteousness necessary. In the passage before us, Dean Alford translates, for the showing forth of His righteousness, because of the passing over of the former sins, in the forbearance of God; and says: i. e., because God had overlooked the sins that had passed in His forbearance; and the words contain the reason why God would manifest His judicial righteousness; on account of the overlooking of the sins which had passed, in the forbearance of God; i. e., to vindicate that character for justice, which might seem, owing to the suspension of God's righteous sentence on sin in former ages in His forbearance, to be placed in question: to show, that though He did not then fully punish for sin, and though He did then set forth inadequate means of (subjective) justification,—yet He did both, not because His justice was slumbering, nor because the nature of His righteousness was altered,—but because He had provided a way whereby sin might be forgiven, and He might be just. Observe, the fact mentioned is not forgiveness, nor remission, as the Authorized Version erroneously renders it, but passing over, or overlooking, which is the work of forbearance (see Acts 17:30), whereas forgiveness is the work of grace,—see Rom 2:4 : nor do the former sins mean, 'the sins of each man which precede his conversion' but those of the whole world before the death of Christ. See the very similar words, Heb 9:15.

(g) That it is also prospective in its effect That is to say, the work of Christ on the cross had in view those who should live afterward, as well as those who had lived before the cross was set up. There is a second showing forth here. The supplied words, I say, in both the King James Version and the Revision, spoil the sense. Paul is not merely repeating in Rom 3:26 what he has already said in Rom 3:25 : he is saying something new. Rotherham's reading of the passage (Rom 3:25-26) clears up the matter: Whom God hath set forth as a propitiatory covering, through faith in His blood, for the showing forth of His righteousness, by reason of the passing-by of the previously committed sins, in the forbearance of God, — with a view to a showing forth of His righteousness in the present season, that He might be righteous even when declaring righteous him that hath faith in Jesus.

Here is the great triumph of the gospel. God Himself is justified, and He succeeds in justifying sinful men! By the gospel God's righteousness is shown as to the past; His righteousness is shown as to the present time; and His righteousness is shown in His justification of those who, on their own merits, are only unrighteous! Surely, this is a wonderful salvation, and He is a wonderful Saviour!

(6) Where is boasting then? (Rom 3:27-30). The gospel excludes human boasting, and this not on the principle of works, but on the principle of faith. The proof is given in Rom 3:28, where therefore should read for. Both the King James Version and the Revision fail us here. The force of the word

is Because. In this verse we have the reason for the exclusion of all human glorying; namely, that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law (1911 Bible). And that this latter statement is true is shown by implication in the queries that follow: Or is God the God of Jews only? is he not the God of Gentiles also? The Gentiles had not the law; it had been given to the Jews alone. If therefore justification was by means of the law, the Gentiles were shut out. But this was impossible, for God is the God of Gentiles also: if so be that God is one, and He shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith. Since there is but one God, there can be but one means of justification. A righteous judge could not render contradictory decisions where all are alike guilty, and certainly He could not decide in such a way that His judgment to save some would necessarily exclude others. The unity of God makes salvation by faith exclusive of every other means (Stiffler).

(7) Do we then make void the law through faith? (Rom 3:31). The question raised here is a natural one. If salvation is by grace and apart from the law, does it not follow that the law is made void? God forbid! says the apostle, nay, we establish the law. The sinner establishes the law in its right use and honour, says Dr. Scofield, by confessing his guilt, and acknowledging that by it he is justly condemned. Christ, on the sinner's behalf, establishes the law by enduring its penalty, death (Reference Bible). Moffatt's translation of Rom 3:27-31 is interesting:

Then where is the exulting? Shut out. By what kind of law? A law of deeds? No, by a law of faith. For we reckon that a man is justified by faith apart from deeds of law. What! is God only the God of Jews? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Assuredly, of Gentiles also, seeing that it is one God who shall justify the circumcision in consequence of faith and the uncircumcision through the same faith. Then 'through faith' do 'we annul the law?' God forbid! we uphold the law. The theme of Rom 4:1-25 is suggested by this question and answer. The law here means not only the Ten Words of Sinai, but the Old Testament in its entirety. Is it set aside, or made of none effect? No, far from it! In the fourth chapter it is shown that the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel is indeed witnessed by the law and the prophets.

02.10. II. Gospel-Righteousness is not Contrary to the Old Testament (ch. 4.)

II. Gospel-Righteousness is not Contrary to the Old Testament (Rom 4:1-25)

1. What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? (Rom 4:1). The force of the language here used is, What then shall we say was gained by Abraham our father after the flesh? What did Abraham gain, and how did he gain it? If his justification was by works, then he had ground for boasting.

2. But not before God (Rom 4:2). This word, before God, is the key to the seeming conflict between Paul and James (compare Jas 2:21-24). James speaks of justification in the sight of men, while Paul is considering justification before God. That no flesh is justified by works in the sight of God is Paul's contention, and James supplements this by pointing out that the man of faith can show his faith only by his works. Faith is visible only to the eye of God; it manifests itself by its works. Faith, which only God can see, justifies in His sight; works justify in the sight of men.

3. For what saith the Scripture? (Rom 4:3). This appeal to the law and to the testimony is to prove that Abraham's salvation was by faith: Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness (Gen 15:6). This is righteousness by faith; it is not by-works righteousness; it is a by-faith righteousness—that is, gospel-righteousness. As James again points out, it took many years for this faith of Abraham's to prove itself to outward observation, but God knew all about it when Abraham believed Him. The whole question, says Dean Alford, so much mooted between Protestants on the one hand, and Romanists, Arminianists and Socinians on the other, as to whether this righteousness was reckoned (1) by means of faith, being God's righteousness imputed to the sinner; or (2) on account of faith, so that God made Abraham righteous on account of the merit of his faith, lies in fact in a small compass, if what has gone before be properly taken into account. The apostle has proved Jews and Gentiles to .be all under sin: utterly unable by works of their own to attain to righteousness. Now faith, in the second sense mentioned above, is strictly and entirely a work, and as such would be the efficient cause of man's justification, — which, by what has preceded, it cannot be. It will therefore follow, that it was not the act of believing which was reckoned to him as a righteous act, or on account of which perfect righteousness was laid to his charge, but that the fact of his trusting God to perform His promise introduced him into the blessing promised. God declared His purpose (Gen 12:3) of blessing all the families of the earth in Abraham, and again (Gen 15:5) that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, when as yet he had no son. Abraham believed this promise, and became partaker of this blessing. But this blessing was, justification by faith in Christ. Now Abraham could not, in the strict sense of the words, be justified by faith in Christ,—nor is it necessary to suppose that he directed his faith forward to the promised Redeemer in Person; but in so far as God's gracious purpose was revealed to him, he grasped it by faith, and that righteousness which was implied, so far, in it, was imputed to him. Some have said (for example, Tholuck) that the parallel is incomplete—Abraham's faith having been reckoned to him for righteousness, whereas, in our

case, the righteousness of Christ is reckoned to us as our righteousness, by faith. But the incompleteness lies in the nature of the respective cases. In his case, the righteousness itself was not yet manifested. He believed implicitly, taking the promise, with all it involved and implied, as true. This, then, was his way of entering into the promise, and by means of his faith was bestowed upon him that full justification which that faith never apprehended. Thus his faith itself, the mere fact of implicit trust in God, was counted to him for righteousness. But though the same righteousness is imputed to us who believe, and by means of faith also, it is no longer the mere fact of believing implicitly in God's truth, but the reception of Christ Jesus the Lord by faith, which justifies us (see Rom 4:23-25). As it was then the realization of God's words by faith, so now; but we have the Person of the Lord Jesus for the object of faith, explicitly revealed; he had not. In both cases justification is gratuitous and is by faith; and so far, which is as far as the argument here requires, the parallel is strict and complete (The New Testament for English Readers).

4. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt (Rom 4:4). Now a worker has his wage counted to him as a due, not as a favour (Moffatt's translation). It is no favour to a man to pay him what he is earning. It is a 'debt' due him (Stiffler). Dr. Shedd quotes Coriolanus here:

Better it is to die, better to starve,

Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.

5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is reckoned for righteousness (Rom 4:5). Here is a most explicit statement of justification by grace through faith. Justification is offered not to the worker but to the believer. Works indeed have their place in the believer's life—he is created in Christ Jesus unto good works (Eph 2:10), but his salvation is not a reward for works: it is the gift of God through faith.

6. Even as David also (Rom 4:6-8). This quotation from Psa 32:1-11 is offered in further proof of the proposition of the chapter, namely, that gospel-righteousness is in keeping with the Old Testament. David was an Old Testament saint, and his justification was by faith. He describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin (1911 Bible). Blessed, indeed! Wonderful salvation!

7. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only? (Rom 4:9-12). Justification in the Old Testament, as in the New, is independent of ordinances. It was not a reward of circumcision, for Abraham was justified twenty-five years before he was circumcised. Thus he is the father of all them that believe, whether from among the Jews or from among the Gentiles. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham (Gal 3:9).

8. For the promise was not through the law (Rom 4:13-22). This justification, in the Old Testament, as in the New, is independent of the law of Sinai. Abraham never had the law, and without it he was justified. He was saved by promise, and the law which came 430 years afterward did not make void the older Covenant of Promise. The law was added to the promise only until the Seed to Whom the promise was made should come. He having come, the law—which was a schoolmaster to bring unto Him—is done away (2Co 3:1-18; Gal 3:19-29). The promise was not through the law, but through the righteousness of faith (Rom 4:13). There can be no mingling of

the two covenants, for their fundamental principles are in sharpest contrast. The law worketh wrath, and not salvation (Rom 4:15). Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace (Rom 4:16). On no other basis could grace have manifested itself. Let the principle of works enter in, and grace is excluded. Abraham was given a promise which was opposed to nature. But because the Promiser was God, he considered neither his own dead body, nor the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise through unbelief; he believed God; and therefore—therefore; because he believed God—"it was reckoned to him for righteousness" (Rom 4:22, 1911 Bible).

9. Now it was not written for his sake alone, but for us also (Rom 4:23-25). Not for his sake alone, but for us also. The Old Testament and the New Testament are in perfect concord. To the Old Testament saint, faith was reckoned for righteousness; and not only to him, but to us also, to whom it shall be reckoned, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered up for our offences, and was raised again for our justification (Rom 4:24-25). Why was Rom 4:25 added? asks Dr. Stifler. Why did the story not close with Rom 4:24? To show that the faith that saves is not faith in the act of the resurrection, but in its import. He who is justified must believe not only that Jesus died and rose again, but why. He died 'for our offences' This word 'offences' brings to view again the whole somber picture of the first main division of the epistle, the division about sin. Sin was such that nothing but the blood of Jesus our Lord could atone for it. But His death does atone, and therefore no works of law find any place in justification. And so it comes to pass that he who believes in the resurrection believes first of all that his own personal sins sent Jesus to the cross and the tomb, that He was the all-sufficient sacrifice for sin. It is only painful conviction of sin that can believe in this way. But if faith stopped at the tomb it would be only an agony. It also sees that, while Jesus died for sins, that death was accepted as the ransom price (Rom 3:24), and so Jesus was raised again. He who became surety for the sinner's debt could not have been released from the prison-house of the tomb unless the debt was paid. His appearance from the tomb is an everlasting proof of the sufficiency of His atonement for our sins; and he who really believes in the resurrection believes that the guilt of his sins is cancelled. Faith is no longer an agony, but a joy, and the believer's heart is set, not merely on the historic (2Co 5:16), but on the raised Christ. That He was delivered for our offences is pain: that He was raised again for our justification is pure spiritual delight.

02.11. III. Gospel-Righteousness Provides for the Believer's Eternal Security (ch. 5).

III. Gospel-Righteousness Provides for the Believer's Eternal Security (Rom 5:1-21).

I. Therefore being justified by faith (Rom 5:1-11). The sevenfold result of justification is shown in this passage. By reason of the gospel righteousness bestowed in response to faith, the believer has

(1) Peace with God (Rom 5:1). Christ Himself is our peace (Eph 2:14). The American Revisers have changed the we have to let us have. In favor of the former are the American portion of the Revision Committee, also H. A. W. Meyer, Godet and others. Meyer says the imperative is utterly unsuitable to the sense. On this Dr. Stiffler says, The question turns on the length of a single vowel, and the manuscripts are not trustworthy on this point; they frequently confound the long and short o. The logic must decide. 'Peace' does not mean primarily tranquility of mind, but that state of things ensuing from a cessation of hostilities, freedom from strife (Rom 3:17; Acts 12:20). This peaceful state came 'through our Lord Jesus Christ,' Who averted the wrath of God. It is possible by not noting this meaning of the word 'peace' that the mode of the verb was changed. For justification gives peace in this sense even when there may be no settled tranquility of the heart (compare Php 4:7-9).

(2) Access by faith into this grace wherein we stand (Rom 5:2). Access means a way in. Man, apart from Christ, is shut out from God's presence and has no way of approach unto Him. But gospel-righteousness gives him an open door, even Him who said, I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture (John 10:9). By Him we have access by faith. A standing in grace is now conferred upon the believer. The gospel has been preached unto him, which also he has received, and wherein he stands (1Co 15:1). His standing before God is the standing of Christ Himself. He is accepted in the Beloved (Eph 1:6). It is all of grace, and having become a son, the believer is exhorted to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus (2Ti 2:1). All this is his through the Lord Jesus Christ, Who, knowing no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2Co 5:21). This is gospel-righteousness.

(3) And rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom 5:2). What was said above, says Dr. Stiffler, on the reading 'let us have' is equally true here on the wrong reading 'let us rejoice,' The King James Version is correct. Perhaps the exhortation is necessary, in order to call our attention to what is really ours as the result of justification. The unregenerate sinner has no joy in the prospective glory of God; but to the believer it is given to rejoice in hope of that glory. Christ having made peace for him through the blood of His cross (Col 1:20), thus opened for him a way in to God's presence and fellowship, and establishing his standing before God, the believer looks forward with rejoicing to the time when the whole earth shall be full of God's glory.

(4) And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also (Rom 5:3). For we glory read we rejoice, as in Rom 5:2. Not only do we rejoice in the coming glory, but also the sufferings attending us on the way. The reason for this is given. The Christian may exult even in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience (i. e., endurance); and patience (or endurance) worketh experience; and experience, hope (Rom 5:3-4). And as for this hope, it is a hope that maketh not ashamed, a hope that can never bring disappointment, a hope that is sure of fruition. The reason for this is shown in the next clause of the passage.

(5) Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts (Rom 5:5). The love of God here spoken of is not our love for God, nor God's love for us, but just God's own love as it pours forth from His great loving heart. Let it not be forgotten that this indwelling love is a proof that the believer's hope will never shame him. He may boldly confess his hope because he has God's love in his heart. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him(1Jn 3:14-19)

(6) The Holy Spirit is given unto us (Rom 5:5). He not only puts God's love into our hearts, but He Himself dwells in us (Rom 8:9). Love is the Spirit's fruit (Gal 5:22), borne in us by His own presence. We know that He liveth in us, because of the presence within us of God's love. If we love one another, that fact is the proof that God dwelleth in us, and (thus) His love is perfected in us (1Jn 4:12). It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Php 2:13). Nothing is more clearly taught in the New Testament than that the Holy Spirit is given to each believer as an indwelling presence (1Co 6:19; Rom 8:9).

(7) We also joy in God (Rom 5:11). This is the capstone of the magnificent temple of the believer's inheritance resulting from gospel-righteousness. He is brought to the place of joy in God. Not merely in the blessings of God, but in God Himself. His soul crieth out after God, the living God, and only God can satisfy him. This joy in God is through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have now received the reconciliation. Atonement is wrong here. The word used is the same as the one occurring twice in verse 10. The reconciliation we have received is the changed relation between God and us. The argument for the believer's security in Christ reaches its climax here, ending where it began. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God; that is to say, We joy in God, and this on account of the reconciliation which has been accomplished by the gospel. The steps leading up to this climax are in Rom 5:6-10, which contain a threefold antithesis arguing the proposition that the saved are eternally safe. It sets forth that this is true because (1) God, on account of His great love for His enemies, gave His Son to die for them; much more then, shall these enemies, now justified, be kept safe, through Christ, from the wrath to come (compare vs. 8, g with 1Th 1:9-10); it is true furthermore (2) because, having reconciled us to Himself when we were His enemies, He surely will preserve us who have become His friends (compare Rom 5:10 with Col 1:21-22); and it is true (3) because Christ, Who died to save us, now lives to keep us saved (compare Rom 5:10 with Heb 7:25; 1Pe 1:5).

We cannot doubt God's love toward us, for Christ died for us while we were without strength and ungodly (Rom 5:6). Someone might be found to die for a good man, but Christ died for sinners, and this is another proof of God's love for us (Rom 5:7-8). It follows, then, that being justified by

His blood, we shall be kept safe in Christ from the wrath to come (Rom 5:9). Since by Christ's death we who were enemies were reconciled to God, much more shall we, by Christ's life at God's right hand, be kept safe. Because He lives we shall live also (Rom 5:10). In a word the believer has been brought into a new state of reconciliation, and it is made evident that God will keep him in this state. Therefore he rejoices in God. To God I'm reconciled;

His pardoning voice I hear;

He owns me for His child;

I can no longer fear.

With confidence I now draw nigh,

And 'Father, Abba, Father,' cry.

2. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have now received the reconciliation (n, R. V.). It has not been sufficiently noted by expositors, said Dr. Stifler, that the word 'received' (Rom 5:11) is not active, but passive, equivalent to 'made recipients of.' The argument for the 'assurance of salvation secured for the present and the future' (H. A. W. Meyer) is conducted wholly from the divine side. If it is objected that, after all, faith is a necessary condition of salvation, and if it fails, all fails, why this very point is secured by the whole argument. If when we were hateful to God He changed toward us, will He—now that we have been made recipients in His grace of that saving change— will He now not insure the condition of its perpetuity? Will God care for everything concerning the believer, support him in trials, shield him in temptation, shed His love abroad in his heart, but leave him to himself in the vital point, his faith? The reconciled man's faith is the first and the chief object of the divine care. The single aim of the argument is the performance of justification by faith.

3. Wherefore (Rom 5:12-21). The all-inclusive aspect of Christ's redemptive work on the cross is set forth in this passage. Adam and Christ are brought into contrast to show the effect of Adam's sin on the one hand and Christ's atoning death on the other.

Rom 5:13-17 being parenthetical, Rom 5:12 and Rom 5:18 should be read together. The Wherefore introducing Rom 5:12 is literally On this account. This links the new paragraph beginning here with the one preceding it, and shows that the topic is unchanged. Rom 5:12 and Rom 5:18 may be read,

Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned; so then, as through one trespass it (the trespass) came to all men unto condemnation; so also through one righteous act it (the righteous act) came to all men unto justification of life (Improved Version). The argument here—and the argument is elaborated in the intervening parenthetical passage, as we shall see—is that when Adam sinned all mankind sinned in him. This is proved from the fact that physical death was the common lot of all men from Adam to Moses. Irresponsible persons, including infants and the insane, died as well as others; and as these could not have died as the result of any sins of their own, and as death is the result of sin, it is argued that their death was the outgrowth of their sin when they were yet in Adam's loins. A similar argument is found in Heb 7:9-10, where it is declared that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek in Abraham, for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.

Before he had begotten a single child, Adam fell into sin, and, as a result, his nature became sinful and corrupt and death-dealing. And his offspring, which of course includes the whole human family, has inherited from him the poison of his fallen nature and the seeds of death. It is on this account that man dies. It is not a man's own sinful acts in his own person that cause his death. He dies because he has inherited a dying nature, and he has inherited a dying nature because he sinned in his father Adam. This is unfolded in the parenthetical verses, Rom 5:13-17. Sin was in the world before the law was issued on Sinai, but, in the absence of law, sin is not charged against men. Nevertheless men died —"death reigned from Adam to Moses." Now, why did they die, if death is the penalty for our sinful acts? There was no law to transgress, and yet death reigned even over them that had not sinned after the similitude (or likeness) of Adam's transgression. Adam transgressed a law when he sinned: God had said that of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he must not eat, and that if he ate of it, he should die. When he ate, he transgressed this law and incurred its penalty, therefore he died; on the day that he ate of it he died spiritually, being cut off for the time being from the life of God; and in due time he died physically, and this because he had transgressed the law of God. His descendants lived and multiplied through the centuries from Adam to Moses; and, although they were not under law, they died. This shows that they died because they all had sinned against law in the act of Adam while they were yet in his loins, who is a figure of Him that was to come. This little word—"Him that was to come"— points to the antidote provided of God for the awful and deadly poison of sin, and the fact that the antidote is ready and abundant and efficacious delivers God from the suspicion of arbitrary and unjust dealing with men. In the first place, their sinful condition was not due to any divine fiat; it was rather the result of wilful disobedience on man's part. And in the second place, God has done what he needed not to do in providing the remedy. He has done it, not to discharge an obligation, but for the great love wherewith he loved us. The language in Rom 5:15-17 is very much involved, and the translators are in confusion about it. As given in the King James Version, But not as the offence, so also is the free gift and not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift, etc., it is awkward and hard to be understood. The revisers only change the word offence to trespass and do not help much. Mr. Darby suggests a way out of the difficulty by reading, But shall not the act of favour be as the offence? and shall not as by one that sinned be the gift? But even he gives the common reading in a foot-note, showing that he is uncertain about the matter.

Conybeare and Howson render it: But far greater is the gift than was the transgression; for if by the sin of one man (Adam), death passed upon the many, much more in the grace of the one man Jesus Christ has the freeness of God's bounty overflowed unto the many. Moreover the boon (of God) exceeds the fruit of Adam's sin; for the doom came, out of one offence, a sentence of condemnation; but the gift comes, out of many offences, a sentence of acquittal. For if the reign of death was established by the one man (Adam), through the sin of him alone; far more shall the reign of life be established, in those who receive the overflowing fulness of the free gift of righteousness, by the one man Jesus Christ.

Moffatt's Historical New Testament reads: But very different is the free gift from the trespass. For since the many died by the one man's trespass, much more did the grace of God and that free gift which is by the grace of the man Jesus Christ abound to the many. And the free gift is not occasioned as by one that sinned. For while the judgment passed from one into condemnation, the free gift passed from many trespasses into justification.

Dr. Weymouth translates: But God's free gift immeasurably outweighs the transgression (or, false step). For if through the transgression of the one individual the mass of mankind have died, infinitely greater is the generosity with which God's grace, and the gift given in His grace which found expression in the one man Jesus Christ, have been bestowed on the mass of mankind. And it is not with the gift as it was with the results of one individual's sin; for the judgment which one individual provoked resulted in condemnation, whereas the free gift after a multitude of transgressions results in acquittal. For if, through the transgression of the one individual, death made use of the one individual to seize the sovereignty, all the more shall those who receive God's overflowing grace and gift of righteousness reign as kings in life through the one individual, Jesus Christ. The parenthesis ends with Rom 5:17. The American Revision should be consulted in the study of the final verses of the chapter, for the Revisers have preserved to us the definite article used in the Greek throughout the passage. Thus we read: So then as through one .trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous. And the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly: that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. This passage clearly teaches that over against the fact that men are by nature children of wrath God has set the other fact that by His grace the Lord Jesus on the cross tasted death for every man. If in Adam's sin, the many were constituted sinners, it is also true that in Christ's death, the many were constituted righteous. The reason for the law is given in Rom 5:20. It entered, that the offence might abound. As Gal 3:19 puts it, It was added (to the Abrahamic covenant) because (literally, for the sake) of transgressions; and it was given only temporarily, till the Seed (i. e., Christ) should come, to Whom the promise was made. In other words, the law was given to magnify the sinfulness of sin, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful (Rom 7:13). But even for this condition, God's remedy was at hand. Where sin increased, grace has overflowed; in order that as sin has exercised kingly sway in inflicting death, so grace, too, may exercise kingly sway in bestowing a righteousness which results in the Life of the Ages through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 5:20-21, Weymouth).

We conclude our study by quoting a paraphrase of this passage from the pen of Professor George Barker Stevens: In view of the truths which have been established, we may compare Christ, His work, and its result, salvation, with Adam, his fatal transgression, and its consequence, physical death, which became the portion of all because his sin involved as its result the sinning of all his descendants. I affirm this relation between sin and death on the ground that even before the law came in to condemn sin and to stamp it as transgression, all were falling a prey to death; even those who lived during this period and had, unlike Adam, no explicit, positive command which they could break, continued to die. (But, before carrying out the comparison between Adam and his work, and Christ and His work, note certain differences. The grace of God in Christ is more than a match for the sin which began with Adam and spread itself over all mankind. Man's condemnation issued from one trespass, but God's restoring grace has more power than many trespasses even, since it saves man from the power of many. We may be sure of this because it is more easily conceivable and more certain that those who receive God's gift in Christ will triumph over sin than that all should have become involved in death in consequence of Adam's trespass). So then— as

we began to say—as by Adam’s sin all became involved in death, by Christ’s work of righteous obedience is acceptance with God opened to all, for the two cases are parallel. Christ is the second Adam, come to restore to God’s favor those who as descendants of the first Adam, are lost to it. Now the Old Testament system, whose saving function I deny, had just the purpose to bring out this indwelling sin into its greatest strength, so that the case of man was rendered even more hopeless than before; but the grace of God in Christ is able to overcome even this power of sin when thus intensified by the law and to bring man back to divine favour and assure him of eternal bliss.

02.12. IV. Gospel-Righteousness Does Not Produce a Sinful Life (ch. 6).

IV. Gospel-Righteousness Does Not Produce a Sinful Life (Rom 6:1-23).

Rom 6:1-23 brings up and answers a question which naturally grows out of the fifth. In Rom 5:1-21, the eternal security of the believer is dealt with, and it is there shown that a saved man is safe. The argument of the chapter is summed up in the statement with which it closes: Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. The question now very naturally presents itself: will not this teaching as to gospel-righteousness encourage and promote a life of sin? If a man is assured that since he is born again he is beyond all possibility of condemnation and cannot fail of final salvation, will this not result in careless living? The answer is that in his new birth the believer has come into possession of a new nature, which is created in righteousness and true holiness, and that therefore he has new desires; and not only new desires, but new power to live according to those desires. The matter is beautifully worked out in the chapter before us.

I. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? (Rom 6:1). Grace abounding is a thing greatly to be desired. If it is produced by abounding sin, must we not then conclude that we are to persist in sin, in order that it may result in more and more grace? The answer to the question raised in Rom 6:1-14.

(1) "God forbid! (Rom 6:2). This is the language of every Christian heart. The name of God does not really occur in the Greek text here, which would be more literally rendered, Far be it! But, as Dean Alford suggests, after following the King James Version,

God forbid is the only adequate rendering of the expression in the original, Let it not be: for it implies a reference to an averting Power; and the occasion is solemn enough to justify, in our language, the mention of that Power. The phrase is used of some inference in itself abhorrent from reverence or piety, or precluded by some acknowledged fact inconsistent therewith. The latter is here the ground of rejection. An acknowledged fact in the Christian life follows, which precludes our persisting in our sin.

(2) We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? (Rom 6:2, R. V.). This is the force of this verse, literally translated. It is not that we are dead, for we are not dead. We died, but we have risen from the dead. Both of these great and wonderful facts—our death and our resurrection—are dealt with in this paragraph.

(3) Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? (Rom 6:3, R. V.). To understand this reference, we must go to 1Co 12:12-13, where we learn that all who are born again—and when they are born again—are made members of the body of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit: For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body. The same

subject is discussed also in

Gal 3:26-28 : For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus (R. V.). Now, here, in Rom 6:3, we are taught not only that we have been baptized into Christ, but that through this baptism into Him we have been baptized into His death. The death referred to is of Christ's death on the cross of Calvary. Our baptism into His death took place when we, having believed, were born again and joined to Him by the Holy Spirit. We were then made members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (Eph 5:30), and from that time we have been reckoned as partakers in whatever the Lord Jesus Christ ever did for us. He died for us, and according to God's reckoning, we died in that death. He was also buried for us, and He rose again for us, and our baptism into Him includes all these things. We were baptized into His burial and into His resurrection. But the great fact which must first be grasped and apprehended is the fact of our death in Him. For we thus reckon, that if one died for all, then all died (2Co 5:14). Of course there is a sense in which all this was accomplished in the reckoning of God before we believed and even before we were born. In the sight of Him Who sees the end from the beginning, we were chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world, and in God's book all Christ's members were written, when as yet there was none of them (Psa 136:16); but viewed from our present human standpoint, we may say that this was actualized for us when we believed on Christ and were joined to Him, being baptized into Him by the Holy Spirit.

(4) Therefore (Rom 6:4). In this verse the symbol of water baptism is taken up, and its warrant pointed out. Because we have been joined to Christ by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, thus being baptized into His death, therefore we submit ourselves to the rite of water baptism, in which are symbolized the death and burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus in our room and stead, and our death and burial and resurrection in Him. And in water baptism the believer not only looks backward to what has been done for him in Christ, and to what, in God's reckoning, he himself is accounted to have done in Christ, but he also looks forward to a walk in newness of life. Baptism in water is indeed a form, but it is also more than a form. When rightly entered into and intelligently apprehended, it signifies the believer's faith, not only in what God hath wrought for him in the person of His divine Substitute, but also in what God will do for him, and in him, and through him in newness of life.

(5) For if we are become identified with Him in the likeness of His death, so also we shall be of His resurrection (Rom 6:5, Darby). This verse tells why there may be a new walk in pointing out the power of that walk. The reason is that, as we are one with Him in His death, so are we also in His resurrection, being endowed in the latter with the same life which He received in rising from the tomb. The reference is not to our future bodily resurrection. 'For if (or "as") a graft in a tree (John 15:1-27), we became (not planted, but) grown together (with him) in the likeness of his death (viz: our baptism), so shall we be also still grown together (with Him) in the likeness of His resurrection (viz: our emergence from the watery grave).' To state this idea of union Paul has not abandoned his figure of baptism. Grafting, to be sure, is not done in water, but the union in baptism is as vital as that between the graft and the tree. It must be noted that none can share in Christ's resurrection life except by first dying. We are buried in order to be raised (John 12:24). Now for the first time Paul has clearly asserted union with Christ. For the thought is, if we went into the baptism

in union, why should we not come out in union? The oneness in the immersion is proof of the oneness in the emersion” (Stifler).

(6) Our old man was crucified with Him (Rom 6:6, R. V.). This definite assertion is repeated in Gal 2:20, I have been crucified with Christ; and the reason for this crucifixion is given in the verse before us, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin. The emphasis here is on the so. Before our regeneration, we were in slavery—”sold under sin.” God’s way of delivering us from this slavery was to cause us to pay the penalty, and this we did in the person of our Substitute; and so we are no longer in bondage to sin.

(7) For he that hath died is released from sin (Rom 6:7, R. V. margin). The believer is here pictured as the criminal who has paid the penalty for his crime. He was guilty, he was sentenced to death, he was executed, and now there is nothing against him, he is freed from sin. If he apprehends this, he may sing from a full heart:

I do believe, I now believe,

That Jesus died for me;

And through His blood, His precious blood,

I am from sin set free.

(8) But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him (Rom 6:8-10, R. V.). The reason for this wonderful statement, based upon the full assurance of faith, is given in Rom 6:9-10. Christ Who died, has been raised from the dead, and dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him; and this being true for Him, it is also true for those who died in Him. For them, as well as for Him, the death that took place on Calvary accomplished the fullest vindication of the law, and answered all the demands of righteousness. It was once for all (see R. V. margin; compare Heb 7:27). As to the life unto which we are raised, it is not a life unto sin, for sin has no claim upon it. It is to be lived unto God (Rom 6:10). One died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him Who for their sakes died and rose again (2Co 5:14-15, R. V.).

(9) Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:11, R. V.). This is an exhortation to adopt for ourselves the reckoning of God. He reckons us to have died to sin: let us also reckon it. He reckons us to have been brought again from the dead and into a life which is to be unto Him. And there is more than reckoning here, for by His grace and power we have been born again, and are really and actually in possession of a new life, and this new life is unto God, because it is God’s own life. We have become partakers of the divine nature. We are God’s beloved children. Having heard the words of Jesus and believed Him that sent Him, we have eternal life and shall not come into judgment, but have passed out of death into life (John 5:24).

(10) Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey its desires (Rom 6:12, 1911 Bible). Dr. Weymouth translates here:

Let not sin therefore reign as king in your mortal bodies, causing you to be in subjection to their cravings; and no longer lend your faculties as unrighteous weapons for sin to use; on the contrary

surrender your very selves to God as living men who have risen from the dead, and surrender your several faculties to God, to be used as weapons to maintain the right (Rom 6:12-13).

(11) For sin shall not be lord over you, since you are subjects not of law but of grace (Rom 6:14, Weymouth). Here is a statement which confuses the legalist, for he would put it exactly the other way about. He would say, Sin shall have dominion over us unless we see ourselves to be under law and not under grace. He reasons that Christians are to be kept from sinning through the terror of the law; and thus he would make the law to be a ministration, not of condemnation and death, but of justification and life (compare 2Co 3:1-18). The statement of Rom 6:14 can be apprehended only by the believer who sees that in Christ there is an absolute end of the law (Rom 10:4). The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin—the thing that empowers sin to sting unto death—is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Co 15:56-57). This victory is brought about by the utter abolition of the law, which is done away in Christ (2Co 3:14). The gospel in its power and beauty can never be fully seen until this point is settled. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse The law is not of faith Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to Whom the promise was made But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster (Gal 3:10-25).

Free from the law, oh, happy condition,

Jesus hath bled, and there is remission;

Curs'd by the law and bruised by the fall,

Grace hath redeemed us once for all.

“Now we are free—there’s no condemnation,

Jesus provides a perfect salvation;

‘Come unto Me’ or, hear His sweet call,

Come, and He saves us once for all.

“‘Children of God,’ oh, glorious calling,

Surely His grace will keep us from falling;

Passing from death to life at His call,

Blessed salvation free for all!

2. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? (Rom 6:15, R. V.). The argument of Rom 6:1-14, is that the believer is not led into a sinful life by the consideration of his eternal security in Christ. Having received a new nature by regeneration, he is now actuated by new desires, and not only by desires, but by new power. It would be indeed pitiful if the new-born child of God, with his new desires toward God, should be left without power to accomplish these

desires. God has not left him thus. Having died to sin, he is alive unto God, and God is working in him both to will His good pleasure and to do it (Php 2:13). The concluding statement of the section is that sin has no dominion over the believer because he is freed from law, and is under grace. Sin cannot inflict its deadly sting, for the strength of sin, which is the law (1Co 15:56), is done away (2Co 3:11-14). In Rom 7:1-25 this freedom from law is taken up in detail. But a new question confronts us here, growing naturally out of this statement of the believer's freedom from law: What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? The believer's response to this question is identical with the response of Rom 6:2, God forbid, and the remainder of the chapter is occupied with a fuller answer to the question raised.

