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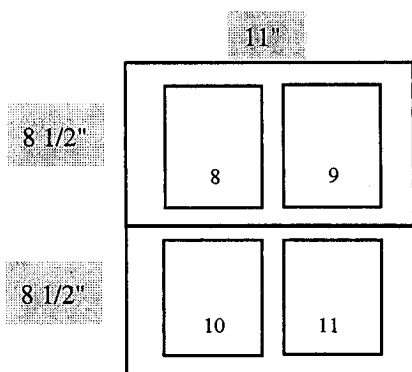
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## *Elements of Dispensational Truth* *Full Preterism*

### *Chapter 8.3*

## *What About the Time* *Notices in the Revelation?*

Of interest to us are the statements in the Revelation concerning the Lord coming quickly. These have been pressed into the service of preterism. Preterists use these passages in Revelation to support their assertion that Revelation was written before AD 70.<sup>1</sup>

### *Some Considerations Regarding* *Understanding Our Subject*

#### **REVELATION WRITTEN IN VIEW OF THE RUIN OF THE CHURCH**

We have already considered that the Lord's coming is presented so as to place us in an expectant posture, waiting and watching. So is it in the Revelation. *Failure is occasion of prophecy.* That means when there is failure God brings

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1. The partial preterist, Kenneth L. Gentry, has written a book, *Before Jerusalem Fell, Dating the Book of Revelation*, Tyler: Institute for Christian Economics, 1989, which now appears to be to preterism what Goliath was to the Philistines. He reviewed the external evidence for the late dating of the book of Revelation (ca. 96 AD) and, not surprisingly, finds the evidence "confusing" and "inconclusive." He finds internal evidences for a pre-AD 70 date of composure in the time references such as the Lord coming quickly. He claims that Nero is the Beast and that Rev. 11 shows that the temple was still standing when Revelation was written. Full Preterists call upon him to consistently embrace their view!

One source that reviews the external evidence for the late date, finding this to be the case, is Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1-7, An Exegetical Commentary*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1992, pp. 20-23. Another is Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1990, pp. 948-962 and a third is D. A. Carson, *et. al., An Introduction to the New Testament*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992, pp. 473-476. It is merely an exigency of preterism that *requires* a date before AD 70.

prophecy forward, and prophecy shows what God will judge. The faithful should keep clear of what God will judge. The book of Revelation is the standing witness to the fall of the church. And in view of that ruin, God has told us of His judgments. In Rev. 2 and 3 we have a foreshadow of the church seen in responsibility, and Christ is seen as a judge, in keeping with the character of the book. In these chapters we find some of the statements regarding Christ's coming. The question is: are these references to a figurative coming in AD 70, or are they references to a literal coming?

It is helpful to keep in mind that what is in view in Rev. 2 and 3 is overall failure and decline of the church viewed on earth in responsibility, with judgment at the end of the church's path in responsibility here, ending with the removal of the saints at the rapture (as we know) and the mass of profession going into the tribulation period and finally accepting the Antichrist. The warnings of the Judge, then, look on to the end when He will come in judgment.

### THE BEARING OF THE STATED DIVISIONS OF THE BOOK

We will be much helped by observing the divisions of the book of Revelation found in Rev. 1:19:

Write therefore what thou hast seen, and the things that are, and the things that are about to be after these.

The first division in the book is Rev. 1, the second is the letters to the churches, and the third is what will be after the churches is Rev. 4 and what follows. Notice that the second does not end in, say, AD 150. No! This has the *entire period* of the church viewed in testimony and responsibility. This is meant by "the things that are." The seven churches depict "the things that are," the entire period that the church is on earth. And "the things that are" have to do with the church on earth in responsibility and testimony.<sup>2</sup>

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2. This is not the place to enlarge on the subject of the church as viewed on earth but I direct the reader's attention to such a use of church in, say, Gal. 1:13, Phil. 3:6. He was not persecuting those who were already in heaven. They are of the church but not looked at it in its testimony and responsibility. It is a desperate artifice to plead Acts 9:4 to claim that since Christ was in heaven and was persecuted, that therefor church means all, including those in heaven. Such is the desperation to avoid the Scripture teaching that there is an aspect of the church viewed on earth. This opposition implicitly means that the saints in heaven are suffering (1 Cor. 12:26) because the church is persecuted. The 'mystical' Christ, if we may so speak, noted in 1 Cor. 12:12 is the head viewed in connection with the members on earth. This leaves the departed as of the body but not in the sphere of its activity, which is here. This is the view of the body in Eph. 4 likewise. In 1 Cor 12:28 the gifts are set "in the church." What church? In the church on earth where there is the ministry of the gifts. There is no ministry by gifts in heaven. And most surely 1 Cor. 12:28 does not mean Corinth, though it does include Corinth as well as the rest of the church on earth (1 Cor. 1:2).



## THE "SEVENS" OF REV. 1-3

The several instances of seven things each signify a completeness of something, such as the seven stars, viewed in, and on, His hand. It is a mistake to fasten on independency of the stars. That is not at all the point. Rev. 2 & 3 is the unfolding of the complete scope of God's dealings with the vessel of testimony on earth during the epoch of "the things that are":

Here is Christ in His general character -- chief and inspector. It seems to me pretty clear that the seven churches are the moral history of the church from the time of John until the end. First, this number seven shows that it forms a whole. If it is a complete idea, it cannot be the aggregate of the church at that time, because they are totally different states. The Lord could not say at the same time, as if to the general church, "Thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam," and "Thou hast kept the word of my patience." Then, if it were only a question of those seven churches, it is incredible that He holds the seven stars, as a whole, in His hand, and that He only thinks of seven churches when there were thousands in the world; v. 12. The stream still runs, but the spring had dried up. Christ in these epistles, we see, will not bear with anything short of the primitive state of the church: it is that which He had set up Himself in forming the church. If they do not return, the Lord will take away the candlestick; and we find very little of repentance in the history of the seven churches. From the very first, judgment is pronounced on the church; only we have the different phases through which it passes to arrive there.<sup>3</sup>

The angels of the seven churches answer to the seven stars (Rev. 1:20). If one is symbolical so is the other. This refers to something in two aspects. Stars in the later part of the Revelation signify derivative political authorities. Here, the stars signify spiritual authorities. As angels, they are the messengers, i.e., the representatives of the state that the Lord addresses in the several assemblies.

## A MYSTERY IS INVOLVED IN THIS

A *mystery* (Rev. 1:20) is involved here, showing that we must look for instruction beyond the mere existence of seven assemblies in Asia at the time John wrote. The selection of seven from the total in Asia, and the order in which they are addressed, are important. Each of these seven assemblies foreshadows a development in the state of the church on earth seen in responsibility, and signifies something larger and more widespread than the state described in each respective assembly.

The seven stars are *in* His right hand of power (Rev. 1:16), held thus securely; and *on* His right hand (Rev. 1:20; JND transl.) for display in responsibility and testimony.

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3. *Collected Writings* 28:337.

The seven candlesticks, or lamps, are also part of this mystery (Rev. 1:20). This gives us a whole, a complete view, of characteristics and phases of the church on earth viewed in responsibility, utilizing the actual states of seven churches existent when John wrote. These states may exist simultaneously, as they obviously did in John's day, but there has been a development in church history where there are periods during which these respective states are characteristics of something wider than a locality. It has been rightly observed that the first three states were sequential and are gone, while the last four exist contemporaneously (though there has been a sequential development of them).

The place these seven letters have in view of "the things that are," the position of Christ as judge, the characteristics in which He presents Himself to each of the seven assemblies, the character of His judgments, the way His coming is spoken of, the mystery character involved, etc., all converge to direct us to the fact that something other than merely local assemblies are in view. The seven are typical of something more than themselves.

### *God's Light, in Responsibility, in the World*

It is helpful to see that Israel was God's light in the world but is now set aside. God does now have a light in the world, however. We noted above in a footnote that Scripture does use the word church in the sense of a place on earth where there is gift and ministry. But there is also responsibility of the church on earth as God's light in the world. This is seen in Rev. 2 & 3 (I do not mean exclusively there), its phases and characters foreshadowed by the seven assemblies in order to give the complete view as God sees it. Each of these assemblies gives a foreshadow of a general candlestick character or phase in this history of the church viewed in responsibility and testimony on the earth. This is involved with the mystery of these things (Rev. 1:20). Thus the local candlestick, or lamp, signifies a wider meaning. It is the wider meaning that is the instruction of paramount importance, whatever practical instructions for an assembly or the individual may be obtained from what the Lord says to each of the assemblies. There is the overall instruction and this is seen in the seven times repeated:

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

It is not said in each case 'what the Spirit said to the assembly.' No! We must see the whole. With these things in mind, let us examine a quotation from J. N. Darby in his 1842 "Notes on the Apocalypse":

There is another remark to be made here: God's candlestick. His government in the world was no longer at Jerusalem. God will govern the world by His Firstborn, and will prepare the way for Him by these judgments. But judgment begins at the house of God. The light -- the candlestick of God --

was there, and His name was upon them in the sight of the world. And whatever be its unfaithfulness, and however God may act in raising a testimony elsewhere before the world, until such a system be judged, as a system established of God, it bears its responsibility, and God acts in judgment towards it. Jerusalem was the seat of God's testimony. His candlestick had been there. I need not insist amongst Christians that the light and the presence of God were spiritually dwelling in the midst of Christians. Nevertheless, Jerusalem's responsibility and her position before the world only ceased in her destruction by the judgment of God. After this, God's candlestick, in a terrestrial sense, was in the professing church. Till then, Christians had been, to the eye of the world, a sect of the Jews. Thus we see Aquila and Priscilla at a distance from Rome, because Claudius had commanded that every Jew should depart from it. At Antioch, in the midst of the Gentiles, which was the starting-point of the labors of Paul, apostle of the Gentiles, the believers begin to have a peculiar name. They were first called Christians at Antioch; Acts 11:26.

Thus God was preparing little by little, and especially by the mission of Paul, another candlestick before the world. Jerusalem, laboring under the weight of her sins and the guilt of the blood of the Just One, by the judgments of God upon her, disappears entirely from the scene, and the professing church is the only witness for God remaining before the world. The judgment of God upon the earth consequently connects itself with the professing church. The position of the church was perhaps more happy before, when she had only to seek her blessings from house to house (Acts 2:46), and while the temple remained the public place of the testimony of God; yet God is always faithful to His own, and wise in His ways. It is, however, under this new character that the church is considered in the Apocalypse. Christ is there judging in the midst of the candlesticks. In the prophetic part, the church is no more seen on earth. The judgments concern the world, and the events proceed from the throne on high, not from Christ walking on earth in the midst of the candlesticks, which shone very little perhaps, but which still were there.

Thus the addresses to the seven churches, while applying to the seven churches in Asia, and severally to any one, are applicable to the professing church so long as she retains this place manifestly on the earth. In detail it may be removed from one place and carried to another, as has been the case. We must remember also that the characteristic condition of one church may begin, and that of another still continue. *Alas! the state of the church at Ephesus has continued to the end, and the candlestick will be removed.*<sup>4</sup> Many more sorrows have occurred in the meantime. One thing more is to be remarked. The characters according to which Christ acts in the midst of the churches until Thyatira are those found in the revelation of His glory in what preceded; chap. 1. This is no longer the case from Sardis, save the fact that

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4. {I have emphasized this sentence.}

He retains in His hand the authority over the churches; the seven stars are still there. But the names He takes (that is to say, the character according to which He acts, and which is the object of intelligent faith in the church) must always be looked for farther off in the knowledge of Christ. They are beyond that revelation of Himself which constitutes the basis of His relationship with the churches in the normal position which He takes towards them here.

In the church at Sardis then, the testimony of the churches, in a certain sense, begins as it were anew, while still remaining part of the whole. The Spirit repeats this characteristic trait -- Jesus holds the seven stars in His right hand. But the position is less ecclesiastical, and has more of what is essential in the nature of His relation with the churches. There is an exception to be made to what has been said in the case of Thyatira. "Son of God" is not part of the revelation of Christ in the preceding chapter. But it seems to me that the apostasy in principle which characterizes the church in Thyatira (association with idols, and this being tolerated) -- this fact had its place when a well-known ecclesiastical relation was coming to an end. Christ is the Son of God; it is under this essential title of the glory of His Person that He laid the basis of the church, and was the object of her faith. Thus the claims of the church, as being associated as co-heir with Him, in contrast with the nations, come in entirely in their place, when the professing church was abandoning her only faith, and the hope which was hers as set apart to God. The Morning Star, the dawn of a new day, shone in the heart of him that overcame under such circumstances. (Compare chap. 22:16.)

These seven churches, considered as a continued series of the history of the church, would then present to us the following epochs. Her first declension already in the time of John; the time of persecution; the professing church established in the empire or in the world, and the germ of the ecclesiastical apostasy; the time of this ecclesiastical apostasy, when Jezebel is seducing and tolerated; Sardis, the time of Protestantism as a system established in the earth; the time when, deprived of strength, faithfulness to the word of the patience of Christ characterizes those who knew it; the time of saying We are rich, when, in true riches, everything is wanting. This last is the final state -- the lukewarmness which Christ spues out of His mouth.

Observe, that we must not look for energy producing effects, but for the effect produced by that energy. This is what God judges. He acts in energy. Thus the Reformation was the energy of the Holy Ghost; the state of Protestantism is a thing which He judges. The churches characterize the state, the position of the Christian testimony which attracts the attention of the world -- the candlestick which is there to give light. If this is the case, it is evident that the study of the speciality of these churches is of the utmost interest to my reader. I earnestly entreat him to make it his study -- so much the more, because the most precious traits of the heavenly joy are found therein.

I shall only add a few words more in general on the whole. The promises  
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made to the first two churches relate to the general recompense, and are, of course, so to speak, for every Christian. The promise made to the third relates to a personal and individual knowledge of Jesus, which supposes that strength for faithfulness of walk is already found more in the faith and in the faithfulness of the individual. Jesus is known alone, and also enjoyed alone. There is in the church of Thyatira, amidst the general iniquity, a remarkable faithfulness and devotedness; and the Spirit of God, while leaving to the body the character of the candlestick, that is to say, the responsibility of witnessing before the world, distinguishes entirely those who had not taken part in this iniquity. Observe ch. 2:24, where the lesson is still stronger, or at least more clear, in all the critical editions.

We may observe that in the last three churches that of Sardis is threatened with the judgment of the world. (Compare 1 Thess. 5.) That of Philadelphia becomes of an inestimable price for the faithful of this time. The coming of Jesus is declared therein to sustain faith in a peculiar manner. And, finally (showing at the same time His perfect patience, if any of His abode there still), we see in the case of Laodicea the professing church spued out of the Lord's mouth.

The removal of the candlestick is still future to us, for the church fell into ruins early and there was never a return to first love as characterizing the church as it had once been. We speak of the removal of the candlestick at such and such a place and the tendency of this is to hinder appreciation for the exposition in the above quotation. And no doubt there is a sense in which it is true that a light goes out here and there, but we must not confuse this with the Lord's coming to remove the candlestick.

## *The Coming of Christ in Revelation Not Figurative*

### THE PASSAGE OF TIME

In Rev. 1:13 He is the Son of man and He appears as judge walking among the candlesticks. There are no repeated (figurative) comings of the Son of man during the time of the church on earth to remove candlesticks. There is no *figurative* coming in Revelation. But how does that statement stand in view of what the Lord says in Rev. 2:5? Do you want to open the door for the idea of figurative comings of Christ? Countless numbers of them, perhaps? Have you not seen where that leads in preterism? And the matter of the explanation of the Lord's statement is dependent upon one's view of the church. I understand this removal of the lamp in view of the truth that there is a use in Scripture of the word "church" to mean *the church on earth* in testimony and responsibility (and subject to failure and *ruin*). This we have in Rev. 2 and 3; a foreview, or foreshadow, of its history in testimony and responsibility, and its end -- as well

as an application to states of individual assemblies.

We can see in the seven golden lamps local responsibility. On the other hand, it is a mistake to see seven "independent" assemblies, thus looking to Rev. 2 & 3 to teach the *constitution* of the church, which is really Paul's line of teaching particularly. Local autonomy is not taught in Scripture, but local responsibility *is* taught, and here it is part of the picture. But there is much more than that in Rev. 2 & 3. Indeed, while local responsibility is important, that is not the main matter in Rev. 2 & 3.

And, what has John 14:23 to do with the issue before us? Nothing. John 14:23 is not the coming of Christ, as if that verse refers to a Preterist kind of figurative coming. It is the Father and the Son making their abode with the individual believer who treasures up the tenor of Christ's mind ("keep my word") -- for communion. Such things found in John's gospel have to do with the operations of the Spirit in the believer, not with the coming of Christ such as we have in John 14:1-3, or of the coming of the Son of man in other passages.

We shall bear in mind that in the recovery of dispensational truth the two phases, or stages of Christ's second coming were rightly distinguished. He will come for the true believers to receive them to Himself to conduct them personally to the Father's house long-since prepared by His entry above as victorious Man, the place thus being readied for His fellow co-heirs. Subsequently He shall appear in glory and power, with them, after the intervening 70<sup>th</sup> week of Dan. 9 (which likely will be preceded by a transitional period occurring right after the rapture of the saints). While the rapture shall have removed the true believers, dominion of the Beast shall subsequently be subjected to the opening of the seven seals, the seven trumpet judgments, the pouring out of the seven bowls, and the personal judgments inflicted by the appearing of Christ in glory. Warnings are given in Rev. 2 & 3 and we must discern what is meant by the warnings with respect to the coming.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

The references to the coming of Christ found in Revelation do not refer to a figurative coming and certainly not to AD 70. It is the imminency of the language regarding Christ's coming that gives a false show of reasonableness to the idea that the book was written just before AD 70 and was then fulfilled. The fruits of the notion are poisonous, however, so let us briefly notice the references in question. We do so as keeping in mind that while the Mosaic system, as sanctioned of God, ended at the cross, the Mosaic age continues to the coming of the Son of man in power and glory. We are in the last hour (1 John 2:18) of which John spoke as well as the end of days (Heb. 1:1, 2). When the moral bearing of such expressions are apprehended, we look at the

passage of time differently -- looking at moral features and changes, not merely at chronology. Thus the expressions we will look at in Revelation have a moral bearing and are not actually indicators of how much time must pass chronologically. Moreover, it is God's pleasure that the Christian be in a posture of expectancy regarding the coming of the Lord Jesus to receive us unto himself.

## **WE ARE IN THE END OF THE DAYS OF THE MOSAIC AGE**

It will be helpful to the reader to keep in mind Heb. 1:1, 2, where the phrase "at the end of these days" refers what J. N. Darby has in a footnote:

See Isa. 2:2. A Hebrew expression as several here, for the end of the period of law, when Messiah was to be introduced.

As we saw in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 1, the church is outside of, and above ages. It is not an age among the earthly ages, though it is here in the world in responsibility. The age in which this responsibility is in force is the Mosaic age. The cross and the coming of the Spirit did not change the age. The Messiah came at the end of these days of the Mosaic age but Messiah was rejected. The new age, "the age to come," is not introduced, and all is meanwhile, as to that, just going on while God is doing a work in accordance with the interposed heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1). We are in a period of the suspension, so to speak, of the introduction of the age to come. It is in the time of the suspension that the imminence of the second coming of Christ is spoken of. It has pleased God, however, to lengthen the waiting without changing the imminence and our proper waiting and watching posture. Let us bear this in mind as we now refer to the statements in the Revelation that bear on this matter.

## *Time Notices in Rev. I*

### **REV. 1:1: WHAT MUST SHORTLY TAKE PLACE**

W Kelly remarked:

"Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to show to his bondmen." The terms "show" here and "signified" in the clause that succeeds are used with striking propriety, when we consider the visions on the one hand and the signs and symbols on the other which characterize the book. The aim is not to bring them out of that position, or to entitle them to the dignity of children of God. This characterizes the Gospel, which distinctively is the revelation of grace and truth in Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son. Here it is what God was going to do for His glory as the rejected One, who, therefore, shows it to His "bondmen" -- a term that suits those who might be in another relationship, after the church closes its history on earth, during a brief crisis of exceptional judgments.

Hence the comprehensive term is clearly employed with divine wisdom, "to show to his bondmen the things which must shortly come to pass."

Remark that it is not “the things which are about to come to pass,” which is exactly right in v. 19, where, after the past vision, the present and the future are distinguished. Here it is to show His bondmen “the things which must come to pass shortly.” If Jonah was sent with a warning of minatory character to arouse Nineveh to repent and thus escape their threatened ruin, John was to show the things which, as the guilt was intolerable, *must* (δεῖ) come to pass shortly. The apostasy of Christendom entails not conditional threats, but necessary and inevitable judgments. The critical facts are disclosed in which we see the church condition set aside because of its final and utter failure to shed the light of the sanctuary, till its last phase becomes so nauseous that the Lord spues it out of His mouth. Then follow judgments on the world with strokes of ever-increasing severity, in which God was about to maintain the glory of the firstborn, whom He at length introduces personally into the world to reign.<sup>5</sup>

### REV. 1:3: THE TIME [IS] NEAR

This statement is repeated in Rev. 22:10. On this W. Kelly wrote:

Then again the character of it, as derived from Christianity having already taken its place, is asserted. “Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” In Daniel’s time, and even to Daniel himself, the book was sealed. The old oracles were sealed then: not so John’s. “And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is near.” In Daniel’s time it was not at hand. To the church the end is always near. In her own course, and in the matters of her portion, the church does not know time at all. Everything that belongs to the body of Christ is unearthly and unworldly. The church is heavenly; and in heaven there are no times nor seasons. There may be lights of the heaven to mark times and seasons for the earth, and again on the earth. But the church consists of souls called out from the earth, and is not of the world: consequently to the church the time is always at hand. When Christ at God’s right hand was announced, even from the very beginning, He was ready to judge the quick and the dead. He remains in that condition of readiness from the time when He sat at God’s right hand till the present. The church goes on according to the will of the Lord, who might according to His own purpose lengthen or abridge the space. It is entirely in His hand, and in none other’s. Whereas for the Jew, there are necessary dates and momentous changes that must take place; and hence, as Daniel represents the Jew, we have the difference kept up. To the Christian this book is not sealed. All is opened, and this because we have the Holy Ghost dwelling in us; “for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” Therefore we find in connection with the book a most solemn warning. “Let him that is unrighteous be unrighteous still: and let the filthy be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” When the hour comes that is spoken of

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5. *The Revelation, in loco*, (first published in 1901) [www.therevelationpublishers.com](http://www.therevelationpublishers.com)



here, it is not for us, but for those who will be found after we are gone. All is then fixed. There will be no time for seeking mercy, as it were: whatever the state in which the Lord at His coming will find us, all is closed up and fixed. Accordingly, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me." We see that it is in connection with the foregoing -- not merely His coming for us who will keep the sayings of it, but for those whom He will find here below -- "to give to each as his work is."<sup>6</sup>

## *Time Notices in Rev. 2 & 3*

The reader must observe that the following comments assume that the above has been read. Also, there are numbers of good expositions of Rev. 2 & 3 available. Here, we confine ourselves to the notices of the Lord's coming which have been pressed into false service.

### **THE PROMISES TO THE OVERCOMERS DID NOT OCCUR AT AD 70**

If the book was fulfilled in AD 70 then the promises to the overcomers were fulfilled then also. The reader should reread Rev. 2 & 3 with this in mind. Perhaps he will come to the proper conclusion of how ludicrous such a distortion of Scripture is. This is one of the considerations showing the absurdity of the AD 70 notion of fulfillment.

### **EPHESUS – REV. 2:5: I AM COMING TO THEE, AND I WILL REMOVE THY LAMP OUT OF ITS PLACE, EXCEPT THOU SHALT REPENT**

J. N. Darby and W. Kelly both leave out the word "quickly" on text critical grounds, and additionally W. Kelly remarked, "For there is no 'quickly' when the Lord comes to remove the lamp, though He does come quickly to fight with the corruption of the church."<sup>7</sup>

We must keep in mind the loss of first love ends in Laodicea. "First love" is love for the Lord that is free of admixture of self-consideration. This is what produces "first works." They are works that are free from admixture with *self*. In Laodicea everything is *self*. The descent is dreadful. And this is where the loss at Ephesus leads when it has worked fully.

It has been observed that only Ephesus is threatened with removal of the candlestick, the lamp. This is instructive. It is called "thy candlestick." Why were no others so threatened? This draws our attention to the Judge's dealing with the first element of the failure in answering to what the candlestick signifies as part of the mystery (Rev. 1:20) of these things in Rev. 2 & 3; failure

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6. *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Acts, The Catholic Epistles, and the Revelation*: London: Broom, pp. 576, 577, 1870.

7. See *Two Nineteenth Century Versions of the New Testament*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, p. 685, 1995.

as giving character to the decline following, which must end in the church being removed as the candlestick on earth. "Thy candlestick" directs our attention to the characterizing failure. Leaving first love is the characterizing failure, never repented of by the church on earth viewed in responsibility according to the candlestick character, which accounts for its end.

**PERGAMOS -- REV. 2:16: REPENT THEREFORE: BUT IF NOT, I COME TO THEE QUICKLY, AND WILL MAKE WAR WITH THEM WITH THE SWORD OF MY MOUTH**

In Rev. 1:16 we see one like the Son of man with a sharp two-edged sword going forth out of His mouth. And in Rev. 19:15 we see the same when He comes to smite the nations. Such spoken of in Rev. 2:14 will have their moral counterparts of Christendom, spued into the great tribulation, and given over to accept the Antichrist, present when the rider on the white horse of Rev. 20 comes to execute judgment. If we do not see the moral continuity and connection of this toleration of evil in Pergamos with Christ's future judgment, who knows what notions we shall fall for -- even such absurdities that Christ did this in AD 70, coming in a figurative way.

**REMNANT IN THYATIRA -- REV. 2:25: WHAT YE HAVE HOLD FAST TILL I SHALL COME**

I suggest to the reader that vv. 24-28, which is addressed to "the rest," indicates a division had taken place in Thyatira.<sup>8</sup> They are encouraged to hold fast until the Lord comes. This would refer, as we would conclude from what Scripture teaches concerning the two parts, or phases of His coming, to the pretribulation rapture. Such are among the overcomers of Rev. 2 & 3, and for such Christ will come, whether alive at the coming, or dead to be raised, and all caught up to meet Him in the air, to go to the Father's house above. It is serious error to suppose that those addressed would have to be alive when Christ came, even though the passage, as far as addressed to them, left them in an expectant posture.

**SARDIS -- REV. 4:3: IF THEREFORE THOU SHALT NOT WATCH, I WILL COME [UPON THEE] AS A THIEF, AND THOU SHALT NOT KNOW AT WHAT HOUR I SHALL COME UPON THEE**

The thief character of the coming of Christ points to the second phase, or stage, of the coming of Christ -- when He comes in judgment, introducing *the day of the Lord* (see 1 Thess. 5:2). When true believers will have been raptured, professed Christians who end up in the great tribulation will be given over to believe the lie (2 Thess. 2) and come under the judgments attendant upon the

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8. It is a mistake to argue against this because only one candlestick for Thyatira is seen. Scripture does not view many assemblies in a city, but only one. See *Letters of J. N. Darby*, in the Index, under Assembly, in a city.

coming of the Son of man (in that character) in power and great glory. See Matt. 24:43; 1 Thess. 5:1, 2.

### **PHILADELPHIA -- REV. 3:11: I COME QUICKLY**

First of all, this is a lovely statement of who will come. He Himself is before the soul as its object. Moreover, the heart is beating in anticipation, longing that it may be *now*. Surely He is coming quickly! The restoration of the truth of the Lord's coming in the 1800s was a Philadelphian recovery:

Behold the bridegroom; go forth to meet him (Matt.25:6).

Notice the words closely and exactly; "behold the bridegroom." *Get Himself* before the soul in this way, so that you go forth to meet Him. It is a return to the expectant posture and this comports with the words "I come quickly." It is Himself that is before the soul so as to be in the good of the expectation.

### **LAODICEA -- REV. 3:16: I AM ABOUT TO SPUE THEE OUT OF MY MOUTH**

Not material prosperity, but boasting in supposed spiritual possessions, having all, claiming powers ( Matt. 7:21-23) such as at the beginning of the church's history, denying that anything is wrong; not acknowledging that first love is lost, that love free from admixture with self-- Laodicea is filled full with self, while claiming Pentecostal power and wonderful works of the Spirit. Such have all, are rich, and have need of nothing. But Christ is outside of the gross pretension.

We need to keep in mind that we all may partake of Laodiceanism. Trafficking in Philadelphian light is also Laodicean in character.

## *Time Notices in Rev. 21*

It is instructive for the state of our souls regarding the coming of the Lord Jesus for us how His coming is presented at the conclusion of the book of Revelation. E. Dennett has written this:

What then has He told us -- His last message to His church? "He that testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly" (Rev. 22:20). Thrice in this chapter does He make the announcement (vv. 7, 12, 20). What a blessed prospect is thus unfolded to our souls? We shall soon see our blessed Lord face to face -- Him who was down here the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; who went down into death for our redemption; met all. God's wrath that was due to us; for His love was so vast, and so intense, that many waters (those waves and billows of wrath which passed over His soul) could not drown it, and the floods could not quench it. The very same Man -- though now His sorrows are ended, and He is glorified at God's right hand -- we shall be permitted to behold as He is; for we shall then be like Him. (1 John 3:2). Again I say, what a prospect! And how it fills our souls with unspeakable joy to anticipate it, as we look away from all else, and think of

that moment when He will come to receive us unto Himself, that where He is we may be also! (John 14:1). Well indeed might we anticipate it; for that moment will be the fruition of His own joy, as well as the consummation of our blessedness.

But there is a question that springs out of this, and this is the second thing I wished to bring before you. During the little while, the interval of waiting, what does our Lord expect of us here? This chapter (Rev. 22) shall give the answer. We have pointed out the threefold announcement He here makes of His speedy coming; and now let us look at their several connections. The first is, "Behold, I come quickly; *blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book*" (v. 7). Thus He teaches us that *obedience* is what He prizes in His own while they await His coming; and this obedience, as we know from John 14, is the proof of our love. Who then, with such a word as this, will seek to excuse himself from obedience? Rather will not every true believer say, What a privilege my Lord has bestowed upon me—to permit me to declare my love for Him whom man rejected -- by keeping His word! And with what delight does His eye rest upon those who amid trials, and even dangers, make this the one end of their lives!

But He speaks again, and says, "Behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." (v. 12). Here we are taught that He looks for *fidelity* in His servants; and, moreover, that watching their course He will recompense them accordingly. (Compare Luke 14:12-26.) Once more, and for the last time, He speaks, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." The response of John is, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" -- a response which should flow spontaneously from the heart of every saint. And thus we are taught, that during the little while we tarry for Him He prizes our affections.

These then are the three things which He looks for from us now -- *obedience, fidelity, and affection.*<sup>9</sup>

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

Ed.

## *The Law is not Dead*

We had previously considered the erroneous notion of L. S. Chafer that the law was dead. Since then, I noticed the following:

No intelligent man amongst us asserts that the law is dead, but that the Christian is dead to it . . .

*The Bible Treasury* 6:159

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9. *Hindrances to Fellowship*, London: Precept Ministries International, 1976.

## *Elements of Propitiation, Substitution, and The Righteousness of God*

### *Chapter 4*

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#### *Purchase, Ransom, and Redemption*

The subject of atonement is a very large one. It involves the Scripture use of numbers of words, such as: atonement, propitiation, ransom, pardon, bought (or, purchased), redemption, reconciliation, and the actual substitutionary bearing of sins of believers. The subject of propitiation and substitution is also related to the subject of election; for it is the sins of the elect that Christ bore in His own body on the cross. These are all related to the work of Christ on the cross and it is difficult to deal with, say, *ransom*, without bringing in some of the other words at the same time. Thus, in considering what *ransom* is, we must consider purchase and redemption at the same time. First, then, we will consider that there are three kinds of rights, so to speak, that the Son of God has regarding believers -- two of which He has regarding unbelievers.

#### *The Rights of Christ by Purchase*

There are two rights that the Son of God now has over mankind, while over the believer He has three rights.

The first He has is Creator rights. The Son of God created all things (John 1, Col. 1, and Heb. 1). In view of creation, He has Creator rights over all.

His second right He has acquired as the Son of Man.<sup>1</sup> By becoming man, and dying on the cross, He has bought everything, i.e., has purchased everything, and has rights over everything, not only because He is Son in the Godhead, but in addition as Son of man. *Son of man* is a title of very broad scope -- wider than His title over Israel as Messiah. Indeed, it is in accordance with the title, Son of man, that authority to execute judgment has been committed to Him:

For even as the Father has life in Himself, so he has given to the Son also to have life in Himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment [also] because he is the Son of man (John 5:26, 27).

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1. The reader will find helpful remarks in *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 8:217, 218.  
[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

The Son of man will be on the great white throne.

The word *purchase* is sometimes used to represent the thought that the Son of man has *bought* everything. He died on the cross and that introduced a new possession of all, in addition to His rights as Creator of all. The new thing, *purchase*, is seen in Matt. 13: 44, where the field is bought to obtain the treasure in it. In a previous parable it is said: "The field is the world" (Matt. 13:38). Everything belongs to, was bought by, i.e., purchased by, the Son of man. Thus we find in 2 Pet. 2:1:

But there were false prophets also among the people, as there shall also be among you false teachers, who shall bring in by the bye destructive heresies, and deny the master that bought them, bringing on themselves swift destruction . . .

These false teachers were never redeemed; but they were bought. Christ has Creator rights and also purchase rights over them, but such were never saved, never *redeemed*. They are false professors, the same false profession characterizing them as it does those miracle-claimers of Matt. 7:22:

For many shall say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied through thy name, and through thy name cast out demons, and through thy name done many works of power? And then I will avow unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, workers of lawlessness.

He said that He never knew them. In John 10:14, He said: "I know those that are mine." And again:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me (John 10:27).

It is obvious that those in Matt. 7:22 never were sheep of Christ: "I *never* knew you." True it is that they cannot be lost-again persons, for were they ever saved, the Lord would have known them for a while -- but He affirms: "I *never* knew you." If they had been sheep of His, He would have had to say, 'I knew you once, but I do not know you now.' It is clear they were professors but not possessors. They are among the purchased, the bought, and thus the Son of man has a title over them; but they are not redeemed.

We must not with the theologians confound purchase with redemption. All the world, all mankind, even the wicked, are *bought* by Christ's blood; but none, save believers, have *redemption* (ἀπολύτρωσιν) through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, though the ἀντίλυτρον be περὶ πάντων. Purchase makes all to be His property or slaves; by redemption we are freed from Satan, Christ's freedmen, to serve God in liberty.<sup>2</sup>

While some truly own Him to be Lord, some call Him Lord only by profession, as we have seen. However, by purchase rights He is Lord of all:

. . . the same Lord of all [is] rich towards all that call upon Him (Rom. 10:12).

Of course He is Lord of those who do not call upon Him! He is *Lord of all*. The occasion will come when all will be compelled, "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord to God the Father's glory" (Phil. 2:10). Think of teaching Christians that they may accept Him as Savior and later, perhaps, accept Him as Lord. Why, He was Lord before a person is saved. His disbelief of it does not change the fact. When he truly calls upon Him:

... if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from among [the] dead, thou shalt be saved (Rom. 10:9).

The Christian owns His Lordship and that He is Christ's slave.

And finally, the third right is the right of redemption. The believer is redeemed, not the unbeliever; so it is clear that *redemption* goes further and deeper than *purchase*. By redemption the Christian is Christ's freedman -- free, in liberty, free from slavery to self, free to do God's holy will.

## Ransom Is the Purchase Price

While *purchase* (buying, bought) does not necessarily involve *redemption*, redemption requires a *purchase price*. Now, Christ gave Himself as a ransom for all, and that *ransom* is the *purchase price*. Paying a ransom price for all, as in 1 Tim. 2:6, purchases all, but this does not redeem all. Redemption requires the purchase price but is not the same thing as the purchase price. Redemption requires the ransom-price but redemption is not the same thing as the ransom-price. J. N. Darby has commented on the distinction between purchase and redemption -- and this entails a consideration of the word "ransom" in 1 Tim. 2:6 and "bought" in 2 Pet. 2:1:

... in "denying the Lord that bought them," {2 Pet. 2:1} the simple answer is, there is no reference to redemption at all. The ordinary word for redemption is ἀπολύτρωσις. The price for it is called ἀντίλυτρον<sup>3</sup> {ransom}, applied to all (1 Tim. 2:6), but ἀπολύτρωσις is not {not applied to all}. Redemption from under a given state is expressed by ἐξαγοράζω in Gal. 3:13; 4:5 -- deliverance from under the law. The only other two passages are in Ephesians and Colossians -- "redeeming the time," rescuing an opportunity (καιρὸν) which offers, so as to profit by it for good -- not making a good use of all time, as usually supposed (cp. Dan. 2:8). I do not believe that ἀγοράζω has ever the sense by itself of 'redeem': it is simply to buy. I know it is so translated in two or three passages, as Rev. 5 and 14; but it is simply "bought."

The passage in 2 Pet. 2, I am persuaded, refers to the idea of a slave bought

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3. {In a footnote to 1 Tim. 2:6, JND has "*Antilytron huper*: a ransom in place of." To construe this into substitution, i.e., making it mean that Christ bore everyone's sins in His own body on the tree, because of the words "in place of," is not scriptural. It is confusion, attempting to make "in place of" mean what is meant by substitution, i.e., the bearing of sins.

in a market -- the contrary of redeemed from a state of slavery -- and who, though his δεσπότης {master}, (not κύριος, the Lord) has his right over him, will not own it. You may remark, that in the passage of Jude treating the same subject, δεσπότης is applied to God also: they deny "the only δεσπότην Θεόν." The question of redemption out of a previous state does not enter into either passage; but the {issue is the} denial of a divinely inherent or acquired title over them. The strongest expression connected with this, and referring to all, is that which I have quoted -- ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων -- "a ransom for all." Nor can the well-instructed saint desire to weaken it. Christ has a title by His dying gift of Himself, not merely by creation, over all flesh. If rejected, He is rejected as the accomplisher of a redemption work, the guilt of the rejection of which lies on all who hear of it. And He has an absolute title by it over all flesh; giving, in virtue of it, eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him. But ἀπολύτρωσις -- actual redemption -- is never referred to at all. But I comment as well as criticize. Λυτρόω, to redeem, as well as λύτρον, a ransom, or λύτρωσις, redemption, bear out the general statement above. <sup>4</sup>

Perhaps more help can be gleaned from this:

Ques. How far does it go, a "ransom for all"?

To all, of course. He was not an *apolutrosis*, nor *antilutrosis*, but *antilytron*. If it had been the former, you would get all the people saved. It is merely an

#### 4. Letters 3:323 [1860].

The scriptures speak of redemption as of a deliverance effected by a ransom, and subsequently by a power producing a full result in behalf of those for whom that ransom has been paid. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of offences" (Eph. 1:9). "Awaiting adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23) -- (*Collected Writings* 23:152). ♦

He offered Himself without spot to God to be a sacrifice, He must be lifted up; He prayed that if it were possible the cup might pass, but it was not if we were to be saved; and so, call it "indemnity" or what you please, we are saved from wrath through Him. His death was an *apolutrosis*, it was a *lutrosis*, without which there is no *apolutrosis* for us. Luke and Hebrews both use the word *lutrosis* which is just redemption by ransom, lösegeld, or indemnity, loskaufung. These are exactly what Dr. W. says is not in Scripture. He says "we obtained the righteousness which was a necessary condition for our salvation." Where is this in Scripture? And so far as it is scriptural that "we are made the righteousness of God in him," how is that so? is the question. "He was made sin for us."

Dr. W., as I have said, forgets it is God's righteousness. God's wrath is the shape or form assumed by God's justice with reference to sin. I agree. But where was this displayed? Was it not in Christ's suffering "the Just for the unjust," a *lutrosis*, the substitution of Christ as "made sin for us"? (*Collected Writings* 29:267). ♦

There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." A ransom is that by which redemption comes, is wrought; to have the good of it Christ must be believed in: but as the righteousness is of God, it is as good for the Gentile as for the Jew, and is needed by the Gentile as the Jew. "There is no difference" (*Letters* 3:180). ♦



adequate price paid, so that God can now send out a testimony to all the world. "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) is a great deal wider. *There*, I believe, the new heavens and the new earth come in. But *here*, it is an available price, so to speak. Whatever God is now doing, sin is the occasion of it, whether judgment, or mercies, or salvation, or discipline, or patience, or anything else. Time will come when there will be no sin at all, and that is the point of *ho airon*: "who taketh away," etc. It will then be *all* accomplished, but it is now applied to us. "Preached to every creature," etc. (Col. 1: 23) is just founded on this.

Ques. How could you use that now?

I should say, 'the blood is on the mercy-seat-come!!' It is never said that He bare the sins of the world.

Ques. He bought a field, as well as treasure in it?

Yes, but there it includes all creation. We find the same thought in the passage, "should taste death for every man," as in the one, "which taketh away," etc. This goes beyond everyone; it is really for everything, though we see not yet all things put under Him.

Ques. In Leviticus 16, atonement is made for things as well as persons?

Yes; the most wonderful thing to me, in that connection, is that, not in chapter 16, but in chapter 8, the tabernacle and vessels were all anointed with oil, and not merely was blood upon them; that is to say, the Holy Ghost takes His place in all creation. Though not guilty, the creation is defiled, and it is to be reconciled. Satan goes into the heavens now as the accuser of the brethren.

Christ is now Mediator between God and man. I do not think I could use "mediator" beyond men. He did not take up angels, that is, their cause, but He took up the seed of Abraham. He will reconcile all things in heaven and earth. At the present time, all is in confusion. An angel receives a command to answer Daniel's prayer and has to stay three weeks on the way. It was under God's hand, of course, but there it is, and in that respect all is in confusion.<sup>5</sup>

Propitiation is the aspect of the work of Christ that is the offering a satisfaction to God for the outrage of sin against His nature and majesty, and glorifying Him with respect to it. The ransom of 1 Tim. 2:6 is related to this aspect (propitiation) of the work of Christ, not to what we mean by substitution, i.e., the bearing of our sins in His own body on the tree. Ransom is not substitution -- such that Christ bore everyone's sins on in His own body on the tree.

I quite believe that Christ died for all, but I cannot say that He bore, as a substitute, the sins of all. The word, it seems to me, is very clear on this point in its doctrines, in the consequences that it draws from them, and in its types. So that I take ἀντιλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων in the simplest and widest sense. Satisfaction has been presented to God for men, but here (1 Tim. 2:6) it is evident these words refer to the desire to make of Jesus, at least of the Messiah,

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5. Notes and Jottings 313, 314.

a mediator of the Jewish nation. No, says the apostle, He is so for all. God θέλει (not βούλεται) that all, not the Jews only, should be saved; He has given, therefore, one Mediator for all, who has made the propitiation which was necessary, and demanded by the majesty of God, so that the door is open to all through the satisfaction that He has made to the outraged majesty of God.<sup>6</sup> ♦

Were then everybody's sins transferred to Christ? If so, all are saved, or His having borne the wrath due to them is ineffectual and reversible . . . But in Dr. B's {Horatius Bonar} substitution the man may not consent, many alas! (We know) do not. Were there sins transferred to the Substitute and the wrath borne effectually and irreversibly, and yet they reject Christ and die in their sins? Dr. B.'s substitution is no substitution at all, for nobody's sins were really borne, and no people really represented . . . Substitution is for people whom the substitute represents; it is one man or person substituted for another, and taking actually the consequences of the conduct or position of him whom he represents. . . . He was substituted for them and took the consequence in sovereign grace; and they are saved. He cannot charge as a judge the sins which he himself has borne and expiated on those for whom He Himself has already borne them.<sup>7</sup>

If Christ is the substitute for all, if He bore the sins of all in His own body on the tree, then the sins of all were transferred to Him on the cross. And He *died* in connection with this work. His *blood* was shed in connection with His being the Substitute. His death and bloodshedding cannot be undone. If Christ is the substitute for all, then the sins involved with His sufferings for them, and His death and bloodshedding, have all to be reversed, the work of substitutional bearing of sins undone -- the sins have to be transferred back to the unbeliever who dies in his sins and is judged according to his works (Rev. 20:12). So the sins and the guilt Christ bore on the cross were not gone by His bearing them and taking the punishment for them. All this confusion is avoided when we abide by the Scripture statement that He bore the sins of *many*.<sup>8</sup>

Speaking of this in terms of Lev. 16, the scape-goat, representing substitution, was sent away. Well, since the scape-goat was carrying everyone's sins, it would have to be recalled, somehow, to retransfer some of those sins back to some people.

Moreover, the *ransom* for all is just that -- *for all*, not the elect only, though substitution and redemption are for the elect only.<sup>9</sup> ♦

6. *Letters* 1:99; this quotation also appears in *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 8:96.

7. *Collected Writings* 23:240, 241.

8. See *Collected Writings* 23:265, 266.

9. In his strictures on the Revised Version of 1881, J. N. Darby remarked:

So they have added pronouns, which destroy the whole force of the scriptural statement. Thus they have added "our" to redemption--"in whom we have our redemption" -- instead of, "redemption." Now, "our" redemption is our personal deliverance -- a great and saving blessing surely -- but redemption is the great and stupendous work of the Savior. I would add, before going further, that I can gather why they have used pronouns with it, namely, to distinguish it from the price of redemption,

## *Ransom For Many, Ransom For All*

It is interesting that before the cross the Lord Jesus said:

... the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28; see also Mark 10:45).

A distinction was pointed out by W. Kelly regarding the prepositions translated "for" in Matt 20:28 and in 1 Tim. 2:6:

There is indeed a true sense in which our Lord is ransom for all; and the apostle speaks of it in 1 Tim. 2, "the testimony to be borne in its own seasons." But a nice difference distinguishes the two texts. When, as in Matthew, it is a ransom for many, we have it clearly defined. The "for" is "instead of" (ἀντὶ) many. It is strict substitution. When, as in 1 Tim., all are in view, it is simply "on behalf of" (ὕπὲρ) all. "For" has not always the same sense in Scripture.<sup>10</sup>

In this statement in the synoptic gospels, the largeness of the ransom, the propitiation for the world (1 John 2:2), is not expressed whereas, after the cross, in 1 Tim. 2:6 it is expressed.

"Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God." In a word, the Spirit of God as yet (before the birth of Jesus, observe), leads the mind of the evangelist to exhibit the Savior in His primary character as to dispensation and personal mission, according to the hope of the promises made to the fathers, and this by the faith of those who were looking to them as Jews, and to whom Jesus was not yet presented in the flesh, and therefore not the subject of the Spirit's direct testimony as come for a Ransom for all, "The testimony [to be rendered] in its own times," but "to his people," all through.<sup>11</sup>

There was *the due time* for the statement that He gave Himself a ransom for (on behalf of) *all*, and that was post-cross testimony -- after the ending of the testing of the first man. However, it seems that the phrase "ransom for (instead of) many" was meant to direct attention to the fact that blessing was not going to be confined to Israel.

These things are in accordance with the two-fold character of the work of Christ: that which is first, what is due the glory of God; and secondly, the salvation of sinners. The ransom *instead of* many correlates with the salvation of sinners, while the ransom *on behalf of* all has in view the satisfaction rendered to, and the glorification of, God with respect to the outrage of sin against His nature and

9. (...continued)

such as antilutron -- ransom price. But this does not in the least authorize the use of the pronoun not in scripture, raising a question as to its limits, and making it solely something about us, which scripture does not. The thing itself is lost, in its application to us, whoever we are (*Collected Writings* 36:86).

10. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 3:341. A. Marshall, in his *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*, translates ἀντὶ in Matt. 20:28 and Mark 10:45 as "instead of"; and ὕπὲρ in 1 Tim. 2:6 as "on behalf of."

11. *Notes and Comments* 6:76 [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

majesty. This latter is the basis upon which the gospel is preached to all -- for Christ was a ransom *on behalf of* all (1 Tim. 2:6).

Additionally, it needs to be much observed that Scripture does not say, either before the cross or after the cross, that "He bore the sins of all." It says that He bore the *sins of many* -- those many *instead of* (ἀντὶ) whom He was the ransom; for He was a ransom *instead of many* (Matt. 20:28).

## *Isaiah 53 -- 1 Peter 2:24*

It is quite clear that Isa. 53 is directly about Jews. But in the NT we see that some of what we have there is applied to Gentiles.

The Lord Jesus is seen there as one rejected by the Jews. However, God will have a future remnant from among them. They will be brought into an acceptance of Christ. In Isa. 53:4 we read that:

we did regard him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But they will come into the understanding that Christ bore the cross for them (Isa. 53:5, 6). The words "our" and "we" in the verse refer to the remnant, not the entire nation -- though when the future purging of the Jews (Ezek. 20; Zech. 13, 14) is completed, those left living compose the nation of those that are all saved (Rom. 11:26). In these two verses we have substitution -- answering to the scape-goat of the day of atonement. The words "wounded," "bruised," "chastisement," and "stripes" are figurative words used to describe Jehovah's dealing with Him on the cross, as their substitute. Peter spoke of this when he wrote:

. . . who himself bore our sins<sup>12</sup> on<sup>13</sup> the tree . . . by whose stripes<sup>14</sup> ye have

12. All was cleared away and removed--Christ bore our sins on the cross, then atonement had to be made for the sins that were upon Him, and there it was made in the same act, in His dying. For Himself, clearly no propitiation was made -- He was making it; still He was the scape-goat, as well as the Lord's lot, and the actual sins that were there had to be atoned for. What He stood as, and what He carried was the object of the propitiation He made. In Lev. 19: 22 we have *al*, both for the person, and for the sin (*Notes and Comments* 2:59).

13. W. Kelly wrote:

Again, He "offered" Himself without spot to God. It is not the word for bearing our sins, strictly speaking. There were two parts always in sacrifice: the one is the victim simply, presented as an offering; the other is the sins laid upon the victim. Now this word expresses only the former element, which, by the way, detects the wrong use of that term in Peter, where it is said that "he bore our sins in his own body" -- as the margin and some others say -- "up to the tree." Now the usage is strictly limited to the textual sense "on the tree." If it had been the word here called "offered" there might have been some show of reason for it, because "offered" has reference to the presentation of the victim when the sins were not yet laid on it. The fact is that the phraseology excludes a continuous action and asserts a subsequent and transient fact, contradicting the whole idea; in short, the notion confounds the offering of the victim first, with the laying the sins upon him afterwards. Now the passage in Peter speaks expressly of the final moment when the sins were laid upon Christ. Consequently the teaching is as utterly false as it

(continued...)

been healed (1 Pet. 2:24).

J. N. Darby wrote:

Though our sins were as scarlet they are made white as snow, and we are bound to believe it, for "his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." He has charged Himself with them. I am convicted, and then humbled about them. But before the day of judgment comes, Christ came, and on the cross was bearing the sins He would have had to judge. The cross was God dealing with Him about them. When He comes in judgment I say, That is the Man who put away my sins.<sup>15</sup> ♦

As the high priest confessed Israel's sin on the scape-goat, so has Jesus confessed ours as His . . .<sup>16</sup> ♦

He bare the sins of all who are saved . . .<sup>17</sup> ♦

. . . actual sins committed, which are dealt with and put away out of God's sight by One "who was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed," Isa. 53: 5.<sup>18</sup> ♦

He gave Himself for my sins, and suffered agonies and wrath for them on the cross, that I may be clear from them.<sup>19</sup> ♦

He suffered for the sins of every believer, by the sacrifice of Himself, He has perfected them for ever. He that is dead is freed from sin. But Christ died; He then is freed from sin. But whose? Ours, who believe in Him. It is all gone, gone with the life to which it was attached, in which He bore it. The death of Christ has closed for faith the existence of the old man, the flesh, the first Adam-life in which we stood as responsible before God, and whose place Christ took for us in grace.<sup>20</sup> ♦

Peter's words convey to us that the Lord Jesus was bearing punishment on the cross under the hand of God. The punishment that He endured was for "transgressions" and "iniquities" (Isa. 53:5). His soul was made an offering for sin. Concerning the word sin, JND has a footnote which says: "*Asham*, 'trespass-offering;' see Note b,

13. (...continued)

is possible to be. The "offering" is distinct from the bearing of the sins, and each of the two parts has its own moment (*The Bible Treasury*, New Series 7:235). See also *Collected Writings* 7:210, 211, 293-296, 300.

14. JND has a footnote to this word, saying:

Or, 'bruise.' Though the word is in the singular, it is literally the marks left by scourging. 'Stripe' does not convey this.

He does not mean that 1 Pet. 2:24 is speaking of literal scourging marks as healing us, but what the word means. The word is used figuratively concerning the sufferings under the hand of God.

15. *Collected Writings* 34:330.

16. *Collected Writings* 7:74.

17. *Collected Writings* 34:76.

18. *Collected Writings* 34:134.

19. *Collected Writings* 18:289.

20. *Collected Writings* 18:273. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

Lev. 5:1." Peter said He bore our sins.

As to the time while God is forming the bride of Christ, Peter speaks of Christ as having borne "our sins," not everyone's sins. The fact of a limitation is true also in Isa. 53, where Jews are in view.<sup>21</sup> If Christ bore everyone's sins, then He bore the sins of every Jew. But Isa. 53 does not support that:

. . . by his knowledge shall my righteous servant instruct many in righteousness: and *he* shall bear their iniquities (Isa. 53:11).

There is a footnote to JND's translation which says:

Lit. 'the many,' i.e., those that are in relationship with him.

The Jews for whom Christ bears their iniquities are limited -- not every Jew; and thus Christ did not bear everyone's sins. Further, In Isa. 53:12 we read:

. . . he bore the sin of many.

No, this is not a sub-set of "He bore the sins of all" because there is no such set. There is no such statement, nor teaching, in the Word of God.

Stripes, chastisements, bruises, wounds, inflicted on Him, and that by Jehovah being pleased to bruise Him, surely speak of punishment, and punishment for us; for it was for our iniquities, our transgressions; and it was that which made our peace and healed us, if indeed we are healed. And this is the more distinctly and remarkably brought out, because it is in contrast with the false judgment the Jews had formed of Him -- that He was stricken and smitten of God, as suffering under His disapprobation. "We hid as it were our faces from him; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." Now they found out He had borne their griefs, and carried their sorrows: and, lest the thought might stop short at His only bearing them (for He did so bear them in the sorrow of His heart), the Spirit in them adds, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities," etc. And lest there should be any mistake as to whence this came, we read further, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief" (v.10). Indeed it would be mere folly to say that the wicked Jews had wounded him for their iniquities; nor could they, nor would they, say they were

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21. And so, when they look on Him whom they have pierced, will it be fulfilled in its direct and glorious meaning, for they above all were of the travail of His soul. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," etc. "He came unto his own," etc. So Peter in his first address. It does indeed fully, in offering of atonement apply to the Gentile, as Paul was commissioned specially to declare, i.e., the power of it, but in specialty of promise it belonged to the Jew, whose ( see Romans ) "the promises" were, and the "oracles of God," and "of whom, as concerning the flesh; Christ came," as here particularly set forth. Nor is this ever departed from in Scripture; "It was necessary that the Word of God should have been first preached unto you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so," etc., which was his special office; so here, where the general truth of Christ's mission, and the principles of divine truth exhibited in Christ, and to the Gentiles -- in a word, what we are wont to call the Gospel -- was to be set forth for the Church, as applicable to men, the larger scope of these promises, "a light to lighten the Gentiles, the glory of God's people Israel" was not forgotten (*Notes and Comments* 6:77).

healed by His stripes.<sup>22</sup>

The notion that Christ bore everyone sins involves this punishment of Christ on the cross and then the sinner being eternally punished for them also when, having been judged according to his works, he is cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20). What underlies these false notions is unclearness about propitiation and substitution.

We should beware of an attitude of leveling everything; or, on the other extreme, to allow for no common blessings of saints in various ages. While the Christian has blessing flowing from the cross, so does Israel. And while some are common (for example, the forgiveness of sins), there are differences. JND remarked:

As all my sins were future when He died for them, so when once I am not in the flesh all that belongs to it faith looks on as past as to atonement and righteousness when He died. For so, and so only, could they be put away. But, as risen, I come into the holiest, not only because I am cleared from sins (a process which, in itself, went no farther than judicial acknowledgment of me where I was responsible), but according to all the value of that in which Christ is entered in. This, I repeat, is our only proper present position; because the old man, who was the responsible man in this world, is viewed as dead and buried, so that we are not in the flesh. Hence, though we were responsible, and the sins were borne and atoned for, we are not at all now in the place, and condition, or nature, in which that government and dealing took place; it is over for us. The bullock, the fullest and highest value of Christ's sacrifice, is ours, and represents our present standing. The two goats clearly show that the same one sacrifice of course applies to both parts of His work; our being presented to God according to His nature, and the putting away of sin, which was inconsistent with our duty as children of Adam.

But the application is, in a measure, different when Israel comes in question: because they do not enter into the holiest through the rent veil, the new and living way. They know the value of Christ's sacrifice when He comes out, and they look on Him whom they have pierced. They are under the weight of multiplied transgressions as a nation, and stand on that ground, and in flesh -- have not to do with Christ within the veil, but when He has come out. I need not say, it is no new sacrifice. Isa. 53 presents to us their recognition of the One we already own. They are not in heavenly places in Him; but He appears to and is with them, to bless them in the earth. They are accepted according to the righteousness of God as a moral governor.<sup>23</sup>

## *Redemption*

Redemption is the third claim that Christ has on us and we must not confuse this with general purchase:

We must not with the theologians confound purchase with redemption. All the

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22. *Collected Writings* 7:66.