(1) Do you not know that you are the slaves of him whom you obey, to whom you present yourselves as obedient slaves, be it of sin for death or of obedience for uprightness? But, thank God, though you were slaves of sin you became cordially obedient to that type of teaching to which you were handed over. Freed from sin you became slaves to uprightness. (I am speaking from a human, standpoint, owing to the weakness of your flesh) (Rom 6:16-19, Moffatt's translation). The apostle is here addressing himself to the question raised in Rom 6:15. This question, says Dr. Stifler, was sure to arise, because human societies and governments know of no way to restrain sin but by law and its penalty. The state's ruler is 'the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil' (Rom 13:4) in breaking the law. The assertion 'ye are not under law' was made to turn the justified man's gaze from Moses to Christ, from law to grace. It is natural to suppose that God's method in the gospel would follow the method of human government, but the principle of fear is not strong enough to keep men in the path of duty. Union with Christ is God's method of giving man victory over sin. Says Mr. Grant:

"Everything here will be questioned, however, by the soul ignorant of itself and of God, and such questions, because of their importance, must have careful answer. Again, therefore, we have the objection of the mere moralist taken up to be indignantly set aside: 'What then? Are we to sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? Far be the thought.' Yet the heart of man is in fact capable of such abuse of divine goodness; yes, but what would such an argument mean? A soul set free willingly yielding itself to that from which God has delivered it? Is this deliverance when the heart is still deliberately seeking that from which it assumes to be delivered? Well, says the apostle, if I am addressing any in such a condition, let me remind them that here the whole nature of God is in question. Does not then the way of sin, deliberately pursued, end in death? Does the gospel change this relation of sin to death? Does it not manifest God, and in all His attributes? His holiness being more shown indeed in the agony of the cross, than even the uttermost punishment of the sinner could have shown it. Thus then, if one freely yields himself to obey a master, he cannot but be reckoned as belonging to the master he has chosen, whether on the one hand to sin with its terrible wages, or of obedience to God for righteousness. In all this there rules a fundamental necessity, which the gospel could not subvert and be still a gospel (Numerical Bible). In Rom 6:17 the apostle gives thanks concerning the Roman believers for their escape from the former bondage of sin. This escape had been by means of their obedience to that mold of teaching into which they had been delivered. The Revision is to be preferred here, as the King James Version reverses the figure. It does seem natural, as Stifler points out, to say a form of doctrine which was delivered you. But that is not what Paul says here. If it were, one shining point would be lost, that both they and God conjoined in the act of their salvation. They obeyed from the heart the

type of teaching—the gospel—into whose power His grace delivered them. The statement of Rom 6:7 is repeated in Rom 6:18, namely, that the believer is free from sin, and in the latter passage the reverse of the proposition is also set forth. In becoming free from sin the Christian has become the bondservant of righteousness, that is to say, he has, by the wondrous change wrought in him in regeneration, come into the place where righteousness becomes his master instead of sin. And this not through fear of law, but by the power of the indwelling Christ; not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (Heb 7:16).

(2) I speak after the manner of men (Rom 6:19-22). The chapter closes with a practical exhortation growing out of all this. The believer is pointed to the new life with its new possibilities. The paragraph is paraphrased thus by Dr. George Barker Stevens:

I am applying to these high spiritual truths terms derived from human relations so as to make the contrast between the characteristic of the old life and that of the new plain to the most undiscerning. And I apply this truth thus: just as you used to allow your bodily powers to be dominated by sin, so you should now, as Christians, make them the means of serving and promoting holiness of life. For (to repeat my distinction between the two kinds of life) in your old life you were freemen in respect of righteousness, and bondmen in respect of sin; the opposite is now true; you are now free from sin and bound to righteousness. But looking away from the principle to the consequences of the old sinful life, what reward did it bring? Only a fruitage of which you are ashamed, for all its results are in the line of that final issue, moral death. But the opposite of all this is your case now. Being freemen in relation to sin and bondmen in relation to God, you have holiness and everlasting life as your portion.

(3) For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 6:23, R. V.). Our eternal life is not only through Jesus Christ our Lord, as in the King James Version. It is in Christ Himself and is never separated from Him. It is in us of course, but that is because we are in Him. This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life (1Jn 5:11-12). This cannot be too strongly insisted upon. There is no such thing as eternal life apart from Christ. The gospel does not offer to man a life detached from Christ. In the gospel God has provided a place in Christ and a share in His life to all who come unto Him. The gospel finds man dead as the wages of sin; it brings him out of death into life (John 5:24); and from the moment of his regeneration the believer has Christ in him as his life (Col 3:4).

Buried with Christ, and raised with Him too;

What is there left for me to do?

Simply to cease from struggling and strife,

Simply to 'walk in newness of life.'

“‘Risen with Christ,’ my glorious Head,

Holiness now the pathway I tread;

Beautiful thought, while walking therein:

'He that is dead is freed from sin.'
"Living with Christ, Who 'dieth no more,'
Following Christ, Who goeth before;
I am from bondage utterly freed,
Reckoning self as 'dead indeed.'
"Living for Christ, my members I yield,
Servants to God, for evermore sealed;
'Not under law,' I'm now 'under grace,'
Sin is dethroned, and Christ takes its place.
"Growing in Christ: no more shall be named
Things of which now I'm truly ashamed;
'Fruit unto holiness' will I bear,
Life evermore, the end I shall share.

02.13. V. The Law Cannot Produce a Holy Life (ch. 7).

V. The Law Cannot Produce a Holy Life (Rom 7:1-25).

We now come to Rom 7:1-25, in which it is set forth, that the law being powerless to justify, is equally unable to sanctify. In the first six chapters three wonderful statements concerning the law have been made, namely: (1) By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight (Rom 3:20); (2) The law entered, that the offence might abound (Rom 5:20); (3) Ye are not under the law (Rom 6:14). These three propositions, as has been pointed out by others, furnish a working analysis of Rom 7:1-25, as follows: (1) The believer's freedom from law (Rom 7:1-6); (2) Though the law makes sin to abound, the law nevertheless is not sinful (Rom 7:7-13) i (3) The law cannot deliver from the flesh (Rom 7:14-25). We will consider the chapter in the order thus indicated.

I. Ye also were made dead to the law (Rom 7:16). This statement of verse 4, as given by the Revision, is the core of the paragraph.

(1) The law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth (Rom 7:1). The marriage relation is used as the basis of an illustration showing how and why the Christian is freed from law. Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law). The word for brethren here is adelphoi and stands for the whole brotherhood in the Roman Church, and is not, as some writers have insisted, confined to the Jewish believers in that brotherhood. It is true that only the Jews had been actually under the law of Sinai, for the Gentiles have not the law (Rom 2:14), yet the apostle here, by the Spirit, is proceeding to show the absence of the legalistic principle in God's dealings with His people in the gospel. They are not under law, but under grace, and these are two contrasting principles which cannot be yoked together. They pull in opposite directions. If a man is under law, he is not under grace; and if he is under grace, he is not under law. This proposition ought to be self-evident. The apostle writes further, I speak to them that know law. He was addressing intelligent people who knew the working of law as a principle. They lived in Rome, where the very meaning of law, and of force through law, had been taught to the world. There is no definite article before the word law in the parenthetical passage of verse one. He is speaking for the moment of law as a principle, rather than the law of Sinai; howbeit, he has in view all the time throughout the illustration the freedom of the believer from the thunderings of Sinai.

(2) The woman which hath an husband. Here the case is brought before us of a married woman bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. This is simple enough. The marriage relation continues of force between the two parties entering into it so long as they both shall live.

(3) But if her husband be dead, she is free. This also is perfectly clear. A married woman, if she marries another man than her husband, is guilty of bigamy: she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

(4) Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ (Rom 7:4). Much confusion is found just here among the commentators. It is objected that Paul is mixed in his metaphor, since, in the illustration, it is the husband that dies, whereas, in the application, it is the wife who is become dead. But the matter is clear enough when it is kept in mind precisely what the apostle writes. He does not say merely ye are dead, but ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ (R. V.). A wife, by her husband's death, has ceased to be a wife. Before the event of his death, there was a wife; after that event, the wife is no more. The woman remains, but she has become dead to the law which bound her to her husband, and her death to that law has been brought about by the death of her husband. It is not the metaphor of the apostle that is mixed, but the commentators.

(5) That ye should be married to another. Let the reader be very careful at this point. It at first seems strange that we should read here in the same sentence of the body of Christ, and another, even to Him Who is raised from the dead. For was it not the same Christ that died Who was raised from the dead? How, then, can He be called another? 2Co 5:1-21 will help us here. In 2Co 5:14-16 it is written: One died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him Who for their sakes died and rose again. Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more. By this statement we learn: (1) That, in the reckoning of God, when Christ died on the cross, the believer died with Him. So, here in Romans, the wife, as a wife, died in her husband's death; (2) that, when Jesus arose from the dead, we rose from the dead with Him, that henceforth we should live not unto ourselves, but unto Him in Whom we died and rose again; and (3) that the Christ we now know is not the Christ according to the flesh. Of course there is a sense in which He is the same Jesus as before the cross, but, in the gospel sense, He is far different. Our trust centers not in the Christ of Galilee, but in the Christ of glory; not in the Man Jesus, Who walked about doing good in the land of Palestine nineteen centuries ago, but in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who sits today at the right hand of the Majesty on high making intercession for us—"managing our concerns for us" (Heb 7:25, Wakefield's translation). This point needs to be emphasized in this day. The subtle appeal found everywhere that we should go back to Christ, rejecting the teaching of the epistles and looking for our instruction to His kingdom teachings found in the synoptic gospels, is nothing short of an invention of the adversary. The epistles of the New Testament are the teachings of Christ as truly as His own words quoted in the gospels. And they are the teachings of the risen Christ, the glorified Christ, the present Christ, the Man Christ Jesus, the Man with Whom we have to do, the Man to Whom we are now married.

(6) That we should bring forth fruit unto God (Rom 7:4). In our natural condition, being children of wrath, even as others (Eph 2:3), and joined, or married, to sin, our fruit, the issue of that marriage, the offspring of that relation, was such as to make us ashamed. But now, being made free from sin and having become servants to God, we have our fruit unto holiness (Rom 6:22). The purpose of the marriage relation is that children may be born and reared; they are the logical issue of this relationship. Just so, as in our former marriage to sin, the issue was uncleanness and iniquity (Rom 6:19), it is the purpose of our new marriage, being joined in this holy relation to the risen Christ, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. This is all brought out in Rom 7:5-6 : For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions (Gr. passions of sins), which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from the law,

having died to that wherein we were held (the King James rendering, that being dead wherein we were held, is incorrect).

(7) So that we serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter (Rom 7:6, R. V.). The Revised Version is to be preferred here above the King James. It is not merely that we have been delivered from the bondage of sin in order that we should serve in newness of spirit, but so that we serve in newness of the Spirit. The contrast between Spirit and letter here is the same as in 2Co 3:1-18, where the Spirit means the Holy Spirit, Who is living and working in and through the Christian-; while the letter means the law of Sinai, the old covenant—a covenant of letters written and engraven in stones. To this Dean Alford agrees, who says, that the Spirit here refers to the Holy Spirit of God, Who originates and penetrates the Christian life; and that the letter signifies the law, being only a collection of precepts and prohibitions, while the gospel is a service of freedom, ruled by the Spirit, Whose presence is liberty. The qualitatively expressed pneumatos, meaning in concrete application the Holy Spirit as the efficient principle of the Christian life, and the qualitative grammatos, characterizing the law according to its nature and character as non-living and drawn up in letters, are the specifically heterogeneous factors on which the two contrasted states are dependent (H. A. W. Meyer). The newness is the new spiritual state, or union with Christ; the oldness of the letter was their former state under the law. The letter means the law. This new service produced holy fruit; the service under law brought forth fruit for death (Stifler). Being married to a new husband we must change our way; still we must serve, but it is a service that is perfect freedom, whereas the service of sin was a perfect drudgery There must be a renovation of our spirit wrought by the Spirit of God, and in that we must serve.

We are under the dispensation of the Spirit, and therefore must be spiritual, and serve in the Spirit It becomes us to worship in the veil and no longer in the outer court (Matthew Henry).

Awaked by Sinai's awful sound,
My soul in bonds of guilt I found,
And knew not where to go;
Eternal truth did loud proclaim,
'The sinner must be born again, Or sink in endless woe.'
"Amazed I stood, but could not tell
Which way to shun the gates of hell,
For death and hell drew near;
I strove, indeed, but strove in vain:
'The sinner must be born again'
Still sounded in my ear.
"When to the law I trembling fled,
It poured its curses on my head;

I no relief could find.

This fearful truth increased my pain:

'The sinner must be born again'

O'erwhelmed my tortured mind.

"I heard the law its thunders roll,

While guilt lay heavy on my soul—

A vast oppressive load;

All creature-aid I saw was vain;

'The sinner must be born again,' Or drink the wrath of God.

"But while I thus in anguish lay,

The bleeding Saviour passed that way,

My bondage to remove. The sinner, once by justice slain,

Now by his grace is born again,

And sings redeeming love.

2. The law is holy (Rom 7:7-13). In this second paragraph of the chapter it is shown that, though the law makes sin to abound, the law nevertheless is not sinful.

(1) What shall we say then? Is the law sin (or sinful)? (Rom 7:7). This question naturally arises out of what has gone before.

(2) God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law (Rom 7:7). That the law is not sinful is proved by the very fact that by the law is the knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20). A sinful law would be incapable of revealing the sinfulness of sin. It is because the law is perfect as a standard of righteousness that it so clearly manifests the presence of evil, and by this heavenly standard, every man is convicted of sin. There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Rom 3:22-23).

(3) For I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet (Rom 7:7). The Revision is right here in adhering to uniformity in the translation of this Greek word, rendered, in the King James Version, lust, covet, concupiscence, etc.

(4) But sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting (Rom 7:8). Without the commandment, sin, though present in the heart of Saul of Tarsus, was unsuspected even by himself. His conscience was not aroused, he was not troubled—"for without the law sin was dead."

(5) For I was alive without the law once. Conybeare and Howson render here: I felt that I was alive before, when I knew no law. And MacKnight paraphrases as follows: Accordingly I was in my own imagination entitled to life while without the knowledge of law formerly. There is a similar use of the

word life in 1Th 3:8, For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. The apostle's meaning very evidently is, that he feels himself to live on account of the gratifying steadfastness and growth in grace of his beloved fellow-saints whom he had led into the knowledge of Christ.

(6) But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died (Rom 7:9). What does Paul mean here by the expression, When the commandment came? He was brought up on the commandments, doubtless, at his mother's knee, and the commandments were studied assiduously at the feet of Gamaliel; but there came a day when his eyes were opened, and he was given to see what the commandments really meant, and that, far from being a means of grace and salvation, they were the means of death and condemnation. Sin was there all the time, but, until the day that the commandment came with all its crushing force upon his consciousness, sin gave him no disquietude. The strength of sin to sting him to death was the law, and when the law was joined to sin in his consciousness, sin, which until then had been dead, came to life, and he died (compare 1Co 15:56-57; 2Co 3:7-9).

(7) And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death (Rom 7:10). Ordained is a supplied word, and is really not in place, for, as a matter of fact, the commandment was not ordained to life. The law is not a ministration of life, but of death (2Co 3:7). And yet Paul could write of the commandment as being unto life because Moses has said, He that doeth these things shall live by them (Lev 18:5; Rom 10:5). Saul of Tarsus, like every other sinner, found himself without power to do these things, and so the law, which was unto life, he found to be unto death. As Conybeare and Howson render it: I felt that I was alive before, when I knew no law; but when the commandment came, sin rose to life, and I sank into death; and the very commandment whose end is life, was found to me the cause of death; for my sin, when it had gained a vantage ground by the commandment, deceived me to my fall, and slew me by the sentence of the law.

(8) Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good (Rom 7:12). This conclusion grows out of the statement of the nth verse. The holiness and justice and goodness of the law is proved by the fact that it slays every sinner with whom it comes in contact. This it must do, else it would be neither holy nor just nor good. The law of Sinai has been described by someone as the concept of the mind of God as to what a man ought to be, and it has its penalty: The soul that sinneth it shall die. So then, if a soul under law sins and dies not, that is indubitable proof that the law is unholy and unjust and evil. A holy law must of necessity impose and enforce its penalty. This explains the connection between Rom 7:11 and Rom 7:12 : For sin seized the advantage, and by means of the commandment it completely deceived me, and also put me to death. So that the law itself is holy, and the commandment is holy, just and good (Weymouth).

(9) Was then that which is good made death unto me? (Rom 7:13). Rather, Did then that which is good become death unto me? (R. V.). This question logically grows out of what has gone before it. Is it then possible that the law, being holy and just and good, could become death to a man?

(10) God forbid (Rom 7:13). In the last analysis, it was not the law that put Saul to death, but sin, by means of the law. What an awful thing sin is, that by the holy and just law of God it can bring death to God's creatures! Surely, by this means, sin does in reality appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. Far be that from me. But I say that sin wrought this; that so it might be made manifest as sin, in working death to me through the knowledge of good; that sin might become beyond measure sinful, by the

commandment (Conybeare and Howson). The misuse and perversion of good is one of the tests whereby the energy of evil is detected, so that sin by its perversion of the good commandment into a cause of death was shown in its real character as sin (Dean Alford). Says Dr. Stifler: This assertion about the goodness or beneficence of the law starts an acute objection: 'Was then that which is good made death unto me?' Can wholesome bread prove poison to the hungry man who eats it? Does fresh, pure water start a fever instead of allaying thirst? How can that which is admitted to be 'good,' the law, prove to be 'death to me?' This subtle objection is not only answered, but turned into an argument. It was not the law that brought death, 'but sin.' And sin wrought death, 'that (in the purpose of God in giving the law) it might appear sin (inasmuch as it, sin, worked death in me by that which is good).' How desperate the disease that only grows worse under the appropriate remedy to heal it! But God had an additional purpose in giving the holy law to sinful man, viz: 'that (in order that) sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.' The coward is not known until he hears the command to march against the foe.

3. But I see another law, bringing me into captivity (Rom 7:14-25). This wail of Rom 7:23 is the burden of the closing paragraph of the chapter, which is a demonstration of the proposition that the law of Judaism could not deliver from the flesh.

(1) The law is spiritual: but I am carnal (Rom 7:14). The apostle has been thinking of himself, up to this point in the chapter, as in the days before he was born again, but the struggle he now proceeds to describe is not that of an unregenerate man trying to save himself, but rather of a regenerate man trying to be good. It is the conflict between the old nature and the new, subsisting together in the believer. The new nature cannot sin, while the old nature can do nothing else. The newly regenerate man, before he learns the better way, is apt to seek victory over the old nature by means of his own efforts. The result of such efforts is always failure, and it takes much bitter experience to teach the believer how helpless he is. It is natural for the human heart to put itself under law, and to seek to perfect itself by means of law-works. By this closing paragraph of chapter 7, we are to learn that, as the law was unable to justify the sinner and make him a child of God, so it is equally unable to sanctify the saint as to his walk. The way of victory is indicated in the 8th chapter.

(2) Sold under sin (Rom 7:14). This expression describes the condition of the carnal man. He is a slave sold into the captivity of sin. And let us remember that the carnal man here is not an unsaved man. He has been saved from the penalty of sin, but he has not yet learned the way of deliverance from the power of sin. He still looks to the law for liberty, whereas the law can bring him only bondage. He is still a sinful man, though saved, and being a sinful man and putting himself under law, there can be but one result, he at once finds himself in a condition of slavery. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them (Gal 3:10). It is not enough to approximate the law, and to do the best you can to keep it. Whoever fails, even in one point, is guilty of all (Jas 2:10). It follows, then, that as none of us has reached perfection and as the law tolerates no imperfection, therefore everyone who puts himself under the law thereby brings upon himself the curse of the law. It is often said that, while we are free from the law as a means of life, we are under it as a rule of life; but there is no Scripture for this; indeed, there is much of Scripture against it. The Christian is promised that sin shall not have dominion over him just because he is not under law, but under grace (Rom 6:14). The very moment he is put under the law sin does

have dominion over him, and he soon discovers that the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, 'for, while the law is holy, he is carnal, sold under sin.

(3) For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I (Rom 7:15). The two I's here, contending with each other, represent the old nature in Paul and the new. For convenience sake, we might say the struggle here is between Saul of Tarsus and Paul the apostle, abiding together in one body. The change in the tense from past to present in this section, beginning with Rom 7:14, will be observed. Hitherto, says Dean Alford, the passage has been historical: now the apostle passes to the present time, keeping hold yet of the carnal self of former days, whose remnants are still energizing in the renewed man.

(4) I consent unto the law that it is good. This is shown, as the apostle points out, by the fact that he does not himself approve of the evil things he is doing.

(5) It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me (Rom 7:17). His failure to lead a good life cannot be ascribed to his wrong attitude toward the law; that failure must be ascribed to indwelling sin. The I is just himself, body, soul, and spirit, that have been seized upon by the alien master which he calls sin (Stifler).

(6) For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing (Rom 7:18). This is shown from the fact, that while he is able to will that which is good, he is powerless to perform it. The argument grows pathetic, and he again reaches the same conclusion in Rom 7:20 as in Rom 7:17 : It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

(7) I find then a law (Rom 7:21). By this he refers to a principle he has discovered in his life, namely, that when he would do good, evil is present with him. He delights in the law of God after the inward man, and this is a proof that he is a converted man and is relating his experience as such. But he sees another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to sin which is in his members (Rom 7:22-23). Four laws are in view in this passage: the law of God; (2) the law of Paul's mind, consenting to the law of God; (3) the law of sin, or the tendency to evil in his own members; and (4) the law, or principle, that this law of sin is stronger in him than the law of his mind. It was a great discovery when he learned that he was utterly helpless in this unequal struggle, and cried out for deliverance.

(8) O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (Rom 7:24). He is evidently crying out against his own physical body which is the instrument whereby he is led captive to the law of sin and death. He called it a body of sin in chapter 6:6, and now he calls it a body of death, for it is the seat of sin and death, and he had not yet discovered the way of deliverance from the power of sin and death.

(9) I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 7:25). This is the ready answer to the despairing question just preceding it, and is a proof that, when Paul is writing the words, he is looking back to a past experience through which he has come. Dean Alford says: This exclamation and thanksgiving more than all convince me, that St. Paul speaks of none other than himself, and carries out as far as possible the misery of the conflict with sin in his members, on purpose to bring in the glorious deliverance which follows.—Compare 1Co 15:56-57, where a very similar thanksgiving occurs.

(10) So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin (Rom 7:25). This is a recapitulation of the whole paragraph. The deliverance out of the hopeless warfare indicated in that paragraph is brought into full light in Rom 8:1-39. The contrast between the victory life of Rom 8:1-39 and the life of defeat of Rom 7:1-25 is beautifully set forth by Leighton in a sermon on Rom 8:35 : Is this he that so lately cried out, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me? that now triumphs? O happy man! who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Yes, it is the same. Pained then with the thoughts of that miserable conjunction with the body of death, and so crying out who shall deliver, now he hath found a Deliverer to do that for him, to whom he is forever united. So vast a difference is there between a Christian taken in himself and in Christ!

02.14. VI. Gospel-Righteousness Provides for a Holy Life by Means of the Holy Spirit ...

VI. Gospel-Righteousness Provides for a Holy Life by Means of the Holy Spirit Indwelling the Believer (Rom 8:1-39).

Spener, an old German commentator, once said that, If Holy Scripture was a ring, and the epistle to the Romans its precious stone, Rom 8:1-39 would be the sparkling point of the jewel. Everybody agrees that this chapter is one of the loftiest mountain peaks in the whole realm of revealed truth. Here we find the climax of the argument begun at Rom 3:21 on the great subject of gospel-righteousness. This is the second main division of the epistle. That gospel righteousness is by faith was shown in Rom 3:21-31. That it is not contrary to the Old Testament Scriptures we saw in Rom 4:1-25. Rom 5:1-21 'teaches that by gospel-righteousness the believer is kept in eternal security. Rom 6:1-23 shows that a sinful life is not produced nor encouraged by the gospel, but that, on the contrary, the believer, made eternally safe, has partaken of the divine nature and therefore of the divine hatred for sin. In Rom 7:11-25, the believer's sanctification by means of law is shown to be impossible, and now in Rom 8:1-39, we are to learn that through the indwelling Spirit of God the believer is led into a godly life. The chapter may be analyzed as follows: (1) The indwelling Holy Spirit as the Spirit of power (Rom 8:1-11); The indwelling Holy Spirit as the Spirit of adoption (Rom 8:12-17); (3) The indwelling Holy Spirit as the Spirit of hope (Rom 8:18-27); (4) The Christian's assurance (Rom 8:28-39).

I. The law of the Spirit of life hath made me free (Rom 8:1-11). It is a wonderful thing for the believer to discover the indwelling Holy Spirit as the Spirit of life and power. But first he must know his safety from wrath or condemnation:

(1) There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:1). The first verse stops with this wonderful statement, the remainder of the verse, as found in the King James Version, being, as all commentators agree, an unwarranted interpolation. The proposition squarely set forth, then, is that, the born again one is absolutely and forever free from condemnation. This is what the gospel has done for him. It has bestowed upon him a righteousness that nothing can mar nor soil in the slightest degree; even the righteousness of God, that is God's own righteousness. This righteousness is imputed unto him at the beginning, and it does not vary afterward with his varying states and conditions, frames and feelings. It is his standing in Christ. This imputation is followed by the actual impartation of God's righteousness, but the process of impartation is gradual and continues to the end of earthly life, while imputation is not a process, but one definite act of God. Dr. Scofield's definition of imputation is: (1) Imputation is the act of God whereby He accounts righteousness to the believer in Jesus Christ. (Rom 8:2)

Because of a believer's faith in Jesus, God will not impute sin against him. And the same writer defines justification as the act of God whereby He declares righteous one who believes on Jesus Christ. The connection by the word 'therefore,' says Dr. Stiffler, is with the first clause of the

preceding verse, and through it with that to which the clause refers. 'Now'—as the argument at present stands. The 'no' is emphatic —no condemnation from the law, and none on account of inherent sinfulness; none from any source nor for any cause. Those who make the 'now' temporal miss the shining point that 'no condemnation' means none possible, none forever. This happy condition belongs only to those in Christ Jesus. The rest of the verse is not genuine and is omitted by all modern editors of the text.

(2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death (Rom 8:2, R. V.). The preposition of is repeated in the original and by the Revisers. The statement is, that by the higher and more powerful law of the Spirit of life, the believer is made free from two other laws, namely, the law of sin and the law of death. The law of sin is defined in the preceding chapter (Rom 7:21-23). The believer, in the 7th chapter, seeking to live a righteous life by obedience to law, found another law in his members, that is, within himself, warring against the law of his mind and bringing him into captivity under the law of sin in his members. In the 8th chapter, deliverance has come, for he has discovered that the Holy Spirit is indwelling him, and that by the indwelling Spirit he may have victory over the law of sin which has heretofore dragged him down. And not only so, but he is delivered also from the law of death. And the law of death is also defined in Rom 7:1-25, Rom 7:7-11. The believer had not known sin except through the law, that is, the law of Sinai. He had not known coveting until he heard the law saying, Thou shalt not covet. And sin, finding occasion, wrought in him, through the commandment, all manner of coveting. Apart from the law sin was dead, and apart from the law Saul of Tarsus had once considered himself alive, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died; and the commandment, which was unto life, he found to be unto death, for sin, finding occasion through the commandment, beguiled him and through it slew him. So the Law of Moses, though in itself spiritual, holy, righteous and good, became unto him a law of death. It was indeed unto Israel a yoke which they were not able to bear (Acts 15:10). In our present chapter, the believer is seen as yielding himself to the indwelling Spirit of God, Who, by divine power, frees him from this law of death.

(3) For what the law could not do (Rom 8:3-4). The law was unable to produce in man the obedience it demanded. It was weak through the flesh, for how could sinful flesh obey a holy law?

Therefore, what the law could not do, God did; and this He did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin offering. Men had all gone astray; they had turned each one to his own way, and the Lord caused to meet upon His devoted Son the iniquity of them all (Isa 53:6). And then came the condemnation. Sin in the flesh, all centering in the Lamb of God on the tree, was put to death, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in the believer. The believer is defined in the final clause of the fourth verse as one who walks not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. To walk according to the flesh, in the meaning of this passage, is to reject the gift of gospel-righteousness in Christ, and to seek to establish one's own righteousness by law-works. This is the natural thing and is what the flesh is ever prone to try. On the other hand, to walk according to the Spirit is to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as He is revealed by the Spirit.

(4) For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. This section (Rom 8:5-8) draws a contrast between the unregenerate and the regenerate, and they are defined as those who are after the flesh and those who are after the

Spirit. That this is the correct understanding is shown from the statement of the 9th verse, in which it is declared that the Christian is not in the flesh in the sense employed here. Rotherham's translation of the passage reads: For they who according to flesh have their being the things of the flesh do prefer, but they according to the Spirit the things of the Spirit; for what is preferred by the flesh is death, whereas what is preferred by the Spirit is life and peace;—inasmuch as what is preferred by the flesh is hostile towards God, for unto the law of God it doth not submit itself, neither in fact can it,—they moreover who in flesh have their being cannot please God. Dr. Moffatt renders the passage thus: For those who follow the flesh have their interests in the flesh, and those who follow the Spirit have their interests in the Spirit. The interests of the flesh mean death, the interests of the Spirit mean life and peace. For the interests of the flesh are hostile to God; they do not yield to the law of God (indeed they cannot). Those who are in the flesh cannot satisfy God. The emphatic statement at the close of the passage is of great importance. The words so then, introducing the 8th verse, in the King James Version, are incorrect. It ought to read simply: And they that are in the flesh cannot please God. The assertion is not a deduction from the preceding verses, but a solemn declaration of God's attitude toward those out of Christ. They are without faith, and without faith it is impossible to please Him (Heb 11:6). God deals with men through Christ, and only through Christ. Whosoever will may come, but all who come must approach unto God through Him Who said, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me (John 14:6). Coming through Him, all may come and welcome, but those who would climb up some other way are thieves and robbers (John 10:1), and they must always fail of access to the Father. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb 10:28-31).

Let it be understood, then, before we go forward in this chapter, that the flesh, the natural man, is under God's condemnation, the wrath of God abideth upon him. Apart from Christ is no salvation and no means of approach to God. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. There may be those in the flesh, as there are, and many of them, who can please men, and who are pleased with themselves, but God is not pleased with them; no matter what they do, and no matter how much their fellowmen may commend them for what they do, God is not pleased. How could He be pleased with men who tread under foot His Son and repudiate the blood of the everlasting covenant?

(5) But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you (Rom 8:9). In this section (Rom 8:9-11), four phrases are employed, all meaning the same thing and having reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer. They are: the Spirit of God (Rom 8:9), the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9), Christ (Rom 8:10), and the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead (Rom 8:11). The doctrine of the indwelling Spirit is found in 1Co 6:19-20 : Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit Which is in you, Which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body (R. V.). The Holy Spirit does not enter the believer at some time subsequent to his regeneration, but the moment he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and is born again by the power of the Holy

Spirit, he is indwelt by that Holy Spirit, who thereafter abides in him continually. And in the paragraph before us in our present study, we are assured that, if the Spirit of God is dwelling in us, we are not in the flesh, according to God's reckoning; and if, on the other hand, the Spirit of Christ, that is, the Holy Spirit, is not indwelling us, we are none of His, that is, we are not Christians at all, we are not born again, we are not children of God. In the second place, if Christ be in us, that is, if we are children of God and have the Holy Spirit indwelling us, then, though the body is still counted a dead thing because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness. And, thirdly, the assurance is given us that even these mortal bodies, which have not yet entered into the fulness of the inheritance of sonship, will be revived by the indwelling Spirit.

These statements of Rom 8:10 and may require further examination, though the doctrine intimated in them will be developed as we go on with the chapter. The meaning of Rom 8:9 is that, in the case of everyone in whom Christ is dwelling, that is, of every Christian, the body, according to God's reckoning, is dead because of sin, and is yet to be redeemed from death (compare Rom 8:23); and meanwhile, the spirit, that is, the saint's own personal spirit, is life because of righteousness. The life of Christ is imparted to the believer's spirit on the ground of gospel righteousness, and it will never again be made subject to death. The body, on the other hand, is not yet redeemed from death. The redemption price has been paid even for the body, but the redemption itself has not yet reached the body, and will not until our Lord catches us up to Himself at the rapture of the church. For this present time the bodies of Christians are just as truly bodies of death as the bodies of unbelievers. Christians grow sick and die just like other people, and this will go on until the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, is fully accomplished at the first resurrection. But, in the meantime, while saints equally with sinners are subject to bodily death, they are not subject to spiritual death. As to their spirits, they have all entered into eternal life, and death hath no more dominion over them. And this is all because of righteousness, the righteousness wrought out for us by the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. He is the Lord, our Righteousness. The believer, having the Holy Spirit indwelling him, may find in the fact of that indwelling a pledge and guaranty of the coming redemption of His body, for if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (that is, make alive) your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you (11). The same argument is found in the words of the Lord Jesus in John 14:1-3 : Ye believe in God, believe also in me. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself. And the same argument is found again in 1Th 4:14 : If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

2. Ye have received the Spirit of adoption (Rom 8:12-17). This paragraph discusses our new relationship in the family of God:

(1) Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh (Rom 8:12). The two verses following (Rom 8:13-14) should be read as a parenthetical statement in connection with Rom 8:12 : (For if ye live according to the flesh ye are to die. But if by the Spirit ye mortify the practices of the body ye will live, for they who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God) (Murdock's translation). Which is to say that, in the sense of this passage, a Christian is one who lives according to the Holy Spirit, and that anyone who lives according to the flesh is not a Christian, he is not a son of God. Sons of God are those who are led by the Spirit of God, and none others are children of God. This is the argument throughout the chapter from the beginning

(compare Rom 8:5-8). The Christian incentive is set forth here. We are debtors, we have a debt and our debt is not to the flesh to live according to it. We are warned against the deeds of the body in view of the fact that the body is still a dead thing in God's sight— our body is a corpse (Bengel). The Christian's aim should always be to make the Holy Spirit the dominant power in his life.