23. *Collected Writings* 10:202 [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

world, all mankind, even the wicked, are *bought* by Christ's blood (should, rather, say death); but none, save believers, have *redemption* (ἀπολύτρωσιν) through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, though the ἀντίλυτρον be περὶ πάντων. Purchase makes all to be His property or slaves; by redemption we are freed from Satan, Christ's freedmen, to serve God in liberty.<sup>24</sup>

In one point of view, then, we are Christ's slaves; and in another point of view we are His freedmen -- but in every case to do His holy will!

W. Kelly well contrasted redemption with purchase:

It has been often remarked, and very justly, that although Genesis is so prolific of the various counsels and ways of God, there is the more marked an absence of the special truth of Exodus in it. Thus, although we have sacrifice as such, covenant and other kindred dealings of God, *redemption* in its full import at least is never brought before us in that book. I am not aware of anything of the sort. By redemption I mean not merely a price paid to purchase us that we may belong to God (this indeed is not the proper import of the word), but rather in its precise meaning this too that God has broken the power of the adversary, ransoming and freeing us for Himself. Such is redemption. I grant you that to the Christian both these truths are made good. He is bought with a price, as we are often told in scripture, and we know it. But the effect of the purchase is that we become the bondmen of the Lord; the effect of redemption is that we become the freemen of the Lord. As ever, man is quick to put the two things in opposition. He cannot understand how a person can be both a freeman and a bondman. But the truth is certain, and both clearly revealed. The reason why a man finds it hard to put the two truths together is that he trusts himself and not God, and this because he wants to be free from the restraints of His will and word. It wants but little thought and reflection for a person to understand that each of them is not only quite just, but that they are both thoroughly compatible and harmonious. Can we not comprehend brethren, that we were under the power of an enemy of God? In the face of this, when enslaved to him, redemption was the putting forth of God's own power in Christ in a way suitable to His majesty and holiness, in which not a single claim was left unsettled, not a single requisite was not answered, not a single sin of man but was judged, yet all and every quality in God was honored, and we are brought out triumphant and free. Thus we are made to be the Lord's freemen; and what should do it if Christ's redemption could not? He did indeed accomplish it, but at all cost to Himself.

But there is more than this in the work of Christ which broke the power of Satan, "that by death he might destroy him that had the power of death." He has perfectly annulled his power, and met all on God's part needful for us; but there is another thought. It is of all consequence that we should feel that we are immediately responsible to God according to the new, intimate, and holy relationship which is ours in virtue of redemption. We are bought with a price. (And what a price!) Thus we belong to Him -- we are not our own, but His. These two truths combine in the Christian; but there is this difference between

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24. *The Bible Treasury* 11:207.



them -- that the world also is "bought," and every man in it; whereas it would be false to say that every man in the world is "redeemed." If we are subject to scripture, we must say that there is no such thing as universal redemption; but we must confess the truth of universal purchase.<sup>25</sup>

To this we add something from W. T. Turpin:

And when the morning comes, then God says to Moses, stretch out your rod over the sea again, and the sea will return to its strength. And God brought it back by a strong wind, "and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared," and the same tide that opened the way for Israel came back in all its rolling power over the whole glory of Egypt and whole power of Pharaoh, and submerged them in the mighty waters, and there was not one of them left. "Thus God saved Israel." It was God's salvation, God's extrication, God's deliverance. And then you find four things said about them -- they saw, they believed, they feared, and they sang. They never sang a note before; they complained in abundance afterwards, but they never sang before. Now they sing; and God has so ordered it that song must go with redemption. You cannot sing until you are redeemed; when you are redeemed you can sing. Now they can sing, and the song, beloved friends, is all about God, not a single word about themselves. That is the peculiarity of that note when it is struck, the theme, the note, is all divine:

The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Now let us take it out of pattern. You know the meaning of taking things out of pattern, I am sure. Here it is in pattern or type, what do you find when you take it out? Why, that the meaning it is that the precious death and the glorious and triumphant resurrection of Lord Jesus Christ for us, accomplished everything that was in the mind and heart of God, is the complete overthrow of the whole power of Satan, the overthrow of all the power of death, "that through death he might annul, destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil," the complete putting away and judgment of sin by the sacrifice of Himself, the whole destruction of Satan's power. That is to say, every enemy that was against us, sin, death, Satan, the grave, were allowed to rise to their highest, and when they were at their highest, were swept away for ever: that is what it means. You have the figure of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ so beautifully there! I do not know anything more touching to the heart than to read of that rod and that strong east wind. O the spotless distress of His precious soul when the east wind of judgment beat upon His head, and that was the night, it was the night of deepest woe to Him when He underwent all that judgment, and endured it all; there was the night of judgment, and then there was the morning of His resurrection. That is what you have got here in type. Thank God if we understand through grace what that is.

In His spotless soul's distress, the judgment was borne alone by Him, all the waves and billows flowed over Him, all the east wind of judgment blew upon His blessed head when He stood there alone for us; and then He rose triumphant, and

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25. *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Bible*, pp. 165, 166.

there comes the morning, so that you have the night and the morning, the night of the cross, the morning of the resurrection. And in that resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have got two things; resurrection out from among the dead begins the new thing, it is the new beginning. But there is more than that in it. It is the testimony, the evidence to the Christian of the completeness, of the fulness of Jehovah's triumph, of God's salvation, so that I can see in that empty tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ the vindication in testimony and evidence to me that God has been perfectly glorified and perfectly satisfied with regard to all my sins.<sup>26</sup>

Ed.

## *Some Comments on Mark 7:15*

There is nothing from without a man that, entering into him, can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man (Mark 7:15).

What does this verse imply? Does the Lord Jesus here give permission for us to eat any and every thing whenever we want? What about alcohol in the case of drunkards? What about addictive drugs in the case of addicts? What about mind-altering drugs in the case of substance abusers? What about high fat foods in the case of the obese? What about poisons in the case of the suicidal? Or is "nothing from without a man" limited to the matter of eating with unwashed hands (Mark 7:2)? Then is the Lord Jesus here advocating or making small the matter of eating with unwashed hands? Is He here speaking contrary to good public health policy? Who knows what germs or toxins may be found on unwashed hands!

William Kelly once wrote the following sound words about Mark 7:15-23:

As to things that defile, they come out of the man. This is true in all things and of all acts of evil; they invariably spring from within, from the corrupt will of man. Thus, for instance, it is plain that if the law execute the capital sentence on a criminal, it is not murder, but, contrariwise, the vindication of God's authority in the earth. It is not a question of evil feeling against the culprit, and there is nothing defiling in it. But if you were so much as to injure a man in deed, word or thought, there you have what defiles. The moment there is that which is a part of your self-will, without God, which comes out of you, and your yielding to it, there is the taint of defilement . . . In a word, we have the doctrine most plainly laid down here, that man, i.e., man in his present state, is only the source of that which is evil. I require another absolutely perfect One, Who is outside me, to be my life; and such an one I have in Christ. If I am a Christian at all, Christ is my life; and the business for me thenceforth is to live Christ (*Exposition of the Gospel of Mark*, p. 113).

If Mr. Kelly is correct in thus directing our understanding of this passage, then the Lord's words here are no endorsement of any particular thing that might enter into a man. He does not call anything safe or healthful or appropriate or good. Instead, He declares the root of defilement: the heart of man. Moreover, He gives thirteen concrete

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26. *The Salvation of Jehovah, Address on Exodus 14*, London: Morrish, pp. 25, 26.  
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examples in Mark 7:21-22:

For 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.

Let us see how Mr. Kelly's understanding of this passage works out in practice. A man eats something and what he eats enters into him. At the same time, something may come out of the man and defile him. A significant part of the meaning of Mark 7:15 in its connection with Mark 7:21-22 is that nothing from without a man, entering into him, can defile him unless something evil is coming out of him at the same time. If something evil is coming out of his heart at the same time, then whatever he does is sin, even his eating and drinking. Both the inward principle of sin and the outward act are judged by Him Who is "a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed" (1 Sam. 2:3). Consider the following thirteen examples:

### 1. EVIL THOUGHTS

Joseph's brothers once "sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry *it* down to Egypt" (Gen. 37:25).

So they ate their bread: they bit, they chewed, they swallowed. Did the bread defile them? It surely did. Not as bread going in, of course, but because of its moral connection with their evil hearts. At the same time that they were eating, evil thoughts were coming out of their hearts to sell Joseph, their brother whom they had just cast into a pit wherein was no water. Surely, every bite of bread was a sin against their brother and against God. Who could be so warped and seared in conscience as to defend their eating as sinless when it was morally connected with the confinement of Joseph in the pit and the thinking of such wicked thoughts, so soon to be put into horrible practice! In so eating, the brothers united themselves together as joint sellers of their brother into slavery.

### 2. ADULTERIES

David committed adultery with the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Then guilty David called Uriah back to Jerusalem and tempted him to go home to his own house and wife. The child conceived in adultery would then be attributed to Uriah, not to adultery. When Uriah refused at first, David called him to dinner "and when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house" (2 Sam. 11:13).

So Uriah ate and drank with David that day; David, no doubt, bit and chewed and swallowed along with Uriah. Did the food and drink defile David? It surely did. Not as physical objects, of course, but because of their moral connection with his wicked heart. He was trying to hide his sin of adultery, but God has exposed it all, even laying the guilt of Uriah's drunkenness upon David who "made him drunk." Surely, every mouthful that David took in was sin against his faithful servant and against God. The sinful moral connection was with the adultery, not yet with the murder that followed, because if Uriah had gone home to his wife, then David would not have murdered him.

### 3. FORNICATIONS

Before Israel crossed over Jordan, they camped in Shittim, "and the people began to  
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commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods" (Numbers 25:2).

Now, the idolatry was horrible, but let us save our comments on idolatry for another day. Here, just notice that they ate and that their eating was connected with their fornications with the daughters of Moab. They ate the sacrifices because they were called, they were called because of the fornications. Hence, they ate in connection with the fornications. Every bite, every chew, every swallow was food entering into them, and something evil coming out from their wicked hearts, even their fornications as they dined with the daughters of Moab. Will any one say that the eating was minor and that God overlooks the eating in view of the more serious sin of idolatry? In answer, look at Psalm 106:28:

They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

So God did not forget or overlook the eating, but remembered it and its special character. Note also the collective character of this case of eating.

#### **4. MURDERS**

How can murder be coming out of the heart of man while he is eating? Is it possible? The wicked king Ahab once coveted the vineyard of Naboth but could not buy it. "And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite" (1 Kings 21:7).

So you know that Ahab ate while Jezebel arranged for the murder of Naboth. Yet God called Ahab the murderer ("Hast thou killed"? 1 King 21:19). When did he kill Naboth? Why when he ate according to the words of Jezebel! Every bite, every chew, every swallow was death to innocent Naboth. The food went into Ahab and murder came out of his heart with every mouthful.

#### **5. THEFTS**

The LORD God gave Adam the fruit of every tree in Eden to eat, save one. And God made Adam the caretaker, also. So he was entitled to touch the trees, contrary to the assertion of Eve in Gen. 3:3. Why he could even pick a forbidden fruit and hold it in his hand without becoming a thief in fact. But it is written, "he did eat" (Gen. 3:6).

Adam bit, Adam chewed, Adam swallowed. And what he ate entered into him. And that was Adam's theft from God Who had not given him that fruit, but the fruits of all the other trees instead. What went into Adam was just a fruit, of course, but what went out of Adam's heart in the act of eating was theft against God. Picking was not the point, nor was holding the fruit. But who could find Adam not guilty of theft after he had eaten?

#### **6. COVETOUSNESS**

A certain man of God from Judah was tempted at Bethel with "a reward" from Jeroboam (1 Kings 13:7), but he replied, "If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: for so it was charged me by the word of the LORD" (1 Kings 13:8-9). But when the old prophet in Bethel found him sitting under a tree, he went back and ate bread and drank water "in the place of the

which the LORD did say". . . "Eat no bread, and drink no water" (1 Kings 13:22).

Covetousness is often more difficult to see than other sins, because it lies deep within the heart. Yet, perhaps, we can see covetousness here. For Jeroboam directed his temptation to the covetousness of the heart when he offered a reward. And the man of God revealed that covetousness was in his heart when he made up such generous terms of reward as "half thine house." (Compare Numbers 22:18 and contrast Daniel 5:17.) And what do you think he was thinking about as he sat under the tree? Just his hunger and thirst or the length of his journey? The bread he ate, the water he drank entered into him, of course. But at the same time he got his free meal, the least that he could have expected out of all that his heart coveted after. And every bite and every swallow was connected with his covetousness.

### **7. WICKEDNESS**

Wickedness is rather a general term, including many particulars within its scope. Moreover, not many persons in the Bible are described as "wicked persons." You will, perhaps, remember the one in 1 Cor. 5. Apparently, there was some likelihood that he would be present when believers at Corinth brethren were eating. So the apostle Paul wrote of him and of all others of like wickedness, "with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11). That means at your table and his also. Other particular kinds of wickedness are listed in the first part of the verse, and the description "wicked person" is stated in 1 Cor. 5:13.

The evil in such persons has effects which continue even after the commission of the overt act that first reveals what is in the heart. Hence, the apostolic prohibition against eating with such an one. Every bite, every chew, every swallow with such an one would be an impure act of joining with him in his wickedness, the evil indifference and neutrality in the heart giving character to the eating with such an one. To show themselves pure in the matter of the man's wickedness, the Corinthian saints must not even eat with him. See 2 Cor. 7:11.

### **8. DECEIT**

Deceit is hiding what is true in order to mislead. So Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus with a kiss. But earlier that same night, when the Lord Jesus "had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him" (John 13:26-27).

When Judas bit into that sop, when he chewed it, when he swallowed it, was he thereby defiled? Surely, he was. Not by some inherent evil attached to what went into him, but by what came out of his heart. He was already engaged by the rulers of the Jews to betray the Lord. His receiving and eating the sop was to hide his betrayal under the cover of closeness and communion with the Lord Jesus in order to mislead the other disciples.

### **9. LASCIVIOUSNESS**

The word "lasciviousness" is not commonly used by men today. It means unrestrained lust. To find an example in the Scriptures, let us look for an occasion when ample restraint was ignored. Belshazzar, king of Babylon, was besieged by Darius the Mede. So he "drank wine" (Daniel 5:1).

How was this unrestrained? Well, he and his guests “praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone” while they drank wine from the vessels that had been taken from Jehovah’s temple at Jerusalem. They were restrained neither by the danger to the kingdom, nor by the holy character of those vessels from the temple. Their thoughts went out in excess to praise idols of all kinds. And all that they drank, every swallow, was proof that what was coming out from their hearts in and by that drinking was unrestrained sin.

### 10. AN EVIL EYE

Saul, king of Israel, eyed David with a wicked eye. At the feast of the new moon, Saul expected David to come, and he thought, “Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean” (1 Sam. 20:26).

So there was king Saul, eating and drinking and thinking of David. Usually an evil eye has something particular to think about. Then the evil eye puts the worst possible connotation upon that particular thing and condemns the person against whom it has evil thoughts. But here David was absent and there was no word or deed of David to condemn. Therefore the evil eye puts the worst possible connotation on the matter and concludes that “surely he is not clean.” So every bite of Saul, every chew, every swallow at the feast of the new moon was connected with his having an evil eye. On the second day of the feast, his evil eye was made public for others to see, and Jonathan “did eat no meat the second day of the month” because he refused to join with his father’s evil eye.

### 11. BLASPHEMY (i.e., INJURIOUS LANGUAGE)

“Blasphemy” in the Bible is not an ecclesiastical word that is limited to injurious language against God. It simply means injurious language of any sort. When Israel murmured in the wilderness, they said, “There is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes” (Numbers 11:6). With these words, they spoke against the excellence of the manna. Then God sent them quail and “while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague” (Numbers 11:33).

In their lust for meat, they used injurious language against the manna, didn’t they? Yes, they did so dishonor that heavenly food and God Who had given it. While the quail meat was going into their very mouths, were they defiled by it? Before it was chewed, the plague began! What was coming out of their hearts in the eating of the quail was the same evil that manifested itself in the injurious language.

### 12. PRIDE

There was more in the heart of Haman than just violence against the Jews. Consider what happened when “the King and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared” (Esth. 5:5). There he ate and drank and “went forth that day joyful and with a glad heart” (Esth. 5:9).

What kind of joy was it when he was “full of indignation against Mordecai” (Esth. 5:10)? At that banquet, Haman’s pride had enlarged itself without bounds. He boasted of the banquet to his wife and friends (Esth. 5:12). He was so full of himself! After the banquet, his inward thoughts were that there was no man whom the King would delight to honor more than himself (Esth. 6:6). After the banquet, his outward deed was to build a supremely tall gallows: he was too proud to build a short one! Thus, every course at

that banquet had swelled his proud heart more and more, not because food or wine produces pride directly, but because the sin of pride was then “coming out” within his heart.

### 13. FOOLISHNESS

The name of Nabal of Mount Carmel was significant. It means “folly” and his own wife said of him, “Nabal is his name and folly is with him” (1 Sam. 24:25). Having turned away David’s servants with nothing, Nabal “held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal’s heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken” (1 Sam. 24:36).

Is it not plain that every bite he ate, every drink he drank, was folly? What went in did not defile him *per se*, but what went in was connected with what came out of his heart. And that was foolishness.

### CONCLUSION

Although these may not be the best thirteen examples to illustrate the words of the Lord Jesus in Mark 7, yet William Kelly had the correct thought on this passage. Even if you can think of more appropriate cases than these, we have looked at thirteen examples of something going in. Always, something was coming out at the same time. Of course, evil things also come out of the heart of man when he is not eating. The unregenerate heart of fallen man is the constant and continuous source of evil. No good can come out of it, but only evil continually. These thirteen examples are drawn both from the Law, the Psalms, the Prophets, the gospels and the epistles. They include cases familiar to children in Sunday schools. Moreover, the thirteen examples illustrate the very same thirteen things mentioned by the Lord Jesus in Mark 7:21-22.

Those who desire long drawn-out implications may see from these examples that an individual believer may indeed become defiled in the same moment when something enters into him if something evil goes out of him at the same moment of time. And those who insist that what enters into a man is analogous to what is received into an assembly of Christians may learn from these examples that an assembly of Christians may indeed be defiled by an act of reception, because the act of reception is both an action of reception inwards and an act of testimony outwards, testifying to what honors Christ in the reception of good or to what dishonors His precious name in the reception of evil. Then, can an act of reception constitute an association with evil? Of course, it can! Because it is not what goes in that defiles: what comes out is what defiles. And an act of reception of unjudged evil sends out a wicked testimony about the Holy and the True.

If only they were here today, Joseph the prisoner in the pit, Uriah the Hittite, Phinehas who used his javelin well in the plains of Moab, Naboth the victim of Ahab, the old prophet of Bethel who learned the lesson of the man of God from Judah, the sorrowful yet obedient brethren at Corinth, the eleven disciples who watched Judas take the sop, Daniel who did not attend Belshazzar’s feast, Jonathan who ate not on the second day of the month, Moses who was “displeased” in Numbers 11, Mordecai for whom the gallows were built, and Abigail the Carmelitess would join their voices together in chorus to declare:

*ASSOCIATION WITH EVIL DEFILES.*

## Chapter 9.2

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### *Romans 10: Israel's Present Condition and God's Grace The Theme of Romans 10*

Rom. 9 has shown us that the Jewish idea of blessing founded on the idea of fleshly relationship is wrong; all blessing results from sovereign calling, election, and grace. Thus, the old Israel is set aside. Therefore if God had chosen Israel in His sovereignty, He could call Gentiles on the basis of the same sovereignty. Furthermore, the prophets had said that a remnant of Israel would be saved. But the old Israel pursued righteousness on a wrong basis. Then they stumbled at the stumbling stone. Rom. 10 expands on Rom. 9:30-33 showing more fully the contrast between the righteousness which is of the law and that which is of faith. Also, Rom. 10 shows Israel's present status as a result of their course.

Then, chap. 10 (after having anew protested his ardent desire as to the welfare of Israel as such, notwithstanding all its ignorance) he introduces Christ the end of the law, faith, the testimony by preaching, and lastly, Israel provoked to jealousy by a foolish nation; God {is} found of those who sought him not; and Israel {is} rebellious and gainsaying, God having in vain stretched forth to them.<sup>27</sup>

Then in Rom. 11 the question is answered, Has God cast away His people? Israel will again be owned of God as a nation after His present work is completed. But it will be the new Israel, the spiritual Israel, all saved.

### *Romans 10:1-4 Self-righteousness Not the Righteousness of God*

1. Brethren, the delight of my own heart and my supplication which [I address] to God for them is for salvation.
2. For I bear them witness that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.
3. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own [righteousness], have not submitted to the righteousness of God.
4. For Christ is [the] end of law for righteousness to every one that believes.

---

27. *The Present Testimony* 4:124.



## ZEAL NOT ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGE

Paul's supplication to God was for their salvation. This was the delight, the good will, of his heart for them. And some from Israel are saved now. But it will not be until Messiah comes in glory, and the rebels of Israel are purged (Ezek. 20, etc.) that all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:26).

The zeal for God that Israel had was not according to knowledge. They knew neither God or His ways. Paul himself had that very zeal. It is instructive to note that "knowledge" here is not *gnosis*, but *epignosis*, full knowledge, i.e., right or true knowledge. They had *gnosis* of God (for they had divine communications), and were in earnest, but the zeal was fatally flawed as being the expression of the flesh. It is the ignorance of flesh and self that characterizes the worker for salvation and righteousness. It is working flesh, religious flesh, that does not judge self in the presence of God and refuses to submit to the righteousness of God. Religious flesh seeks to establish its own righteousness by meritorious works.

## ISRAEL DID NOT SUBMIT TO THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD (v. 3)

Using the law for righteousness is legal, *human* righteousness (but in reality there is none. See Rom. 8:7). The righteousness of God of which Romans speaks is *God's* righteousness. The righteousness of God is God's consistency with what He is in His nature as light and love. God has shown His righteousness in justifying us on the principle of faith, for He has satisfied Himself concerning what He is as light -- by the satisfaction rendered by Christ on the cross. Hence He can righteously justify us on the principle of faith. And this excludes works. The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel (Rom. 1:17), apart from law (Rom. 3:21), and it requires submission to it for salvation.

"Submitted" has a moral force for our souls. This the flesh resents, lacking conscience before God, and being full of pride. To obtain the righteousness of God means *submission*. Let us note that before we come to Rom. 10:9, 10 we are shown that submission is involved in having the righteousness of God. Is it really contrary to grace in salvation to say submission is not part of it? Is it right to say that the confession of Jesus as Lord does not involve obedience? -- that "Lord" in Rom. 10:9 means Jehovah. What? Jehovah is not to be obeyed? Can one do what Rom. 10:9, 10 says, without *submitting* to the righteousness of God? Rom. 10 plainly shows that those who do not submit to the righteousness of God are lost.

What is involved in one's seeking to establish his own righteousness is man's total ruin by the fall (see Rom. 8:7)? He has not learned the lesson of the law, i.e., man's inability to obtain righteousness on the basis of performance, and is under the curse of the law (Gal. 3:10). And Christendom also has those who have not learned that works never quickened a soul with divine life. Self-righteousness is a noxious weed in the heart of man.

## CHRIST IS [THE] END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Christ is the stumbling stone for those who do not believe. For the believer Christ is [the] end of the law for a specific purpose. W. Kelly wrote:

Verse 4 has given rise to very various opinions. One which has prevailed from ancient times and perhaps still more among moderns, is that Christ is the

accomplishment of the law. But there seems no ground whatever to confound *τέλος* with *πλήρωμα*. Others again take it in the sense of “object” or “aim.” But the simplest meaning as decided by the context appears to be “termination,” though we know it is also used for “issue” or “result.” And in this meaning the representatives of the most various systems coincide: Augustine and Luther on the one hand; Meyer, De Wette, etc., on the other. “Christ is [the] end of law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” The Christ of God is made unto us righteousness. “By law is knowledge of sin.” Righteousness cannot be had thus; only the believer is justified. Yet so sure is this result, that it belongs to every believer.<sup>28</sup>

This passage does not tell us, nor does any other, that the law is abrogated:

Hence, when it is said, “I am not come to destroy but to fulfil,” it is a false deduction to say that I am come to call upon Christians to fulfil it. Christians are associated with Christ where He is now. The apostle’s statement is, “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.” The law itself is not abrogated, but we are not under it. “It is good if a man use it lawfully;” but “it is not made for the righteous, but for ungodly and profane.” That is not for Christians surely. Useful to convict of sin, to bring in death and condemnation on the sinner, to make the offence abound, and sin exceeding sinful. Christ is all for the believer; while every word of God is good, rightly used.<sup>29</sup>

... the work of Christ is the end of the law for (or unto) righteousness to every one that believeth (Rom. 10: 4). This latter phrase (*telos nomou*) can only mean that fulfilment which the law demanded, and could not but demand, till its end or accomplishment was reached; and that additional word, that Christ is the end of it ‘unto righteousness’ (*eis*), leaves no doubt that this fulfilment of the law is to be found in Christ, and is received in the reception of Christ.”<sup>30</sup>

Nor is the notion of Christ’s righteous law-keeping involved, as if put to our account. Acts 2:36 bears on this. Christ’s death and resurrection and ascension is involved.

## *Romans 10:5-13*

### *The Word of Faith, and Jesus as Lord for Salvation*

5. For Moses lays down in writing the righteousness which is of the law, The man who has practiced those things shall live by them.

6. But the righteousness of faith speaks thus: Do not say in thine heart, Who shall ascend to the heavens? that is, to bring Christ down;

7. or, Who shall descend into the abyss? that is, to bring up Christ from among [the] dead.

8. But what says it? The word is near thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is,

28. *Notes on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, in loco.*

29. *Collected Writings* 10:22.

30. *Collected Writings* 7:367; see also 7:311, 372; 33:370; 23:252; *Notes and Comments* 5:35, 36, 66.

the word of faith, which we preach:

9. that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from among [the] dead, thou shalt be saved.

10. For with [the] heart is believed to righteousness; and with [the] mouth confession made to salvation.

11. For the scripture says, No one believing on him shall be ashamed.

12. For there is no difference of Jew and Greek; for the same Lord of all [is] rich towards all that call upon him.

13. For every one whosoever, who shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.

### THE TWO RIGHTEOUSNESSES CONTRASTED (vv. 5-10)

The contrast of the two righteousnesses are expressed in two languages: (1) the language of law and (2) the language of faith. This is an antithesis -- a contrast between two things. One is merely human, the other is divine.

**The Righteousness Which is of the Law.** If man in Eden had not sinned, he would not have died, because death is the wages of sin. His continuing to live could not have been called eternal life as we have it taught in the NT. True, if man had continued to live forever, it would have been unending natural life. It is not the unendingness of it that constitutes it eternal life. Why, the wicked shall never be extinct. Do you think you should say they have eternal life?

If a natural man kept the law perfectly, he would not die. But that is not eternal life either, though it would be living forever. Eternal life is much more than merely living forever. At any rate, the righteousness which is of the law is based on works. For v. 5, see Lev. 18:5 for what Moses, the law-giver said.

We need to also note the fact presented in 2 Cor. 3:6, 7, 9:

For the letter kills, but the Spirit quickens. (But if the ministry of death, in letters, graven in stone . . . the ministry of condemnation . . .

"The letter kills" means the law. It is not a ministry of life. It is a ministry of death and condemnation. See how the quickened soul in Rom. 7, not knowing deliverance, and being under law in his conscience, makes the discovery of these things.

**The Righteousness Which is of Faith (vv. 6-8).** The first thing to note here is the total absence of any reference to Christ's keeping of the law. The second thing to note is the absence of reference to man's doing; but we learn what God has done and that our place is to believe. The third thing to note is that the righteousness which is of faith is *the righteousness of God*. This righteousness is contrasted to the righteousness which is of the law with a "but." The righteousness of faith speaks, saying that there are two things not to do<sup>31</sup> in the heart. In v. 3 we had *heart submission* brought before us. In v. 6 we

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31. The next thing I would mark in connection with this is, that the commands of God, though the literal circumstances of blessing associated with them may be gone, never lose their power; for they are always, unless as connected with these blessings in detail, moral -- in their character, exhibiting  
[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com) (continued...)

have *heart silence* brought before us.

The quotation is from Deut. 30:12-14.<sup>32</sup> Scaling the heights and plummeting the depths refers to human effort, and such accomplishment is really not attainable. But man wants to *do*.<sup>33</sup> Concerning Paul's quotation, the following extract is helpful:

In v. 5 the apostle goes on say, that the righteousness of the law had not accomplished what man desired; and then in v. 6, the righteousness of faith comes in, and it

“speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is to bring Christ down from above): or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

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31. (...continued)

and expressive of God, on which relationship to Him is necessarily founded. This is what the word in Deut. 30: 12-14, quoted by the apostle, means: “It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us, that we may hear and do it . . . But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” Now the apostle calls this the righteousness of faith (Rom. 10: 6), the force of which we shall see in a moment, if we examine the place where it occurs in Deuteronomy, and learn also the accuracy of scripture quotation; and that this quotation in Romans, as everything else in Scripture, is the mind of the Spirit of God.

The statement of Moses in Deuteronomy was not the covenant on which, in literal obedience, they held the land; this would not have been the righteousness of faith, but the principle of *Do*, and then the blessing. It was *besides the covenant that was made with them at Horeb* (chap. 29: 1), and proceeds upon the ground of the total loss of the literal blessings, which were the result of literal -- obedience in the land: “And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind, among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey,” etc. That is, after the covenant of literal obedience had been so broken that they had lost the fruits of it in the possession of the land, and were driven out (at once the evidence that it was broken, and constituting the impossibility, in that exclusion from the land, of such literal obedience), thereon the Lord says, “For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven,” etc. But it was nigh them, that which faith recognized in its power and principles, although, in exclusion from the land, its literal observance was impracticable (*Collected Writings* 16:7; see also 7:268, 353, 372; 10:64; and especially 33:371).

32. Duet. 30:12-14 is about Israel in the future. Paul made an application for a principle.

33. Doing with delight, when in possession of life, is a different thing from doing in order to obtain life. Now what I say is, The law was never given that we might obtain righteousness or life by it, nor ever could have been. It was introduced by the by to convince of sin. A sinless being, who had life, did not want a law of righteousness to obtain it; a sinful creature with a law of righteousness could only be condemned. “Do this and live” is not written on the gate of heaven. It was written on Sinai, which is not the gate of heaven. It is the gate of death and condemnation. It was not said to Adam, Do this and live. He lost the life he had by disobedience (*Collected Writings* 7:268).

Here in resurrection, we got the great principle of righteousness by faith, which they had rejected. Israel, as a nation, had utterly failed, as regards their own righteousness; for they had broken the very highest and nearest link between themselves and God, when they had made the molten calf and worshiped it. From that very moment nothing was left for them in the way of blessing, but this righteousness by faith, of which Moses had spoken to them, as we see in Deut. 30.

In Deut. 27 we see that Moses, in God's name, had been laying down the great principle of legal righteousness to the Jews, as the keepers of the law; and which if they continued not in, cursing must be the result. And mark here that the curses were pronounced on mount Ebal, the mount of cursing. The blessings were never pronounced, nor indeed could they be, for God Himself stood in the way; because those who were under the law had not kept it, and were necessarily under its curse. The real effect of being under law is curse. Where is the blessing? Nowhere to be found. Now this, that the curse is on Ebal, is our security; for Christ has borne it, having been made a curse for us; and we are beyond it. So it can never reach us, for "Christ is the end of the law, for righteousness, to every one that believeth." In the 28th chapter, we get the government of God in the midst of Israel, which put them dependent on present conduct.

"If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God" (vv. 1, 2).

"But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee."

Then in the 30th ch. he supposes all this to have had its result. They had been brought under the government of the law in the land, and all had failed. They had fallen under the law's curse. In Deut. 29:28, they are rooted out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, the effect of their failure; and in v. 29 we get the summing up of the whole,

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children, that we may do all the words of this law."

The things that were revealed were those that they were to act upon. They had been put into the land on the ground of obedience, to *do* "all the words of this law." This ended in utter rejection, in their being rooted out of their land. There is your rule to act on.

But behind all this, there was another thing -- a secret thing in the heart of God-- and that was grace.

"And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou

shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee" (Deut. 30:1).

Here I get quite another thing. All the effect of God's government had had its accomplishment. The things which were revealed for them to act on are no longer owned, and another class of blessings are now brought out. All that had depended on their conduct was lost; but behind it all there was this secret thing,-- God's thoughts of grace. Therefore in the 30th chapter, we have

the righteousness by faith brought out. For if, when out of their own land, they shall turn to the Lord their God, He will have compassion on them, and turn their captivity, and gather them from the nations whither He had scattered them. Thus every question of legal righteousness is utterly at an end. If there is any hope for a Jew, it is on another principle -- even through the righteousness of faith. Now the moment you bring in the righteousness of faith, Christ is the end of it (the law). "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth." Legal righteousness is done with, and Israel has suffered its curse; and now Paul shows that they are here thrown on this new way of having to do with God-- on the righteousness of Christ.

"The word is nigh thee." You have not to go to Jerusalem to get it, or over the sea, for "the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).<sup>34</sup>

Ed.

### *What is the Leaven of the Pharisees?*

Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy; but there is nothing covered up which shall not be revealed, not secret that shall not be known; therefore whatever ye have said in the darkness shall be heard in the light, and what ye have spoken in the ear in chambers shall be proclaimed upon the housetops (Luke 12:1-3).

### *Favoritism*

My brethren, do not have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [Lord] of glory, with respect of persons (James 2:1).

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34. *The Girdle of Truth* 2:355-361.

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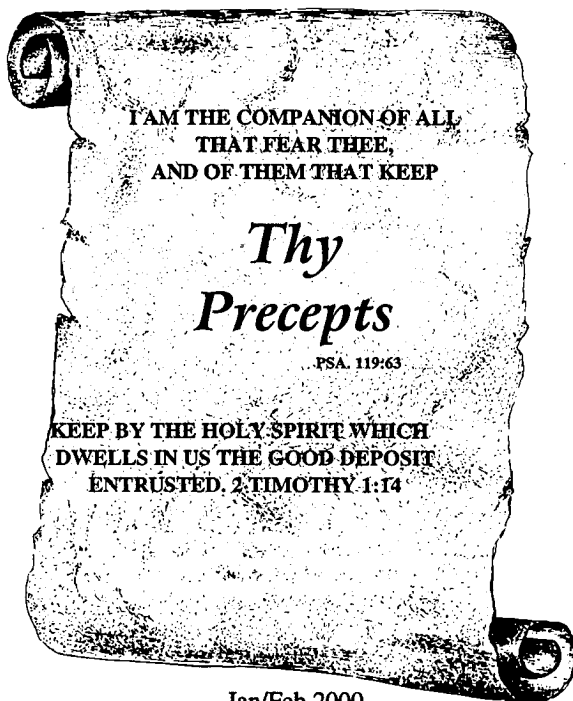
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### *Completion of Atonement on the Cross Denied*

W. Kelly well remarked:

Never does scripture represent our union with Christ as before the Advent {first coming}, or in His life here below, or even in His death, but with Him risen and glorified. It is true that *when united to Him thus*, scripture does speak of the Christian being crucified with Christ, baptized into His death, dead with Him, buried with Him, as well as risen. But nowhere is such language used of the faithful till after the work of redemption was wrought and He was glorified: then, no doubt, what was true of Him as their great Substitute might be, and is, said of them. It is idle in such a question to speak of the counsels of God. *His* choice of the saints in Christ before the foundation of the world is a precious truth; but it is not *their* union with Christ till they are actually called and brought into the membership of Christ by the Holy Ghost. So, again, His purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, is not to be confounded with our forming part of Christ's body. Were we members of Him (save in divine counsels) before we were converted or even existed? The question is as to living union with Christ as Head, which, I maintain, is invariably in scripture made to follow redemption and the presence of the Spirit sent down from heaven after Christ went on high. If divine purpose be made to decide the matter, one might thereby justify the heterodoxy of those who say the resurrection or the judgment is past already, and the eternal state come; for these equally exist before God's eyes, and we look on them all by faith.<sup>1</sup>

A full Preterist article on the internet put the issue quite plainly:

So long as the temple still stood, and the sarifices were continually offered, the

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1. *Christ Tempted and Sympathizing* [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

plan of redemption was incomplete. Christ Himself declared that His victory at the cross was not complete, and would only find its fulfilment in judgment (Matt. 12:20; Rom. 2:5-8; 9:22-23; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 1 Cor. 15:54-57). Therefore the plan of redemption's fulfilment must occur after the cross, and Pentecost.<sup>2</sup> ♦

The climax of these points (and the most explicitly declared in Scripture) is that the Christians were still waiting for eternal salvation **after the Cross and Pentecost** . . . They had not yet been "clothed upon" with the redemption for which they were waiting (2 Cor. 5:2-4).<sup>3</sup> ♦

Then we are told that Rom. 8:23, Acts 3:19, etc. teach this. This is followed by the assertion that before AD 70:

Nobody had yet been redeemed . . . redemption was **brought with Christ from heaven at His second Coming** {at AD 70}.<sup>4</sup>

The brazen defiance of God's Word seems to know no bounds:

. . . knowing that ye have been redeemed . . . by precious blood, as of a lamb without spot [the blood] of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19).

And this brings us to Ed. Stevens' assertion of Christ's Yom Kippur work of atonement going on in heaven between AD 30 and AD 70:

The result of the AD 70 resurrection is that the OT saints have been rescued from Sheol/Hades and are now in the presence of God with immortality and eternal life . . . They did not get immortal bodies at their physical death, nor were they allowed into the presence of God . . .

The transition period saints {see the chart in TP14:149} had "eternal life," but not access to the presence of God Yet. When they died physically they did not go to Sheol/Hades, but rather to the outer courts of the heavenly temple (cf. Rev. 6:9ff; 7:9-17). They were not allowed access to the presence of God until Christ the High Priest finished His Yom Kippur duties inside the heavenly Holy of Holies. When He completed that atonement, He came back out and "appeared the second time" to the anxiously awaiting saints gathered in heavens's outer temple courts (cf. Rev. 6:9ff; 7:9-17).<sup>5</sup>

A series on the subject of the atonement has already been begun in *Thy Precepts* and we will not pursue the subject here. Readers will no doubt understand the above teaching to be fundamentally evil doctrine. This teaching is interlocked with fundamentally evil teaching regarding the resurrection being past (AD 70) and not a physical resurrection at that, as in the case of the teaching of Hymenaeus and Philetus, to which we now turn.

2. Todd. D. Dennis, *New Testament Realized Eschatology*, p. 6.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

5. Stevens *Response to Gentry*, Bradford. Kingdon Publications, p. 36, 1997. See also p. 29.

## *Full Preterism is Hymenaeus and Philetus Redivivus*

But profane, vain babblings shun, for they will advance to greater impiety, and their word will spread as a gangrene; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; [men] who as to truth have gone astray, saying that the resurrection has taken place already; and overthrow the faith of some (2 Tim. 2:16-18).

Long ago W. Kelly remarked, concerning J. S. Russell (*The Parousia*), R. Weymouth (*Version of the New Testament in Common Speech*), and F. B. Procter:

The assumption of these dreamers is: Christ came finally and so fully at the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, that all scripture about His parousia was then exhausted.

... These men, like Hymenaeus and Philetus of old, overthrow the faith of some; for no lie is of the truth. And this lie denies necessarily the resurrection of the body, the triumphant rapture of the saints to Christ, our future abiding place in the Father's house, no less than the awful judgment of the quick in the day of the Lord, when the Satanic trio condignly suffer, and the displayed world-kingdom of our Lord and His Christ shall come in power and glory, to the deliverance of the still groaning creation. Then the purpose of God shall be fulfilled for the administration of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and those on the earth; in Him in whom also we were given inheritance as His joint-heirs.<sup>6</sup> ♦

One may not value the tradition through Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, and must incomparably prefer the living and gracious light of the inspired scriptures. But those western chiefs did not destroy either the foundations, or the hope, like these strange fanatics of the misbelieved and perverted "Parousia." For theirs is an utter misuse of precious truth which leaves nothing but decomposed fruit, the ashes of death, instead of the life, of which they write so glibly and unspiritually and unholily, without a single atom of truth rightly understood or applied. Unbelief of the truth is blind and bad; but how much worse is faith in a lie of Satan that supplants God's mind for faith and hope?<sup>7</sup> ♦

It appears that Hymenaeus and Philetus were professed Christians and they taught something that undermined the faith of God's elect. They brought not "the doctrine of the Christ" (2 John 9). Likely, those whose faith they had undermined would have claimed that these two were godly men. They may have said true things about Christ and about other Christian doctrines. That is all beside the point, as it is beside the point regarding full Preterists. Saying good and true things does not remove the poison of heterodoxy. We do not know what the full system of these two was, but we have a reasonably clear view of the main features of the full preterist position, as indicated on the chart. Additionally we know what is

6. "The Heavenly Hope" in *W. Kelly's Writings on Prophecy*, p. 120.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

entailed in such teaching regarding the Lord's resurrection body, the resurrection body of the believer really corresponding to that, along with the implications of the unfinished work on the cross, and that the resurrection and judgment is past -- with the implicit denial of eternal, conscious punishment of the wicked. These things are spreading like gangrene.

W. Kelly has made some interesting and instructive observations regarding the erroneous teaching that the day of the Lord was present, as noticed in 2 Thess. 2, as well as comments on Hymenaeus and Philetus.

The report spread was that the well-known day of trouble was already come. Of course those who spread abroad such a rumor must have taken the day of the Lord in some spiritual way, because it was very evident that the world at large abode much as before, and that judgment-day in a literal sense was not as yet. There were trials, persecutions, and troubles of various kinds at that time, which were taken hold of in order to make out that the day of the Lord in some sort was already arrived. Nor is this by any means an uncommon thing in the history of souls or of Christendom. There have been several epochs before in the world when people pretended that the last day was come. And we may find something that may help you in this point of view in the second Epistle to Timothy, where we learn those were not wanting who propagated the notion that the resurrection was past already. Clearly they must have taken the resurrection in some figurative way to set up such a pretension. But, understand it as they might, their doctrine is certain. However we may explain, or try to explain, the character and grounds of the errors which the Spirit of God guards against in both passages, we must own the fact and the plain meaning of the words. The false teachers in the one place insisted that the day of the Lord was arrived, and in the other they said that the resurrection was already past, or had actually come. The truth is that neither one nor other could be till Christ Himself had come; and this is what the Spirit of God pre-supposes more particularly in the very verse before. "We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is present." Do not believe that it is set in. Do you not know that the Lord Jesus is coming to gather you to Himself first?<sup>8</sup> ♦

This may suffice in a well-grounded way to assure the reader that the error so unscrupulously taught by fanatics in Thessalonica was, not that the day is "at hand" (for the apostle himself taught this expressly in Rom. 13:12), but that it had "actually come." These mischievous men were probably of similar type as Hymenaeus and Philetus, "who concerning the truth erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2:18). The resurrection could be only thus explained away as accomplished, by reducing it allegorically to some spiritual privilege already received; as many writers, and

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8. "The Coming and Day of the Lord Viewed Morally" in *W. Kelly's Writings on Prophecy*, p. 161.

even commentators, counted orthodox, have misinterpreted "the first resurrection" in Rev. 20. Some such attenuation by giving a present bearing is as easily understood, as of the day of the Lord, if not more so. For while that day can never be fulfilled in all its scope, till Jehovah executes judgment on the quick here below and brings in His own reign, when all things rejoice instead of groaning as now, yet judicial inflictions in God's ways on Israel or the heathen were designated by "that day" in the Old Testament. Take Isaiah 3, 7, and still more evidently 13, and 19. For what can be clearer than that a then sweeping and exterminating judgment on a people and country, as of old on Babylon or on Egypt, is called the "day of the Lord" on them? Yet no doubt there remained momentous elements as yet unfulfilled which await "the day" in the fullest sense at the end of the age.

Joel 1, 2 may illustrate this same thing. The day of the Lord is similarly introduced and with similar characteristics. It is a day that comes as a destruction from the Almighty; a day of darkness and of gloominess; a day of cloud and of thick darkness; great and very terrible, and who can abide it? It is a day which, however it might fall on any in a measure through Medes or Persians, through Greeks or Romans, looks onward to its completeness at length, when the Lord rises up to shake not the earth only but also heaven. Compare Zeph. 1:7-18 with Zeph. 3:8-20, Zech. 12-14.

Now it is very intelligible that a misleader might avail himself of the germinant or partial application of the prophecies in ancient times to affirm that the sore troubles and persecution the Thessalonians then endured along with external distress and political convulsion, etc., indicated that day. It was *not* indeed Christ's presence, nor were the saints translated to heaven, which twofold event could not of course be pretended in any way to have taken place; for it is here pleaded as a self-evident guard against the error in circulation, that the day of the Lord's dealing with the living on earth had begun, and that the saints were involved in its terrors. So far in fact were any from so egregious a fancy as that Christ had come, that beyond controversy the apostle could entreat them by (or, for the sake of) His presence and our gathering together unto Him, that they should not credit the alarming rumor that His day was there. That is, every believer in his senses was fully aware that Christ had not come, but was in heaven still, and that the saints were as yet on earth instead of being caught up to Him above. Therefore the apostle does make this a ground of appeal why they should not receive the mischievous report, no matter how strongly in appearance commended, that His day had actually dawned. Christ's presence and our gathering unto Him on high must precede that day. That on the one hand so great a joy, so bright a hope, was not the actual portion of the saints and that on the other (while Christ was still absent; they themselves and their brethren were as yet on earth, were obvious facts and irrefragable reasons why the day could not be come. The saints are to appear from heaven following Christ to bring in that day, See Rev. 17:14; Rev. 19:14. In order to this they must be translated there previously; and so we see them symbolized as in

heaven from Rev. 4 and onward.<sup>9</sup> ♦

But the error of the resurrection already past is fatal to this endurance meanwhile. It would, if true, entitle us now to reign as kings, to take our ease, to enjoy present honor and glory; and thus it is directly framed and calculated by the enemy to thwart the will of our Lord, Who calls us to share His sufferings till we are glorified together. Hence it is false as a doctrine, it is ruinous for practice, and it destroys all communion with Christ, as sharing His affections in separation from the world. It would be hardly possible to discover any delusion more opposed to the truth in its character and consequences for the soul and the walk, as well as in counteraction of the moral glory of the Lord. Well can we understand therefore that its teachers "overthrow the faith of some." And if it were so then, how much more widely extended and settled do we find the mischief now, when Christ's coming is no longer before the saints as a constant living hope, and the resurrection of the body is practically nothing to them, satisfied that after death their souls go to heaven! The world becomes then a scene of present enjoyment. Association with a once dead and rejected Christ is unthought of. They flatter themselves that they have attained to a wisdom higher than was known by the apostles in those earlier days, now that they have learnt to enjoy the best of both worlds.

The truth cannot be undermined without the most withering consequences, both morally and ecclesiastically. It is not only communion interrupted between Christ and His own, but divergence from and opposition to His mind, more or less distinctly. Those who undermine may of course be deceived themselves; they may flatter themselves as contributing a higher testimony. But truth is never at issue with truth: in Christ all is in harmony. To say that the resurrection is past already is both the index of the grave heterodoxy at work destructive of our proper hope, while professing to give advance of privilege, and also the ready instrument of deep and rapid progress in evil. For when the resurrection comes, there will be no more need of watching unto prayer, no more endurance of affliction, no more the good fight of faith: all will be settled in power, glory, rest, and enjoyment.

That we are dead and risen with Christ is true and holy, and cannot be too urgently pressed on the believer from first to last of his career; but we, groaning within ourselves, as having the first-fruits of the Spirit, also await the adoption, the redemption of our body (Rom. 8:23). This will only be at Christ's coming, which the enemy would also conceal and rob us of, the most influential of all hopes for such as love Him and would know the fellowship of His sufferings. How crafty and pernicious then the device which, turning our hope into an expression of high privilege now, would thus annul our heavenly hope, destroy communion and walk, hide Christ from our heart's longing, and make rest in present things a wise and right thing!

Such was the error of Hymenaeus and Philetus: profane babblings truly,

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9. *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thess. 2:2, in loco.



and sure to proceed farther in ungodliness, and a very gangrene in its devouring corruption. Such error is the overthrow of faith wherever it is accepted.<sup>10</sup> ♦

It really requires little thought to anticipate the obvious answer that would be given by full Preterists, namely, that 2 Tim. 2:18 was written before the alleged spiritual resurrection had occurred; and that whenever it might have occurred, persons living after that event could make the objection that we make.<sup>11</sup> That reply sanctions the teaching of these two and means that the defense really is this: Hymenaeus and Philetus were merely ahead of schedule! But Paul made no room for that 'ahead of schedule' idea nor therefore indicate that they were ahead of schedule. The evil was in spiritualizing the resurrection, or giving it a figurative meaning. Moreover, the truth is that after the rapture 2 Tim. 2:18 will have no bearing. All Christians, living and dead, will then have been removed from the earth and there will be no true, distinctively Christian faith on the earth to overthrow. God will then raise up the testimony of the Jewish remnant and the earthly calling will recommence.

It is also well to keep in mind that in the OT, in several places, resurrection is used in a figurative way to refer to the reinstatement of Israel. The use of such a figure of speech is based on the fact that there is such a thing as a literal, a bodily, resurrection. Full preterism denies the bodily resurrection. It does this in express terms regarding the Christian's body. Regarding Christ's body, their problem seems more pronounced because the Lord's body did not experience corruption and He rose from the dead. This we shall consider next.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

Ed.

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10. *An Exposition to the Two Epistles to Timothy*, on 2 Tim. 2:16-18, *in loco*.

11. Since writing this I found this explanation:

Paul did NOT attempt to negate, refute, or correct anything about what Hymenaeus and Philetus or the other believers thought or taught regarding the nature of the resurrection. The reason the premature announcement of the resurrection *upset the faith* of some was that it posited a consummation of the spiritual kingdom {which was to take place in AD 70} while the earthly temple in Jerusalem still stood. This made law-and-works salvation still possible . . . W. R. Shirk, *Resurrection: A Promise Fulfilled*, Wheaton: Projects in Eschatology, p. 34, 1998.

Note well that besides the Hymenaeus evil, this teaches another evil: in the Old Testament times persons could have salvation by law-and-works.

## *Elements of Propitiation, Substitution, and The Righteousness of God*

### *Chapter 5*

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## *The Death, the Blood, and the Cross of Christ, in Their Bearing Regarding the Believer*

### *The Death of Christ Regarding the Believer*

The bearing of the death of Christ regarding those who are not believers is reserved for the next chapter.

#### **CHRIST DIED AS AN ACT OF HIS WILL**

First, let us be sure that our Lord died as an act of His own will. The blood of the atonement came from the side of a dead Christ. Our Savior did not bleed to death:

On this account the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it again. I have received this commandment of my Father (John 10:17, 18).

It is abundantly clear from this that the Lord Jesus died as an act of His own will. And thus we read:

... he said, It is finished; and having bowed his head, he delivered up his spirit (John 20: 30).

His head did not droop in death; indeed not. It was *His* act, and He delivered up His spirit -- for no one took His life from Him. It was voluntary, His own act.

#### **DELIVERING POWER IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST**

The believer has, through sovereign grace, appropriated the death of Christ for Himself. G. V. Wigram has written largely on the subjects in this chapter, particularly on the Scripture's use of the death of Christ. The reader would do well to obtain a copy of the book quoted just below. Here we will consider but a small part of it as bearing on the delivering power, for the believer, of Christ's death. Commenting on Rom. 6:2-13, he wrote:

The argument of Paul is presented to be towards the proving by God's estimate

of the death of Christ for the church, and the church's fellowship by the Spirit in that estimate, that the church is free from sin, and so free as to have no pretext for continuing to live in it.

If God's object, says he, was, that as sin hath reigned unto death even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, no one can say, We will continue in sin that grace may abound. And then the context quoted follows—the grand truth of which seems to be that our exemption from the charge and guilt of sin comes by God reckoning us *dead with Christ* by the Spirit: being planted in the likeness of His death, we were baptized thereinto and buried with Christ by baptism into death. That is, God, having given to us the Spirit of Christ Jesus, looks upon us as one with Him, and so imputes to us all that was true of Christ. Now He died under the charge and the power of sin imputed— but when He had died it had done its all, and being raised from the dead He dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him—for He liveth unto God. And now, if all this has been done by God to His Son for the church, let every member of it reckon himself dead indeed unto sin, so as neither to allow it to reign in the mortal body by obedience to its lusts, nor to yield the members of the body as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. The whole weight of the argument seems to me to turn upon *the mode* in which the church got her freedom from sin, in the power and guilt of it, even by being identified of God, through grace in the Spirit, with that which was the all that the charge and power of sin imputed could effect upon Christ Jesus.

This passage has often been taken as if it applied to the death of Christ as presented to the world. That such a view involves a complete violation of the characteristic marks of the whole context, as well as very unsound doctrine, is plain. Perhaps the saints do not look enough at the inseparable union of their blessing and the life of the Son of God. If we know Him we must have His Spirit, and this Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, and identifies us fully in all things with Him, so that God looks upon us by virtue of it, as having that true of us which personally was only true of Him whose Spirit we have received, and thus retrospectively we are said to have been crucified together with, died together with, and been buried together with, Him, as well as quickened together with Him: for though the life that was in the Lord was not fully manifested to man till the resurrection, when He became manifest the second Adam; yet I need not say that He was not intrinsically and personally, after the resurrection, other than what He was from the beginning, the only begotten Son of the Father, the Lord of all glory. The death of the Lord in this place seems presented as the place of the saints' and church's clearance from all the charge and power of sin.

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ: that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God," &c. (Rom. 7:4).

In the last citation the death of the Lord was shown as the means of clearing the church in principle, from under sin; here it is presented as having the same effect as to law, and on this simple ground, that the claim of the law having been met by Christ fully, they who are looked upon as one with Him are free from it.

This to the individual believer is of immense importance in connection with obedience; for as long as the mind of the Christian turns to law, as though it still rested upon him, he will be under that which stirs up the evil of the flesh, and, God knows, we need not either that, or the sorrow consequent upon it, in addition to the difficulties of our walk. I would only further notice that the expression, "that ye should be married to another," should rather be "that you should be for another," for it refers to the saints' present connection with the Lord, and that is one of espousal; not yet marriage. And again, in verse 6, "that being dead wherein we were held" should rather be "that we being dead to that wherein we were held," as a closer and more literal rendering, as well as one more consistent with the sense of the context.

"If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But 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 your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:10, 11).

What blessed consolation and comfort is here! Having in the seventh chapter traced the practical effect upon the mind, and its thought of regeneration as in a Jew, so regenerated, considering the question of law, and then shown how sorrow and depression were the result, here we find the apostle presenting, as it were, the same individual, with the question of law disposed of, in the blissful meditation upon the work of redemption wrought for us by Christ. The question of regeneration had turned his thought inward, and then the question of the spiritual character of the law had scared him: redemption lifts up his mind from self to Christ, to all accomplished by Him, and no condemnation established -- and more than this, it meets the very thoughts awakened about the body of sin, and death in us proves that our bodies are so, or Christ need not have died; and throws the mind therefore not upon anything in self, but upon the faithfulness of God, who, having delivered Christ for our sins raised Him again, and will quicken into newness of life all those who make that death the ground of their acceptance before God. And thus, believer, as thou well knowest, is described both thine experience and thy hope as to thy body -- it is dead because of sin; but it shall be quickened because the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead dwells in thee.<sup>1</sup>

## *The Blood of Christ*

### THE EMPHASIS ON BLOOD IN SCRIPTURE

What then is the reason that the whole word of God should give such prominence to our subject? It is two-fold: first the blood "*is the life*" of the man or animal, (hence when it is seen out of the body it is a proof of death); secondly, man's life is forfeited by sin and sins. He is mortal {i.e., subject to death}, being descended

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1. *The Cross, the Blood, and the Death of Jesus Christ; Their Uses and Applications by the Spirit in the Scripture*, Winschoten: Heijkoop, pp. 146-144, third ed.

from Adam after his fall, "As in Adam all die," and has a sinful nature; in addition to which he has committed sins, the penalty of which is death. "The wages of sin is death."

Now it is because of the first of these reasons that at the Lord's supper we get the blood typified apart from and outside that which sets forth the Lord's body. The bread would be enough to set forth Christ, but to set forth His death or Him in His death, we have the special image of the blood as poured forth in the cup. Hence the force of that verse "Without *shedding* of blood there is no remission." Other types of death exist, such as the water of baptism, but blood is specifically death in its atoning aspect as placed between God and the sinner. It is the only thing that covers sin. Hence when it was sprinkled on the mercy seat, God could not only dwell with rebellious Israel, but could say through the mouth of Balaam that He had beheld no iniquity in them, although proof enough of their rebellious spirit lay within the ark in the very holiest. As to the second reason -- life being forfeited to God on account of sin, no man can lay down his life as a freewill offering for another (as Moses wished to do). The reason Christ could do so was, because He was sinless in nature and practice. His life was therefore not forfeited on account of sin or sins, and He alone "had power to lay it down." This He did in perfect love for us who had forfeited our lives. This sacrifice has two aspects, God-ward and man-ward. The atoning blood looked at from God's standpoint propitiates Him, or in other words satisfies fully the claims of His holiness, that has been outraged and set at nought by sin for 4,000 years. An offence against an infinite God demands an infinite sacrifice. Therefore even though no sinner on earth were to trust in the blood, God's righteousness on account of sin looked at generally would be vindicated in Christ's death. But man-ward it has another side. God is not only now vindicated as regards His own holiness and righteousness, but He comes forth as the justifier of every sinner who believes. The blood washes away out of God's sight the sins of all who rest on it.

Towards man then it has a saving power, of which the vilest may freely avail themselves. It therefore atones to God for sin and justifies believers from their sins. <sup>2</sup>

## THE ATONING BLOOD CAME FROM A DEAD CHRIST

After He was dead came the shedding of the precious blood that we read about in Scripture. His death was not due to bleeding to death, <sup>3</sup> or any other cause, except His own act of laying down His life. And so the blood of the atonement came from the side of a dead Christ who had delivered up His spirit.

2. *The Bible Student* 2:38, 39.

3. "It was not by taking blood from Him as a victim that He died. The water and blood that were shed were when He was dead -- and it is vital to hold that He gave up His life and that it was not taken from Him by shedding His blood. I quite admit He had really to die. But the reality of His drinking the cup of wrath, which unquestionably from scripture was accomplished before He gave up His spirit, is of the last importance" (*Letters of I. N. Dargy* 3:392).

That precious blood had all the value of the death; and that death had all the value of the three hours of atoning sufferings under the abandonment of God. <sup>4</sup> This is the blood of which Scripture speaks, and *this alone*! It is the blood from the side of One dead, who delivered up His Spirit. Yes, the blood must have the value of death in it, yet that death be not by the shedding of blood, else the death would not have been the voluntary yielding up His life by dismissing His spirit.

### THE ATONING BLOOD ACCOMPANIED BY WATER

Moreover, the atoning blood was accompanied by water:

The sacrifice of Christ abides in its efficacy; but, so far from this being all we want, because of it there is a necessity for "the washing of water by the word." "He that is washed [bathed] needeth not save to wash his feet." For this is he that "came by water and blood, not by water only, but by water and blood." The Lord Jesus has provided for all. Out of His side, as we know, flowed both; and so it is, that as the blood of Christ expiated our sin as guilty sinners before God, so the water not only gives us new birth, but also, in answer to His own intercession, carries on the cleansing of the feet when they are defiled in our own passage through the world. <sup>5</sup> ♦

"This is he who came by (*dia*) water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by (*en*) water only, but by (*en*) water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness." The testimony of the water and of the blood is twice expressed in this verse, but with a different Greek preposition each time. He came by (*dia*) water and blood; and then He came in (*en*) water and blood; that is to say, in the power of the water and of the blood. The former of these expressions (*dia*) indicates the character in which Jesus came here below; the latter (*en*), the power displayed by Him according to that character. Jesus came in a character of purification and expiation: "by water and blood." He has wrought according to that character, and has accomplished purification and expiation in water and blood. Although the water and the blood both express the death of Christ, they set forth two results of that death. We are cleansed by the water of death (sanctification), and we are also cleansed by blood (justification). From this it follows that, the death of Christ giving its character and value to our sanctification, we reckon ourselves dead to sin even as Christ died for sin. I do not know if we pay sufficient heed to this purifying power of the death of Christ, whereby we are freed from the power of sin now.

"And it is the Spirit that beareth witness." The Spirit of God, present here below, is also a witness of the grace of life which is in Jesus. But it is in virtue of the death of Christ that the Holy Ghost has come down. Thus purification, expiation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, are privileges which exist for us only

4. It is when really already dead, that His blood which had all the value of that death was shed (with the water) to cleanse from sin. It must have the value of death in it, yet death not be by it (*Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:196.).

5. W. Kelly, "The Elders in Heaven," *Scripture Publishing Co.* Heijkoop, p. 381, 1971 reprint.

in virtue of a dead Christ.<sup>6</sup> ♦

The thrust of the soldier's spear brought out the divine testimony of salvation and of life.

Notice also how opportune this circumstance was. If they had pierced Jesus before His death, and had killed Him, He would not Himself have given up His spirit: if they had pierced Him without putting Him to death, His blood shed thus would not have had the value of His death. But He gives His life Himself; He is dead, and all the value of His death, in its two aspects of purification and expiation, was manifested, when His side was pierced and the water and the blood came forth; 1 John 5.<sup>7</sup> ♦

Let us be sure to keep the eye of faith fixed steadily on that blood accompanied by the water, from the side of the dead Christ. *This* is the blood of the atonement.

### **THE ATONING WORK HAS AS ITS VALUE THE VALUE OF HIS PERSON**

The sufferings, the death, and that which came from the pierced side has all the value of His Person imparted to it all.

None but the divine person of the Son, become man, can meet the case; without the shedding of His blood was no remission; His death was absolutely requisite to free from sin: but all this availed only *because He endured the forsaking of God.*<sup>8</sup>

It is most important to understand that the value of the work is commensurate with His Person. While we do not doubt that His sacrifice was a propitiatory sacrifice, Scripture does not state it *that* way, perhaps with the heathen sacrifices in view, propitiating their gods. How Scripture presents it is this:

and *he* is the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2).

It is Himself! He imparts all the glory and value of Himself to what He wrought! This gives infinite value to that work.

### **NO REPEATED APPLICATION OF THE BLOOD**

Another point regarding the blood of Christ we must speak of before we close. It is this -- Whereas the blood of bulls and of goats required to be shed again and again every time a man sinned, the sacrifice of Christ is not only offered once for all, but for ever cleanses from all sin. It not merely cleansed us when we believed, but it *cleanses* {1 John 1:7}, or in other words, no sin can ever stand against us in God's book, for the value of the blood of Christ for those who believe is eternal. There is a practical cleansing and a restoration of communion that take place as regards the sins of the believer, but this is by the application of the water of the word, not of the blood of Christ. This is shown in the OT type of the red heifer in Num. 19, and also by our Lord in John 13. To confound the

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6. *Collected Writings* 28:327.

7. *Collected Writings* 33:298.

8. *The Bible Treasury* 6:192.

constantly repeated cleansing of the washing of water by the word with the eternal cleansing power of the blood of Christ, shed once never to be repeated nor reapplied, is a serious mistake.<sup>9</sup> ♦

Take the prevalent idea of a frequent recourse to the blood of Christ to restore from failures. How could men speak thus if they believed that Christ obtained everlasting redemption? or that the worshipers once purged have no longer conscience of sins? They cannot have the truth of the gospel in their soul, else they never would think after such a fashion. Christ bore our sins in His body on the tree, not merely those before we believed; His blood cleanses from every sin, not from some only. The saints ought to know that there is the washing of water by the word {Eph. 5:26} to meet any defilement in the Christian by the way, but no annulling of redemption through Christ's blood. "For by one offering He (Christ) hath perfected" not only for ever but continuously (εἰς τὸ διηνεκές) the sanctified {Heb. 10:14}. There is no such thought in God's gospel as our needing a fresh propitiation through His blood after the first; for it was plenary and all-sufficient. But we need to have our defiled feet cleansed by Christ's word and advocacy. And we confess any sin {1 John 1:9} wherever we act inconsistently with Him; we confess our sin in that particular to God, and judge in ourselves that which exposed us so to fail. That is quite true and right; but not to shake the ground of His one sacrifice and of redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our offences.

If our sins were not all effaced, what would be the value of any? If only one were not forgiven, it would be fatal. But to the believer, forgiveness or remission of our sins means a complete clearance of the sad burden. Only if one should sin, conscience acts under the Spirit's dealing, and there follows a real humbling of ourselves due on any failure; for every such thing is a shame to us and a grief to the Holy Spirit of God whereby we were sealed unto the day of redemption {Eph 4:30}. This however cannot touch the accepted work of our Lord Jesus, Author as He is of everlasting salvation {Heb. 5:9}. So also the knowledge of the Father and of our relationship as His children are quite unshaken. For "we have an Advocate with the Father" {1 John 2:1} who is on high expressly to meet effectually all these difficulties, otherwise insuperable. We are thus ever indebted to Christ; but His advocacy is not His bloodshedding, nor is His blood again His advocacy. Risen and in heaven with the Father, He lives to intercede for us. His blood had quite a different aim and effect. His sacrifice has done its own work perfectly; and His advocacy {1 John 2:1} has its proper place for our need afterwards; and woe to all those that ignorantly unsettle the truth, and insinuate what undermines the gospel of Christ, even though they believe in His person.

<sup>10</sup> ♦

## SCRIPTURE'S USE OF THE BLOOD

G. V. Wigram's summary remark is apropos here.

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9. *The Bible Student* 2:40.

10. W. Kelly, *Exposition of the Epistles of John*, pp. 129, 130.



The blood, when spoken of as known so as to be valued, always seems to involve, more or less remotely, the idea of atonement. In itself it is atonement; even that by which *alone* God can be just, and yet the justifier of the sinner; and, so it is that which not only enables God to bless, but the sinner to draw near for blessing. And yet it has more uses and applications in connection with atonement, than most are aware. For it may be looked at as presented with the view of giving eternal life to them that believe; as in itself propitiation; as the removal of sin; as justification; forgiveness, nearness, peace; as that which alone cleanses the conscience of a sinner, or can keep a saint's conscience clean; which has cleansed the person in one place, and the robes in another; which is redemption -- an approach to the holiest -- the securer and retainer of that place -- our purchase money -- our sanctification -- the proof of our election -- our power over Satan, the power and measure of our obedience to God, that in which we have communion one with another, the seal of the everlasting covenant, &c., &c., &c. In such various lights does the Spirit make mention of the blood! May the saints, however weak, know God's estimate of the blood in all the varied applications of it, and, through the Spirit, learn to adopt God's estimate, and to set aside their own.

Ignorance of the blood, or carelessness as to it, is the world's condemnation.<sup>11</sup>

## *The Cross and the Believer*

### THE CROSS MEANS REJECTION

The cross is, in one way, the measure of the first man's rejection of the Lord Jesus, who is the revelation of the Father in the Son. G. V. Wigram wrote:

The cross seems to me to be used in scripture as especially connected with shame and disgrace. The cross was in itself a cruel and a disgraceful *heathen* mode of death -- kept, even by them, for the very vilest. It seemed to say -- This is a wretch, who has no feelings to be considered and whose sufferings may be protracted so as to scare others from committing what he has done. By the Jews seeking it for Jesus, it was saying, either "We are not Jews," or "He is no Jew"; for then, if a sinner, he should have been stoned -- and in it they were saying that He was not their king (as you will see in John 19), nor their prophet, much less Son of God; as done by the Gentiles also, it was the denial of His being the Son of God from whose hand the Gentiles had received their kingly power. (See Dan. 2.) The cross is used in scripture as the thing which, in one word, tells what is the present result among men of serving God; of being a disciple; of becoming one; and this not only at the hands of the world, but of the professing world. The cross of Jesus proved this as to Jerusalem and its law; while at the same time it told of His

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11. *The Cross, the Blood, and the Death of Jesus Christ; Their Uses and Applications by the Spirit in the Scripture*, Winschoten: Heijkoop, 34, fifth ed.  
[www.presentfuturespublishers.com](http://www.presentfuturespublishers.com)

thorough self-renunciation, perfectness of obedience, and of the estimate the world had of God: -- Jew and Gentile would crucify His Son. The priests of His temple, they would seek it for Him; Pontius Pilate would rather yield it to them, though he knew Jesus was innocent, than have it said himself was not Caesar's friend. It was God's way of telling what He felt about man's sin; about the old man in each of us; about carnality, self-righteousness, and human wisdom; about there being no ground of justification or means of purification, in whole or in part, in us; no door open by which a new life could come in to us; of making the Jew and Gentile shake hands; of stripping all of boasting, specially from the Jew, &c., &c. In so many different connections is the cross presented. May the believer pass and re-pass through the testimony of scripture about it, and learn to use the cross of Jesus for the purposes for which it is given and made known to him! <sup>12</sup>

See 1 Cor. 1:18; Gal. 5:11; 6:14; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 12:2; Mark 8:34.

### THE CROSS MEANS FORSAKING

On the cross the unfathomable forsaking took place in those three hours when He was made sin for us. He was there forsaken by God (it does not say by the Father). Upon this inscrutable horror our souls often meditate, especially when remembering Him in His death.

Death was the penalty of sin. Death, therefore, when Christ undertook to endure the penalty, was all that we should have looked for; but His blood was needful for atonement also. Perhaps those who had understanding then would have thought, "The Father loves Him, and therefore you will see His death will be one of peculiar ease: how it will be we know not, but perhaps the veins will open outwardly of their own accord, and that quiet stupor pass over Him which comes in bleeding to death, and He will gently fall asleep, without a struggle or a groan." But this was not God's way. For He came not only to endure the penalty and to give the blood in atonement, but to be the standard by which God might measure the world and the flesh in man. And in the cross we see the effects on Him of His really drinking that cup of trembling to the dregs which was our doom. The poisonous draught could not take that effect on His pure human and perfectly divine person which it would on our impure human and only mortal persons. But O what an effect it did take! for it cut off all intercourse between Him and God. The whole vital energy of the relationship between the creature and the Creator was drained, and the relationship severed; and even that Holy Thing had no refuge left to Him save in the relationship between Himself and God in deity: these two things seem expressed thus: -- "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" -- "FATHER, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." And why was this? Because He had presented Himself as the Lamb, and was looked upon as already filleted and garlanded for the sacrifice with the wreaths of our sins and follies. How plain is it then that God can hold no intercourse with sin! He saw it laid lightly, only as by

imputation on Jesus, and He hid His face from Him, and would not look upon Him. O how He has told out here His hatred to sin, and the unmendableness of the sinner, in himself, as such; and the impossibility of any one whatever treating with Him until all his sins have been forgiven him, and all his iniquities been covered.

## THE CROSS IS THE SENTENCE ON THE FLESH AND CARNALITY

With a few more edifying observations by G. V. Wigram, we close this section:

14. The *cross* is God's sentence against all that is carnal in the church (1 Cor. 1);
15. Even as it is the sentence of God against all that is carnal in the world (1 Cor. 2: 2);
16. The *cross* was, in Jesus, the proof of how He had emptied Himself -- "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (2 Cor. 13:4);
17. The *cross* was that to which the Jews (Peter and Paul among them) had to flee from Moses' law, for justification, purification, and the power of a new life Gal. 2:20);
18. The *cross*, therefore, strongly condemns any one who, having heard of it, would in any way share the honor of salvation between Jesus who died on it and self (Gal. 3:1);
19. Offensive as the *cross* is, it was Paul's only testimony for justification or purification (Gal. 5:11-24);
20. The *cross*, therefore, by itself, as giving nothing but shame to nature, will not do for popular preachers; yet it is the Christian's only stay (Gal. 6:14-16);
21. The *cross* is the power of union to Jew and Gentile, as throwing a shade over the ordinances of the one, and the intellectual pride of the other (Eph. 2:16);
22. The *cross* was the measure of the obedience in humiliation of the Son of God (Phil. 2:8-13);
23. The *cross*, therefore, is the *sine qua non* of a true Christian -- in other words, "no cross, no Christian" (Phil. 3:17-20);
24. The *cross* is God's estimate of everything great and noble in the world which He will reconcile to Himself (Col. 1:20);
25. Especially thus connected with the Jew under Moses' law (Col. 2:14);
26. The *cross* was the measure of the Lord's willingness to endure (Heb. 12: 2);
27. The *cross* was the world's and earth's estimate of the value of the Son; What is the religion of the earth!!! (Rev. 11:8).

Ed.

## *Elements of Dispensational Truth* *Romans 9-11*

### *Chapter 9.2*

## *Romans 10: Israel's Present Condition and God's Grace*

### *Romans 10:5-13*

#### *The Word of Faith, and Jesus as Lord for Salvation*

(Continued)

**"But What Says It?" (v. 8).** So, one does not think of some work involved such as bring Christ down from heaven, or bringing Him up from the dead. These would be working for salvation. It is the word of faith in the mouth and heart that is needed

**"The Word of Faith" (v. 8)** is in the heart and in the mouth. Of course OT saints had faith, believing what God said. And it is also true that in the OT there were evidences of God's grace as well as truth. But we need to reckon with this great fact:

The law was given by Moses: grace and truth subsists through Jesus Christ (John 1).

This indicates a immense transition point in the ways of God. Grace and truth began to exist as the basis of the ways and operations of God,<sup>1</sup> in contrast to His ways in the OT. In the OT man was under probation. Man had a standing in the flesh, in Adamic, responsible standing under trial to see if fallen man was recoverable. This trial ended at the cross. Thus, the first man is judged and now God has before Him the second man, out of heaven (1 Cor. 15:47).

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1. See the helpful footnote to the word "subsist" in JND's translation of John 1:17.

Just as John 1:17 denotes a change in the ways of God concerning His ways, exactly parallel to this we read:

But, faith having come . . . (Gal. 3:25).

Of course there were persons in the OT times who had faith. But it is *now* that faith has become the revealed ground, the publically-declared ground, upon which God is dealing. It is intimately connected with the grace and truth characterizing the declared operations of God *now*. All this is in particular contrast to law as a principle of the dealings of God with man. And Gal. 3:23 sharply draws that contrast:

But before faith came, we were guarded under law, shut up to faith [which was] about to be revealed.

Believe what God states and you will receive light. Though individuals under the law personally had faith, faith as the basis of the ways of God was not, and could not then have been, introduced -- because the trial of the first man was the great basis of God's ways with man. The cross was the transition point.<sup>2</sup> So *now* it is not "doing," it is not performance for merit, it is not the (lost) first man under trial to see if he is recoverable, but the word of faith in the heart and in the mouth. This especially stands in contrast to the word of the law under which the first man, in the persons of Israel, were placed.

**The Mouth's Confession and the Heart's Belief (vv. 9, 10).** "The word of faith," Paul wrote, "which we preach," involves the mouth's confession and the heart's belief. There has been going on for some time a controversy over what is called "Lordship salvation." One side contends that Jesus may be accepted without owning Him as Lord -- that may come later. The other side says He must be owned as Lord. Well, Rom. 10:9 says "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord." It might be replied, but that is equivalent to Jehovah. It had never occurred to me to think that Jehovah was not to be obeyed until I was told by a non-Lordship salvation advocate that Lord here means Jehovah. But that makes no difference. "Lordship salvation" may have baggage with it that also is not found in Scripture and I would not like to be called an advocate of "Lordship salvation" any more than an advocate of 'Non-Lordship salvation.'

Obedience is connected with the operation of God in the soul of the sinner. See 1 Pet. 1:2, for example. In Rom. 1:4, 5 we read:

(. . . marked out Son of God in power, according to [the] Spirit of holiness, by resurrection of the dead) Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom we have received grace and apostleship in behalf of his name, for obedience of faith among all the nations

...

"Obedience of faith" is connected with "Jesus Christ our Lord." And this sets the

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2. The end of the testing of the first man at the cross is a very important matter to understand.

tone for Romans. Why, Rom. 14 assumes, supposes, that every conscience is governed by what is due the Lord, with room to grow in grace and be better instructed. But I do not wish to labor this matter as those who turn the force of this have systematized Scripture in support of the idea of believing on Jesus as Savior but not necessarily at the same time as Lord, even to the point of making the parable that speaks of one being cast into the outer darkness mean not being cast into eternal punishment, but it means a Christian who misses the kingdom. Be the system as it may, does one do well to read: 'if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Jehovah,' and expect that that removes accepting Him as Lord of my life? – or that Jehovah is not to be obeyed as Lord of the life? What did Peter expect the Jews to believe when he preached to them (Acts 2:36)? See also Acts 16:30, 31. Moreover, in 1 Cor 12:3 we read:

I give you to therefore to know, that no one, speaking in [the power of the] Spirit of God, says, Curse [on] Jesus; and no one can say, Lord Jesus, unless in [the power of the] Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly this is a matter of *what is owned by the heart*. No one can thus say "Lord Jesus" unless in the power of the Holy Spirit. And what does the supposed Christian who has not yet come to the point of acknowledging the Lordship of the Lord Jesus over his life say? I own Jesus, but not the *Lord* Jesus? Is the Holy Spirit dwelling in such a one?

3. Thus the apostle brings in the test of spirits in the confession of Jesus as Lord (v. 3 {of 1 Cor. 12}), "Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed." Here he does not, of course, mean only the precise term "anathema," or "accursed;" but what he has, as I judge, in his mind, is this: whatever lowers Jesus is an impossibility to the Holy Ghost -- a very simple principle, but one which is the only perfect test for all truth in the church of God. The apostle gives it in a double form, a criterion for as well as against. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." If man ventures without the Spirit of God, he becomes a prey to the evil one who seeks to lower Jesus. The Holy Ghost alone knows what is proper to Jesus. And He does not speak of Him merely as the Son of God. The point where error comes in is in the Son of God becoming a man; for it is the complex person of the Lord Jesus that exposes persons to break down fatally. There are those, no doubt, who *deny* His divine glory; but there is a far more subtle way in which the Lord Jesus is lowered, and this is where He is owned to be a man, but where the manhood of the Lord is allowed in some way to swamp His glory, and neutralize the confession of His person. Thus, one is soon perplexed, and lets that which puts Him in association with us here below work so as to falsify what He has in common with God Himself. There is but one simple thing which keeps the soul right as to this, and that is, that we do not venture to pry and never dare to discuss it, fearing to rush in human folly upon such holy ground, and feeling that on such ground as that we are only *worshippers*. Wherever this is forgotten by the soul, it will invariably be found that God is not with it -- that He allows the self-confident one, who of himself ventures to speak of the Lord Jesus, to prove his own folly. It is only by the Holy Ghost that he can know what is revealed about the Lord Jesus. But then we have the double guard: if a man lowers Christ, it is *not* by the Spirit; and if a man truly says that He is Lord, it *is* by the Spirit. Here is the chief test for perpetual use in the church of God (W. Kelly, *The Action of the Holy Spirit in the Assembly*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, p. 13, 14) [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

Now the Lord is the Spirit, but where the Spirit of [the] Lord [is, there is] liberty (2 Cor. 3:17).

If he be a true believer, *the Spirit of the Lord* is indwelling. Paul and his companions did

... not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus Lord (2 Cor. 4:5).

Our blessed portion is:

... but ye have been sanctified, but ye have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:11).

Does a person who does not own the *Lord* Jesus Christ call upon the name of the *Lord* Jesus Christ?

... to the assembly of God which is in Corinth, to [those] sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all that in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours (1 Cor. 1:2).

Do these texts really make room for persons who accept Jesus as savior but not as Lord? If so, 1 Cor. 1:2 omits them and 1 Corinthians is not intended for them.

**The mouth's confession** is first.<sup>4</sup> None reads the heart but God. The mouth's confession may be false, but it is what is placed first. If the mouth confesses what is truly in the heart, the person is saved. The heart's belief in Christ's resurrection includes within it, of course, His death. His resurrection brings in the mighty action of the Spirit of holiness (Rom. 1:4) as well as the action of the glory of the Father in raising Christ from the dead (Rom. 6:4). In Rom. 10:9 it is viewed as God raising Him from among the dead. The belief "in the heart" indicates that it is not mere intellectual assent arrived at by the historical evidences of the resurrection but that the truth of the resurrection is dwelling in the soul.

**"For with [the] heart is believed to righteousness"** should cause us to look at v. 6 again -- "the righteousness of faith." In v. 10 the order is reversed from v. 9: first the heart, then the mouth. No true mouth-confession is made without a prior work of God in the heart. Righteousness is attained through faith.

**With [the] Mouth Confession is made to Salvation.** This confession, as we saw, is the confession of Jesus as Lord. The grace of God operative in the heart enables the saved one to own Him as Lord. Owning Him as Lord is of the essence of this salvation confessed with the mouth. The confession does not say, "Yes, He is my Savior, but I do not own Him as my Lord." What would God think of *that* "confession"? It would be a salvation that does not include Christ's Lordship.

#### WHOSOEVER (vv. 11-13)

**Whosoever -- No Shame (v. 11).** This is an adaptation of Isa. 28:16 and an *application* to the present work of God's grace. We may well be ashamed of our

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4. This is the order in which Moses spoke in Deut. 30:12-14.

past, but that is a different matter. To not be ashamed refers to the confidence that one has in God's salvation, whether in the future millennial period of blessing foreseen by the OT prophets, or now-- which was not foreseen by the OT prophets. The door of blessing is open for Gentiles, and though in the millennium the order of blessing will differ, and the distinction between Jew and Gentile will be in force, *now* there is no difference.

**No Difference (v. 12).** In Rom. 3:22, 23 we saw that there was no difference in that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And here there is no difference in the Lord's richness towards whosoever calls on the name of the Lord. This aspect of the subject is, note carefully, in the present time of God's call by the gospel. In the millennium, the blessed Gentiles will not have the same place as Israel, though they will be saved. The accompaniments of millennial salvation will not be the same for Jew and Gentile then, nor does the blessing of either rise to the place "in Christ" that the saved now have. This present richness is unfathomable and will be eternally displayed (Eph. 2:7) in the assembly (Eph. 3:21).

Note that He is here called the "Lord of all." He is universal Lord and ultimately universal acknowledgment will be secured (Phil. 2:10, 11). He has *bought* everything by His death. We call this the teaching about "purchase," and *purchase* does not mean redemption. He bought, purchased, the evil teachers of 2 Pet. 2:1-3, for example. All belongs to him, not only because He is God, but particularly as man having gone down into the death of the cross, been raised, and made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).

**No exclusion (v. 13).** This quotation is from Joel 2:32. Joel has the millennium in view and Gentiles will call on the name of the Lord. This has a present *application*, not a present fulfillment; the fulfillment is millennial. The OT prophecies have the millennial glory in view. However, it has pleased God to do a present work in connection with the mystery of Christ and the assembly, not foreseen by the prophets (Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:9). Hence in Eph. 1:12 we read of those who have trusted ahead of the millennial time. They have "pre-trusted":

... that we should be to [the] praise of his glory who have pre-trusted in the Christ.

The quotations from the OT prophet, as quoted by Paul, have, let us call it, a pre-application now, not a fulfillment. God is presently acting on the principle of certain things said in the OT, but even so, these things do not constitute the mystery of Christ and the assembly.

## *Romans 10:14-17*

### *The Announcement of Good Tidings*

14 How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear



without one who preaches?

15 and how shall they preach unless they have been sent? according as it is written, How beautiful the feet of them that announce glad tidings of peace, of them that announce glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all obeyed the glad tidings. For Esaias says, Lord, who has believed our report?

17 So faith then [is] by a report, but the report by God's word.

### **CALLING, BELIEVING, HEARING AND LACK OF BELIEF (vv. 14-16)**

Cf. Psalms 14:4, where the wicked do not call on Jehovah. *Now*, they do not call upon Christ. Neither can anyone believe on Christ if they have not heard of Him. It is true that persons have been saved by reading the Word, but that is generally where the gospel has been brought. It is preachers that go and preach Christ to the lost.

Now he takes another ground in which, in exceeding grace, he seeks to provoke them [the Jews] to jealousy. That which shut up the Jews was not merely the rejection of Christ, but the rejection of the Gentiles as His body, refusing grace to the Gentiles. And in the parable of the king who took account of his servants, Matt. 18:23-35, do we not see just this -- the Jew refusing mercy to the Gentile? "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?" As Paul says in 1 Thess. 2:16, "Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved to fill up their sins alway." Christ came carrying all the promises, and they rejected Him. Not merely had they failed in the question of righteousness -- that they had done before -- now they reject the Messiah. Well, now, Christ on the cross prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." That prayer of Christ's was heard as regards God: and so Peter said: "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers," but repent and He will come back again. But before he could finish that sermon the priests came upon him and stopped him: and thus they not only rejected Jesus Christ Himself, but the testimony of the Holy Ghost as to His second coming. And this is what Stephen charged them with: "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye"; and then instead of Christ coming back to them on the earth, Stephen goes up to Christ in heaven.

If you take Christ on earth as man -- though "God, blessed for ever" -- the moment He takes His place as man among men, the Holy Ghost comes and seals Him. The Holy Ghost comes and testifies of that which is on the earth. When He is speaking to Nathanael it is another thing: "Henceforth ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Here it is the Son of man, and angels His servants. In the former case, heaven opened, and the Holy Ghost came down to seal Jesus as the Son of God. In this case, heaven opened and the Son of man is seen here on the earth as the object of all the angels' service. But in the case of Stephen, heaven opened, and the Son of man is seen there. It is not heaven opening to put its seal and stamp on the Son of man here, but to show us the Son of man there. It is not now the heaven opened to look on what is here, but the heaven opened for the Church to look up at what is there. This is the

Church's position now; full of the Holy Ghost to be gazing up into heaven, and having communion with Christ at God's right hand.

This testimony of the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of Stephen, the Jews stopped, casting Stephen out of the city and stoning him, thus bringing final rejection on themselves. Their rejection of grace to the Gentiles we see constantly manifested all through the Acts of the Apostles: see especially Acts 22:21, 22. There Paul is giving an account of his conversion; and when he came to this part of it, "Depart, for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles," we read, "They gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth, it is not fit that he should live." Thus Paul was the minister of grace, but they would not hear of grace, "filling up their sin alway, for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."

This same spirit was manifested in Saul of Tarsus; for where do we first find him? Holding the garments of the men who stoned Stephen, when heaven was opened, showing Christ to the Church and closing grace to the Jew. Then he was stopped on his way to Damascus, and the glory of the Lord was revealed to him. And what did he then see? The unity of the Church. Not merely the Son of man in glory; but in the glory he saw the Lord putting all the saints in union with Himself. Thus the great thing revealed to Paul was this, that the very saints whom he was persecuting were one with this Lord in glory. He was converted by knowing that the saints and the Lord were one. For the Lord owned the persecuted saints as Himself; therefore in persecuting them he was persecuting Him.

Full of this gospel, Paul sets about building the Church. He goes about telling this glorious truth, that believers are one spirit with Jesus; the Church one body in Him, their glorified Head in heaven. This blessed testimony of the union of the saints with the Lord in glory, against which there has ever been war, was thus brought out by Paul. Now, also, the testimony which Isaiah, seven centuries before, had pronounced, found Israel, in Acts, with hearts fat until there was no remedy.

In this 10th of Romans, Paul shows that the gospel did go out unto the ends of the earth, and that Israel ought to have received it. But he touches the subject very gently, saying, "They have not all obeyed the gospel." For their own prophet Isaiah said, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" "So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." It is no use getting on legal ground here; legal righteousness is not *believing a report*.<sup>5</sup>

## FAITH AND GOD'S WORD (V. 17)

This verse touches upon what man's condition is as lost. Many a professed Christian does not know what it means to be lost; hence we sometimes say man is *totally lost*. Our thoughts about this need to be consistent with Rom. 10:17. A helpful article on this verse follows.

## *Hearing And Faith*

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17)

This is God’s order, not man’s. The word “hearing” in this verse is not a verb but a substantive. If we read it as a verb, we lose much of the meaning. We speak of a man who has become deaf as one who has lost his “hearing.”

First then “hearing [cometh] by the word of God.” That is to say, the word of God finds its way into the heart and gives “hearing,” or, in other words, the ability to hear.

Then this “hearing” is the channel for the formation and growth of faith.

Of course this has nothing to do with natural hearing. It applies as much to the naturally deaf as to those whose natural hearing is perfect. It is spiritual hearing, and who can spiritually hear that has no spiritual life? The links of the chain in their order are: the word of God; hearing; faith.

First of all you have a dead soul. The word of God enters the heart and imparts the spiritual hearing; and hearing the word gives rise to faith.

The thought must not be allowed that the word of God is at the first applied to a soul that can already hear; for as we have seen, “hearing cometh by the word of God.” His word is the living seed, which, entering into the heart, brings forth life in that which was before dead.

It is very important to grasp this truth in its simplicity.

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God” (1 Cor. 2:14). What then is the use of preaching the word to those who do not receive it?

This is the question so important to be clear upon. To all human reasoning it would be of no use at all. But in truth it is what God has appointed, this “foolishness of preaching”; sowing the seed, the living and life-giving word, into hearts that are dead. The evangelist does not go forth endeavoring to coax or press the natural minds of the unregenerate into receiving the word of God. He knows that it can never be done so for good. The object before his mind is, by the Spirit, to sow, as it were, the word of God into the hearts of those whom he addresses. Now the word of God is not only seldom but never truly received by the natural heart, for “the carnal mind is enmity against God” (Rom. 8:7). I may call on a friend, who gives me his hand and receives me into his house. On the other hand an officer of the law may call at a criminal’s house, and the criminal resists to his utmost by trying to keep the door shut. Nevertheless as the officer by strength prevails and enters the house, the criminal could not be said to receive the officer into his house. On the contrary, he did what he could to resist the officer.

Now the word of God, though not received by the natural man, finds its way by God’s grace into the heart, reveals Christ, and quickens. The new life is capable of receiving the things of the Spirit of God. Thus “hearing” is the channel for the formation and growth of faith.

Many seem to have the erroneous idea, that the natural heart, before the new birth takes place within it, has faith which it can exercise in hearing the word, the seed of life. In this case faith would not be by hearing, for it would exist before the

hearing; which directly contradicts the truth. According to such a notion faith, at least at its commencement, would be an act of the old Adam nature. It could not well be strained to support the idea that after the new birth faith passes over from the old to the new nature. "The dead hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear live." Faith characterizes those who are born of God, born of water and the Spirit. So it is at the first, and so it continues to the end.

It is interesting to note how the order we have been considering is kept up throughout scripture. It is not the Spirit's motive everywhere to bring before us every link; but we never find Him contradicting Himself by reversing the order. For example, "He that heareth My word and believeth (on) Him that sent Me hath everlasting life etc." (John 5:24). Again, "In Whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth" (Eph. 1:13).

Of course none can hear the word, but they who have God's word applied to their souls by the Holy Spirit. In the two verses just quoted the first link is not given, but the order is as elsewhere, hearing; believing, etc. Indeed we in scripture mostly find the life-giving (and consequently the power to hear) by the word spoken of as a very distinct thing, a passing from death unto life; as John 5:24 says, He that heareth and believeth hath passed from death unto life. He could not hear otherwise.

The recognition of the truth, as conveyed in the words at the head of our paper, enables the evangelist to go forth in simple dependence on God; fully confident, knowing that by the Spirit he handles the one and only means of giving life, namely, the word of God. And on the other hand he is nothing discouraged by outward appearances, knowing that all to whom he is sent are alike dead and devoid of hearing, and that the success of his ministry depends not on those whom he addresses, but on the word as applied by the Spirit. Like his Lord Whose life animates him, he speaks (if we may so say) as one that hath authority and not as the scribes (Matt. 7:29).<sup>6</sup>

## ***Romans 10:18-21***

### ***But Israel Did Not Believe God***

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yea, surely, Their voice has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the extremities of the habitable world.

19 But I say, Has not Israel known? First, Moses says, *I* will provoke you to jealousy through [them that are] not a nation: through a nation without understanding *I* will anger you.

20 But Esaias is very bold, and says, I have been found by those not seeking me; I have become manifest to those not inquiring after me.

21 But unto Israel he says, All the day long I have stretched out my hands unto a people disobeying and opposing.

**THE UNIVERSAL TESTIMONY (v. 18)**

Compare the opening phrases in vv. 18 and 19 and notice that v. 18 ("they") is general while v. 19 is specifically about "Israel." "Their voice" refers to created things. God's eternal power and divinity are spoken in the creation. Certainly many persons deny this but that is merely the expression of where the heart is. Not evolution, but devolution is what is operative; and though that be so, still the design may be observed. Objectors will meet the Creator, but I doubt they will then utter any objections -- just as the man in the parable was "speechless" when asked how it was he had no wedding garment.

Psa. 19 affirms this expression of the glory of God; and v. 4 in particular says, "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their language to the extremity of the world."

This shows that God had in view the Gentiles over the whole earth. None have excuse: "... so as to render them inexcusable." Some Christians work hard to show that there must be exceptions. Likely they do not believe the awful truth that man is totally lost, and that means every individual.

For a time Israel was in a place of -- let us call it -- dispensational nearness, while the peoples were in gross darkness. But God has cast light upon the Gentiles and the gospel has gone out to the world. From the start of His dealings with man He had all in view, though He has His ways of unfolding His purpose to glorify Himself in Christ, in two spheres, the earthly and the heavenly.

**HAS NOT ISRAEL KNOWN? (v. 19)**

From the testimony that went out into all the world through created things we turn to consider Israel who had added light from God. Rom. 3:1, 2 shows the advantage they had. And what did the old Israel, Israel in the flesh, Israel under testing, do? Why, in test after test, by law, priesthood, judges, kings, prophets, etc., it was failure upon failure. It was "the first man" (1 Cor. 15:47), in the persons of Israel, that was under trial to see if lost man was recoverable. And what was the result of this?

... but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:24).

Thus, He was crucified, cast out, and consequently the gospel has gone out to all and the truth of the mystery of Christ and the church has been unfolded. God is gathering a heavenly people now and when that work is complete, He will begin again with Israel, though upon a new basis, to have a new Israel under Messiah when He reigns before His ancients in glory. Ed.

## *The Seven Churches*

### *Chapter 1*

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(Continued)

#### *Section 2: Rev. 1:4-5a: Greetings to the Seven Assemblies*

(1:4) John to the seven assemblies which [are] in Asia: Grace to you and peace from [him] who is, and who was, and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits which [are] before his throne; (1:5a) and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.

#### **JOHN TO THE SEVEN ASSEMBLIES WHICH ARE IN ASIA (1:4)**

Why was this book not written to a single assembly, as many epistles of Scripture are written? Or, why not to the assemblies in a province as in Galatians? Or, why not such an address as in 1 Cor. 1:2, to Corinth and to all everywhere that call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ? Is not the address rather in keeping with the prophetic character of this book and does it not have in view the ruin of the church on earth seen in responsible testimony? In point of fact, it is to the whole church on earth, as we see if we understand that the selection of these seven particular churches, out of many others, has a mystery character, as indicated in Rev. 1:20. Prophecy is occasioned by a ruin of what God has set up. The book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ is a standing witness to the ruin which had set in previously, indeed, while Paul was still alive. But we may have church-theories which get in the way of seeing these things.

Next we will consider in some detail three notices of what is divine. The order is (1) the Eternal; (2) acting in the completeness and variety of the Spirit's actions; and (3) acting in that way in Jesus Christ. This accounts for the order.

#### **GRACE TO YOU AND PEACE (1:4)**

Mercy is not included for that is for the individual, as we may see in the introduction in epistles to individuals. Grace and peace are needed to prepare us for a book of God's judgments. Grace is needed when, for example, we have an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. We then need grace to act in accordance with, say, 2 Tim. 2:19-23, as well as other directions. We need grace to judge ourselves, to judge the flesh first in ourselves, and then where we see the flesh manifesting itself.

As another example, while it is true that the Babylon of Rev. 17, 18 is not yet

formed, its working is already present, as the mystery of iniquity is already working (2 Thess. 2:7). In Rev. 18:4 we read:

Come out of her, my people . . .

That system will be composed of the apostates of Christendom and in that day none of God's people will be in that system. The call to come out is applicable now, wherever principles of that system operate now. This is an example of the bearing of prophecy on the behavior of those who profess allegiance to Christ. They need to be separate from what God is going to judge. And so we need grace to be here for Christ's honor. *Peace* is based on the separation from evil to which grace leads. Lack of peace is often the result of the Lord's people not walking in intelligent separation from evil, unto Himself.

### (1) FROM [HIM] WHO IS, AND WHO WAS, AND WHO IS TO COME (1:4)

This is the first of the three-fold source of the "grace to you and peace" directed to the seven churches. *Mercy* is not included because mercy is directed to individuals, having in view personal needs and circumstances, not to assemblies. In Revelation "grace to you and peace" does not come to them from the Father. "Father" is found in Rev. 1:6, 2:27, 3:5, 21, and Rev. 14:1, but in relationship to Christ. Grace and peace comes to them, not from the God of ages, not from God the Father, but from God the Eternal. It is God in essential being.

But it was of all importance to them that He was that God who is the *ehyeh asher ehyeh*, "I am that I am," God ever existing, subsisting in Himself and creating all else. And this is one great truth of what I may call the translation of the name in the Apocalypse; not "who was, and is, and is to come," but "who is" (*o on*), "who was" the God known of old, the promiser withal, and who is the "coming one" *o erchomenos*, when He will be Ancient of days, and Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, and His name known (even that Jehovah, and Jehovah alone, is so) over all the earth.<sup>7</sup>

*Who is* denotes the immutability and eternality of God. It is the great Jehovah, "I am that I am" (Ex. 3:14). From eternity to eternity He is Elohim, the Supreme, the uncaused cause. In John's Gospel we see that the Lord Jesus is "I am." First, then, there is necessarily the statement of the ever subsisting eternity of personal being. Then we are told of Him as *Who was*, and *Who is to come*, which is His relation to time as the sphere of manifestation of His glory, as having to do with others. It has in view His glory manifested in Christ, through the Spirit -- Who is next noted, before we come to "from Jesus Christ." We must ever be mindful of the fact that the Father is Jehovah, the Son is Jehovah, and the Spirit is Jehovah, the Elohim (plural, is three or more in Hebrew), the Supreme, and not suppose that here we have Jehovah to the exclusion of the Spirit and Jesus Christ. The way these things

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7. *Collected Writings* 29:83. See also *Letters of J. N. Derby* 3:405; *Notes and Comments* 1:205; 3:151. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

are stated in Rev. 1 is in keeping with the character of the book.

In Rev. 4:8 the order of the expression we are meditating on is different. It is the One on the throne who had acted in times past, and the One who is -- the Eternal, and the One who is to come. Indeed, He was about to come.

In Rev. 11:18 the words "who is to come" are dropped because with the introduction of the kingdom the One "who is to come" *has come*. In a footnote to Rev. 1:4 in J. N. Darby's translation we read:

It is not 'about to come,' for the *act* of the lord's coming is not immediately before the mind. I will not say there is no allusion to the future awaited exercise of divine power; for in Daniel, not only is the Son of man brought before the Ancient of days, but the Ancient of days comes . . .

## **(2) SEVEN SPIRITS WHICH [ARE] BEFORE HIS THRONE (1:4)**

We speak of the Spirit of God when thinking of the distinction of Person in the Godhead. Particularly in connection with the church, He is the "one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4). The symbol of the seven Spirits of God brings before us a certain variety and completeness of operations concerning the governmental ways of God in connection with those things found in this book of Revelation of Jesus Christ. The Spirit of God is brought before us as the seven Spirits four times in the Revelation. In Rev. 1:4 we see the seven Spirits before the throne of the Eternal, and we may understand this in the most general way, while subsequently this symbol of the Spirit of God is three times seen in a particular connection. In each of these three latter connections the words "the seven Spirits of God" are used, which is not the case in Rev. 4:1.

(1) In Rev. 3:1 "the seven Spirits of God" are associated with the seven stars as in the hand of Him Who examined the state of Sardis. There was a grave lack in Sardis' appreciation of the Spirit in this character as expressing the government of God in the completeness and variety of His ways in the assembly. His rightful place was not owned in Sardis.

(2) In Rev. 4:5 the seven lamps of fire, burning before the throne, are "the seven Spirits of God." This shows us the holiness of the throne in searching judgment. But who has the moral fitness to open the seven-sealed book of God's judgments? Who has moral fitness to deal with what the lamps of fire before the throne expose as contrary to the holiness of that throne? Praise God, there is One Who has overcome so as to open the book, and its seven seals.

(3) In Rev. 5:6 the Lamb, with the marks of what He passed through for God's glory, *standing* in resurrection triumph, has "seven horns and seven eyes, which



are the seven Spirits of God [which are] sent into all the earth.”<sup>8</sup> The seven horns and seven eyes are symbolic of the fulness of the Lamb’s power (seven horns -- omnipotence) and omniscience (seven eyes), and these shall be wielded in all the variety and completeness of the activity of the Spirit for God’s ways in government in the earth. It is the seven Spirits of God that were previously seen as the lamps of fire before the throne. When the Lord Jesus was here, every word, work and way was expressed in the power of the Spirit of God. There is no basis for expecting that in His activities described in the Revelation this should be different. Indeed, there is a character to His words and works in the Revelation that calls for this description of the Spirit in connection with those words and works.

In Isa. 11:2 we see that the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon a “shoot out of the stock of Jesse.” The Spirit is there described in seven characters or aspects. Since there are those who, seemingly not liking the connection with Isa. 11:2, are only able to count six characters, let us count them:

1. and the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him,
2. the spirit of wisdom
3. and understanding,
4. the spirit of counsel
5. and might,
6. the spirit of knowledge
7. and the fear of Jehovah.

God’s Word is marvelously constructed. If you want only six, you can eliminate #1. Now, why would one want to do that, unless he is a theologian, exegete, or expositor that has a problem with the meaning of the seven Spirits? But it is plain that seven things *rest* on the shoot out of the stock of Jesse, though the word *rest* is used only expressly of the Spirit of Jehovah. That shoot out of the stock of Jesse is indeed Jehovah Himself.

The Lamb in His omnipotence and omniscience is endowed with the Spirit thus described. But language fails to describe what is infinite in character.

In Rev. 1:4, the greeting also proceeds from the seven Spirits which are before the throne of the Eternal. We Christians know that the Eternal is three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. They three are one God, co-equal in

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8. In Rev. 4:5 and 5:6, we see the contradiction of a “rule of interpretation” that some have made. It has been said that a symbol may not mean another symbol. But that is exactly what we do have here. If you insist on that false “rule” you will have to conclude that seven literal spirits are meant. This leads to the absurdity of putting seven created beings in between “Him who is” and Jesus Christ in Rev. 1:4, 5. And then you must make the Lamb’s seven horns and eyes mean seven created beings -- as expressive of his omnipotence and omniscience -- another absurdity; and for what? -- to maintain some human rule of interpretation.

power and knowledge, one in will and in purpose, but distinct in Persons. And while They three always act in unity, yet They act in accordance with the distinction of Person in the display of that unity so blessedly revealed in the NT.

Now, it would be an evil thing to suppose that there are actually seven distinct Spirits of God, as if God were nine Persons. And just here we may well bring to bear what was said above concerning the words "he signified it." What is *signified* in the seven Spirits which are before the throne of the Eternal? It is as we have it in Isa. 11:2. We are not now reading in the epistles where we read of one body and one Spirit. The Spirit is presented here according to office in connection with His actings in governmental fulness and variety. Here in Revelation the seven Spirits of God brings before us the Spirit of God in connection with judgment in its variety -- the seven signifying its complete character. The number seven is one of the characteristic numbers in the Revelation and signifies some kind of completeness, whatever variety may be involved. In connection with the judgments, which are quite varied in form, we notably see seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls of God's wrath. Let us be sure that we understand that the divine Persons act in absolute unity whatever variety of action might be displayed. And variety of action of the Spirit of God is signified by the "seven Spirits of God which [are] before his throne." Moreover, the seven Spirits is a symbol that has in view the setting up of the throne of Christ through the variegated and complete judgments preceding its establishment. The seven Spirits, then, do not have to do with membership in one body or Christian standing but speaks of fulness and completeness governmentally of the Spirit by Whom God judges.

Some writers draw attention to Zech. 4 in connection with our subject of the seven spirits, as others connect Zech. 4 with the two witnesses. Well, it is true that Zech. 4:6 brings in the Spirit of Jehovah; and no doubt the Spirit of Jehovah is meant by the oil in the bowl that is at the top of the seven-branched candlestick. It appears that there are seven pipes from the bowl of oil to each of the seven lamps upon the lampstand -- making 49 pipes in all. There were also two olive plants, one on the right and one on the left of the lampstand. A pipe from each olive plant feeds oil into the bowl at the top of the lampstand. In Zech. 4:14 they are called the two sons of oil, and some have supposed that these represent the two witnesses of Rev. 11. I think this is a mistake, in spite of some similarity in wording of Zech. 4:14 and Rev. 11:4. Zech. 4 does not picture something in the great tribulation during which the two witness render their Moses-like and Elijah-like testimony. Rather, the two sons of oil symbolize what is explicated in Zech. 6:13, where we see that Christ will be a priest upon His throne. They symbolize

Christ's two millennial offices: kingship and priesthood.<sup>9</sup> The golden seven-branched lampstand is Christ in millennial glory, shedding light amidst Israel. It is divine light in millennial glory, in fulness and completeness of variety of expression (seven lamps fed by 7 x 7 pipes from the bowl) displayed, sustained by the Spirit (v. 6, symbolized by the oil) energizing the light of Christ in the royal and priestly offices. The light fed by the 7 x 7 pipes through which the oil flows speaks to us of the plentitude, fulness, and variety of the Spirit's power in the display of this light from Christ in millennial glory. Seven times seven in glory is not the same as "seven" in completeness of government.

The two olive plants are the source of the oil which feeds into the bowl. They are both called olive branches (v. 12 -- fruitfulness and testimony) and sons of oil. Sonship in Scripture indicates status and dignity of position; and so these speak of the excellence of the dignity of expression, in the energy of the Spirit, of the two offices of Christ. So it is through these two offices that the light shines in all its variety and perfection.

In Revelation the seven Spirits of God speak of something having to do with judgment.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

## *The Woman's Place and Service According to God's Word - Part 2*

Having written in Part 1 of the woman's sphere and place in God's economy on a positive note for good, I thought it might be a profitable warning to see the darker side of the picture where women have been used by the Arch-enemy for evil. Thankfully the examples are few, compared with those recorded for good, and God delights to record what answers to His will and order in creation.

It may surprise my reader that some of the references to evil actions are on the part of those marked out as children of faith. But we must be aware that having still the fallen nature in us until the grave or the rapture, we are capable of the same

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9. It is also a mistake to think that Christ is exercising His Melchisedec priesthood now. Not so. Christ's present priesthood is carried on in the heavenly sanctuary for those who have the heavenly calling. There, the assembly can go in for worship (Heb. 10:19-32), where He is minister (Heb. 8:2) and sings in the midst (Heb. 2:12). His Melchisedec priesthood will be exercised in the millennium in connection with an earthly people, when the sons of Zadok, offspring of the faithful warrior priest, Phinehas, will minister before Jehovah. Though sons of Aaron, they are under a new order of priesthood, the Melchizedec, founded on the finished work on the cross. The finished work, and resurrection of Christ, from which the Melchizedec priesthood is derived, shows that the sacrifices will be memorial.

actions as the unregenerate but with more serious implications (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1) because the Foe uses it to cause reproach on Christ (2 Sam. 12:14).

1. We start with the originator of it all, i.e., Eve. What moved her to the sinful partaking? Apparently, though not directly stated, some heart murmur was present to induce her to listen to suggestive doubts as to God's perfect goodness in freely giving of all provision except one tree. The lie hidden, soon receives acceptance of the bait held out of being as gods knowing good and evil (the very same lie that permeates the cults such as Mormonism, of becoming gods). Secondly she acts in the first instant without reference to her God-given head and gives to him likewise. The independence from God's will causes independence from man, the head and involving him in her weakness (by not taking his responsible place) in eating with her (Gen 3:1-7). The Divine comment upon the affair is that "... the woman being deceived was in transgression." How comforting is the word of assurance in recovery when mutual continuance in faith, love, holiness and sobriety takes place, (1 Tim. 2:14, 15). These closing remarks arise out of the command that a woman not teach a man or usurp authority over him, but be marked by a quiet and meek spirit. We live in a world where this healthy instruction is despised, ignored or considered out of date.

2. Of all breakdowns we have none less than Sarah, the mother of the elect Isaac (Gen. 16:1-5). Impatient as to God's timing, she suggests a fleshly course to fulfill the promise and gets not an Isaac, but despising by Hagar and an Ishmael, the enemy of the Seed of promise, Isaac (Gen. 21:9), even as today's news shows in the Arab-Israel world. God overrules in this fleshly course and declares blessing on Ishmael, too (Gen. 17:18, 20).

3. In Rebekah, Isaac's wife, we have a much more serious deviation from the conduct of faith when she resorts to deceit herself and instills the same into her favorite son Jacob (Gen. 27) in order to bring about the promise of Jehovah, "the elder shall serve the younger" by fleshly means with dire governmental consequences. The mother and favored son, Jacob, never saw each other again following Jacob's "few days" departure as she thought. This speaks serious warning to us to consider the holiness of God our Father, "Who without respect of persons (in contrast to these parents) judgeth according to every man's work . . ." (1 Pet. 1:17).

4. Rachel, the favored wife of the two sisters, seeing her barrenness and Leah's fruitfulness, begins to envy her sister and comes to reproach Jacob for her condition, indirectly blaming God (Gen. 30:1) "Give me children else I die." Jacob's anger is rightly kindled at the castigation. Thus a feud arises. God eventually gave her two sons, Joseph and Benjamin, but she forfeits her life in the birth of the second (Gen. 35:16-20). Is there a connection between her death in childbearing and her complaint saying "else I die" if she have no children?

5. We have spoken of Miriam in a good setting in Ex. 15 where praise issued from her with the women in rejoicing. We would not forget her love-oversight of her baby

brother, Moses, when committed to the ark of bulrushes and its wonderful result in God's providence in giving Moses right back to his mother to care for until of age. But as we're looking at the darker side of the lessons of Scripture, we have in Num. 12:1-15 a sad state of affairs on the part of Miriam with her brother Aaron in the murmuring against the meek Moses, her younger brother. A position was wanted that was not given to her by Jehovah, and Moses' marriage to a stranger to Israel is used as grounds for complaint! How often do we find an excuse in the failure of another for a hidden cause of discontent. The Lord's dealings with it was severe as she became a temporary leper (7 days) but prayed for by a spiritual brother for healing (vv. 9-13). What grace to emulate when falsely charged or envied. We have not to defend ourselves, but have our case in the hand of the Lord, as David when being cursed and stoned by Shimei in the day of his affliction and flight for life (2 Sam. 16:5-12). So too, dear lame Mephibosheth in the deception and slander of Ziba (2 Sam. 19:24-30). Our true David will not judge by the hearing of His ear, nor sight, but righteous judgement (Isa. 11:3, John 7:24, 1 Cor. 4:5).

6. In our present subject, Judg. 17:1-13, we have no redeeming result but a solemn picture of covetousness on the part of a woman - mother and her son Micah over money stolen and recovered about which she had cursed in her own son's ears. What a sad illustration of the bad influence of a parent on their offspring as in this case. No wonder we have the seedling cause of Israel's final departure from Jehovah -- idolatry. A mother (unnamed) covets, her son follows her example. What kind of influence do we exert on our children - for good or evil? Timothy was influenced by the faith of grandmother and mother (2 Tim. 1:45). Covetousness is labeled "idolatry" in God's estimation and we do well to judge it and flee from it (Col. 3:5 and 1 Tim. 6:10-11). It is the basic cause of corruption in the world (2 Pet. 1:4).

7. I include a less-known woman next, King Saul's younger daughter of whom it states, she loved David and was therefore used as a snare by her father for David's destruction (1 Sam. 18:20-27). That her love was genuine, there is no doubt, and she shows this by saving his life later from the hand of her murderous father, possibly risking her own life in the courageous act. (1 Sam. 19:11-17). But her love for David being natural, not of Divine impulse, as Jonathan her brother's was, she allows herself to be pawned off to another suitor (1 Sam. 25:44). Later on, in David's righteous demand of her return in the day of his triumph, she shows her real heart in despising David when he danced before the Lord on the ark's entry into Jerusalem (2 Sam. 3:12-16 and 6:14-16, 20-23). In God's government, she dies childless -- a special reproach for an Israelitess (see Luke 1:24, 25). God is a jealous God and His glory will He not give to another, though they be a king's daughter and famous among men (cf. Isa. 42:8 and 1 Cor. 10:21, 22). We belong to One Who deserves our undivided allegiance. He is worthy Who died that we might live to God now known as Abba-father (Gal. 4:4-7). Natural relationships are to be respected as of God, whether man or woman, husband or wife, father, mother, children, brothers and sisters, but they must always be kept in their place in relation to the higher claims of Christ (Mat. 12:46-50). [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

8. We now come to the wickedest of women (though many imitators down through the centuries such as Catherine de Medici, queen of France, 16th Century and modern times a madame Koch of Buckenwald) even Jezebel of Ethbaal Zidonian Gentile king. It says of her as the wife of wicked Ahab that she stirred up his heart to do evil in worshiping gods and murdering just persons as Naboth, whose portion Ahab coveted. Of him it says he sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel, his wife stirred up. (1 Kings 21:25). What a comment on the power of a woman over a man for good or evil this scripture is! And how we should take heed of natural influences of closest ties of nature or bonds as marriage. Only by having the Lord-God governing our hearts are we kept safe. We are vulnerable otherwise and the Enemy knows how to stumble us by legitimate things of responsibilities and relationships as of God's establishments.

9. Sadly this evil record goes on by a daughter of this wicked king and queen. Her name is Athaliah, wife of Jehoram, king of Judah. This unholy union came about through mixed marriage of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, kings of Israel and Judah against God's order of separation from evil – holy from unholy (2 Chron. 18:1 with 21:6). She walked after the pattern of her mother, Jezebel. When king Jehu's judgment of God fell on all the seed royal of Ahab's house and followed through to the princes royal of Judah, wicked Athaliah murdered all her own seed (a Satanic device to obstruct God's coming Messiah) but good princess Jehoshabeath hides her youngest baby brother Joash and seven years later he is proclaimed king by the good priest Jehoiada, her husband (2 Chron. 22:8-23;1-15). It is to be noted that God's displeasure of this unholy alliance is seen in three generations struck out in the genealogical register of Matt. 1:8 "Joram begat Ozias" -- three kings left out in between (cp. 1 Chron. 3:11, 12). Thus Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah are stricken off the list. It is a serious transgression to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, bearing serious consequences now and for eternity (2 Cor. 6:14-18). Jehoshaphat was a good king who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord except in this one thing -- an unholy union -- and paid the high price. It was no doubt for political advantage or economic, as twice he so acted. God blew on both unions. Let us take warning (see 2 Chron. 18:1-3 and 20:35-37).