(2) Ye have received the Spirit of adoption (Rom 8:15). Adoption, in the Scriptures, means literally, placing as a son. Under the old Roman law, when a son reached the age of maturity he was publicly inducted into partnership with his father, and recognized as his heir and successor, and this public function was designated by the word adoption, or son-placing. Under the Old Testament, Israel's relation was not that of full sonship, but, under the new covenant, the believer at his new birth is at once given the place of full-grown sonship. This is his position as the gift of God's grace, and when the Holy Spirit thereupon takes up His abode in the believer's body, He enters as the Spirit of adoption, giving the believer deliverance from bondage and fear, and causing him to cry, Abba, Father. The expression here is, Abba, the Pater, Abba being the Hebrew and Chaldean word for father, and Pater the Greek form of the same word. As Paul uses it here, the expression is a repetition of the words used by the Lord Jesus in Mark 14:36, and they are found again, in much the same connection as here, in Gal 4:6.

(3) The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God (Rom 8:16). This great fact of sonship is the thing for which justification through faith paved the way. Salvation does not, by any means, stop with justification. God's purpose in delivering us from sin was that He might make us His sons. This He could not righteously do until our sins were righteously disposed of, but the blood having been shed which cleanseth us from all sin, He has been enabled to exercise His divine power in our regeneration, and then to open wide His arms of love and receive us unto Himself as His dear children (Eph 5:1).

(4) And if children, then heirs (Rom 8:17). Think of it, God's heirs and Christ's co-heirs! Not joint-heirs in the sense of dividing with Him the inheritance, but rather, in the sense of entering together with Him into the whole inheritance.

(5) If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together (Rom 8:17). The if here is not conditional; it is rather to be read, since indeed we suffer with Him, for this is the common lot of Christians. It is another descriptive phrase to define what a Christian is. A Christian is one who suffers with Christ. For even hereunto were ye called (1Pe 2:21), and unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake (Php 1:29). The apostle does not here enter into discussion as to the degrees of suffering through which Christians may pass. It is doubtless true that some Christians know more of the ministry of suffering than others, but it is also true that to every child of God there is appointed a ministry of suffering which he cannot fully escape, even if he would. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2Ti 3:12). It is almost an axiom of the gospel, says Dr. Stifler, that the path to glory is the path of pain (Mark 10:38; Php 2:9). Therefore the intelligent believer does not hesitate to undergo sorrow in his service to Christ; he rather covets it in order that he may be glorified with Him; for the joint heirs are those who suffer that they may be glorified. Suffering is the seed that ripens in fruit of glory.

3. In hope were we saved (Rom 8:18-27). The Holy Spirit indwelling God's children as the Spirit of hope, leads them to look forward into the future, for that blessed hope of their Lord's return:

(1) For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to usward (Rom 8:18). The in us of the King James Version is incorrect. The glory has already been revealed in us in great measure, but there is a glory to be revealed toward us when our Lord shall come again. In 1Pe 1:11 and elsewhere, the sufferings of Christ are linked with the glory that shall follow, and our sufferings and glory are of course closely identified with His. When He shall appear, or be manifested, we are to be manifested with Him in glory (Col 3:4). Our manifestation as the sons of God shining in the glory of our Father is dealt with in the passage before us, but prior to our manifestation with the Lord Jesus, when He shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, there is to be a revelation of His glory unto, or toward, us. We are to see Him as He is in order that we may become like Him (1Jn 3:2-3). And this glory that shall be revealed toward us is so great that the present sufferings, however great they may be, are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory.

(2) For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God (Rom 8:19, R. V.). The material world itself is pictured here as upon the tiptoe of expectancy, so great is the glory about to be revealed, when the children of God shall be manifested in His likeness.

(3) For the creation was subjected to vanity (Rom 8:20-21, R. V.). Upon this complicated passage we quote Dr. Stifler at length: As God's sons look with longing to the future, first, because their present condition is painful and is not the ideal condition, and, secondly, because the future will bring them redemption, just so the creation, personified all through this passage, looks to the same future, first, because it is now under the curse, and, secondly, in the future, in the glorification of the faithful, it will find deliverance. Rom 8:20 gives a reason for the 'earnest expectation' drawn from the present condition of creation, and the next verse a reason (when we read 'because') drawn from the future. 'Was made subject to vanity' is ambiguous. Creation was not made so, for originally creation was 'good,' and it was subjected to vanity, that is, to attain to no good end permanently. Any good that comes from creation must be evoked by man's hard toil. This condition did not come about by its own will ('willingly'), but because of Him (God) Who subjected it to vanity, not finally, but upon a basis of some provision for the future, called 'hope.' This verse clearly implies that creation ('all nature') is neither in its original condition nor in its final condition. It fell when man fell (Gen 3:17-19); it shall be restored when he is, and shall be no longer subject to vanity, but to him (Heb 2:5-9). It is eagerly awaiting the revelation of God's sons, because that is the time when it 'also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption (the subjection, Rom 8:20) into the liberty of the glory ('glorious liberty' is wrong) of the children of God.' The creation is promised the liberty of the glory, not the glory.

(4) For we know that the whole creation groaneth (Rom 8:22-23). No one with the anointed eye can fail to discern the universal sufferings of this nether world, and the Spirit of God tells us here why the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain. This reason is given in Rom 8:23, where the supplied word they should read it, for it refers to the whole creation of the preceding verse. Not only it, but ourselves also, though we have the firstfruits of salvation in the presence of the indwelling Spirit of God, groan within ourselves, and we are all waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Christians are already sons of God in the fullest sense, but that fact has not yet been made manifest to the world. Adoption, in the New Testament sense, is already ours (Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5), but it is a matter of faith for the present time, and our sonship is not publicly proclaimed, so to speak, and will not be until the glad day of redemption to which this passage

points. Then, even our bodies, these bodies of our humiliation, shall be transformed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body, by that same power by which He is able also to subdue all things unto Himself (Php 3:21). Our bodies, in common with the material creation generally, are now suffering in the bondage of corruption. They are dead because of sin (v. 10), but in that day their deliverance will come. 'For this corruptible must needs put on incorruptibility, and this mortal put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the word written: Death has been swallowed up in victory" (Darby's Translation).

(5) For in hope were we saved (Rom 8:24-25, R. V.). The King James Version breaks down again here. The 1911 Bible reads: For in that hope were we saved. The Holy Spirit of God, immediately upon the believer's regeneration, directs his attention to the blessed hope set before him. Things are not to go on forever as they are at present. The grace of God that bringeth salvation has not only delivered us from the consequences of sin by the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross, but it has also put us under instruction, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present age; and it has put before us a blessed hope in connection with the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great God and our Saviour (Tit 2:11-13). It is in that hope, therefore, that we have been saved. The hope for the present is a matter of faith, for hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

(6) Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity (Rom 8:26-27, 1911 Bible). It is not infirmities, as the King James Version puts it. The reference is to one particular infirmity, namely, in that we know not how to pray as we ought: but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. This is the third groaning mentioned in this chapter: the burdened creation groans, the children of God groan, and the indwelling Holy Spirit groans; and all these groanings are expressive of a longing for the glorious deliverance, that is coming in the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1Pe 1:5). Rom 8:27 pictures God the Father as He that searched the hearts. And He knows the meaning even of the Spirit's unutterable groaning because He (the Spirit) maketh intercession for the saints (even in the groanings which cannot be uttered) according to the will of God. There is surely comfort here for the weakest saint of God, who often finds himself unable even to pray. The Spirit Himself helpeth our infirmity.

4. We are more than conquerors (Rom 8:28-39). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and He assures the Christian's heart by the wonderful language of this closing paragraph of this wonderful chapter:

(1) And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28). His purpose is the great thing in this passage. Who can withstand the eternal purpose of God? If salvation were offered to the believer conditionally; if something were left to his faithfulness, or his obedience, or his prayerfulness, then, indeed, the case would be hopeless, for the history of man shows that, whenever he is put under a system of probation, he breaks down. The law was such a system, and under it life was offered as a condition of obedience: He that doeth these things shall live by them but the law proved an intolerable burden (Acts 15:10), a ministration of condemnation and a ministration of death (2Co 3:7; 2Co 3:9). In the gospel, all conditions are swept aside, and whosoever will may come. He is

only to come, and God does all the rest. Let him come in all his vileness and weakness, and God will not so much as mention either his vileness or his weakness, but will just take him into His loving arms, and undertake for him, and thereafter see to it that all things work together for good unto him. This is His eternal purpose which He purposed before the world was, and of course, with such a salvation, based upon such a purpose, it cannot be otherwise than that all things shall work together for good unto the children of God.

(2) “For whom He did foreknow (Rom 8:20, Rom 8:30). The word for has the force of because, and it introduces the reason for our assurance that all things are working together for our good.

He foreknew us; He also predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren; He also called us with an effectual calling; and He also justified us, and He has also glorified us. The past tense continues through the whole passage, although the glorification is yet future, for God is able to count things done even when they have not yet been done. Our glorification is according to His purpose, and nothing is to be suffered to thwart His purpose. Having been foreknown and predestinated and called and justified, we shall also be glorified.

(3) What shall we then say to these things? (Rom 8:31). What indeed can be said? If God be for us, who can be against us? And what matters it whether any power is against us! Shall we be afraid of anything, with God on our side?

(4) He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (Rom 8:32). It would, indeed, be strange if God should withhold any good thing from those to whom He had given His Son. In Christ, all things are ours, for we are Christ's, and Christ is God's (1Co 3:21-23).

(5) Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? (Rom 8:33). It is probable that in this whole passage Paul has followed the form of queries, and that the rest of this verse should read, as in the 1911 Bible, Shall God, that justified? And surely, if God—Who has justified, and Who has therefore precluded any possibility of bringing a charge against us—if He has nothing to accuse us of, then it matters very little that we be judged of man's judgment (1Co 4:3). And as for Satan, who accuseth the brethren day and night before God, we need not fear him, for God has justified us, and that ends the matter. Satan is unable to bring anything new against us, for God knoweth us altogether, and He has found a way to be just and at the same time our Justifier.

(6) Who is he that condemneth? Is it Christ, Who died, yea rather, Who is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us? (Rom 8:34, 1911 Bible). This surely ought to comfort every believer's heart. There is nothing to fear from Him who died for us, and rose again, and Who now ever liveth to make intercession for us (Heb 7:25).

(7) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? (Rom 8:35-37). Shall it be tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? God's children have always been hated by the world, and whenever such persecution has been permitted, they have been accounted as sheep for the slaughter; and yet all these things have only tended to increase their devotion and their faithfulness, and to establish their integrity as witnesses unto Christ.

(8) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us (Rom 8:37). To be more than a conqueror means to be unconquerable. A man might be a victor at one time, and a victim at another; but not so here, for through Him that loved us we are kept, kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed (1Pe 1:5).

(9) For I am persuaded (Rom 8:38-39). This joyful song of triumph with which the chapter closes has been a tower of strength to the children of God ever since it was written. The chapter opened with no condemnation, and it closes with no separation. God will never condemn one of His children, though He may be compelled in faithfulness to chasten him (1Co 11:31-32); and God will never lose one of His children who has come unto Him through Christ. For such a one these words come from the Father's own heart: Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thus endeth the main argument of the epistle. The dreadful malady of sin was described in all its hideousness in the first main division, but, if the disease was terrible, the remedy is quite sufficient. God, in the gospel, has provided a righteousness without spot, that saves and cleanses and keeps the believer, even unto eternity. My sheep, says the Good Shepherd, hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of My hand. My Father, Which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand (John 10:27-29).

02.15. Third Main Division: The Vindication of God's Ways

Third Main Division: The Vindication of God's Ways

(Rom 9:1-33, Rom 10:1-21, Rom 11:1-36)

We now come to a new section of our epistle, consisting of Rom 9:1-33, Rom 10:1-21 and Rom 11:1-36, and containing the theodicy, or the vindication of the ways of God in His dealings with Israel. In Rom 9:1-33, Rom 10:1-21, Rom 11:1-36, says Dwight, the second main objection to the doctrine of justification by faith is considered—namely, that, by reason of the rejection of all unbelieving Jews which it involves, it contradicts the promises of God and His covenant with His chosen people.

Paul could not do otherwise, says H. A. W. Meyer; he must settle this great problem; this is inevitably demanded by all that had gone before. For if the whole previous treatise had as its result, that only believers were the recipients of the promised salvation, and if nevertheless the Messianic promise and destination to salvation had their reference in the first place (compare Rom 1:16) to the Israelites, concerning whom, however, experience showed that they were for the most part unbelieving (compare John 1:11), this contradictory relation thus furnished an enigma, which Paul, with his warm love for his people, could least of all evade, but in the solution of which he had on the contrary to employ all the boldness and depth of his clear insight into the divine plan of redemption (Eph 3:4, ff.) The defence of the efficacy of his Gentile apostleship (Th. Schott, and in another way Mangold and Sabatier) is not the object of the section—that object Paul would have known how to meet directly—but such a defence results indirectly from it, since we see from the section how fully the apostle had recognized and comprehended his place in connection with the divine plan of salvation. The problem itself, the solution of which is now taken in hand by the apostle, was sufficiently serious and momentous to be treated with so much detail in this great and instructive letter to the important mixed community of the world's capital, which, however, does not thereby appear to have been a Jewish-Christian one.

Dr. Scofield remarks that this great passage is really a parenthesis. Rom 12:1-21, which begins, 'I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies,' etc., is the resumption of the line of thought and revelation abruptly interrupted at the end of chapter 8. But, as Professor Stiffler has pointed out with a clearness and force unequalled by any other commentator on Romans, logic required the apostle to insert this section at this precise point. It is convenient for us to forget the Jew. It is easy, too, for usually Christians know almost nothing of distinctive Jewish covenant and promise. Furthermore, there still lingers in some minds the old and often disproved notion that Christians are now the true Israel. But to the apostolic church the question of the relation of Judaism to the new institution, the church, was the most living and burning of questions. Having, therefore, brought the entire race into one common condemnation as sinners, and opened the one and only salvation in the gospel, the question inevitably emerges, What, then, becomes of the Davidic covenant, confirmed by the oath of God and renewed to the mother of Jesus by the angel Gabriel? What becomes of the repeated, specific, and absolutely

unconditional promises of the restoration of all Israel to the land of their fathers, and the establishment again of the monarchy in the person of a Messiah, Who should be Son and Heir of David? This section is the apostle's answer. Just as James, in the Jerusalem council, showed that the acceptance of the Gentiles by faith without circumcision not only did not contradict the prophets, but 'agreed' with them, since they had predicted the restoration as occurring after the return of the Lord (Acts 15:14-17); so Paul, only more at length, explains that this gospel age is an interregnum fully foreseen by the prophets, and that, so far from having done with national Israel, the Deliverer shall yet come out of Zion, and 'all Israel (not 'every Israelite') shall be saved' (Scofield Correspondence Course). In introducing this section, Mr. Darby says that there remained one important question to be considered, namely, how this salvation, common to Jew and Gentile, both alienated from God—this doctrine that there was no difference—was to be reconciled with the special promises made to the Jews. The proof of their guilt and ruin under the law did not touch the promises of a faithful God. Was the apostle going to do away with these to place the Gentiles on the same footing? They did not fail also to accuse the apostle of having despised his nation and its privileges. Rom 9:1-33, Rom 10:1-21 and Rom 11:1-36 reply to this question; and, with rare and admirable perfection, set forth the position of Israel with respect to God and to the gospel. This reply opens, in itself, a wide door to intelligence in the ways of God (Synopsis). The grace of the gospel has now been carried to its issue in glory, says Mr. Grant (Numerical Bible). The doctrine of the epistle is so far concluded; but we have yet to see the bearing of all this upon Israel, and special promises given to her of God. The sin of man at large and of Israel, we may say especially, has been fully proved. 'There is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;' but that does not affect at all the question of the faithfulness of God to His own Word. Let man be what he may; if God has spoken, He will surely fulfil what He has promised, and here we have to remember that the promise to Abraham was indeed not directly to the nation at all, and therefore the standing or fall of the nation could not affect it. It was absolute grace in its nature, and as we see in Gen 15:1-21, if trial and suffering, if the furnace were needed as well as the lamp, the covenant included both, in order to work out the purpose of God. When the law came in, it was exceptional entirely, as the apostle says, 'it came in by the way,' and for the purpose, not of putting Israel's title to the inheritance upon a new foundation, but really in order to show that nothing but absolute grace could be the foundation of such promises as hers. The law was the ministration of death and condemnation, as we have fully seen, and if the inheritance were of law, as the apostle tells us afterwards, it were no more of promise. Law and promise are in absolute contrast, in contradiction, one may say, to one another. Israel chose the law, and so far, therefore, as she could do it, gave up the grace in which God in fact had been hitherto dealing with her, to accept the recompense of her own desert. She found this in result; and it was seen from the beginning that it would be terribly against her. The new covenant, which still remains to be fulfilled, provides for the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, but to a people who have sinned, and expressly in view of their sins; but it is absolute grace once more. It is all God's 'I will,' not the legal, 'Thou shalt.' Thus, these unconditional promises must be fulfilled. The prophets fill them out and show us Israel on their conversion as a nation not lost in the midst of the Gentiles, but, on the contrary, the centre of the divine rule for the earth and in special nearness to the divine King. The promises of the Old Testament have nothing to do with heaven, no thought of any one going there. They concern the earth; and here the blessing for the earth of necessity implies the blessing for Israel. Isaiah affirms the eternal perpetuity of their seed and name, not merely for the millennium,

but 'as the new heavens and the new earth, says God, 'which I will make, shall remain before Me, so shall her seed and her name remain.' Thus Israel's distinct existence, and as it is implied, distinct privilege, remains eternal. There is no escape from this, except into the utter confusion in which so many are, between the earthly people and the heavenly, Israel and the church. If we will only read Scripture with the simplicity which belongs to it, if we will only allow that God means exactly what he says, there will be no difficulty at all in discerning that Israel's promises abide in spite of all that has come in apparently to set them aside, and (for a time) in fact has done so.

Before proceeding to the study of the section, let us heed this word of caution from Dean Alford: In no part of the epistles of St. Paul, is it more requisite than in this portion to bear in mind his habit of insulating the one view of the subject under consideration with which he is at the time dealing. The divine side of the history of Israel and the world is in the greater part of this portion thus insulated: the facts of the divine dealings and the divine decrees insisted on, and the mundane or human side of that history kept for the most part out of sight, and only so much shown as to make it manifest that the Jews, on their part, failed of attaining God's righteousness, and so lost their share in the gospel. It must also be remembered that, whatever inferences, with regard to God's disposal of individuals, may justly lie from the apostle's arguments, the assertions here made by him are universally spoken with a national reference. Of the eternal salvation or rejection of any individual Jew there is here no question: and however logically true of any individual the same conclusion may be shown to be, we know as a matter of fact that in such cases not the divine but the human side is that ever held up by the apostle—the universality of free grace for all—the riches of God's mercy to all who call on Him, and consequent exhortations to all to look to Him and be saved. The apparent inconsistencies of the apostle, at one time speaking of absolute decrees of God, and at another of culpability in man,—at one time of the election of some, at another of a hope of the conversion of all,—resolve themselves into the necessary conditions of thought under which we all are placed, being compelled to acknowledge the divine sovereignty on the one hand, and human free will on the other, and alternately appearing to lose sight of one of these, as often as for the time we confine our view to the other.

Proceeding now to the consideration of the section in detail, we find it yielding itself readily to simple analysis, in keeping with the chapter divisions:

- (1) Israel's failure and rejection acknowledged (Rom 9:1-33);
- (2) Israel's rejection is the result of Israel's failure (Rom 10:1-21);
- (3) Israel's rejection is neither complete nor final (Rom 11:1-36). The object of the Spirit of truth in the whole section is to show that the ways of the Lord are right ways.

02.16. I. Israel's Failure and Rejection acknowledged (Chapter 9.)

I. Israel's Failure and Rejection acknowledged (Rom 9:1-33)

1. I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart (Rom 9:1-2). The change from the triumphant strain of the preceding chapter is startling. Dr. Stiffler suggests that it may be accounted for psychologically. The apostle, says he, had just been contemplating the certainty of the glory of the sons of God; his heart goes now to the other extreme, the failure and misery of his own countrymen. The vehement language was necessary, because in giving the gospel to the heathen Paul was looked upon by the Jew as the enemy of his own nation. Some of the Roman church, knowing as they did the exclusiveness of the Jews, might be persuaded that Paul was an apostate rather than an apostle of God. He must defend himself. He is about to outline Israel's shame. Let it be seen that the picture is drawn not by an enemy, but by a loving friend, whose heart is breaking as he paints.

2. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom 9:3). Many and varied are the comments on this verse, the writers often shrinking from the obvious meaning of the words as they stand. Wakefield cuts the troublesome knot at one stroke by reading: I have great grief and continual sorrow of heart (for I also was once an alien from Christ) on account of my brethren, etc. In a note he says: I see no method of solving the difficulty in this verse, which has so exercised the learning and ingenuity of commentators, but by the *euchomai einai* of Homer—I profess myself to be. This solution makes the passage rational and plain. Alford holds that the literal reading is, I was wishing, etc., and says: This imperfect tense is not historical, alluding to his days of Pharisaism, as some have supposed, but implies, as very often, a half-expression of a desire: 'I was wishing, had it been possible.' Darby reads, For I have wished, I myself, to be a curse from Christ for my brethren, and remarks: Moses, in his anguish, had said, 'Blot me out of Thy book.' Paul had not been behind him in his love. In his *New Testament in Braid Scots*, William Wye Smith renders: There is muckle dool to me, and constant sorrow i' my heart, for I mysel' coud hae wiss't mysel' devotit by Christ, for my brethren's sake, my kin eftir the flesh. In a note he says: Sinder't frae ony common use; as was an offeran i' the temple. The sense is obscure: and we haena Paul to expone it. While it may mean torn frae a' things in this life, and frae life itsel', it disna mean sinder't frae Christ for eternity. And John Wesley, in his *Notes on the New Testament*, says of the passage:

Human words cannot fully describe the motions of souls that are full of God. As if he had said, I could wish to suffer in their stead; yea, to be an anathema from Christ in their place. In how high a sense he wished this, who can tell, unless himself had been asked, and had resolved the question? Certainly he did not then consider himself at all, but only others, and the glory of God. The thing could not be; yet the wish was pious and solid; though with a tacit condition, if it were right and possible. The language, says Stiffler, is startling and has troubled many; but it is in the very spirit of Israel's great leader, Moses (Exo 32:32), and may we not say, though the word is

different, in the spirit of Christ (Gal 3:13)? Besides, this is not the language of deliberation, but of heart-breaking passion, in which he says, I could (were it permitted or were it possible) wish myself accursed (away) from (not 'by') Christ.' It is this grief at the loss of men, this intense yearning for their salvation, that made Paul the preacher he was.

3. Who are Israelites (Rom 9:4). In Rom 3:1-31 the question was raised, What advantage then hath the Jew? And the answer was ready: Much every way. That answer is amplified in the sevenfold summary found in our 9th chapter. Surely, Israel's position before God was one to be coveted; for to this people pertaineth:

(1) The adoption. They were adopted as God's people from among the nations. Their adoption, as spoken of here, is not individual, but national. It is a different thing from the New Testament adoption, but it is yet a thing to be greatly desired, and a thing for which to be deeply grateful.

(2) And the glory. The Shekinah cloud of glory led them and followed them in their wilderness wanderings. Thus they had been made companions of the Holy Spirit (Heb 6:4).

(3) And the covenants. The Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant, the Davidic covenant—all were theirs, and all are yet theirs, despite their failure. The Gentiles, on the contrary, are aliens from the commonwealth, and therefore strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world (Eph 2:12).

(4) And the giving of the law. The Gentiles have not the law (Rom 2:14). If others boasted of their Solons and Lycurguses, how far juster ground of boasting is there of the Lord as lawgiver {Calvin}.

(5) And the service. They alone, among all the nations of the world, had an authorized form of worship; they were taught the way of approach to God.

(6) And the promises. Even the promise of the Redeemer was peculiarly Israel's, though it was first given to the whole race in Eden, for it was ultimately confined to the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the tribe of Judah, and house of David. Let it not be forgotten that the Lord Jesus Christ was primarily a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and that the showing of mercy to the Gentiles was a thing that came afterwards (Rom 15:8-9). In Heb 7:6, Abraham is described as him that had the promises.

(7) Whose are the fathers. What other nation ever had such fathers? Abraham, the head of many nations, Isaac, and Jacob, were theirs; other nations had great ancestors, but Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have the honor of being not merely natural, but divinely chosen chiefs (Stiller).

4. And of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came (Rom 9:5). Besides these seven all their own, the Israelites had one other honor in which they shared, an honor that overtops all the rest. The 'whose' changes to 'of whom.' The fathers were theirs, but the Christ, though He came from them in His human relation, belongs to the world (Stiller). The expression ('and of whom is Christ, so far as regards the flesh') implies that He was not entirely sprung from them, but had another nature; 'on His human side,'—'as far as pertains to His human body' (Alford).

5. Who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen (Rom 9:5). There has been much controversy over the punctuation and application of this Scripture. Those who deny our Lord's deity insist that we should read here, Blessed forever be the God Who is over all! and that the words are to be

understood as a doxology to the Father. By the early church, however, it was generally rendered as in our English Bible, and applied to Christ. This rendering, says Dean Alford, is not only that most agreeable to the usage of the apostle, but the only one admissible by the rules of grammar and arrangement. It also admirably suits the context: for, having enumerated the historic advantages of the Jewish people, he concludes by stating one which ranks far higher than all,—that from them sprung, according to the flesh, He Who is God over all, blessed forever.

A. W. Meyer, though opposing this view, yet acknowledges that the words may be interpreted as referring to Christ; and both Weiss and Dwight, Meyer's editors, agree with Alford's conclusions as above. Stifler says that Sanday, after an exhaustive examination of all the arguments bearing on the punctuation of this passage, 'with some slight, but only slight, hesitation,' admits that Paul here applies the name God to Christ. The claim is made that Paul does not anywhere else call Christ God. But this is an error, for Paul calls Christ God in Acts 20:28; in Col 1:16 he declares that all things were made by Him and for Him; and in Col 2:9 he writes that in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. In addition to this, there is little doubt that Hebrews was written by Paul, and in the first chapter of that epistle Christ is repeatedly called by names of deity.

However, no one who really knows Christ denies or doubts His deity. By His supernatural birth (Isa 7:13-14; Mat 1:22-23), and by His supernatural resurrection from the dead (John 8:46; Rom 1:4), as well as by all that lay between, He was shown to be God in the flesh. We receive Him as such, and adore Him as such, bowing before Him with His disciple Thomas, and worshipping Him as our Lord and our God.

6. Not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect (Rom 9:6-13). There had been failure, but the failure was not God's. The people had broken down, but the great promises of the covenant were not conditional promises, they were not made to depend upon the faithfulness of the people. The Word of God must be fulfilled. If we are faithless, He abideth faithful; for He cannot deny Himself (2Ti 2:13, R. V.). In the paragraph before us, all this is brought out in answer to the natural questionings that would arise in regard to God's dealings with Israel. The case is not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect, or as though it hath come to nought (R. V.), or as though it had failed (1911 Bible). The Word of God still remained unbroken. The promise of God had not been set aside. The proof of this is in what follows:

(1) For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel (Rom 9:6). The promise was not for all the nation of Israel. The apostle is making a distinction here between natural Israelites and those among them who were men of faith. Believing Gentiles are not in view just now, though they are elsewhere called Abraham's spiritual seed. In the passage before us, he is considering only the two kinds of Israelites, the natural and the spiritual Israel (compare Rom 4:1-3; Gal 3:6-7; John 8:37-39).

(2) Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called (Rom 9:7). Abraham had other children besides Isaac. Ishmael was born before Isaac, and there were many sons born afterward of Keturah (Gen 25:1-4), and yet the Messianic promise was confined to Isaac and his seed. The principle of God's sovereign elective grace is thus established at the outset. The Jew could not deny this principle, and thus shut out the Gentiles from the promise, unless he was willing to include the Ishmaelites and the descendants of Keturah with himself in the promise. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not

the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son (Rom 9:8-9, compare Gen 21:12; Gen 18:10).

(3) And not only this (Rom 9:10). The apostle now cites the case of Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebecca. While these children were yet in their mother's womb, before they had done any good or evil, It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger (Rom 9:12, compare Gen 25:23). The reason given for this decree is simply, that the purpose of God...might stand. It is according to election ... not of works, but of him that calleth (Rom 9:11). In the case of Ishmael, it might be objected, that, being born of a slave woman, he was set aside on that account, but this objection cannot stand as touching the case of Esau and Jacob. Though they were twins, Esau was yet the first-born, and God decreed that this first-born should be subject to his younger brother, and, as we have observed, the only reason given for it is that it was according to the purpose of God. The decree itself went far beyond the persons of Esau and Jacob, as will be seen by reference to the Scripture cited, Gen 25:23 : And Jehovah said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels: and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger (R. V.). On this Dean Alford says: But the nations must be considered as spoken of in their progenitors, and the elder nation is in fact that sprung from the elder brother. History records several subjugations of Edom by the kings of Judah; first by David (2Sa 8:14);—under Joram they rebelled (2Ki 8:20), but were defeated by Amaziah (2Ki 14:7), and Elath taken from them by Uzziah (2Ki 14:22); under Ahaz they were again free, and troubled Judah (2Ch 28:16-17, compare 2Ki 16:6-7)—and continued free, as prophesied in Gen 27:40, till the time of John Hyrcanus, who reduced them finally, so that thenceforward they were incorporated among the Jews: as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated (there is no necessity here to soften the 'hated' into 'loved less': the words in Malachi proceed on the fullest meaning of hate, see Rom 9:4, 'The people against whom Jehovah hath indignation forever').

7. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? (Rom 9:14-18). The apostle's exclamatory reply, God forbid! is the language of faith, for faith cannot for a moment tolerate the insinuation that there is unrighteousness with God:

(1) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion (Rom 9:15). Paul finds the argument for his vehement denial of injustice in God, says Dr. Stifler, not by abstract reasoning about the idea of justice, but in the Scriptures. The quotation is from Exo 33:19. The great Jewish captain is earnestly seeking grace from God. It might be supposed that he could attain it on the ground of his office and merit; but even 'to Moses' God saith, He gives mercy not because he is Moses, or because he seeks it, but just because it is God's 'will' to do so. It is a bold, crisp assertion of the divine freedom in bestowing grace. In any case through human history wherein I shall be seen to have mercy, the one account I give of the radical cause is this—I have mercy' (Moule). Mercy is the outward manifestation of the feeling of compassion. And according to Dean Alford, The meaning apparently is, 'Whenever I have mercy on any, it shall be pure mercy, no human desert contributing;' which agrees better with the next verse than the ordinary rendering, which lays the stress on the 'whomsoever' and is not inconsistent with Rom 9:18, 'he hath mercy on whom he will;' because if God's mercy be pure mercy without any desert on man's part, it necessarily follows that He has mercy on whom He will, His will being the only assignable cause of the

selection.

(2) So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy (Rom 9:16). The human element is simply excluded. Mercy is shown not according as men will to receive it, or run after it, but according to God's own purpose. We shall return to this a little further on in the chapter.

(3) For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth (Rom 9:17). The quotation here is from Exo 9:16, and it leads to the conclusion of Rom 9:18 : Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.

Ten times in the Scripture, says Dr. Stifler, about Pharaoh it is said he hardened himself; but Paul makes no account of this, for his clear intention is to account for Pharaoh's overthrow by the free purpose of God. And yet God did not harden him for the sake of the hardening, but that the divine power might have a field of display and that the divine name might become known. If Pharaoh had willingly and sweetly allowed the people to depart, there could have been no miracles 'in Egypt and in the Red Sea' (Acts 7:36), and the children of Israel would have had no fame as God's own chosen, a fame that endured for centuries (1Sa 5:8)...God is absolute sovereign, allowing nothing to direct His activity but His own will. His Word is true, as true, as He is, but He has never uttered a word to abridge His freedom. This hardening process is going on to-day; it can be read as clearly in current history as in God's Word. And yet man is also free in choosing God and free in refusing Him. The reconciliation of these two is a question of philosophy, and philosophy fails in the effort. The Bible does not attempt it, but stops with asserting that both are realities.

Augustine says:

Let it be enough for the Christian, living as yet by faith, and not yet seeing what is perfect, but knowing it only in part, to know, or to believe, that God acquits none except of His free mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and condemns none, except of most equitable justice, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ. But why He acquits or does not acquit one rather than another, let him who can, search into the so great deep of His judgments: but—let him beware of the precipitous descent.

Mr. Darby says, that God's sovereignty is the first of all rights. But in what case had He exercised this right? In a case that concerned that right of Israel to blessing, of which the Jews sought to avail themselves. All Israel would have been cut off, if God had dealt in righteousness; there was nothing but the sovereignty of God which could be a door of escape. God retreated into His sovereignty in order to spare whom He would, and so had spared Israel (justice would have condemned them all alike, gathered round the golden calf which they set up to worship)—this, on the side of mercy; on that of judgment, Pharaoh served for an example. The enemy of God, and of His people, he had treated the claims of God with contempt, exalting himself proudly against Him—'Who is Jehovah that I should obey Him? I will not let His people go.' Pharaoh being in this state, Jehovah uses him to give an example of His wrath and judgment. So that He shows mercy to whom He will, and hardens whom He will. Man complains of it, as he does of the grace that justifies freely.

8. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? (Rom 9:19-24). The objector has taken an advanced step here. Up to this point he has been content merely to call God's justice into question, but now he practically charges God with injustice:

(1) Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? (Rom 9:20). Such replying, as Mr. Grant points out, must necessarily be in vain. Could one succeed in establishing his cause against Him, what could it be? It would be the ruin of everything. Think of being able to show that God was not the righteous, holy, gracious God He is! Think of the disaster everywhere which would result from such a thing! The moment we speak of God, we must be still and know that He is God; and the apostle insists upon this in the first place.