10. Coming into the New Testament we again have a mother and daughter relationship acting together in the death of a righteous man, John the Baptist. Herodias had a vengeance against John for his faithful rebuke of her unlawful marriage to her brother-in-law. It took the right occasion for her hatred to find opportunity and her graceful daughter's dancing so pleased Herod that the evil heart seizes the offer of Herod to her daughter, to get rid of John. How awful the bad influence of a mother comes through in a willing tool to carry out the design (Mark. 6:14-29).

11. Perhaps sadder by far is this present example because it involves those who profess the name of Christ, i.e. a husband and wife, Ananias and Sapphira. Wishing to be thought generous in giving like Barnabas (Acts 4:36, 37), they made pretense

of a sale of land, but secretly kept back part of it for themselves (Acts 5:1-11). It was an act of hypocrisy perhaps linked with covetousness, pretending to be what they weren't. The governmental judgement of death (a sin unto death) fell on both of them. This raises no necessary question as to their eternal standing. True believers are capable of the worst of sins, if the fallen nature is yielded to, as David, the incestuous brother of 1 Cor. 5, and those ill, weak and dying in 1 Cor. 11. Had Sapphira been faithful toward her husband, the serious results may have been averted. We cannot plead relationships marital, parental or filial, as an excuse to do evil. Each one must give account of himself in the day of reckoning (Rom. 14:12). Our best function in our several relationships of man-woman, husband-wife, father-mother-children, fraternal, master-servant, ruler-subject, will be in accord to our being subject to Him first in our life commitments (1 Cor. 11:3, 15:28, Eph. 5:21-24). Note that subjection in these scripture references gives Christ as the supreme pattern Who as man restored that order in His own Person as the God-Man incarnate, a marvelous, adorable mystery calling forth our eternal praise, worship and thanksgiving!

When He in flesh the desert trod,  
He loved to do Thy will;  
His bosom glowed, His feet well shod  
Thy pleasure to fulfill.  
As in His life, so in His death  
He was devoted still;  
For us in love resigned His breath  
Obedient to Thy will.

L. F. Hymnbook No. 200, vv.2, 4 (1928).

T. J. Knapp

## *The purpose of God About Us*

You see, it is a wonderful thing to think of, what the purpose of God is about it; and this is where the deficiency is in every one of our souls. The thought of God is to have a people on this earth walking in the steps of His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the heavens. That is His thought, His present thought about His people; and if you and I, have not in our souls the sense of that, that God is seeking to have a people upon this earth, in their feeble measure the reflection of His own Son in the heavens, how can we have that communion with God which apprehends His things? If the thought of God be to have a heavenly people upon this earth, in the life of His Son, you cannot go on with this world; and if this be *not* God's thought, what is? If God be seeking to have a heavenly people, a people in their practices, and ways, and walk, and character, and relationships, heavenly, if that *be* His thought, then we cannot possibly go on with the world. I do violence at once to the purpose of God if I do.

If we mean to go on with the world, I think it would be far more honest if we said, "No, God has *not* such a thought in His mind at all. His purpose is to have a people here to enjoy the world as much as they can; that is His purpose." I think it is a great deal better

that we should be honest with our hearts and consciences. There is nothing God hates and detests so much as unreality. The great thing that He is looking for in His people is *reality*, and not to be trifling with conscience about these things. Better for you to give a denial to the fact, and say, "God has no such purpose; Christ did *not* go up to heaven to form a people like Himself, and the Holy Ghost did *not* come down to keep a people like Christ." It is better to say so at once, and then go hard and fast with the world. There is nothing so miserable and detestable as a sort of truckling with this wretched, polluted world, taking just as much of Christianity as you think will suit you. This is exactly what people are doing.

*Collected Writings of W. T. Turpin, p. 145.*

## *Brief Notes Concerning the Burnt-offering*

The burnt-offering (Lev. 1) is the first of the five offerings in Lev. 1-5. Their order is connected with God coming out to man, so what is highest is given first. It is Christ in His unspeakable giving Himself in death for the glory of God, "delivering himself up for us, an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. 5:2). The sin and trespass offerings are not said to be "of a sweet odour"; only the first three are -- though the fat of the sin-offering made a sweet odour to Jehovah, for that bespeaks the excellency of Christ.

While what answers to the meal-offering is found in all four Gospels, the other four offerings answer to the four Gospels in the inverse order. In the first two Gospels there is the cry of abandonment, and the first two gospels bring before us the trespass-offering (Lev. 5) and the sin-offering (Lev. 4). The peace-offering (Lev. 3) is seen in Luke (cp. Luke 15, feasting on the fatted calf). In John we have the burnt-offering:

... the cup which the Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it? (John 18:11).

I have glorified *thee* on the earth, I have completed the work which thou gavest me that I should do it (John 17:5).

As we saw the burnt offering in Eph. 5:2 (the epistle in which we have the largest unfolding of the purpose of God to glorify Himself in Christ), let us make one more connection. In Eph. 1:6 we learn that:

... he has taken us into favour in the Beloved ...

It is in such a One that we enter into favor -- "in the Beloved." Can you measure that? No. Never. Only the infinite One knows the measure of it. It is altogether stunning! Christ's place is our place. Our little cup is lost in the greatness of it, immersed in it, as it fills us and overflows us. And of the burnt-offering it is said:

... and it shall be accepted for him to make an atonement for him (Lev. 1:4).

Praise God! Christ is accepted for us, not according to our valuation of the sacrifice, but according to God's valuation. It is Christ giving Himself to God, in death, **for**



*the glory of God*, but in that there is the ground, the basis, for all God's actings in grace. This offering gave its name to the altar, called *the altar of burnt-offering*. Does that not suggest to us that the burnt-offering is the basis for God's actings? The Lord Jesus has rendered Himself up as a satisfaction to God for the outrage of sin against His nature and majesty, and satisfied Him, apart from the matter of a sinner's salvation. The Lord Jesus has glorified God! This is the most important thing.

The Jewish worship in the OT was for an earthly people who stood in covenant relationship under the law, and had a standing in Adamic responsibility. The law made no distinction between who was a child of God and who was not. The vail was unrent in the tabernacle and Aaron entered once a year to present the blood and the cloud of the incense before the mercy-seat and the cloud, the Shekinah, on the mercy-seat.

Now the vail is rent by the blood of Christ and we have direct access, to which subject we shall return below. Here, let us note that the new Israel, under the new covenant, will be a saved people (Rom. 11:26). There will be a new order of priesthood, the Melchisedek order, and under this order the sons of Zadok will be in the chief place (Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11), offspring of the faithful warrior-priest, Phinehas, who was jealous with Jehovah's jealousy (Num. 25:11-13). In the millennium the sacrifices of Ezek. 40-48 are necessarily memorial, under the high-priesthood of Him who is priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13), whose priesthood is based on a once-for-all finished work (Heb. 7:16, 17). Still, it is an earthly order, though it is immensely greater than what the old Israel had under the old covenant. The millennial temple will not have a vail. How could it? The vail was rent by God Himself. But Israel will still be an earthly people, yes, a saved people, and there is an order of worship suitable for those in such a position. But there will still be a representative priesthood. Moreover, it should be observed that the millennial temple will have two-leaved doors (Ezek. 41: 23-25). Surely this denotes a much greater access than when under the old covenant, but it also shows how much greater is the access that we believers have now. And we have it under no covenant.

There is now also an order of worship, which certainly is not like that of old Israel under the old covenant. Why do Christians import parts, more or less, of that system into Christianity? Yes, that is a question to be answered in the light of God's present work, during the time of the interposed heavenly calling into Israel's earthly calling.

Christians have no representative priesthood because they all are priests (1 Pet. 2:5, 9) and function under the present heavenly priesthood of Christ. It is important for Christians to know where Christian worship takes place. We do not find in Scripture that we have an earthly place for worship. We worship, in spirit, in heaven. We have:

boldness for entering into the [holy of] holies by the blood of Jesus, the new and living way which he has dedicated for us through the vail, that is, his flesh, and

[having] a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart  
... (Heb. 19-21).

It is there, above, where He is, that the true worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24) is rendered; where He is "minister of the holy places and of the true tabernacle . . . (Heb. 8:2); where "in the midst of [the] assembly will I sing thy praises" (Heb. 2:12). There are no horses in heaven (Rev. 19 is symbolic) and no musical instruments either, suitable for an earthly people's worship, in heaven. Just think of musical instruments to help the worship of the 24 elders in heaven (Rev. 5). Just think of music to get them in the mood for worship. Just think of them hearing a "sermon" that is called worship. Why, the sight of the Lamb as it had been slain set the vaults of heaven ringing with the worship of the Lamb, whose blood had redeemed them. It is *that* One who is the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2). It is not stated that He rendered a propitiatory sacrifice (I do not doubt that He did) but that *He is the propitiation*. This signifies His person as imparting His glory and worth to the work! The work's glory and value is commensurate with that of His person.

The OT promises to Israel will be fulfilled in the millennium, as long as the sun and moon shine, but not longer. We have reviewed this subject before. In the eternal state the church will have a distinctive place (Eph. 3:21). Indeed, the church will already have entered its state in glory at the rapture. "The tabernacle of God," i.e., the "new Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:2-4), is distinguished from "men" (not from Israel). Rev. 21:9, 10 shows conclusively that the new Jerusalem is the bride (it is two different symbols used), and this connects with Eph. 3:21. It is not really in Scripture that Israel shall have an eternally distinct place and will be producing offspring eternally! But the church will have an eternally distinct place. As for us, "his servants shall serve him" (Rev. 21:3); no doubt in the service of eternal worship. It is the sacrifice of praise. And while the fire that burns the burnt-offering shall cease, my soul sees something in "the law of the burnt-offering" (Lev. 6:9):

A continual fire shall be kept burning on the altar; it shall never go out (Lev. 6:13).

Can we not see something in this that transcends time and space? Yes, the physical fire will end, but the presentation of Christ to God, for His smelling a sweet odour -- shall that really end? Yes, the new Jerusalem is symbolic, but it is eternal. Moreover:

And I saw no temple in it; for the Lord God Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb (Rev. 21:22).

This is our eternal portion. What bearing do the things we have been considering have on our souls, and on our practice, now?

Ed.

See J. L. Harris, *Jewish Bondage and Christian Freedom*, available from the publisher.

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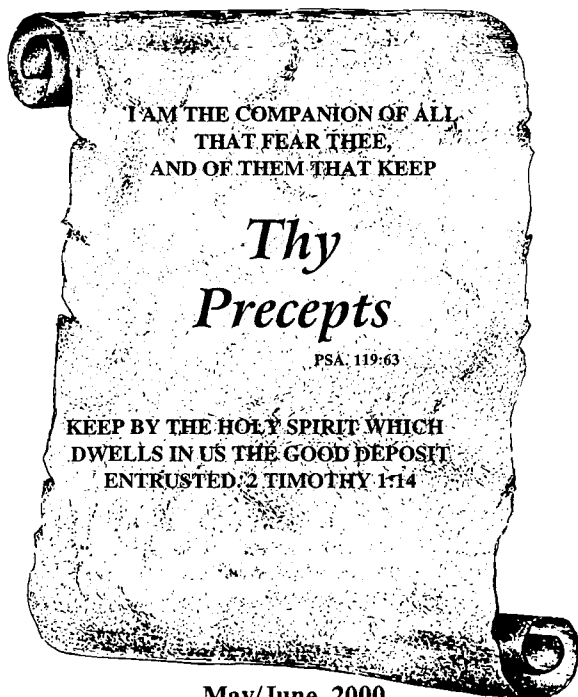
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## *Thy Precepts*

PSA. 119:63

KEEP BY THE HOLY SPIRIT WHICH  
DWELLS IN US THE GOOD DEPOSIT  
ENTRUSTED. 2 TIMOTHY 1:14

May/June 2000  
Vol. 15, #3

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## *Elements of Dispensational Truth* *Full Preterism*

### *Chapter 8.4*

#### *The Leaven of Full Preterism*

*(Chapter 8.4 continued)*

#### *The Resurrection Body*

##### **CHRIST'S RESURRECTION BODY**

**Was There a Transmutation of Christ's Physical Body Into a "Spiritual Body" so that It was not Physical Any Longer?** The full Preterist view, Hymenaeus-like, has spread its gangrene. The teaching of full Preterism is that the believer's body stays in the grave at death but at death he receives a spiritual body and is in heaven with it. It is clear from this that "resurrection" is not the resurrection of the Christian's body. Since, obviously, Scripture links the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the believer, the fundamentally evil, Hymenean doctrine of the resurrection spreads its gangrene to the truth of Christ's resurrection body. The problem of doing this involves the fact that the Lord's body saw no corruption (Acts 2:27, 31; 13:35, 37). As the empty tomb proclaimed, it was not left in the grave. I suppose a full Preterist feels obliged to invoke some kind of spiritual alchemy to transmute the physical into something non-physical, placing a meaning on "there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44) to include his evilly-conceived spiritual alchemization of Christ's physical body to transmute it into a non-physical body (withal twisting the meaning of "spiritual body" in 1 Cor. 15). And this must have happened at the instant of the resurrection in such a way that Christ never actually rose in a physical body. When the Lord said to His disciples:

... behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as ye see me having. And having said this he

showed them his hands and his feet (Luke 24:39, 40).

That certainly is physical; and this was stated to show them that he was not a spirit that they thought they were able to see. Was He just deceiving them? The point the Lord was making here is precisely that His body was material, not spiritual in an ethereal sense. It was concrete; it was His very own body that He took again in resurrection. It was flesh and it was bones. If He had meant that His body was a material body, how should he have said so? That His body had new qualities does not change the fact of its materiality. A "spiritual body" is a material body in a glorified state.

Further doubt was dispelled by His act of eating, a thing not necessary for sustenance in the resurrection state, but to assure them of His physicality. Note also how consistent with the perfection of Scripture that this act of eating is recorded in the gospel that brings before us, as a leading feature of it, the perfection of our Lord's manhood (Luke). That He did eat with the disciples is affirmed in Acts 10:41.

The truth is that the Lord's resurrection body was the same physical body but in a new state. It was *not* non-physical. There is corporeal identity of body, but in a new state. The modern Hymenaen doctrine of Christ's resurrection body involves shuffling and shifting (and contortions like some modernists, rationalists, and higher critics who deny a physical resurrection of Christ). What the full preterists do in this shuffling is to say that (since AD 70):

1. the believer's body remains forever in the grave but that he receives a "spiritual body" (Hymenaen-defined) like Christ's;
2. and yet Christ's body did not remain in the grave, and He received a "spiritual body."

Look at that combination carefully and perceive their problem of what to do about Christ's body. What they want is an immaterial body in both the case of Christ and the believer. Ed. Stevens' discussion is replete with the words "*mere* physical body" when the fact is that he implicitly denies that the believer has *any* physical body in resurrection glory and that our body in resurrection will be like Christ's:

All of us agree that we cannot live in God's presence with a mere physical body.<sup>1</sup>

Is the *mere* physical body the issue? No. He implicitly denies *any* physical body at all. Since the AD 70 resurrection, resurrection is now an ongoing process at each believer's death, and:

The inner man rises into God's presence with a new kind of body after the outer

---

1. Stevens Response to Gentry, Bradford: Kingdom Publications, p. 24, 1997.  
[www.preteristunipublishers.com](http://www.preteristunipublishers.com)



shell dies.<sup>2</sup>

In connection with trying to cope with the fact that Christ's physical body saw no corruption (Acts 2:27, 31; 13:35, 37) and was taken again in resurrection, he changes the words "mere physical" to "pure physical."

The fact that He ascended into heaven with that same body suggests that it must have been more than just a pure physical body.<sup>3</sup>

Playing upon the words "mere" and "pure" and "more than" is just obfuscation. The truth is that it *was a physical body*, and that is what he is working to circumvent. He has trouble because the Lord's body lay in the grave and did not experience corruption. The soul does not see corruption, of course; it is the body that is meant. That he really denies Christ has a physical body now is implicit in this statement:

By "physicalizing" our resurrection body, Gentry is actually denying that Christ had a different kind of resurrection body than Lazarus. That robs Christ of His unique status as the "firstfruits" of a new kind of resurrection body.<sup>4</sup>

So, according to this logic, if the believer has a physical body in resurrection, that is like saying that Christ's resurrection body was like Lazarus'. Thus, as firstfruits of a new kind of resurrection body, we receiving a non-physical resurrection body, Christ's must also be a non-physical body.

Lazarus' case was not resurrection, but restoration to earthly life, as all know. It involved not only that but also the reversal of the decay that had set in. Lazarus' case has nothing to do with this matter of the believer's body in the resurrection state though it displayed the resurrection power of Christ by which He can resurrect the believer's body and showed that Christ is the resurrection and the life. Lazarus had no resurrection body when restored to life. Why is the subject being obfuscated? It is as desperate as it is nonsense to claim that by "physicalizing" our resurrection body that is tantamount to saying that Christ's resurrection body is like that of Lazarus. What an absurd claim. At any rate, let full Preterists boldly declare, consistently with their Hymenaen doctrine of the resurrection, that Christ's resurrection body was not physical -- not physical in any way -- which is what they really, at bottom, do believe so as to be consistent with their denial of the resurrection of the believer's physical body. We all know that Scripture interlocks Christ's resurrection and ours.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from among [the] dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from among [the] dead shall quicken your mortal bodies also on account of his Spirit which dwells in you" (Rom. 8:11).

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2. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

It is our "mortal bodies" that shall be made alive. Moreover, note the word "also" as the unbreakable link to Christ's being raised up from among [the] dead. In resurrection Christ took again the physical body that lay in death, but in resurrection it was in a new state. He is still incarnate in the body prepared for Him (Heb. 10:6). Moreover, we reject the word *mortal* as applied to the body the Son took in incarnation, for mortal means subject to death -- which His body was not; though it was *capable* of death. Furthermore, no one could take His life from Him:

No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it again. I have received this commandment of my Father (John 10:18).

The giving up of life involved the separation of the body from the life.<sup>5</sup> The taking it again was the uniting of the body and the life; the same, the uncorrupted body, but now on the other side of death, in the resurrection state, glorified, yet the identical body, withal having the characteristics shown us in the Gospels. It is a body of glory.

... for *our* commonwealth has its existence in [the] heavens, from which also we await the Lord Jesus Christ [as] Saviour, who shall transform our body of humiliation into conformity to his body of glory, according to the working of [the] power which he has even to subdue all things to himself (Phil. 3:20).

**When Did Christ's Resurrection Take Place?** His resurrection took place on the third day. That is, He did not have a resurrection body at the moment He died -- as it is alleged believers now receive at the moment of death.

**Christ's Body Retains the Marks.** He was brought out of death<sup>6</sup> and, happily, like Thomas, we shall be able to see the nail prints as well as the spear hole in the side of the Lord Jesus!

### THE SEED ANALOGY

Thus also [is] the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruptibility. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body: if there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual [one] (1 Cor. 15:40-42).

**"It Is Raised."** In 1 Cor. 15:42-44 the word "it" is used eight times. "It" refers to the dead body. Four times "it" is said to be "sown." That is like the seed sown into the ground. And four times we read that "it" is "raised."

There is continuity of that sown with that raised. Therefore what is raised is

5. In death, the union of the human and divine in His Person was, of course, maintained. The soul and spirit of the manhood remained united to the divine, though the body lay in death.

6. Heb. 5:7 states a contrast between His time here and the pre-incarnate state; it does not address the subject we are considering. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

of the same nature as what was sown. It is true that there are differences in the raised state, the glorified state. So was that true in the case of our Lord. The differences do not remove the continuity. To say that at death the body remains in the grave but that a spiritual body is given at death means no continuity between the two. It fails the seed analogy while pleading its applicability. The Lord's own body, not experiencing corruption (Acts 2:27, 31; 13:35, 37), was resurrected, and there the continuity is plain to see.

**The "Spiritual Body."** With Scripture before us, uncontorted by Hymenaenism, it is clear that the body of humiliation with which you are reading this page is the body on which Christ's mighty power will act to conform it to His body of glory (Phil. 3:21). It will not be left as a carcase in the grave while at death you receive a mythical, Hymenaen-defined, spiritual body, a (non-physical) spirit-body.

The natural body is the body that has life through connection with the soul in the present state of the body, suitable for the present condition of existence. It is a *soulual body*, a psychical body, so to speak, in a good sense. There will be the *spiritual body*. That does not mean some ethereal body that God will substitute for the physical body. It denotes a change in the physical body such that the physical body is suited to the *spiritual dwelling* above in the new, glorified state, as the unimpeded instrument of the highest part of man, namely, the spirit of man. It is a glorified body, like Christ's body of glory. "Natural body" and "spiritual body" refer to two different manners of existence for the physical body. The "spiritual body" is not contrasted with the *materiality* of the natural body. Rather, it is a contrasted *state* of the body. Having the spiritual body will be an immense gain and relief in contrast to our present experience. Moreover, we will not be left in the intermediate state of being "unclothed" but rather clothed upon with the house from heaven.

### **What is Mortal will be Swallowed up of Life.**

... we do not wish to be unclothed, but clothed, that [what] is mortal may be swallowed up by life (2 Cor. 5:4).

It is clear that that with which we will be clothed is the thing that is now mortal, only the thing that is now mortal will have been swallowed up by life. The soul is not mortal (mortal means subject to death). The mortal body shall put on immortality; it shall be quickened -- *made alive*:

For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal put on immortality (1 Cor. 15:53).

... he that raised up Christ from among [the] dead shall quicken your mortal bodies also on account of his Spirit which dwells in you (Rom. 8:11).

It should be perceived by the reader that the denial of these truths will lead on to denial of the immortality of the soul and to annihilationism and denial of the eternal, conscious punishment of the wicked.

Happily, like Thomas, we shall be able to see the nail prints as well as the spear hole in the side of the Lord Jesus! (John 20:27; Luke 24:40). Just think of seeing "a Lamb standing, as slain" (Rev. 5:6). The marks of the sacrifice are there, but he is standing; standing in mighty resurrection power as the great overcomer Who has overcome so as to have in His nail-pierced hand (so to speak) the book of God's judgments (Rev. 5:7; John 5:22).

Heb. 5:7 states a contrast with His time here and the pre-incarnate state; it does not address the subject we are considering.

### THE BODY OF THE BELIEVER

1 Pet. 3:18 reads:

... being put to death in flesh, but made alive in [the] Spirit . . .

As J. N. Darby pointed out in a footnote, "The article {"the"} being left out, makes "in Spirit" characteristic, in contrast with "in flesh." . . ." He was resurrected by the Spirit (cp. Rom. 1:4), took His own life again (John 10:18) and was raised by the glory of the Father (Rom. 6:4). The three divine Persons act in unity. It is not the soul which dies but the body -- and it is the body that is made alive. Christ's physical body was made alive, made alive in Spirit.

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).

### *The Body Will Come Forth from the Grave*

#### FULL PRETERIST DENIAL

John L. Bray, for example, a Southern Baptist, is busy spreading the evil denial of the resurrection of the body:

We, too, shall be "caught up" **at death** to be with Christ and His saints, with a new, heavenly spiritual body -- leaving the old body behind for the worms and the maggots to eat! <sup>7</sup>

#### CHRIST DIED TO REDEEM THE BODY

The power of redemption has not yet touched our bodies of humiliation, hence we await this:

... even *we* ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, we also groan in ourselves, awaiting adoption, [that is] the redemption of our body (Rom. 8:23).

#### IDENTITY BY PERSONALITY ONLY?

And pious men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him (Acts 8:2). Though Stephen's spirit and soul were in heaven, thus separated from his body,

we see that our identity is not confined to the spirit and soul in heaven. But man is spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess. 5:23). "Stephen" will not be left in the grave. The substitution of an imagined body for the physical body is merely the exigency of a false system.

### **NOTHING THAT WENT INTO THE GRAVE SHALL COME OUT?**

Hymenaeian-like language says that nothing that went into the grave will come out. Of course that was not true in Christ's case. And He who is the resurrection and the life said:

... an hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall go forth ... (John 5:28).

It is instructive that it speaks of the hearing of His voice by those who are in the tombs. The way Stephen is spoken of, as we just saw, is quite in accordance with this text. "Stephen" is one of those in this position. The complete identity of the person consists of spirit, soul, and body; and thus Stephen is with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8) but because not yet clothed with the house from heaven is in a state spoken of in 2 Cor. 5:3, 4 as "unclothed."<sup>8</sup> This term has reference to not being in the body. The believer here on earth is:

... ardently desiring to have put on our house which [is] from heaven (2 Cor. 5:3).

W. Kelly wrote:

What calm and confident knowledge the apostle here predicates of Christians as such! And what a contrast with the dark uncertainty of unbelief, or with its impious audacity! The eternal things are none the less sure in hope because they are not seen. For we know that, if death destroy the earthly tent we live in, we have a building of God. The body in its present state he compares to a tabernacle to be taken down, in its future to a building from God as the source, and to a house not made with hands, and hence everlasting in the heavens, its suited and purposed sphere for ever. As we already heard, God who raised up the Lord Jesus shall also raise up by Him those also who sleep, and then present us all together faultless before the throne of His glory: here details are entered into with clearness and discrimination. It is one of the few passages which treat of the intermediate state, as well as of the resurrection or change of the body for glory, and therefore of the deepest interest to the faithful personally and relatively. And in a few brief and plain words adequate light is given, without the smallest indulgence of irreverent curiosity, for all that concerns the family of God after death as well as the change at Christ's coming. One cannot conceive a communication more worthy of God, or more characteristic of His

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8. The word "naked" refers to being without Christ. It is a warning to mere profession of Christianity. The unbelieving dead, though resurrected in the resurrection of the unjust, are not looked upon by God as being clothed with the house from heaven. They are really naked whether unraised or raised. In the intermediate state the believer is "unclothed."

word generally, while it bears the deep impress of His blessed servant who was inspired to give it.

Of course theology is here little more than a Babel of discordant tongues; and even the more pious and learned seem unable to answer with precision what is meant by the building we have of God. Some will have it that this house not made with hands is heaven itself, but how then could it be said to be "in the heavens?" How could we be in this case said to be clothed with our house or "dwelling which is from heaven?" The house and heaven itself are carefully distinguished. Others again, with less error but with an imperfect view of the passage as a whole, think only of the resurrection body. But it does not follow that the passage throws no light on the state of the soul between death and the resurrection, or that it treats solely of what is to happen after Christ's second coming.

The lowest and most mischievous of these interpretations is that of Olshausen and others who admire petty philosophizing, and contend that the house entered at death is an ethereal corporeality adapted to the heavenly condition of the soul, either intermediate between death and the resurrection, or (as bolder spirits say) to the exclusion of the body which is not to be resuscitated and changed. The intermediate and glorified vehicle of the soul is directly at issue with the plain and decisive language of this very passage. The house is described not only as in the heavens, but as "everlasting." Scripture shuts out therefore all notion of a temporary body, for the soul in heaven before the resurrection of the body we now have. And a man must be a skeptical Sadducee who denies that He who raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by (or, by reason of) His Spirit that dwelleth in us (Rom. 8: 11). There is intermediate blessedness for the believer apart from his body with Christ on high; but the resurrection from the dead awaits His coming.<sup>9</sup>

### *Where the Spirit Dwells*

Scripture speaks of our bodies being the temple of the Spirit, and of His indwelling us, in a number of places (Rom. 8:9, 11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Tim. 1:14). It does not follow from this that in some Hymenaen-fashion the Spirit would not have this place to dwell upon the believer's death, and therefore when the believer dies he must immediately have the Hymanean-spirit-body for the Spirit's dwelling. The truth is that in the disembodied state it is true that the Spirit does not have our body as His temple. But, we read:

. . . God, who has sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts (2 Cor. 1:22).

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9. Notes on the Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, London: Morrish, pp. 76-78, 1882.

... God has sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba Father (Gal. 6:6).

The Spirit dwells in the soul and death cannot disrupt, or interrupt, that dwelling. This is how He dwells in us, and thus dwells in our bodies, where our souls dwell. Upon death, the Spirit remains as the *seal*, and as the *earnest in our hearts*, though we be with the Lord as absent from the body (2 Cor. 5:8). But that condition will not continue, for it is certain from Scripture that because of that very indwelling of the Spirit *now*, He who raised Christ from among the dead will also quicken our mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11). We shall continue to be eternally indwelt of the Spirit, and when the “surpassing greatness of his power” is further put forth on our behalf, we shall have bodies of glory like Christ’s, and the Spirit will again dwell in those bodies as shall our souls.

Eph. 1:19 speaks of the “surpassing greatness of his power” already displayed towards us who believe:

... and what the surpassing greatness of his power towards us who believe, according to the might of his strength, [in] which he wrought in the Christ [in] raising him from among [the] dead, and set him down at his own right hand in the heavenlies, etc. (Eph. 1:19, 20).

What did this “greatness of his power” surpass? Why, creatorial power. Staggering to the mind as is the universe as the display of the creatorial power of God, there is something that surpasses that display of God’s power. Think of that. What came out in the cross, and in the resurrection, and in the glorification of God was the display of His moral being as light and as love. *What God is* is told out in the cross. And God must raise from among the dead, and glorify, the one who so glorified Him (John 17:4):

... even as Christ has been raised up from among [the] dead by the glory of the Father (Rom. 6:4).

“The glory of the Father,” all that God is in His moral being, was brought into activity, proceeding forth from Him in moral excellence, in raising Christ from among the dead. This exhibited the surpassing greatness of His power by which He wrought in raising Christ from the dead and seating Him in glory above. It was glory answering to glory. It was glory commensurate with glory. In Lev. 16 we see the cloud of the incense (the glory of the Person of Christ) brought before the cloud on the mercy seat, and we see the blood on and before the ark of the covenant. As J. Armet wrote, righteousness can meet the claims of righteousness, but only a cloud can meet a cloud. Yes, it is glory answering to glory in connection with the work of atonement. It is the glory of the Person of Christ imparting glory and value to the work. These things are beyond creatorial glory and power though they are displayed in the arena of the creation. Creation exists for the display of God’s glory in Christ. The “*surpassing greatness of his power*,” then, involves things that are beyond God’s having produced the present heavens

and earth; and the matter of the resurrection of Christ, and consequently of the believer, is involved with this surpassing power and surpassing glory.

The God who can do all these things is more than able to raise the believer's body from the dead. Talk about the fish that ate the fish that ate the body of man, talk about cremation, and how can God resurrect such, is besides the point:

And the sea gave up the dead which [were] in it, and death and hades gave up the dead which [were] in them (Rev. 20:13).

Why would you think you have some obligation to explain the method by which this will take place? Nothing can resist Him. No eventuality can deflect Him.

### *The Rapture*

Which is more absurd? that a literal rapture occurred in AD 70, or that a spiritual rapture occurred? Some preterists in the past believed a literal rapture took place in AD 70. E. Hampden Cook claims that the Christians who fled from Jerusalem when they had opportunity:

... exactly tallies with the statement that the woman [of Rev. 12] -- symbolizing the surviving members of the Hebrew Christian church -- hastily sought refuge in the wilderness, where *for the whole duration of the war in Palestine* -- 1260 days or three years and a half -- she remained, cared for by God. The total silence of history as to what subsequently became of these Jewish Christians finds adequate explanation in the belief that at the end of the siege they were caught up to meet the Lord in the air . . .<sup>10</sup>

How convenient to explain it this way, to account for post-AD 70 persons *about whom he knows nothing*; besides the arbitrary restricting the rapture to these Christians. What became of the Thessalonians to whom Paul wrote about the rapture? His predecessor in this parousia-delusion, J. S. Russell, believed in a literal, partial, AD 70 rapture. He calls to his aid a historical hiatus, a blank, a silence:

Admitting that the predictions do not require an absolute and universal removal of the *whole* body of the faithful (for it is manifest that there is a clear distinction made between the watchful and the unwatchful, the ready and the unready, and that as many might be shut out of the kingdom as those who went in), yet the language of prophecy certainly implies the sudden and simultaneous removal of a very large number of the faithful. Is there, then, any vestige in history of such a blank? Most certainly there is . . . Ask the ecclesiastical historian to put his finger on the spot where the records of early Christianity are most obscure, and he will unhesitatingly point to the period when the Acts of

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10. *The Christ Has Come*, London, Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., pp. 124, 125, 1895.  
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the Apostles end.<sup>11</sup>

We shall not join him in this preposterous belief. He appeals to a blank time in Church history as the explanation of the disappearance of large numbers of Christians, leaving behind other large numbers. Yes, about this happening there is a complete blank!

The 'superior' spiritual view of the rapture is given to us by Max R. King, the father of the recent, Church of Christ (Campbellite) version of full preterism:

The point is that all of God's elect (both the firstfruit saints {AD 30 - AD 70 saints, I take it} and historical Israel) would be gathered as on new creation in Christ in the final end of the old dispensation {at AD 70}. This is the point in the so-called *rapture* text (1 Thess. 4). To insist on a literal reading of that which is clearly symbolic (apocalyptic) language is to miss the spiritual truths contained in such passages.<sup>12</sup>

And that also gets rid of the waiting and watching for Christ now. It was a spiritual event that took place in AD 70. Of course:

It is evident that most within early Christianity missed the full significance of AD 70.<sup>13</sup>

What I believe is that not "most," but *all*, missed the full *Hymenaen*-significance. He *implies* that some did not, yet he can produce none such -- well, of course not, because there is none. We will not pursue this further.

## *The Eternal, Conscious Punishment of the Wicked*

How can you be a "nice" person, a loving person, and believe that God will eternally punish the wicked? You could chose to believe in universalism or in the annihilation of the wicked, claiming that God eternally punishes the wicked by eternally depriving them of life. These doctrines are increasingly popular, even among "evangelicals." What Scripture calls "the flesh" in us prefers such teachings.

The full Preterists seem hesitant to state plainly that their AD 70 position

11. *The Parousia*, Grand Rapids: Baker, Preface to the New Edition, p. 5, 1983 [reprint of 1887]. Milton Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p. 448, 1974 reprint of sec. ed. says:

So, there appears no sufficient reason for denying that at the judgment of Jerusalem many other bodies of the saints which slept arose, and many living saints were miraculously translated.

This is not only a literal, partial rapture but a literal, partial resurrection as well.

12. *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, Parkman Road Church of Christ, p. 641, 1987.

13. Ed. Stevens, *Stevens response to Gentry*, Bradford: Kingdom Publications, p. 11, 1997.

entails the denial of the future eternal, conscious punishment of all the wicked. For example Max King, the father of the present push for full preterism, particularly among the Church of Christ (Campbellite) has a section in his book, "The Judgment of the Small and Great."<sup>14</sup> In the full preterist system, the judgment of Rev. 20:12-15 took place at the destruction of Jerusalem. All prophecy terminates in AD 70 and this leaves no predictions of future judgment. These things are worked out by forcing all Scripture to conform to the AD 70 notion and we are not going to examine all these absurdities. At any rate, missing from Max King's discussion in this section is the positive assertion of eternal, conscious punishment. Ed. Stevens says that in AD 70 "The *lost* dead were judged and cast away from the presence of God."<sup>15</sup> Well, why was it not stated plainly: are they in eternal, conscious punishment? Or were they annihilated? And tell us about the portion of the wicked dead who have died since AD 70.

Concerning the denial of eternal, conscious punishment of the wicked, the book *Facts and Theories as to a Future State . . .* by F. W. Grant is a very thorough examination of the matter.<sup>16</sup>

(Concluded.)

Ed.

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14. *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, Parkman Road Church of Christ, pp. 257-259, 1987.

15. *Stevens response to Gentry*, Bradford: Kingdom Publications, p. 34, 1997.

16. This book is an enlargement of his *Life and Immortality*, a book recommended by J. N. Darby, *Letters* 3:389.

## *Elements of Propitiation, Substitution, and The Righteousness of God*

### *Chapter 6*

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## *Died For All, Blood Shed For Many*

### *Christ Died for All*

That Christ died for all is the declaration of Scripture:

For the love of Christ constrains us, having judged this: that one died for {ὁπὲρ -- *hyper*, on behalf of} all, then all have died, that they who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who died for {ὁπὲρ} them and has been raised (2 Cor. 5:14, 15).

#### **THE TOTAL INCLUDES A SUB-SET**

Before looking at this passage in some detail, let us observe a point that is helpful and of which we have an example in this passage. He died for all; and so we say He died for *us*. The *us* is part of a larger group called, in this passage, *all*. *Us* is a sub-set of *all*. When I say Christ died for me, that does not necessarily mean that He did not die for all. And in this case, it is taught expressly that He died for all. His death on behalf of all is connected with that aspect of propitiation which is for the world (1 John 2:2). But ss soon as the word *sins* is brought in, a distinction must be made. In 1 Cor. 15:3 we read:

Christ died for {ὁπὲρ -- *hyper* -- on behalf of} our *sins*.

This is not a sub-set of Christ dying for the sins of the world. There is no such thing taught in Scripture -- that Christ died for everyone's sins -- or bore everyone's sins in His own body on the tree. Death *for all* is **not** the same as death *for the sins of all*. Christ's death for our sins is not a sub-set of the untrue assertion about Christ's death for the sins of all. Much error involves treating something as a sub-set of something larger, when the larger thing, in reality, does not exist. Comparison of 1 Cor. 15:3 with 1 John 2:2 bears on just such an error. because one passage is about a subset and the other is about the larger group; i.e., there is Scripture for both, not just one, of the two cases.

*Christ Bore Only the Sins of Believers; and,  
His Blood is Only Spoken of as Shed for Many*

THE WORLD	BELIEVERS ONLY
PROPITIATION	
<p>Propitiation . . . for the world (1 John 2:2)</p> <p>This is <i>general</i> - - - - - so that God can say "come"</p> <p><b>not stated that He is the propitiation for their sins</b></p>	<p>Propitiation for <i>our sins</i> (1 John 2:2; 4:10; Heb. 2:17). Propitiation is <u>Godward</u> -- He glorified God about <i>our sins</i> - - this is <i>specific</i> - -</p> <p>Substitution is <u>manward</u>; He made <i>our sins</i> His own</p>
PURCHASE <sup>17</sup>	
<p><i>PURCHASE</i></p> <p>Bought the field (Matt. 13:44)</p> <p>Deny the master that bought them (2 Pet. 2:1)</p> <p><b>not stated that He bought them with the blood of his own</b></p>	<p><i>SUBSTITUTION</i></p> <p>The assembly of God, which he has purchased with <i>the blood</i> of his own (Acts 20:28)</p>
RANSOM	
<p><i>PURCHASE</i></p> <p>Ransom for ( ὑπὲρ -- "on behalf of") all (1 Tim. 2:6)</p>	<p><i>SUBSTITUTION</i></p> <p>Ransom <i>for</i> ( ἀντὶ -- "instead of")<sup>18</sup> <i>many</i> (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45)</p>
RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD	
<p>Towards all</p> <p><b>not stated to be upon all</b></p>	<p>Upon all those who believe (Rom. 3:22)</p>

17. The reader will recall that in a previous chapter the subject of PURCHASE was discussed. *Everything* was bought by Christ's death. Redemption is another matter.

18. "The 'for' is 'instead of' (ἀντὶ) many. It is strict substitution. When, as in 1 Tim., all are in view, it is simply 'on behalf of' (ὑπὲρ) and *not* 'instead of' (ἀντὶ). (See *Thy Precepts*, Vol. 15, #3, May/June 2000, p. 94.)

### DEATH OF CHRIST

#### *PURCHASE*

Died for (ὕπὲρ -- on behalf of) all (2 Cor. 5:15)  
**not stated that He died for the sins of all**

#### *SUBSTITUTION*

Died for (ὕπὲρ -- on behalf of) *our sins* (1 Cor. 15:3)

### BORE SINS

**not stated that He bore the sins of all**  
**not stated that He bore the sin of all**

#### *SUBSTITUTION*

Bore *our sins* in His own body on the tree (1 Pet. 2:24)  
 Bore the *sin of many* (Isa. 53:12)

### BLOOD OF CHRIST

**not stated that He shed His blood for all**  
**not stated that He washed all in His blood**

#### *SUBSTITUTION*

Blood shed *for* (περὶ -- “concerning” Marshall) *many* for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28)  
 Blood shed *for* (ὕπὲρ -- on behalf of) *many* (Mark 14:24).  
 Washed us from our sins in His blood (Rev. 1:5)

### REDEEMED

**not stated that all are redeemed by blood, or any other way**

#### *SUBSTITUTION*

In whom *we have* redemption through His blood (Eph. 1:7)

Concerning the way Scripture speaks of these matters, we observe the following:

1. It is not stated that Christ died for the sins of all. Why not learn from the silence of Scripture that Christ did not bear everyone's sins on the cross?
2. Why not learn from the systematic delimitation of Scripture that, corresponding to that silence, the passages which speak of sins borne by Christ speak only of the sins of many, not all?

3. Even in the case of the Jews in Isa. 53 there is this delimitation. Christ did not bear the sin of all of them.
4. Why not learn from the delimitation of Scripture that, corresponding to that silence, the passages which speak of Christ's shed blood, only *many* are spoken of, *not all*?
5. And very remarkable is the fact that the assembly of God is purchased with the blood of His own.
6. Then there is the remarkable difference noted regarding "ransom for many," which adds confirmation to the fact that actual *substitution* is seen in "instead of" (ἀντὶ) many, which is not the case in "ransom for all."
7. And while Christ died for all, He died for us; remarkably, it is only said of the believer that Christ died for *our sins*.
8. Even in regard to propitiation, the delimitation is stated: while there is propitiation for the world, there is propitiation for *our sins*.
9. Thus the righteousness of God is *towards* all, as propitiation is for the world, as Christ died for all; but the righteousness of God is *upon* those that believe -- who only are those whose sins Christ bore substitutionally, the many for whom His blood was shed (Rom. 3:22).

If there was a Scripture that stated that Christ bore everyone's sins, it would long ago have been produced, and the lack of such a statement necessitates that the idea that Christ bore everyone's sins must be *read into* such texts as "a ransom for all," and He "died for all." If it were not *read into* such texts, there would be no Scripture for the false idea.<sup>19</sup> And thus these certain Scriptures are tortured to make them say what they do not say, either for this purpose or some other, in order to have some Scripture for the notion.

Rom. 5:6 and 8 speak of Christ dying on behalf of us ungodly ones (v. 6), and also on our behalf while being sinners. Of course, all are ungodly, and sinners, but the passages are about the sub-set -- us believers.

Our brother is to be looked upon as one *on whose behalf* Christ died (Rom. 14:15). In 1 Cor. 8:11 our brother is looked at as one *for whose sake* Christ died. Some other passages are:

1 Thess. 5:10 -- "who died for us" -- or, as Marshall has it, "concerning us."

Titus 2:14 -- who gave Himself on behalf of us.

19. I have heard it said that the only sin for which a person will be judged is not accepting Christ as Savior. That notion would mean Christ bore all of a person's sins but one. These notions come from the carnal mind. At the great white throne judgment, the unbelievers are judged "according to their works" (Rev. 20:13). And why so, if Christ had paid the penalty on the cross, having borne those sins in His own body?  
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Gal. 2:21 -- gave Himself on behalf of me.

Gal. 3:13 -- became a curse on behalf of us.

None of this indicates that Christ bore everyone's sins in His own body on the tree. The believer grows in his appreciation that Christ died for him, while the unbeliever refuses the fact. But the believer knows that Christ bore his sins in His own body on the tree; yea, and what is deeper, that He was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21), which has to do with sin in the flesh.

## *2 Cor. 5:14, 15 Does Not Support Substitution for All*

J. N. Darby has discussed some of these false views:

The thing we do not find in Scripture is substitution for all. On the great day of atonement, there were two things in the sin-offering of the people -- the Lord's lot and the people's lot. The Lord's lot was killed, because it met the whole character of God; God was completely glorified in Christ, and the gospel goes out to the whole world. Then with the people's lot, the sins of the people were confessed on its head; that is the scapegoat; in that I find Christ for His people, and in the other atonement, Godward. That, of course, was for those whose sins he confessed. In Rom. 3 we hear of the "righteousness of God unto all, and upon all them that believe." It goes out toward all, and is upon believers. Many a one will say that Christ bore the sins of the world; but if so, how can God ever impute them? He could not, nor does Scripture ever say so. Then the Calvinist only takes the blood upon the mercy-seat; really he denies the propitiation. We have the satisfaction to God's glory, and then the gospel goes out and says, "We beseech you to be reconciled to God: come in." When they come I can say, I have something else to tell you; Christ bore all your sins, and it is impossible God can ever impute them or any one of them. An evangelist would not be right in saying, "Christ bore all your sins." If he makes it personal, God of course knows His own elect from all eternity, but we can only know them as they are shown out in life.<sup>20</sup> ♦

Christ . . . has confessed all the sins of His people as His own, borne our sins in His own body on the tree. The two goats are but one Christ, but there is the double aspect of His sacrifice, Godward, and bearing our sins. The blood is the witness of the accomplishment of all, and He is entered in not without blood. He is the propitiation for our sins. But in this aspect the world comes in too. He is a propitiation for the whole world. All has been done that is needed. His blood is available for the vilest whoever he may be. Hence the gospel to the world says, "Whosoever will, let him come." In this aspect we may say Christ died for all,

gave Himself a ransom for all, an adequate and available sacrifice for sin, for whoever would come -- tasted death for every man. <sup>21</sup> ♦

Were then everybody's sins transferred to Christ? If so, all are saved, or His having borne the wrath <sup>22</sup> due to them is ineffectual and reversible. The whole argument of the book shows Dr. B. {Bonar} has confounded substitution which does suppose transference of guilt and crime from the guilty to another, a substitution of one person for another, as when a debt is paid (the illustration Dr. B. gives); while propitiation is to Godward. <sup>23</sup> ♦

As regards propitiation and substitution, they are points of great importance, and important to distinguish; but, in order to deny the true import of these words, and the truth connected with them, Dr. Bonar has made confusion, and indeed most mischievous error, out of it. That Christ, for God's glory, stood as the representative man before God, and in a certain sense took our place, and died for all, making propitiation for the whole world, is true; and I add that if Dr. Bonar chose to call this substitution, though I should regret it as unfitting, and enfeebling its use in other vital aspects, yet it would not be my place to prescribe words to him. But he does a great deal more than this. By his hatred of the truth and fondness for his own views, he has upset the whole gospel. "The blood brought within the veil," he tells us (p. 109), "contained a world-wide message, so that each one hearing of that atoning blood might at once say, then God is summoning me back to Himself," etc. Be it so; but then "propitiation," he continues, "rests on substitution. In all these symbolical transactions we have one vast thought, the transference of guilt from one to another, legally and judicially." If this be so, then if each one hearing of it could apply it, the guilt of all had been transferred to Christ, and it cannot be untransferred, or transferred back again, for Christ has died under it, a work "perfectly valid for all ends of justice"; consequently there can be no imputation of sins to anybody at all -- the guilt has been transferred.

Scripture carefully distinguishes propitiation and the transfer of guilt {substitution}, Jehovah's lot and the people's lot on the great day of atonement

21. *Collected Writings* 27:319.

22. J. N. Darby wrote:

It has been attempted to say, there is no appeasement of wrath with God. The words ἱλάσκεσθαι, ἱλασμός, ἵλας τήρειν, all have exactly this sense. They meet the qualities or attributes in God which are necessary and must be maintained or He is not God as He is (or not God at all), to maintain what He is, His holiness and righteousness. But He is supreme in love (*Collected Writings* 10:349; see also 14:246).

W. Kelly observed:

According to the letter the NT no more speaks of "wrath" executed in the cross, than of propitiating God. And there is like wisdom in its abstention. But let all beware of denying one or other because of God's gracious guard against abuse (*The Bible Treasury* 18:97, note).

23. *Collected Writings* 23:240. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)



{Lev. 16}. Sin being come in, God's glory was in question, and our sin too. The blood was brought under God's eye as propitiation, and the sins of the people were laid by their representative on the head of the scape-goat. Both ends were met, God glorified in what He was, and the people's guilt put away. So Christ appeared at the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; but besides that He was once offered to bear the sins of many.<sup>24</sup> ♦

To what absurdities has Scripture been subjected -- even that all died with Christ.<sup>25</sup>

## *Christ's Blood Shed for Many*

We have considered numerous distinctions made by Scripture, such as that Christ died for all but we do not read that He died for the sins of all -- while we do read that Christ died for *our* sins. And now we inquire: where is it written that His blood was shed for all? Might Scripture be wiser in its language than we are? *The ransom is for all; and Christ died for all. This Scripture declares -- and this, we have seen, is connected with the teaching regarding purchase* by the Son of man -- which is connected with Christ being the propitiation for the world (1 John 2:2), a text which will be considered later in this series. But redemption is another matter. We are aware that only believers are redeemed. By what are they redeemed?

... knowing that ye have been redeemed . . . by precious blood (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

... in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of offences, according to the riches of his grace (Eph. 1:7).<sup>26</sup>

24. *Collected Writings* 23:265.

25. J. N. Darby remarked:

In interpreting "If one died for all, then were all dead," if people would get God's mind, they would not say absurd things. As for all dying with Christ, I deny it altogether, and do not admit that we must get God's mind through the Greek. It is a total departure from the apostle's argument, and contradicts the next verse. The theory is that people live and die; but "they which live" are those who are not left in that state. The next sentence is demonstrative of it: "He died for all, that they which live"; that is not all. The aorist gives the historical fact, but it does not say that the historical fact is the consequence of Christ's having died. Why did Christ go down there? It was because they were all in the pit; and then the point is that some live (not all), and if they live, they are to live to Him that died for them and rose again. If it were translated, "then all died," it would be historical. There is no consequence in it, and "then" is not time, but "consequently"; the Greek in this verse for then is *ara*, which is nowhere time. It is not consequence, though it may be a fact. The proper force of *ara* is illative in later Greek. (That is, it introduces an inference). (*Collected Writings* 26:336; see also *Notes and Comments* 6:60.)

26. In this connection Rev. 5: 9 should be noted:

... and hast redeemed to God, by thy blood out of every tribe, etc.

## BLOOD USED TO INDICATE DEATH

There are passages where blood is used to signify the death of someone. See Matt. 23:30, 35; 27:6, 25; Acts 5:28; 22:20; Rev. 6:10; 18:24; 19:13. When we read of the blood of Christ we know that included in the thought is His death. Moreover, His death has all the value of the three hours of atoning sufferings.

## BUT THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IS NOT SAID TO BE FOR ALL

It is remarkable when surveying the use of the word blood in the NT that we do not find the word used in a parallel way to the case of, for example, "died for all." We do not read some such thing as "He shed his blood for all." Not understanding the reason for this is no basis to say that there is no difference. With such an attitude we have locked ourselves out from having God show us the reason. Now, without being dogmatic as to an explanation, we can at least say that the Spirit of God, who has given us God's Word, has been pleased to apply the *death* of Christ in one way, and has been pleased to apply the *blood* in another way.

We know that the work of atonement on the cross involved the atoning sufferings, death, and blood-shedding of Christ.<sup>27</sup> The blood that Scripture speaks of is the blood that was accompanied by the water from the Lord's side (John 19:34; 1 John 5:6). Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). *Faith* thus knows only of the blood from the *Lord's side*. This is the blood of the atonement that Scripture presents to *faith*.

The new covenant for Israel, when all Israel shall be saved (Rom. 11:26), has for its blood, the blood of Christ (Matt. 26:28). The blood of Christ is used in a figurative way as that which the believer drinks (John 6:53-56). It signifies the appropriation of His death on the cross, which death has all the value of the atoning sufferings.

In Acts 20:28 we have a remarkable expression:

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26. (...continued)

Rev. 14:3, 4:

... who were bought from the earth ...

... These have been bought from men [as] firstfruits to God and to the Lamb

In a footnote to Rev. 5:9, JND says:

Or 'bought,' as ch. 14:3, 4.

Concerning Rev. 5:9, Marshall has "didst purchase" (ἡγόρασας); and for Rev. 14, purchased (ἡγορασμένοι).

All are bought by the Son of man, and thus those who have divine life are purchased. Additionally, they are purchased also from among men.

27. The water that accompanied the blood from the Lord's side is very important, but not our subject here. Sin makes us both guilty and morally dirty. The work on the cross provides for God to deal with both of these things: with the blood and water, respectively.

... the assembly of God which he has purchased with the blood of his own.

The propriety and piety of translating this passage thus was discussed by J. N. Darby.<sup>28</sup> The point is that the belonging of the assembly to God is by blood.

Next we have faith in His blood:

... who God has set forth a mercy-seat, through faith in his blood (Rom. 3:25).

But not only that:

... having now been justified in [the power of] his blood (Rom. 5:9),

connects the blood with justification – not to the exclusion of His resurrection, of course, (Rom. 4:25). Notice, too, how justification is connected with redemption (Rom. 3:24). We have been redeemed by precious blood (1 Pet. 1:18, 19); we have redemption through His blood (Eph. 1:7).

Moreover, we are brought nigh by the blood of the Christ (Eph. 2:13) and have peace by the blood of His cross (Col. 1:20). It is the blood of the Christ that purifies our consciences from dead works, to worship the living God (Heb. 9:14). We enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 10:14).

28. Now for my own part I believe -- have always thought -- the reading 'the church of God' to be right. If *dia tou idiou haimatos* was the reading in this place, then "the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood" would be the only right translation; and so the English translators read it. But I confess I agree with Athanasius that such language is not according to Scripture analogy and its expression of the truth. It is not a question of the divinity of the Lord, one way or the other, but of the fitness of speaking of the blood of God. I do not think such an expression scriptural. I do not accept the title even of the Mother of God. I believe it revolts just and divinely-given thoughts in the mind, and turns away from the true, eternal divinity of the blessed Lord. He who was God had a mother, and He who was God shed His blood; but I do not think Scripture speaks of God's shedding His blood. I think it revolts the mind as wrong, unseemly -- I will say, profane. I know what a person means and I bear with it, because I delight in his holding the true, essential deity of the Lord. But I agreed with Athanasius, when I had never read him, when I examined the passage in this view, in thinking such expressions contrary to the analogy of the faith. As regards the translation of '*dia tou haimatos tou idiou*' "by the blood of His own," that it is Greek is I judge beyond controversy, in spite of the confident pretensions of some, and the slighting remarks of others. In John 15:19, we have this usage, which anyone may find in a dictionary. "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own" -- '*to idion ephilei*.' It is an unquestionable Greek usage. Of course, it can be translated, "by His own blood." The question is, which is right. '*To idion*' is that which is specially near and identified with any one, as our word, "own." Hence it is said, "He spared not his own Son." God has purchased the church with that which was His own, nearest and dearest to Himself: a thought as apt and beautiful as possible here. Of that there can be no question. The singular seems to me more intimate than the plural, but I could not here give any proof that I am right. At all events, no expression would be more appropriate, hardly any, it seems to me, so strong. God purchased the Church with that which was most near to Himself and most dear to Himself. This seems to me a most forcible expression, peculiarly expressive in the circumstances -- more so, it seems to me, than that which would have expressed the relationship of the blessed Lord to His Father, whatever the essential importance of that may be in its place. The force of the sentence is in the word '*idion*' (English *own*), which is to me a deeply touching expression (Collected Writings 34:107).

To him who loves us, and has washed us from our sins in his blood, and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father: to him [be] glory and the might to the ages of ages. Amen (Rev. 1:5, 6).

So we see how the blessedness of the *appropriation* of the value of Christ's death is connected with the blood. And when one has appropriated that value, he is in the good of substitution.

And finally, let us notice that when Scripture speaks of the forgiveness of our sins, and an aspect of the work of Christ is mentioned, it is connected with blood and/or redemption. Eph. 1:7 was quoted above and to that we should connect Col. 1:14. Besides that, Heb. 9:22 says:

... without blood-shedding there is no remission.

But where there is no appropriation of the work of Christ, the blood of Christ is never mentioned.

### THE BLOOD SHED FOR MANY

In connection with the introduction of the Lord's supper, the Lord Jesus said, concerning the cup:

For this is my blood, that of the [new] covenant, that shed for {περὶ -- "concerning," Marshall} many for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28).

This is my blood, that of the [new] covenant, that shed for {ὕπὲρ -- on behalf of} many (Mark 14:24).

This indicates that the blood was shed for others besides those who will be under the new covenant. But it says "for many" not -- 'for all.' And here there is a difference from the *ransom*. The words "ransom for many" had been stated by the Lord, whereas in the due time, as we saw, the testimony rendered was that He was a "ransom for all." But, it was not subsequently said that His blood was shed for all.

Concerning the Lord's supper and the blood shed for many, the following remarks by JND are helpful:

The Lord then institutes the supper, putting first Himself, then the blood of the new covenant, then its being shed for many, in the place of the Jewish passover, the old covenant, and {in place of} the limitation of everything to that people. This is the distinctive character of the supper here, suited to this Gospel {Matthew}.<sup>29</sup> Mark's account is essentially the same. Luke's is much more personal and connected with (surely divine, but also) human affection to the disciples. But in all it is the blood of the new covenant, or the new covenant in His blood. In Matthew it is leaving association with them, breaking with men, even with the disciples down here, drinking no more of the fruit of the vine; only in Matthew and Mark His drinking it again with them after a wholly new sort is

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29. (See also *Collected Writings* 204:66-69, 111) [www.truthpublishers.com](http://www.truthpublishers.com)

also spoken of. It was the simple and blessed testimony of the displacing all that was before, man and any previously presented ground of man's relationships with God.

No new covenant was yet established; but the blood on which it was to be founded was shed, and it could be announced so that Judaism was closed, that is, man's relationships with God as in flesh, and on the footing of man's righteousness; also closing any connection between the Lord come in flesh and man. His body, but His body as dead, was given as meat indeed. This carried the double testimony that there was no possible connection any more between man in the flesh and God;<sup>30</sup> but also, that redemption was wrought, the true passover offered. Hence, as before that, death was death to man, now he lives by death, the death of Christ. It is not here as in Luke, "Do this in remembrance of me," but His separation from His disciples is strongly marked. He does not eat or drink with them, but gives what was the sign of His death to them, the sign of a perfect redemption by His death, but that His death, not His life with them was their portion with Him. This was a total and mighty change, the essence of their whole relationships with Him and having an eternal character. Death was the portion of the Son of God as man down here, and their part with Him and with God was founded on it.

The blood was shed for many for the remission of sins, and the new covenant was founded on it; all was dispensationally changed, but all was eternally founded also as to man, the believer's relationships with God. But present association was wholly broken off till renewed in a new way in His Father's kingdom. This is an expression of Matthew's Gospel like the kingdom of heaven. It is the higher and heavenly part of the kingdom.<sup>31</sup> In chapter 13 {Matt. 13:41-43} we find it in the explanation of the tares and the wheat. We read, "The Son of man shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend . . . then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," that higher part where they shall be in the same glory as Christ Himself, predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself: only here it is My Father; there, "their." Then Christ will anew, but in a blessedly new way,<sup>32</sup> enjoy companionship with His disciples and they with Him. Blessed place and blessed familiarity! If the Lord has given up the companionship of His disciples, it is to accomplish their redemption; and He waits, as we wait, to renew it in a better place and in brighter scenes, but as truly and more intimately than they could have it here. Nothing more beautiful or touching than this intimation of the Lord at the moment of His departure. He showed where His heart was, His love to us. And they sung a hymn together, and went out to the mount of Olives, His wonted

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30. {It marked the end of the probation of the first man. After the cross, man is no longer under testing.}

31. {The future kingdom will have, so to speak, two spheres: the earthly, which is the kingdom of the Son of man; and, the heavenly, which is the kingdom of the Father.}

32. {See *Collected Writings* 25:21; *Synopsis* 3:139}. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

resort.<sup>33</sup> ♦

It is the new covenant in His blood, and, further, shed for many. It is thus shed blood alone which is before us in the Eucharist. It is an abiding witness that, as to God's part in it, the foundation of the covenant is laid in the blood of the Mediator of it, and that that blood is shed for many. It is further a sign of the unity of the body, so that those who take part in it are there as one body in Christ, identified with all true saints.<sup>34</sup> ♦

To be continued, if the Lord wills.

Ed.

## *His Heart and His Hand*

### *Numbers 13; Joshua 14*

It is most important to understand the moral condition of Israel at this time; otherwise great difficulty must be experienced in seeking to apprehend why Jehovah permitted Moses to send out spies to search the land of Canaan. A careful study of Deut. will very clearly demonstrate the fact that unbelief on the part of Israel was the *origin* of the mission of the spies, though *allowed* of God, who can work His sovereign will in spite of all; just as the demand for a king afterwards, though Jehovah acceded to it and allowed it, was a virtual denial of His regal titles and claims over the rebellious nation. There is one important fact which appears to me to place the question of the searching of the land beyond all dispute. In the third chapter of Exodus, where the earliest intimation of His purpose is recorded, there is likewise a description of the character of the land as it existed to His eye -- its exceeding goodness, fertility, and beauty are all there delineated and traced. How, then, could it have been possible for God, having cast Israel on the fidelity of His word and promise, to originate that which virtually was a slur upon His veracity and the certainty of His word? No; Jehovah *permitted* it, but never *originated* it.

There is a principle of weighty import in the circumstances which attended the searching of the land. First, observe how the testimony of the spies was but confirmatory of Jehovah's word:

And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs . . . And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

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33. *Collected Writings* 24:197-199.

34. *Collected Writings* 29:366 [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

But then, *immediately*, other principles began to work. The goodness of the land was not denied -- how could it, in the presence of the *earnest* before their eyes? But between them where they were and the possession of this goodly land there were difficulties, and these are all mapped out with the accuracy of unbelief:

Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

And these obstacles and impediments, by occupation with them, obtained such a hold over their hearts, that they were, in their own sight, as well as in the sight of their enemies, but grasshoppers.

Now it is very important to observe how *a sight of the land* tests them; and, in truth, nothing tests like it. This principle stands true in regard to all God's ways with His people at all times. As soon as ever He discloses His purpose regarding us, His mind and thoughts for the time present, then it is that all the difficulties standing in our way are presented in full array; and hence it is, at this present time, that those who see what God's great thought is concerning His beloved Son, have difficulties and opposition that all others are strangers to. If any doubt the application of this principle, they have only to study the history of God's testimony on the earth, in order to be certified as to its truth. Who, may I ask, are beset with every kind of opposition at this present time? Are they not those who seek to keep the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"? Only give up the truth of Christ's body on the earth as a *practical* one, and you will be promoted to great honor; stand out as a unit, and you will be let pass. But connect yourself *practically* with the great truth -- "There is one body, and one Spirit," and you are at once subjected to all the opposition of men, and the most malignant hatred of Satan. You are surrounded with difficulties on every side; and if you allow such between you and God, instead of having Him between you and them, your heart will lose confidence, as Israel's did, and the test will become to you an occasion which Satan will use to turn you away from God, instead of being an opportunity to turn to God. Now observe the consequence of failing before this test. First, there is *weeping*, next *murmuring*, then *hard thoughts* of God; and lastly, they propose crowning self-will

Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

Observe how gradual the nature of their declensions -- of every declension -- is. They had forgotten the living God, and His interest in them as His people; they had preferred the estimate which their foolish hearts had formed of God's land in the light of the difficulties between them where they were and it; and now the issue is complete -- a captain of their own choosing is their resource. This gradual character of all decline is very solemn, and has a special voice, because of the spurious notion that our falls are immediate, or all at once. Not so, beloved reader; like everything else, they have their beginnings, and hence the solemnity of the words

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

But now let us turn for a moment and look at a bright side of this dark picture. The dismal dreariness of unbelief serves ends we should little fancy. The crisis not only brings out the man of unbelief, it likewise calls to the front the man of faith; and this scene is no exception. Joshua and Caleb, men for a crisis, are equal to the emergency; and their united testimony at this moment is very beautiful -- "We are well able to overcome," is the language of the one, and "If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us," is the testimony of both. That is to say, the *hand* and *heart* of God are the resources of men of faith in a crisis. Is it not blessed to see a man like Caleb hiding himself behind the power of Jehovah, the arm of God? -- so that forgetting the weakness of Israel, and the strength of both giants and walled cities, he rallies, as it were, the broken ranks of his people with these words --

Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it, because the right hand of Jehovah's power, which was celebrated on the shores of the Red Sea, as having dashed in pieces the enemy (Ex. 15:6), was before Caleb's heart and thoughts; he goes back to that wondrous scene in his testimony, and seeks to connect his people thereby with that same Jehovah who always triumphs gloriously.

And their united testimony in Ex. 14 is not less beautiful. The delight of Jehovah in His Israel -- that is, His affections, His heart -- is a sufficient plea that He would surely bring them in, thus in the light of this love, this delight of God, they can say, "the Lord is with us." Oh, what rich resources of faith a *crisis* calls forth! It is very striking to see how it is all that is in God they testify unto. The springs of delight in God's own heart, motives there entirely apart from the objects of His favor, are wondrous topics for faith to rest on. And hence it is that even the acknowledged difficulties become tributary to his own, "the people of the land are bread for us." Our God delights in difficulties, to show how entirely above and beyond them He is. The faith of God's elect, these crisis men, look upon them as bread! There is another point of great beauty here. These men of faith are exposed in this crisis to be turned upon by their own --

The congregation bade stone them with stones;

then it is the glory of Jehovah appears, to vindicate the witnesses to the power of His hand and His heart:

The glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

Now, ere we pass from this part of our subject to pursue the history of the land possessed, let me point out the immense advantage a saint now has over any of God's people at any previous period, but only to take shame to ourselves that so few of us are crisis men in purpose and heart at this present time.

Most blessed as this testimony of Caleb and Joshua was, as far as they could witness to the *ability* and *delight* of God to bring His people into possession of what His heart had in store for them, yet what is it if compared with the witness which a saint now can bear to power and love? Who, for instance, in olden times, knew the power of His right hand, in taking the beloved Son out of death, and seating Him in highest glory? How blessed by faith to be spectators of the glory of the Father visiting the grave



of Jesus, raising Him up and claiming Him as his own! How blessed to-day to be witnesses, in the power of the indwelling Spirit, to such glory! Truly we are they who are privileged to know

what is the exceeding greatness of his power . . . which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all {Eph. 1}.

Blessed and wondrous vision this is to occupy faith, the Christ of God, the glorious Man, constituting as His point of departure all those things which are termini with us. Principality, power, dominion, names, are the *extent* to which poor things like us can reach in comprehension; but when we look at Jesus raised and exalted by the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, we behold Him *departing* only from that which *bounds* our ken {understanding}. So much for the power of His hand. If again we think of His heart, His affections, when were they proclaimed or known until the beloved Son, ever in His bosom, disclosed them? Joshua could say, "If the Lord delight in us, he will bring us in." I hesitate not to say that an "*if*" now, in the light of the cross, and the *glory*, of the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as the position of the saint by virtue of union with the beloved Son as man, would be the unbelief which casts a slur on the love which has disclosed itself in such a manner as to secure confidence in itself. "All the Father's heart made known" -- marks the wondrous place into which we have, through His sovereign grace, been introduced.

How it speaks to the heart and moves the affections, the thought that this marvelous love of God (His own peculiar love) has been made known in the sorrows of His own Son, His Lamb! The agonies and the blood of Jesus not only measured the distance of ruined creatures from God, they also measured the affections of God. Is it too much to say so? When you and I, beloved, by faith visit that wondrous scene of sorrow and love, when by faith we see His travail and sorrow, do we not also see the heart of God therein expressed as never before; and we, by virtue of the same agony and blood standing, not only to witness such love, but to adore the source and the channel through which it flowed forth so blessedly to us?

It was a wonderful day for the earth and for Moses, when, in response to the desire of his heart to see His glory, Jehovah replied --

Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.

Wonderful sight *that* for Moses, hid in a cleft of the rock, and covered by Jehovah's hand; but, let me ask, is that the sight He gives to the saints now? Oh, beloved, if the

eternal Son of the Father *emptied* Himself to become a man, and as a man *humbled* Himself down to those depths of agony and grief, expressing *therein* God in His nature, as well as glorifying Him in meeting every one of His righteous claims, what could suit either that Son or the Father's heart, save the exaltation of the One in the highest place in heaven, and the manifestation of the other to poor things like us? It was in keeping with Moses that he should but see His back parts; and it was consonant with Jehovah's manifestation of Himself at that time to disclose no more, but *now* His righteousness as well as His love requires the full manifestation of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. I have referred to these facts simply to point out the immense contrast between the testimony of a Caleb or a Joshua, blessed, faithful men though they were, and the witness expected from a saint now.

Let us now look a little at the history of the land *possessed* by the same Caleb whose testimony is recorded in Josh. 14. Forty-five years of endurance and faith had intervened between this scripture and the one we have already considered, and Caleb is now an old man of eighty-five years, yet with no mark of decay as regards the energy that characterized him at Kadesh. He had turned about and wandered with his nation for forty years in the wilderness, and that for no fault of his. If Israel were the people of God, let them be ever so bad in themselves, that is sufficient to connect them with the affections of the man of faith. But during those forty years of wilderness toil and trouble, he carried in his heart the beauty of that goodly land which his eyes had for a moment beheld. No protracted period of trial or provocation had prevailed to obliterate from his thoughts or affections Jehovah's land. It is not difficult to conceive how its richness and beauty lived in his heart, and comforted him many a weary day. How blessed to hear him trace up everything to its source in these words:

And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said these forty and five years.

The sense of who He was to whom this aged warrior owed his steadfastness as well as his life, is not absent from his soul. Years only bring out with greater distinctness how completely cast he was upon Jehovah, and how his soul rejoiced in this blessed fact -- the Lord was as good as His word.

Again, observe here the unfading nature of *faith*, it never wears a gray hair. Though Caleb was now an old man of eighty-five years, he was as fresh and vigorous, as young and as strong, as at forty.

As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced; if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.

Then he receives his inheritance and his blessing --

And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron therefore became an inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the Lord

God of Israel.

How blessed to think of the spot which the faith of this crisis man claims and receives! Hebron was the place where David was anointed king (2 Sam. 2:4). It was a place signalized in many ways. Here it was that Sarah died (Gen. 23:2); here likewise Abner was buried (2 Sam. 3:32); but in no respect was it so remarkable as in the first-named instance. In this is there not the sweet and blessed picture of that spot where faith alone can fold her wings? The place that faith gets as its inheritance is where God's beloved one is crowned; *there* and *there* alone it rests, its repose and enchantment are there.

There is one other fact of great beauty in connection with this faithful servant of Jehovah, which I must not pass without notice; it serves to show how faith's *surroundings* and *associations* are ever of a like nature with itself. We are told in Josh. 15 how Caleb's walk at home was no exception to his testimony abroad; observe how he seeks to surround himself with associations of a like nature with himself. He will give his daughter to one who is not only worthy of Caleb's daughter, but who is distinguished by the same confidence and faith which made Caleb a crisis man. All this has its voice surely for us, beloved, in these days, when so much of the world, in one way or another, is sought after by those who, by profession at least, declare that they have been crucified to it and it to them.

We have thus examined a little of the history of the searching and possessing of the land of Canaan by these faithful true-hearted witnesses for Jehovah in their day. The Lord grant it may have been with profit, instruction, and encouragement, too, according to the power of His own Spirit who loves to communicate the things of God to the children of His love, the heirs of glory.

*Collected Writings of W. T. Turpin*, pp. 225-227, available from the publisher.

## *Spiritual Fog*

It is distressing to one's soul to see fellow-believers in the process of becoming loose and neutral in the things of God -- in what is due His holy name. It results from self-pleasing, from self-will, often covered up as being God's will. For example, it can be covered up by putting Christians before Christ. This will be done to have a wider fellowship than permitted by the Word of God, covering up the disobedience as love to fellow believers. The pretense is that I am obeying God's Word in doing it (really, doing my own will), thus, in effect, making God the author of my self-will.

I rejoiced greatly that I have found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as writing to thee a new commandment, but that which we have had from [the] beginning, that we should love one another. And this is love, that we should walk according to his commandments. This is the commandment, according as ye have heard from the beginning, that ye might walk in it. For many deceivers have gone out into the world.

Whosoever goes forward and abides not in the doctrine of the Christ has not God. He that abides in the doctrine, *he* has both the Father and the Son. If any one come to you and bring not this doctrine, do not receive him into [the] house, and greet him not; for he who greets him partakes in his wicked works (2 John).

The word "partake" is *koinoneo* and means to *make one with*. Disobedience to this Scripture means that the disobedient make themselves one with those who bring not the doctrine of Christ; i.e., with those in error on fundamental truth. This Scripture is violated all the time. Moreover, it is explained so as not to bear the true meaning and thrust. It is violated and/or explained away so as to spare self and have a wider fellowship than Scripture allows.

What attends such behavior is an awful spiritual effect upon the mind. Some kind of a fog settles upon the mind. There is an unholy mist, an unholy vapor, that diffuses itself through the mind. Spiritual matters are therefore seen differently as the spiritually fogged mind judges what is before it for consideration. Things are viewed in accordance with a looseness and neutrality in divine matters that has diffused itself throughout the mind. Spiritual delusion takes place and things seem otherwise than they are. The spiritual eyesight is sickly. What is needed is "eye-salve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see" (Rev. 3:19). This eye-salve will help us to see the force of 2 John. It will show us, as 2 John 4, 5 tells us:

that we should love one another. And this is love, that we should walk according to his commandments.

Wake up! Pretended love to others when you are not walking according to His commandments is fake love; it is feigned love.

Let love be unfeigned: abhorring evil; cleaving to good . . . (Rom.12:9).

Wake up! If you are not abhorring evil, your love is fake. Abhor evil first; then cleave to good.

Wake up! Do you not know that those who shirk these responsibilities reverse the matter and denounce those that *do* obey these Scriptures? Yes, those who stand apart from these unholy compromises are deemed to be the real offenders. Such is the thinking of those whose minds are enveloped in a spiritual fog. The fog masks the true view of the real evil.

As a help towards removing spiritual fog, a series of pamphlets is in process of preparation. Two are now in print, namely:

1. *An Exposition of 2 John With Some Comments on Gal. 5:9 and Rev. 2 & 3.*
2. *An Exposition of 2 Tim. 2:2:16-26, Purging Oneself from Evil Associations and Its Consequences.*

If the Lord will, others will follow rapidly. The next is on 1 Cor. 5. These papers are about 80 pages, \$4.00 each. Postage under \$20.00 is \$2.25; over \$20.00 10%.

20% discount on 10-25 pieces.

## *The Seven Churches*

### *Chapter 1*

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#### *Section 2: Rev. 1:4-5a: Greetings to the Seven Assemblies*

(Continued)

(1:4) John to the seven assemblies which [are] in Asia: Grace to you and peace from [him] who is, and who was, and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits which [are] before his throne; (1:5a) and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.

#### **(3) AND FROM JESUS CHRIST (1:5)**

This is the third of the three-fold source of “grace to you and peace.” And within it there is another triad, a three-fold ascription of glories to Christ, *in relation to the earth*. This cluster of titles speak of glories resulting from His coming in manhood for the glory of God. In this we shall see His moral qualification to exercise judgment, and to reign. And as we meditate on the matters being brought before us, there is a rising up of worship in our souls, which shall burst forth at the end of v. 5.

In connection with each of the three named descriptions of the Lord Jesus in v. 5, the reader will see a bold-faced phrase concerning some aspect of the manhood of our Beloved connected with that description.

#### **(1) The Faithful Witness.**

#### **The Refused Man**

#### **The Humble Man**

The description, “the faithful witness,” marks the pathway of our Beloved here on earth: <sup>1</sup>

He who comes out of heaven is above all, [and] what he has seen and has heard, this he testifies; and no one receives his testimony (John 3:32).

They said therefore to him, Who art thou? [And] Jesus said to them, Altogether that which I also say to you (John 8:25).

. . . Thou sayest [it], that I am a king. I have been born for this, and for this I have come into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth (John 18:37).

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1. It is not meant to deny that He faithfully works above (Mark 16: 19, 20) with His own, and has spoken from heaven also, all marked by that same faithfulness. But this aspect does not seem to be meant here.  
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“Faithful” indicates the contradiction of sinners that He bore. Yet not one word, or one work, did anything else than exhibit this character in Him. Other Scriptures also bear on this, but this is sufficient as showing that “the faithful witness” was the refused Man though He was the faithful witness of what He had seen and heard. His is the unspeakable, the infinite, competency to declare the Father! -- ever dwelling, uninterruptedly so, from all eternity, in the bosom of the Father.

Moreover, He was born to reign, and reign He will. They nailed Him to the tree but God brought out immeasurable glory in that very cross. And though He there died (as an act of His own will, of course, John 10:17, 18), He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (Rom. 6:4). His faithful witness led on to His death.

## **(2)The Firstborn from the Dead.**

## **The Accepted Man**

### **The Risen Man**

And as the risen Man, He acquired fresh glories.<sup>2</sup> He must have the first place in all

#### **2. Another wrote:**

But there was more. He was a faithful man; but there was an adversary who had the power of death over man, and ruled the world, and could bring the world against this witness as having the power of death. No doubt in Christ, as the faithful Witness, he had nothing; but then, if Christ had not subjected Himself to death, He must have remained alone, as we have seen, must have gone to heaven with twelve legions of angels, in the right of his own perfectness, but left us out, and the world under Satan's power. But these were not his thoughts, nor the counsel of God, nor suited to His glory: the Scriptures had spoken differently, and they are the expression of God's mind, and what could give them greater authority than this reference to them of the Lord's, *must* be fulfilled. “How, then, shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” Christ Himself, the Son of God, was to die; the Scriptures, the witness of God's mind, the truth, had said it; and He gave Himself, drank, in blessed obedience and love to His Father, the cup He had given Him to drink. But it is the special side of this which regarded His power and title over the world, and victory over the prince of it, which we are here to consider. Satan committed himself completely in the exercise of this power of death, and dominion over the world; but it was all he had. He was the prince of this world, and it was the hour of darkness. And Christ, in obedience, subjects himself to this last and absolute putting forth of Satan's whole power over men and in death, a power sustained, too, by the pronounced judgment of God. But it is with the former we have to do here, though it were nothing without this latter. But the prince of this world was judged. By death, Christ brought to nought the power of him who had the power of death. In the resurrection, He comes up in that power of life which left no trace of Satan's power behind. Indeed, according to His trust in Jehovah, no corruption passed upon Him, no moment's trace of anything that was not the power of the Holy Ghost. He gave Himself up to death, His spirit to His Father, and never saw corruption. In Him, so to speak, resurrection and transmutation { ? } were united. In resurrection, according to divine righteousness, He took the condition to which power belonged in grace. He died, and rose that He might be Lord both of dead and the living, and was competent and had title to have all power in heaven and in earth. In the passage we are considering, His ascension is not touched on, but His coming forth from the whole result of Satan's power through sin, through the work which gave the

things.<sup>3</sup> Cp. Col. 1:18. He has title to universal Lordship (Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:11) whether presently owned or not, thought it shall be by many when it is too late.

Firstborn from the dead does not mean the first one in time. No. It is a *title* of dignity and pre-eminence. So is it the case when He is called the firstborn of all creation (Col. 1:15). Most certainly this does not mean that He was a created being; He is the creator. Having created all things (John 1; Col. 1; Heb. 1), He entered that creation to display what God is. It must be Himself, the Word, for as the *Word* (an eternal, divine *name* of distinction of Person in the Godhead) He is the revealer, the communicator, of what God is. And having entered the creation, He must necessarily have the *title* of preeminence in that sphere; therefore, "firstborn of all creation" (Col. 1:15). You will recall that Reuben lost the place of the firstborn and that passed to the house of Joseph (cf. 1 Chron. 5:1-2). It may in merely human circumstances mean the first born in the sequence of time, but it need not be so. In our Lord's case, whatever sphere He enters He must have a title of preeminence. Does He have brethren? His title is "firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29).

*Only-begotten Son* is not a title. It is a name (John 3:18), a name signifying the distinction of Person in the Godhead and the relationship to the Father, in whose bosom the only-begotten Son lies from eternity to eternity, necessarily uninterruptedly so (John 1:18).

We may note (Acts 17:30, 31) that in the resurrection of Christ God has given proof that He has appointed the rejected Man to be the Judge of the world.

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## 2. (...continued)

place and power of man in the new estate in which the power of God would place him. He is the begotten from the dead, the Man who has made good, in this final and conclusive conflict, the title of God in spite of sin, and against sin; and baffled all Satan's apparent success, so that God is perfectly glorified in respect of that in which man had dishonored Him, and in which, so to speak, to the creature's view, all that God was, all His moral glory, was brought into question. Christ has taken thus the place divinely prepared for man, the headship of man according to God, the whole question of Good and Evil having been resolved by His subjection to the whole power of evil in death (in life He ever kept it at a distance in the power of the Ghost), and, divine judgment being glorified, made it possible, yea necessary, for God to bring up Him (and, blessed be God! all in Him) into the perfect place of blessing, where divine goodness could have its absolute flow, and that in righteousness, -- yea as due to Christ, and so to others as redeemed. But here, we take it as the place of power and right, according to God's counsels, in man. The Head of every man is Christ, and He will take all men out of the power of death, and Satan's power, though for the wicked it will be for judgment. He is the first-begotten from the dead (*The Present Testimony* 12:277, 278).

See also *Collected Writings* 16:220, 221.

3. We do not read in Scripture about brother Primus. We do hear of Secundus, Tertius, and Quartus the brother. However, Diotrefes "loves to have the first place among them" (3 John 9); i.e., Christ's place. He wanted to be Primus [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

**(3) And the Prince of the Kings of the Earth****The Reigning Man****The Acknowledged Man**

(Cp. Dan. 8:25). Now we come to the third of these glories of our Beloved, as connected with the earth. He must also have the preeminent title regarding government in the earth. Christ makes good all things wherein the creature has failed, and government, first given to Adam, is not an exception. Not only does He do that, but God is under obligation, so to speak, to give Him the highest place in the very world where He went down to the lowest, even the cross. He Himself said that He *must* be lifted up (John 3:14). There is another *must* that answers to that one:

For he must reign until he put all enemies under his feet (1 Cor. 15:25).

Among many references connected with this are: Psa 2; Psa. 8; Psa. 45; Zech. 6:13. Also Psa. 89:27 is very instructive.

Presently the Lord holds this title but the time of the reign has not yet arrived. He both sits at the right hand of God (Psa. 110) and in His Father's throne (Rev. 3:21). Reigning time necessarily awaits the ingathering of His fellow-heirs and then we shall sit with Him in His throne (cp. Rev. 3:21). The making good this title commences with the preparatory judgments after the time of "the things that are," followed by His personal assertion of power in Rev. 19.

While we are noticing the characteristic triads found in Rev. 1, we should not forget that "Jesus Christ" is found three times in Rev. 1 -- vv. 1, 2, 5.<sup>4</sup>

### *Section 3: Rev. 5b -6: Responsive Worship*

(5b) To him who loves us, and has washed us from our sins in his blood, (1:6) and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father: to him [be] the glory and the might to the ages of ages. Amen.

The latter part of v. 5 and all of v. 6 seem to have a parenthetical character. The book is not about the church in its relationship to the Head, since the book is governmental in character. Here, however, is injected parenthetically the heart's expression of worship. The eye of faith may view Christ in some particular glories that are His, as above, and say: that One is the One who loves me, etc. Some of the glories that are His were brought before us, and that awakens in our hearts the sense of relationship to Him whose glories they are. It is morally fitting that this be injected here.<sup>5</sup> From that awakened heart there pours out an acknowledgment of His actings for us -- forming yet another triad, the acknowledgment of a three-fold acting in blessing for us by the One of whom we have just been thinking, who has made us fit to worship,

4. The name "Jesus" is found seven times: Rev. 1:9; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10; 20:4; 22:16.

5. J. N. Darby wrote a paper, "Our Relations to Christ, Revelation 1:4-7; 22:16-21," *Collected Writings* 16:286-400, which speaks of these relations as far as they are spoken of in the Revelation. Notice that these two cases are outside of the body of the visions.



rendered to Him at the very end of v. 6. Then v. 6 is followed by the matters in vv. 7 and 8:

... followed by the testimony of what He is to the world, and to the Jews, at His coming in judgment. Then we have the seal of the eternal glory {v. 8}.<sup>6</sup>

### (1) TO HIM WHO LOVES US

It is not "that loved" us, but His love is on-going, continuous, unending. Oh, how He loves! In John 13:1 we see that He "loved them to the end." "End" does not have reference to time, but the phrase means that He loved them as going through everything for *them* -- for His own. There was nothing in us to draw out this love. Why, oh why did He, and does He, love me? Why did the Father give me as a love gift to the Son (John 17:2)?

How blessed it is to be in the enjoyment of that love *now*. Our souls shall be in the peak of enjoyment and appreciation of it for all eternity. We may think of Rev. 5 as introductory to the eternal blessedness.

When in the presence of the Lord, there is nothing prepared for God but praise and adoration: "to him be glory and dominion." The Christian remembers what Christ is for him. The Christian may sometimes say, I am not in a state to praise; he may, it is true, be more or less capable of doing it well, but he is always in a state to do it. If a man who has sinned is there in the midst of his brethren, he may be cast down in humiliation, but he is, and ought always to be, in the position to praise doubly the grace shown him, because Christ is always suitable to a sinful soul. His praises will be modified, but he will always praise.

So also, whenever a Christian is in circumstances of chastening from the love of the Father, there is some hindrance to his enjoying this gladsome liberty of the Spirit; nevertheless, because Christ has done all for him, he can always praise Him.

That which makes the thing more remarkable is, that this song is sung in heaven. Observe what is said (Rev. 5:9) to "him that sat upon the throne." Those who begin the strain sing "a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." Clearly there is but a trifling difference. They sing better, without doubt, in heaven than on earth; but it is very nearly the same song. There is no other subject of praise for heaven than for earth; the blood of Christ has the same efficacy on earth as in heaven: that for which they praise God there is equally true for us. Their harps are better tuned than ours, but their song is the same.<sup>7</sup>

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6. *Collected Writings* 11:193.

7. *Collected Writings* 16:218. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

**(2) AND HAS WASHED US FROM OUR SINS IN HIS BLOOD**

Oh, it was Himself that did it. Take the words, *He has washed us*, and repeat them four times, each time emphasizing a different word. How clean we are from our sins. The value of His precious blood has the value of the accomplished death, and has the value of the atoning sufferings; and has imparted to it the value and glory of His Person -- infinite. The cloud of the incense rose up from the hot coals that were taken from the altar and placed upon the censer, and taken into the holy of holies, with the blood of the bullock. It is the cloud of the glory of His Person, imparting value and glory to the blood, to the work of atonement. And that cloud rose up before the Shekinah (Lev. 16); for as J. T. Armet said, righteousness can meet the claims of righteousness, but only a cloud can meet a cloud. It is glory meeting glory. Think about it.

**(3) AND MADE US A KINGDOM, PRIESTS TO HIS GOD AND FATHER (V. 6)**

**A Kingdom, Priests.** Here we are not viewed as children of God or even as members of one body. Rather, we are seen in connection with Christ's office and dignity. What we are made, here, is in keeping with the character of the book, of course. Moreover, it is in keeping with the office and dignity of Christ Himself as King and Priest:

Behold Him, the subject of our songs! It is Christ; but in looking upon Him, we see what He has made us before God His Father. There is something very touching in the thoughts and the counsels of love. Love wills that the beloved shall enjoy the same blessing of glory as he who loves. Christ is from God, King and Priest, the nearest to God as King and Priest in power and in approach to Him. Well, because He loves us, He will have us placed in the same position of blessing as Himself, and we are by faith already there. Something would have been wanting to His love if He had not done it; . . . and what ought to proceed from the heart by the Spirit is praise and adoration. One may sing well or ill, high or low, according to the state of one's soul, but it is a song that ought to be sung without one discordant note.<sup>8</sup>

The following chart summarizes the differences regarding priesthood for the old Israel under the old covenant, ourselves now as partakers of the heavenly calling, and the new Israel under the new covenant.

	<b>KINGLY PRIESTHOOD</b>	<b>HOLY PRIESTHOOD</b>
Character	set forth excellencies (1 Pet. 2:9)	offer spiritual sacrifices (1 Pet. 2:5)

Israel past, during the trial of the first man	Cp. Ex. 19:6. The old Israel never attained to it	The old Israel never attained to it
Christians now, during the heavenly calling	set forth the excellencies of Christ (1 Pet. 2:9), as in the path of being strangers and sojourners here (1 Pet. 2:11), having a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1)	offer spiritual sacrifices (1 Pet. 2:5) boldness to enter the holiest above (Heb. 10:19)
Israel future, enjoying the earthly calling	"Ye shall be called priests of Jehovah; it shall be said of you: Ministers of our God. You shall eat the wealth of the nations, and into their glory shall ye enter" (Isa. 61:6)	The sons of Zadok (Ezek 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11) of the line of Phinehas, in fulfilment of Num. 25:10-15 <sup>9</sup>

Concerning the future, there are two phases to kingship and priesthood:

1. In heaven, waiting for the appearing of Christ to occur.

- a. In Rev. 4, as connected with the central throne, we have a picture of kingship.
- b. In Rev. 5 we see priestly worship.

2. During the millennium:

- a. Reigning with Christ over the earth for the 1000 years, along with the entire complement of the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4, 6). The first resurrection is *the resurrection of the just* (Luke 14:14) which includes the just ones of all times who had died and been resurrected or had been translated into glory.
- b. The earthly priesthood and worship are centered at Jerusalem.

In eternity the assembly will have a distinctive place (Eph. 3:21; cp. Rev. 21:2, 3) and its own blessedness. It is a grave mistake to think that common blessings destroy distinctive privileges and that therefore the church has no distinctive place eternally.

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9. It should be noted that when Israel is in the good of the earthly calling, Christ is priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13). The kingly and holy priesthood will derive its character from Him. Then will He be the Melchizedec high priest, under whom the sons of Zadok minister. Though they are sons of Aaron, they function, not under the Aaronic *order*, but under Christ's Melchizedec *order* of priesthood, founded on the once-for-all finished work. The millennial sacrifices take their character from this change in the *order* of priesthood and are therefore memorial of that once-for-all work on the cross.

In Rev. 1:6 the value of the act that makes the saints such is celebrated. It is not a church relationship, but rather something shared among those participating in the first resurrection -- i.e., the just.

**The Church is not a Kingdom Over Which Christ is King.** Rev. 1:6 ought not to make us think that the church is a kingdom over which Christ is a King. He is not King of the Church, but rather Head, as Scripture says, and as one would think from the fact that the church is His body, of which He is Head also from that point of view.

It is never said, He has made "it" a kingdom. He has made us a kingdom, supposing the new reading right. And this makes all the difference; because it is then, not a sphere of government, but a term of personal dignity, just as priest is.<sup>10</sup>

Keeping 1 Pet 2:5, 9 in mind is helpful here regarding the comment, "a term of personal dignity." Thus, "kingdom" does not refer to 'subjects' here, but rather to priests. It is what Israel failed to attain (Ex. 19:5, 6) under law, though on earth in the millennial day, the new Israel, the spiritual Israel, the all-saved Israel (Rom. 11:26), will be a kingdom of priests relative to the nations, as suits such a people on earth, while their approach to God is through the sons of Zadok, the holy priesthood.

At the present time, we have such a place but with higher privileges connected with these things, as having access through the rent veil, into the holiest above. In the millennium, the new Israel under the new covenant has greater blessing than the old Israel under the old covenant, but their blessing does not rise to what we have as "in Christ." It is true that the millennial temple has no veil. But it has two sets of two-leaved doors (Ezek. 41:23, 24). The entrance to the sanctuary is through a two-leaved door. Thus, there is not the access we now have, but there is greater access than for the old Israel, yet there is an earthly priesthood, the sons of Zadok. All these things are perfect in their place and show the distinction of the earthly and the heavenly callings.

It is over His earthly people, Israel, that the King reigns -- not over the heavenly people.

**To His God and Father.** This is not stated in the exact same words as in John 20:17. There, Christ is bringing the disciples into a new relationship. That is not the subject

10. *Collected Writings* 8:23. Concerning Rev. 5:9, he wrote elsewhere:

Verse 9 is literally, "and they sing." Read rather, "thou hast bought [people]. . . Thou hast made them kings . . . and they reign." All scholars suppress the "us." It is not difficult to understand, because the priests present the prayers of the saints. As to these saints on the earth, God has made them kings and priests. There was no doubt that the four and twenty elders were kings and priests; but that which was so beautiful to celebrate was, that those suffering ones, left behind awhile, were also kings and priests. There is a slight difference of reading as to "reign," or "will reign"; for my part, I think it is rather "will reign." The church is there, but not alone: all the saints of the Old Testament are there also (*ibid.*, 28:347). [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

here. Here, we are looked at as in a position of dignity and office, so to speak. For example, the 24 elders speak of maturity, dignity and office. So we read here, "to his God and Father," because our direct relationship as children of God is not the subject or point.

**TO HIM [BE] THE GLORY AND THE MIGHT TO THE AGES OF AGES. AMEN.**

Amen! indeed. Cp. Rev. 4:11; 5:13; 7:12 -- and 1 Pet. 5:11. This refers to "Jesus Christ" in v. 6. The ages of ages means eternity. Do you think that this ascription of praise will end when the new heavens and the new earth commence? What a sorry thought for the heart of a worshiper; yes, a priest to His God and Father. We shall everlastingly serve in the service of worship (cp. Rev. 22:4).

Alas for the world that knows not this blessed One. The next verse speaks of them.

To be continued, if the Lord will.

Ed.

## *Letter from an Old Disciple to a Young Sister in the Lord*

I duly received your kind and loving note. It was very welcome and very acceptable. And now, I am proving my willingness, at least, to respond to your wish, though I am nothing of a letter-writer. But I have asked the Lord to give me a word for you, and He never fails. Still, so poor and weak am I, that though He may graciously give me a word, and present a sweet and profitable line of truth for me to pursue, I may spoil it in the detail.

The flesh ever seeks to intrude itself, and if allowed to get in and show what it can say and do, the fair work of the Spirit will be marred. Hence the need, my dear young sister, of constant watchfulness and prayer.

The blessed Jesus is our perfect example in this -- watching and praying, when the deep, and dark shadow of Calvary was gathering thick around Him. He separated Himself from His disciples, that He might "offer up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared."

By watching He saw and anticipated all that was coming. By prayer He passed through it all before it came, in spirit with His Father. So when the deep trial actually came, He was perfectly prepared for it, having gone through it all beforehand in deep and blessed communion with His Father.

Hence the beautiful tranquillity of soul which He manifests in the presence of His enemies. With what sublime dignity He meets Judas, officers, men, chief priests, multitude, &c. In the calm fortitude of One who could truthfully say "Not my will, but thine be done," and who sought only the Father's glory, He could say, "Whom seek ye?" "I am He." Oh! what majesty and holy courage, combined with simple child-like dependence on His Father in heaven.

The deeper the trial, the thicker the darkness, the heavier the sufferings, He is just the

more profoundly subject to His Father's will, and the more entirely cast on Him. The Father's glory, the children's salvation, He kept full in view; which led Him to look beyond the hour and power of darkness "to the cloudless morning" when the "countless multitude" of ransomed hearts will cluster around His blessed person, beating with perfect love and endless joy to His ever blessed name, in the bright and eternal effulgence of the Father's glory. "Praise the Lord, who died to save us; Praise His name for ever dear."

This, my dear child in the gospel, is your only safe and perfect example, looking to Jesus whether joy or sorrow lies before you. Before it actually comes, seek to go through it all in secret with the Lord, so that you may not be taken by surprise and thrown off your guard when called to enter upon the scene. If you have in spirit gone through the trial with the Lord in private, He will be with you and carry you through it in public to His glory; and that's all you have got to care about it.

Read first the scene in the garden as described by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and then add John. When Christ was watching and praying, the disciples were sleeping. Ah! what a lesson. Sleepiness and self-confidence characterized the bold and loving Peter; perfect subjection to God, and simple dependence on Him, characterized the dependent "Son of man." But when the hour of conflict arrived, who stood in the fight alone? Those who had neither watched nor prayed were unprepared; therefore they all forsook Him and fled. Of the people there was none with Him. Ah! what a practical lesson we get here.

And now, my one-year-old, let me ask you, Have you learned (when you know, feel, or fear any trial or difficulty coming upon you) to go away by yourself and lay it all out before the Lord, and in true, sweet, and blessed fellowship with Him go over it all, round it all, through it all, thus honoring the Lord by watching and prayer, knowing that He will honor you, His dependent one, when the difficulty comes, or prevent it from coming altogether? Oh! how different would be our walk and testimony, our practical exhibition of Christ, were we thus to watch and pray. The blessed Lord Himself, my dear young Christian, effectually teach you by His own blessed Spirit; for I, in measure, feel ashamed to speak about things which I have realized so little. But the Lord is very patient, He has borne long with me. I know, and it is a great deal to know, that His precious blood cleanseth from all sin.

Two things make me very happy

1. I am washed in the blood of Christ;
2. I am made in Christ the righteousness of God.

Therefore I am fit to be in the holy presence of God without a veil, where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

I state this for you to try yourself on the same ground. Of course you are on precisely the same ground: so Is every believer; but all don't know it, because of looking to themselves.

May you be kept, my dear child in the faith, living, walking, and acting in the holy presence of our God and Father, with a single eye and an undivided heart for the glory of His Son, your living Savior, by the divine power of the Holy Ghost.

With very much love in Christ, I am faithfully yours in the immortal bonds of the ever blessed gospel.

A. Miller, London, 1st June, 1855.  
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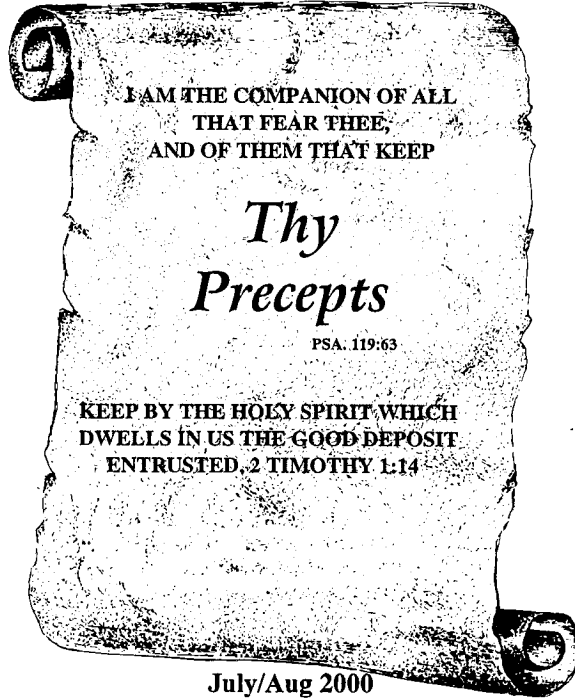
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THAT FEAR THEE,  
AND OF THEM THAT KEEP

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PSA. 119:63

KEEP BY THE HOLY SPIRIT WHICH  
DWELLS IN US THE GOOD DEPOSIT  
ENTRUSTED, 2 TIMOTHY 1:14

July/Aug 2000

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## *The Seven Churches*

### *Chapter 1*

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#### *Section 4: Rev. 1:7, 8: The Promise of Christ's Coming in Judgment, Sealed by the Eternal One*

(1:7) Behold, he comes with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they which have pierced him, and all the tribes of the land shall wail because of him. Yea. Amen.

(1:8) I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith [the] Lord God, he who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

#### **THE COMING ONE (1:7)**

What is brought out in v. 7 is the knowledge the saint has regarding the judgment on the world. We need to be morally separate from what is due for judgment.

And here is another glory of Christ as man. We saw that there is a moral necessity that He occupy the highest place in this world, where He went to the lowest. And here He is coming to take His great power and reign, making good His title as prince of the kings of the earth. It is His appearing in glory (see Rev. 19), not the pretribulation rapture. Why would you expect to find the rapture occurring as an event in Revelation? I do not mean that there is no reference to it, but the event itself is not named in Revelation. And that is appropriate; it is in keeping with the character of the book. There may be some implications about it, but no notice of the event, as such. So, of course, there is no “come, Lord Jesus” in this connection here because the rapture is not in view. The distinction between the two stages, or phases, of Christ’s coming is fully set out in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 2.

We should also note that Rev. 1:7 is not about the Jews exclusively.

**Behold, He Comes With the Clouds.** See Dan. 7:13 and Matt. 24:30. I do not think it appropriate to think that clouds here means clouds of saints.<sup>1</sup> Here it is said that He comes *with the clouds*. In Matt. 24:30 we read: “and they shall see the Son of man coming *on the clouds* of heaven with power and great glory.” It is true that in 1 Thess. 4: 17 we read: “caught up together with them in [the] clouds.” But

---

1. Sometimes Heb. 12:1 is used in support of the idea as if Rev. 1:7 “may” be “in keeping with” Heb. 12:1. Heb. 12:1 is using a figure of speech not so in the text here.

why think of clouds of saints? In Acts 1:9 we read: "a cloud received him out of their sight"; and then the disciples were told that the Lord "shall thus come as ye have beheld him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11). In *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 2, p. 51, it is noted that this refers to his coming at the rapture. I suggest that we do well to see both phases of the Lord's second coming as connected with literal clouds.

**(1) And Every Eye Shall See Him.** And thus is set aside the notion of a providential coming. Did you think this means that every eye shall see a providential coming of Christ? Do you know from the Word of God how it will be that every eye shall see him? Do you know from the Word of God that this means at the same instant? "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Now we walk by faith, with no sight. In the age to come it will not be so. Every eye, not children of God only, shall see Him.

**(2) They Which Have Pierced Him.** This is not the same thing as Zech. 12:10, which refers to the godly Jewish remnant formed after the pretribulation rapture. There we see them brought into the good of the application of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16) to themselves as they experience repentance as never before.<sup>2</sup> Rev. 1:7 is about judgment on the world that rejected Christ and on Israel that pierced Him. True, Gentile soldiers did the act, but morally it was because Israel rejected Him. Both Jew and Gentile are implicated.

But who shall endure the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he will be like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's lye (Mal. 3:2; see Mal. 4:1).

These were closing words of warning in the OT to Israel.

**(3) And All the Tribes of the Land (Earth) Shall Wail.** You will see in a footnote to JND's translation the alternate translation for "land" is "earth," which is preferred by W. Kelly.<sup>3</sup> This distinguishes all the tribes of the *earth*, from "they which have pierced him."

Is this Christ coming at the end of the millennium? Why the wailing? Is this what we are to expect if they were in the millennium of the postmillennialists, at the end of which Christ returns? Well might the tribes of the earth wail:

...at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, with [the] angels of his power, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God, and those who do not obey the glad tidings of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:7, 8).

2. The godly Jewish remnant will be those who truly answer to the Lord's words in Matt. 23:39. Matt. 26:64 seems to be a warning for those who will not say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.

3. W. Kelly's *Writings on Prophecy*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, p. 317, 1997.

**Because of Him. Yea. Amen.** See 1 Cor. 1:19, 20. Is not this John's expression of joy over these glories of Christ? His soul is at one with the purpose of God to glorify Himself in Christ.

In v. 7 we saw that Christ will come in judgment. Christ's right to so come, and all that results from it, is undergirded by the eternal One.

### **I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA (1:8)**

**I Am.** I believe that Christ is actually in view in this verse in the sense that God and Christ may be viewed as one object before the mind of the Spirit, as is the case in other passages in John's writings.<sup>4</sup> And if this be so, then we have seven special "I am" statements in Revelation (Rev. 1:8, 17, 18; 2:23; 21:6; 22:13, 16).

**The Alpha and the Omega.** These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. There is nothing before Alpha and there is nothing after Omega. In Rev. 21:6 the Lord Jesus says that He is the Alpha and the Omega. And in Rev. 1:17 He declares Himself:

*I am the first and the last.*

In Rev. 22:12 He says:

*I [am] the Alpha and the Omega, [the] first and [the] last, the beginning and the end.*

The devil's witnesses may contradict, but Scripture cannot be broken.

### **SAITH [THE] LORD GOD, HE WHO IS, AND WHO WAS, AND WHO IS TO COME, THE ALMIGHTY (1:8)**

Here we come to the end of the introductory part of this chapter, closed by the Eternal, who has made Himself known by names of relationship in the OT, Jehovah Elohim -- Lord God<sup>5</sup> -- (to Israel) and as El Shaddai -- Almighty<sup>6</sup> -- (to Abraham), Who indeed is the Alpha and the Omega, glorious in majesty and

4. J. N. Darby pointed out this:

Take the end of 1 John 2 and beginning of 3 -- in John 2:28, "he shall appear"; that is, Christ: in v. 29, saints are "born of him"; but they are "sons of God" in John 3:1; but the world "knew him not": that is, the same Person is Christ on earth. In v. 2 we are "the sons of God," but, "when he shall appear"; now it is Christ. No one can read this passage and not see that Christ and God were one Object or Person before the apostle's mind; and so at the end of the epistle, "We are in him that is true, that is, in his Son Jesus Christ: this [He] is the true God and eternal life." And even the OT knows this. In Dan. 7 the Son of man comes to the Ancient of days (ver. 13), but further on in the course of the chapter, the Ancient of days comes (v. 22). So in Rev. 1:17: "The first and the last" is "he that liveth and was dead." In Rev. 1:8, Alpha and Omega is the Almighty; in Rev. 22:12, 13, it is Christ who comes. In 1 Tim. 6:14, 16, "the blessed and only Potentate" is "King of kings and Lord of lords," but in Rev. 19:16 this is Christ (*Letters* 3:104).

5. Lord God is used nine times in the Revelation: 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 18:8; 21:22; 22:5; 22:6.

6. Almighty is used nine times in the Revelation: 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 16:14; 19:6; 19:15; 21:22.

splendor, dwelling in the beauty of holiness. It has been well said that He who bears these wonderful names has taken the place and name of Father with us (2 Cor. 6:17, 18). We should note that the meaning of Almighty includes omnipotence and one Who sustains.

Notice v. 4 where the Eternal was introduced. The epoch of the church may pass (John's day); the epoch when every eye shall see Christ may pass; the Eternal remains the same.

### ***Section 5: Rev. 1:9-11: The One in [the] Spirit on the Lord's Day and His Directions Received***

(1:9) I John, your brother and fellow-partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and patience, in Jesus, was in the island called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus. (1:10) I became in [the] Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet, (1:11) saying, What thou seest write in a book, and send to the seven assemblies: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.

#### **I, JOHN (1:9)**

At this point in time John was in the time of persecution and the time of the failure of the church on earth as viewed in responsible testimony. This is where the delay in the coming, the delay of the parousia, placed him.

**Your Brother and Fellow-partaker in the Tribulation and Kingdom and Patience, in Jesus.** A footnote in JND's translation says:

The words 'tribulation,' 'kingdom,' 'patience' are intimately connected, being brought together under one head by one article in the Greek.

This is another triad, a triad of what is connected together for those, who with John, are waiting for the coming glory. The Christian is told in the Word that he will pass through tribulation (not the great tribulation of Rev. 7:14 ) as we see in Acts 14:22. Other passages speak of it, such as 2 Cor. 4:10, 11, etc. The Lord had said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:23). And see Rom. 8:28.

It is helpful to see that the bearing of the word "patience" shows that the kingdom here is not the millennial kingdom, the kingdom in power and glory. Patience will not then be needed. Meanwhile, Christ also waits in patience for that kingdom (2 Thess. 3:5). It should be noted that Philadelphia understands this (Rev. 3:10).

**In Jesus.** It is a remarkable thing that our Lord is spoken of here simply by His human name. The significance of this is that "in Jesus" indicates that "fellow-  
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partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and patience” has the character of the Lord’s path and patience when He walked here on earth to the glory of God. (Cp. Heb. 12:2). How good it is to realize in our souls that the Lord Jesus was in the path that leads up to glory before us, and that He has left us a model that we should follow in His steps. The path John speaks of is the path the Lord Jesus trod.

The use of the name Jesus in the Revelation indicates Him as the One who walked here on earth as the faithful One. When we speak of Him without adding “Christ,” is it not sweet and appropriate also, to refer to Him as Lord Jesus?

### **WAS IN THE ISLE CALLED PATMOS (1:9)**

The Roman emperor Domitian was, after all, but the instrument of God in John’s banishment to the isle of Patmos; he had banished John to the desolate place (at least it is now), and one would hardly expect that he was sent to comfortable circumstances. Patmos is an island about 10 miles long and six wide, mainly rocky. For details, consult a Bible Encyclopedia. It was the end of any of John’s travels among the Lord’s people and was no doubt a loss of fellowship. Yet the state of John’s soul, and his communion, was not changed by these circumstances. He was in unbroken fellowship with the Lord in these trying circumstances. How blessed it is that Christ is our life and we are indwelt by the Spirit. So his body was confined to Patmos, but his soul could explore the limitless love and glories of Christ -- without restriction. On the other hand we forget that God is over circumstances and we fret, showing how often, and how little, we are in the good of the Scripture that says that He will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.

John knew that his body was for the Lord, and the Lord for the body (1 Cor. 6:13) and he acted in this way before he was confined to Patmos. He used his body for the Lord’s glory, not to please himself. Therefore it was not because of any evil act that he was sent to Patmos. And being there, he still acted in a way that showed that his body was for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

### **FOR THE WORD OF GOD, AND FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS**

**The Name Jesus.** John was there *for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus*. The name Jesus appears twice in this verse, without the words Lord and/or Christ. I hardly think it right to bandy about terms like “sweet Jesus” and use the name Jesus in some habitual manner when referring to Him. I do not see either reverence or holy intimacy in such talk. When the name Jesus is used in Scripture it directs attention to His pathway while on earth. See 2 Cor. 4:10 for an example. It is used here, and in the Revelation elsewhere, because of His pathway on earth, when known by His personal name, Jesus, as man, walking in the path of carrying out the will of God, testifying to that holy will, and being rejected. There are bondmen of God who are also in a pathway of testimony and rejection.

When the author {B. W. Newton} remarks how continually the name

of Jesus is used throughout this book, the answer is, It is never used in the prophetic part of it, but in {except in} the expression of testimony, or witnesses of Jesus. Ch. 12:17: the dragon makes war with them.<sup>7</sup> Babylon (ch. 17:6) is drunk with the blood of the martyrs or witnesses of Jesus. Ch. 19: 10: "Thy brethren which have the testimony of Jesus; for the testimony of Jesus," etc.<sup>8</sup> And it is remarkable that, in the introduction and close of the book, before and after the prophetic part where the name of Jesus is mentioned, it is always associated with this testimony; ch. 1:2, 5, 9. Christ Himself even becomes, so to speak, a prophet revealing what God gave to Him.<sup>9</sup>

**The Testimony of Jesus.** This bears on persons as bondmen, not as sons. Moreover, the bearing of the phrase is prophetic testimony, not church testimony. The character of the revelation of Jesus Christ is this: "the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 19:10). J. N. Darby has made the following helpful remarks on this matter:

Not that Christians were not witnesses to Jesus -- clearly they are, or ought to be; but that is not the character of the witness or testimony here. And the book clearly asserts that there is another kind of witness or testimony to Jesus -- the testimony found in this book; which is not by the Holy Ghost sent down for fellowship and communion, or "communications pertaining to the family," but which nevertheless constitutes persons servants. "I am *thy* [John's] fellow servant," and John was the servant of Jesus, and a witness, "and of thy brethren *the prophets*: for the testimony of Jesus is *the Spirit of prophecy*." This latter is what is called a reciprocal proposition, each member having the article; and therefore we are justified in reading it inversely: The Spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. Now here we get the declaration that this comparatively distant position, which is not for the communication of truth

7. The woman (the Jews as objects of God's purpose) and her seed (Rev. 12) are the great object of his malice; but the woman is secured, and he makes war with the remnant of her seed, characterised as having the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus (that is, as being faithful in obedience, of which the commandment of God, the law, was the measure, and walking by the light and spirit of prophecy); for the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus (*Collected Writings* 5:246).

8. Ch. 19:10. We must distinguish the prophetic Spirit from the Spirit sent from heaven. In the first case, it is the Spirit who declares things beforehand; in the second, it is the Spirit given after a work accomplished in redemption, as a seal of that work. This is important to distinguish, because the testimony of Jesus is not always the gospel (*Collected Writings* 28:356).

9. *Collected Writings* 8:42. In Rev. 22:9 we have, 'For I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book; worship God.' And again, ch. 19:10, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus." Now this is commonly taken as if the angel had the testimony of Jesus, and was himself as one of the prophets. But it appears to me the rendering is simply this: σύνδουλός σου εἰμι καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου τῶν ἔχόντων, "I am but a fellow-servant of thee, and of thy brethren the prophets"; thee and the prophets being in apposition, not the angel and the prophets: in the other, 'of thy brethren which have the testimony of Jesus,' which makes the passage very simple. (*Collected Writings* 13:24, 25).



pertaining to the family as such, is nevertheless a testimony of Jesus. In Peter I get the Spirit of prophecy, while, of course, of just as much authority, contrasted with the gospel or church testimony which pertained to the family. The Spirit of Christ in the prophets was testifying, i.e., witnessing beforehand, and ministered things which are reported by them who have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Into these things the angels desire to look; of these they are themselves the messengers, because they are not properly of the family, though everything belongs to it. A steward is for the estate: with the family concerns he has nothing to do, though the family have with the estate too. In a word, it is the Spirit of prophecy which characterizes the witnesses in this book, and not John's own proper place as an apostle in the family; and therefore he speaks of himself only as in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, and not as an apostle in the church. Christ Himself takes no character beyond what He was, or will be on earth, in His title in the address; namely, faithful Witness, First-begotten from the dead, and Prince of the kings of the earth. And the celebration of the church's association with Christ in heavenly places is in the mouth of others, and that in heaven. The opening response of the saints (ch. 1:5, 6) and the closing desire of the bride (ch. 22:17) associate the church down here with it. The character of the witnesses then throughout this book is not a church character, but a prophetic angelic character, which we find (in Peter) contrasted in its nature with the testimony of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.<sup>10</sup>

### I BECAME IN [THE] SPIRIT ON THE LORD'S DAY (1:10)

**Not "the Day of the Lord."** The Lord's day,<sup>11</sup> here, does not mean the day of the Lord.<sup>12</sup> There are those who say the day of the Lord begins at the rapture. It does

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10. *Collected Writings* 8:42.