(2) Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? (Rom 9:20-21). The word power, in this passage, the Revision changes to right—"Hath not the potter a right over the clay?" There is reference here to Isa 29:16, where it is written: Shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding? Again, in Isa 45:9, we read: Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work. He hath no hands? In the apocryphal book of Sir 33:13, there is similar language: As the clay is in the potter's hand to fashion it at his pleasure, so man is in the hand of Him that made him to render to them as liketh Him best. Again, in the book of Wisdom, Wis 15:7, it is written: For the potter, tempering soft earth, fashioneth every vessel with much labour for our service: yea, of the same clay he maketh both the vessels that serve for clean uses, and likewise also all such as serve to the contrary: but what is the use of either sort the potter himself is the judge. There is a word from Jehovah in Jer 18:6, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith Jehovah. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel. The same figure is employed in 2Ti 2:20-21, though with a different purpose in view. What we have in Rom 9:1-33 is the free sovereignty of God. It is well to remember this, and to follow Dean Alford's example. He says:

I must pause here to remind the student, that I purposely do not enter on the disquisition so abundant in some commentaries on this part of Scripture, by which it is endeavored to reconcile the sovereign election of God with our free will. We shall find that free will asserted strongly enough for all edifying purposes by this apostle, when the time comes. At present, he is employed wholly in asserting the divine sovereignty, the glorious vision of which it ill becomes us to distract by continual downward looks on this earth. It is in parts of Scripture like this, that we must be especially careful not to fall short of what is written: not to allow of any compromise of the plain and awful words of God's Spirit for the sake of a caution which He Himself does not teach us.

(3) What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? (Rom 9:22-24). The word willing, in Rom 9:22, should be read, wishing, or purposing. The meaning of the passage is, that, while God has a perfect right to destroy all sinners at once, He has also a right to show mercy where He wills, and to restrain His wrath where He wills, in order to fulfill His purpose.

9. As he saith (Rom 9:25-29):

Two quotations from Hosea (Hos 2:23; Hos 1:10) are cited in Rom 9:25-26. By referring to the prophecy itself, it will be seen that, in both cases, the direct application was to Israel, while the citation in Romans has reference to the Gentiles. Both passages, Mr. Grant remarks, refer to God's purposes with regard to Israel in the time to come, but as a principle they equally show how He is acting and how He has title to act in His present grace. The men of the Gentiles, who were not His people, He is calling His people; and where He had said unto them, 'Ye are not My people,' there they are now called of Him His children. The apostle does not say that this is an exact fulfillment of Hosea's words.

It is a fulfillment in principle, and that is all that is implied in his quotation.

Two quotations from Isaiah are also found here. They are from Isa 10:22, ff., and Isa 1:9; and the apostle quotes them to prove that it is only by God's grace that even the remnant out of Israel is saved.

10. What shall we say then? (Rom 9:30-33). The question raised finds its answer in the words following:

(1) That Gentiles, who followed not after righteousness, have obtained righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith (Rom 9:30, 1911 Bible). The article the, before Gentiles, is wrongly found in both the King James and the Revised Versions. The statement would not be true as applied to the Gentiles en masse. It is true, however, of certain Gentiles that they have, by the sovereign grace of God, attained unto a righteousness which is of faith. In this and the next verse, we have a commentary upon the 16th verse above: It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. These Gentiles who have attained to righteousness have not attained thereto through their own willing, or their own running, but through the sovereign, elective grace of God.

(2) But Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law (Rom 9:31, R. V.). Here was a nation pursuing after a law of righteousness and failing in the pursuit. They said, when the covenant of law was proposed to them, All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do (Exo 19:8).

(3) Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law (Rom 9:32). Rom 10:1-21 takes up this subject and works it out in detail, showing the difference between the righteousness which is of the law and the righteousness which is of faith (compare Rom 10:5-6). Chrysostom and others think that, in these final verses of the chapter, there is a solution of the whole doctrinal difficulty raised by the chapter, but Alford dissents from these, and says: This solution is simply in the creative right of God, as declared in Rom 9:18;—but they are a comment on Rom 9:16, that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth: the same similitude of running being here resumed, and it being shown that, so far from man's running having decided the matter, the Jews, who pressed forward to the goal, attained not, whereas the Gentiles, who never ran, have attained. If this is lost sight of, the connection of the whole is much impaired, and, from doctrinal prejudice, a wholly wrong turn given to the apostle's line of reasoning,—who resolves the awful fact of Israel's exclusion not into any causes arising from man, but into the supreme will of God.

Stifler says:

It is at this point that Paul passes from the sovereignty of God to the responsibility of man. The two cannot be harmonized in the human understanding, except as the Scriptures harmonize them; that is, by insisting on and holding to both. The Scriptures and reason assert the absolute sovereignty of God, and Scripture and the human conscience assert with equal force the responsibility of man; so that the practical error arises when either one of these is denied or when one is explained in a way to exclude the other. It must also be remembered that, while man cannot save himself, moral inability does not relieve from responsibility. Man's inability lies in his sinful nature (Rom 8:7), and God cannot be made responsible for sin. The sinner's inability to do right, to do God's will, is the acme of his sin. A world of sin is a world of confusion. Sin introduced confusion between God and man, and confusion cannot be explained. The real difficulty between God's absolute sovereignty and man's responsibility is metaphysical and not Biblical. How can there be one sovereign free will and other free wills? And when Fritzsche says that Paul's view is 'absolutely contradictory,' he is virtually demanding that Paul cease preaching and turn philosopher to solve the insoluble. But Paul leaves the question where he found it, and goes on now in this and the next chapter to show that Israel's failure was their own fault.

(4) They stumbled at that stumblingstone (Rom 9:32). The word for, found here in the King James Version, is omitted by the best authorities, and confuses the sense, making it appear that Israel had failed to pursue by faith because of their stumbling over the stumblingstone, which of course is Christ. Now, the fact is just the opposite from this. They stumbled at the stumblingstone because they were not pursuing righteousness by faith (compare 1Co 1:23). As the R. V. footnote has it, Because doing it not by faith, but as it were by works, they stumbled.

(5) As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed (Rom 9:33). The quotation is from Isa 28:1-29 :

Peter uses the same Scripture in 1Pe 2:6, along with other Scriptures employing the same figure of Christ (compare Psa 118:22 and Isa 8:14). This chapter is a test of faith, and a reasonable test. Faith trusts God. She believes that God is not only omnipotent, that is, all-powerful, but also all-wise and altogether righteous. She believes this in spite of everything, and to her the suggestion is intolerable that the Judge of all the earth should ever fail to do right. She reads in God's Word, that He hardeneth whom He will, and also that God is not willing that any should perish. These things may be irreconcilable to human reason, and they probably are, but human reason has no authority over faith. Faith believes God. In the very nature of the case, it is of necessity that finite man should fail at some point to comprehend the infinite God. Faith follows on, walking with God, even when reason fails to comprehend. Faith trusts God in the dark. That is, after reason has entered into darkness and obscurity, faith goes on, walking not in darkness, but in the light of God, because she trusts God. Otherwise, faith need not be at all, for to walk by faith is essentially opposed to walking by sight. When sight comes in, there is no further need for faith. Let us thank God for the privilege of trusting Him, and of walking quietly with Him, leaving our hand in His, for, though we may not know, it is always true that He knoweth the way that we take.

02.17. II. Israel's Rejection Is the Result of Israel's Failure (Chapter 10).

II. Israel's Rejection Is the Result of Israel's Failure (Rom 10:1-21).

1. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved Paul's expression of affection here is very strong. Rotherham renders it, Brethren! the delight of my own heart and my supplication God-ward in their behalf are for salvation.

2. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge The zeal is for God rather than of God (see R. V.). They were zealous for God, but their zeal was not based upon correct knowledge of God.

3. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God (Rom 10:3). It was because of their ignorance of God's righteousness that they sought to establish their own. Had they known the meaning of righteousness from God's viewpoint they would not have admitted such a thing.

4. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth (Rom 10:4). This verse explains the meaning of the closing words of the preceding verse. Their failure to submit themselves unto the righteousness of God consisted in their rejection of the Lord Jesus, who is The Righteousness of God, and the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. The promise is written large in the Old Testament Scriptures, that one day Israel shall receive the Lord Jesus Christ and salute Him as THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Jer 23:6). This will be in the day of the fulfillment unto them of the new covenant (Jer 31:31-34; compare Heb 8:8-12 and Rom 11:25-27).

5. The righteousness which is of the law. Moses's description of this legal righteousness is, of course, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. This is the first Old Testament citation in the chapter. It is from Lev 18:5.

6. The righteousness which is of faith (Rom 10:6). In this verse, reference is had to a passage in Deu 30:12-14. This is not because gospel righteousness is found in that passage, but the passage serves to illustrate the perfectly plain statement of gospel-righteousness. The word of the new covenant is as clear and as comprehensible as was the plain command uttered by Jehovah through Moses unto Israel in the wilderness. It is not needful that anyone should ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above, nor into the deep to bring Him up again from the dead (Rom 10:6-7). The word of the gospel is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach (Rom 10:8):

(1) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (Rom 10:9). This is a needful condition of salvation under the new order of things. This is the way of obtaining the righteousness which is of faith.

(2) And shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead (Rom 10:9). There must be heart belief. Mr. Rotherham points out that the contrast in this passage is between heart and mouth, and not between heart and head—"a distinction of which the Bible knows nothing." Doubtless there is such a thing as an intellectual assent, even to the proposition of the gospel, which falls short of saving faith. To believe, in the gospel sense, is to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as one's personal Saviour, and any so-called belief which falls short of this definite reception of the Saviour is not New Testament faith. As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name (John 1:12). Saving faith is perhaps better understood as personal trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as one's own Saviour.

(3) Thou shalt be saved (Rom 10:9). In this verse we have one of the clearest settings forth of the gospel to be found anywhere in the Scriptures.

7. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom 10:10). In the paragraph closing with this verse we have one of the most important statements in the Bible. Here the Holy Spirit of truth brings into sharpest contrast the two righteousnesses. One is God's righteousness and the other is man's righteousness. One is divine and the other is human. One is by works; it comes to the man who doeth. The other is by grace through faith,—to everyone that believeth. One is called the righteousness which is of the law. The other is called the righteousness which is of faith. One is the result of man's own efforts. The other is the gift of God in Christ to any man who will receive it. The failure of Israel is the matter under discussion. They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, went about seeking to establish their own righteousness; and when Christ, the end of the law for righteousness, came and offered Himself to them, they refused to submit themselves unto Him. The principle involved, however, is applicable not only to Jews. It is general, and applies to all men, Jews and Gentiles alike. Seven fundamental propositions may be drawn from this passage of Scripture. This is the gospel of God. In this sevenfold statement He gives us a complete unfolding of the way of life. In the midst of the awful confusion of these last days it is refreshing to get back to first principles and examine the foundations upon which we are building. May God deliver His people from error, and ever show us His way more perfectly!

(1) Man by nature is unrighteous. Nothing is more strongly emphasized than this in the Word of God. Humiliating to the flesh though it be, it is nevertheless true that man is naturally corrupt. Theologians may quarrel over questions of original sin and total depravity, but God has been faithful in pointing out that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer 17:9). Out of the heart are the issues of life, and from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within (Mark 7:21-23). Man, apart from God, is unrighteous and only unrighteous. This is shown in the terrible history of the race, as given by the Holy Spirit of truth in Rom 1:1-32. When God gave them up, it was unto vile affections. When he gave them over, it was to a reprobate mind, and they were found to be filled with all unrighteousness (Rom 1:26, Rom 1:28-29). It is easy for men to compare themselves with themselves, and derive satisfaction from the comparison, but God declares that there is none righteous, no not one (Rom 3:10). There is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Rom 3:22-23). As for the Jews, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through them (Rom 2:24). As to the Gentiles themselves, they are without

Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world. They walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart. They are dead in trespasses and sins, and past feeling (Eph 2:1; Eph 2:12; Eph 4:17-19). The Scriptures declare that the natural man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts (Eph 4:22); that his mind is enmity against God, that it is not and cannot be subject to God's law; and that he cannot please God (Rom 8:7-8). They further assert that he cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1Co 2:14). Such, according to the Scriptures of God, is the helpless, hopeless, undone condition of the natural man. And in this we are all alike—we are by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Eph 2:3). Man by nature is unrighteous.

(2) Man by nature is ignorant of God's righteousness. Man is corrupt, and he has a corrupt mind. Therefore, his view of righteousness is distorted. He has his own ideas of right and wrong, and they are false ideas. For as a matter of simple fact, the righteousness of God is the only kind of righteousness there is. In this discussion we have spoken of two righteousnesses, but we shall find on examination that the human righteousness here spoken of is not righteousness at all. Righteousness is simple right-ness, and if a thing is right it cannot be more. On the other hand if it be not right it is of necessity wrong. And the standard of righteousness is God's righteousness. He is absolutely righteous. The ways of the Lord are right. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. In Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God cannot lie, because He is righteous. He cannot repudiate a promise, because He is righteous. He cannot forget His Word, because He is righteous. But God's standard is not man's standard. The characteristic distinction between God and man is that God is not a man that He should lie (Num 23:19). Man's ideas of right and wrong are low ideas, corrupt ideas, evil ideas, because they are conceived in corrupt and evil minds. Man's conception of God is distorted. It is written that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God. They conceived that God was like themselves. They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man (Rom 1:21-23). Having therefore corrupted their very conception of the character of God, they of course lost the true view of His righteousness. What is the natural man's idea of the righteous requirements of a holy God? Ask the first man you meet, and he will probably tell you that if a man tries to do right, that is all that will be expected of him. Or perhaps he will say, If I do the best I can, God will be satisfied. Does it never occur to the natural man that in these very words he speaks there is an implied admission of his corrupt nature? For, according to these replies, he can only try to do right: he rarely succeeds. He may do the best he can, but of course what he does is not perfect. But the point here is that man who is so complacent about his own trying and doing, has an idea that God is complacent, too. Man says, Of course, we are all sinners, and all we can do is to do the best we can. This satisfies his perverted conscience, and he thinks it also satisfies God. This is all wrong. God's demands are inflexible. He says to man, Walk before me, and be thou perfect. He says, Be ye holy, for I am holy. And His declaration is most explicit that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. And though holiness and righteousness are not the same thing, yet there cannot be the one without the other. God's new creation is in righteousness and true holiness (Eph 4:24). All this, however, is unintelligible to the natural man. For man by nature is ignorant of God's righteousness.

(3) Man by nature, because of this ignorance, goes about to establish his own righteousness. Of course he would never try such a thing if he had any real appreciation of what he was attempting. If he realized how high God's righteousness is, and then realized how low his own ideas of right and wrong are, he would give up at once, and be ready to wait for the grace of God. But it is not so. From the days of Cain until now, the natural man has sought to make himself presentable to God. The carnal mind is proud, and it rebels against the truth of God. Even when the truth is apprehended, man holds it down in unrighteousness (Rom 1:18, R. V.). The Scriptures declare that that which may be known of God (i. e., to the natural man) is manifest in them, so that they are without excuse. God has not left Himself without witness even among unregenerate men, but they have turned from Him: they did not like to retain God in their knowledge (Rom 1:19-20; Rom 1:28). So it is that men, having rejected the counsel of God against themselves, are continually seeking to establish a righteousness of their own. Instead of consulting the Word of the living God, they consult their own consciences— i. e., their own corrupt ideas of right and wrong. The unenlightened conscience is a most elastic thing, besides being corrupt, and the more it is listened to, apart from the testimony of the Word of God, the more accommodating it becomes; until finally, instead of accusing, it excuses almost any act of evil. It becomes not only defiled and polluted—it is all that by nature— but it becomes also seared as with a hot iron (1Ti 4:2). Man by nature, because he is ignorant of God's righteousness, goes about to establish his own righteousness.

(4) The only conceivable way for the natural man to establish his own righteousness is by means of his own works. This goes without saying. If I am to have a righteousness of my own establishing, it must be the result of my own good works. This was the method put to the test in the case of Israel. The righteousness which is of the law had only this word: The man which doeth those things shall live by them. Not trying, mark you! but doing. And not doing the best we can, but doing those things. The natural man has an idea that his good deeds and his evil deeds are to be weighed in a balance; and if the good weigh more than the evil, then everything will be all right. His case would be bad enough even then; but that is not the method. Far from it! In the law, God said to Israel: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might, and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. This has been called the concept of the mind of God. Well, at least it is the concept of the mind of God as to what man ought to be it is God's "idea of right and wrong. It is a statement of God's righteousness, the righteousness of God. There is nothing arbitrary about it. God demanded of Israel only that which was right, or righteous. It was their duty, even before He issued the law, to love God supremely, and their neighbours as themselves. It follows, therefore, that if the people of Israel were to establish their own righteousness, they could do it only by doing those things. There was no other possible way. And the same principle obtains with men everywhere and always. The Gentiles, though they have not the law, are yet bound by the same principle of righteousness as that contained in the law. As it is written, They show the work of the law written in their hearts (Rom 2:14-15) • It is their duty, as much as Israel's, to do right. And to do right means to do righteously. They, as well as Israel, are bound to love God supremely, and their neighbours as themselves. If they are to establish their own righteousness, this is the only way to do it. It is true universally that only he that doeth those things shall live by them. The only conceivable way for the natural man to establish his own righteousness is by means of his own works.

(5) But it is impossible for any man thus to establish his own righteousness. We have seen that the only conceivable way for the natural man to establish his own righteousness is by means of his own good works. But what if he is incapable of good works? What then? Ah, then is his case a hopeless one, indeed. And is not this the true state of the case? If it be true that man by nature is unrighteous, how then can he do a righteous act? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one! (Job 14:4). Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil (Jer 13:23). Man may do things which he considers righteous, but in God's sight we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isa 64:6). There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death (Pro 14:12). The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart (1Sa 16:1). In the days before the flood, men supposed they were making great progress. There were giants in the earth in those days. There were mighty men which were of old, men of renown. But what God thought of the matter was a far different thing. God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Gen 6:4-5). The end of all flesh came before God in that day, and never to this present time has God put any confidence in the flesh. The flesh, corrupt then, is corrupt now, and its works —the doings of the natural man—”are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like” (Gal 5:19-21). Now, how can righteousness come from such a source? When the fountain is poisoned, how can the stream be pure? What can the law of God, which is holy and righteous and good, do for the natural man, who is unholy and unrighteous and evil? Surely, it cannot produce righteousness in him. It can only condemn him and show him his helplessness. And this is the very purpose of the law. When it speaks, every mouth is stopped, and all the world is brought in guilty before God. By the deeds of the law no flesh is justified in God's sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20-21). The law of Moses, the ten commandments, written and engraven in stones, is not a ministration of life, but of death. It is not a ministration of righteousness but of condemnation (2Co 3:9). Let us remember that the law is an inflexible thing. It demands a flawless life of perfect obedience from the cradle to the grave. It brooks no slightest disobedience. If man keeps the whole law and stumbles in one point, he is guilty of all (Jas 2:10). It is not enough to try to be good. It will not do to try to do right. It will not suffice to have done the best we could. If a man is establishing his own righteousness, why, then, let him do it. But the Word of God will never call wrong by the name of right; it will never call evil good. Now, where is our natural man? Is he justified? Far from it! He is cursed. As the Scripture saith, As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them (Gal 3:10-12). Thus it is seen that it is impossible for any man to establish his own righteousness.

(6) On the other hand, to obtain the gift of God's righteousness in Christ is possible for every man. Whosoever will may come. The gift is for anyone who will have it. As there is no difference in God's sight between sinners, so there is no difference in respect of those invited. It is true that righteousness is not attainable by law-works, but now the righteousness of God apart from the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which

is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference (Rom 3:21-22). Not one member of the human race is excluded. White or black, rich or poor; whatever you are, whoever you are, wherever you are; no matter how sinful, no matter how vile, no matter what you have done, no matter what your record —"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1Jn 2:2). He is "the living God, Who is the Saviour of all men (1Ti 4:10). Hallelujah, what a Saviour! Behold, the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world! Think of it! God's righteousness, offered to every man! The Lord Jesus Christ, the end of the law for righteousness when He died on Calvary, tasted death for every man (Heb 2:9). No man will be able to plead that he was omitted from the great provision of salvation. The Lamb of God is the Saviour of all men. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. This text (Isa 53:6) opens and closes with the big-little word all. It is like a door, placed at each end of the text. If you are included in the former all, you are also included in the latter all. All includes everybody. As the little boy said of the like word, whosoever, it means you, or me, or anybody else. And He died for all. He died, for you, and me, and everybody else. He died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him Who for their sakes died and rose again (2Co 5:14-15). He died for you. Whoever you are He died for you. True, He died for others, but He died for you. If He had not died in your room and stead; if He had not died for you—for you— then you must needs perish for your sins. But He died for you that He might bring you to God —the living God, the giving God, Who waits for you to come to Him, that you might not perish but have everlasting life. He died for you! He died for me! Blessed be His holy name! For me! I must die if He had not—but He died for me—and now I have His promise that I shall never perish: that I shall never be plucked out of His hands: that I am accepted in the Beloved, that I am called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ. Hallelujah! He died for me! He died for everybody else! Everybody! Everybody! From Adam down to the last man in the human race, He died for them all. Before He died, many had been saved by faith in the Coming One; and since His death many have been saved by faith in the One Who came and died. He died for them all. But many were lost, before Calvary, and after. Yet He died for them. All their iniquities were laid upon Him. If they were lost, it was not His fault. If they went down to perdition, it was in spite of all He did for them. He died for them. He died for you, and me, and everybody else. To obtain the gift of God's righteousness in Christ is possible for every man.

(7) God's way of bestowing His righteousness upon unrighteous man is by grace through faith. We have seen man's helplessness to attain to righteousness by means of law works. The law could show him the need of righteousness; it could show him what righteousness was. But it could go no further. It could not make him righteous; it could not produce righteousness in him. But God, through the gospel of Christ, has met man's need just here. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit (Rom 8:3-4). What the law could not do, God did. But it had to be by grace, which is unmerited favor. Man could never have earned such a boon as the righteousness of God. He could not have deserved it. He deserved death, for that is the wages of sin. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were

dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph 2:4-9). And the gift by grace is through faith. As it is written, it is of faith, that it might be by grace (Rom 4:16). It is not a hard thing that is asked of man. No man may say in his heart, Christ must again be brought down from above, or up from the deep. The word is nigh us, even in our mouth and in our heart. We have only to receive God's perfect salvation, already wrought out and finished. It is all very simple. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Nothing could be clearer; nothing more beautiful. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. What a wonderful gospel! The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Eternal life, mind you! Not temporal, but eternal. Not temporary, but perpetual. Eternal! Everlasting! Not something you get now and lose after a while. Not that, but life, life, eternal life. The Good Shepherd, just before giving His life for the sheep, said, My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they .follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one (John 10:27-30). There are many persons in the world who will tell you they were once Christians, but not now. Surely, they could never have received the gift of God, which is eternal life. Eternal life is everlasting—it lasts forever! No, Christ does not suffer His sheep to perish. He is not a man that He should lie; and His own word is, they shall never perish. The gift is by faith. It is unto all and upon all that believe. And to believe, Scripturally, is to receive the Lord Jesus as one's personal Saviour. He came unto His own, and His own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name (John 1:11-12). He that thus believeth is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, not because he is a sinner, but because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (John 3:18). Do you ask what you are to believe? The answer is, You must believe God. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record: That God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life (1Jn 5:9-12). May God Himself help all who read these words to believe Him! For to believe Him is to obtain His gift of eternal life, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. God's way of bestowing His righteousness upon unrighteous man is by grace through faith. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?

8. For the Scripture saith (Rom 10:11). From this point in the chapter the writer's purpose is evidently the same as in Rom 4:1-25, namely, to show that this gospel-righteousness is no new thing; that this justification by faith has always been God's way of salvation. On this point several proof-texts are gathered from the Old Testament: For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame (compare Isa 28:16). For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him: for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Rom 10:11-13, R. V compare Joe 2:32).

9. How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? (14) At this point the inspired writer anticipates an objection, and again he sets up the imaginary opponent who puts these queries:

How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (Isa 52:7). But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? (Isa 53:1). So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

10. But I say, Have they not heard? (Rom 10:18). The imaginary opponent having availed himself of Old Testament quotations also, in an attempt to thrust back upon God the responsibility for Israel's failure, the apostle replies in the passage beginning at the 18th verse. We quote from the Revision here: But I say, Did they not hear? Yea, verily, Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world (Psa 19:4).

"But I say, Did Israel not know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation, with a nation void of understanding will I anger you (Deu 32:21).

"And Isaiah is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought Me not; I became manifest unto them that asked not of Me (Isa 65:1).

"But as to Israel He saith, All the day long did I spread out My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people (Isa 65:2).

Here are more quotations from the Old Testament, all tending to show that God had warned His chosen people. The first quotation is from the 19th Psalm, and the Holy Spirit's purpose in referring to it is to show that even where the message of God has not been carried by personal messengers, God has not left Himself without witness. Indeed, the entire Psalm is written to prove precisely that thing.

Nature itself reveals God to man. And that revelation is sufficient to make man responsible to God. Enough of God is revealed to man— every man—to make it his duty to worship the Maker of heaven and earth according to the measure of that revelation. The revelation through nature is not a small revelation; it is not, as has been said, the dim light of nature. God declares that by it the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, even His eternal power and divinity, so that they are without excuse (Rom 1:20). The heavens declare the glory of God;

The skies show forth the work of His hands.

Day unto day is pouring out speech,

And night unto night breathing knowledge.

Without speech and without language,

Without their voice being heard,

Into all the earth their sound goes forth,

To the end of the world their words.

(Psa 19:1-4, De Witt's rendering.) This Scripture from Psa 19:1-14 bears with crushing force upon the people of Israel. Surely, if the Gentile nations were held responsible before God, how much more the nation of Israel! The oracles of God had been committed to them. They were doubly responsible. Furthermore, they had been repeatedly warned that if they continued to despise the Word of God, it should go to the Gentiles. The quotations from Moses and Isaiah, cited above, are sufficient proof of this. Where Israel was groping and failing to find the Messiah, those who sought Him not clearly discerned Him. How can Israel be excused for ignorance of a worldwide gospel, when even the heathen discovered it? (Stifler).

02.18. III. Israel's Rejection Is Neither Complete nor Final (Chapter 11).

III. Israel's Rejection Is Neither Complete nor Final (Rom 11:1-36).

1. I say then, Hath God cast away his people? (Rom 11:1). Dr. Stifler says: This chapter from the historical point of view is logically necessary. The Old Testament clearly promises Israel headship or leadership in the world's worship. This primacy they had held from the days of Moses until the days of Paul, when the latter became the chief instrument in transferring it to 'another nation' (Mat 21:43), composed of elect persons called from all peoples (1Pe 2:9-10). This promise of headship was made to Israel not on the ground of their national descent, as the 9th chapter above shows, but, after all, it was a national promise. It belonged to the natural descent, and constituted their 'advantage.' It could not possibly be realized in the church, because the latter knew no racial distinctions. The essence of Judaism was separation from other people. Two facts stood out prominently in Paul's day: first, that the church for the present had displaced Israel in the leadership of God's worship in the world; secondly, that Israel had a promise in their 'oracles' that was not realized in the church and could not be; for the aim of the latter was not national separation, but diffusion, or, more exactly, election from all nations. The first question Paul has already considered in Rom 9:1-33 and Rom 10:1-21. Israel was justly displaced, and by their own fault. With the second fact the present chapter deals. Israel as a separate people is to be restored and to realize the promises made to them in the Old Testament. God's far-reaching plans in the riches of His wisdom for the salvation of the world are here disclosed, provoking the exultant hymn in Rom 11:33-36. Israel's present failure proves to be the world's wealth now and their own finally (Stifler).

2. God forbid! (Rom 11:1). This is Paul's wish, that God would forbid and prevent such a thing as the casting away of Israel. They were still His people, though they were disobedient and gainsaying.

3. For I also am an Israelite (Rom 11:1). If Israelites as such were cast off, then Paul would be included; and the fact that he had been saved was a strong argument to show that God had not yet cast away His people which He foreknew (Rom 11:2). That Israel has not been forever set aside is the theme of this chapter. (1) The salvation of Paul proves that there is still a remnant (Rom 11:1). (2) The doctrine of the remnant proves it (Rom 11:2-6). (3) The present national unbelief was foreseen (Rom 11:7-10). (4) Israel's unbelief is the Gentile opportunity (Rom 11:11-25). (5) Israel is judicially broken off from the good olive tree, Christ (Rom 11:17-22). (6) They are to be grafted in again (Rom 11:23-24). (7) The promised Deliverer will come out of Zion and the nation will be saved (Rom 11:25-29). That the Christian now inherits the distinctive Jewish promises is not taught in Scripture. The Christian is of the heavenly seed of Abraham (Gen 15:5-6; Gal 3:29), and partakes of the spiritual blessings of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 15:18); but Israel as a nation always has its own place, and is yet to have its greatest exaltation as the earthly people of God (Scofield Reference Bible).

4. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? (Rom 11:2-4). The reference is to 1Ki 19:10-18. Elijah supposed that he alone of all Israel remained true to God. He was mistaken, for God had preserved a remnant of seven thousand who had not turned aside to Baal worship.

5. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace (Rom 11:5). Paul himself was a proof of this, as well as the others in Israel who had accepted the Messiah and found salvation in Him.

6. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. We have quoted the entire verse, the remaining words in the King James Version being spurious. The 'no more' is not temporal, but logical. Grace and works are mutually exclusive methods. If the remnant was selected on the ground of grace, their legal works had no part whatever in the selection, else the grace would have lost its character as grace (Stifler).

7. What then? (Rom 11:7). What is the conclusion? This: Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for. Israel sought for righteousness but failed to find it, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law (Rom 9:31-32).

8. But the election hath obtained it (Rom 11:7). The elect remnant obtained what the nation as a whole failed to find.

9. And the rest were hardened (Rom 11:7, R. V.). The nation of Israel as such is lying under the judicial chastening of God.

10. According as it is written (Rom 11:8). The parenthesis here should be omitted, for the closing words of the verse are included in the quotation. The point is that in the Jew's own Scriptures all this had been clearly predicted beforehand; therefore he had been fully warned of the consequence of turning from God.

11. God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day (Rom 11:8, R. V.). Isa 29:10 and Deu 29:4 are combined in the citation, and the passages should be pondered, with their contexts. The teaching is very solemn. Long-continued abuse of God's grace brought a terrible punishment upon Israel. The principle is unfolded in Isaiah's dreadful commission (Isa 6:1-13). Let the reader carefully meditate upon that impressive scene. Isaiah had seen a vision of the King, Jehovah of hosts (Isa 6:5. It filled him with horror on account of his own sinful condition, and that of his people.

There is nothing like a look at the Lord Himself to reveal to man his utter uncleanness.

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts. A seraph thereupon flew unto the prophet, with a live coal from the altar, and, touching his mouth with it, announced the purging and forgiveness of his sins. Then came the voice of the Lord: Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? The prophet answered, Here am I; send me. Now, carefully observe the precise terms of his commission. We quote from the Revised Version: And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed ('continually' margin), but understand not; and see ye indeed ('continually,' mg.), but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn again, and be healed. The horror of the prophet at hearing these terrible

words may well be imagined. His agonized query was, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until cities be waste without inhabitants, and houses without man, and the land become utterly waste, and Jehovah have removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land. And if there be yet a tenth in it, it also shall in turn be eaten up: as a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remaineth, when they are felled; so the holy seed is the stock thereof.

Over and over again this Scripture is quoted in the New Testament and its fulfillment pointed out. In Mat 13:1-58, replying to a query as to why He had begun to teach the people in parables, our Lord replied:

Because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them.

"But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not (Mat 13:10-16; compare Mark 4:12; Luk 8:10). In John 12:39 it is declared that certain of our Lord's hearers were unable to believe. The whole passage is in John 12:37-41, as bearing upon this point: But though He had done so many signs before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? (Isa 53:1). For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and He hardened their heart; lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and should turn, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, because he saw His glory; and he spake of Him. The passage is again cited in Acts 28:26-27. The connection there also is full of solemn import. Paul had reached Rome in chains, and had called together the leaders among the Jews in that city (Acts 28:17). We quote Acts 28:23-28 : And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Spirit through Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers, saying, Go thou unto this people, and say, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles: they will also hear.

Thus there had come upon Israel to the uttermost the thing that was threatened, the inevitable consequence of hearing the Word of God and doing it not (compare Jas 1:22-25). And this judicial hardening continues upon Israel unto this very day also. Although nineteen centuries have come and gone since the epistle to the Romans was written, Israel is still hardened, still far from God,

still a people scattered and peeled, still dispersed and despised, still reckoned a curse among the nations.

12. And David saith (Rom 11:9-10). The Scripture quoted in these two verses is from one of the confessedly Messianic Psalms, Psa 69:1-36 (Psa 69:22-233). If anyone doubts that Christ is the theme of this Psalm, let him compare Psa 69:9 with John 2:17 and Rom 15:3; Psa 69:21 with Mat 27:34; Mat 27:48; Mark 15:23; Luk 23:36; John 19:28-30; Psa 69:22 with Rom 11:9-10; and Psa 69:25 with Mat 23:38; Luk 13:35; Acts 1:20. The Speaker throughout Psa 69:1-36 is undoubtedly Christ. At Psa 69:20 He says:

Reproach hath broken My heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity,-but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave Me also gall for My food; and for My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. This was fulfilled, as we know, on the cross (John 19:28). Then the divine Sufferer goes on, in the words of Psa 69:22-23, the words quoted in the passage we are now studying in Romans:

Let their table before them become a snare; and when they are in peace, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see; and take their loins continually to shake.

Again we have quoted from the Revised Version. The form of the words in Romans is that of the Septuagint, where the passage reads:

Let their table before them be for a snare, and for a recompense, and for a stumbling-block. Let their eyes be darkened, that they should not see; and bow down their back continually. In the word 'table,' says Dr. Stifler, there is a picture of men feasting, eating and drinking, unconscious that their enemies are just upon them. The Jew's carnal security while trusting in the law proved his spiritual ruin. But the quotation is poetic, and need not be rigidly defined. 'And bow (Thou) down their back alway' under the heavy legal yoke (Acts 15:10). The 'alway' does not mean forever, or the whole discussion concerning Israel must end here. 'Alway,' converted in a few cases by some editors into a phrase, occurs about seven times, and means continuously or without interruption (Luk 24:53; Heb 13:15). It is not an indefinite, but a limited term, limited by the circumstances of which it speaks.

13. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? (Rom 11:11). That they have fallen cannot be denied; but is this the end? Has Israel no future in God's purpose? Must we conclude that, since Israel has been unfaithful to God, therefore God will be unfaithful to Israel? Shall He forget His covenant? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Israel has stumbled, and fallen. Is this the end?