11. See *Collected Writings* 10:301.

12. W. Kelly wrote:

I am aware that the late Dr. S. R. Maitland, followed by a very few others, ventured to deny that the expression ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ refers to "the Lord's-day," and to argue that it means "the day of the Lord," into which he supposed the prophet was carried forward in Spirit. The fact is however that, first, the expression is pointedly distinct from that prophetic phrase, ἡμέρα κυρίου with or without the article (for it is used either way according to the exact shade of thought intended); secondly, it is the form constantly and regularly used from the earliest ages to express, according to Christian feeling, the first day of the week, as Jews would say, or Sunday, as Gentiles said. Hence Justin Martyr, wishing to defend Christians and their faith before heathen, uses their term, but in a sort of apologetic way, τῇ τοῦ ἡλίου λεγομένῃ ἡμέρᾳ (Apol. i. 67, ed. Otto, 1842, i. 268-270.) Where no such motive operated, the phrase of St. John is employed, as in the alleged Epistles of Ignatius to Magnesians, ix., μηκέτι σαββατίζοντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ κυριακὴν ζῶντες; so also in Clem. Alex. Strom. v. vii. 12; in Iren. Fragm. vii., ed. Bened. 342, and in Euseb. H.E. iv. 23, 26, v. 23. There is no need to multiply later references, nor to prove that it was so understood by the Latins or by those who spoke in other tongues. It is as certain as any such matter can be that the meaning is "the

not. We are in man's day (1 Cor. 4:3). This runs until the day of the Lord supplants it. The day of the Lord will begin when the smiting stone smashes the image (Dan. 2), i.e., at the appearing of Christ in glory. The wrong notion about our verse would result in projecting the seven churches into the day of the Lord, and a form of this has actually been held by some.

**The Day Was Precious to John.** We are not told that he "was [in] the Spirit on the Lord's day" in order for us to think that he was not so on the other six days of that week. It is the assurance that he had indeed entered that state, and in that state on the Lord's day these things were brought to him.<sup>13</sup> He may have been deprived of the great privilege of remembering the Lord Jesus in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup on the first day of the week (cp. Acts 20:7), but he kept track and knew it was the Lord's day. Without making it a rule that the Lord's supper cannot be held on any day but the Lord's day, yet we might sense in our souls the moral suitability of the connectedness of the day and the supper, especially so because we read of both the Lord's supper and the Lord's day. As JND has in a footnote to his translation, it is "The 'dominical' or 'lordly' day -- characterized by belonging to the Lord, as 'Lord's,' 1 Cor. 11:20."

**Became in the Spirit.** John "*became* in [the] Spirit." (Cp. Rev. 4:2; 17:3; 21:10). It was a state into which he entered.<sup>14</sup> This brings before us that there was fresh exercise of soul. This freshness of exercise should characterize God's bondmen, of whom John was one. And why not every day? And though John is called a bondman in this chapter, he received this Revelation on the day which speaks of Christ's resurrection, and we are in Him risen also. True, the prophecy received is governmental in character, but what a blessed day to receive from the Lord communications from God.

12. (...continued)

Lord's-day," and nothing else. On that day it pleased the Lord to give His servant John in the Spirit those visions of the future which make up the book of Revelation and close fittingly the canon of scripture (*The Bible Treasury*, New Series 9:375n).

A discussion appears in *The Prospect* 1:185 rebutting James Kelly's assertions that the day of the Lord is meant.

It is startling to see that John F. Walvoord holds that the day of the Lord is meant, notes that W. Hoste did not hold this, and then states that he "does not offer any factual evidence that the expression is indeed the first day of the week" (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Chicago: Moody, p. 43, 1967). Is that what the issue devolves on?

13. It hardly needs to be said that this has nothing to do with the matter of the Christian not being in the flesh, but in the Spirit. That has to do with Christian position.

14. I find the remarks of many commentators on Scripture to be offensive. Take this example from Leon Morris:

It was also written in excitement. The writer tells us that he was 'in the Spirit'. We must not expect calm, detached, polished prose (*Revelation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 31, 1997 [1987]).  
[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

John was in severely restricted circumstances. Conditions in the Christian profession were distressing. But his soul rose above the circumstances and he became in [the] Spirit on the Lord's day. This is most precious and a very great encouragement for us.

Here only is the designation "the Lord's day" mentioned. The ruin of the church on earth, seen in responsible testimony, does not change the preciousness of this day. Do you acknowledge His day? It was even a day of proportional giving (1 Cor. 16:2).

It is a myth that the Lord's day is a Sabbath day. Spiritual alchemy may attempt to transmute the Lord's day into a "Christian Sabbath," so as to have the Christian under the 10 commandments, which requires a Sabbath; but it is a vain endeavor by those who do not rightly know what it means that the Christian is dead to the law (Rom. 7:4) and who, having Christ as his life (Col. 3:4), is under "the law of the Christ" (Gal. 6:2), the "rule" of the new creation (Gal. 6:15, 16). Happily, our Lord rose on the first day of the week and it was also on the first day of the week that the Spirit came in the special capacity to unite the saints to the Head in heaven (at Pentecost).

In Rev. 4:2 we see that John became in [the] Spirit but the Lord's day is not mentioned there. The Lord's day had special meaning to John, and should have had also to the seven assemblies; and they should have recognized the character it gave to the Lord's communications to them through John. And if there had been a true owning of, and entering into, the meaning of His day and His supper, there would have been the needed self-judgment. But Rev. 4 begins the things which are after the present epoch of the church's testimony on earth. Hence the Lord's day is omitted in Rev. 4:2.

#### **A GREAT VOICE AS OF A TRUMPET (1:11)**

It was a voice of authority, summoning John to another view; a voice conveying intelligence, not merely a trumpet sound; though the voice being as a trumpet directed his attention to one like the Son of man.

### ***Section 6: Rev. 1:12-16: One Like the Son of Man as Judge***

(1:12) And I turned back to see the voice which spoke with me; and having turned, I saw seven golden lamps, (1:13) and in the midst of the [seven] lamps [one] like [the] Son of man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle: (1:14) his head and hair white like white wool, as snow; and his eyes as a flame of fire; (1:15) and his feet like fine brass, as burning in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters; (1:16) and having

in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth a sharp two-edged sword going forth; and his countenance as the sun shines in its power.

### **REVELATION IS OCCASIONED BY FAILURE OF THE CHURCH ON EARTH SEEN IN RESPONSIBLE TESTIMONY, AND HERE CHRIST IS CONSEQUENTLY VIEWED AS A JUDGE**

The Revelation is a book of judgment. Peter said that judgment must begin at the house of God (1 Pet. 4:7); i.e., at that which stands nearest to God, though the mass of people composing that house have now merely a nominal profession.

It has been rightly observed that *the occasion of prophecy is failure*. That means that when failure has come about with respect to what God is doing, then the prophetic voice is raised, both recalling to faithfulness and pointing out the judgments of God. Additionally, the future glory may be presented. The writing of the book of Revelation is a standing witness to failure as having occurred. What failure? It is the failure and the ruin of the vessel of testimony for God in this world as a lightbearer; i.e., of the church on earth viewed in testimony.<sup>15</sup> And so

15. This is not the place to give an exposition the subject of *the church on earth*. "Church" is used in three senses in Scripture. It refers to what Christ builds (Matt. 16:18), to the local assembly (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 1:2), and also to *the assembly on earth* as in, say, Gal. 1:13, Phil. 3:6. Paul was not persecuting the local assembly as such, nor those who were already in heaven (as Stephen was). In 1 Cor. 10:12 we read:

Give no occasion to stumbling, whether to Jews, or Greeks, or the assembly of God.

Independency needs to force this to mean only at Corinth, else the text speaks of such a thing as the church on earth.

Those in heaven are of the assembly but not looked at as in its testimony and responsibility. The saints in heaven are not suffering (1 Cor. 12:26) because the church is persecuted, and Christ is persecuted. Yet, if one member suffer, the other members suffer with it. It is desperate to try to confine these things to the local assembly so as to support independency of assemblies. The 'mystical' Christ, if we may so speak, noted in 1 Cor. 12:12, is the head viewed in connection with the members on earth. These are matters of the way these things are presented in Scripture for our instruction. This leaves the departed as *of* the body but *not in the sphere of its activity*, which is here below. To illustrate this again, observe that this is the view of the body in Eph. 4 likewise:

... from whom the whole body, fitted together, and connected by every joint of supply, according to [the] working in [its] measure of each one part, works for itself the increase of the body to its self-building up in love (Eph. 4:16).

Here "the whole body" is seen in activity "of each one part" working. This is not in heaven. It is the body viewed on earth in activity; and it is called "the whole body." It is troublesome notions about "independency" and "autonomy" that interfere with the acknowledgment of this. Not "local autonomy" but rather "local responsibility" is the truth.

Moreover, in 1 Cor 12:28 the gifts are set "in the church." What church? In the church on earth where there is the ministry by those the gifts. There is no ministry by gifts in heaven. And most surely 1 Cor. 12:28 does not mean Corinth, though it does include Corinth as well as the rest of the church on earth (1 Cor. 1:2). We must also keep in mind that though at the beginning "the church" and "the

Christ has taken a new position with respect to that testimony for God. In Rev. 1 the Son of man, into whose hands all judgment has been committed (John 5), is seen in judicial attire.

We must keep in mind that what is in view in Rev. 2 and 3 is overall failure, decline, and ruin of the church viewed on earth in responsibility, as a lightbearer, with judgment at the end of the church's path in responsibility here, ending with the removal of the saints at the rapture (as we know) and the mass of profession going into the tribulation period and finally accepting the Antichrist, all dealt with at the appearing of Christ in glory. The warnings of the Judge, then, look on to the end when He will come in judgment.

### **AND I TURNED BACK TO SEE (1:12)**

There must be a significance to the fact that the voice as of a trumpet was behind John and that he needed to turn around to see that which pertains to Christ and the seven churches. The subject of the seven churches has a different character than that from Rev. 4 and on, though Christ and the seven churches necessarily has a governmental character also. The difference is noted by the two positions of John. Before turning, his position is looking to the unfolding of the prophetic events, and the introduction of the kingdom, as if the epoch of the assembly was past. But he must turn about for something else, namely for the vision of One like the Son of man in judicial character regarding the church on earth seen in responsible testimony -- as pictured by the seven assemblies. And while this has a prophetic character, the dealing with the seven assemblies is not written as predicting events, as in much of the book.

### **IN THE MIDST OF SEVEN GOLDEN LAMPS (1:13)**

Below, when we come to v. 20 we will consider the seven golden lamps. We note here that there was One in the midst of the seven lamps. Obviously, He is not inside each lamp so as to be in the midst of the lamps. This is not like Matt. 18:20 where He is in the midst in the assembly. He is here in the midst of seven lamps, the chief, central figure. Something special is signified by this concerning the meaning of the seven golden lamps.

### **THE DESCRIPTION (1:13-16)**

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15. (...continued)

body" were co-extensive, that soon changed. Make room in your thoughts for the responsibility of professing Christianity, even if there is not reality. Do not saddle yourself with the notion that every last person included among those addressed in the letters to the seven churches were true Christians. Leave room for profession -- and for the fact that there is a view of the church presented in Scripture, in responsibility, that is larger than "the Body."

The time will come for the display of all true Christians as "... the assembly, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:23). *Then* shall the assembly and the body be displayed as co-extensive, for all mere professions in the church will have been swept away.

**Like [the] Son of Man.** Below (Rev. 1:19), we note the three major divisions of the book. "What thou hast seen" is the first division and refers to Rev. 1, especially the view of the Judge. The Lord Jesus is seen in Rev. 1 as a Judge. John saw One "like [the] Son of Man."<sup>16</sup> Without the "the" this denotes *character*, the character He occupies with respect to the church on earth seen in responsibility, and as such, subject to judgment -- in particular with respect to the fall from first love in Ephesus and until the spewing out of Laodicea. The church on earth is in a ruined condition and morally He must take the position of Judge with respect to it, seen in these representative, mystic, seven assemblies. He is seen in a characteristic place, namely, in the *midst* of the seven golden candlesticks (Rev. 1:13).

This is the same One that washed John's feet (John 13) and in whose bosom he had lain (John 13:23).

In John 5:22 we learn that all judgment has been committed into the hands of the Son because he is the *Son of man*. Note, it does not say because He is man. It falls short of the mark to say that the judgment is committed to Him because He is man. "Son of man" is a broad title and it is in view of what that title signifies that is the basis for all judgment being committed into his hands.<sup>17</sup>

John's gospel especially stresses His glories as God, the Son. In Revelation, also written by John, we see manifold glories attaching to Himself as man. Here, as presented in Rev. 1, in connection with the seven churches, we note that there are nine features named, of the One like the Son of man, and they seem to fall into three sets of three.

### **(1) The First Three Features -- Personal: Judicial, Righteous, and Wise.**

1. *Clothed with a garment down to the foot.* He is seen clothed in the Judge's robe,

16. Concerning the lack of the definite article "the," before "Son of man," let us observe some comments in a footnote to this in J. N. Darby's translation:

Or 'a Son of man.' See Dan. 7:13, also without the article. It is not likeness to a person John knew, but to the character known by this title in Scripture. To have seen angels in heaven would have been no wonder, but to see one as 'Son of man' was. This chapter corresponds to Dan. 7: only now he was seen on earth. It was the title the Lord habitually took. This made it personal; but in Daniel, though surely the same person, it was characteristic. Here, too, it is characteristic. Still the person designated is now known, and it is difficult to say 'a Son of man,' because of excluding this. "Son-of-man-like is feeble, it might mean only a manner; see ch. 14:14.

The Son of man was brought before the Ancient of days (Dan. 7:22). But the Son of man is also the Ancient of Days. This involves the truth of the Trinity, though that was not unfolded in the OT. E. Dennett has good comments on this in his exposition of Daniel. Also see *Bible Treasury*, New Series 8:216-218, for a good note on the title "Son of man."

17. The reader will find much help regarding the title "Son of man" in *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 8:217-219.

not girded for service as we see Him in John 13. Some think this is a priestly robe. We do not have a priestly function here.<sup>18</sup> It is not difficult to understand a judicial garb, rather than a priestly garb. There is judgment, not any intercession at all. The ruin of the church on earth viewed in responsible testimony is what He addresses in Rev. 2 and 3, and this is not His high priestly function. That is another line of truth. John did not fall at His feet as dead because he had a priestly view here. The character of what we have here is seen in Rev. 2:23:

. . . and all the assemblies shall know that *I* am he that searches [the] reins and [the] hearts; and I will give to you each according to your works.

2. *Girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle.* He is not girded about the loins for service (cp. Luke 12:35); but love (the breasts) is girded with righteousness (a golden girdle). The outflow of love is guarded (cp. Eph. 6:14) by righteousness. Hence we read such words as "I rebuke and discipline as many as I love" (Rev. 3:19). It may be noticed that the seven angels that had the seven last plagues also had golden girdles about the breasts. There is something judicial, not priestly, in this.

3. *His head and hair white like white wool, as snow.* This reminds us of the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9) rather than how He is seen by the bride in S. of S. 5:11 where His locks are black as the raven. There He is seen as the ageless, never changing one (no white hairs), full of wisdom. Here He is seen, not only according to a symbol of maturity of judgment (though naturally speaking, maturity of judgment does not necessarily accompany white hair in us), but He is the Ancient of Days as well as the Son of man. He is God and man in one Person, for He took humanity (spirit, and soul, and body) into His Person.

## **(2) The Second Three Features – Judgment: Penetrating, Firm, and Resistless.**

4. *His eyes as a flame of fire.* (Cp. Rev. 2:18; 19:12 -- referred to three times.) Eyes, in Scripture, speak of intelligence and discernment -- here, in judgment, searching judgment that tries as the fire tries. Cp. Heb. 4:12; Psa. 139:23, 24. But it is a *flame* of fire shedding light, and light manifests the true character of everything, including the evil we allow, and with which we are connected.

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18. The fact that the Greek word for garment here is the same as the Greek word used by the (Greek) Septuagint translation of the priest's robe in Ex. 28:4 does not prove that the Lord is presented here as a priest, or as a priest-judge. The Septuagint of Ezek. 9:22 uses the same Greek word for what was worn by the man with the ink horn. What does that prove?

Also, the thought has been expressed that we have here the priest with the golden snuffers for the lamps of testimony. Here He has to do with the failed light in the world, not in the sanctuary (the tabernacle) where, moreover, there was a golden candlestick of six branches attached to the central stem, speaking of Christ Himself. For the Christian, the sanctuary is above (Heb. 8:2).

5. *His feet like fine brass, as burning in a furnace.* His feet denote firmness. Brass in Scripture is used typically as signifying judgment (as in, say, the brazen altar); and as burning in a furnace the emphasis on judgment of responsibility is intensified.<sup>19</sup> The feet indicate that He will not be moved or corrupted but stands firm regarding the responsibility He is to judge.

*His feet alone were never in need of either feet-washing or judgment, for He could not be defiled.*

6. *His voice as the voice of many waters.* (Cp. Rev. 14:2; 19:6 – this figure is used three times). This is not the voice of the Beloved as the bride in S. of S. 5:2 heard. Here is pictured the overwhelming majesty in Him (cp. Ps. 93:4; Ezek. 1:24; 43:2). As *many waters* it is resistless. Are our ears deaf to hear Him?

**(3) The Third Three Features -- Relative: Upholding, Penetrating, Manifesting (good and evil).**

7. *In His right hand seven stars.* This is the hand of power. He is sovereign and sustains the seven stars.

8. *Out of his mouth a sharp two-edged sword going forth.* Cp. Heb. 4:12, where, notice, the sword pierces. It is the penetrating judgment of the words that proceed out of His mouth.

9. *His countenance as the sun shines in its power.* This is the climax point in the description. This is the face in which they spit -- think of that unspeakable audacity. This is the face of supreme authority (the sun represents supreme, the moon derivative, and the stars lesser, authority). Light manifests the true character of all things.

This is the One Who is in the midst of the candlesticks, observing all, and pronouncing His judgment. The question is, are we conscious of this position of Christ? Do we take it into account or do we ignore this? Does this affect our

19. Some thoughts by J. N. Darby are transcribed here:

His feet, as seen here, represent judgment, not abstractedly divine in the sanctuary, but applied down here to the ways and dealings of men -- to sin, in government, and this with a peculiar character. Ezek. 1:7 and Dan. 10:6 (different in the English version) are the same; but we have here "passed through the fire." I apprehend it means here that the application of righteousness in judgment to man was according to the full absolute trial of the fire of God (i.e., judgment allowing no evil). Governmental judgment has not this character exactly. Brass is not used for immediate divine righteousness -- i.e., intrinsic divine righteousness as such, remaining immutable in itself; to be met and satisfied, no doubt, by what is suited to it, but not exercised. This last is in power and ways. But in Christ, this last had all the perfectness which that fire, which consumes all dross, has or can have. In the relative characteristics, we have maintenance, by His power, of all the subordinate administrative power of the churches; judgment, according to and by the power of the word, of what had possessed that word, and the manifestation of supreme sovereign power, as regards the whole world (Corrected Writings 11:191, 192).



conduct as individuals, in the assembly, and in our associations with Christians? It certainly affected John, who fell at His feet as dead. Lord Jesus, give us a greater sense of this, we pray.

When we consider the use of these features as brought before the seven assemblies, we will observe that they are used in the first four churches, but concerning the last three, only his title over the seven stars is used, with Sardis; while regarding the last two assemblies, only moral features are brought before them.

### **WHAT THE JUDGE DOES**

In Rev. 2 and 3 the Judge pronounces His judgment, but does not yet execute the judgment. That awaits its appointed season.

We never get the direct work of God in the seven churches, because God cannot judge His own work. He walks through and sees how this thing has turned out and how that has; but you never get a direct intervention of God . . . It is more than eighteen hundred years since it was said of the church, judgment must begin at the house of God; and for all this time God has borne with it, but assuredly the judgment of the church will come. <sup>20</sup>

To be continued, if the Lord will.

Ed.

## *Elements of Propitiation and Substitution*

## *Chapter 6*

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(Continued)

### *Isaiah 53*

It is quite clear that Isa. 53 directly concerns the Messiah and Israel. But in the NT we see that some of what we have here is also applied to Gentiles.

Isaiah portrays the Lord Jesus here as the one rejected by the Jews. However, God will have a future remnant from among them and they will be brought into an acceptance of Christ. In Isa. 53:4 we read that:

... we did regard him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But they will yet come into the understanding that Christ bore the cross for them (Isa. 53:5, 6). The words "our" and "we" in the verse refer to the remnant, not the entire nation – though when the future purging of the Jews (Ezek. 20; Zech. 13, 14) is completed, those left living will compose the nation of those that are all saved (Rom. 11:26). In these two verses (Isa. 53:5, 6) we have substitution – answering to the scape-goat of the day of atonement. The words "wounded," "bruised," "chastisement," and "stripes" are figurative words used to describe Jehovah's dealing with Him on the cross, as their substitute. Peter spoke of this when he wrote:

... who himself bore our sins on the tree ... by whose stripes <sup>1</sup> ye have been healed (1 Pet. 2:24).

These words convey to us that the Lord Jesus was bearing punishment on the cross under the hand of God.

The punishment that He endured was for "transgressions" and "iniquities" (v. 5). His soul was made an offering for sin. Concerning the word sin in v. 10, JND has a footnote which says:

*Asham*, 'trespass-offering:' see Note *b*, Lev. 5:1.

1. JND has a footnote to this word, saying:

Or, 'bruise.' Though the word is in the singular, it is literally the marks left by scourging. 'Stripe' does not convey this.

He does not mean that 1 Pet. 2:24 is speaking of literal scourging marks as healing us, but what the word means. The word is used figuratively, encompassing the sufferings under the hand of God.

So sin in Isa. 53:10 does not refer to the principle of sin in our nature as fallen (as in Rom. 6 and Rom. 8:3), but to acts of sin; i.e., sins as acts, for which Christ bore substitutionally and made restitution, as sin in the trespass offering (Lev. 5). As Peter said, He bore our sins in His body on the tree (1 Pet. 2:24).

Writing to Christians during the time while God is forming the bride of Christ, Peter speaks of Christ as having borne "our sins," not everyone's sins. The fact of a limitation is true also in Isa. 53, where Jews are in view.<sup>2</sup> If Christ bore everyone's sins, then He bore the sins of every Jew. But Isa. 53 does not support that:

... by his knowledge shall my righteous servant instruct many in righteousness:  
and *he* shall bear their iniquities (Isa. 53:11).

There is a footnote to the word "many" in JND's translation which says:

Lit. 'the many,' i.e., those that are in relationship with him.

The Jews whose iniquities Christ bore are limited – not every Jew; and thus Christ did not bear everyone's sins. Further, in Isa. 53:12 we read:

... he bore the sin of many.

No, this is not a sub-set of "He bore the sins of all." There is no such general statement, nor teaching, in the Word of God.

Stripes, chastisements, bruises, wounds, inflicted on Him, and that by Jehovah being pleased to bruise Him, surely speak of punishment, and punishment for us; for it was for our iniquities, our transgressions; and it was that which made our peace and healed us, if indeed we are healed. And this is the more distinctly and remarkably brought out, because it is in contrast with the false judgment the Jews had formed of Him -- that He was stricken and smitten of God, as suffering under His disapprobation. "We hid as it were our faces from him; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." Now they found out He had borne their griefs, and carried their sorrows: and, lest the thought might stop short at His only bearing them (for He did so bear them in the sorrow of His heart), the Spirit in them adds, "But he

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## 2. J. N. Darby wrote:

And so, when they look on Him whom they have pierced, will it be fulfilled in its direct and glorious meaning, for they above all were of the travail of His soul. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," etc. "He came unto his own," etc. So Peter in his first address. It does indeed fully, in offering of atonement apply to the Gentile, as Paul was commissioned specially to declare, i.e., the power of it, but in speciality of promise it belonged to the Jew, whose (see Romans) "the promises" were, and the "oracles of God," and "of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came," as here particularly set forth. Nor is this ever departed from in Scripture: "It was necessary that the Word of God should have been first preached unto you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so," etc., which was his special office; so here, where the general truth of Christ's mission, and the principles of divine truth exhibited in Christ, and to the Gentiles -- in a word, what we are wont to call the Gospel -- was to be set forth for the Church, as applicable to men, the larger scope of these promises, "a light to lighten the Gentiles, the glory of God's people Israel!" was not forgotten (Notes and Comments 677)

was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities," etc. And lest there should be any mistake as to whence this came, we read further, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief" (v.10). Indeed it would be mere folly to say that the wicked Jews had wounded him for their iniquities; nor could they, nor would they, say they were healed by His stripes.<sup>3</sup>

The notion that Christ bore everyone's sins involves this punishment of Christ on the cross for everyone's sins and then the sinner being eternally punished for them again when, having been judged according to his works, he is cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20). What underlies these false notions is uncleanness about propitiation and substitution.

We should beware of leveling everything so that saints of various ages all have common blessings or of the other extreme of allowing for no common blessings at all. While the Christian has blessings flowing from the cross, so does Israel. And while some are common (for example, the forgiveness of sins), there are differences. JND remarked:

As all my sins were future when He died for them, so when once I am not in the flesh all that belongs to it faith looks on as past as to atonement and righteousness when He died. For so, and so only, could they be put away. But, as risen, I come into the holiest, not only because I am cleared from sins (a process which, in itself, went no farther than judicial acknowledgment of me where I was responsible), but according to all the value of that in which Christ is entered in. This, I repeat, is our only proper present position; because the old man, who was the responsible man in this world, is viewed as dead and buried, so that we are not in the flesh. Hence, though we were responsible, and the sins were borne and atoned for, we are not at all now in the place, and condition, or nature, in which that government and dealing took place; it is over for us. The bullock, the fullest and highest value of Christ's sacrifice, is ours, and represents our present standing. The two goats clearly show that the same one sacrifice of course applies to both parts of His work; our being presented to God according to His nature, and the putting away of sin, which was inconsistent with our duty as children of Adam.

But the application is, in a measure, different when Israel comes in question: because they do not enter into the holiest through the rent veil, the new and living way. They know the value of Christ's sacrifice when He comes out, and they look on Him whom they have pierced. They are under the weight of multiplied transgressions as a nation, and stand on that ground, and in flesh -- have not to do with Christ within the veil, but when He has come out. I need not say, it is no new sacrifice. Isa. 53 presents to us their recognition of the One we already own. They are not in heavenly places in Him; but He appears to and is with them, to bless them in the earth. They are accepted according to the righteousness of God as a moral governor.<sup>4</sup>

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3. *Collected Writings* 7:66.

4. *Collected Writings* 10:202

## Chapter 7

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### *Propitiation for SINS -- only for Believers -- and, Propitiation for the World*

#### *1 John 2:2*

Commenting on 1 John 2:2, W. Kelly pointed out the difference between propitiation for the sins of believers and propitiation for the world:

... here we have another thing to observe. The apostle says that the propitiation of Christ is not for our sins only. It is also "for the whole world." Now we never find the propitiation for sins, except definitely for those that believe, as of old; now for those that are God's children. Christ is a propitiation in a general way for the whole world, but only "for our sins." There is a marked distinction, when he speaks of the whole world. This makes the putting in of "the sins" objectionable, when the world is in question. It is going beyond Scripture. If the Lord had been the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, the whole world would get its fruit and go to heaven. He bore their sins in the way He bore ours, what has God against them? He is the propitiation for our sins; He has annulled them for ever, blotting them out with His blood. Were it thus for the world, it would stand clear.

There Calvinism again is shallow, hard, and wrong. Propitiation is not merely a question of God's children. God Himself had to be glorified as to sin, apart from our salvation, His nature in love vindicated as to His worst enemies. We may see the instruction afforded on the two truths by the type on the Day of Atonement (Lev.16). On that day there were two goats for the people of Israel. One of those goats was Jehovah's lot; the other was the people's lot. Now it was only in the people's lot that all their sins were confessed. This was not the case with the first goat; and it was sacrificed. In this there appears a marked difference. As to one goat, Jehovah's lot, it was for His glory, tarnished in this world by sin, by His grace, to satisfy the exigencies of His nature. He must needs be glorified about sin. But this did not as yet take up definitely the burden of the sinner. For his remission the sins must be confessed distinctly and positively; and so Aaron did, laying both his hands on the head of the live or second goat, the people's lot. The first goat was killed, and its blood brought into the sanctuary as everywhere, within and without. Here is the propitiation in typical way, which so far makes it stand good for the whole world, that the glad tidings might be

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preached to every sinner.

The doctrine is here and elsewhere. The type of it helps to illustrate the marked difference. The sacrifice of Christ has perfectly glorified God's nature, so that He can rise supremely and send forth glad tidings to every creature. But there is something more needed for sinners to be saved. "Christ bore their sins in His body on the tree." This is never said about "the world"; there is always a sufficiently careful guard. But because God has been perfectly glorified as to sin in the sacrifice of Christ, He can by His servants, as it were, beseech and entreat even His enemies: Be reconciled to God. God's love is the spring. Christ's death is the way and basis for the gospel. It does not necessarily save every creature, but declares God is glorified in Christ. If there were not a soul converted, God would be glorified in that sweet savor of Christ.

But it is well to note that the difference is great between the two. If God left all to man, not one could have been saved. It is by grace that we are saved. To the elect He gives faith; and there is where the propitiation for our sins comes in. None with the fear of God thinks all are to be saved, or denies that grace makes the difference between a believer and an unbeliever. The Day of Atonement bore witness that the first thing was to glorify His own nature; and this apart from effacing the sins of His people. It was of still higher moment that His truth should be vindicated, His holiness and His righteousness, His love and His majesty in Christ's cross. Therein as nowhere else good and evil came to issue, for the judgment and defeat of evil, and for the triumph of good, for the reconciliation not only of all believers to God, but of all things (not of all persons), and for new heavens and a new earth throughout eternity. The basis of this was laid in what the slain goat (Jehovah's lot) typified. But in order to extricate the people from their sins, He would show them His great mercy; and so they are in the second place taken up definitely, and their sins laid on the live goat, which carried them away into a land of forgetfulness, that they might be remembered no more. It is the distinction of propitiation and substitution.

Here we read that our Lord is the propitiation for our sins, "and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." Particular care is taken not to identify God's children and the world. Hence it is not said "for [the sins of] the whole world."<sup>5</sup> There is the danger of adding to Scripture, and the duty of believing Scripture only. Man's addition makes the difficulty; adhering to God's word solves it, while it says enough to proclaim divine mercy to the whole world. There God's nature and love are vindicated. That He is a Savior God appears to all men. He sends the message of grace to every creature.

He charges all men everywhere to repent: but in order to be saved, first is the effectual call of the sinner according to the divine counsel; secondly, the working of the Holy Ghost in the heart of the believer in receiving Christ. This is not the case with "the whole world"; and it is vain to deny that which is a fact. But here we have the Scripture that explains it. When you believe in our Lord

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5. There the translators were rash [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

Jesus, we too can say, following the word, He bore your sins away; but we are not entitled to say so to the unbeliever, nor to "the whole world." Faith only is entitled to speak thus. The fact is that this type is only a particular witness to the great principle of Scripture, dogmatically laid down in the clearest terms of the New Testament. Take the distinction between "redemption" (Eph. 1:7) and "purchase" (2 Pet. 2:1): the true key, which opens the Calvinistic and Arminian dilemma. For they both confound the two truths, so that each is partially right, and partially wrong. The Lord by His death "bought" all creation, and every man of course, "false teachers" and all. It is at their everlasting peril that they deny His rights and rise up against their Sovereign Master. But none are "redeemed" save those who have through faith in His blood the forgiveness of their trespasses. Hence the Calvinist is as right in holding particular redemption, as the Arminian in maintaining universal purchase. But they are both in error when they fail to distinguish purchase and redemption. By His death on the cross the Lord added to His creator rights, and made every creature His by that infinite purchase. All are His, and not their own, as the believer only and fully acknowledges. But redemption delivers from Satan and sins; and this is nowhere the portion save by faith.

Take again another form of the truth in Heb. 2:9, 10. Christ by God's grace tasted death for every thing, including of course every man (compare vv. 7, 8). All were purchased. But the language quite differs from ver. 10, where we hear of God, in bringing "many sons" to glory, perfecting the Leader of their salvation through sufferings. When the two distinct truths are confused, not only precision is lost, but the truth suffers from the heart's lack of enlargement through knowing universal purchase, and from evaporating into vagueness through ignorance of the speciality of redemption.<sup>6</sup>

Q. 1 John 2:2. Was Christ a propitiation "for the sins of the whole world?" Does John 1:29 teach this? Does 1 Peter 2:24 apply alike to all, believers and unbelievers? W.R.W.

A. It cannot be urged too plainly or often that "the sins of" is an interpolation, not only uncalled for, but an addition which goes beyond the truth and is therefore false, as all exaggerations must be. "For our sins" is in pointed distinction. "For the whole world" is ample ground of encouragement for preaching the gospel to those who are still in unbelief, without warranting the dangerous delusion that the sins of the whole world are gone. This would naturally lead to telling every body that he is forgiven, in open opposition to the general warning of scripture to all the unconverted. Hence it is not just to confound this last member of the sentence with 1 Pet. 2:24, which rather coalesces {"coalesce" means a coming together to form a whole} with Christ's being a propitiation for our sins. He was our substitute; when men believe the gospel, we and they can say this of them. But He is a ransom for all, as He is a propitiation for the whole world. John 1:29 goes on to the complete *taking away*

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6. William Kelly, *The Epistles of John the Apostle, in loco*. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

(not “bearing our sins”) of the sin of the world, as will be manifested in the new heavens and new earth, like Heb. 9:26. The sacrifice is already offered and accepted; but all its results are not yet come and enjoyed. It will be applied to the millennial age, and completely in the eternal day. To say that judging “according to works” does not mean “sins” is mere quibbling. The “works” of the unbelievers, of the wicked, are nothing but “sins”; for which, when raised, they will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone, the second death.<sup>7</sup>

### *Propitiation for the World*

... and *he* is the propitiation for our sins; but not for ours alone, but also for the whole world (1 John 2:2).

### **DEATH, NOT BLOOD, IN PROPITIATION FOR THE WORLD**

Propitiation involves the vindication of God regarding sins outrage against His nature and majesty and glory. His sovereignty is attacked, His glory thrust aside, as far as the tendency of self-will is concerned. Moreover, His dealing with sin raises the question of the righteousness of God.

Propitiation is Godward and has to do with maintaining His glory. Because God has been propitiated, the basis for His acting in grace has been provided consistent with that glory. For the world, the gospel goes out because of the *death* of Christ. The chart below illustrates how the death of Christ and propitiation for the world are related. That is the *death*, not the blood. We are considering this in accordance with how Scripture presents this matter. The *blood* is spoken of in Scripture as connected with propitiation for the believer. That may not fit with theories we may have about this subject; but what we want is how Scripture presents the matter to faith, for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Later we shall consider how propitiation for *our sins*, and substitution for *our sins*, coalesce, forming one whole (atonement) for the believer.

Propitiation for the world (Christ died for all) lays the basis for approach to God, the gospel going out to all. Approach to God must be done in consistency with God's nature, and in accordance with His glory, and He himself has provided for that. But will man approach to God in virtue of the propitiation? There are Calvinists who say that Christ died for only the elect.<sup>8</sup> Thus they have to understand certain Scriptures differently than what they actually express. The Scripture is express that Christ died for all:

... having judged this: that one died for all, then all have died; and he died for all, that they who live should no longer live to themselves (2 Cor. 5:14, 15).

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7. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 2:302.

8. See Paul Wilson's refutation of the notions expressed by A. W. Pink, *Christian Truth* 12:275, 301. On p. 319ff he dealt with “reprobation.”



It is true that Romans looks at man as *alive in sins* (and running from God as fast as he can) but Ephesians looks at the sinner as dead: *dead in trespasses and sins* (Eph. 2:1). Man is without life towards God and is viewed as dead. In 2 Cor. 5:14, 15 we read that "all have died." That is the state of all men as regards life towards God. Now, Christ's death here is viewed as proving just that state to be the state of all men: i.e., they are all dead.<sup>9</sup> All, not the elect merely, had died. And Christ died for all those dead ones. There are some of those dead ones who receive life from God, and they should no longer live unto themselves as the rest do. There is an aspect of the death of Christ that is for all, but it is life-producing only in some cases.

In 1 Tim. 2:6 we read:

... who gave himself a ransom for all ...

This means a ransom *in place of* but not in the way of what we mean by substitution and redemption. Christ has purchased (bought) all. In Rom. 3:22 we see the distinction again:

... righteousness of God towards all, and upon all those who believe.

There is an aspect of the work of Christ that has all in view, yet the righteousness of God is only on some, i.e., on those who believe. It is *redemption* and substitution that is *particular*, i.e., specific -- for believers only.

A false view that Christ died only for the elect falsifies the love of God in John 3:16, when some take "world" to mean the 'world of the elect.' And so some take God's command to all men to repent (Acts 17:30) to mean 'all the elect.' Concerning these two verses, John Calvin held that "world" means just that; and "all men" in Acts 17:30 means just that: all men.

So there is an aspect of propitiation which is for the world, for Christ died for all men. His death, not His blood, is brought before us in Scripture, regarding this aspect of His work on the cross. Substitution as bearing our sins in His own body on the tree is only about believers, and this alone is brought before us in connection with His blood.

## WHAT BENEFIT DOES THE WORLD GET FROM PROPITIATION?

J. N. Darby did not care for this question

What benefit does the world get from [propitiation]? It puts everything on a false and low ground, as if the end and only object of God's ways -- leaving out the claims of His glory and nature in that which angels desire to look into. I agree in general with what you say; but "the Lord's lot" was not for the sins of the people, as guilt, though God's holy and righteous nature was met in respect of their sin. The blood was sprinkled first, on and before the mercy-seat -- God's throne in

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9. This fact shows that the death of Christ marks the end of the testing of the first man. The result of the testing was that all have died (or "had died"); Christ's death denotes that fact.

the most holy place where God dwelt -- and the altar of incense. The atonement was for the "holy place . . . that remaineth among them." "That is for the people," (v.15) {Lev. 16} is in contrast with Aaron and his house. But what was cleansed and hallowed was the holy place, and the altar, no doubt, because of the tabernacle being among them. As meeting God's nature and character, it was the basis of all (cp. Heb. 9:23-26 and 27, 28). The taking away the sin of the world was to have "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" -- is the fruit of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Thank God! our sins are taken away, too, but that is a different thing from putting away sin.

It is deplorable to make putting away our sins, true and blessed as it is, the end of all. God has been glorified in Him (John 13) in such sort, that Man is in the glory of God. In the scapegoat, God's people were represented in their head -- the high priest -- and those only who, as such, were identified with him. In the other there was no such representation -- a most important principle. Though the people's uncleanness were the occasion of it, it was the Lord's lot, His dwelling-place which was in question, and transgressions not in question, save as the means of its defilement; and the blood was under God's eye as the ground of all God's dealings till, and making the security of, the new heavens and the new earth. (See John 13:31, 32.) Through the cross, God Himself has been fully glorified, and in virtue of it Christ Himself has entered into the glory of God as Man, though He had it before the world was. (So Phil. 2) Man's sin was absolute, Satan's power over all the world, man's perfection absolute in Christ when absolutely tested, God's righteous judgment against sin displayed as nowhere else, and perfect love to the sinner, His majesty made good. "It became him" (Heb. 2). No doubt our sins were borne too, thank God! that we might have part in the results; but blessed as this is for us, it was really a secondary thing to the basis of the glory of God in the universe, and the bringing all into order, according to what He is fully displayed. So John 17:4, 5. But in John's gospel there is not a word of the forgiveness of our sins, save as administered by the apostles.

Finally, the people were not represented in the blood on the mercy-seat and holy place; their sins gave occasion to its being done but the cleansing was of God's dwelling-place, that that should be fit for Him, and what He was, perfectly glorified by Christ's death -- to be for ever before Him as eternal redemption. The two goats made but one Christ in different aspects. But propitiation alters the whole ground of God's dealings with man. It is the display of God's mercy maintaining God's righteousness, but opening the door to the sinner -- the ground on which I preach the gospel, and can say to every sinner, The blood is on the mercy-seat; return to God, and it will be His joy to receive you: it is not necessary for Him to judge you if you so come, for His righteousness is fully glorified, and His love free. This may bring out the evil will in man, but it is then "ye will not come to me that ye might have life." There is death in substitution -- He "bore our sins in his own body on the tree" -- "died for our sins according to the scriptures": as I have said, the two goats are one Christ.

The word "lost" is not a different word. Christ came to seek sinners, not

repentant sinners. God leads to repentance. We have the repentant sinner in the third parable -- the seeking in the two first. (Luke 15) The "lost" in them has, of course a physical sense as a figure, but there was no thought of their disposition to return. It is a miserable denial of the gospel; "God commendeth *his* love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The figure of their being carried clean away, not to be found, may be given, but that forgiveness and redemption are by blood-shedding is stated everywhere -- no remission of sins without it. "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." Luke 19:10 is also "lost" -- the same word . . . <sup>10</sup>

### *Propitiation for Our Sins*

. . . and *he* is the propitiation for our sins; but not for ours alone, but also for the whole world (1 John 2:2).

#### **PROPTIATION HAS IN VIEW GOD'S NATURE AND GLORY**

There are two aspects, or two major features, to the work of Christ on the cross: propitiation and substitution. However, concerning propitiation, there are two aspects involved:

1. Propitiation for the world -- which is not propitiation for sins.
2. Propitiation for *our sins*.

In the May/June issue a chart was presented; its purpose was to illustrate the fact that Scripture does not teach that Christ was a substitute for the sins of all persons. Below is another chart meant to illustrate the difference between "propitiation . . . for the whole world" and propitiation for the sins of believers. It should be noted that in Lev. 16 we have a type of atonement for the people of God composed of propitiation and substitution (the two goats of the one sin-offering). There is no OT type of atonement for the world, of course; but neither is there an OT type of propitiation for the world. It is in connection with the unfolding of these truths doctrinally, in the NT, that God speaks of "propitiation for the world." This subject is brought out consequent on the God-glorifying work of propitiation. This is founded on the God-glorifying work of Christ which provided the righteous basis upon which God could proclaim the gospel to all. "Propitiation for our sins" goes further and indicates that God is glorified *specifically* concerning the believer's sins. *Christ Himself is the propitiation* and this denotes the impartation of the glory and value of His Person to the work, it having the value and glory of Himself. And with respect to our sins, God's holy nature and His glory have had that very value and glory presented to Him. This is especially typified by the cloud of incense accompanying the presentation of the blood in the sanctuary rising up from the hot coals from the altar of burnt-offering and covering the very mercy-seat upon which abode the Shekinah (Lev. 16:2, 12, 13). It was glory meeting glory! Is that a coalescing of the glories?

God's nature and glory is thus necessarily satisfied and this opened access to God. But the unbeliever will not come. The believer comes and finds both propitiation and substitution for his sins by the death and blood of Him Who Himself is the propitiation; and who is in the presence of God for him as his advocate.

### WHAT ABOUT LIMITED OR UNLIMITED "ATONEMENT"?

Discussions often center on "limited atonement" versus "unlimited atonement." Perhaps there is usually confusion in this way of stating the matter. In the NT we have "propitiation . . . for the world" as well as a "propitiation for our sins." "Propitiation . . . for the world" is an *unlimited aspect* of propitiation while "propitiation for our sins" is *particular*, i.e., limited to believers, as is substitution (which involves redemption). If we understand this to be the case, we should understand that, strictly speaking, the word atonement as applied to the work of Christ, is only applicable to believers. This results in a limited atonement and yet there is an unlimited aspect of propitiation. Perhaps we can see how the phrases "unlimited atonement" versus "limited atonement" used in controversy over this subject do not do justice to this matter as not taking into account the *two aspects of propitiation*. The truth of this matter is more comprehensive than phrasing the issue the usual way in the on-going controversy over the extent of the atonement would indicate. At any rate, we are seeking understanding, and perhaps the chart below may help in that objective.

### THE LORD'S BLOOD WAS SHED AFTER HE WAS DEAD

It is instructive to observe that the Lord Jesus' blood was shed after He was dead; necessarily so. It could not be that He would bleed to death. First, that would violate John 10:18. He bowed His head; it did not droop. Accordingly, it was an act of will to deliver up His spirit

. . . and having bowed his head, he delivered up His spirit (John 19:30).

Moreover, the death and bloodshedding were distinct things and fit with what we are considering concerning His death having a bearing towards the world (and believers also, of course), but his blood was not for the world but for the believer. So His death was not by bloodshedding. While the death and bloodshedding, with the atoning sufferings, comprise the one work, these are the three elements to the one work. Only the believer has the blood applied to him.

### CONNECTION WITH CHRIST'S ADVOCACY

It would have been better to have included 1 John 2:1, 2 with ch. 1. And, the advocate is the one who rendered *Himself* as the propitiation for our sins -- sins in view of which He is the advocate. So, not only is He "Jesus Christ [the] righteous," qualified in that way to deal with the matter, but He is the very one who expiated those sins judicially. It is *Himself* that is the propitiation for our sins, imparting the glory and value of His Person to the accomplished work.

ATONEMENT ONLY FOR THE BELIEVER		
For the believer propitiation and substitution coalesce <sup>11</sup>		
PROPITIATION general	PROPITIATION for our sins	SUBSTITUTION for our sins
Propitiation for the world (1 John 2:2).	Propitiation for <i>our sins</i> (1 John 2:2; 4:10; see Heb. 2:17).	Our substitute bore <i>our sins</i> in His own body on the tree (1 Pet. 2:24). Bore the sin of many (Isa. 53:12).
This is <i>general</i> .	Propitiation is <u>Godward</u> ; He glorified God about <i>our sins</i> .	Substitution is <u>manward</u> ; He made <i>our sins</i> His own.
This meets God's glory generally.	This is <i>specific</i> .	This is <i>specific</i> .
Christ died on behalf of all men (2 Cor. 5:15).	This meets God's glory specifically.	This meets man's need specifically.
Ransom on behalf of all (1 Tim. 2:6).		Christ died on behalf of our sins (1 Cor. 15:3).
Righteousness of God towards all (Rom. 3:22).		Ransom instead of many (see Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45).
no redemption		and upon those that believe (Rom. 3:22).
		redemption <b>through His blood</b> (Eph. 1:7).

11. By "coalesce" is meant that these two truths come together and form a whole. While the death of Christ is included (of course!) the "blood" is used exclusively in application to believers, in contrast to unbelievers.

These two aspects of the work for the believer are seen in the two goats of the *one* sin-offering on the great day of atonement (Lev. 16:5). This illustrates what is meant by "coalesce" here. The blood of one goat was presented in the sanctuary (this speaks of propitiation) while the goat upon whose head the sins were confessed was sent away to "a land apart" (this speaks of substitution).

One goat brings before us the satisfaction for our sins (propitiation) while the other goat brings before us the transference of sins and guilt (substitution). See *Collected Writings* 23:265, 266 as well as 31:375, 376.  
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## THE CHART

The chart illustrates how propitiation for our sins and substitution for our sins coalesce, i.e., come together as a whole, for the believer. And, let us take note again that while the death of Christ has an aspect with the world in view, *the blood is only spoken of regarding the believer*. The blood of Christ has to do with the *application* of the work of Christ to the believer. The blood has as its value the death of Christ, which has the value of the atoning sufferings in the three hours. The blood includes all and is applied to the believer. This is true of the water of cleansing also, for out of the side of the dead Christ came water and blood. Sin had made us filthy as well as guilty and God has met all our condition. The water is not for the world anymore than the blood is. The water and blood are what is *applied* by divine grace. Properly speaking, atonement is only for the believer. What is depicted on the chart is not likely to satisfy either the Arminian or the Calvinist. The fact is that the unfolding of dispensational truth was accompanied by the more proper view of very many truths. And when we think of the unfolding of the truth of the ending, in the cross, of the first man's standing (in Adamic responsibility, under testing), there was much important gain in apprehending God's thoughts and the true Christian position. The work of Christ does entail the end of the testing of the first man; and necessarily God is glorified in the second man, under whose headship the Christian is. Hence we are to reckon ourselves dead as having died with Christ (Rom. 6); and our new position is being seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6). We are taken into favor in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6). He Himself is the measure of our being taken into favor; as also He Himself is the propitiation *for our sins* (1 John 2:2). How could anything be greater than that of which He Himself is the measure?

## PROPIATION, ATONEMENT, AND RECONCILIATION

J. N. Darby commented:

"Atonement" occurs but once in the New Testament, and there it should be (Rom. 5:11) reconciliation; and expiation occurs but once in the Bible (Num. 35:33), and that is in the margin, "no expiation for the land": so we may drop that word. Propitiation is towards God. There is the holy and righteous character of God to be met; and this is propitiation. God is not changed by it; but, being righteous and holy, this is responded to, that His love might go out according to righteousness and holiness, and mercy and righteousness be consistent. Atonement is more when the blood is applied. Blood was sprinkled upon the altar, because sin was there, blood of atonement. It is the actual putting away of sin by the sprinkling of the blood. The idea is, a thing or person is in a state in which they cannot have to say to God, as here "the iniquities of the children of Israel among whom I dwell"; and that condition must be dealt with. You must have the blood where the sin has been, you must have it for God to be in relationship with such. The blood is brought in, and the thing sprinkled, and so the thing is put right. Here reconciliation is the same word.

In the two goats are the two aspects of what Christ did. The twofold view is

most interesting; as in Christ the Apostle and High Priest, like Moses and Aaron. Atonement signifies life given and accepted as sacrifice for life forfeited; remission is the deliverance of those who appeal from the sentence of death, and thence it is the forgiveness of the sins that caused their condemnation.

“Atonement” is the greatest blunder in Rom. 5:11. We are said to be “reconciled” in v. 10. Then v.11 speaks of “our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation,” not the atonement, which has nothing to do with the sins on our side; atonement is for God.

When I think of propitiation, I think more of the person propitiated and what is due to him; reconciliation deals with circumstances too. It has nothing to do with our nature in the Old Testament. We have a nature that always likes to break the law; and we learn what that is. When I find I have a nature that cannot be subject, I say, Here is a pretty business; and this all comes out in the New Testament. The remedy is, not merely that Christ has died, and whatever Christ did is mine, but that I am dead with Him (Rom. 6).

Atonement is for guilt. When I look in the Old Testament, I see guilt blotted out, and not a nature judged; that is the thing for which the atonement provides, and I do get the blood put upon the mercy-seat where God Himself sits; and when I know what His nature is, I get the fact that here God’s nature is met, not my own dealt with as in the cross of Christ. For nature, my nature, is not known under law to be dealt with. So, if David says, “Create in me a clean heart,” would he have spoken thus, if he had known that his heart in the flesh could not be made clean? Again, if Naaman was clean altogether, it is a figure for now. But then there was no flesh lusting against the Spirit, nor even the two natures contrary one to the other, as a state existing and explained to the believer. With the new nature, I have now the privilege of knowing that the old is dead. I have the new man and the old; but the old is condemned in death. “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh”; and I not only die daily, but know that I am crucified with Christ.

The atonement is another thing; in it God’s nature is met, and this is the point. I have nothing about man’s nature; God’s nature has been dishonored by sin, and He is there sitting with things before Him which He will not stand. This is the fact, and therefore the blood is put under His eye; that is, Christ has done it, and God says, “When I see the blood, I will pass over”; but sin is all considered in the lump, so to speak here. When we find nature and conflict with nature, it is a question of the Holy Ghost. This applies to nature only in the way that it applies to sin at large

...

The scripture that made the question, whether Christ was a sin-bearer all His life, quite clear to me was, “he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” He must be proved all His life to know no sin, and then He can be made sin. To bear sins in life makes atonement without blood, but “without shedding of blood is no remission.” Why should the Lord be saved from “that hour” if it had been going on all His life? And there is another thing if followed up: it takes a person back and unites him to Christ before He died, which is false. “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it

abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”<sup>12</sup>

The reformation doctrines that Christ died to reconcile the Father to us, and the doctrine of Christ's vicarious life, contributed to some wrong views regarding atonement. J. N. Darby wrote:

The doctrine of the Reformation put forth the view that Christ died to reconcile His Father to us -- a statement every way erroneous, confounding the name of relationship in blessing with God in His nature; and teaching, what scripture does not, that Christ's work was to reconcile God to us, to change His mind. But others have used this to deny real propitiation and atonement.

“God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.” He did not need to have His mind changed. But a righteous and holy God could not pass over sin as nothing, and if God so loved, the Son of man must be lifted up. God was not (as a heathen god) one who had to be propitiated that He might not be against us; but He did require that the righteousness and holiness should be maintained in the universe. I think you will find that the New Testament never says God was propitiated, but you will find Christ was an ἱλασμός for our sins. (1 John) And that Christ was a priest ἱλάκεσθαι τὰς ἑμαρτίας. It is not, as in Homer, [Il. 4386] θεὸν ἱλάκεσθαι. We have the imperative in Luke 18 ἱλάσθητι, “Be gracious.” We have never God for the object of ἱλάκομαι in the New Testament; but we have sins; and it seems to me to set the point on very clear ground.<sup>13</sup>

He was quite correct when he wrote:

As to doctrine, we read in the second article, “That Christ died to reconcile His Father to us” -- a statement quite inconsistent with the gospel on its fundamental principle, which flows from the Father sending the Son out of His own voluntary and uncaused love. This mission of the Father from His own mind is of the very essence of the gospel; the error is an abuse of one part of the gospel, in which Christ made satisfaction for sin, to destroy another, the fountain from which it flowed, in which God gave Him so to make the satisfaction. It strikes at the root of all the liberty and settledness of peace of the people of God.<sup>14</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

The work of Christ glorified God (John 17:4) about sin, which seems to be a deeper matter than rendering a satisfaction, though that is true in itself. In Lev. 16 the cloud of incense rising up from the hot coals from the altar, before the mercy seat, speaks of Christ's glory meeting the glory of the Shekinah between the cherubim. It was glory meeting glory, as J. T. Armet pointed out. The cloud of the incense covered the mercy seat; and God look out through that cloud of glory. That cloud of incense was essential to propitiation being effected.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

12. *Collected Writings* 19:246-248

13. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:460, 461.

14. *Collected Writings* 14:151.



## *Elements of Dispensational Truth* *Romans 9-11*

### *Chapter 9.3*

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#### *Romans 11:*

#### *The Administration of Privilege, God's Ways, and Israel's Future*

#### *The Theme of Romans 11*

The heading above attempts to state, very briefly, the scope of Rom. 11. Rom. 11 takes up the principles involved in God's administration of privileges starting with Abraham and ending with the reinstatement of Israel into the place of privilege. It is most important to realize that an individual may be in the place of privilege without there being any vital relationship with God. Such was the case of the old Israel under the Mosaic covenant. Such is the case now with the Gentiledom profession of Christianity who are in the place of privilege (grafted into the Olive Tree). That there is cutting off, or out of, the Olive Tree, which is a figure for God's administration of privilege, is in keeping with the fact that privilege and a vital connection with God do not necessarily go together.

Though the state of some individuals is noted in Rom. 11, the main thrust of Rom. 11 is not about the state of individuals, but about God's administration of privilege. However, when Israel is reinstated into the place of privilege, at that time they shall all be saved under the new covenant (Rom. 11:26, 27). In that instance privilege and vital connection with God will be commensurate with each other. Now, of course, in the case of Gentiles, that is not so. The Olive Tree does not speak of vital connection with God. It most certainly does not mean the body of Christ. That cannot have members removed from it as cutting off from the Olive Tree depicts.

Romans 11 opens with a question: "Has God cast away his people?" It is true that a Jew who now rests upon Christ for the forgiveness of sins is thereupon

sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise just as are Gentiles (Eph 1:13; Acts 15:11) and is thus a member of Christ (1 Cor 12). Does this new operation of God mean, then, that God has cast away His people, Israel? We see from this that the question raised in Rom 11 involves the nation of Israel, as such. The main point is not about Jews who are presently saved. The discussion does involve the fallen nation and its future in relation to the *national* election (v. 28).

Rom. 11 opens, we noted, with a question: "Has God cast away his people?" The answer is a resounding No! The Holy Spirit gives at least five proofs that God has not repudiated *the nation*, i.e., thrust the *nation* from Himself in a final sense.

1. Verses 1-10 shows us that there is presently a saved election among them now as there had been in Elijah's day. Not a single foreknown saint is cast away.

2. Verses 11-24 shows us that Israel has not fallen in such a manner that they cannot regain their former place. Salvation to the Gentiles, during the interval of Israel's fall, is meant (among other things) to provoke them to jealousy. If they abide not in unbelief they shall be grafted in again.

3. The Deliverer (i.e., Messiah) from Zion will turn away ungodliness from Jacob and so all Israel shall be saved (v. 26).

4. "As regards the glad tidings, [they are] enemies on your account; but as regards election, beloved on account of the fathers. For the gifts and calling of God [are] not subject to repentance" (Rom 11:28, 29). Note well that the apostle applies this to *the nation* of Israel.

5. "So these also have now not believed in your mercy, in order that they {Israel} also may be objects of mercy" (Rom 11:31). Thus, the *nation* of Israel will come under mercy.

Besides this, Rom. 11 considers the Gentile privilege that has now come about. Privilege has indeed come to Gentiledom but it is not always accompanied with salvation. Hence there is a solemn warning to Gentiles lest they *also* be cut off. And indeed that cutting off will occur. Rom. 11 does not speak of the rapture or of the great tribulation. However, the fact is that the rapture will occur and the Gentile mass of profession will end up worshiping the evil Triad (the Beast, the Antichrist, and Satan), as will the mass of the Jews, during the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel. During that time God will have a remnant of the nation of Israel and *they will form the nation* under the new covenant after the Lord has appeared in glory. Gentiles from outside the apostate Gentile profession of Christianity will be blessed *through* Israel, a situation different than now -- hence Gentiles in the millennium are not accounted as *in* the Olive Tree, for the blessings to them are mediated through Israel, reinstated into their own Olive Tree.