14. God forbid! (Rom 11:11). This is not the final outcome of their history. God had a purpose even in their stumbling and fall, and that purpose was a gracious and benign one. Through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles. And even this was not for the sake of the Gentiles only, for it was in God's mind by this means to provoke them (that is, the Jews) to jealousy. Emulation stands for the same Greek word in Rom 11:14, and is to be preferred, notwithstanding the action of the Revisers in using jealousy in both verses. Parazeloo is, literally, to stimulate alongside, and its force here is to excite to rivalry (Strong). The same word occurs in Rom 10:19 and 1Co 10:22. Dr. Moule calls attention, in connection with this chapter to the divine benignity which lurks even under the edges of the cloud of judgment. Continuing, he says: And observe, too, thus close to the

passage which has put before us the mysterious side of divine action on human wills, the daylight simplicity of this side of that action; the loving skill with which the world's blessing is meant by the grace of God to act, exactly in the line of human feeling, upon the will of Israel.

"But would that 'the Gentiles' had borne more in heart that last short sentence of St. Paul through these long centuries since the apostles fell asleep! It is one of the most marked, as it is one of the saddest, phenomena in the history of the church, that for ages, almost from the days of St. John himself, we look in vain either for any appreciable Jewish element in Christendom, or for any extended effort on the part of Christendom to win Jewish hearts to Christ by a wise and loving evangelization. With only relatively insignificant exceptions this was the abiding state of things till well within the eighteenth century, when the German Pietists began to call the attention of believing Christians to the spiritual needs and prophetic hopes of Israel, and to remind them that the Jews were not only a beacon of judgment, or only the most impressive and awful illustration of the fulfilment of prophecy, but the bearers of the yet unfulfilled predictions of mercy for themselves and for the world. Meanwhile, ail through the Middle Age, and through generations of preceding and following time also, Christendom did little for Israel but retaliate, reproach, and tyrannize. It was so of old in England: witness the fires of York. It is so in this day in Russia, and where the 'Judenhetze' inflames innumerable hearts in central Europe.

"No doubt there is more than one side to the persistent phenomena. There is a side of mystery; the permissive sentence of the Eternal has to do with the long affliction, however caused, of the people which once uttered the fatal cry, 'His blood be on us, and on our children!' (Mat 27:25). And the wrong-doings of Jews, beyond a doubt, have often made a dark occasion for a 'Jew-hatred,' on a larger or narrower scale. But all this leaves unaltered, from the point of view of the gospel, the sin of Christendom in its tremendous failure to seek, in love, the good of erring Israel. It leaves as black as ever the guilt of every fierce retaliation upon Jews by so-called Christians, of every slanderous belief about Jewish creed or life, of every unjust anti-Jewish law ever passed by Christian king or senate. It leaves an undiminished responsibility upon the church of Christ, not only for the flagrant wrong of having too often animated and directed the civil power in its oppressions of Israel, and not only for having so often neglected to seek the evangelization of Israel by direct appeals for the true Messiah, and by an open setting forth of His glory, but for the deeper and more subtle wrong, persistently inflicted from age to age, in a most guilty unconsciousness—the wrong of having failed to manifest Christ to Israel through the living holiness of Christendom. Here, surely, is the very point of the apostle's thought in the sentence before us: 'Salvation to the Gentiles, to move the Jews to jealousy.' In his inspired idea, Gentile Christendom, in Christ, was to be so pure, so beneficent, so happy, finding manifestly in its Messianic Lord such resources for both peace of conscience and a life of noble love, love above all directed towards opponents and traducers, that Israel, looking on, with eyes however purblind with prejudice, should soon see a moral glory in the church's face impossible to be hid, and be drawn as by a moral magnet to the church's hope. Is it the fault of God (may He pardon the formal question, if it lacks reverence), or the fault of man, man carrying the Christian name, that facts have been so woefully otherwise in the course of history? It is the fault, the grievous fault of us Christians. The narrow prejudice, the iniquitous law, the rigid application of exaggerated ecclesiastical principle, all these things have been man's perversion of the divine idea, to be confessed and deplored in a deep and interminable repentance. May the mercy of God awaken

Gentile Christendom, in a manner and degree as yet unknown, to remember this our indefeasible debt to this people, everywhere present with us, everywhere distinct from us;—the debt of a life, personal and ecclesiastical, so manifestly pure and loving in our Lord the Christ as to move them to the jealousy which shall claim Him again for their own. Then we shall indeed be hastening the day of full and final blessing, both for themselves and for the world (Handley C. G. Motile).

15. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world . . . how much more their fullness? (Rom 11:12-15). Everything worthwhile has come to the Gentile world through Israel. If such blessing has come through their stumbling and falling, far greater blessing is to come through their return to their own place in God's love and favor. Paul, as the apostle to the Gentiles, sought to stir his own kinsmen to emulation, for only through Israel's recovery is the worldwide blessing to come. Their casting away has brought reconciliation to Gentiles, but their own reconciliation will be as life from the dead. It is ever God's plan to bless the world through the Jew. In His own time,

He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit (Isa 27:6).

It is to this nation that the prophet calls, saying,

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples: but Jehovah shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising (resurrection from the dead!) (Isa 60:1-3). This is the order everywhere in the Scriptures of God. Israel must first come into the blessing, and then the Gentiles. Hear God's nation sing, in Psa 67:1-7 :

God be merciful to us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy salvation among all nations. . . . God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.

16. For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches (Rom 11:16). Num 15:21 interprets the former of these two figures. A handful of dough was presented to God as a token of the lump from which it was taken. By the first fruit here, Paul means the saved Jewish remnant, including himself and all believers in Israel. By the lump he means the whole nation. The root, strictly speaking, is Abraham (Gal 3:29), and the natural branches are his descendants according to the flesh through Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.

17. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches (Rom 11:17-24). In this discussion the point is that just as the nation of Israel through unbelief has temporarily lost its place of primacy and favor in the counsels of God, exactly so shall the Gentile peoples, if they believe not, be also cast aside. Men do not graft wild branches into good trees. God has acted contrary to nature in bringing salvation to Gentiles. To bring salvation to His own covenant people, which He will surely do in due time, will be a perfectly logical proceeding. And God is able.

18. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery (Rom 11:25-27). The Spirit of God here whispers a secret into the ear of the church of God—a revelation concerning God’s eternal purpose for His beloved ancient people. Lest we should be wise in our own conceits, God would have us to know that blindness (a hardening, R. V.) in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. The reader’s attention is directed to the comments on Rom 11:7-10, above. Observe, in addition, that the blindness, or hardening, is neither complete or final. It is not complete, for it is only in part. A remnant in Israel is turning to the Messiah (Rom 11:5, above). And it is not final, for it is only until the church is complete, which is His body, the fulness of Him (Eph 1:22-23).

19. And so all Israel shall be saved (Rom 11:26-27). The difficulty connected with these verses, which has given so much concern to commentators, will disappear when the punctuation is corrected. The statement is clear enough when we read, And so all Israel shall be saved as it is written. Everything is bound to come to pass as it is written. The Scriptures are emphatic in predicting that a time is coming when God will save the nation of Israel as such. Not a remnant, but the whole nation then living shall be converted and saved. This does not touch the case of Israelites who die in this present age rejecting the salvation of God, but it covers the whole nation that shall be left upon the earth at the time when the great blessing comes. All this will be brought about, of course, by the Lord Jesus Christ. He it is that shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. He has already come as the Redeemer, the Goel, to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob (Isa 59:20); but the nation refused to receive Him. Yet the foundation of God standeth sure, and all Israel shall be saved as it is written. He has not forgotten His promise, and in due time He will fulfill it in every jot and tittle. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. Let us look at the terms of His covenant unto them:

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith Jehovah: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith Jehovah, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah: for they shall ALL know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more (Jer 31:31-35).

20. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes (Rom 11:28-31). The Jews have rejected the gospel, and that puts them in the place of God’s enemies for the time being. Let the Gentiles take advantage of the opportunity; this is preeminently the Gentiles’ day. Let them not forget, though, that Israel is still an elect nation, and that to the fathers God made great and sure promises. “The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Having bestowed gifts and calling upon Israel, God will never take those gifts or that calling back; they are theirs forever; he does not change. The Gentiles have by their disobedience brought upon themselves the mercy of God; and just so shall the children of Israel by their disobedience bring upon themselves the mercy of God.

21. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief (Rom 11:32). The Revision is to be preferred here: For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all. His whole action with both Jew and Gentile comes to this, that He 'hath concluded (locked up as in a prison), them all in unbelief (with this grand purpose), that He might have mercy upon all.' There is nothing richer than His mercy. If the Jews, for instance, had obeyed Him, they could have experienced only His fidelity. Mercy, which wholly excludes privilege or merit, is the grand idea (Eph 2:4-5). The Jew will find his gifts and calling, but they come to Him as a matter of mercy—mercy that excludes 'boasting' (3:27).

"Authorities are divided on the meaning of 'all.' It certainly does not refer to the elect; the whole context forbids that. But does it mean all men, all individuals (Meyer, Alford), or all nations, the Jews and the Gentiles about whom Paul has been speaking? The context is decisive for the latter. This general principle, as some have failed to notice, describes God's attitude toward men, and not the outcome of that attitude. It does not contradict other plain Scriptures by teaching universal salvation, or salvation without faith. 'The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe' (Gal 3:22). The principle says nothing about the outcome of the divine mercy toward all. It simply declares that God has actively and directly locked up all in sin so that he may have mercy toward all; and that if they are saved they are saved by mercy.

"This is the final and complete explanation of the Jew's fall. He was by nature a sinner: God hedged that nature about with a rigid law to show him what his real character was. He tried to find liberty within its iron bars, but gets only slavery. Mercy alone can deliver him.

"The Gentile in Paul's day had no law, but sought liberty in wisdom, his own wisdom (Rom 1:21-22), and in his quest became a fool and a slave to his lust. God knows that man cannot save himself, that no form of civil government and no system of ethics, even though it be that of the Old or of the New Testament, can attain to liberty. But man does not know it; he is in the rough prison, shut up under sin to learn it, to learn that salvation cannot be reached by human effort, that it comes down from God, the absolute gift of His mercy.

"This divine purpose of mercy is not only the explanation of the Jew's fall, but of the continuance of the world in sin. It is the key to those terrible first chapters of the epistle. Universal condemnation leads to the universal principle of mercy. And what Paul saw in his world-wide view in his day, is still sadly true. The nations are in sin; Israel still refuses the Christ. The lesson of sin's prison-house is not yet learned; but what the elect have found out all along— that there is no hope in themselves—the nations will learn in due time, and man's works will cease, and God's principle of mercy toward all will bring salvation. God now elects men from both Jew and Gentile; Jew • and Gentile will then elect God. This thirty-second verse is the climax of the epistle (Stiller).

22. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! (Rom 11:33-36). Here the chapter, and the section, closes with a song of praise to God. How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! It is only as He reveals Himself that we can know Him at all (Compare Job 5:9; Job 11:7; Job 15:8). For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? (Isa 40:13-14). Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? (Job 35:7; Job 41:1). For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things: to Whom be glory forever. Amen.

02.19. Fourth Main Division: The Christian Walk

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(Rom 12:1-21, Rom 13:1-14, Rom 14:1-23, Rom 15:1-13) The strictly doctrinal portion of our epistle ends with Rom 11:1-36, and the remainder is occupied chiefly with exhortations to a Christian walk in accordance with what has been taught. This is ever the Holy Spirit's way, as seen throughout the Scriptures. Doctrine determines duty. Creed characterizes conduct. What a man really believes is revealed by what he does. For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he (Pro 23:7) This method of teaching is illustrated in Eph 5:8, where it is written, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. The doctrine precedes the exhortation, and furnishes the basis for it. And so it is in the closing section of Romans: these hortatory chapters are the outgrowth of the wonderful teaching of the preceding doctrinal ones. Here we shall find the whole ground of Christian life fully covered. First of all, the life must be yielded to God, and He must be in full possession (Rom 12:1-2). This is fundamental, and without it the Christian life cannot be normal. But let this point be settled—settled right, and once and for all—and great fruitfulness and blessing will result.

02.20. I. The: Living Sacrifice (12: 1, 2).

I. The: Living Sacrifice (Rom 12:1-2).

1. I beseech you (Rom 12:1). The verb here is *parakaleo*, from Paraclete, the Holy Spirit's title so often translated Comforter. It is also applied to the Lord Jesus as our Advocate (1Jn 2:1). The verb itself is frequently found in the New Testament, and is variously translated, beseech, call for, comfort, desire, exhort, intreat, and pray. It is a strong word, hard to render into English. But the Spirit uses it here, in seeking to induce His people to fully yield themselves to Him. It is as if God Himself were on His knees before His people, if we may so speak, begging them to once and for all give themselves over to Him, and thus enter into the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

2. Therefore (Rom 12:1). This word calls attention to all that has preceded it in the epistle. Doubtless, the special connection is with the argument which ends with Rom 8:1-39, the theodicy of Rom 9:1-33, Rom 10:1-21, Rom 11:1-36 being parenthetical; and yet it may well be that even those chapters were also in the writer's mind as he wrote the therefore. The practical exhortations which are to follow are based upon the doctrines already set forth. What the eye is in the body, that faith is to the soul, and the knowledge of divine things. Yet it has need of practical virtue, as the eye has need of hands and feet and the other parts of the body. And therefore the divine apostle in his doctrinal argument subjoins ethical instruction also (Theodoret).

3. Brethren (Rom 12:1). It is a message for the brethren, and not for the unbeliever. Let no one distort this passage into a gospel text. The unsaved sinner cannot give himself to God, and if he could the offering would not be acceptable. The only thing for a lost man to do is to receive the Lord Jesus as his personal Saviour. After that is done, he may speak of making an offering.

4. By the mercies of God (Rom 12:1). The mercies of God are surely exhibited in the gospel, as so graphically portrayed in the preceding chapters of our epistle. By these very facts, he says, I beseech you, by which ye were saved: as if anyone wishing to make an impression on one who had received great benefits, were to bring his benefactor himself to supplicate him (Chrysostom).

5. That ye present your bodies (Rom 12:1). The verb is connected with sacrifice. Present, says Dr. Stiffler, is a temple term for the bringing thither of anything to God. So Jesus was presented (Luk 2:22), and so Paul would present each believer (Col 1:28). He entreats the Romans to make themselves a sacrificial offering to God. The word 'present' occurs first in the epistle at Rom 6:13, a verse which this chapter now unfolds. It is there translated 'yield.' 'Bodies' is the comprehensive term for the whole man, body, soul, and spirit (1Th 5:23). It is equivalent to 'yourselves,' but better suited than the latter word to Paul's sacrificial idea.

6. A living sacrifice (Rom 12:1). The sacrificial victims under the old covenant were slain. But since the one sacrifice for all has been accomplished on Calvary there is no further need of dead sacrifices. What God wants is that we make a present of ourselves to Him, as living sacrifices, putting ourselves into His hand, for His pleasure.

7. Holy (Rom 12:1). We are holy brethren (Heb 3:1), by reason of the substitutionary sacrificial work of the Son of God on our behalf; we are sanctified (made holy) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb 10:10).

8. Acceptable unto God (Rom 12:1). How wonderful it is that we are permitted and enabled to make an acceptable offering, who were once sinners of the Gentiles! The glory for it all belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ; we are accepted in the Beloved, in Whom we have redemption through His blood (Eph 1:6-7).

9. Which is your reasonable service (Rom 12:1). The adjective here is logical. Alford renders it rational, and remarks that it is opposed to carnal or fleshly (see Heb 7:16). So Chrysostom: having in it nothing corporeal, nothing gross, nothing subject to sense. The contrast is between the fleshly sacrifices of Judaism and the spiritual sacrifices of the new dispensation (compare 1Pe 2:5; John 4:23-24).

10. And be not conformed to this age: but be ye transfigured (Rom 12:2). The two verbs used here, usually translated conformed and transformed, are radically different from each other:

(1) The former is from *suschematizo*, to fashion alike (Strong), or to become like shaped (H. A. W. Meyer). To be conformed to this age is to yield oneself to it, following the line of least resistance, as jelly in a mould, until one becomes like the age, having given up the good fight of faith. Thus Demas forsook Paul, having loved this present age (2Ti 4:10), and forgot Him Who gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver, us from this present evil age, according to the will of God and our Father (Gal 1:4). The word translated conformed is rendered in 1Pe 1:14, fashioning yourselves according.

(2) On the other hand, the word translated transformed is from *metamorphoo*, which gives us our English word metamorphosis, and means literally transfigured. The same Greek word is used in the gospel accounts of the transfiguration on the mount (see Mat 17:2; Mark 9:2). Our Lord's transfiguration did not result from outward conditions, but rather from an unveiling of that which was within. So we are called upon here to be transfigured. Quite a different word is rendered transform in 2Co 11:13-15, where Satan and his agents are said to be transformed into angels and messengers of light and righteousness. The word there is *metaschematizo*, and is defined by Strong as meaning to disguise. The same word reads transferred in 1Co 4:6—"These things ... I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes."

11. By the renewing of your mind (Rom 12:2). Renewing occurs but once elsewhere in the New Testament. In Tit 3:5 it is written, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit. This renewing is not our work, but the Spirit's. We are not called upon to renew our minds in order that we may be transfigured: we are only to yield ourselves unto God, and He does all the rest. In other words, as Alford puts it, the renewing of your mind is not the instrument by which, but the manner in which the metamorphosis takes place: that wherein it consists. The process is set forth clearly enough in 2Co 3:18, where it is written, But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transfigured (*metamorphoumetha*) into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord (Improved Version).

12. That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Rom 12:2). The R. V. marginal rendering here is: that ye may prove what is the will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect. Prove here has the force of discern or recognize.

Dr. Stifler warns us to beware of the chapter mark which cuts off these two verses from what precedes, as if an entirely new thought were taken up with Rom 12:1-21. These two verses are intimately connected with the summing up at the close of Rom 11:1-36. That summary led Paul to adoring worship as he viewed God's wide-reaching plans. And the idea of these two verses is worship evoked and provoked by the same view. The Romans are to present themselves for a rational service, a worship in which the spiritual reason leads. This worship is impossible except by men dis severed from conformity to the world. He who is ruled by the world's spirit and pursuits, to whom the world is the only great thing, cannot worship. The spring of the worship, as well as its power, is just what it was in Paul, a mind that discerns God's will in the dispensational ordering of the world to bring about its ultimate salvation (see Eph 3:14-21), a mind that sees that will as good and acceptable and perfect. When the corner-stone of creation was laid, all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:6-7); and he, too, will worship, who sees the corner-stone laid by God in Christ for the new creation. It takes mind (Rom 12:2) to know mind (Rom 11:34). These two mentions of the word look each other in the face across the chapter bar, and man's mind in its mortal activity never acts normally except in adoring worship. 'Present your bodies' is the first step. 'That ye may prove the will' is then, first of all, His will in Christ for the redeeming of the nations, Jew and Gentile. And only as this will is known can anyone see how he is himself to act. The renewed mind dwelling on the sublime purposes of God gains an increasing delicacy of discernment of its own moral action, and is prepared for personal guidance in all questions of duty and living, and to occupy spiritual offices acceptably. It is at this point that Paul branches off on duties. The qualification to discharge them is a knowledge of God's ways.

02.21. II. The Yielded Life in Service (12:3-8).

II. The Yielded Life in Service (Rom 12:3-8).

1. For I say (Rom 12:3). The apostle speaks with authority, through the grace (i. e., the gift) given unto him.
2. To every man (Rom 12:3). He says it not to this person or that person only, but to ruler and ruled, to bond and free, to simple and wise, to woman and man (Chrysostom.)
3. Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think (Rom 12:3). There is a play on the words here in the original, which can only be clumsily conveyed in another language: 'not to be high-minded, above that which he ought to be minded, but to be so minded as to be sober minded' (Alford).
4. According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith (Rom 12:3). Reference is made here to the differing gifts for service in the church which is the body of Christ. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him (1Co 12:18).
5. We are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another (Rom 12:5). This is illustrated in Rom 12:4, as in 1Co 12:12, by the human body, which, though it is one body, has many members with differing functions.
6. Having then gifts (Rom 12:6-8). As these gifts differ according to the grace that is given to us, that is according to the will of God Who bestows the gifts, we are to minister, each one according to his own gift and place in the body. There are seven gifts enumerated (compare Eph 4:8-12; 1Co 12:28). The seven gifts are named in order in this passage, and believers are here exhorted, each to minister according to his own gift from God by the Spirit:

(1) Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith (Rom 12:6). The New Testament prophet is one that speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort (1Co 14:3). A prophet is a forth teller of the mind of God. The Old Testament prophets were called upon to do this apart from the written Word, for the Word of God was not yet complete; but, now that the Scriptures are finished, the prophet of God speaks according to that which is written. To be a prophet is a high privilege, and this gift is the first named here. In 1Co 14:1 we are exhorted to follow after love, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. It is a great thing to be a mouthpiece for the Spirit of God. Yet this must be done within certain well-defined limits: the prophet must prophesy according to the proportion of faith. Dr. Stifler says that faith does not mean here body of doctrine. It is the prophet's own personal trust. There was dealt to him a measure of faith (Rom 12:3 above) for this work. God gave him an insight into the gospel of Christ. Let his prophecy not go beyond that and become vainglorious and arrogant. Men who have an office are under strong temptation to go beyond what they know in it. Thus they greatly injure themselves in coming to believe the utterances of their own ignorance, and they mislead others, who believe them because they are accredited teachers. Let the prophet rigidly limit his gift by the

faith of his gift.

(2) Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering (Rom 12:7, R. V.). Preachers are often spoken of as the ministry, as if they were the only ministers in the church. In a very true sense the whole church is a body of ministers, for the word means a servant. The passage here reads, eite diakonian, en te diakonia —"if service, in the service." But, it may be observed that the Greek word for servant is the word for deacon; and possibly the office of deacon is in view here. Let them be occupied with their diaconate, that is, their ministry or service. In connection with the word, ministry, it is interesting to note the change made by the Revisers in Eph 4:11-12, where the purpose of the risen Christ in bestowing gifts upon His church is set forth. The King James Version reads: And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

These persons are what the modern church calls the ministry. They are only Christ's gifts bestowed upon the church which is His body, for a very definite purpose; namely, according to the common Version: for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ This is confusing, for it seems to separate "the ministry into a class distinct from the saints. Now observe the Revised rendering of the passage: And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ.

Still clearer is the 1911 Bible: And he hath given some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; unto the perfecting of the saints for the doing OF SERVICE, for the building up of the body of Christ.

(3) Or he that teacheth, on teaching (Rom 12:7). The gift to teach is necessarily in some degree included in the gift of prophecy. The teacher is an expounder of the Word of God. Let him expound that Word according to the proportion of faith. Let him teach in the sphere, within the bounds, of the teaching allotted to him by God, or for which God has given him the faculty (Alford).

(4) Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation (Rom 12:8). A most interesting word is this: eite ho parakalon, en te paraklese. Notice here that the root word for Paraclete is used. The same word in its verb form is translated beseech in the first verse of our chapter. Within limitations, the exhorter is to be a paraclete or comforter to his fellow-believers. This gift also is closely connected with the gift to prophesy. In 1Co 14:31 it is written: For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted (Gk., parakalontai). In 1Ti 4:13 the gift of teaching is linked with that of exhortation:

"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation (paraklese), to doctrine (didaskalia, translated teaching in Rom 12:7).

(5) He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity (Rom 12:8). Some have supposed that this refers to those who were appointed in the church for the giving of alms to the poor, while others hold that it includes those who give money to the church for the support of the gospel. In any case, the principle is the same. For simplicity the Revision reads liberality; the Greek is singleness (compare Mat 6:22; Luk 11:34; Eph 6:5; Col 3:22).

(6) He that ruleth, with diligence (Rom 12:8). This, declares Dr. Stifler, is a faulty rendering. The apostolic church had no rulers. It ought to be, 'He that presides' or 'superintends.' Paul may have referred in this term to their elders (1Th 5:12; 1Ti 5:17). Dean Alford says: He that ruleth or presideth— but over what? If over the church exclusively, we come back to offices again: and it is hardly likely that the rulers of the church, as such, would be introduced so low down in the list, or by so very general a term, as this. In 1Ti 3:4-5; 1Ti 3:12, we have the verb used of presiding over a man's own household: and in its absolute usage here, I do not see why that also should not be included. Mr. Grant has a helpful note. He says: Next, we have 'He that ruleth' or 'He that leadeth.' The leader is of necessity, to a large extent, the ruler also, but there is no absolute rule, except that of the Spirit, in the church of God; but he that realizes that he is leading others has, of necessity, much responsibility attaching to this. If his word is weighty, he must be the more careful. The apostle says here, he must rule or lead 'with diligence,' that is, not careless of what he is doing, not at random, but as giving thought and care to that which is having effect upon the minds of others.

(7) He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness (Rom 12:8). The word mercy as used here has no reference to sins, nor to the forgiveness of sins. The reference is to those in the church having a special gift to aid those who are in trouble. Let them do it with cheerfulness, for it is a glad service. Perhaps this is the gift of helps mentioned in 1Co 12:28.

02.22. III. The Yielded Life in Fellowship (12: 9-16a).

III. The Yielded Life in Fellowship (Rom 12:9-16 a).

1. Let love be without dissimulation (Rom 12:9). The Revision reads, without hypocrisy, and others translate, Let love be unfeigned. Love is not love unless it be real. This exhortation comes first in the paragraph on Christian communion, for love is the basis of all real fellowship in the body of Christ. The fruit of the Spirit is, first of all, love (Gal 5:22).

2. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good (Rom 12:9). The love of evil and the love of good are mutually exclusive passions. Therefore, ye that love Jehovah, hate evil (Psa 97:10). If ye would learn to do well, then ye must cease to do evil (Isa 1:16-17). Good and evil are two masters which no man can serve together (Mat 6:24). Let us not fail to observe the connection in which we find this exhortation; it is preceded and followed by words about love. Our love for one another, then, is not to blind us to the evil that we may see in one another. We are to abhor the evil, even while loving the person in whom we may find the evil. And in such a case we shall be the more faithful in seeking to deliver the person from the evil that entangles him and help him to cleave to that which is good.

3. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love (Rom 12:10). Weymouth reads here, As for brotherly love, be affectionate to one another. It is not enough to love: we ought to demonstrate the love we have toward one another. Demonstrativeness is hateful when true affection is absent; but where love abides it ought to manifest itself.

4. In honor preferring one another (Rom 12:10). This is true humility, or meekness, always the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:23). In Eph 5:18-21 the Spirit-filled church is seen, with the members submitting themselves one to another in the fear of Christ (R. V.). William Wye Smith's Scotch New Testament has it: And be-na ye fou' wi' wine, in whilk is riot; but be ye fou' o' the Spirit, speakin' amang yersels in psalms and hymns, and godly sangs, liltin' and makin' music i' yere hearts till the Lord, at a' times giean thanks for a' things, i' the name o' oor Lord Jesus Christ, till yere God and Eaiter. Pittin' yersels aneath ane anither, in the fear o' Christ. There is no power in the universe that can produce a picture like that but the power of the Holy Spirit of God.

5. Not slothful in business (Rom 12:11). A wrong translation! The Revisers render the phrase, In diligence not slothful. So also, Young, the Englishman's Greek New Testament, Grant, and many other translators. Darby reads, As to diligent zealouslyness, not slothful. Weymouth's rendering is, Do not be indolent when zeal is required. This is somewhat paraphrastic, but it probably hits upon the true meaning of the passage.

6. Fervent in spirit (Rom 12:11). Lukewarmness has no place in the Christian life (Rev 3:15-16). It is the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man that availeth much (Jas 5:16).

7. Serving the Lord (Rom 12:11). This is the climax of all that precedes in the entire chapter. Moffatt puts the whole of the nth verse thus: Never let your zeal flag; maintain the spiritual glow;

serve the Lord.

8. Rejoicing in hope (Rom 12:12). Rejoicing in the hope is how it is written in the Greek. What is referred to is the hope of the gospel (Col 1:23), the blessed hope of our Lord's return (Tit 2:11-13).

9. Patient in tribulation (Rom 12:12). This we had in the 5th chapter, with the basis for it. The Christian is able to glory in tribulation: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

10. Continuing instant in prayer (Rom 12:12). For instant, read steadfastly (R. V.). This entire verse also ought to be read together. Conybeare and Howson translate it: In your hope be joyful; in your sufferings be steadfast; in your prayers be unwearied.

11. Distributing to the necessity of saints (Rom 12:13). Distributing is better than the Revisers' communicating; but the 1911 Bible is better than either: contributing to the necessities of the saints. We are to share what we have with one another and thus relieve each other's needs (Heb 13:16).

12. Given to hospitality (Rom 12:13). The Greek is pursuing hospitality—running after it. We have here not the usual word for given, and it is not elsewhere in the New Testament so translated. We have the same English expression, given to hospitality, in 1Ti 3:2, but in the original it is merely hospitable—philoxenon, literally, fond of guests. But in the passage now before us in Rom 12:13 it is hospitality pursuing—philo xenian diokentes, literally, running after a fondness for guests—addicted to hospitality as to a strong habit. It is a fine old habit, all the sweeter as it becomes rarer. Let us be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares (Heb 13:2; Gen 18:3; Gen 19:2).

13. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not (Rom 12:14). This is the principle of Mat 5:44; Luk 6:28; 1Co 4:12. Unnatural, and impossible, except by the power of the Holy Spirit; but this is the way of blessedness.

14. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep (Rom 12:15). This is true sympathy, or fellow-feeling. It is often more natural to weep with weeping ones than to rejoice with rejoicing ones, for this latter form of sympathy is frequently hindered by envy; but in the church which is His body, the organism consisting of His born-again ones, the indwelling Holy Spirit, when unhindered, always produces sympathy among the members of the body; and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it (1Co 12:26).

15. Be of the same mind one toward another (Rom 12:16). The thought is closely connected with that which precedes it. Weymouth translates: Have full sympathy with one another. Darby: Have the same respect one for another. Moffatt: Keep in harmony with one another.

16. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate (Rom 12:16). "Condescend is rejected by Stifler as an unfortunate word:

Condescension has no place in the church. Some render, 'be carried away with' the lowly—give yourself to them. The world neglects and despises them; Christ loves them and died for them.

There is often more genuine worth and manhood in the alleys than in the avenues; and Christian love goes where love is most needed. It is 'carried away' in the service of need. Christ in help to one lowly woman was so 'carried away' that He had no desire to eat (John 4:31-32). The 1911 Bible reads: Set not your mind on high things, but go along with the lowly. Wakefield has it: Set not your mind on high things, but be guided by humility.

02.23. IV. The Yielded Life in Relation to the World (12:16b-21).

IV. The Yielded Life in Relation to the World (Rom 12:16-21).

1. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil (Rom 12:16-17). This is quoted from Pro 3:7, which, according to the Septuagint version, reads: Be not wise in thine own conceit; but fear God, and depart from evil. Rotherham, in the Romans citation, reads: Be not getting presumptuous in your own opinion: unto one evil for evil rendering. In 1Pe 3:9 it is written: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

2. Provide things honest in the sight of all men (Rom 12:17). This intensely important word, repeated in effect in 2Co 8:21, and elsewhere often insisted upon, is another Old Testament quotation, being from Pro 3:4, in the Septuagint.

3. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men (Rom 12:18). This is closely connected with what follows. Dr. Young gives the whole paragraph thus:

If possible —so far as in you—with all men being in peace; not avenging yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath, for it hath been written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will recompense again, saith the Lord;’ if, then, thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he doth thirst, give him drink; for this doing, coals of fire thou shalt heap upon his head; be not overcome by the evil, but overcome, in the good, the evil. The first part of the quotation is from Deu 32:35 and is cited again in Heb 10:30. The remainder of the passage is from Pro 25:21-22. He who cannot be moved from the basis of love, says Dr. Stifler, is a victor even though he cannot win his enemy. To win himself is a much greater triumph.

Now let the reader look back over this marvellous chapter. It is full of impossibilities from the natural standpoint, yet it is the practical, normal Christian life. Victory comes through a definite yielding of the body into God’s hands as a living sacrifice. This is indeed our reasonable service. Here is where world-conformity ends and heavenly transfiguration begins. Thus, and thus only, is the goal to be reached—the goal of triumph. Thus, and only thus, can God’s child avoid being overcome of evil. Thus only can he overcome evil with good.

02.24. V. The Yielded Life in Relation to Civil Government (13:1-7)..

V. The Yielded Life in Relation to Civil Government (Rom 13:1-7)..

1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers (Rom 13:1). It has been well observed, says Alford, that some special reason must have given occasion to these exhortations. We can hardly attribute it to the seditious spirit of the Jews at Rome, as their influence in the Christian church there would not be great; indeed, from Acts 28 the two seem to have been remarkably distinct. But disobedience to the civil authorities may have arisen from mistaken views among the Christians themselves as to the nature of Christ's kingdom, and its relation to existing powers of this world. And such mistakes would naturally be rife there, where the fountain of earthly power was situated: and there also best and most effectually met by these precepts coming from apostolic authority. The way for them is prepared by Rom 12:17 ff. 1Pe 2:13 ff. is parallel. The word for be subject is more literally rendered, submit himself. And the exhortation is for every soul: on which Dr. Stifler remarks that none is exempt, not even the pope.

2. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God (Rom 13:1). The word for power throughout this passage is *exousia*, and refers to civil governmental authority. Civil government has its source in God, and all constituted power is appointed and ordained by him. The cruel abuses in government are no necessary part of them and do not invalidate their divine charter any more than the r abuses of marriage rob it of its sacredness. Any government is preferable to anarchy, just as poorly enforced marriage laws are better than none. Man abuses all God's gifts (Stiller).

3. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God (Rom 13:2). The writers have labored hard and long over this sentence. Dr. Stifler says that teaching and agitation for better government is not forbidden here if these do not lead to resistance, but under this principle it is hard to see how a Christian can lead in a rebellion. Paul's words are unmistakable, and yet there stand Cromwell and Washington! H. A. W. Meyer says that Paul has certainly expressed the divine right of magistracy, which Christian princes specially designate by the expression 'by the grace of God' (since the time of Louis the Pious). And *ai de ousai*, the extant, actually existing, allows no exception such as that possibly of tyrants or usurpers (in opposition to *Reiche*). The Christian, according to Paul, ought to regard any magistracy whatever, provided its rule over him subsists *de facto*, as divinely ordained, since it has not come into existence without the operation of God's will; and this applies also to tyrannical or usurped power, although such a power, in the counsel of God, is perhaps destined merely to be temporary and transitional. From this point of view, the Christian obeys not the human caprice and injustice, but the will of God, who—in connection with His plan of government inaccessible to human insight—has presented even the unworthy and unrighteous ruler as the *ousa exousia* (the existing authority—the power that is), and has made him the instrument of His measures. Questions as to special cases—such as how the Christian is to conduct himself in political catastrophes, what magistracy he is to look upon in such times as the *ousa exousia*, as also, how he, if the command of the magistrate is

against the command of God, is at any rate to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29), etc.—Paul here leaves unnoticed, and only gives the main injunction of obedience. By no means, however, are we to think only of the magisterial office as instituted by God (Chrysostom, Oecumenius, and others), but rather of the magistracy in its concrete persons and members as the bearers of the divinely ordained office. Dean Alford observes that the apostle here pays no regard to the question of the duty of Christians in revolutionary movements. His precepts regard an established power, be it what it may. It, in all matters lawful, we are bound to obey. But even the parental power does not extend to things unlawful. If the civil power commands us to violate the law of God, we must obey God before man. If it commands us to disobey the common laws of humanity, or the sacred institutions of our country, our obedience is due to the higher and more general law, rather than to the lower and particular. These distinctions must be drawn by the wisdom granted to Christians in the varying circumstances of human affairs; they are all only subordinate portions of the great duty of obedience to law. To obtain, by lawful means, the removal or alteration of an unjust or unreasonable law, is another part of this duty: for all authorities among men must be in accord with the highest authority, the moral sense. But even where law is hard and unreasonable, not disobedience, but legitimate protest, is the duty of the Christian.

4. And they that resist shall receive to themselves judgment (Rom 13:2). The King James Version's damnation here is far too strong. The Revisers' word, judgment, is to be preferred above condemnation for, although God may judge a Christian, He cannot condemn him. The thought is precisely paralleled in 1Co 11:29-32, where Christians are exhorted to take heed how they partake of the Lord's Supper:

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. The teaching here, then, is that God Himself will deal with those who resist the authority of civil government. In resisting the powers that be, they are resisting Him; and they shall receive to themselves judgment from Him. The judgment may come through the powers, but it is from God, nevertheless.

5. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil (Rom 13:3). Tholuck and others infer from this verse that Paul wrote the epistle prior to the terrible persecutions of the Christians during Nero's reign; and Alford thinks that had this been otherwise, the principle stated by the apostle would have been the same, though he could hardly have passed so apparent an exception to it without remark. It is clear that the general principle is what is in mind here, rather than its application in specific instances. Generally speaking, rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil. If one would be free from fear of the civil power, then, let him do good and he will have praise rather than punishment. It is true, as observed by Meyer, that when Paul wrote these words, it was still the better time of Nero's rule; but, as the same writer goes on to say, the proposition has a general validity, which is based on the divinely-ordained position of the magistracy, and is not annulled by their injustices in practice, which Paul had himself so copiously experienced. Let the ruler remember that he is a minister of God ... for good (Rom 13:4), and not for evil.

6. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain (Rom 13:4). Those who advocate the abolition of capital punishment forget that the state has divine authority

for bearing the sword and using it. The ruler is not only a minister of God for good unto well-doers, but he is also the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. The original charter of human government is written in the Noahic Covenant, and this has never been abrogated; it remains in full force: At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man (Gen 9:5-6).

7. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. Christians are to submit themselves to the civil authority, not in fear of its wrath, but in obedience to their own consciences as enlightened by the Word of God. They obey the government for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king (1Pe 2:13-17).

8. For for this cause pay ye tribute also. The public officers must be supported, since they are God's ministers, attending continually upon the exercise of their duties in administering the affairs of government. Tribute, here, is direct taxation for the expenses of state. Custom, in Rom 13:9, is toll, or tax upon produce. Tertullian declared that what the Romans lost by the Christians refusing to bring offerings to the heathen temples was more than made up by their willing payment of taxes.

9. Render therefore to all their dues (Rom 13:7). Whether tribute, or custom, or fear, or honour, let not the Christian fail in any respect towards these public ordained ministers of God who occupy places of authority over him.

02.25. VI. The Law of the Yielded Life (8-14).

VI. The Law of the Yielded Life (Rom 13:8-14).

1. Owe no man anything, but to love one another (Rom 13:8). The law of Sinai provided against debt: Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning (Lev 19:13). And elsewhere the Word warns against debt: The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender (Pro 22:7). But there is one debt that can never be fully cancelled; namely, the debt of love. We must go on loving, and as we do so we are in principle fulfilling the law: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law, so far as that other is concerned. The law against adultery, killing, stealing, lying, coveting, and every other sin against men, is all summed up in one word, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom 13:9-10; compare Mat 22:39; Luk 10:29-37).

2. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep (Rom 13:11). The great New Testament incentive to holiness is now brought forth. And that ought rather to read And this. That is, and let us do this—live without debt except to love—for this great reason added to all the others; namely, that now is our salvation nearer than when we (first) believed (see R. V.). Our Lord's return is the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1Pe 1:5). The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof—i. e., make no provision for the gratification of selfish desires. All this will be accomplished if we really put on the Lord Jesus Christ. So we say of friends, says Chrysostom:

'Such an one has put on such an one' when we mean to describe great love and unceasing intercourse. Our Lord Himself often used the truth of His return to stimulate His disciples to watchfulness and holiness, and so also did the writers of the New Testament epistles. It is to this blessed hope that Paul directs his readers in the closing paragraph of Rom 13:1-14. On this paragraph Dean Alford says:

Without denying the legitimacy of an individual application of this truth, and the importance of its consideration for all Christians of all ages, a fair exposition of this passage can hardly fail to recognize the fact that the apostle here as well as elsewhere (1Th 4:17; 1Co 15:51), speaks of the coming of the Lord as rapidly approaching. Prof. Stuart and others are shocked at the idea, as being inconsistent with the inspiration of his writings. How this can be, I am at a loss to imagine. 'OF THAT DAY AND HOUR KNOWETH NO MAN, NO NOT THE ANGELS IN HEAVEN, NOR EVEN THE SON, BUT THE FATHER' (Mark 13:32). And to reason, as Stuart does, that because St. Paul corrects in 2Th 2:1-17 the mistake of imagining it to be immediately at hand (or even actually come, see note there), therefore he did not himself expect it soon, is surely quite beside the purpose. The fact that the nearness or distance of that day was unknown to the apostles, in no

way affects the prophetic announcements of God's Spirit by them, concerning its preceding any accompanying circumstances. The 'day and hour' formed no part of their inspiration; the details of the event did. And this distinction has singularly and providentially turned out to the edification of all subsequent ages. While the prophetic declaration of the events of that time remain to instruct us, the eager expectation of the time, which they expressed in their day, has also remained, a token of the true frame of mind in which each succeeding age (and each succeeding age more strongly than the last) should contemplate the ever-approaching coming of the Lord. On the certainty of the event our faith is grounded: by the uncertainty of the time our hope is stimulated, and our watchfulness aroused (The New Testament for English Readers).

Hallelujah! Maranatha! Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

02.26. VII. The Yielded Life in Relation to Weak Brethren (14:1 to 15:7).

VII. The Yielded Life in Relation to Weak Brethren (Rom 14:1-23, Rom 15:1-7).

1. Him that is weak in the faith receive ye (Rom 14:1). The believer's normal attitude towards his weak brother in Christ is epitomized in this brief exhortation. Despite his weakness, he is a brother, and he ought to be acknowledged as such, received as such; and every action towards him should be in view of this relationship. The all-sufficient reason is given in the final verse of the section: Wherefore receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God (Rom 15:7)

2. But not to doubtful disputations (Rom 14:1). The margin here is, Not to judge his doubtful thoughts. The English Revisers have in their margin, not for decisions of doubts; and the American Revision has, in the text, not for decision of scruples. The meaning is plain. We are to receive our weak brethren as brethren, and not merely for purposes of argumentation. Receive them as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

3. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Rom 14:1-23 and 1Co 8:1-13 are devoted to the question whether Christians should eat meat which had been offered to idols. It was a burning question in the early churches. Large quantities of meat were brought to the numerous heathen temples and presented in the worship of idols. Of course, the idols had no use for it, and even the priests could not consume all of it, and therefore it was sold to the public through the markets. This made it almost if not quite impossible for one to discover whether the meat on his own table had not come from an idol's temple. The stronger Christians cared not for this, believing that they might eat all things. They knew that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one (1Co 8:4). Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge, and these weaker brethren found themselves unable to eat of a thing offered to an idol (1Co 8:7). To go on eating these things was to defile their conscience, and in order to be on the perfectly safe side, they ate herbs; that is, they confined their diet to vegetables.

4. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth (Rom 14:3). The need for this exhortation may be readily understood. The strong in faith would be under temptation to despise or set at nought his weaker brother (see Rom 14:10); while the weak in faith would be liable to censure his stronger' brother. But this must be avoided: we must not despise our brother, nor judge him, for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? (R. V.). To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand (Rom 14:3-4).

5. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike (Rom 14:5). Here was another problem, and one that may come nearer home, for it is a present-day problem. What is to be done in such a case? Some are stronger than others, and clearer on the doctrines of grace. They deny any man's right to judge them, in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath: which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of

Christ (Col 2:16-17). They declare their liberty from the law, and insist that their freedom has been too dearly bought to be easily surrendered; they are constantly exhorting us to stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage (Gal 5:1). On the other hand, there are weaker brethren who cannot see this at all. These dear ones are fearful; they are shocked to hear men talk of their eternal security in Christ: they are timid; they hope it will be all right and that they will somehow be saved at last; but they insist that there is such a thing as being too sure. What then? how shall these dear ones be dealt with? are they to be despised? or, are we to enter into doubtful disputations with them, and seek to decide their scruples for them? Nay, since God hath received them, let us also receive them, and love them, and pray for them, and bear with them. Meanwhile, let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. True it is, brethren, that ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another (Gal 5:13). Ye must take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak (1Co 8:9).

6. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord (Rom 14:6). The remainder of this sentence is omitted from the Revision, because it is not found in the best manuscripts. Dr. Moffatt translates: The man who values a particular day does so to the Lord. The eater eats to the Lord, since he thanks God for his food; the non-eater abstains to the Lord, and he too thanks God. For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself; if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. Thus we are the Lord's whether we live or die (Rom 14:6-8).

7. For to this end Christ died and lived again (Rom 14:9). We quote the Revision, much to be preferred here. The purpose in Christ's death and resurrection was to establish His lordship over all—"that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living." In 2Co 5:14-15, it is written that One died for all, therefore all died: and He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him Who for their sakes died and rose again.

8. But why dost thou judge thy brother? (Rom 14:10). This challenge, addressed to the weaker Christian, is at once followed by another aimed at the stronger one: Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? This is not the time for judging. There is a time coming when the saints shall judge the world (1Co 6:2), but meanwhile, we are to judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God (1Co 4:5)

9. For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God (Rom 14:10). This is the correct reading, rather than the judgment seat of Christ, as in the King James Version. The thought of the passage is that each individual must answer for himself and not for another, for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God (Rom 14:11-12; compare Isa 45:23; Php 2:10-11). The exhortation of the thirteenth verse follows logically: Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. The judgment that is needed' is self-judgment rather than the judging of others (1Co 11:31-32)

10. I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself. Paul saw his liberty fully; he was not under law, but under grace (Rom 6:14); he knew that the Lord Jesus had brought an end to the law (Rom 10:4); that he had set aside the dietary requirements of the

law of Moses, making all meats clean (Mark 7:19, R. V.); and he taught clearly in all his epistles that every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer (1Ti 4:4-5)

11. But to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean (Rom 14:14). In such a case, it is better to abstain, because he that doubteth is condemned (that is, self-condemned) if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Rom 14:23); therefore he writes: If your brother is being injured because you eat a certain food, then you are no longer living by the rule of love. Do not let that food of yours ruin the man for whom Christ died. Your rights must not get a bad name (Rom 14:15-16, Moffatt).

12. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom 14:17). It is as if the Holy Spirit Himself had become tired of writing about eating and drinking, and longed to lead the Lord's people out of such low considerations and into the higher atmosphere of the kingdom of God. Observe the order of these elements in the kingdom of God; first righteousness, then peace, then joy, in the Holy Spirit. No peace apart from righteousness! It is when we have been justified by faith that we enter into peace with God (Rom 5:1), and this peace leads to joy. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ...and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom 5:1-2). This is the right view of Christian living. As Moffatt again translates:

You must not break down God's work for the mere sake of food! Everything may be clean, but it is wrong for a man to prove a stumbling block by what he eats; the right course is to abstain from flesh or wine or indeed anything that your brother feels to be a stumbling-block. Certainly keep your own conviction on the matter, as between yourself and God; he is a fortunate man who has no misgivings about what he allows himself to eat. But if anyone has doubts about eating and then eats, that condemns him at once; it was not faith that induced him to eat, and any action that is not based on faith is a sin (Rom 14:18-23)

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves (Rom 15:1). The rule of Christian love given in Rom 14:21 is here reiterated and amplified: Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification (Rom 15:2), and for the very good reason that even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me (Rom 15:2-3; compare Psa 69:9; 1Pe 2:23).

14. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope (Rom 15:4). This illuminating reference to the Old Testament Scriptures is used here to sum up the exhortation begun in Rom 14:1, and is followed by the prayer of Rom 15:5-6, and the final word of Rom 15:7.

02.27. VIII. Confirming Promises and Showing Mercy (15:8-13).

VIII. Confirming Promises and Showing Mercy (Rom 15:8-13).

1. Now I say (Rom 15:8). The true reading is, For I say, as given in the Revision, and Dr. Stiffler explains that the for introduces the long passage following to show how Christ received both parties. The word 'meat' and the words 'strong' and 'weak' are not again used; but instead the two nationalities in the church appear, the Jew and the Gentile, showing that the division in dietary matters ran in the main between these two. The Jew would be the weak man, the Gentile the strong; but there were doubtless exceptions on both sides.

2. That Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers (Rom 15:8). The ministry of Christ was to the Jew first. Great and wonderful promises had been made to Israel, and these promises must be redeemed; so Christ became a servant to the circumcised in order to prove God's honesty (Moffatt); or, in vindication of God's truthfulness—in showing how sure are the promises made to the fathers (Weymouth). Many of these Old Testament promises were fulfilled in connection with the first advent of Christ. Every jot and tittle was accomplished which had relation to the sufferings of Christ, and the remaining promises were reiterated and confirmed. The Lord Jesus is coming again to fulfill in every jot and tittle the promises having to do with the glory that should follow (1Pe 1:11).

3. And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy (Rom 15:9). Mercy is the emphatic word here, and is in contrast with the promises of the preceding verse. God had made no promises directly to the Gentile nations, and so the ministry of Christ to the Gentiles is a matter of pure mercy.

4. As it is written (Rom 15:9). The apostle now brings forward four Old Testament Scriptures to prove that this showing of mercy to Gentiles was foreseen. These quotations have not the character of promises to Gentiles, but are nevertheless predictive of the work of the gospel among them: (1) For this cause I will confess to Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy name (Psa 18:49); (2) Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people (Deu 32:43); (3) Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud Him, all ye peoples (Psa 117:1); (4) There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles trust (Isa 11:1; Isa 11:10).

5. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost (Rom 15:13). Hope, in this verse, is the same as is translated trust in Rom 15:12 (see R. V.), and in the 13th verse it is preceded in both instances by the definite article. It is the hope that is referred to—"that blessed hope" of Tit 2:13. The 1911 Bible translates:

Now the God of the hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in the hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

02.28. The Epilogue

The Epilogue

(Rom 15:14-33, Rom 16:1-27) The body of the epistle closes with the benediction of Rom 15:13. However, there is much important teaching in the concluding paragraphs.

1. And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren (Rom 15:14-15). Paul had written to the Romans not because they were not full of goodness, but because they were. The case is not as in Jude 1:3, but more like that in 1Jn 2:21; 1Jn 2:27. He writes not so much to instruct, as to put them in mind of what they already know.

2. That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles (Rom 15:16). This verse is highly figurative. Paul writes of ministering as a priest (see the Greek) in the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Dean Alford says: "The apostle is using a figure in which he compares himself to a priest, and the Gentiles to the sacrifice which he was offering. The Gentiles themselves are the offering; so Theophylact, 'This is my priesthood, to preach the gospel. My knife is the Word, ye are the sacrifice.' The language is evidently figurative, and can by no possibility be taken as a sanction for any view of the Christian minister as a sacrificing priest, otherwise than according to that figure, namely, that he offers to God the acceptable sacrifice of those who by his means believe on Christ. Conybeare and Howson translate: Yet I have written to you somewhat boldly in parts (of this letter), to remind you (rather than to teach you), because of that gift of grace which God has given me, whereby He sent me to minister for Jesus Christ, bearing His glad-tidings to the Gentiles, that I might present them to God, as a priest presents the offering a sacrifice well pleasing unto Him, hallowed by the working of the Holy Spirit; and a footnote by the same translators reads: literally, 'to minister for Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, a priest presenting an offering in respect of the glad-tidings of God that the Gentiles might be offered up as an offering well pleasing unto Him.' The same thing is said under a somewhat different metaphor, 2Co 11:2. Dr. Stifler says:

He thus writes because of the apostolic 'grace' (Rom 1:5; Eph 3:8) given him by God that he should be a minister, a spiritual priest, to the Gentiles, not to offer a sacrifice for them, which was already done, but to minister to them the gospel, that they themselves might be an acceptable 'offering' to God (Eph 5:26-27; 2Co 11:2). The offering is acceptable because it is sanctified, made holy, by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Paul gave men the gospel, and God gave such of them as believed the Holy Spirit, and by these two means they became a fit offering to God. Num 8:14-16 is an illustrative passage on this point. Moses was commanded to separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: And thou shalt cleanse them, and offer them for an offering.

3. I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ (Rom 15:17-21). In this paragraph Paul speaks of his great privilege as a minister of the gospel to the Gentiles, and points to the mighty signs and wonders accompanying his ministry as a proof that Christ was working through him by the power of the Spirit of God. He had preached the gospel from Jerusalem, and round

about unto Illyricum, not building upon foundations already laid, but preaching where Christ had not been named, thus fulfilling the Word of God as written in Isa 52:15, To whom He was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

4. For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you (Rom 15:22-24). He declares his purpose to come to Rome when he should take his journey into Spain. Whether Paul ever reached Spain is uncertain, but we know that he did reach Rome, though as a prisoner of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:9-15; Rom 15:22-24; Eph 3:1; Eph 4:1).

5. But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints (Rom 15:25-33). Paul's reference here is to the collection which he was engaged in gathering for the poor among the Christians at Jerusalem. There are numerous references to this collection in his epistles (see also Acts 24:17). The churches of Macedonia and Achaia had been pleased to make this contribution, and Paul commends them for it, for their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things (compare 1Co 9:11). When he has finished this task of ministering to his brethren in Jerusalem, he intends to go via Rome to Spain, and he is sure that when he comes he will come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. He beseeches the Roman brethren to pray for him in connection with this Jerusalem mission, and he makes this appeal for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit. We read in Galatians that the fruit of the Spirit is love, and here we are reminded of the love which the Holy Spirit bears unto His people. The chapter closes with the apostolic benediction: Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

6. I commend unto you Phebe our sister (Rom 16:1-16). This chapter is headed by Dr. Scofield, The outflow of Christian love. It is beautiful to observe the variety of the greetings sent to those in Rome who were personally known to Paul. He himself had never visited the Roman church, but all roads led to Rome, and it had come to pass that many of his personal friends had gone to Rome from the churches which he himself had been instrumental in founding. We have heard before of Priscilla and Aquila, and of some of the others mentioned in this list. The 13th verse is particularly touching: Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. This is a pathetic reference to the tender relationship between God's children. Rufus was Paul's brother in the Lord, and Rufus' mother had at some time ministered to Paul as a mother, and so he speaks of her as his own mother.

7. Now I beseech you, brethren (Rom 16:17-20). He warns them against those who would cause divisions and introduce schism into the sweet atmosphere of spiritual unity suggested by these relationships of which he has been speaking. These false teachers were to be avoided, for they by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. The obedience of the Roman saints is known far and wide. Paul is glad on this account, but he exhorts them to further obedience in turning away from false doctrines, for he would have them wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. The promise of Rom 16:20 is to encourage them in patient waiting: The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly (compare Gen 3:15). This section also closes with a benediction: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

8. Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you (Rom 16:21-24). Paul has been sending salutations to Christians in Rome; he now sends salutations from Christians who are with him. Timotheus and Lucius are better known to us as Timothy and

Luke. Tertius is Paul's amanuensis. Gaius, now Paul's host, is doubtless the man alluded to in 1Co 1:14. He is also the host of the whole church, for the Corinthian church was probably holding its meetings in his house. A striking contrast is presented by Erastus the chamberlain of the city, a high municipal official, and Quartus a brother, who joined in these Christian salutations. Quartus' name means fourth, just as Tertius is also a Latin numeral, and means third. These men, it has been conjectured, were formerly occupied as galley slaves, or in some other occupation where they were numbered instead of named. The Greek, in verse 23, reads, Quartus the brother, instead of a brother; he is just Brother Quartus. From a nameless condition he had been exalted to the position of a holy brother (Heb 3:1) in Christ (compare 1Sa 2:6-8), and was in an equal brotherhood with the city chamberlain.

9. Now to him that is of power to stablish you (Rom 16:25-27). This closing paragraph is of great doctrinal importance as touching the person of Christ. (1) God is of power to stablish His people; (2) He stablishes them according to Paul's gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ; this preaching of Jesus Christ by which God stablishes His people must be a preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery. There is much preaching of Jesus Christ which does not establish God's people, because it is not according to Paul's gospel, nor according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but was made manifest by revelation to the apostle Paul (compare Eph 3:1-7). The Lord Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery is (1) the Mighty God from eternity (Isa 9:1-21); (2) Immanuel, God with us in flesh (Isa 7:14; Mat 1:21-23); (3) our Passover sacrificed for us (1Co 5:7; compare Exo 12:12); (4) the Great Shepherd in resurrection (Heb 13:20-21; Rom 1:4); (5) High Priest over the house of God (Heb 10:21; Heb 3:14); (6) Christ in us, the hope of glory (Col 1:26-27; Gal 2:20); (7) the coming King over the whole earth (Zec 14:9; Jer 23:5-6). TO GOD ONLY WISE, BE GLORY THROUGH JESUS CHRIST FOR EVER. AMEN

03.0.1. Simple Studies in Thessalonian, Timothy, Titus and Philemon

SIMPLE STUDIES in First and Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus and Philemon
FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH PUBLISHERS FINDLAY, OHIO Printed in the U. S. A.

03.0.2. Table of Contents

Table of Contents A Word from the Publisher Simple Studies in First Thessalonians Simple Studies in Second Thessalonians Simple Studies in First Timothy Simple Studies in Second Timothy Simple Studies in Titus Simple Studies in Philemon

03.1. Simple Studies in First Thessalonians

Simple Studies in First Thessalonians

Bible students do not agree as to which of the New Testament books was written first. Some believe it was Matthew, and others believe it was James, and yet others believe it was First Thessalonians.

Certain it is that this is the first of the books written by Paul. Ussher's date for it is 54 A. D., which was less than twenty-five years after our Lord's death and resurrection. The city of Thessalonica still survives, though its name has lost its first syllable; it is now Saloniki, or Salonica. The historical record of Paul's first, and, so far as we know, his only visit to Thessalonica is contained in Acts 17:1-34, and it is exceedingly brief, including only nine and a half verses. But that visit was one of the most amazing incidents in Paul's most amazing career. Let us read the record in full:

"Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

"And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

"But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. And they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea." This was during Paul's second missionary journey, when he had come into Macedonia in response to the Troas dream (Acts 16:8-9). His first stop in Macedonia was at Philippi, and from Philippi he came to Thessalonica. A remarkable feature of First and Second Thessalonians is the wide range of doctrine contained in them. During an evangelistic campaign of less than a month, to which he had come an unknown stranger, the apostle was used in turning multitudes to Christ, and then taught the new converts in almost all the vital doctrines of the Christian faith. These Epistles, written only a few weeks later, review these doctrines, including the trinity of God, the tripartite nature of man, election, conversion, sanctification, practical living, resurrection, the day of Christ, the day of the Lord, the second coming of Christ to the earth, etc. "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" (2Th 2:5.) But the doctrine most strongly emphasized in these Epistles is that of the rapture of the saints, that is, their

catching away to meet the Lord in the air. In all the eight chapters of these Epistles this blessed hope is held forth. Indeed, in these the first of the messages addressed to the churches, is found the fullest teaching concerning this wonderful event, which may transpire at any moment of any day or any night. It would seem that the Holy Spirit was constrained to take the first opportunity to whisper into the ears of the infant church this sacred secret, in order that by it the newborn children of God might be kept in a separate path with their Lord, growing in grace and in the knowledge of him.

I. The Three Tenses of Salvation (1Th 1:1-10). The salutation is from Paul, Silas and Timothy, and it is addressed “unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ.” It is difficult, if not impossible, for us to imagine the impact of such words upon the minds of these young converts, rescued so recently and so miraculously from raw paganism. In his prayers for them the apostle gives thanks for three things: (1) their work of faith; (2) their labour of love; and (3) their patience of hope. We shall see the true relation of these three things a bit later.

He knows that they were the elect of God by the way they had received the gospel, believing it and acting upon it, becoming followers of the Lord and of his servant, despite the resulting affliction, and “with joy of the Holy Spirit.”

These young recruits had become examples to others throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for they had sent the message of the gospel out so widely that their new faith was the topic of conversation wherever Paul had been since leaving them. He did not need to speak of them at all, but he himself learned about them and heard about them wherever he went: how they had turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who had delivered his people from the wrath to come.

Now we may return to those three things of 1Th 1:3, and fit them together in their order with the three things of 1Th 1:9-10.

1. Their work of faith consisted in their turning to God from idols. Mark, it was not a turning from idols to God, but it was a turning to God from idols. Many sinners try to turn from their sins to God, but it cannot be done that way. They must first turn to God before they can turn from their sins.

2. Their labour of love consisted in their serving the living and true God. Never before had they heard of the living God; they had heard only of dead gods. They had never before heard of the true God; all the gods they had known were false gods. They had fallen in love with God, and therefore they served him in a labour of love.

3. Their patience of hope was the result of their waiting for God’s Son from heaven. Patience is endurance, and they were enduring much affliction, because of the hope that was in them. “Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us” (Rom 5:3-5). The wrath to come, from which we are delivered, is THE GREAT TRIBULATION. That awful period of judgment will be a visitation of the wrath of God upon his enemies, and “God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him” (1Th 5:9-10). The promise of Rev 3:10 assures us beyond doubt of our deliverance from THE GREAT TRIBULATION, for what it really says, correctly translated, is this: “Because thou hast kept my

enduring word, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (compare Mat 24:21).

II. A Father in the Gospel Ministering to His Children (1Th 2:1-20).

We need not enter upon a detailed exposition of this chapter, for it is easily understood. But let the reader meditate upon it, and let him mark especially the consuming passion in the heart of the great apostle toward his children in the faith. 1Th 2:7, as the Revisers translate it, reads: “But we were gentle in the midst of ‘you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children.” Mark that word, “her own children.” A children’s nurse in the hospital might speak of her little patients as “my children,” but, even so, the case would be quite different if she were a mother nursing her very own children.

Then, too, notice how he speaks in 1Th 2:11 : “Ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children.” Again the Revisers have been more careful. They make it read like this: “Ye know how we dealt with each one of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying, to the end that ye should walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own kingdom and glory.”

He had suffered, and was still suffering, as they were; but all the time he had them in his heart, longing to see their faces with great desire. He had tried to come to them “once and again,” but Satan had hindered him. “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.”

Thus again he points onward and upward, to remind them of what awaited them at the end of the road. May it please God to keep us, as he kept Paul, in the power of the blessed hope, ever serving the living and true God, and waiting for his Son from heaven!

III. Appointed to Afflictions (1Th 3:1-13).

Like the preceding chapter, this one needs little exposition. Paul tells of sending Timothy from Athens to establish the Thessalonian believers and to comfort them concerning their faith, “that no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.” Timothy had returned, bringing encouragement to the apostle, who was comforted over them in all his own affliction and distress by their faith: “for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord” (1Th 3:8). He thanks God for them, rejoicing over them, and prays night and day that he might come to them to perfect whatever may be lacking in their faith (1Th 3:10). And then, in the end of the chapter, he again points on to the blessed hope: “Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints” (1Th 3:11-13). The chief point in the chapter is that the children of God are appointed to afflictions while they are passing through this world on their way home. We are slow to learn it, but it is most clearly taught in the Scriptures, that, if we walk faithfully with God, we are to expect the world to hate us and to persecute us. Of course, a carnal Christian may get along pretty well with the world, but while he is doing that he need not expect to have that fellowship which is truly with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and which alone

can bring fulness of joy (1Jn 1:3-4). If he be a child of God at all, he will sooner or later learn, and learn to his sorrow, that his loss is immeasurable. It is the solemn declaration of Scripture that friendship with the world is spiritual adultery and enmity with God (Jas 4:4). In John 16:33 the Lord Jesus said: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." That was not a threat; it was a promise; and it is followed by the encouraging word, "but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The world hated him, and still hates him, because he has testified against it; that its Works are evil (John 7:7), and that means its religious works as well as other works; and the same world will hate you if you look it in the face and give a like testimony. On his first missionary journey, Paul plainly told his converts that through much tribulation they must enter into the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). The faithful preacher of the gospel will not tell people, as some preachers and so-called evangelists tell them today, that if they turn to the Lord everything will be easier for them. Quite to the contrary, Paul warned them of trouble ahead if they determined to follow Christ. Like Garibaldi told his recruits of the terrible experiences facing them, and like Winston Churchill told the English that he could promise them nothing but blood, and agony, and sweat, and tears; so the faithful messengers of the gospel will warn the people that tribulation awaits those who enlist under the banner of the Captain of our Salvation. Of course, there is the end to be considered, the glorious end, where at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore (Psa 16:11); but until the goal is reached, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1Pe 4:12-13). And let it be always remembered that, however great they may be, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward" (Rom 8:18). Keep looking up.

IV. Pleasing God and Waiting for Our Lord (1Th 4:1-18). In this chapter, the serving of the living and true God and the waiting for his Son from heaven, mentioned in the first chapter, are presented in proper balance. The normal Christian is the Christian who is serving God in a true labour of love, and is looking with eager longing for his Lord's return. If either of these elements be lacking, the Christian life is abnormal and out of balance.

I. Pleasing God (1Th 4:1-12). In this section we find the apostle giving wholesome instruction for clean living, warning particularly against the sin of fornication. As we read this passage, and other similar passages, such as 1Co 6:1-20, we should remember the background of these early Christians who had come out of the filthiness of heathen religious systems, where fornication and kindred sins had been tolerated, and sometimes even encouraged and enjoined as a religious duty. We quote from the Revised Version, which is clearer than the older translation: "Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk,—that ye abound more and more. For ye know what charge we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles who know not God; that no man transgress, and wrong his brother in the matter: because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as also we forewarned and testified. For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who giveth his Holy Spirit unto you (1Th 4:1-8). This is all quite clear, if it be remembered that sanctification here as

everywhere in Scripture, means separation, and that God is calling his children to walk in separation from the world and its evils, and in fellowship with him.

1Th 4:9-12 are also clear. In them the apostle commends the Thessalonians for their love toward each other, and urges them in this grace to abound more and more (compare 1Pe 1:22). Then he exhorts them to “study to be quiet.” The word for “study” is “be ambitious.” “Make it your ambition to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, even as we charged you; that ye may walk becomingly toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing.”

II. Waiting for Our Lord (1Th 4:13-18).

Here we have the norm of the doctrine of the rapture of the saved; that is, their catching up to meet the Lord in the air. Every doctrine of Scripture has its pattern, its standard, its norm; that is, some place in Scripture devoted to it, and making it clear. The norm of the doctrine of love is 1Co 13:1-13; of resurrection, 1Co 15:1-58; of faith, Heb 11:1-40; of the second coming of Christ to the earth, Mat 24:1-51. And here, in 1Th 4:13-18, we have the norm of the doctrine of the rapture. The word “rapture is from the Latin *rapto*, meaning “caught up” or “snatched away.”

There is no need to get off into forbidden bypaths concerning the rapture, if we are careful to consult the norm and listen to what it says, rather than building our doctrine upon isolated and unrelated texts. Let us now take up the study of this mountain peak in the Word of God.

1. “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope” (1Th 4:13). Our Heavenly Father desires us to know the truth about our dear ones who have gone on to be with him. As to their bodies they are “asleep,” but they themselves are “absent from the body, and present with the Lord” (2Co 5:8).
2. “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him” (1Th 4:14). On that wonderful day, the spirits of all the saved of all the ages will come out of heaven with their Lord and ours, to receive their glorified resurrection bodies.
3. “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord” (1Th 4:15). For the three years between his conversion and the beginning of his public ministry (Gal 1:15-18), Saul of Tarsus, better known to us as Paul, was a student at the feet of the risen Christ, who appeared to him from time to time, instructing him in the gospel and committing to him that rich body of truth which we know as “Pauline” (Gal 1:11-12).
4. “We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede, RV) them which are asleep” (1Th 4:15). Those still living when that day comes will not be caught up before those who have fallen asleep.
5. “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God” (1Th 4:16). There is no mistaking this language; it is too plain. It is not “a matter of interpretation,” for such language is incapable of interpretation. We may believe it, or we may not believe it; but let no one who rejects it claim to believe it and talk about “interpretations.” It is “the Lord himself” who is coming, and not someone else. And when he comes he will come shouting. He will come with a shout, and with his shout there will be mingled the voice of Michael the archangel, and the trump of God. That seems to dispose “without a trace” of the notion of a silent rapture. No, it will be a noisy one. And there will be something on that day

to be noisy about. O! What a day!

6. “The dead in Christ shall rise first” (1Th 4:16). None of the lost dead will have a part in this resurrection (Rev 20:5-6; Rev 20:11-15). Only the saved will rise in this resurrection, and all the saved will rise. Those who talk about a “partial rapture” would do well to consider this. There certainly is no intimation of a division so far as the dead in Christ are concerned. And, as we shall see, there is no intimation of a division among those alive and remaining.