It will be of general help to the believer to keep in mind that believers are not only and always viewed in Scripture in their body-of-Christ character. A wrong

notion about that distorts many Scriptures, including Rom. 11. The Olive Tree does not view the Jewish and Gentile believers as one body in Christ, blessed as that truth is, but it is not the only truth. Jewish and Gentile believers are alike partakers of the administration of privilege now. That privilege has a form now, in keeping with God's present work, as it had a form in OT times, and as it will have a different form in the future. The common element is that the Olive Tree signifies the administration of privilege on earth, and the principles of that administration.

Hopefully, it will be clearly seen that covenant theology cannot deal with Rom. 11 in a straight-forward manner, but must combine making the Olive Tree mean the Church, or body of Christ, often accompanied with spiritual alchemy regarding Israel.

We may divide Romans 11 into 7 subsections.

## *1: Romans 11:1-6*

### *God's Prevailing Election of Grace*

- 1 I say then, Has God cast away his people? Far be the thought. For *I* also am an Israelite, of [the] seed of Abraham, of [the] tribe of Benjamin.
- 2 God has not cast away his people whom he foreknew. Know ye not what the scripture says in [the history of] Elias, how he pleads with God against Israel?
- 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have dug down thine altars; and *I* have been left alone, and they seek my life.
- 4 But what says the divine answer to him? I have left to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed knee to Baal.
- 5 Thus, then, in the present time also there has been a remnant according to election of grace.
- 6 But if by grace, no longer of works: since [otherwise] grace is no more grace.

### **THE NATION IS MEANT BY THE "PEOPLE"**

**Israel is Always the People of God.** This may be a startling heading in view of the fact that Israel was pronounced Lo-ammi (not-my-people) in Hos. 1. If you will observe that this has to do with the transfer of government from Israel to the Gentile, and not what they are in God's mind, you will be helped in understanding Rom. 11. Much has been said in the writings of J. N. Darby on these matters, and in particular we will consider here a quotation from him introductory to a lengthy consideration of this point:

The rejection of Judah, at the time of the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and, consequently, the cessation of the application of the title

“Ammi” {my people} to the whole people, has been the universal conviction of those Christians who have studied these subjects; and this for very simple reasons. One may be astonished that any one should call it in question, but I will briefly here present some of the proofs. To give them in full and in order, it would be needful to transcribe the greater part of the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Before producing some of these, it is well to recall the fact, that Israel is always the people of God; and if the affections of the heart and of the faith of a Daniel and a Nehemiah have called them so, nothing is proved thereby. Israel cannot cease to be the people of God. “The gifts and calling of God are without repentance,” and it is of Israel that this is said. God never ceases to consider Israel as His people; but He *has* ceased to *govern* them as His people, and to have His throne in the midst of them upon the earth. Paul insists in Rom. 11 upon this point after their rejection of Christ “I say, then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid” (v. 1).<sup>1</sup>

**Rom. 11 is About Israel as the People of God.** It is very important to realize that in this chapter we have before us Israel *as a nation*. Notice in Rom. 10:21 in connection with Rom. 11:1:

But unto Israel he says, All the day long I have stretched out my hands unto a people disobeying and opposing (Rom. 10:21).

I say then, Has God cast away his people? Far be the thought. For I also am an Israelite, of [the] seed of Abraham, of [the] tribe of Benjamin (Rom. 11:1).

We learn from this that the term *people* here means *Israel*. Paul begins by asking, “Has God cast away his people?” He is talking about Israel, not about the reception of individuals. Everyone knew that Jews were blessed under the gospel. The church was formed in Jerusalem, composed of Jews. Who did not know that? Individuals from amongst the nation were blessed, and notoriously so. The answer to the question is not, “God has rejected Israel as a nation, but not as individuals; and I now cite proof that individuals are received by God.” The question had to do with the nation, as such. ‘What about the nation of Israel in view of the work God was now doing’ is the question. They are now:

As regards the glad tidings, [they are] enemies on your account; but as regards election, beloved on account of the fathers (Rom. 11:28).

Clearly, this is a national election, and this is not yet made good to them. It could not be made good to them in the past because the first man, lost, was under testing, under probation, to see if he was recoverable. The testing of Israel was the testing of the first man in their persons, in Adamic standing of responsibility. The testing of the first man ended at the cross. That did not change the purpose of God. He has interposed the heavenly calling into Israel’s earthly calling meanwhile (Heb. 3:1) and when the present work of forming a heavenly people is completed, the earthly calling will be resumed and God will form a Jewish remnant to be the

nation of Israel under the new covenant (cp. Rom. 11:26 and 27). That national "adoption" belongs to Paul's kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites (Rom. 9:4). Of course, they will be individually saved. If we refuse the spiritual alchemy that attempts to transmute Israel into the church, and if we hold fast the truth that Israel will have a distinct national place in the millennium, while the church is in glory, we shall be greatly helped in understanding the ways of God.

Paul noted he was of the tribe of Benjamin, a tribe almost exterminated. But extermination would not be allowed by God, for Benjamin must have his portion in the millennium.

### **PAUL'S CASE SHOWS IT IS A MATTER OF THE NATION, NOT MERELY INDIVIDUALS**

Paul's reference to himself as a case in point must be in harmony with what we have just considered. He does not cite his own case to show that the nation is now cast away as a nation, so as never to be restored, and that individuals are not cast away. He cited his own case to show that God is not finished with Israel. He calls himself here an Israelite, and of the tribe of Benjamin. We should recall that the tribe of Benjamin was nearly exterminated due to sin (Judges 20 & 21). But God preserved them. These things illustrate God's mercy and preservation and grace, as does the case of the 7000; which see, below.

He cites his own case, not to show that he had been received as an individual, but in proof of the interest he took in his nation, he was of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin; now what is the meaning of being of the tribe of Benjamin, if it is not the people, as people, whom God still loves? God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. What people? The people of whom He speaks in v. 1 -- Israel! One cannot doubt it when one reads the end of the tenth chapter; and I ask, if the question was about the election of individuals, what ground could there be for proposing the question whether the people of God were rejected because the Church was called? No! but in that God had reserved an election from among the people of Israel, set aside for the moment on account of its sin, He had given proof that He still thought of that people; as the case of the seven thousand in the days of Elijah also showed; moreover, the verses 26-29 leave no doubt upon the subject; for he affirms, while speaking of the future reception of Israel, that, although, as to the gospel, they are enemies for the sake of the Gentiles, as to election they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. Who would say that they who are enemies as to the gospel, yet loved for the fathers' sakes, and who thus present the proof that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, are accepted as individuals? Could any one say that this is a proof the people is rejected as a nation, though not as individuals? Would any one say that the election of individuals as to the Church is for the fathers' sakes?

I assert then, that the view referred to is altogether wide of what was in the mind of the Apostle; and attributes to him a thought which the whole chapter contradicts, and which appears altogether erroneous, if one does but take the trouble to read it; for it is clear that Israel is loved for the fathers' sakes, yet

enemies as to the gospel, is not Israel loved as individuals, but quite the contrary. Paul shows that the momentary rejection of the nation was by no means God's definitively rejecting his people; that they were yet beloved for the fathers' sakes, an elect people, the gifts and calling of God being without repentance, and he proceeds almost to state the very opposite of the view referred to; for he says, "If some of the branches were broken off;" that is, he forces himself to restrict the breaking off -- to some branches. I conclude, then, that this view transgresses against the basis of the whole meaning of the chapter, and is entirely wide of that about which the Apostle speaks.<sup>2</sup>

### WHAT DOES "CAST AWAY" MEAN?

**The Meaning of "Cast Away."** The concordance shows that the word in Greek in vv. 1 & 2 is different than that in v. 15. In vv. 1 & 2 the thought is repudiation, thrusting from God in a final sense. In v. 15 the thought is that Israel is put aside from present national favor. In vv. 1 and 2 the word is *apothomai*, which means:

... thrust from oneself, to cast off, by way of rejection, Acts 7:27, 39; 13:46; Rom 11:1, 2; 1 Tim 1:19.<sup>3</sup>

"repudiate the people Israel" Rom. 11:1f.<sup>4</sup>

to thrust away from one's self, to drive away from one's self, i.e., to repudiate, reject, refuse.<sup>5</sup>

In v. 15 the word is *apobloee* which means:

to throw off from, to lay aside, to cast away.<sup>6</sup>

The truth is that God has not cast away His people Israel in the final sense, as *apothomai* indicates. They are laid aside for the time being (v. 15) and they shall be restored, as is explicitly clear from this chapter, spite of covenant theology to the contrary. Let us be clear in our understanding of this. In v. 1, "far be the thought" that God is finally and definitively finished with Israel as a people (not a question of individuals); while in v. 15 Israel is seen as laid aside, the world comes into view before God, and then there will be the reception of Israel for which resurrection is used figuratively.

**The Idea that Israel is Cast Away Forever is a Gentile Conceit.** It is an amazing phenomenon that Christians teach that God is finished with Israel as a distinct nation. This very chapter warns against this, saying, "that ye may not be wise in your own conceits" (Rom. 11:25).

### HIS PEOPLE WHOM HE FOREKNEW (v. 2)

2. *The Present Testimony* 4:121.

3. W. E. Vine., *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 172.

4. Arndt and Gingrich, p. 103.

5. Thayer, p. 70.

6. W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 172.

**God's Foreknowledge of Israel.** Those saints who compose the church were chosen *in Christ* before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4; 1 Pet 1:20). The church will be eternally distinct (Eph. 3:21). While Israel was foreknown, the expression "before the foundation of the world" is not used concerning the nation. "From the foundation of the world" is a phrase used of Israel and also of blessed Gentiles in the future. The Gentiles who were kind to the King's brethren (the Jews in a future day) are blessed with blessings of the kingdom prepared from the world's foundation (Matt. 25:34). And concerning those who are designated as "those that dwell on the earth" in Rev. 13:8 (i.e., the apostates) we read:

... whose name had not been written from [the] founding of [the] world in the book of life of the slain Lamb.

Cp. Rev. 17:8. While we enter into rest before Israel, still the reference in Heb. 4:3, "although the works had been completed from [the] foundation of [the] world," refers to Israel's rest, which will be here on earth in the millennium.

The bride of Christ is seen symbolized by the city of Rev. 21. It is not, of course, a literal city, as Rev. 21: 9, 10 clearly shows. Rev. 21:1-8 speaks of the eternal state. There we see the holy city, new Jerusalem. This, as does Eph. 3:21, shows that the church has an eternally-distinct place -- but this tabernacle of God is said to be "with men" (Rev. 21:3). In the eternal state, Israel has no distinct place as Israel. Now, this accords with the distinction noted above. The church is foreknown in Christ, in eternity past, so to speak, while Israel is foreknown in time. Hence Israel's distinct place is confined to time.<sup>7</sup> And this accords with the distinction between the heavenly calling now (Heb. 1:3) and Israel's earthly calling.

The interested reader may also look at Matt. 13:35 and Heb. 9:26.

#### **THE REFERENCE TO THE 7000 ALSO SHOWS THAT IT IS A MATTER OF THE NATION, NOT MERELY INDIVIDUALS (vv. 2-4)**

**7000 Preserved.** Next the Apostle directs them to the case of the 7000 who bowed not the knee to Baal (*neither did they kiss him*). How does the reference to the 7000 agree with the idea that the correct answer to Paul's question is: "God has rejected Israel as a nation, but not as individuals, and I will now cite proof"? Obviously, the reference to the 7000 does not support the idea that the answer to the question is: "the nation is now cast away but God now receives individual Jews." It proves that *that* is not Paul's point. The reference to the 7000 shows that even though the nation was sunk into idolatry and only a small (but perfect in its

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7. To use the OT references to the word "forever" regarding Israel means forever as long as time continues. The reading of *eternity* into those promises leads to utter absurdities such as an eternal procreation of Israelites and idle notions about populating other planets, eternal sacrifices, etc., etc.

sum)<sup>8</sup> company was faithful, God had not cast the nation away, in the sense of definitive, final rejection.

Thus, then, in the present time also there has been a remnant according to election of grace (Rom. 11:5).

This comparison is meant to show that now also, though Israel be away from God, He has a remnant of them, and Israel is not finally and definitively repudiated.

**"I Have Left To Myself."** Israel's case was so bad that Elijah pleaded against them (1 Kings 19:14). He only was *publicly* known as Jehovah's prophet, (yet he really knew Obadiah hid 100 prophets (1 Kings 18:12, 13)). But God says, "I have left to myself . . ." That is much more than saying 'there are 7000 left.' Surely this is not a notice of what happened merely, but it notes the exercise of *the sovereignty of God*. It denotes the divine action: "I have left to myself"! It was a remnant according to the election of grace and this has God Himself in view. God takes care of His glory though man does not. Works (v. 6) are discounted in this altogether. There is in Scripture something called "dead works" (Heb. 6:1; 9:14.<sup>9</sup> These are 'meritorious works' (without merit) that one does who has no divine life from God. By way of contrast might we not call the works that result from the divine life we have, that are acceptable to God, "life works"? But they result from God's work in the soul. The works of v. 6 refer to what would merit God's favor -- really putting Him under obligation to the worker. Grace is God for us in all that He is, in spite of what we are in ourselves. This is totally unmerited on our part.

**A Remnant According to the Election of Grace.** This refers to the natural branches in the Olive Tree who were not broken out consequent upon the rejection of Christ. These are ethnic Jews who are children of God. They are noted in Rom. 2:28, 29. The reader will notice that the subject in Rom. 2 changes from the Gentiles at v. 17 to the Jews. A *true Jew* is an ethnic Jew who is a child of God. A Christian is not a true Jew, covenant theology notwithstanding. Rom. 2:17-29 addresses the Jew. Also Gal. 6:16 distinguishes "*the Israel of God*" from the Gentile believers. The Israel of God is this very election of grace noted in Rom. 11:6). Paul himself was one of them. Hebrews is addressed to Jewish believers and in Heb. 3:1 they are now partakers of the heavenly calling, a higher calling than the earthly calling of Israel.

Jewish believers are not said to be grafted into the Olive Tree as is said of Gentiles. Gentiles are cut out of the olive tree wild by nature (Rom. 11:17) and grafted in among them in the good Olive Tree. This does not make a Jew out of a Gentile.

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8. This is not a general number. And it illustrates what we have had before, and here again; namely, God's election.

9. We read of those who are "twice dead" (Jude 12). Such are (1) mere professors of Christianity who are (2) dead in trespasses and sins and are also dead in their profession.  
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**AT PRESENT THERE IS ALSO A JEWISH ELECTION OF GRACE (v. 5)**

As it was of old in Elijah's day, so is it in the present time -- there is an election of grace. Of course, the difference is that this election of grace is also incorporated into the body of Christ. The *earthly calling* of Israel has been suspended by the interposition of the *heavenly calling* (cp. Heb. 3:1) and so the present election of grace from among Israel has that heavenly calling.

**GRACE SETS ASIDE WORKS FOR MERIT (v. 6)**

Of course persons were only ever saved by the grace of God. There never was any other way. The cross showed God's righteousness in not bringing into judgment the sins of OT saints (Rom. 3:25). The cross was before His mind. So that even when Israel stood in covenant relationship under law, the saints were saved only by grace. What their actual understanding was is entirely another matter. Grace as a basis of *standing* before God, with the knowledge of sins forgiven, was brought through Jesus Christ. The Jews stood before God in Adamic standing, in the flesh, under testing, to see if fallen man was recoverable. That is not our standing now. A Christian's works are, let us call them, life-works. They result from the life of Christ in us, as standing on the known ground of grace before God, which could not be while the first man was under testing to see if he was recoverable from the fall.<sup>10</sup> But all saints are saved only by grace. There are dispensational distinctions and privileges connected with this that differ, but that is another matter. Dispensational truth never taught otherwise, although there have been those holding defective views that have said so since J. N. Darby's day, providing a cheap, but baseless, advantage to some opposers of dispensational truth

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

Ed.

---

10. John 1:17 says:

For the law was given by Moses: grace and truth subsists through Jesus Christ.

That is an immense fact, and, when rightly understood, shows numbers of fallacies in covenant theology. In a footnote to the word "subsists" JND has:

*Ginomai*, 'has come,' that which, not having actually been in being before (i.e., in the world), now begins to be so. So the Word was (v.1), but everything else 'began to be.' The world 'had its being,' 'began to be,' through Him (v. 10). He '*became* flesh' (v. 14), *ginomai*. So 'grace and truth came into being.' I am not satisfied with 'subsists,' but 'came' gives the idea of coming into the world. No doubt they did so, but the word has not this force. They began to exist *de facto* down here. The verb is singular, and 'grace and truth' go together in the person of Christ. Nothing subsisted by the law, it was a rule given; but grace and truth actually commenced to be, not in God's mind of course, but in revelation and actual existence down here. But its so taking place supposes its continuance.

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## *Two Characteristic Statements in Mark*

The book of Mark presents the Lord Jesus in the perfection of His service. He is the perfect Servant. There is a unique statement in Mark that, as has been said, gives the character of the book:

He doeth all things well (Mark. 7:37).

There is another lovely statement that is found in Mark's gospel, which says this:

What *she* could she has done (Mark 14:8).

Now, no one else's opinion about that has any weight against the judgment of the perfect Servant whose estimate of "a good work" wrought upon Himself (v. 7) is according to the balance of the sanctuary.

He does not ask for more than what she could do. Perhaps she wanted to do more, but He appreciated what she did. ***She did what she could.*** She could do no more, but it was a most excellent sufficiency for His heart. Why so? Because, "***what she could she has done***"! How could He ask for more?

It does not appear that the great Servant of God expects more than we can do. Nor does it appear that there is reason to suppose that He expects *less*. He does not expect more; what would make us think that He should be satisfied with *less*?

Do you not know that your body is [the] temple of the Holy Spirit which [is] in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own? for ye have been bought with a price: glorify God now then in your body (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

Is there not a lesson in the fact that a woman was the instrument used of God in this matter? The woman brings before us what is subjective, what answers to truth concerning the state of soul, what answers to the claims of God, what sets forth the subject heart. Our state of soul needs to be in tune with what *woman* represents according to the thought of God about us. In each Christian, man or woman, it is the bowing of the heart to the will of God in response to Himself that shows in a practical way the meaning of the woman's position.

What an unhappy state of soul it is to be chafing under the desire to do more, when we leave undone what we *could* do. It is worse yet if there is a desire for some service by which we may distinguish ourselves. We have not thus learned Christ.

Observe that her service was intelligent: "She has beforehand anointed my body for the burial" (v. 8). Moreover, she is not named. Service is not for notoriety. Cp. Mark 1:36-38 for an example from the great Servant Himself.

Ed.

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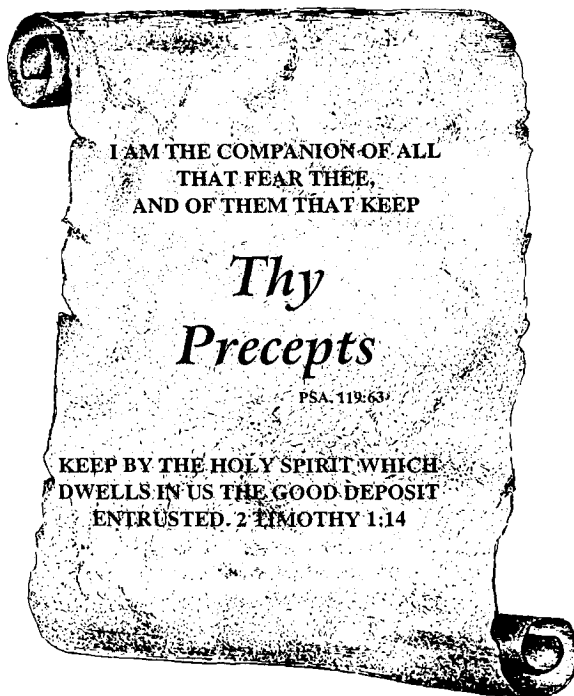
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## *The Seven Churches*

### *Chapter 1*

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(Continued)

#### *Section 7: Rev. 1:17-20: His Qualifications to Judge the Seven Assemblies*

(1:17) And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead; and he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; *I* am the first and the last, (1:18) and the living one: and I became dead, and behold, I am living to the ages of ages, and have the keys of death and of hades. (1:19) Write therefore what thou hast seen, and the things that are, and the things that are about to be after these. (1:20) The mystery of the seven stars which thou hast seen on my right hand, and the seven golden lamps. -- The seven stars are angels of the seven assemblies; and the seven lamps are seven assemblies.

#### **JOHN PROSTRATED (v. 17)**

John was not the first prophet to so react to a vision. Overwhelmed in the presence of such glory, he fell at His feet as dead. The One he saw like the Son of man is no one less than the first and the last, even the eternal One, the living One.

#### **THE DESCRIPTION OF THE LIVING ONE (vv. 17, 18)**

**He Laid His Right Hand Upon Me, Saying, Fear Not.** John was not strengthened by angelic means, as some in the OT. His right hand of power, in which He could hold the seven stars, is placed upon John for his support and strength, accompanied by His assurance not to fear. Note that He does not say to John, remember how you lay in My bosom. No. How inappropriate, unfitting, unseasonable that would have been.

The Lord Jesus describes Himself as the first and the last three times in this book (Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 22:13). It is remarkable that in Isa. 41:4; 44:6; and 48:12, we three times find that Jehovah is the first and the last. It is clear from these and other Scriptures that the Lord Jesus Christ is Jehovah, in spite of the self-

proclaimed witnesses (Jehovah's Witnesses) that deny it.

I trust I am not forcing things into a mold by suggesting that we now come to another triad of description of the One who said "fear not."

**(1) I am the First and the Last, and the Living One.**

*This is divine*; deity, from eternity to eternity, so to speak. He is the uncaused cause of all, living eternally by who He is in the absoluteness of His being. The human mind is at a loss to deal with that which is without a cause. There are some that propose that matter is eternal and that the universe goes through cycles such as the present cycle allegedly begun from the modern fairy-tale, the "big bang." Does that really solve the problem? Or does it merely hide it? Do some Christians say God originated the "big bang," in deference to the "scientific" fairy-tale? Man is necessarily an evolver, wants to be a creator, and makes of the Creator an evolver. It was the Son, in accordance with the distinction of Person in the Godhead, as the Word, who created all things (John 1; Col. 1; Heb. 1), and He has entered the creation in holy manhood to display what God is as light and love; and here He declares His competency. He shall yet judge these fairy-tales, among many other things.

**(2) And I Became Dead, and Behold, I am Living to the Ages of Ages.**

*This is human*, but could not be so without Him also being divine. Death had no claim upon Him. He became dead. It was an act of His own will of voluntary sacrifice in obedience to the Father (John 10:17, 18); and through death He might annul him who had the power of death (Heb. 2:14). Also, note in John 19:30 He bowed His head. No, it did not droop. Satan will be put in hell. And when the Lord's disciples reported how the demons were subject to them, His prescient eye saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven. That was a token of what was to come. This fall will commence in Rev. 12 and end in the lake of fire.

It is a comfort to our hearts, as it was to John, to have such a One of victorious power over death say, "fear not."

**(3) And Have the Keys of Death and of Hades.**

*This is authority*, as indicated by having the keys (cp. Isa. 22:22 and Matt. 16:19). He Who is both deity and human can administer such authority in accordance with the throne of the Eternal. He has all authority over death and destiny. It is such a One as this that laid the right hand of power on John and said "fear not."

Both death and hades speak of a state, not of places. One has to do with the body and the other with the soul and spirit. The rich man was in hades and so was the Lord. For the rich man, stripped of every comfort, it was already a state of being in torment. For our Lord it was Paradise. Notions about hades being a



place inside the earth are absurd.<sup>1</sup> The rider on the pale horse under the fourth seal was named Death, and hades followed with him (Rev. 6:8). Was hades a *place* following death around? Well, in the correct sense, yes; but not a literal hades in the bowels of the earth. Understand that death and hades refers to complementary states (one to the body and the other to the soul, respectively), and it will be clear. When hades will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20), does that mean a place inside the earth is going to be pulled out of the bowels of the earth and then cast into the lake of fire? Concerning *Christ Preaching to the Spirits in Prison*, the book by that name, written by W. Kelly, is recommended to the reader as covering views on this subject both ancient and modern.<sup>2</sup>

Christ is the resurrection and the life and has authority over death. All shall be raised from the dead, though in two distinct resurrections; distinct both in character and time. However, as to time, the first resurrection is not a point in time. It takes place in stages, Christ being the firstfruits. It is the resurrection of the just, a class of persons, and it will be complete for the millennial reign (Rev. 20). The rest of the dead, composing the resurrection of the unjust, will not live again until the millennium is over.<sup>3</sup> Then death and hades will be cast into the lake of fire, necessarily so since the body and soul will have been reunited in the resurrection of the unjust.

Happily, the Christian who dies is looked upon as having “fallen asleep through Jesus” (1 Thess. 4:14).

## THE MAJOR DIVISIONS OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION (v. 19)

Write therefore what thou hast seen, and the things that are, and the things that are about to be after these (J. N. Darby).

Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which are about to come to pass after these (W. Kelly).

Write thou therefore [the] things which thou sawest and [the] things which

1. The Scripture shows that what the OT called sheol (Psa. 16:10) the NT calls hades (Acts 2:27). The NT use of this Greek word does not mean that the Greek mythology is sanctioned by Scripture use of the word, else that would sanction Pluto as the god of the underworld. Tartarus was the lowest place in hades and this word is used in 2 Pet. 2:4, translated by JND as “the deepest pit of gloom.” No doubt that is what is meant by the Scripture use of tartarus, but certainly that does not sanction the Greek mythological notions about hades. Read W. Kelly’s *Christ Preaching to the Spirits in Prison*. It is a good antidote to ancient and modern nonsense about hades in the center of the earth, such as is found in W. R. Newell, *The Book of the Revelation*, Chicago: Grace Publications, p. 30n, 1945. Henry Morris, another pseudo-literalist in interpreting Revelation, holds similar views (*The Revelation Record*, Wheaton: Tyndale house, p. 44, 1983).

2. See also *The Bible Treasury* 19:223.

3. A full treatment of the two resurrections is found in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, vol. 2, available from the publisher. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

are and [the] things which (is) are *about* to occur after these things (Alfred Marshall's *Interlinear*).

This Scripture divides the book of Revelation into three main parts. <sup>4</sup> We have

4. Not surprisingly, this threefold division is contested. One example of wanting to make a two-fold division is connected with the following translation:

Write, therefore, the things you are about to see, that is, both what now is and what lies in the future.

What is the advantage of this? Well, the advantage is that it gets rid of what may be called the dispensational understanding of Revelation.

It recognizes that the great throne-room drama of chapters 4 and 5, the vision of the woman giving birth to the man-child in chapter 12, and much of chapter 17 belongs to the past and the present as well as the future (Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 82 (1977)).

F. F. Bruce held such a view ("Revelation," in *The New Layman's Bible Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p. 1682 (1979).

Alan Johnson discusses the question of a threefold or a twofold division, and asks the following question about the threefold view, "In the latter case, where does the chronological break take place in the book?" He points out:

Some have taken the similar but not identical phrase in 4:1 (q.v.) to mean the same as here and have rendered it "what shall take place after these present things," after the things relating to the seven churches (2-3). This results in either the historicist view of chapters 4-22 or in the futurist view of them. But if the future is simply the future visions given to John after this initial vision, then the statement has little significance as indicating chronological sequence in the book.

It is clear that he does not want such guidance from Rev. 1:19. So he concludes:

This leaves the question open concerning the structure of the book and its chronological progression, as John may have intended ("Revelation," in F. E. Gabelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, vol. 12, p. 429, 1981).

Allow one more example of how these decisions are made. Concerning the three-fold division, G. B. Caird wrote:

But this is a grotesque over-simplification . . . Chapters 2 and 3, though mainly appraisal, contain both threats and promises; and the remaining chapters include many tableaux which can only denote events already past or present at the time when John was writing. It is better to take the words **what you see** to mean the whole of John's vision . . . (*The Revelation of Saint John*, Peabody: Hendrickson, p. 26, 1966).

Perhaps what we have here is a grotesque case of deciding first for the scheme, then forcing Rev. 1:19 into submission, and denouncing as grotesque the allowing Rev. 1:19 to have its proper place in guiding the interpretation of the book.

Rev. 4:1 says:

. . . Come up here, and I will shew thee the things which must take place after these things.

There is the great chronological break, quite in accordance with the inspired statement of the three

been noticing the many triads in this chapter, and this also can hardly be without significance. And now we should notice that the book itself, whatever subdivisions and sections we may discover, is really composed of three great divisions.

The observation of the significance of this three-fold division of the book leads to understanding this book from the dispensational viewpoint. "Futurism" is not sufficient, as that may be posttribulational, and may embrace a form of covenant theology. This verse, correctly understood, also denies preterism, historicism, amillennialism, and postmillennialism. This verse, rightly understood, orients us in the direction of a dispensational understanding of the Revelation -- whatever divergences "dispensationalists" may have in viewpoints. The statement "the things that are" does point to the epoch of the church on earth, though not explicitly so. In fact, not until the history of the church on earth, viewed in responsible testimony, was advanced in time, was it was seen that there is a foreshadow presented in Rev. 2 and 3. And this way of understanding the matter has in view that Christians should always be in an expectant posture of soul, awaiting the coming of the Lord. Suitably to this, the foreshadow is veiled, not a series of predicted events (other than the judgments on evil that the Lord pronounced).

It is well to be pointed in the correct direction to begin with by the three-fold division of the book, which in the ways of God has come into clearer focus.

(1) **"What thou hast seen"** refers to John's view of Christ in ch. 1. This is the presentation of Jesus Christ in a judicial posture preparatory to exercising the judgments given in Rev. 2 and 3. It is befitting His dignity and place that this should have its distinctive place in the book as main division one.

(2) **"The things that are"** refers to ch. 2 and 3. This covers more than merely the time of these particular churches. "The things that are" indicates the period from the time of Ephesus having left first love until the rapture. The expression "the things that are" is one of the items that indicate that the seven churches form a foreshadow of the time that the church is on earth, viewed in responsible testimony. There is something about the seven assemblies that applies to the era in which we find ourselves; this is the era of the things that are. It is fitting that this second division be occupied only with that which was closest to Christ.

(3) **"The things that are about to be after these"** means the things that will follow after "the things that are." It is obvious that the second expression and also

this third expression cannot both refer to contemporaneous things.<sup>5</sup> The words "after these" means just that and not a vague 'hereafter.'<sup>6</sup>

It is instructive that Rev. 4:1 opens with "After these things I saw." Admittedly, this phrase could mean no more than he saw the visions of Rev. 4-22 after what he saw previously. But we ought to realize that there is a signification in the words in keeping with Rev. 1:19. The phrase, "the things that are about to be after these" means after the churches -- up to the rapture. These words imply that the seven churches indicate something of wider application than what is merely local. So does Rev. 4:1, the latter part, where it says "I will show thee the things which must take place after these things." After what things? -- after the churches; after the era of the churches. Of course, this is what would be expected in view of the truth of the pretribulation rapture of the saints.

In this way, Rev. 1:19 and Rev. 4:1 indicate that the churches form a foreshadow of the interval for the whole of the present period.

The third division of Revelation (Chs. 4-22) give us the Lord exercising judgment regarding the earth. This is by instrumentalities, and then by Himself personally (Rev. 19:11-21). And in it all we have views of the saints above, and the church, in the place of blessing.

### THE MYSTERY (1:20)

The "Sevens" of Rev. 1-3. The many instances of seven things in Revelation signify a completeness of something, such as the seven stars, which are viewed in two ways: *in*, and *on*, His hand. It is as grave a mistake to fasten on independency of the stars as it is to do so in the case of the lamps. That is not at all the point. Rev. 2 & 3 is the unfolding of the complete scope of God's dealings with the vessel of testimony on earth, as in a state of failure, during the epoch of "the things that are":

Here is Christ in His general character -- chief and inspector. It seems to me pretty clear that the seven churches are the moral history of the church from the time of John until the end. First, this number seven shows that it forms a whole. If it is a complete idea, it cannot be the aggregate of the church at that time, because they are totally different states. The Lord could not say at the same time, as if to the general church, "Thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam," and "Thou hast kept the word of my patience." Then, if it were only a question of those seven churches, it is incredible that He holds the seven stars, as a whole, in His hand, and that He only thinks of seven churches when

---

5. The reader should consult W. Totter, *Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects, in loco*; and *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:104, 105.

6. W. Kelly's comments on the correctness of "after these" may be found on p. 684 of *Two Nineteenth Century Versions of the New Testament*, available from the publisher.

there were thousands in the world; v. 12. The stream still runs, but the spring had dried up. Christ in these epistles, we see, will not bear with anything short of the primitive state of the church: it is that which He had set up Himself in forming the church. If they do not return, the Lord will take away the candlestick; and we find very little of repentance in the history of the seven churches. From the very first, judgment is pronounced on the church; only we have the different phases through which it passes to arrive there.<sup>7</sup>

The angels of the seven churches answer to the seven stars (Rev. 1:20). If the golden lamps are symbolical, so are the stars. The angels and the stars refers to something in two aspects.

**A Mystery is Involved in Rev. 2 & 3.** Before looking at the stars, the angels, and the lamps, some thoughts on the mystery aspect of Rev. 2 & 3 are in order. A NT mystery is a divine secret that may be known by the saints of God. This mystery indicates to us that there is something special for us, applicable to the time of "the things that are" the present period of the church on earth.

A *mystery* (Rev. 1:20) is involved here, showing that we must look for instruction beyond the mere existence of some seven assemblies (among others) in Asia Minor at the time John wrote.<sup>8</sup> The selection of seven from the total in Asia Minor, and the order in which they are addressed, are important. Each of these seven assemblies foreshadows a development in the state of the church on earth seen in responsibility, and signifies something larger and more widespread than the local state described in each respective assembly.

The seven stars are *in* His right hand of power (Rev. 1:16), held thus securely; and *on* His right hand (Rev. 1:20; JND transl.) for display in responsibility and testimony.

The seven candlesticks, or lamps, are also part of this mystery (Rev. 1:20). This give us a whole, a complete view, of characteristics and phases of the church on earth viewed in responsible testimony, utilizing the actual states of seven churches existent when John wrote.<sup>9</sup> These states may exist

7. *Collected Writings* 28:337.

8. There are those who believe in independency of assemblies who take the view that Rev. 2 and 3 give a view of the church's course until the rapture. Of course, this implicitly admits of such a thing as the church (singular) on earth. For example, John Ritchie, *A Brief Sketch of Church History*, Kilmarnock: John Ritchie, n.d., wrote that:

... they have a further application to the whole course of the Church in testimony through the entire dispensation (p. 1).

9. W. Kelly remarked:

Every believer in the inspiration of the Apocalypse of course admits the ever-living application of the moral pictures set forth in Rev. 2, 3, as is true of the Acts in the New

simultaneously in a number of local assemblies, as they obviously did in John's day, but there has been a development in church history where there are periods during which these respective states are characteristics of something wider than a locality. It has been rightly observed that the first three states were sequential and are gone, while the last four exist simultaneously though there has been a sequential development of them. They fall into four and three, as is usual with sevens. We must keep in mind that Thyatira replaced Pergamos and in that way forms a grouping with the former three. We will examine such things later.

The place these seven letters have in view of "the things that are," the position of Christ as judge, the characteristics in which He presents Himself to each of the seven assemblies, the character of His judgments, the way His coming is spoken of, the mystery-character involved, etc., all converge to direct us to the fact that something more than merely local assemblies are in view. The seven signify something other than merely themselves.

**What Is the Place of the Seven Churches?** In keeping with the character of the book of Revelation, then, He has assumed the posture of Judge and has addressed

9. (...continued)

Testament, or of the histories in the Old Testament. But the idea that the seven churches represent all churches, or the general state and character in John's day, appears to be mere confusion. The truth is, that each represents a distinct moral state, in which the professing body, wholly or in part, might be at some given time. In a word, that the local assemblies then exhibited the special features described is true; but they could not all characterize the then existing state of the church in general, because they set forth different and even opposed moral conditions. If we admit then, as we must, an enlarged application, beyond that to the actual assemblies or to mere individual conduct, the natural reference is to successive phases of spiritual condition, good or bad, in the history of the Christian profession. Perhaps the extreme partisans of the Protestant school of interpretation {historicism} are not generally aware that their learned leader, {Joseph} Mede, thus expresses himself in his more mature "Short Observations on the Apocalypse" (Works, p. 905): -- "If we consider their number being seven, which is a number of revolution of time, and therefore in this book the seals and trumpets and vials also are seven; and if we consider the choice of the Holy Ghost, in that He taketh neither all, no, nor the most famous church in the world, as Antioch, etc., and such no doubt had need of instruction, as well as those here named; -- if these things be well considered, may it not seem that these seven churches, besides this literal respect, were intended to be as patterns and types of the several ages of the catholic church *à principio ad finem*, that so these seven churches should prophetically sample unto us a sevenfold successive temper and condition of the whole visible church, according to the several ages thereof, answering to the pattern of the seven churches here? And if this be granted, viz., that they were intended to be so many patterns of so many states of the church, succeeding in the like order the churches are named, then surely the first church (viz., the Ephesian state) must be first, and the last be the last," etc. (*Christ and the Seven Churches* . . ., Glasgow: Allan, pp. 36, 37, 1868).

seven representative assemblies. There were more than seven assemblies in Asia Minor, and many more elsewhere. The choice of *seven* indicates a completeness of view. Moreover, the order is significant also, as we shall see. In Rev. 2:1 He is described as walking "in the *midst* of the seven golden lamps," which are the seven assemblies. Of course, this is altogether different from Matt. 18:20, which speaks of Himself as in the midst of an assembly gathered together unto His name. That is not the subject in Rev. 2 and 3. Here He is seen walking in the midst of *the seven* assemblies. And what is before us is the matter of answering to being a light-bearer and answering to the golden character of the lamp -- this *golden character* not signifying their state but rather *how the assemblies are constituted in the mind of God*. And, all of this signifies that there is something larger than local assemblies that is before us in Rev. 2 and 3, and that this larger thing (the church on earth of which the local assembly is the expression locally) is in the position of responsibility for bearing light. It is important to note that the seven lamps are part of a mystery (Rev. 1:20). This signifies that there is something more involved than what is merely local. Such considerations do not set aside the lessons to be learned from the conditions of the respective seven churches that have a bearing at any time while we await the soon coming of our Lord; in addition, we see in them a larger bearing between the Apostle John's day and the second coming.

The Son of man has the central place-- even in judgment upon that which bears His name as lightbearer in this world.

In 1852 J. N. Darby gave a series of seven lectures on the seven churches and these are found in *Collected Writings*, vol. 5. There is a long introduction which may be read with much profit. Here is a paragraph concerning how the seven churches are viewed:

When the churches are addressed in Rev. 2 and 3, the Spirit never speaks of grace flowing down from the Head to the members of the body; and even when we see the saints on high, they are presented, not as one body, but as separate worshipers, having an object in heaven to worship, kings and priests to God. Indeed, the Spirit does not speak of the church as the body of Christ in these addresses, but of certain companies in certain circumstances, and not as members of a body, nor of the living power of grace working down here to produce blessing; but of the conduct of those who have enjoyed the advantages of this grace when they had been set in this place of blessing. It does not speak of what the church is, but of what the church has done. It is not the church's condition as set in grace by the power of the Holy Ghost (for the Holy Ghost which had put them there is not spoken of as working, or dwelling in them); it is the church's responsibility. You will not find all through, as I said before, the Father's love to the children, nor yet the Holy Ghost, as the soul (so to speak) of the body, linking it to the Head, nor the power of grace, of which the marriage of the Lamb is the grand result. But it is the church in a given condition on the earth, subject to

judgment. There is nothing here about union with Christ. But we find this- the testimony of what Christ is to each state of things spoken of -- His present judgment of which He reveals. This makes it very simple and easy of apprehension, and also full of profit to our souls in the way of warning; while the privileges in which we are set are the spring of all blessing, which makes it so true that "the joy of the Lord is our strength."<sup>10</sup>

### THE STARS AND THE ANGELS (1:20)

The golden lamps indicate what the assemblies are in the mind of God, as light bearers, and do not indicate the state of the assembly. It is in connection with the stars that the state of the assembly is addressed, because the stars are the angels. We will consider the stars and angels together because the stars are the angels (Rev. 1:20), these two figures presenting two views of the same thing. The stars are part of the mystery (Rev. 1: 20).

**Various Interpretations of the Meaning of the Stars.** The star/angel is a *symbol* just as the 24 elders (ch. 4) are symbols, they being chiefs of the heavenly priesthood, the number 24 coming from David's ordering of the 24 courses of the priesthood. They represent the presence of the entire heavenly priesthood, composed of the raised and raptured saints at the pretribulation rapture.

The matter of the seven stars and angels has been generally felt to be difficult to understand. There have been numbers of explanations and four of them are:

- (1) The angel represents some kind of clergy office (a self-serving idea for clergymen).<sup>11</sup>

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10. *Collected Writings* 5:260.

11. Elders among the Gentiles were appointed by the Apostle or his apostolic delegate (Titus 1:5) and they having passed off the scene, there is no power or authority to appoint official elders. The moral qualifications (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1) remain and can be recognized without officiality. Those who do not see/acknowledge the ruin of the church might have thought the word "elder" or "bishop" should be here, or used instead of "angel." Such may read something official into the word angel. Of course, the school of Diotrephes has graduated officials and hierarchies after his own character. The cleric and hierarchies which assume this place shall answer Him for it. Woe to the angel of Thyatira. And the angel of Sardis was pronounced "dead" (Rev. 3:1). There may have been officially appointed elders in some, or all, of these assemblies as then existent, still alive, but such are not addressed in that way. Why? Rev. 2 and 3 has a bearing upon the various phases through which the church would pass until He comes for us and so all is presented perfectly to allow for, and make room for, the failure and its consequences. Strictly speaking, the aspect of the text that presents *foreshadow* is not stated as prediction (prophecy) in the text in order not to delay the expectation of a soon return of Christ.

Though the official phase and power of the 'apostolic' church has passed away, the Head still supplies ministry, and as well as those with moral qualifications, for the good of His own, until He come.



(2) The angel means a literal angel. Some have bound themselves by a supposed rule of interpretation that "a symbol cannot be interpreted by a symbol"<sup>12</sup> and seem thus driven to view the angels as literal spirit beings. We can immediately rule this out on two grounds:

(a) the angels are holy and sinless, yet the angels in Rev. 2 and 3 are subject to judgment.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, concerning the angel of Laodicea, the Lord said, "I am about to spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16); and,

(b) this rule is clearly falsified in the book of Revelation itself. Notice that the seven lamps of fire (Rev. 4:5) are the seven Spirits of God, which is also figurative. Also, in Rev. 5:6 the Lamb has seven horns and seven eyes which are said to be the seven Spirits of God. Here again one figure is figurative of another figure.

(3) the angel represents some person in the assembly -- this has its attraction, but I do not know how this would fit with the foreshadow view.

(4) the angel is representative of the 'spirit' of the assembly.

The angel character shows that these stand as representative of the churches concerning their states. The star is what the angel is towards the assembly but the angel speaks of what the assembly is towards God. The angel is the representative of the 'spirit' of the assembly. Ed. Dennett observed:

The angel of the church. The significance of this appellation must be gathered from its use in Scripture. First, then, we read that little children have their angels, who "always," said the Lord, "behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven" (Matt. 18:10.) When, moreover, the saints, who were gathered together praying

11. (...continued)

The angel, then, is not some presiding officer over the assembly. "There is no intimation in the New Testament that any one person took such a place over any assembly, except one, and he is distinctly condemned for so doing. (See 3 John 9.)"

12. For example, W. Hoste, *The Visions of John the Divine*, Kilmarnock, John Ritchie, p. 18, n.d.

13. As an example of the working of psuedo-literalism, take this remark by Henry Morris:

The principle of natural, literal interpretation seems to require us to understand here that true churches of the Lord have individual angels assigned for their guidance and watch-care (*The Revelation Record*, Wheaton: Tyndale house, p. 45, 1983).

Beside the error about angels, note that "churches of the Lord" is an unscriptural thought. But more, this, in effect, declares Thyatira and Laodicea to be "true churches of the Lord," because they each had an angel! And Herman A Hoyt wrote:

"... represent angelic creatures in spectacular performance as they exercise custody over the churches (*Studies in Revelation*, Winona Lake: BMH Boks, p. 27, 1977).

Alan Johnson, not a psuedo-literalist, of course, takes the same view but due to other considerations (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishers, 1979).

for Peter, were told that he was at the door, they in their unbelief said it was "his angel" (Cp. Dan. 10:13; 12:1). From these instances it would seem that an angel, in this sense is the representative of another, "the mystical representative of one not actually seen." But the word is also used (and this indeed is its simple meaning) for a messenger, whether heavenly or earthly. As an example of the latter, we read in James of Rahab receiving the messenger. The angel of the church would be thus its representative before God . . . <sup>14</sup>

To this we add some thoughts from J. N. Darby:

The angels stand as moral representatives of the churches. They are addressed -- not the letter sent by them -- and they are owned of Christ. They are stars (that is, subordinate authority, but in the character of heavenly light and order in the darkness) *in His hand*; so that we must see that which should stand as a representative authority before Christ, and in His hand. But the church is that which is judged, and, as has been remarked by another, whenever judgment is threatened, it is not on the angel; it is, in fact, on the church, or a guilty part of it. The angels stand, therefore, as the accepted representatives of the churches. Both they and the churches are seen in the mind of Christ and of God. The stars are in Christ's right hand, and the candlesticks are golden. Both are looked at abstractedly . . .

So the star is that which has the authority of Christ in the church, and stands before Him as representing it, but cannot be separated, in idea, from the church itself. I say this, because I find "Thou hast left thy first love." Who? the angel: so it is said; but surely the church as such. Yet it is "thy candlestick," that is, its public acknowledged status before the world as light-bearer. So that what the ear that can hear is to hear is what is said to the *churches*, but all is said to the angel. So to Smyrna, "Fear none of those things which *thou* shalt suffer; Satan shall cast of you," etc. Similar things are found in Thyatira. So in Pergamos, "Antipas was slain among you." Indeed, it is impossible to read the epistles to the churches without seeing that the angel and the churches are identified; only that the angel is looked at abstractedly in its representative character, the churches dealt with in their actual state, and as composed of individuals. The whole body is responsible, and dealt with in detail of judgment; but Christ looks at the ideal responsible personage: a thought which will be in fact realized by every one that hears His words. An individual may be in this, if he be the intelligent vessel of Christ's mind, in the midst of an assembly; so all those who are so. But the assembly is responsible, and all that hear Christ's warning. <sup>15</sup>

We can learn something from the figurative use of stars in the Scripture. In Gen. 1 the stars are lesser lights even than the moon (we must view it phenomenally) which is said to rule the night (Gen. 1:16). Christ, the sun, is

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14. *The Seven Churches*, London: Morrish, pp. 20, 21, n..d. See J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings* 5:268.

15. *Collected Writings* 30:332-333. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

supreme. The moon, which appears to be a ruin by nature, reflects the sun's light and so the church on earth ought to reflect the light of the Son during this night season of the world. The stars picture individual, lesser lights.

In Joseph's dream, the sun represented Jacob, the moon, Joseph's mother, and the 12 stars the sons of Jacob. Cp. Rev. 12:1 where we see this again. In Revelation, stars are used for lesser, derivative authorities, supposed to render light in the night. These are subordinate governmental authorities. Jude 13 refers to certain evil persons as wandering stars. Our Beloved is called the bright and morning star (Rev. 2:8; 22:16), the One Who will come for us in the dark night of this world, before He bursts forth in splendor as the Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2) in millennial glory. It is clear that in Revelation a star may symbolize what is not in vital relationship to God, though indicating something that ought to give light.

The sphere of responsibility of the stars in Rev. 2 and 3, and their action, is the assembly. This responsibility and action is two-fold. First, we may speak of giving light. Though the light of a star is dwarfed by the sun, its light is of the same character and is seen during the sun's absence. It is during the present night season that there is responsibility in ministering light by the assembly. Sadly, there may be a pandering to low state, which only furthers the decline. An assembly may form its ministers of the Word of God who in turn foster the assembly in doing this, in a downward spiral. What of pandering to youth and feeding pabulum to the saints? But let us forbear. It is well when a ministry of Christ -- which must *necessarily* include *what is due to Christ*, thus excluding any pandering to, or setting up of, the first man -- is before those set to give light in the world.

Second, the stars are symbolic of responsibility to maintain order in the assembly in a governmental way.

The stars are in the hand of Him Who walks in the midst of the lampstands. This is the One to Whom they are subordinate and subject to His will and sustainment.

Notice that to Ephesus Christ is presented as having the seven stars in His right hand. But to Sardis it is only said that they are His. This change denotes the decline.

While the angel is held especially responsible for the state addressed by Him Who walks in the midst of the golden lamps, all persons, individually, are accountable as is clearly and emphatically seen in the repeated statement, "He that has an ear to hear . . .," tells us that though the angel is addressed, the Spirit speaks to the assemblies; and, if we have an ear to hear, we are to hear all seven of the Spirit's addresses to the assemblies. Surely we are to hear so that we profit from it in our walk. This comports with the fact that the angel represents the spirit

of the assembly.

Indeed, it is impossible to read the epistles to the churches without seeing that the angel and the churches are identified; only that the angel is looked at abstractedly in its representative character, the churches dealt with in their actual state, and as composed of individuals. The whole body is responsible, and dealt with in detail of judgment; but Christ looks at the ideal responsible personage: a thought which will be in fact realized by every one that hears His words. An individual may be in this, if he be the intelligent vessel of Christ's mind, in the midst of an assembly; so all those who are so. But the assembly is responsible, and all that hear Christ's warning.<sup>16</sup>

There is something to be noted concerning the angels and the promises:

As a rule no promises are made to the angels; but Smyrna and Philadelphia are exceptions to this. To the representatives of these two assemblies promises are made. In the case of Smyrna it is the crown of life if faithful unto death; a mark of approval to be bestowed on those who endure temptation. (Rev. 2:10; James 1:12.) In the case of Philadelphia the promise speaks of homage to be paid by those who have disowned them, and preservation from the hour of trial about to come upon all the world to try them that dwell on the earth.<sup>17</sup>

It is interesting that this is the case concerning two assemblies where attention was not drawn to failure.

### THE GOLDEN LAMPS (1:20)

The seven golden lamps are part of the mystery (Rev. 1:20).

**Their Material.** The lamps John saw in the vision were made of gold. Gold is used in Scripture as a figure of what is divine. The gold does not refer to the practical conduct of the assemblies but what God established at the beginning. The assemblies were begun in righteousness and there is a corresponding responsibility to answer to this in practice. Do not draw erroneous views from this that would hinder godly separation from evil, unto the Lord.

The candlesticks were God's idea of them. The report is of things that are -- what man had actually made of them here below. Christ judicially brought what the Spirit saw to bear on what man had produced.<sup>18</sup>

**Their Position.** The stars were seen in the right hand of the Judge and they are lights for the assemblies. The lamps are not so presented. They are on the earth. They, too, have light but that light is for those around about in darkness. Both the stars and the lampstands indicate that it is the night season.

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16. *Collected Writings* 30:333.

17. *The Bible Treasury* 9:237.

18. *Collected Writings* 8:25 [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

**Seven Lampstands.** What immediately strikes us is that the lamps are separate; seven separate lamps, rather than a seven-branched one as was placed in the tabernacle. The reason for this is that the function is entirely different. The seven-branched one was in the sanctuary and speaks of Christ. The seven lamps are in the world and are assemblies standing in responsible testimony as lightbearers where they are. The fact that seven are chosen indicates that a complete view of something is being presented

### **Their Light.**

In speaking of the things that are, I do not (because Scripture does not) in any way allude to the eternal state of the church in its union with Christ, as its Head in grace, but to a time condition, an external state, of the church considered as responsible here below during a given period; and this time condition, this external state, judged in the seven churches. Again, I repeat, it is not our "spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" that are spoken of here, but that in the midst of which Christ is walking, outside Himself on the earth. On earth He needs a candlestick-a light; not so in heaven, there is no need of a candlestick there-no candle there to give light, "for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." But on earth He needs light-bearers, and therefore the character of candlesticks is given to the seven churches-to be the "light of the world." They are lighted from heaven, to give light on the earth, in the dark places below-to bear testimony to Christ, while He is away in heaven, hid in God. And it is to test these light-bearers, that Christ walks as the Son of man amidst the candlesticks. It is true that our life is hid with Christ in God; but while walking on the earth, we are to shine as lights in the world, the displayers of what heaven can produce-to be living in heaven while walking on the earth; as Jesus spoke of Himself when on the earth, "the Son of man which is in heaven."<sup>19</sup>

**In the Midst.** This is the Lord's position (Rev. 1:13, here as Judge, in the midst of the golden lamps. It is true that the geographical position of the seven assemblies is very roughly circular, but that is not what his being in the midst refers to. You would have to calculate a geographical center. No. This is a moral note. It is His place. Moreover, the fact that He is in the midst of these specific seven of all those assemblies in Asia Minor adds to the indications that much more than merely those seven literal assemblies is in view.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

## *Elements of Dispensational Truth* *Romans 9-11*

### *Chapter 9.3*

## *Romans 11: The Administration of Privilege, God's Ways, and Israel's Future* (Continued)

### *Romans 11:7-10 Judicial Blinding of the Old Israel*

- 7 What [is it] then? What Israel seeks for, that he has not obtained; but the election has obtained, and the rest have been blinded,
- 8 according as it is written, God has given to them a spirit of slumber, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear, unto this day.
- 9 And David says, Let their table be for a snare, and for a gin, and for a fall-trap, and for a recompense to them:
- 10 let their eyes be darkened not to see, and bow down their back alway.

#### **THE BLINDING OF ISRAEL (v. 7)**

Here is the awful contrast of the nation, as such, with the election of grace from among that nation, even as in Elijah's day. God has left for Himself a remnant from among the nation, acting in His sovereignty of grace. Of course, now this election of grace from among Israel is incorporated into the church<sup>1</sup> -- as we may view them from that particular standpoint -- though that is not the viewpoint here.

The present form of mercy being shown to the Gentile fills the time of the interposition of the heavenly calling into the earthly calling of Israel. This interposition of the heavenly calling will end at the occurrence of the rapture while the obduracy of heart will continue a little longer. In that little interval a

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1. In fact, at the first the church of God was composed entirely of the remnant according to the election of grace. But this is ~~not the subject or the viewpoint in Rom. 11.~~  
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remnant of a Jewish character will be formed, as God returns to the earthly calling. That remnant shall become the nation referred to in Rom. 11:26, the obdurate of heart having been cleared away by the judgments of God in their various stages and forms. As Jehovah knew no nation, as such in relationship to Himself in the past (Amos 3:2), so he knows none now, nor shall he in the future, except Israel.

The Israel that is blinded is the natural Israel. The future Israel (Rom. 11:26) is the spiritual Israel.

The reason for Israel's blinding is not because of an eternal decree of reprobation but what was deserved by their unbelief, as W. Kelly makes clear in his book on Romans.<sup>2</sup>

2. He commented on some remarks of John Calvin concerning this passage:

One could understand a believer perhaps saying that the citations of an apostle seemed foreign to his purpose when not examined with their context; but is it too much if we denounce as irreverent no less than unintelligent the man who could venture so to speak, for no better reason than a blind love of his own scheme? It is excellent and right that scripture should declare hardening to be an infliction of God after men have already proved their ungodliness. It is false and bad to say that Paul labors to prove here that the blinding was not because it was deserved but in consequence of eternal reprobation. In fact scripture teaches no such doctrine. Nowhere are any said to be rejected before the foundation of the world. Nor this only: they are punished at the world's end for their wickedness, not because of a divine decree. Indeed a judgment in this case would be nugatory. But they are judged each according to their works, and the lake of fire is their sentence; though scripture takes care after this to append the divine side, adding that, if any one was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire. So in a previous chapter of this epistle Paul had carefully shown how God, willing to show His wrath and make His power known, endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy which He had before prepared for glory. To me I confess it looks like the blinding influence of falsehood when men overlook the difference of vessels of wrath fitted on the one hand to destruction, and of vessels of mercy which He on the other hand before made ready for glory. It is guilty man who is the agent in sin and misery; God only who is the source of all the good, though His longsuffering be conspicuous most of all if possible in bearing with the evil who at last come into judgment.

In short then not only not Paul but no other inspired writer ever speaks of "eternal reprobation;" it is merely a dream of a certain school. So the curse of God follows, instead of causing, the impious ways of men. Arminianism is wholly astray no doubt in reducing God's election to a mere foresight of good in some creatures; but Calvinism is no less erroneous in imputing the evil lot of the first Adam race to God's decree. They both spring from analogous roots of unbelief: Calvinism reasoning, contrary to scripture, from the truth of election to the error of eternal reprobation; Arminianism rightly rejecting that reprobation but wrongly reasoning against election. Like other systems they are in part true and in part false -- true in what they believe of scripture,

## WHAT DID ISRAEL SEEK FOR? (v. 7)

Verse seven opens with, "What [is it] then?" Since grace sets aside works, how do things stand with Israel? What Israel sought it has not obtained. Why should amillennialists say that the answer to Paul's question is that what Israel sought was the kingdom? Perhaps they do so because since there is no manifested kingdom for Israel now, therefore they think to spiritualize the OT kingdom promises. But the Scriptures clearly show what Paul had in mind concerning what Israel sought. Rom. 9:30, 31 and 10:3, 4 plainly tell us that it is *righteousness* that they sought. Christ is not reigning now and the remnant of grace, the election, has not obtained the kingdom -- yet. What the election of grace *has* obtained is the righteousness which Israel sought and the election now has that righteousness as connected with a known, revealed standing before God.