7. “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up” (1Th 4:17). You see? The saved, the born-again ones, only they, but all of them, will be caught up. The “partial rapture” theory, which teaches that not all the saved will be caught up, but only the particularly spiritual and deserving ones, is a mischievous and unscriptural notion, born of a lack of apprehension of the doctrine of grace. No one deserves to be caught up, but all the children of God will be caught up, despite their utter lack of deserving or merit. The rapture is a part of our salvation; and salvation, in all its parts, is by grace, through faith, plus nothing.

8. “Together with them” (1Th 4:17). What a thrilling word!—“together with them.” Think of all the saints, all the saved of all the ages, rising from the earth in their glorified bodies, swept up out of this scene of sin and woe, drawn up by the all-powerful magnetism of him who is “upholding all things by the word of his power” (Heb 1:3)!

9. “To meet the Lord in the air” (1Th 4:17). That is enough. That leaves nothing to be desired. “To meet THE LORD in the air.”

10. “And so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1Th 4:17). Glorious thought! How the heart swells with inexpressible joy, in the contemplation of an eternity with him whom our souls love!

“Then with my Saviour, Brother, Friend,

A blest eternity I'll spend,

Triumphant in his grace,

Triumphant in his grace.”

11. “Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (1Th 4:18). Ah, yes, indeed! There are no other words like these. These are words calculated to set the heart of every child of God singing with David of old, saying, “I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning” (Psa 130:5-6).

III. Drawing a Parallel. Our Lord must have had the rapture in mind when he uttered the comforting words of John 14:1-31. Let us compare the two passages:

1. Our Lord said: “Let not your heart be troubled”; and Paul said: “Sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”

2. Our Lord said: “Ye believe in God, believe also in me”; and Paul said: “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again (just as God had promised), even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

3. Our Lord said: "If it were not so, I would have told you"; and Paul said: "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord."

4. Our Lord said: "I will come again"; and Paul said: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven."

5. Our Lord said: "And receive you unto myself"; and Paul said: "We shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air"

6. Our Lord said: "That where I am, there ye may be also"; and Paul said: "So shall we ever be with the Lord."

7. Our Lord said: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"; and Paul said: "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." The resemblance between the two passages is too exact to be accidental, or incidental; it was so planned by the Spirit of Truth. And so our path is marked out for us, and the end thereof: we are to so walk as to please God, and we are to be waiting for our Lord. We are to serve the living and true God, and wait for his Son from heaven. May he keep us in this blessed path, leading to that blessed end!

IV. Looking for the Day (1Th 5:1-28).

1. "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1Th 5:1-3). The subject now changes from "the day of Christ" when our Lord shall come to catch away his people, to "the day of the Lord" when he comes afterward with his saints to set up his kingdom. It was of this "day of the Lord" that our Lord Jesus himself was speaking in Mat 24:36-44 :

"But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only. And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man. Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left: two women shall be grinding at the mill; one is taken, and one is left. Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh."

All this has no reference to the rapture of the saints, which has been described so fully in 1Th 4:1-18. Of course, it is true in both cases that wherever and whenever a believer and an unbeliever are found together, "one shall be taken and the other left." At the rapture the believer will be caught away to meet his Lord in the air and the unbeliever will be left to go into the awful judgments of The Great Tribulation; while at the coming of the Lord to judge the world the unbeliever will be taken away by death and the believer will be left to enter with his Lord into the glory of the Kingdom. The passage in Mat 24:1-51 refers to our Lord's coming to the earth as Son of man to re-establish David's throne, sitting thereon, and reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords over the whole world. By that time the effect of the Rapture will have largely passed away as a "nine days' wonder," and when they shall be saying, "Peace and safety," then destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

2. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1Th 5:4-8). The children of light will be taken away at the rapture. They are the children of the day; they are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let them not sleep, as do others; but let them watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." By "the hope of salvation" is not meant hoping to be saved, but rather the "blessed hope" which accompanies salvation (Tit 2:11-14; 1Jn 3:1-3). At the rapture we are to be changed into his image, transformed into his likeness. We are to be like him, for we shall see him as he is. This is the blessed hope related to our salvation, and we are to put it on as a helmet, protecting even our thoughts with the peace of God which passeth all understanding, guarding our hearts and our thoughts in Christ Jesus (Php 4:7, RV).

3. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do" (1Th 5:9-11). As we have already learned in our preceding chapters the wrath referred to here is that awful period of affliction called by our Lord himself THE GREAT TRIBULATION (Mat 24:21). We are delivered from this "wrath to come" (1Th 1:9-10). Let us again remind ourselves of the positive promise of Rev 3:10 : "Because thou hast kept my enduring word, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." In this connection it is interesting to note that the same Greek word, *gregoreuo*, is translated "watch" in 1Th 5:6 and "wake" in 1Th 5:10. So the rapture is not to be limited to those who are especially watchful. It will not be a "partial rapture." It is to include all those who have been born again up to the time of that great and wonderful event. The dead in Christ and the living in Christ will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.

4. "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves" (1Th 5:12-13). This exhortation is addressed to the people generally concerning their leaders (compare Heb 13:7; Heb 13:17).

5. "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (1Th 5:14-15). This exhortation is addressed to the leaders themselves showing how they should lead (compare 1Pe 5:1-4).

6. "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1Th 5:16-18). Here is a lovely program for every Christian, and whoever follows this program may know that just so far as he follows it, he is doing the will of God.

7. "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1Th 5:19-21). The Holy Spirit must not be quenched. It is his office to speak through prophesying, but every prophesying should be carefully tested to see whether it be from the Spirit of Truth or not (compare 1Jn 4:1-6). "He that prophesieth (if he is prophesying 'by the Spirit) speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort," and he should be carefully heard, and his prophesying carefully heeded (1Co 14:3). But one must be careful to distinguish between the "Spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

8. “Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1Th 5:22). The Revision here reads, “Abstain from every form of evil.” Of course it is well also to abstain from the very appearance of evil whenever that is possible.

9. “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (1Th 5:23-24). Here as well as in Heb 4:12 the soul and the spirit of man are distinguished rather than identified as the same thing. Man is not bipartite but tripartite, and the Word of God is careful to distinguish between that which is merely soulish or animal or natural on the one hand, and that which is spiritual on the other hand (compare 1Co 2:14).

How good it is to read here that our sanctification will one day come to its full culmination, and our whole spirit and soul and body will be preserved unto that day, “blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!” This is not because of anything in us, but because “faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (compare. 1Co 1:8-9; Col 1:22; 1Th 3:13).

10. “Brethren, pray for us” (1Th 5:25). What a gracious ministry is vouchsafed even to the humblest child of God, that he may pray and pray effectually even for an apostle of Christ!

11. “Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss” (1Th 5:26). This was a common oriental salutation, as it is even to this day. The form of salutation is not to be looked upon as a matter of compulsion or legalism. The attitude of the heart is the thing that is important, and with the heart we should always “let brotherly love continue” (Heb 13:1).

12. “I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren” (1Th 5:27). The word “holy” is omitted from the Revision. Of course all God’s people are “holy brethren” (Heb 3:1), but the point here is that the Epistle must be read to the whole church. Printing had not yet been invented, and therefore it was impracticable that each member should have a copy. How we ought to thank God for the art of printing by which it is possible for even the humblest child of God to have the whole Word of God for his very own!

13. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen” (1Th 5:28). This benediction, like all other benedictions in the Bible, is only for the children of God (compare Eph 6:24 with 1Co 16:22-23).

03.2. Simple Studies in Second Thessalonians

Simple Studies in Second Thessalonians

It is altogether to be regretted that because of a mistranslation in our common Version in 2Th 2:1-3, the theme of Second Thessalonians should be confused. The Revisers have corrected it, but so few people consult the Revised Version that the correction is rarely seen. Instead of “the Day of Christ” in 2Th 2:2, it should read, “the Day of the Lord,” which is a very different matter. The Thessalonian Christians were disturbed by a report circulated among them, and evidently confirmed by a forged letter as from Paul, to the effect that the Day of the Lord had already begun, and that the afflictions which they were enduring were a part of the judgments relating to that “Day.” They had been taught by Paul that before “the Day of the Lord” could begin they should be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and that this catching up would be the beginning of “the Day of Christ.” Paul writes Second Thessalonians to comfort them and to explain that he has written no such letter to them, and that “the Day of the Lord” could not possibly begin while the church is still here upon the earth. “The Day of Christ” may begin at any time, for at any moment of any day or any night the Lord might descend from heaven to catch away his people. “The Day of Christ” begins with the rapture and endures for seven years, or the period of Daniel’s Seventieth Week (Dan 9:27). During those seven years the church will be absent from the earth and with her Lord in heaven. At the end of that seven years the second coming of Christ to earth will take place, and that will be at the beginning of “the Day of the Lord.” This “Day of the Lord” will continue for the thousand years of our Lord’s millennial reign, and will then merge into “the Day of God,” when the kingdom is turned over to the Father, that God may be all in all (1Co 15:22-28; 2Pe 3:10-13).

I. The Salutation (2Th 1:1-4).

1. “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (2Th 1:1-2). This salutation is almost identical with that of First Thessalonians.

2. “We are bound to thank God always for you, 1 brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure” (2Th 1:3-4). Of course the word “charity” in 2Th 1:3 should read “love.” Here, as in First Thessalonians, Paul declares that he has occasion to tell the churches everywhere of the steadfastness and faithfulness of the Thessalonian Christians in all their sufferings.

II. Present Suffering and Future Glory (2Th 1:5-12),

1. “Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer” (2Th 1:5-8). Here is a somewhat complicated passage. The glories of the coming kingdom are held before their eyes, and they are assured of the righteous judgment of God. The apostle declares that God is dealing righteously and that he

will recompense tribulation to them that trouble them, and he will give rest to those who are troubled, when the Lord shall come in his glory, being “revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Some teachers hold that in 2Th 1:8 we have two classes of people; first, “them that know not God”; and second, them “that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And from this they infer (for it is only an inference) that the first class consists of those who have never heard the gospel, and the second class consists of those who have heard it and disobeyed it before the rapture of the saints took place. Therefore they teach that those who hear and reject the gospel before the rapture will have no opportunity of salvation afterward. For our own part we cannot see that the inference is warranted, and we do not believe that the Scriptures reveal here or elsewhere whether or not those who reject the gospel before the rapture will have opportunity for salvation afterward. What we do know is that salvation is offered here and now. It is not safe to wait. “Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.”

2. “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day” (2Th 1:9-10). This is the judgment awaiting those “that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” They are to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Destruction here does not mean annihilation, nor is the doctrine of annihilation taught here or elsewhere in Scripture. The Greek word is *olethros*, and the significance of the word is “ruin,” in the sense of death or punishment. Indeed, in the Revised Version the verse we are now studying is translated, “who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might.” Annihilation is quite a different thing from “destruction from the face of the Lord.”

All this is to take place when our Lord shall come to be glorified in his saints. What a joyous privilege will then be accorded to the saints, that in them their Lord shall be glorified! Then indeed shall they be an exhibit “to the praise of his glory” (Eph 1:12-14). Also, in that day that is coming our Lord will be “admired in all them that believe.” The Revision reads, “and to be marvelled at in all them that believed (because our testimony unto you was believed) in that day.” That is the way it all comes about, through believing the testimony concerning him. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom 10:17).

3. “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you [’]* worthy of this , calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ” (2Th 1:11-12.) This then is the end of the race, the goal toward which we move. Then it will be our high privilege, without minus marks, to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light (1Pe 2:9).

III. The Day of the Lord and the Son of Perdition (2Th 2:1-12).

1. “Now we beseech you, brethren” (2Th 2:1-2). As we have already seen, there is great need of observing the change made by the Revisers in the translation of this paragraph. Instead of “the

day of Christ” in 2Th 2:2, we should read “the day of the Lord.” We quote from the Revised Version:

“Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand.” The apostle bases his exhortations upon “the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him,” which he had fully discussed in the fourth chapter of the First Epistle. He had there shown that the proper attitude of the believer is to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, ready always to be snatched away from this scene, and gathered about the pierced feet of the Lord in the air. Beginning now at the point where he left off then, the apostle cautions the Thessalonians against unnecessary agitation, and shows them that they should not be shaken or troubled either by spirit, or by word, or by a letter as from himself. He had written no such letter, though evidently they had received one in his name, saying that the Day of the Lord was about to begin.

There may be those who feel that we are overemphasizing the distinction between “the Day of Christ” and “the Day of the Lord.” They may say, Christ is the Lord, and the Lord is Christ, and Christ is both Lord and God; therefore it must be that “the Day of Christ,” “the Day of the Lord,” and “the Day of God,” are the same. That may sound logical, but it is entirely unscriptural. These are not matters of logic, but rather matters of revelation. And the Scripture clearly reveals that God makes a sharp distinction between these three periods called “Days.”

“The Day of Christ,” as we have already seen, is always imminent. It may begin at any moment of any day or any night, for it begins with the Rapture of the saved described in 1Th 4:13-18, and this may transpire at any time.

“The Day of the Lord” begins with the glorious second coming of Christ to the earth to set up the kingdom.

“The Day of God” begins at the end of the millennial reign of a thousand years, when the kingdom is turned over to the Father (1Co 15:22-28).

Thus we may see the importance of correct translation in 2Th 2:2. “The Day of Christ” is always at hand, but “the Day of the Lord” is not always at hand. As Paul says, it cannot take place until other things transpire which are predicted in the Word of God.

2. “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first” (2Th 2:3). More literally it would read, “the falling away.” The Greek word is apostasia and the meaning of it is, defection from truth. There have been many apostasies, each one of which could have been called “a falling away.” But the apostasy referred to here is different from the others, and so different and so much greater as to be designated “the falling away.”

3. “And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” (2Th 2:3). This is the “Beast” of Rev 13:1-8, who will be manifested as the emperor of the revived Roman empire. He and his False Prophet (Rev 13:11-17) must be manifested before “the Day of the Lord” can begin.

4. “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God (setting himself forth as

God, RV) (2Th 2:4). This is what is referred to as “the abomination of desolation” (Dan 9:27; Dan 12:11; Mat 24:15). It is the replacing of the worship of Jehovah by the worship of the “Beast.”

5. “Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?” (2Th 2:5.) From this we gather that during his brief visit to Thessalonica, which occupied less than a month (Acts 17:1-2), Paul not only preached the gospel to sinners, showing them the way of salvation, but he also dealt with a wide range of doctrine, including the things of prophecy. In these days we are advised on every hand not to deal with prophecy, and especially to avoid teaching prophecy to young converts. Young converts were all that Paul had at Thessalonica, and while he was yet with them he told them these things.

6. “And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time” (2Th 2:6). The Holy Spirit is now withholding or restraining the working of iniquity, so that “the man of sin” may not be revealed before his time.

7. “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let” (2Th 2:7). The Greek word for “letteth” is exactly the same as the Greek word for “withholdeth” in 2Th 2:6. In both instances the Revisers use the word, “restraineth.” Here is an instance illustrating how the English language is changing through the centuries. We no longer use the word “let” in the sense of restraining, but only in the sense of permitting, which is exactly opposite.

8. “Until he be taken out of the way” (2Th 2:7). This language has been misunderstood to indicate that the Holy Spirit will be taken away from the earth at the time of the Rapture. But notice the language. It does not say, “until he be taken away,” but rather, “until he be taken out of the way,” which is a very different matter. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent, and therefore cannot be absolutely taken away from any place, but he may be “taken out of the way” as the restrainer of lawlessness, and that is exactly what will happen. He began, in the 2nd chapter of Acts, his work of gathering out from the nations a people for the Lord’s name (Acts 15:13-18). And in this ministry there must be of necessity a restraining of lawlessness. Therefore he is restraining lawlessness until the church is completed, and when that is done he will take his hands off, so to speak, and allow the mystery of iniquity or lawlessness to run its course without hindrance.

9. “And then shall that Wicked be revealed” (2Th 2:8-10). Please observe that the word “Wicked” begins with a capital letter. It means “that wicked one,” or as the Revision puts it, “the lawless one,” the man of sin, the son of perdition. When the church has been completed, and together with the saints of past ages has been caught up “to meet the Lord in the air,” then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (RV). This is why men are lost. It is not because they are sinners, for salvation is offered only to sinners; it is rather because they refuse to receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

10. “And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion” (2Th 2:11-12). When men go on rejecting the truth, God turns them over to delusion, that they should believe, not “A LIE” as in the common Version, but “THE LIE”—“that they should believe THE LIE: that they all might be damned who believe not THE TRUTH, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” It is a choice

between believing "THE TRUTH" and believing "THE LIE." This may send us back to the beginning of things when God forbade Adam and Eve to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He said to them, "Thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." That was "THE TRUTH." But Satan came saying, "Ye shall not surely die." That was "THE LIE" (Gen 2:17; Gen 3:4). This TRUTH and this LIE have gone on ever since. THE TRUTH is that "the wages of sin is death," and THE LIE is, "ye shall not surely die." In the lesson we are now studying we may find the secret as to why such large numbers of people are deceived by every new "ism" that comes into view. The reason is this: They have trifled so long with God and have so long refused to receive the love of THE TRUTH that they might be saved, that God has finally turned them over to believe THE LIE. Every false cult in the world comes with exactly the same message, "Ye shall not surely die." They all deny the reality of eternal punishment, which is the worst possible form of death, and they all deny the value or even the need of salvation through blood. And the awful end of it all is that finally they come to have "pleasure in unrighteousness" (compare Rom 1:32).

IV. Exhortation to Steadfastness (2Th 2:13-17, 2Th 3:1-5).

1. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2Th 2:13-14). Many ancient authorities put the words, "as first fruits," in place of the words "from the beginning." While Paul worked in Philippi before going to Thessalonica, yet the Thessalonians, together with the Philippians, might be designated as the first fruits of Macedonia. The apostle gives thanks that God hath chosen them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. Here again comes before us the mystery of election, and here the emphasis is upon the sovereignty of God in choosing these Thessalonians unto salvation. Elsewhere is emphasized the freedom and responsibility of man, and we are emphatically told that God "would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1Ti 2:4 RV), and that he is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2Pe 3:9). Let us all acknowledge that the relation between these two great doctrines of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility is beyond our finite comprehension, and let us adopt the philosophy of the old preacher who said, "I pray for my people as if everything depended upon God, and then I preach to my people as if everything depended upon themselves." And let us rejoice that our calling of God is "to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2. "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2Th 2:15). In Mat 15:2-6 and Mark 7:3-13 our Lord denounced the Jews for turning aside from the commandment of God to the traditions of men. In Col 2:8 Paul wrote: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." But the same Greek word is translated "ordinances" in 1Co 11:2 where Paul commends his readers because they have kept the ordinances as he delivered them unto them. Also, in the Epistle we are now studying, He rebukes those who walk disorderly "and not after the traditions which he received of us." In itself, "traditions" is not an evil word. The thing to make sure of is that the traditions we follow are the traditions of God rather than those of men.

3. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work" (2Th 2:16-17). A gracious benediction surely, breathing the apostle's deep affection for these his children in the faith.
4. "Finally, brethren, pray for us" (2Th 3:1-2). Definitely he desires them to pray for him, "that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men."
5. "For all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil" (2Th 3:2-3). Paul was always depending upon the faithfulness of God. "If we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself" (2Ti 2:13, RV). Paul depended upon God to establish his children and to keep them from evil (or, the evil one, RV).
6. "And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you" (2Th 3:4). Because of his confidence in the Lord he was looking for a real work among his people.
7. "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (2Th 3:5). The Revision reads, "into the patience of Christ," and the Revisers' margin makes it, "into the steadfastness of Christ."

V. Final Instructions (2Th 3:6-18).

1. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2Th 3:6-10). Because of the sufferings through which the Thessalonians were passing, and especially because they had been led to believe that the day of Christ had already come, leaving them behind at the rapture, and that they were just facing the terrors of the day of the Lord, there was danger that they should fail to do the things they ought to do. Paul points to his own conduct when he had been among them. He had not behaved disorderly, neither had he eaten any man's bread for nothing, but had worked with his hands, that he might not be chargeable to any of them; not because he had not the authority, but to make himself an example unto his followers. And he says, "even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."
2. "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly working not at all, but are busybodies" (2Th 3:11-13). These he commands and exhorts by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread; and then addressing the whole group he says, "Brethren, be not weary in well doing."
3. "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (2Th 3:14-15). Here the apostle reminds them that he speaks with authority, and that his words, being the Word of God, must be obeyed.
4. "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all. The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (2Th 3:16-18.) With this, the apostolic

benediction, the Epistle closes.

03.3. Simple Studies in First Timothy

Simple Studies in First Timothy

Timothy was Paul's constant friend and helper. The first mention of him in Scripture is in Acts 16:1-40, where we are told that when Paul came to Derbe and Lystra he found there a certain disciple named Timotheus, the son of a believing Jewish mother, "but his father was a Greek." From 2Ti 1:5 we learn that his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice were Christians before him. Since his home was in Lystra, it may be that young Timothy had been an eyewitness of the stoning of Paul in that town, recorded in Acts 14:19-20; and this might have been the immediate cause of Timothy's conversion. From the record in Acts 16:1-40 we learn that Timothy was "well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they all knew that his father was a Greek. And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily" (1Ti 1:2-5).

Although the name Timothy is more familiar to us than Timotheus, the latter form is found in Scripture more frequently than the former.

"Timotheus" occurs seventeen times besides two subscriptions at the end of First Corinthians and Second Timothy, while "Timothy" is found only seven times besides two subscriptions at the end of First Timothy and Hebrews. "Timotheus" is made up of two words and it means "dear to God." He surely was dear to God, and he was dear also to the Apostle Paul, who, from the prison in Rome, wrote to the Philippian church, saying, "I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly" (Php 2:19-24).

There seems to be conclusive evidence that Paul's expressed desire to be soon released from prison was gratified, and that during the interval between two Roman imprisonments the First Epistle to Timothy was written.

First Timothy deals with church order and church discipline. The theme of the Epistle may be seen in 1Ti 3:15, "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." How much better it would have been if the churches everywhere had been guided by the simple instructions of the Apostle Paul in this Epistle!

I. The Dangers of Legalism and False Doctrine (1Ti 1:1-20).

1. “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour” (1Ti 1:1). He received his commission as an apostle, “not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead” (Gal 1:1).
2. “And Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope” An unusual expression concerning our Lord, —“our hope.” A somewhat similar expression is found in Col 1:27, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”
3. “Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith”. More literally it reads, “My true child in faith” (RV). The Greek words gnesios teknon might be translated “genuine born-one.” It is a great thing to know that you are really and truly a child of God by regeneration, that you have been genuinely born again.
4. “Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1Ti 1:2). Familiar language to us, but language which we do well to ponder carefully and thankfully. Think of having God for “our Father,” and Jesus Christ as “our Lord.” Let us remember that all this involves an obligation, for he himself asked, “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?” (Luk 6:46.)
5. “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.” (1Ti 1:3-4). The word for “fables” is myths. The phrase “endless genealogies” probably refers to the teaching of the gnostics concerning the succession of the ages. Reference may be had also to the doctrines of the legalistic teachers as to the law of Moses and the endless genealogies connected therewith, seeking to link up the Old Testament dispensation with the New, and to make Christianity just a new form of Judaism.
6. “Now the end of the commandment” (1Ti 1:5-7). By “the commandment” Paul refers to the charge he had already delivered to Timothy when he had left him in Ephesus. 1Ti 1:5-7 in the Revision read: “But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned: from which things some having swerved have turned aside unto vain talking; desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm.” It is the old fight between law and grace. The struggle went on continuously against the legalizers who taught that salvation is partly through faith and partly by obedience to the law; and also that the believer’s rule of life is the law of Moses, which one must obey in order to keep saved. This was the doctrine of the false teachers in Galatia, and the Epistle to the Galatians was written to meet and refute that doctrine. In Gal 1:8-9 the double anathema of God is pronounced upon all such false teachers: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”
7. “But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully” (1Ti 1:8-11). True enough! “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Rom 7:12). But it is because the law is good, absolutely good, and demanding absolute goodness from man in whom there is no good thing (Rom 7:18); it is because the law is good that the sinner cannot obey it. So, in order that the

sinner might be saved it was necessary to find a way apart from obedience of a perfect law. And it is the glory of the gospel that God found a way “that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom 3:26). “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom 8:3-4). God found a Ransom in the person of his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, “and through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38-39). “Justified from all things!” Reckoned righteous according to the righteous reckoning of God himself. And so Paul goes on here in writing to Timothy, saying, “that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.” According to the gospel of God the believer is “a righteous man”; he is justified from all things; and therefore the law has no claim upon him. He is saved by grace, through faith, plus nothing. He is accepted in the Beloved, and stands before God in the absolute and flawless righteousness of God himself. But the gospel not only gives the believer a perfect standing before God: it also works in the believer to produce a godly walk. The law could never do this, for the law is a ministration of condemnation and death (2Co 3:1-18). Under it the best man in the world is absolutely condemned, while under the gospel the worst man in the world is absolutely justified, if only he believes. The sinner cannot be saved by good works, for he is unable to perform any good works; being “in the flesh,” he “cannot please God” (Rom 8:8-9). So, good works cannot produce salvation, but salvation should produce good works. We are not saved by good works, but we are saved unto good works. This is all set forth briefly but clearly in Eph 2:8-10 : “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

8. “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry” (1Ti 1:12-16). This phrase “the ministry” is much misunderstood and abused. We talk about a man “entering the ministry” when he becomes professionally a preacher or teacher or missionary. But this is a misuse of words. Ministry is serving, and unless a man has already been in the service of God it would be better for him to keep out of the pulpit altogether. All Christians are “in the ministry,” and they would do well to remember the fact that they are appointed to the service of God as truly as is the pastor, or the missionary, or any other of God’s children. The Revised Version is much to be preferred in this passage. We quote:

“I thank him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to his service; though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief: howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all

his longsuffering, for an example of them that should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life.” This word “ensample,” or “pattern” as in the old version, has been understood by some to indicate that Paul’s conversion, “as of one born out of due time” (1Co 15:8), is to be considered a type of the future conversion of the nation of Israel. The word employed in 1Co 15:8 and translated “out of due time” is to *ektromati*, and its literal meaning is “abortion,” or “an untimely birth,” a birth before the due time. In a note on this Dr. Scofield says: “Paul thinks of himself here as an Israelite whose time to be born again had not come, nationally (compare Mat 23:39), so that his conversion by the appearing of the Lord in glory (Acts 9:3-6) was an illustration, or instance before the time, of the future national conversion of Israel. See Eze 20:35-38; Hos 2:14-17; Zec 12:10-14; Zec 13:1-6; Rom 11:25-27” (Scofield Reference Bible).

9. “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (1Ti 1:17). Of course by “the King” Paul means our Lord Jesus Christ, and here in this beautiful doxology he ascribes honor and glory to him in whom “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col 2:9).

10. “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenceus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme” (1Ti 1:18-20). The words, “which went before on thee,” are changed by the Revision to read, “which led the way to thee.” In 2Ti 2:17-18 Hymenaeus is mentioned again as denying the future resurrection, and as Dr. Scofield points out: “It is significant as bearing upon the seriousness of all false teaching, and particularly as related to resurrection, that Paul calls it blasphemy to teach that ‘the resurrection is past already’” (Scofield Reference Bible).

II. Order in Worship (1Ti 2:1-15).

1. “I exhort therefore” (1Ti 2:1). The Revision reads: “I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men.” Here we have committed to us the ministry of intercession for the world. In John 17:9 the Lord Jesus said to the Father: “I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.” But here we are instructed to make intercession for all men.

2. “For kings, and for all that are in authority” (1Ti 2:2-3). Here we are commanded to pray for “the powers that be” which “are ordained of God” (Rom 13:1). Let it be remembered that when Paul wrote these words the ordained “power of God” was the Roman Empire, and that the man on the throne was the terrible Nero. And yet Paul as an apostle of Christ commands that we should be praying for rulers, “for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.” Any government is better than no government. Even an evil, corrupt government, if it really governs, is better than anarchy. Civil government is a gift from God, and we ought to be giving thanks for it and praying for it continually. If man has corrupted it and misused it, that does not alter the fact that it is a gift from God’s hands for the preservation of life and order. Kings and rulers must give an account to God for the way they administer their office. But all the time they are to be respected and prayed for and obeyed, excepting only when their commands are opposed to the commands of God.

3. “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1Ti 2:4). The word “will” should read “would” as in the Revision. God “would have all men to be saved.” He is not willing that any should perish (2Pe 3:9). This should dispose once and for all of the notion that God has predestinated a large portion of the human race to be lost. There is much mystery connected with the equally true doctrines of the sovereignty of God and the freedom of the human will, but let us not allow ourselves to believe anything contrary to the plain statements of Scripture. The doctrine of election is a true doctrine, and we thank God for it. But it is also true, for God has said so, that he “would have all men to be saved,” and that he “is not willing that any should perish.”

4. “For there is one God, and one mediator” (1Ti 2:5-7). There are not many gods, as was taught by heathenism and paganism, but “there is one God.” On the other hand, there is a mediator between God and man, “one mediator” and only one. The approach to God is no longer through the Levitical priesthood, but through the mediatorship of God’s Son. He is the mediator, thank God, between God and men, a “daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both” (Job 9:33). This mediator is none other than “the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,” whereunto Paul was “ordained a preacher, and an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.” This he asserted with great earnestness, saying “I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not.”

5. “I will therefore that men pray everywhere” (1Ti 2:8-15). Here the apostle discusses the order of God with reference to the sexes in connection with the worship of the local church. Instead of “men” the text reads, “the men.” The apostle says: “I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing” (1Ti 2:8, RV). And then he goes on to say: “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel” (1Ti 2:9). The word “shamefacedness” in the common Version or “shamefastness” in the Revised Version seems to be an unwarranted translation of the Greek word, which has no iota of shame in it, but is rather expressive of modesty towards men or awe towards God. The same word is translated “reverence” in Heb 12:28 : “Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” Women are given a certain place in the church of God, and that place is not the place of authority or leadership, but rather the place of subjection under the leadership of men (compare Eph 5:22-24; 1Co 11:2-15). Women ought to thank God every day for what the gospel has done for them, and they ought to be careful to observe God’s order and be content to occupy the place assigned to them in the church by God himself. They ought to adorn themselves modestly and soberly. Their true adornment should not be outward, but inward, expressing itself outwardly through their good works (compare 1Pe 3:1-9). In 1Ti 2:11 Paul is approaching his discussion of the qualifications of elders and deacons in the churches. These positions are not for women, but only for men. The 15th verse takes us back to Gen 3:16, where God said to Eve and to all women through Eve: “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” The promise of 1Ti 2:15 is that the godly Christian woman who continues in faith and love and holiness with sobriety may expect from God to be safely delivered in her bearing of children.

III. The Office of a Bishop (1Ti 3:1-7).

1. “This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work” (1Ti 3:1-5). In the primitive churches the pastor was called by various titles. He was a presbyter or elder, he was a pastor or shepherd, and he was a bishop or overseer. Of course for such a position he should be properly qualified and should be selected by the Spirit of God, though the Spirit of God might reveal his selection through the action of the church as a body (compare Acts 1:15-26; Acts 6:1-7). He “must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?).”

2. “Not a novice” (1Ti 3:6-7). He must not be a new convert, “lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” So we learn here as elsewhere that Satan was condemned for his pride.

IV. The Office of a Deacon (1Ti 3:8-13).

1. “Likewise the deacons” (1Ti 3:8-9). The word diakonos means a servant. It is variously translated, “deacon,” “minister,” and “servant.” Nowadays we are quite in the habit of referring to the pastor as “the minister,” and to the pastorate as “the ministry.” But if we were exact about it we would call the deacons ministers, while the pastor would be more properly called a bishop. The word “bishop” comes from episkopos which means an overseer or superintendent. The modern idea of a bishop ruling over other bishops and churches has no warrant in Scripture. Strictly speaking, every pastor is a bishop, and the deacons are ministers or servants. The deacons should be “grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.”

2. “And let these also be first proved” (1Ti 3:10). This verse should read as in the Revision, “And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless.”

3. “Women in like manner” (1Ti 3:11-13). Because of its connection it would seem that this verse is dealing not with women in general, but specifically with the deacons’ wives. The translators in our common version evidently came to this conclusion and so they supplied the italicized words, “must their.” The text simply reads “women.” The deacons’ wives should be grave, not slanderous, sober, faithful in all things. And each deacon should be the husband of one wife, ruling his children and his house well. In the Revision 1Ti 3:13 : “For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” The seven men appointed in Acts 6:1-15, while not in that chapter called “deacons,” were nevertheless appointed to serve as deacons should always serve. They had to do with the business affairs of the church, while the apostles and elders gave themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:3-4).

4. “These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1Ti 3:14-15). The word “ground” is used here in the sense of “support” or “stay.” The church is here to hold aloft the truth, even to manifest him who is its Head and who himself said, “I am the truth” (John 14:6).

5. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness" (1Ti 3:16). In this verse there are outlined the steps by which God has produced godliness in men,

(1) "God was manifest in the flesh." He became incarnate in a virgin's Son. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

(2) "Justified in the Spirit." The Son of God was put to death after declaring that he would be put to death and then in three days rise again from the dead. When He did indeed rise from the dead he showed that all his claims were true, and thus he was vindicated, and justified; thus he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom 1:4).

(3) "Seen of angels." He is indeed seen of angels, and is the object of their adoring worship. The decree of the Father has gone forth, saying, "Let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb 1:6).

(4) "Preached unto the Gentiles." This is going on today. The gospel spreads abroad, carrying the invitation, "Come, for all things are now ready."

(5) "Believed on in the world." The world itself hates him, rejects him, and believes not on him. But there are some who believe unto salvation; and as many as receive him, to them gives he the right to become children of God, even to those who believe on his name. And these are born, born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:11-13).

(6) "Received up into glory." This does not refer to his ascending into heaven from the Mount of Olives as recorded in Acts 1:1-26, but rather to the catching up of his body, which is the church, to be joined to him who is the Head, as described in 1Th 4:13-18. This tremendous event may take place at any moment of any day or any night. And while we go on serving the living and true God, we must also be waiting for his Son from heaven (1Th 1:9-10).

V. Principles of Guidance in Church Administration (1Ti 4:1-16, 1Ti 5:1-25, 1Ti 6:1-21).

1. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith" (1Ti 4:1-5). A similar warning pointing to the apostasy of "the last days" is found in 2Ti 3:1-5. There is no promise in Scripture of a widespread revival at the close of this age; and, while revivals are always desirable, it is not well to teach that such a revival must of necessity precede the coming of the Lord for his people. Nothing, even so much as a thickness of a tissue paper, must be allowed to come in between the believer and the expectation of his Lord's coming for him. There are some who teach that the rapture cannot take place until the whole world is evangelized, and they base their teaching upon the words of our Lord in Mat 24:14, where he said: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." This is a grievous wresting of Scripture, for our Lord's words have nothing whatever to do with the rapture. The phrase frequently occurring in Mat 24:1-51, "the end," is not the end of the church age, but rather the end of the Great Tribulation period, immediately preceding the glorious second coming of Christ to earth to set up his kingdom and to judge his enemies. The "gospel of the kingdom" is not committed to the church at all. The gospel of the kingdom was the gospel preached by John the Baptist when he said, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It was also preached by the twelve when our Lord sent them out two by two, and instructed them to say, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It was also preached by the seventy whom

our Lord afterward sent out two by two with the same instructions (Mat 3:1-2; Mat 10:1-7; Luk 10:1-12). If a preacher today should say, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," he would not be preaching the truth. The kingdom of heaven is not at hand. The kingdom of heaven, which was offered to Israel and rejected by Israel nineteen hundred years ago, is postponed, and cannot be established until the King returns. Meanwhile the church is commissioned to preach the gospel of the grace of God and to gather out, not a company of subjects to be ruled over in the coming kingdom, but rather a company of co-rulers to reign with the King when the kingdom is manifested.

Timothy is instructed that in the latter times there shall be a falling away from the faith, and a "giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons." False preachers will be "speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." Many of the "isms" of our day seek to regulate marriage, if not to forbid it, and also to regulate our diet, and tell us what we may or may not eat. Especially is this true of the legalizing teachers who would put us under law and command us to "abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." Of course, under the law certain foods were permitted and certain others were forbidden. But under grace, "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." In Mark 7:1-37 the Lord of glory himself set aside the law's regulations concerning diet:

"And he called to him the multitude again, and said unto them, Hear me all of you, and understand: there is nothing without the man, that going into him can defile him; but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man. And when he was entered into the house from the multitude, his disciples asked of him the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Perceive ye not, that whatsoever from without goeth into the man, it cannot defile him; because it goeth not into his heart, but into his belly, and goeth out into the draught? This he said, making all meats clean" (Mark 7:14-19, RV).

2. "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ" (1Ti 4:6-8). We have said that the ministers of the church were the deacons, but that does not mean, and we tried to make it plain that it did not mean, that the deacons were the only ministers. For every Christian is a minister, since every Christian is a servant, and, of course, these include the pastor himself. He also is a minister and he should be "a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained." He must "refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise himself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little (rather, a little, RV); but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

3. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (1Ti 4:9-10). So then the world has a Saviour. Christ is the Saviour of all men! He is the Saviour "specially of those that believe," but he is also "the Saviour of all men." So that if men are not saved it is not because they have not a Saviour. What a pity, what a tragedy, that the world should have such a Saviour and still go on in its lost condition! Men are lost, not because they have not a Saviour, but because, having a Saviour and such a Saviour, they refuse to receive him; preferring rather to tread him under foot, making the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and

doing despite to the Spirit of grace. For such there is coming a terrible vengeance. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb 10:28-31).

4. "These things command and teach" (1Ti 4:11-16). Timothy was a young man, but he must not let anyone despise his youth. He must be an example to believers, in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. He must give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. He must not neglect the gifts bestowed upon him by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. He must meditate on these things; giving himself wholly to them; that his profiting may appear to all. He must take heed to himself, and unto the teachings. He must continue in these things, for in so doing he should both save himself and them that heard him. The word "save" in 1Ti 4:16 is used in the sense of deliverance from responsibility. He must keep himself clean from the blood of all men, carefully discharging his obligations in connection with the charge committed to him.

5. "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity" (1Ti 5:1-2). The chapter is occupied with regulations showing Timothy how he ought to behave himself in the church of God.

6. "Honor widows that are widows indeed" (1Ti 5:3-16). This discussion about widows seems to turn upon the question as to which of the widows in the church should be "taken into the number," evidently referring to those who should be enrolled for assistance from the church. It is not necessary to go into the chapter in detail, for it is easily understood. 1Ti 5:11-12 should read as in the Revised Version, "But younger widows refuse: for when they have waxed wanton against Christ, they desire to marry; having condemnation, because they have rejected their first pledge." 1Ti 5:8 and 1Ti 5:16 command that relatives who have dependent widows should care for them, "and let not the church be charged."

7. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (1Ti 5:17-22). Care must be taken in choosing these ministering brethren and those who sin should be openly rebuked. Timothy was to be careful to avoid partiality in the choosing of teaching elders. He was not to suddenly ordain any man by the laying on of hands. He must keep himself pure.

8. "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (1Ti 5:23). Evidently Paul had been informed of Timothy's infirmities and perhaps of the difficulty of finding pure water to drink, and so he prescribed for him "a little wine." This prescription has been overworked by many, and has been used as a warrant for all kinds of indulgences and excesses in the use of strong drink. Anyone who is really submissive to the Word of God will find little difficulty in learning from it the danger attending this thing. There is nothing to really satisfy man's longing that comes from the vine-tree of the earth, "from the kernels even to the husk" (Num 6:4). Christ himself is the true vine of heaven (John 15:1), and "he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psa 107:9; Isa 55:1). His Word warns his people against fellowshiping with winebibbers and gluttons (Pro 23:20), and declares that "it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink; lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted" (Pro 31:4-5). Wine may be good for medicinal purposes (Pro 31:6-7; 1Ti 5:23), but there is great danger that it may be used to excess, and it is far better to be filled with the Holy Spirit of God than to be drunken with what men call "ardent spirits" (Eph 5:18).

Men have said that the wine furnished by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Cana wedding was fermented wine. I do not pretend to know the nature of the wine furnished there, but I am satisfied that there was little resemblance in it to the thing described in the Scriptures of God as biting like a serpent, and stinging like an adder (Pro 23:29-32). Doubtless rather it was like the heavenly fruit of the vine that he will drink new with his own in his Father's kingdom (Mat 26:29). No wonder the governor of the wedding feast at Cana pronounced it the best wine kept till the last. Never before had he tasted such wine and never did he taste such wine again.

9. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid" (1Ti 5:24-25). The Revision is helpful here: "Some men's sins are evident, going before unto judgment; and some men also they follow after. In like manner also there are good works that are evident; and such as are otherwise cannot be hid." Some men's sins are openly manifest while they are yet living, and other men's sins come to light only after the men themselves have departed this scene. It is so with good works. Some men do good works which are immediately known to their fellow men; while other men's good works are not known until after the men themselves have gone.

10. "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour" (1Ti 6:1-10). This passage deals with the poor and the rich, beginning with the bondservants or slaves. Let them be content to serve, and if they have believing masters let them serve them all the better. Those who teach otherwise are wrong. Godliness with contentment is great gain, and having food and raiment we should be content. Those who are ambitious to be rich are subject to many temptations and snares which may lead to destruction and perdition. "For the love of money is the root of all evil." The love of money is selfishness, and selfishness is at the root of all kinds of evil. Observe that it is not said that money is the root of all evil, but the love of it is the root of all evil. So those who have no money may be as guilty of this form of sin as those who have much money. Coveting after money is dangerous business, for some who have thus coveted have erred from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11. "But thou, O man of God, flee these things" (1Ti 6:11-12). The man of God is to "flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." He is to "fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession, before many witnesses."

12. "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Ti 6:13-16). In due time he will be manifested as the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. The Epistle closes with another warning against pursuing after riches, and shows how much better it is to "trust in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." Let believers rather "do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to share; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life (or, on what is really life)." The apostle seems reluctant to close his message. His heart longs over his son Timothy, and he

appeals to him in this final word: “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so-called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.”

03.4. Simple Studies in Second Timothy

Simple Studies in Second Timothy In his Second Epistle to Timothy we have Paul's farewell words, written from the Roman prison just before his execution. There is a marked difference between this and the First Epistle. The churches in Asia, in whose founding the apostle had had so large a part, had already in a large measure turned away from his teachings, and legalism had taken the place of grace. Second Timothy points out the path for the Christian in a day of spiritual darkness, and teaches that this spiritual darkness will increase to the end of the church age. Throughout the age there will be numerous churches calling themselves Christian, though they will become largely anti-Christian in fact. But all the time there will be a remnant of the faithful, and they will find instructions for their walk in this Epistle. The keynotes of the Epistle are, "All they which are in Asia turned away from me," and "A good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2Ti 1:15; 2Ti 2:3).

I. Paul... to Timothy (2Ti 1:18).

1. "Paul, an apostle by the will of God, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son" (2Ti 1:1-7). In his First Epistle Paul saluted Timothy as his *gnesios teknon*, his "genuine child." In his Second Epistle he greets him as his *agapetos teknon*, his "beloved child." He expresses his thanks to God for Timothy and declares that without ceasing he prays for him, greatly desiring to see him, being mindful of his tears. He calls to remembrance the unfeigned faith which had begun in Timothy's family with his grandmother Lois; then it had come to his mother Eunice; and then to Timothy himself. He exhorts Timothy to stir up the gift of God which had been transmitted to him through the laying on of the apostle's hands. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

2. "Be not thou therefore ashamed" (2Ti 1:8-12). It might be natural to be ashamed of fellowship with a prisoner, but Timothy was not to be ashamed either of the testimony of our Lord or of Paul his prisoner. Rather, he must be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," whereunto Paul had been "appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." It was for these things that Paul was suffering, but Paul himself was not ashamed, for he knew whom he had believed, and was persuaded that he was able to keep that which he had committed unto him ("my deposit," Greek) against that day. The words "abolished death," written here by a man facing physical death, refers to the death which is death indeed, that spiritual death which is eternal separation from God, the source of life.

3. "Hold fast the form of sound words" (2Ti 1:13-14). Words are important things, especially in a preacher, therefore let the preacher be careful that his words are sound words. The message which Paul had committed to Timothy must be kept "by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us."

4. “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me” (2Ti 1:15). Compare 2Ti 4:10-16.

5. “The Lord give mercy unto the house of, Onesiphorus” (2Ti 1:16-18). Upon this tenuous thread some have tried to support the doctrine of prayers for the dead. But there is no evidence that either Onesiphorus or his family had died. His name is mentioned nowhere outside of Second Timothy. In this first chapter Paul declares that Onesiphorus had often refreshed him, and was not ashamed of Paul’s chain; but, when he was in Rome, he diligently sought Paul out and found him, and Paul prays “that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day; and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knoweth very well.” The other mention of the name of Onesiphorus is in 4:19, where Paul sent his greetings to Prisca and Aquila, “and the household of Onesiphorus.” Apparently Onesiphorus lived in Ephesus, and wherever he was he was faithful. Paul thanked God for him, and we thank God for him; but what has all that to do with prayers for the dead?

II. A Sevenfold Composite Picture of a Christian and His Duties (2Ti 2:1-26). In this chapter the Christian is presented in seven successive pictures, and in each of these pictures his duties are pointed out, appropriate in each case to the picture itself.

1. “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2Ti 2:1-2). A Christian is a son, and as such he is to be strong in grace. And it is the duty of each one of us, as much as it was of Timothy, that the things which we have received we should commit to faithful men able to teach others also.

2. “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2Ti 2:3-4). Being a soldier is quite different from being a son. A son in his father’s house may be strong in grace, but a soldier in the army must endure hardship, and he must separate himself from everything in order to devote himself absolutely to the task in hand. “No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”

3. “And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully” (2Ti 2:5). Here the Christian is pictured as an athlete contending for a prize. Just as a contestant in the athletic games must observe the rules or be disqualified, so the Christian in the struggle in which he engages must carefully observe the instructions for his guidance laid down in the Word of God. Of course the prize for which the Christian is striving is not salvation, for that is a gift. It is rather the reward promised the faithful servant (1Co 3:11-15).

4. “The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits” (2Ti 2:6). The Christian here is pictured as a farmer, and a farmer must labor if he is to partake of the fruits of his farming. The Revised Version reads: “The husbandman that laboreth must be the first to -partake of the fruits

2Ti 2:7-14 do not need detailed exposition. It is interesting to point out that in 2Ti 2:8, instead of “Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised,” etc., the Revision reads: “Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel.” It is a good word. Let us by all means “Remember Jesus Christ.”

Then in 2Ti 2:12-13 the Revision is also an improvement: "If we endure, we shall also reign with him: if we shall deny him, he also will deny us: if we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself." It is a wonderful thing to remember that nothing can affect the faithfulness of God (compare 1Co 1:1-9).

5. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth" (2Ti 2:15-19). Here the Christian is presented as a skilled workman, an artisan, and as such he must study, always with the object before him that he might be approved unto God. He must learn how to "rightly divide the Word of Truth," for the truth has certain right divisions. The Bible is built according to a certain law of structure, and it is only as this law of structure is observed and obeyed, that the Christian workman may obtain God's approval. The Word of God must not be set aside to give way to "profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker (gangrene, Greek)." Hymenaeus and Philetus had departed from the truth and were teaching that there was no future resurrection, and had overthrown the faith of some. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure," having a seal with two inscriptions, one on either side; first, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and, second, "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

6. "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these (that is, from the vessels to dishonour), he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2Ti 2:20-22). Here the Christian is presented as a vessel, and as such he must be a clean vessel, sanctified, or set apart, and meet, that is, fit, for the Master's use. And in order that he might qualify for the Master's use and be prepared unto good work he must "flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." He must avoid foolish and unlearned questions, knowing that they do gender strifes.

7. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive" (2Ti 2:24-26). Notice the contrast between the picture of the Christian as a soldier and the picture of a Christian as a servant. As a soldier the Christian's business is to strive, to earnestly contend (Jude 1:3); but as a servant of the Lord he must not strive, he must be submissive. He must "be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God per ad venture will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

III. Shadows in the End Time (2Ti 3:1-17).

1. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come (2Ti 3:1-9). These marks of the end time are enumerated: "Men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;" — and all the time "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Real Christianity will give way to religious form. There will be plenty of motion but little life. "From such," says the apostle, "turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." In 2Ti 3:8-9 we learn the names of

the magicians of Egypt who withstood Moses (Exo 7:11-12; Exo 7:22; Exo 8:7; Exo 9:11). “Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.”

2. “But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience, persecutions, afflictions” (2Ti 3:10-13). Paul was a great sufferer (2Co 11:1-33). He endured great persecutions, but out of them all the Lord delivered him. “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” That is not a threat, but a promise, like the similar word of our Lord Jesus in John 16:33, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” There is no use looking for improvement in the end-time, for “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

3. “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of” (2Ti 3:14-17). Timothy had learned these things of the Holy Scriptures through his grandmother, through his mother, through the Apostle Paul, and through others; but he had learned them from the Holy Spirit himself. From a child he had known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us “wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” The Holy Scriptures are from God. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God (“God breathed” Greek), and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Here we have a statement concerning the Word of God, and it is a statement which may be tested, like a proposition in algebra or chemistry. It may be reduced to a demonstration. And wherever or whenever men have applied the test they have found that the Word of God is indeed profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; and that its study is what makes the man of God “complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (RV).

IV. A Man About To Die Speaks His Final Word (2Ti 4:1-22).

1. “I charge thee” (2Ti 4:1-6). Here the aged apostle, who has so long and so faithfully held aloft the light of truth, hands the torch to his faithful friend and follower, his beloved child, Timothy, reminding him of the day when the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom. Paul says to this young preacher: “Preach the word.” That is the principal thing. Let the preacher know that his business is to preach the Word. For the time will come when they will not endure sound teaching; but after their own desires, having itching ears, they will heap to themselves teachers to tickle their ears; and just because they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables, therefore it is the more important that the preacher should be urgent in season and out of season, reproof, rebuking, exhorting, with all longsuffering and teaching. Let the preacher watch in all things, endure affliction, preach the gospel as an evangelist, fulfilling his ministry.

2. “I have fought a good fight” (2Ti 4:7-8). The Revision is better: “I have fought the good fight.” He is not referring to the manner in which he himself had fought, but rather to the nature of the fight itself. It was a good fight, all along the line, and he was glad to have had a part in it. “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that

day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.” Observe that Paul emphasizes the righteousness of his Judge. He is not depending upon a gracious Judge, but rather a righteous Judge. It is no part of a judge’s office to be gracious. It is his business to be righteous. He does not preside in a court of mercy, but rather in a court of justice. The grace of God went all the way when the Son of God was nailed to the cross of Calvary for our sins. But, having “laid our sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, who bore them all and frees us from the accursed load,” the righteousness of God now demands that those who come unto him by the Lord Jesus shall be received and welcomed and given eternal life, and protected and preserved, and rewarded for their faithful service. The crown spoken of here, like the other crowns of the New Testament, is a symbol of reward, and here it is promised to all them that have loved his appearing. Of course the crown is not salvation. Salvation is a gift, and Paul long ago had received that gift. But he is looking forward to the crown at the end of the race when he shall hear the voice of his righteous Judge say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

3. “Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me” (2Ti 4:9-13). In these verses we have a picture of the loneliness of the apostle. He wanted Timothy to come to him, for Demas had forsaken him, having loved this present age, and had gone to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke was with him. He wanted Timothy to bring Mark with him when he came, “for he is useful to me for ministering” (2Ti 4:11, RV). Tychicus had gone to Ephesus, being sent by Paul. He wants Timothy to bring the cloak that he had left at Troas, for it was probably not always quite comfortable in the Roman dungeon. Then, too, Paul wanted Timothy to bring “the books, but especially the parchments.” We may not know what these books and parchments were. Paul would have opportunity in prison for study which he could not have otherwise.

4. “Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil” (2Ti 4:14-15). Paul commits this evil worker to the Lord that he might be rewarded according to his works, and he warns Timothy against him, “for he hath greatly withstood our words.”

5. “At my first answer no man stood with me” (2Ti 4:16-18). Evidently there had been a first trial for Paul, and, though he had not been fully acquitted, there had been, so to speak, an adjournment of his trial. Humanly speaking he had to stand alone at that first hearing. All men had forsaken him, and he prays God that it might not be laid to their charge (compare Luk 23:34; Acts 7:60). But though all men forsook him the Lord stood with him and strengthened him, “that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

There has been much conjecture about “the mouth of the lion.” Some have thought it meant, that Paul escaped being thrown into the arena to be destroyed by lions. Others have said that the emperor Nero who then occupied the Roman throne was often called “the lion.” But it seems more reasonable to suppose that by “the mouth of the lion” Paul was using a figure of speech to describe some great peril that had threatened him.

6. “Salute Prisca and Aquila” (2Ti 4:19-22). Here we have the final words of greeting to and from friends. He sends personal messages to our old friends Aquila and Priscilla, and to the family of Onesiphorus. He tells of Erastus abiding at Corinth, “but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.” Again, he beseeches Timothy to come to him before winter. Then he sends personal greetings

from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren, closing with the apostolic benediction. A word needs to be said about Paul having left Trophimus sick at Miletum. There had been a time when "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them" (Acts 19:11-12). Indeed, there had been times when Paul was used of God even to raise the dead (Acts 20:7-12). Why then had he been obliged to leave Trophimus at Miletum sick? The answer is, that in the beginning of the New Testament Church, before the writing of the New Testament was completed, it pleased God to support the testimony of his servants by working miracles through them. But as the New Testament books neared completion the spectacular gifts, such as speaking with tongues, healing the sick, raising the dead, and other miracles, were gradually withdrawn. So that having the Scriptures complete in its possession the church of God is now called upon to walk by faith and not by sight.

03.5. Simple Studies in Titus

Simple Studies in Titus The Epistle to Titus, who had been left in charge of the churches on the island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea, was written at about the time of First Timothy. It is similar to that Epistle in many respects, emphasizing the same truths. However, while the truth most emphasized in First Timothy is the importance of sound teaching, in Titus the truth most emphasized is the importance of God's order for the conduct of the churches.

I. Instructions for the Guidance of Local Churches (Tit 1:1-16).

1. "Paul to Titus" (Tit 1:1-4). The apostle greets Titus here, as he greeted Timothy in his First Epistle to him, as his *gnesios teknon*, his "genuine child." We are not so well acquainted with Titus as with Timothy. We know that Titus was a Gentile whom Paul had brought to Christ (Tit 1:4; Gal 2:3). In Acts 15:1-41 he was in the party with Paul and Barnabas when they went from Antioch in Syria up to Jerusalem to discuss with the apostles and elders there the relation of Christians to the law of Moses. Some of the Hebrew Christians at Jerusalem refused to recognize Titus as a Christian because he was not circumcised. Paul, who in other circumstances had circumcised Timothy on the principle of being all things to all men that he might gain some (1Co 9:19), resisted the demand of the legalizers at Jerusalem, that the gospel of Christ might continue with us (Gal 2:3-5). Titus was Paul's trusted messenger in gathering the offerings from among the churches for the poor saints at Jerusalem (2Co 8:15-24). The apostle speaks in 2Co 7:5-16 of the consolation and comfort brought to him by Titus after a visit to the Corinthian church.

2. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee" (Tit 1:5-9). From this passage it appears that Paul and Titus had visited Crete together, and that Titus had been left in Crete to watch over the young churches on that island. He now points out to Titus the importance of having the right men in charge of the various local churches. The Holy Spirit had chosen men to be elders or bishops, but it remained for the churches to recognize these men and install them in their office. "It is," says Dr. Scofield, "not at all a question of the presence in the assembly of persons having the qualifications of elders, made overseers by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28); that such persons were in the churches of Crete is assumed; the question is altogether one of the appointment of such persons. These assemblies were not destitute of elders; but were 'wanting,' in that they were not duly appointed. There is a progress of doctrine in respect of the appointing of elders. Elder (*presbuteros*) and bishop (*episcopos* overseer) designate the same office (compare verse 7; Acts 20:17; compare verse 28), the former referring to the man, the latter to a function of the office. The eldership in the apostolic local churches was always plural. There is no instance of one elder in a local church. The functions of the elders are: to rule (1Ti 3:4-5; 1Ti 5:17), to guard the body of revealed truth from perversion and error (Tit 1:9), to 'oversee' the church as a shepherd his flock (Acts 20:28; John 21:16; Heb 13:17; 1Pe 5:2). Elders are made or 'set' in the churches by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28), but great stress is laid upon their due appointment (Acts 14:23; Tit 1:5). At first they were ordained (Greek, *cheirotoneo*, 'to elect,' 'to designate with the hand,') by an apostle; for

example, Acts 14:23, but in Titus and 1 Timothy the qualifications of an elder become part of the Scriptures for the guidance of the churches in such appointment (1Ti 3:1-7)" (Scofield Reference Bible).

3. "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers" (Tit 1:10-16). Many of these were "of the circumcision," that is, Hebrews, whose mouths must be stopped. But of the Cretians themselves Paul quotes one of their own writers as saying: "The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies," and Paul adds, "This witness is true." These must be rebuked, and the people must be warned against listening to their false teaching. They professed to know God, but showed by their works that they were abominable and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate.

II. Instructions for the Guidance of the Preacher (Tit 2:1-15).

1. "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Tit 2:1-10). Let the preacher remember that it is his business to preach, and to give sound teaching in his preaching. These verses show what kind of people Christians ought to be, including aged men, aged women, young women, young men, and Christian bondservants or slaves.

2. "For" (Tit 2:11-15). This little word "for" is really a big word, perhaps the biggest in the whole Epistle. It is like a very small hinge upon which a very large door may swing. All that precedes it consists mostly of good advice, telling people how they ought to live. Good advice is not confined to the Christian church nor to the Christian gospel. As a matter of fact the gospel of Christ is not good advice at all, nor is it merely good news. It is that, but it is much more than that, "for it is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom 1:16). The power of God, mind you, not the good advice of God, nor even merely the good news of God. It is God's own power. And that is what makes this word "for" so important. Titus is commanded to preach these things to the people in Crete and to preach them in confidence, remembering the tremendous power of his message. He had a right to demand that the Cretian Christians should live the right kind of lives, "FOR the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

That, of course, is Calvary, for there the Son of God delivered us from the penalty of sin, the wages of sin, which is death. But salvation means more than deliverance from the penalty of sin. It means also deliverance from the power of sin. The grace of God teaches us that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present age." The word for "teaching" is a word which means to bring under discipline. That is what a disciple is; a disciple is one who is brought under discipline. God does more than teach us. He takes us in charge, and proceeds to produce in us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that godly life which we could not produce in our own strength. And even more than that. The grace of God delivers us also from the presence of sin. This will be accomplished when our Lord returns, and for him we should be constantly waiting,—"looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people (a people for his own possession), zealous of good works."

These are the things which the preacher is to preach: "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."

III. Instructions for the Guidance of Believers (Tit 3:1-15).

1. "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers" (Tit 3:1-2). The government is God's creation, God's gift unto the world. The powers that be are ordained of God. (Rom 13:1-14) and therefore we should obey magistrates, be ready to every good work; and in our dealings with other men we should "speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men."

2. "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish" (Tit 3:3-4). Paul here tells what kind of man he used to be before he got saved. He was an enthusiastic Jew. The phrase, "love toward man," comes from the Greek word *philanthropia* which, of course, gives us our English word "philanthropy." The Greek word occurs only once again in the New Testament, where it is translated "kindness" (Acts 28:2).

3. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done" (Tit 3:5-7). It is according to God's mercy that we have been saved "by the washing (the bath) of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

Here, as in John 3:5, water and the Spirit are associated in relation to our salvation. The water is a type of regeneration through the Word of God, "the washing of regeneration." Along with the bath of regeneration which eleven of the apostles had experienced and Judas had not (John 13:10-11), there is also "the renewing of the Holy Spirit," and this renewing of the Holy Spirit is again spoken of in Rom 12:1-2, where it is called, "the renewing of your mind." The Spirit of God uses the Word of God in our new birth and also in our training as children of God (John 7:37-39; Eph 5:25-27; 2Co 3:18).

4. "This is a faithful saying" (Tit 3:8-11). Here Paul enjoins upon us all that we should be "careful to maintain good works" (compare Tit 3:14). Foolish questions, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law, are to be avoided. And the heretic after the first and second admonition is to be rejected. The word "heretic" means "one who makes a choice." He chooses to believe and press his favorite doctrines, which may be false or true; but, if true, he stresses them out of proportion and presses them until he produces schism in the body, and, as the apostle here says, "He that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."

5. "When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter" (Tit 3:12-15). This would indicate that Titus was not to be permanently stationed on the island of Crete, which would make it even more important that the needed elders or bishops should be appointed and set to work. Zenas the lawyer who is not elsewhere mentioned in Scripture, and Apollos whom we know very well are commended, and the Epistle closes with a little word of intimate fellowship: "All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen."

03.6. Simple Studies in Philemon

Simple Studies in Philemon This letter was written by Paul from the Roman prison at the same time as the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. The three letters were sent from Rome by the hands of Tychicus and Onesimus. As we begin the study of Philemon, let me point at once to what I believe is the keynote of the Epistle. I refer to the phrase, “in the flesh,” in Phm 1:16. To me this phrase establishes beyond doubt that Philemon and his slave Onesimus were brothers “in the flesh.” That is to say, they were sons of the same father and mother. If Paul had intended to say this, I do not see how he could have said it in plainer language,—“a brother beloved, both in the flesh, and in the Lord.”

It is not at all impossible that Onesimus could have been Philemon’s brother as well as his slave. Let us draw the picture: Here, let us say, were two sons in the same family who had not the same ability. Philemon became a prosperous man while his brother was not prosperous. It would be natural for the prosperous brother to help the other, and one can see how the less prosperous brother might finally have become so deeply indebted that he became his brother’s slave. This, of course, would be before either of them had become a Christian.

Philemon was a man of some prominence in Colosse. He certainly was, a slaveholder and he evidently had a larger house than many other Christian brethren, for the church met in his house (Phm 1:2).

We have no record that Paul ever visited Colosse, for the Scriptures never mention the city except in Col 1:2. From Col 2:1 it appears that Paul was not known personally to the believers in that city. And yet it seems evident from Phm 1:19 that Philemon himself had been led to Christ by the apostle.

Let us put our hypothesis to the test, and see how it works out. Assuming for the moment that the hypothetical solution of the problem is the correct one, the situation in Colosse would be something like this: Philemon had become a Christian, and was a leading figure in the Colossian church, but he had not freed his brother, and Onesimus was still kept in slavery. This, of course, would cloud Philemon’s testimony in Colosse, and in a measure it would cloud also the testimony of the Colossian church in the community. Men would say, “Why is it that this man, with his high profession of Christianity, does not see the incongruity of keeping his own brother in slavery?”

You see, we do not get rid of all our grave clothes at once, and Philemon was no exception. The name “Onesimus” means “profitable,” and Philemon might have reasoned that Onesimus was more profitable to him in slavery than in freedom.

Onesimus runs away. He is accused by practically all the commentators of stealing from Philemon before he ran away. This does not seem to be proven, though there is an intimation in Phm 1:18 that it might have been true. All roads led to Rome, and Onesimus found his way to Rome. How he came into contact with the Apostle Paul in prison is not revealed. He may himself have been a lawbreaker, and thus a prisoner in the same prison with Paul. In any event we do know that in that

contact Onesimus himself became a Christian. Paul led him to Christ and became his father in the gospel.

Whether the apostle had known before this, he certainly came to know now, of the double relation between Philemon and Onesimus, and he seized upon the golden opportunity to set things right for Philemon and the church in Colosse. He wrote a letter and sent it to Colosse by Onesimus; and that letter we now know as "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Philemon."

I. The Salutation (Phm 1:1-3).

1. "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow labourer, and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in thy house: grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phm 1:1-2). There may be a play upon words in the phrase, "our dearly beloved," for the name "Philemon" comes from a root meaning "to kiss." Dr. James

H. Brookes defines the name Philemon as meaning, "who kisses in love." Apphia was probably Philemon's wife, and Archippus their son. Archippus is mentioned in Col 4:17 in such a way as to intimate that he might have been taking Epaphras' place as elder or bishop, that is, the pastor, in the church at Colosse, while Epaphras was with Paul in Rome. It has been suggested also that Archippus might have been a military man, and so he is greeted here as a soldier.

2. "Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phm 1:3). There is always danger that we shall become so familiar with these words as to fail to appreciate them. Only think of having God for your Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and to have them uniting in such a greeting as this: "Grace to you, and peace!"

II. Paul's Desire for Philemon (Phm 1:4-14).

1. "I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers" (Phm 1:4-5). He had heard of Philemon's love and faith which he had toward the Lord Jesus and toward all saints, and therefore he put his name on his prayer list (compare 1Jn 3:14).

2. "That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus" (Phm 1:6-7). Now let us look at this verse carefully. "Communication" means sharing what you have with others. Paul prayed that the sharing of Philemon's faith might become effectual in the church and community by the acknowledging of every good thing which was in him in Christ Jesus. Consider that carefully. Paul believes in Philemon. He believes that he is a true Christian, and he declares that he has great joy and consolation in Philemon's love, "because the bowels (or, the hearts) of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother." But what Paul wanted to accomplish was the acknowledgment by others of the good things which were really in Philemon. Philemon's testimony was hindered, and his neighbors did not recognize the good things which were in him. Paul, in this letter, hoped to overcome this difficulty and to set things right, so that Philemon might be acknowledged everywhere as a true Christian and faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus" (Phm 1:8-14). The apostle reminds Philemon that he really had the right to enjoin him or to command him that which was befitting. But for love's sake he preferred to beseech him, "being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of

Jesus Christ.” He made intercession for his son Onesimus, whom he had begotten in his bonds. The name Onesimus, as we have already seen, means “profitable.” In time past he had not lived up to his name, and was unprofitable, but now he had become profitable, both to Philemon and to Paul himself. Paul sends him again and says, “Receive him, that is, mine own bowels (my very heart, RV).” Paul would have been glad to keep Onesimus with him that he might serve him in the bonds of the gospel. But he was not willing to do this without Philemon’s consent, that his benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

III. From Slavery to Brotherhood (Phm 1:15-25).

1. “For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever,” (Phm 1:15). Slavery is not necessarily a permanent thing, but a brother never stops being a brother. That relation goes on forever.

2. “Not now as a servant” (Phm 1:16). The word for “servant” is bondservant or slave. Paul now is beseeching Philemon to receive Onesimus, “not now as a slave, but above a slave, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?” Onesimus had become a brother in the Lord to Paul, and so he was especially beloved of Paul. But Philemon had a double reason for loving him, because he was Philemon’s brother, both by natural generation and by regeneration, “both in the flesh, and in the Lord.”

3. “If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself” (Phm 1:17). How would Philemon receive Paul if he were to come to Colosse? Would he send him to the slave pen, or to the guest chamber?

4. “If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, to put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides” (Phm 1:18-19). Here is the doctrine of imputation beautifully illustrated. Our sins were imputed to Christ, and his righteousness is imputed to us. Paul says to Philemon, “If this man owes you anything, charge it to me.” That is imputation. And when Philemon charged the account to Paul, if there was anything to charge, then Onesimus’ debt was cancelled, and he stood before Philemon in the name and credit of Paul himself. So it is with us. Our debt was paid on Calvary, and we are set free, delivered from slavery and brought into brotherhood in the family of God.

5. “Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord; refresh my bowels (my heart) in the Lord” (Phm 1:20). The passionate tone characterizing this letter would be incomprehensible if Paul were merely interceding for one who had been a slave, and was to continue as a slave. But when it is seen that he is interceding for a brother to be released from slavery and recognized and installed as a brother beloved, and when it is further seen what effect this would have upon Philemon’s testimony and the testimony of the church in the city and community of Colosse and surrounding communities, then it is easily understood why Paul should feel the matter so keenly and should plead with such earnestness, as one who must not be denied.

6. “Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote” (Phm 1:21). The Revision reads: “Having confidence in thine obedience I write unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even beyond what I say.” It is interesting to note that while in Phm 1:8-9 Paul said he would not command in this matter, but rather beseech, yet in Phm 1:21 he says in effect, “I expect you to obey me.”

7. “But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you” (Phm 1:22). He hoped to be released from prison and to come to Colosse, and in such a case he could check up and see whether Onesimus was still in bondage to his brother, or was in his rightful place in his brother’s home. The Epistle closes with words of personal salutation and the apostolic benediction.

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