## THE REST MADE OBDURATE OF HEART (v. 7b-10)

In a footnote to the translation JND remarks: "Or, 'hardened,' 'made obdurate of heart.' It is most solemn to think of it. Verses 7b-10 review the instrumentalities through which the government of God fell upon the nation of obdurate hearts hardened against His grace.

See Deut. 29:4; Isa 6; Matt 13:15; John 12:29; Acts 28.

This is their desperate case (see also Matt 12:45) until the time when they will be willing in the day of His power (Psa. 110:3). See Zech 12:10. God will undertake by the sovereignty of grace. W. Kelly remarked:

How then stands the case? "What Israel seeketh, this it obtained not, but the election obtained; and the rest were hardened." It will be noticed that those we call ordinarily the remnant or righteous portion of Israel are designated "the election," while the mass are called the rest or remnant. "Hardened" also is the right sense, rather than blinded (though this is also taught elsewhere). It may be that ἐπαρώθησαν was confounded in thought and sense with ἐπηρώθησαν, as another has pointed out to be the fact in the Vatican text of Job 17:7 in the LXX [Septuagint].

This leads the apostle to adduce the testimony of scripture, in the words (apparently mingled) of Isa. 29:10 and Deut. 29:4, followed up by the still more tremendous imprecation of David in Psa. 69:22, 23, all speaking of the ungodly in Israel. Here again the law, the psalms, and the prophets gave their joint overwhelming evidence in terms so vehement that the apostle had rather to bring in "strong consolation" from the unfailing faithfulness of God for at least a remnant as we have seen, before he established every word by these "two or

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### 2. (...continued)

false in yielding to human thoughts outside scripture: happy those, who are content as Christians with the truth of God and refuse to be partisans on either side of men! Our wisdom is to have our minds preserved to all temptations, refusing to go a hair-breadth farther.



three witnesses” for the general condition of Israel. What more apt to clench the question? What wiser course possible for the apostle?<sup>3</sup>

See Psalm 69:22. God’s house had become “your house” (Matt 23:38) in their hands. So Jehovah’s table had become “their table.”<sup>4</sup> This signifies a fellowship together of their own making and they conspired against the Holy One of Israel, Jehovah come down in holy manhood, to nail Him to the cross.

In the future there will be a new Israel. Concerning the old Israel:

... let their eyes be darkened not to see, and bow down their back alway (v. 10).

This reminds of the cursed fig tree, upon which fruit was never to grow. It is the old Israel. The old Israel stood before God as the first man under testing. Not so the new Israel under the new covenant, a covenant of grace.

## *Romans 11:11-15*

### *The Results of Israel’s Fall and Restoration*

- 11 I say then, Have they stumbled in order that they might fall? Far be the thought: but by their fall [there is] salvation to the nations to provoke them to jealousy.
- 12 But if their fall [be the] world’s wealth, and their loss [the] wealth of [the] nations, how much rather their fulness?
- 13 For I speak to you, the nations, inasmuch as I am apostle of nations, I glorify my ministry;
- 14 if by any means I shall provoke to jealousy [them which are] my flesh, and shall save some from among them.
- 15 For if their casting away [be the] world’s reconciliation, what [their] reception but life from among [the] dead?

#### **THE STUMBLING OF ISRAEL (v. 11)**

The following translation is by W. Kelly:

I say then, Did they stumble in order that they should fall? Far be it: but by their trespass salvation [is come] to the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy. But if their trespass be [the] world’s riches and their loss [the] Gentile’s riches, how much more their fullness?

It is indicated here that Israel fell down by stumbling. The word for “fall” in verse 11 in this context has the thought of falling so as not to regain the former place. Clearly, the stumbling which took place will not result in that.

3. W. Kelly, *Notes on Romans*, p. 217.

4. W. R. Newell had the strange notion that this “refers to the table at which the Israelites were privileged to eat with Jehovah (*Romans Verse by Verse, in loco*). That could hardly be “their table.” It does not say “the table.” [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

The word for "trespass," we are told, denotes a moral trespass, a misdeed. This refers to an extraordinary trespass and is, no doubt, the rejection of Christ. In Rom. 9:32, 33 we learn that they "stumbled (struck against) at the stumbling stone" for He is "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." The cross is the great turning point.

The answer to the question, Did Israel stumble so that they should irrevocably lose their national place?, is, No!

Israel stumbled, and stumbles, over Christ. They would not have Him since they sought after righteousness by trying to establish their own righteousness (Rom. 9:30-33). He was the end of the law for righteous to everyone that believes (Rom 10: 3, 4). They preferred Barabbas (bar = son; abba = father) to the true Son of the Father.

Have they stumbled in order that they might fall so as not ever to regain a national place? No, says Paul. The nation shall again have a national place. But individuals did fall so as not to regain a place. The individual unbelievers did stumble that they might fall, for Israel is now hardened. So this proves, as shall be proved over and over as we proceed, that the question is not about individuals but about the nation of Israel and the administration of privilege on earth. It is the nation, not individuals, that has stumbled but will regain its place.

Thus the very slip of Israel from its place of witness and depository of promise, turned as it is through divine mercy into present favor towards the Gentile world, becomes an argument in the hands of grace to assure their future restoration. The apostle alludes to the words of Deut. 32, the bearing of which on the question is as evident as to the Jew their authority is indisputable. It was not Paul but Moses who declared that the Jew provoked Jehovah to jealousy, that he was unmindful of the Rock who begat him, the glory of God that formed him. It was Moses who testified that Jehovah said, "I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with [that which is] not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with [those which are] not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation." Undoubtedly it is the sure and solemn threat of God's displeasure in turning from Israel to the Gentiles, as certainly as Israel used to turn from Jehovah to false gods. But the threat, now accomplishing after the utmost patience, and only accomplished when they added to their old idolatry the still graver sin of rejecting the Messiah and disdaining the gospel that offered them the pardon of these and all other sins by His blood, -- the threat itself contains the no less sure intimation of restoring mercy in the end. For certainly He who acts with a view to provoke them to jealousy through blessing the Gentiles does not mean to cast them off eventually; rather the very reverse. One sees by such admirable reasoning and such profoundly accurate employment of the Old Testament scripture how truly it is the same Spirit who wrote of old by Moses working now by Paul.

Apart from any particular allusion, the state of things whether now or by and by accords perfectly with, and presents the face of, Christianity and with the general

prospects for the world according to the prophets. For it is just when the Jews lose all their place and nation no less than distinctive rank as a witnessing and worshipping people in their land that we see the Gentiles gradually renouncing their idols, and the true God and His word incomparably better known than even of old in Israel. Revealed truth, having its center and display in Christ, alone accounts for the eclipse on the one side and the possession of a brighter light on the other. Did not the Jews reject the true light which now shines on nations so long benighted in idolatry? Again, while owning the mercy of God, which has thus wondrously turned aside to visit the Gentile with the gospel during the continued unbelief and consequently dark and wretched nothingness of the Jew, who can overlook the rich and full stream of Old Testament scripture which depicts the joy and blessedness of the whole earth only when God causes His face to shine on Israel? "God shall bless us" (says the inspired Jewish psalmist); "and all the ends of the earth shall fear him." It is right to preach, a privilege to look for souls to be blessed; but it is vain, because unscriptural, to expect universality of blessing and delivering power over the world as a whole till Zion's light is come and the glory of Jehovah is risen on her. Then and not before shall the Gentiles come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising then the nation and kingdom that will not serve Zion shall perish -- a state of things in evident contrast with the grace that goes out now to Jew and Gentile indiscriminately, and gathers believing souls by the Spirit for heavenly and eternal glory, instead of being a display of the righteous government of Jehovah-Messiah in Israel and over all the earth.

Hence it is obvious with what strict truth the apostle could affirm that the salvation to the Gentiles, by the slip or trespass of the Jews, is but to provoke them to jealousy instead of being a sign of being abandoned for ever as a people by God. Nay further he could reason, in harmony with the prophets, that if their trespass is the world's wealth, and their loss and diminution the Gentiles' wealth, how much more their fullness? The apostle here accounts, or, if one will, apologizes, for his bringing in the Gentiles when discussing the destiny of Israel. He was speaking to the saints at Rome, "to you the Gentiles." Further, "inasmuch therefore as I am apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry": how or why should he forget the divine mercy to such hinging on God's ways with Israel that now occupied him? Especially too as he was thereby seeking to further that provocation to jealousy for which he had the authority of Him who alone is good and of whose compassion toward Israel he was no less assured than of His righteous displeasure at their sins. "If by any means I may provoke to jealousy [those who are] my flesh and may save some of them" (v. 14). "For if their rejection [be the] world's reconciliation, what their reception but life from among [the] dead?" Such we have seen is the uniform impression left by the Psalms and the Prophets, as every candid and intelligent Jew must feel.<sup>5</sup>

The blessing and privilege granted to the Gentiles is, in the ways of God, a provocation to jealousy of Israel, and Paul hoped that some might be stirred to avail themselves of the grace of God.

## HOW MUCH RATHER THEIR FULLNESS (v. 12)

Israel shall have a fullness as well the nations (cp. vv. 12 & 25). This proves that the expression "fullness of the nations" cannot mean the conversion of the world because "conversion of the world" necessarily would include the Jews. Israel's fullness will take place subsequently, consequent upon Christ's appearing in glory and turning ungodliness away from Jacob. He will purge out the rebels from among them (Ezek. 20) and thus they shall all be righteous (Isa. 60:21). So all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:26) because all those left are born of God and these compose the entire nation. At that millennial day the nations will rejoice with Israel (Deut. 32:43); for the knowledge of Jehovah will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:19). Read Isa. 2:2, 3; 12:4-6; 60; Zech. 14:16.

Israel is *now* in a condition of "loss" (v 12), or diminishing, during the time which will result in the fullness of the nations. The fullness of the nations precedes Israel's fullness (v. 25) but v. 12 shows that a wider (not deeper) extent of blessing to Gentiles (during the millennium) will follow Israel's fullness. *Then* blessing will flow out through Israel. This is not the situation now. It is a profound difference.

The riches of the nations stands in contrast to Israel's loss of something. These are riches that can be lost. It is an external place of nearness that is meant in v. 15. The old Israel had a place of nearness in this sense. And while the Gentiles have come into a new place with regard to the administration of privilege, blessing will be more widely effective consequent upon Israel's fullness. However, and this is important to observe, Gentile blessing in the millennium will be through Israel, which is not the case now. Of course, the portion of a saved Gentile now is heavenly and richer than will be the character of blessing for Gentiles in the millennium, though then it will be more widespread.

## I SPEAK TO YOU, THE NATIONS, ETC. (vv. 13, 14)

**The Apostle of Nations Speaks to Them.** It is Gentilism that Paul has before him up to v. 25.

My reader should remember, that if there had not been something peculiar, there would have been no need to speak of Gentiles. Nay, one could not have done it. A Christian, once a Jew, needed warning as much as another.<sup>6</sup>

To me it is evident, that as to the practical bearing and application of these words -- "you Gentiles," though all Gentiles be liable to their application, those who are referred to in the words of Simeon (Luke 2) are the only ones who are the object of them; the rest, as the inhabitants of Central Africa, for instance, exist not for the application of the reasoning of God in this chapter. When God

will apply them so, He will take care, by the preaching of the everlasting gospel, that all the Gentiles should be the objects of the judgment which will show the justice of His government; but we cannot exactly address to them these warnings; we should be right in applying to them the doctrine which Paul applies (Acts 17); there he preaches to the world, here he speaks to professors.

More will be said on this when we consider the good Olive Tree.

**I Glorify My Ministry.** It is not that Paul glorifies himself, but his ministry. Indeed, it is characteristically a ministry of the glory, as may be seen in numbers of Scriptures, 2 Cor. 4 being one of them. The Apostle of this ministry to the Gentiles also desires the provocation of his kinsmen according to the flesh -- provocation to blessing also, that they might participate with the Gentiles in the mercy towards them.

**Provoking to Jealousy to Save Some of His Kinsmen v.14).** It is clear from this text that Paul had no such idea as that the nation of Israel would be saved in the present period of God's work through the gospel which Paul preached. "Save some from among them" makes this clear.<sup>8</sup> Yet, in Rom. 11:26 we read that "all Israel shall be saved." This will take place, not during the epoch of the preaching of Paul's gospel, but when Israel enters the millennium. That will be Israel's reception, as life from the dead, noticed in v. 15.

#### **THE WORLD'S RECONCILIATION FOLLOWED BY ISRAEL'S RECEPTION (v. 15)**

**The Casting Away of Them (v. 15).** Paul himself was proof that "the casting away of them" does not mean all of the Jews, for he himself was a saved Jew -- not cast away. The phrase refers to the nation.

**The World's Reconciliation.** Obviously the phrase, "the world's reconciliation," does not mean that the world will actually be saved. The expression denotes that the Gentiles are brought into view, before God, for the administration of privilege while Israel as a nation is cast away (laid aside), in the ways of God, meanwhile.

It is not exactly the inhabitants of the countries in which the gospel has been preached who are the Gentiles "brought to light," only the light is come there to bring them into light; but it is the countries of the baptized, where

7. *The Present Testimony* 4:132.

8. Daniel Fuller contradicts the Word of God:

... there is no hope for Israel apart from the gospel of grace which is proclaimed by local churches, to whom alone, as the pillar and ground of the truth, Christ has entrusted "the faith" until the end of this present evil age. Thus there may well be an ingathering of Jews after "the times of the Gentiles." But when and if this happens, Israel will be "saved" and joined to the body of Christ by believing the same gospel as Paul preached to his brethren in the flesh (Fuller, p. 362).

Nor is he sure that there will be an "ingathering" of Jews"; but he is sure that *if* it happens Israel will be joined to the body of Christ -- [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com) but after the times of the Gentiles!

Christianity is professed. In theory, all the Gentiles have been brought into light. God takes knowledge of it. It is therefore the apostle can say to the Colossians -- "The gospel is come into all the world, and brings forth fruit;" but as to the position of responsibility as a body, that is realized there where they have been Christianized.<sup>9</sup>

Sometimes this is spoken of as bringing the Gentile dispensationally into view for blessing, in an effort to explain it and make clear the distinction between the present place of the Gentile and the place the nations shall have in the future in relation to Israel as the center of blessing. The way James expressed it in Acts 15:14 is that "how God first visited to take out of [the] nations a people for his name." The present work is not the fulfilment of the OT, but, James said, "with this agree the words of the prophet . . ." It was consistent with the OT prophecies concerning blessing for the nations. A Jew, on principle, cannot object to Gentiles being blessed.

**Israel's "Reception" (v. 15).** The casting away of the nation (v. 15), which means that they are laid aside, but not irrecoverably so, synchronizes in time with the message of salvation going out to the Gentiles. Verses 11-14 prove this. The fall of Israel (v. 12), or rather the trespass of Israel (the rejection of Christ), synchronizes with the message of salvation going out to Gentiles. This synchronization is also seen in what is said concerning the Olive Tree, which we will consider below.

Israel's "reception" denotes that Israel as a nation will again be brought near as a nation, into view, before God, for the administration of privilege; but in the future, spiritual Israel's blessing will have a different aspect to it than in the past in that all Israel shall be saved (v. 26; Isa. 61:9) whereas in the past, while Israel was owned of God, and in the place of the administration of privilege, not all were children of God (Isa. 64:6).

**Life from Among the Dead.** Verse 15 compares the reception of the nation of Israel to resurrection, used figuratively here. Verse 25 tells us that the blindness of Israel is until a certain time. Verse 26 tells us that all Israel shall be saved; and v. 27 tells us that they will be in covenant relationship again.

So resurrection is used as a figure of Israel's restoration to the place of privilege and blessing *as a nation*. This figure is also used in Dan 12:1, 2; Ezek 37; Isa. 26:19, 20. Yes, all of these use resurrection in a figurative way for the restoration of Israel.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

*Elements of Propitiation and Substitution*

## *Chapter 8*

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### *Bearing Sins was Only on the Cross*

#### *The Cross, the Place of Sin-Bearing*

It is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul (Lev. 17:11).

... who himself bore our sins in his body on the tree ... by whose stripes <sup>10</sup> ye have been healed (1 Pet. 1:24)

... who has not need day by day, as the high priests, first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins, then [for] those of the people, for this he did once for all [in] having offered up himself (Heb. 7:27).

... having been once offered to bear the sins of many (Heb. 9:26).

This is he that came by water and blood (1 John 5:6).

... and having knelt down he prayed, saying, Father, if thou wilt remove this cup from me: -- but then, not my will, but thine be done ... And being in conflict he prayed more intently. And his sweat became as great drops of blood falling down upon the earth (Luke 22:42-44).

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matt. 27:46).

Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree (Gal. 3:13).

In Gethsemane He looked upon the awful cup, the cup of being made sin, of bearing our sins, of being forsaken of God. And He shrank from the horror. It was fitting to shrink from it. He was the Holy One. It would have been a moral imperfection not to shrink from this. It was part of the perfection of the Holy One, the One come in dependence as man, to so pray. But He took the cup. In the first three gospels where the Lord Jesus is presented in some human station

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10. In his translation, in a footnote to the word stripes, he said:

Or 'bruise.' Though the word is in the singular, it is literally the marks left by scourging. 'Stripe' does not convey this. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

we have this scene in Gethsemene; whereas in John, where He is presented as the Eternal Son come here to glorify God and ascend up where He was before, we read:

The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it (John John 18:11).

How perfect is every Scripture in its place!

The Scriptures cited point to the cross as the place for sin-bearing. They do not point to the idea that Christ bore sins all His life. J. N. Darby wrote:

I go on to state further my own views on these points. I hold as to expiation or atonement fully and simply what every sound Christian does: The blessed Lord's offering Himself without spot to God and being obedient to death, being made sin for us, and bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; His glorifying God in the sacrifice of Himself; and His substitution for us; and His drinking the cup of wrath. I believe, though none can fathom it, that what I hold, and have taught, and teach, makes this atonement clearer. I mean the not confounding the sufferings of Christ short of divine wrath with that one only drinking of the cup when He was forsaken of God. I see this carefully brought out in Psa. 22. In the midst of cruel sufferings, of which the Lord in Spirit speaks prophetically there, He says, "But be not thou far from me, O Lord," twice over. Yet (and that is the great fathomless depth of the psalm) He was, as to the sorrow of His soul, forsaken of God. With that no other suffering, deep and real as it was, can be compared. But the Holy Ghost makes here the distinction in order to bring out that wondrous cup, which stands alone in the midst of all things, the more clearly. And this makes other suffering more true and real to the heart, and the drinking of the cup (that on which the new heavens and the new earth subsist in immutable righteousness before God, and through which we are accepted in the Beloved) has a truth and a reality which nothing else gives it. The mixing up accompanying suffering with this, in their character, weakens and destroys the nature of both. We come to the atonement with the need of our sins; once reconciled to God, we see the whole glory of God made good for ever in it. I add, as regards Christ's relationship with God, I have no view but what I suppose to be the common faith of all Christians, of His being His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased, that, as a living man here below, divine delight rested upon Him. Though never so acceptable in obedience as on the cross, there He was as, for God's glory, bearing the forsaking of God. That of course was a special case.<sup>11</sup>

In 1860, JND wrote an article, *1 Peter 2:24*,<sup>12</sup> a devastating critique of the notions that Christ's life was vicarious and that "His sufferings during the time of His active service were penal." The reader is referred to this article for details of this matter as well as the attempt to change the translation of 1 Pet. 2:24 to

11. *Collected Writings* 7:146. See 19:214.

12. *Collected Writings* 7:291-301; see also 7:210, 214; 19:214; *Letters* 3:461.



make it compatible with such teachings.

## *How Many Sins?*

We may look at it in all its breadth and compass; Jesus confessed our sins, bore them, and was bruised on their account. If He has opened your heart to believe in Him as bearing sins at all, then all your sins are put away; you must either deny that He was bearing sins at all, or you are justified. Here is the certainty of peace; and we stand justified from all things, and Jesus looks at us in this character, not at any particular time, but in order that He may present us to God. There is no question of past or future transgression, but He bore *our sins*. Hold fast this. There is, indeed, the frequent consciousness of faults. While faith says our sins are put away, still in looking at ourselves we see evil; and now we find how graciously the Lord provides for this defilement. The priest that offered the sin-offering was to eat it ({Lev.} 6: 26).<sup>13</sup> ♦

God speaks plainly of wrath, indignation, vengeance, because of sin. What was the wrath due to sin, which Christ bore when He bore our sins in His own body on the tree? It is not a speculative question, of what might be, but of what saves you! Do you believe, that what Christ bore, when He made His soul an offering for sin, was merely the amount of a certain temporary suffering? that this was what sin amounted to in the presence of God? and that this too was what God's wrath amounted to? Do not be led astray by any abuse of the blessed truth that it was Christ's divine nature that gave infinite value to His work. It did so, blessed be God. But He "bore our sins in his own body on the tree." And "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." "He was wounded for our transgressions." "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, with his stripes we are healed." Now was what He bore for us, for you, a mere amount of temporary punishment, or the holy wrath of God, the awfulness of God's forsaking Him while He was alive, His soul being made thus an offering for sin? That wrath which shuts out from His presence, while the soul can know what it is -- is not this what we have deserved? It is not merely torment and then ceasing to exist; though Christ, as a divine Person, gave infinite value to His work..<sup>14</sup> ♦

## *"Why Has Thou Forsaken Me?"*

### *Psalm 22*

*From Words of Truth*

The cry in this psalm is pre-eminently the cry of one forsaken of God. In this the psalm stands alone. Not, indeed, that we do not find other sufferings of our Lord

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13. *Collected Writings* 19:235 [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

14. *Collected Writings* 7:11, 12

in this psalm, but that which gives it its distinctness from all other psalms is this cry of abandonment. It is a cry to God, and that, as the psalm says, both when He was *not* heard, and when He *was*. Other psalms speak of Him as the perfect man, the one who ever trusted in God; the sixteenth Psalm is specially His language as the trusting one; other psalms speak of His sufferings from His enemies, and what He endured at the hand of man; but in Psa. 22. it is not His enemies that are before us, though they are mentioned afterwards, but it is Himself, His cry to God Himself.

It is that solemn moment with which nothing can be compared, when upon the cross He took up the whole question of sin before God; and good and evil were brought to an issue in the only Person that could solve the riddle!

It was atonement. Not that this alone appears, in the psalm, but it is its first and deepest thought and truth. Indeed, the psalm shows that there was no sorrow that He knew not; -- no shame from which He was saved, nothing of wickedness, on man's part, lacking -- surrounded by dogs and ravening lions, nay, man, more cruel than all, baser than all, man alone guilty, though led on by a mightier rebel than himself. All this we find, but more wondrous and beyond all else, God was there, and there as the judge of sin. God was then forsaking Jesus, because of sin, It is this with which the psalm opens. It is this verse which the Lord Jesus Himself singles out from the psalm, when He cries under God's abandonment upon the cross. God has given these words to us, as the utterance of His own beloved Son. when, in accomplishing that work which we need for eternity, He was made sin for us.

The Lord Jesus was not meeting Satan at the Cross. He had met Satan after His baptism, and had conquered him. He had acted upon this victory everywhere in His ministry. He having bound the strong man in the wilderness, afterwards He spoiled his goods as He went about doing good. The Lord Jesus had also, in Gethsemane, after His ministry was closed, passed through the conflict with Satan as the power of darkness. On the Cross it is neither *Satan* nor *man*. It is sin before *God*, and He who knew no sin, glorifying God as God about sin in death.

This was no question with His Father. He was ever the beloved Son in whom the Father was always well pleased, and never more so than on the cross. But sin is against God, and it is this He has taken up, and He goes through it before God in death. Our hearts delight in it, and rest in it. When God touches the question of sin, atonement is made. Atonement has two parts. It is expiation before God, and substitution for our sins. The latter is not the subject of our psalm. We find it in other psalms. Both are figured in the ritual for the day of atonement, in Lev. 16. There was Jehovah's lot, and Israel's lot. The blood of the sin-offering carried in where God was, and the actual transgressions of the congregation confessed by Aaron on the head of the scape goat. The former is taken up in this psalm. It is the grand and most important part of atonement, where all is important. It is Jehovah's lot -- the expiation of sin before God. God is seen here in all the forms of His

moral being, dealing with sin in the Person of one who is able to take it up, and go through it all perfectly. Herein is the infinite grace of God – one who, when forsaken of God, had therein reached the very highest point in glorifying God. This is the meaning of the words, “Thou hast heard me from the of the unicorns.” Did the glory of His Person shelter Him from suffering? Not so. It was that which enabled Him to endure it, and to feel it all as none other could. The Lord felt everything perfectly. If there had been the smallest insensibility it had not been perfection. In the cross sin was disposed of righteously, and for ever, not by power, but by suffering. The Lord went through it all and was heard. “Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.” The answer was in resurrection. We find it in the next verse “I will declare thy name to my brethren.”

Death, and death alone, disposes of sin, so that the sinner, receiving the testimony to this perfect work of Christ, might be put absolutely without sin, as to his conscience, in the presence of God. Thus the work of Christ brings the soul to God -- not only to the Father, but to God. Thus it is not merely love which is displayed, but in the Cross we have also a foundation of righteousness. God is fully revealed as God. The atonement was not wrought before the Father as such. It was not as Father that God dealt with sin in the person of Christ. It was the Father's delight in {Christ's} doing the work, but the work was before God, the work was about sin, and the result of the work is that the righteousness of God is declared. God having thus dealt with sin in atonement is the only firm footing for the soul; without this, all truth, and especially heavenly truth, will only elate the soul, or leave it a prey to Satan's delusions.

In the cross, the Lord Jesus, as Son of Man, glorified God, when made sin. All through His life He glorified His Father. Even at twelve years of age we hear Him say, “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?” At His baptism we see how the Father cares for His glory. “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Not “hear ye him” yet for the time for this had not come, but He was always the beloved Son, in whom the Father was well pleased. And herein we see the evil of the teaching, which speaks of the Lord as the sin-hearer in life. If it could have been, He would not have been before the Father, as the One in whom He was ever well pleased. Had He been always bearing sin, He had always been forsaken of God, and to say this is a virtual denial of the personal glory of the Son of God.

But now that He has passed through the unparalleled hour, when, made sin, He was forsaken of God, and having died, He enters in resurrection into the blessedness of His own relationship, and declares it as that into which He now can bring all His people, it is now, “Go and tell my brethren, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.” It is not “our Father” now: that would be beneath His glory. It is His own relationship as man, and into this He brings, by His own work, those for whom He has wrought redemption; and more, it is the place He then took on high. It is into this blessed relationship and access to the

Father the Lord now brings His people, and not only so, but He himself is in their midst, leading their praise. "In the midst of the congregation will I sing praises unto Thee." This is the characteristic praise of the Church of God, and it is the more remarkable to find it here, as the psalms do not bring out the Church's portion, but Israel's. It is the worship of those, whom the Lord brings into His own relationship to God His Father. It is the worship of those who stand consciously in the full results of His atonement, and are brought into the same nearness to God as He is in, when He says, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, to My God and your God, and He in their midst leading the worship. It is the worship of saints, and not of poor sinners as such worshipping. This is peculiarly the worship and position of saints now. There will never be anything like it again. The day is coming when the earth's groans shall cease; when heaven and earth shall be filled with praise; but there never will be a day such as this. It will not be worship in the holiest then, or the name of the Father on the lips of those who worship. This psalm proves it. It is "thy name" declared "to my brethren" in Psa. 22:22. The next verse the Lord calls on those "who fear Jehovah" to praise Him. This verse brings us on to Jewish ground. It is not the Lord leading the praises in the Church, but calling on those that fear Jehovah, and the seed of Israel, to praise. Jehovah, and not Father, is the title now. The call to praise is upon the ground of the same work. "For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him, but when he cried unto him, he heard." The praise is founded upon the work of the cross, when He cried, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," and was heard; and now the public answer is given, in the Father having raised Him from the dead. It is the call of praise on the ground of atonement. This is very distinctly marked in the 25th verse. Then it is the Messiah's praise in the great congregation. But it is not now in the midst of the Church, as verse 22nd. We have the two positions in John 20. On the first day of the week when the Lord appears in their midst, and besides saluting them with peace, breathes on them and says, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"; and on the eighth day when Thomas owns Him with the confession, "My Lord and my God," and where we have no breathing on them, and no mention of the Holy Ghost. Thomas confesses Him according to Jewish faith, but there is not, in this second scene, anything that speaks of association with Christ. It is not the blessedness now of union, nor even of association; but of the Lord paying His vows in the great congregation, as the Head of Israel, and they are gathered as a people round the Lord their God. Then we find the meek. "The meek shall eat and be satisfied." They shall now enter into earthly blessing. It is the accomplishment of the promise; -- "The meek shall inherit the earth." Then the blessing flows out, and "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee." To apply this now is only to deceive. It is a baseless fable now. Then it will extend to all the kingdoms of the nations. "For

the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among all nations" . . . <sup>15</sup>

## *Notion of Bearing the Sins of All*

J. N. Darby wrote:

Dr. W. says:

"The atonement spoken of in Scripture was an atonement by which the sins of the world were removed.

No such thought is found in Scripture; that He is an *ilasmos* for the world is said, but that the sins of the world are removed is wholly unscriptural. If so, there could be nothing to judge men for; for they are judged according to their works ( Rev 20: 13), and the Lord says: "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins"; and the apostle, "Because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." It is said of Christ that He is *o airon*, not of the sins, but of the sin of the world, and that He baptizes with the Holy Ghost, not that He has taken away our sins. This taking away of sin will be completely fulfilled only in the new heavens and the new earth, and He, as Lamb of God, is this taker away; but that the atonement spoken of in Scripture was one by which the sins of the world were removed is utterly and wholly untrue. <sup>16</sup>

W. Kelly responded to the following question:

Q. 1 John 2:2. Was Christ a propitiation "for the sins of the whole world?" Does John 1:29 teach this? Does 1 Peter 2:24 apply alike to all, believers and unbelievers? W.R.W.

A. It cannot be urged too plainly or often that "the sins of" is an interpolation, not only uncalled for, but an addition which goes beyond the truth and is therefore false, as all exaggerations must be. "For our sins" is in pointed distinction. "For the whole world" is ample ground of encouragement for preaching the gospel to those who are still in unbelief, without warranting the dangerous delusion that the sins of the whole world are gone. This would naturally lead to telling every body that he is forgiven, in open opposition to the general warning of scripture to all the unconverted. Hence it is not just to confound this last member of the sentence with 1 Pet. 2:24, which rather coalesces {"coalesce" means a coming together to form a whole} with Christ's being a propitiation for our sins. He was our substitute; when men believe the gospel, we and they can say this of them. But He is a ransom for all, as He is a propitiation for the whole world. John 1:29 goes on to the complete *taking away* (not "bearing our sins") of the sin of the world, as will be manifested in the new heavens and new earth, like Heb. 9:26. The sacrifice is already offered and accepted; but all its results are not yet come and enjoyed. It will be applied to

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15. *Words of Truth*, New series 3:181-185.

16. *Collected Writings* 29:264. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

the millennial age, and completely in the eternal day. To say that judging "according to works" does not mean "sins" is mere quibbling. The "works" of the unbelievers, of the wicked, are nothing but "sins"; for which, when raised, they will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone, the second death.<sup>17</sup>

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

## *Evangelicalism and Intellectual Respect*

In a book review by R. A. Young in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 43/2, pp. 336, 337 (June 2000), we read:

Carl Henry and Edward Carnell both sought to make "evangelical fundamentalism" worthy of intellectual respect by returning to classical Protestantism without separatism and millennialism. The self-criticism that Henry and Carnell set in motion has opened up various critical evangelical options that continue to question the presuppositions of doctrinal fundamentalism . . .

. . . his major focus throughout is on inerrancy and the nature of Scripture. Dorien realizes that rethinking the doctrine of Scripture is essential to the remaking of evangelical theology . . . Even inerrantists such as Carl Henry denounces making inerrancy the "superbadge of evangelical orthodoxy" (p. 119) . . . Because of this, he is willing to embrace such non-innerantists as G. C. Berouwer, George Ladd, and F. F. Bruce as evangelicals (p. 119) . . . Dorien comments that "the trend in evangelical theology is clearly away from strict-inerrancy doctrine" (p. 205).

If the Lord Jesus held the inerrancy of the OT Scripture (and He did), then the errancy view makes the Lord err! To say that He erred in His humanity but not in His deity is to divide the Person. The Son took humanity into His Person -- one Person. The humanity cannot be divided from the Person of the Son. To believe that our Lord erred is worse even than the evil notion that He could have sinned, but did not do so! The notion that He erred is an attack on "the doctrine of the Christ" which is a "wicked" work (2 John). Persons holding such views are unfit for Christian fellowship, as are those who will not separate from them. Note the words quoted above: "returning to classical Protestantism without separation."<sup>18</sup> Is that you?

Ed.

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17. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 2:302.

18. On Christ's Person, see *The Collected Writings of A. C. Ord*; A. C. Ord, *The Man Christ Jesus*; R. A. Huebner, *An Exposition of 2 John with Some Comments on Gal. 5:9 and Rev. 2 & 3*; and, *An Exposition of 2 Timothy 2:16-26*; and, *1 Cor. 5, Clearing the Assembly of Leaven*; and, *Carefulness in Reception*, all available from [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

## *Contentment And Satisfaction*

These are two things which the Christian is entitled to experience; contentment here in this world; satisfaction hereafter in heaven. But neither of these are known by the natural or the worldly man. The human heart and mind are incapable of contentment, and the world, in which they find their sphere of existence, is incapable of giving satisfaction. Nothing short of perfectness, whether as to the state of the individual and in his circumstances and surroundings, can satisfy; and nothing short of the anticipation, and sure prospect of perfectness, can give contentment. Contentment and satisfaction (we speak of them only in an absolute and positive sense) both imply a perfect state, and a perfect moral condition, and though differing from each other, yet are they closely linked together. I may be contented where I am not satisfied, but I never can be contented except in the anticipation of satisfaction.

The natural man, as we have said, knows not contentment; "the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy" Discontent is the normal state of even the most contented, most easy-going, and unambitious; that is, their present circumstances, whatever they may be, good, bad, or indifferent, are not those in which any man desires permanently to remain. In youth or age, in poverty or riches, in sickness or in health -- in circumstances, personal, domestic, or social -- you will not find a living man, woman, or child, upon the earth, who does not covet, and who does not expect in some respect or other, a change for the better. This state then of desire or expectation, is not contentment; and we need hardly say that it is not satisfaction; for the latter involves a fuller measure of supply than the former. For to be satisfied, is not merely complacency in, and submission to, present circumstances, but it is the having every desire and every need complied with to the full.

This is not the lot of anyone here below. The divine record concerning that man, who drank deeper of earth's riches, gifts, and pleasures, than any before him, or after him, is, that "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (Eccl. 1:8). The conclusion to which his experience led him, was that "under the sun" all is vanity and vexation of spirit; that in fact nothing endures, and that everything that occurs on the earth is followed by sorrow in its train.

But "the things that are impossible with men, are possible with God," that which is unattainable by man, and which all creation cannot accomplish in the human heart, is conferred by God upon the believer. God, when known and trusted, can give to man contentment here, and satisfaction hereafter; contentment on earth, and satisfaction in heavenly glory.

In order to be content one must be delivered from, and placed beyond, the reach of the causes of discontent. It is impossible for one to be contented in a state and circumstances in which nothing is ministered in perfection, and in which the best anticipations and most earnest longings of the heart and mind are liable to

disappointment. Such is the state of the natural man in the world; as one has truly expressed it, "a sinner in a world of care." But the Christian has learned that he belongs to another scene and sphere. The cross and death of Christ have closed to him his connection with sin as the cause, and the world as the sphere of judgment; in the grave of Christ he has by baptism taken his place in death; in the resurrection of Christ, he finds himself alive again from the dead, alive unto God; and now, though in the flesh, living by the faith of the Son of God, who has loved him, and given Himself for him. In the glory of Christ he learns the place and the measure of his sanctification, before God, and of its practical exhibition in the world. "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creation, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God." Now it is evident that as these things which are true of every Christian, are held in the heart by faith, the believer finds that he is in a sphere in which disappointment is unknown, and discontent is impossible. "A new creation" is his state; "all things of God" are his circumstances. True he is left in this world, and as regards his body and its necessities, there is yet a link with it, and with the old creation. But when on one side, the end of the flesh, and the character of the world, are learned and seen in God's own presence; and on the other, the grace of God in Christ, and all that that grace has brought to him, are believed and known in the heart; such an one ceases to expect from the world, and expects everything from God, and the expression of his heart is, "what can I expect from myself a sinner, from men, sinners? -- from the world, their sphere of existence, and the scene in which all that man is as a sinner has been developed and is shown forth? Therefore let me turn away from these, as in any sense the means, or as having the ability to minister one pure and unmixed feeling of content or satisfaction to the soul, and let me turn to God, the living God, the Holy One, and the True, yet God of all grace and Father of mercies, and have to do with Him alone, while sojourning here below. "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock, and my defense; I shall not be moved" (Psa. 62:5, 6).

To one who has thus learned to distrust the things that are seen, and to lean on Him who is not seen, disappointment is unknown and discontent impossible. He may or may not have of the things here below which minister to flesh or sense, to comfort or to ease, but he has God who knows him and his necessities, and will never leave nor forsake him. Therefore circumstances do not move him, for he has learned God in Christ, in the cross, the grave, and the glory. "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?" It is "God for" him here. It is Christ in glory to whom such an one is passing on. That he has an unattained goal before him does not render him *discontented*, though until that goal is reached he is not *satisfied*. He learns in whatsoever state he is, to be content, for the circumstances in which he is, who walks by faith, are of God's making, and not of his own; therefore if he murmurs at his circumstances, he murmurs against God; and even if through failure or self-will he "make his own bed," as men say, and that an uneasy one, yet then his



wisdom and blessing is in turning to, and accepting, the results of his actings from the hand of the Lord, with whom it is an eternal principle, that "he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." A self-judged saint is therefore as contented in such a case, as in some other in which he may see God alone acting, and self in no way the procuring cause. Who could be more contented than Paul in the Roman prison, addressing the Philippians, in whose very city he had formerly also sung praises at midnight, with his "feet fast in the stocks?" Whether in Rome through his own act, he sees God causing the things that happened to him to fall out for the furtherance of the gospel, or whether in Philippi for the testimony of Christ, he is so thoroughly at home with God that when the doors of the prison are burst open by miracle, the last thing he thinks of is to escape. What dignity and peace is thus given to a man, who thus "sets the Lord always before him: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord."

This however by the way, for it is not needful that we should learn contentment in failure, but rather contentment in the full sense of His love, whose favor is better than life, whose way is perfect, who keeps the feet of His saints. Christ before the soul, Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, the manna for the wilderness journey, Jesus in whom we learn the perfect path of a man upon the earth -- contains every essential for the necessity of the saint and servant here in the world; and satisfaction of heart, mind, and spirit, the satisfying of all that the renewed man in resurrection power and glory is capable of, will surely be the portion of such an one in God's own time. "As for me, I shall behold thy righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Then will he find rest, and rejoicing in His presence, where is fulness of joy.

The conclusion of the matter then is that God only can content the heart of man on earth. It is not merely that He gives a contented spirit to a man, so that he can be patient and self-restrained; He does this, but He does more; for it is He Himself who is the source of content. Habakkuk in his day knew the secret of content. Though every earthly solace and resource failed him, "yet," says he, "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy, in the God of my salvation." (Chap. 3:17, 18.) Paul in his day had the same spring of joy in his soul -- God, in whom he had believed, whose he was, and whom he served. Thus he can say to the Philippians, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, to be content;" "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." "I have all things and abound." In no place does this true and suffering servant of Christ more earnestly exhort the saints to "rejoice in the Lord," than from his prison in Rome. The Lord teach our hearts the same lesson: contentedness with Himself. Thus and thus only can the believer rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, and above all, "joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation." Mercies take wings and flee away, but the soul that rests and joys in God is independent of them all. Marvelous the grace that will allow a poor and trembling heart to be

contented even now with that God, who in the eternity to come will be "all in all!"

*From Voice to the Faithful 9.*

## *The Ensnaring Effects of the Visible*

It is solemn to reflect, in this day, on how the *visible* and the *human* are being used to supplant the *invisible* and the *spiritual*. Every art of the enemy, his profound skill and dexterity, his many-sided and deeply laid plots, are all in requisition at this moment to destroy, if it were possible, and in any case, alas! to deteriorate and tarnish, every testimony to the reality and power of things not seen.

It is very instructive to note how, even in days when "sight" and "nature" were the ground on which man walked before God, as tested and proved by Him, God had His own independent witnesses to the only path suited to Himself in a world where everything is in revolt, and manifesting the consequences of departure from God. *Faith* not sight, is that great principle, as we find from Heb. 11; and this line of life and power was maintained by these worthies amid trials and sorrows of no ordinary kind.

The earliest departure from this divine path of faith is recorded in Gen. 12, in the very same scripture which tells us of the call of Abram "out" from country, kindred, and father's house. Set free by "death" (see Acts 7:2-4), "glory" had its full weight with Abram; and very blessedly did he rise and go forth from every visible thing as expressed by country, kindred, and father's house,

into a place which he should afterward receive for an inheritance . . . not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looketh for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:8-10).

As thus brought forward by glory and death, to walk the invisible path of faith, the visible for a time ensnares him. The famine, that was seen, took a firmer hold upon him than the "God of glory," who appeared to him in Mesopotamia, and afterwards when he was in the land of Canaan. Being thus deceived he sought for help in Egypt, and *found Hagar!* which "answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children" (Gal. 4:25). Note well, in this scripture, the contrast between "Jerusalem which now is," and "Jerusalem which is above."

Another instance of the seductive power of the visible, is recorded in Gen. 48. Most blessed is it to see faith, the invisible power, triumphing in Jacob over all that marked his previous checkered history, as we behold him rising superior to nature and its claims, when he laid his hands on the head of Ephraim, the younger of Joseph's two sons "*guiding his hands wittingly*"; yet equally distinct is the snare of the visible, seen in Joseph's displeasure and dissatisfaction thus expressed: "Not so, my father; for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head."

There is likewise a very solemn coincidence between this break-down of faith in Joseph, when being invested with the forfeited portion of Reuben (1 Chron. 5), and the actings of the same Reuben afterwards in Israel's history, when, in conjunction with Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, he erected "a great altar *to see to*" (Josh. 22:10). But of this more further on.

How blessed and encouraging to see in the last moments of the patriarch on which we are dwelling, the fruit of the patient, gracious ways of God with him! How cheering to see a man whose *sight* and *sense* controlled in no ordinary degree, now in faith the witness for God, intelligent, subdued, and elevated:

By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

And equally comforting is it to hear one who was continually contravening the ways of God by the visible and natural, thus accept death for himself upon it all: "Behold I die; *but God shall be with you.*"

Another striking instance of the perverting power of the visible is presented in Moses, when called of God to be the deliverer of Israel. Solemn it is to reflect on what little stay his soul derived from the promised "Certainly I will be with thee," of the "I am that I am" (Ex. 3). Observe how the absence of the visible and the human, "I am not *eloquent*, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am *slow of speech*, and of a *slow tongue*," are his pleading to be excused; and this in the presence of the most marked display of the *superhuman*. (See Ex. 4:2-7). This was not that faith which characterized him at the first, when he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Then the visible was of no account to him; but he has drooped in soul, as it were, since then, and now, as Abraham went into Egypt for help and got Hagar there, so Moses turns to the same quarter and gets Aaron, his trial and affliction afterwards. Very solemn it is to contemplate how this same Aaron, given to Moses in the day when he craved for the outward and the visible, as we have seen, was the very man who ministered to the people in their idolatrous craving after the visible, when they "*saw* that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount" (Ex. 32:1); and the same Aaron of whom it is said, with respect to the molten calf which he himself had made, "and when Aaron *saw* it, he built an altar before it."

In the same manner afterwards, in their history in the wilderness, did they crave for "a captain" (Num. 14:4), in order that they might return into Egypt, where Abraham went in the famine, and where alas! many a child of God now turns in like circumstances, in order to find some visible countenance or support. Both "calf" and "captain," the one made and the other desired, are but the ensnaring meshes of the visible and human. We know that "these things were our examples," that is, types (*τύποι*) (1 Cor. 10:6). The Lord give us to study them, and take it to heart, as to how far we, as His saints to-day, have not dropped down a thousand-fold more than they, into the perverting line of sight and nature.

It is very solemn to note the *moral* order in which the apostle in the above

scripture, refers to the circumstances in Israel's history, on some of which we have been dwelling. The spring of all was the insufficiency of the unseen, the craving for the visible; then, having obtained the lusted-after object, it becomes their idol; next follows unholy alliance with Moab (fornication); and lastly, the captain is desired, as the calf had been made. This moral, not historical, order is very solemn, as setting forth the course of the professing church of God up to Laodicea, which is the great boaster of the visible (Rev. 3:17), and which, when full blown, will be spued out, and then carried by the beast -- Satan's great visible power on earth (Rev. 17:7).

But we must turn to Israel's history in the land for a little, to see how this terrible principle ensnared them in all their course. Alas, even when they were in *type* a dead and risen people (across Jordan), and in the land of Canaan, their first failure was from this very principle we are considering. First, observe what a testimony Jehovah gave to His thoughts and ways, in the manner in which Jericho was surrounded and captured. There was the entire absence of any visible display in power, but there was to be that which is the invariable concomitant of real power, namely noiseless equanimity (Josh. 6:10).

Has not all this its own special voice for His saints of this day, who professedly occupy the ground on which Israel stood typically when in Canaan? Has it not a double voice as well? Does it not distinctly tell us what the mind and thoughts of the Lord are, as to the real power of that which is *invisible* and *supernatural*? But does it not also very clearly indicate our true place as across Jordan, namely, *that we are dead men*, and helpless in every human point of view? The Lord give us to ponder the weighty instruction which is here conveyed to faith.

Now the very next chapter is the record of how the visible ensnares, for we read of Achan making confession of his sin in these words:

When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and *took* them (Josh. 7:21).

How solemn the rise, progress, and issue of the bewitching effects of the visible!

We will turn now to another striking exemplification of our subject: it is supplied to us in the history of Reuben's great altar, "TO SEE TO" (Josh. 22:10). This act of the two and a half tribes was in perfect moral accord with the position they had taken. That position is thus sorrowfully expressed, "*Bring us not over Jordan*" (Num. 32:5). They were under the power of the visible, they possessed "a very great multitude of cattle." What could be more *natural* than that they should seek the spot most suitable to their circumstances? And if in that day there were to be found men of such narrow and extreme thoughts as to press the fact that the other side of Jordan was the true possession of God's Israel, and that taking it this side, or looking for it this side, is abandoning the call and purpose of God, how would not Reuben and his associates resent all such Visionary and transcendental notions as these? And is it not Satan's great object in this day as in that day, to hinder the people of God, and keep them out of their true and rich blessing, by despising and scorning the unseen land

beyond the river, and presenting some visible Jazer and Gilead instead? May the Lord give to His saints in this time of sifting, the wing of faith to rise beyond the snares and nets abounding in the land of sight!

But mark the beginning of this great altar. We read:

When THEY SAW the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that behold, the place was a place for cattle.

It was the same principle exactly that operated in Lot, who

lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar (Gen. 13:10).

The sight-principle confounds the garden of the Lord and the land of Egypt. Just think of these two put together: "Egypt," and "the garden of the Lord!" What a contrast! The one is *above* and *unseen*; the other is *below* and *visible*. Jordan separates them. And alas! there are not a few to-day who have lifted up their eyes like Lot, and like Reuben, and *seen* well-watered plains and places for cattle, and are settling down, or are settled down, on *this side of Jordan*. It is thus evident that there can be no security whatever from the ensnaring effects of the things seen, save as the soul is consciously kept in the light of what is unseen; and that cannot be, if *the other side of Jordan* is abandoned, as the only sphere for faith to rest in.

Thus to return to this history of the two and a half tribes, we find that their "*great altar to see to*" was in perfect keeping with their choice of what they had seen *this side Jordan*; it was a craving after the visible. It was a subtle wile too. They did not mean or intend to abandon the worship of the God of Israel; but having made a false choice in settling down in Jazer and Gilead, their human expedient is the erection of the great altar to see to, something *visibly* great, somewhat that appealed to the eye; an attempt in reality to bring God to man's ground, instead of man to God's. How solemn! It is not necessary to pursue the history further, or to point out how the other tribes resented this act of Reuben. My one object in dwelling on it so far, has been to point out the principle involved, and how deceiving and ensnaring the visible is.

It is very instructive also to observe how, in the close of Joshua (ch. 23), the people are warned in the most solemn way against the inevitable consequences of being ensnared by *visible worship* (v. 7), and *association in a natural way* (that is, yielding to *what is seen*) with the people of the world (v. 12); and this is precisely what came to pass. How solemn! They were in the *true standing*, yet incompetent to maintain it. Then in Josh. 24 it is the same line of the most solemn prophetic exhortations. They had been worshipers of the visible (idolaters), and the snare would be to return to it. All being finished, Joshua

took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; *for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto*

us.

I shall now turn to one more instance of the power of the visible and its consequences upon Israel, and that is, the way in which it acted upon them so as to hinder the observance of the Sabbatical year. In this instance it is all the more remarkable and solemn how the visible turned them aside, inasmuch as there was a special provision made by Jehovah to meet the case (see Lev. 25:20, 21). The desire of His heart was that the land should keep a sabbath unto the Lord:

The seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord.

Nothing could be more distinct, or beautiful in its import and typical bearings. Did Israel observe and cleave to the mind of Jehovah as to this? Observe the solemn warning of Lev. 26:43: "The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them"; as well as vv. 33, 34:

And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.

Such were the prophetic warnings which follow immediately the ordinance of Jehovah as to the sabbatical year, yet how lost upon the nation, ruled by the visible, as it is clear they were, in refusing to keep it! In vain, as far as they were concerned, did Jehovah promise,

I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years (Lev. 25:21).

The visible work of mans hands, their *sowing* and *reaping*, was greater and better to them than His blessing. Thus they lost their highest favor, and 2 Chron. 36:20, 21 records the execution of the predicted sentence in those solemn words:

And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him [the king of the Chaldees] and his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, *until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths*; for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

How solemn all this; yet how blessed to see that when they were in Babylon and all visible means of help gone from them, and entirely in the hands of their oppressors, then those, who were really faithful to the Lord, found out where alone their real resources were -- even in God Himself.

May His saints to-day have grace to ponder and weigh in His presence, the weighty lessons which the history affords, that, amid the increasing tendency to turn away from the line of life and faith, grace may either preserve or recover a true remnant for the Lord, broken-hearted ones who, amid sorrow and pressure, cleave to Himself, whom, having *not seen*, they still love.

W. T. Turpin

# *Recent Pamphlets*

## *An Exposition of 2 John*

### *With Some Comments on*

### *Gal. 5:9 and Rev. 2 & 3*

### *Number One in a series*

A series of pamphlets on the subject of the holiness of Christian fellowship is being prepared. This is #1 of five that are now in print. These contain substantial expositions of various passages of Scripture coupled with documentation, and refutation, of what is brought forward to shirk responsibility while addressing the unfaithfulness in a cloak of false love. Among other things, the evil teachings in *The Lake Geneva Conference Report* will be addressed.

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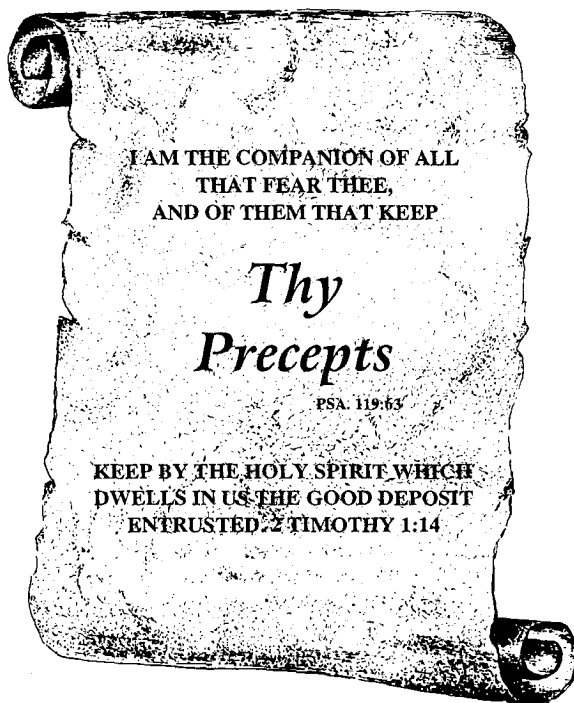
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# *The Seven Churches*

## *Revelation -- Division 2:*

### *The Things that Are*

#### *What the Spirit Says to*

#### *the Seven Assemblies:*

## *Chapter 2*

---

### *Profiting from Rev. 2 and 3*

#### *Profession, not the Body of Christ, is in View*

No member of the body of Christ can be lost or be rejected by Christ. In these seven assemblies there are those who will be rejected. Indeed, Laodicea is threatened with being spued out of His mouth (Rev. 3:16). No, the body is not the subject, nor are the members, as such, before us here, though, of course, there are those in the assemblies that are members of the body. But the body is Paul's subject and it is not found here. Neither is assembly discipline the subject, nor is church order laid down. Rather, it is profession with its consequent obligation for light-bearing that is the subject, with the Judge's judgment concerning the condition. An excellent survey of this matter is found in *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 5:287-293, which it would be well to read before proceeding.

#### *God's Light, in Responsibility, in the World*

It is helpful to see that Israel was God's light in the world but is now set aside. God does now have a light in the world, however. We noted previously in a footnote that Scripture does use the word church in the sense of a place on earth where there is gift and ministry. But there is also responsibility of the church on earth as God's light in the world. This is seen in Rev. 2 & 3 (I do not mean exclusively there), the phases and characters of professing Christendom are foreshadowed by the seven assemblies in order to give a complete view as God

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sees it. Each of these assemblies gives a foreshadow of a general lamp-character, or phase, in this history of the church viewed in responsibility and testimony on the earth, the last four continuing to the second coming. This responsibility of professing Christendom as a whole is involved with the mystery of these matters (Rev. 1:20). Thus the local candlestick, or lamp, signifies also a wider meaning. It is the wider meaning that is the instruction of paramount importance in the book of Revelation, in keeping with its character, whatever practical instructions for a local assembly or the individual may be obtained from what the Lord says to each of the assemblies, important as that is in its place. There is the overall instruction and this is seen in the seven times repeated:

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

It is not said in each case 'what the Spirit said to the *assembly*.' No! We must see the whole, as is indicated in the words "what the Spirit says to the *assemblies*." With these things in mind, let us examine a quotation from J. N. Darby in his 1842 "Notes on the Apocalypse":

There is another remark to be made here: God's candlestick. His government in the world was no longer at Jerusalem. God will govern the world by His Firstborn, and will prepare the way for Him by these judgments. But judgment begins at the house of God. The light -- the candlestick of God -- was there, and His name was upon them in the sight of the world. And whatever be its unfaithfulness, and however God may act in raising a testimony elsewhere before the world, until such a system be judged, as a system established of God, it bears its responsibility, and God acts in judgment towards it. Jerusalem was the seat of God's testimony. His candlestick had been there. I need not insist amongst Christians that the light and the presence of God were spiritually dwelling in the midst of Christians. Nevertheless, Jerusalem's responsibility and her position before the world only ceased in her destruction by the judgment of God. After this, God's candlestick, in a terrestrial sense, was in the professing church. Till then, Christians had been, to the eye of the world, a sect of the Jews. Thus we see Aquila and Priscilla at a distance from Rome, because Claudius had commanded that every Jew should depart from it. At Antioch, in the midst of the Gentiles, which was the starting-point of the labors of Paul, apostle of the Gentiles, the believers begin to have a peculiar name. They were first called Christians at Antioch; Acts 11: 26.

Thus God was preparing little by little, and especially by the mission of Paul, another candlestick before the world. Jerusalem, laboring under the weight of her sins and the guilt of the blood of the Just One, by the judgments of God upon her, disappears entirely from the scene, and the professing church is the only witness for God remaining before the world. The judgment of God upon the earth consequently connects itself with the professing church. The position of the church was perhaps more happy before, when she had only to seek her blessings from house to house (Acts 2:46), and while the temple remained the public place of the testimony of God; yet God is always faithful to His own, and wise in His ways. It is, however, under this new character that the church is considered in the Apocalypse. Christ is there judging in the midst of the candlesticks. In the prophetic part, the church is

no more seen on earth. The judgments concern the world, and the events proceed from the throne on high, not from Christ walking on earth in the midst of the candlesticks, which shone very little perhaps, but which still were there.

Thus the addresses to the seven churches, while applying to the seven churches in Asia, and severally to any one, are applicable to the professing church so long as she retains this place manifestly on the earth. In detail it may be removed from one place and carried to another, as has been the case. We must remember also that the characteristic condition of one church may begin, and that of another still continue. *Alas! the state of the church at Ephesus has.*

Many more sorrows have occurred in the meantime. One thing more is to be remarked. The characters according to which Christ acts in the midst of the churches until Thyatira are those found in the revelation of His glory in what preceded; ch. 1. This is no longer the case from Sardis, save the fact that He retains in His hand the authority over the churches; the seven stars are still there. But the names He takes (that is to say, the character according to which He acts, and which is the object of intelligent faith in the church) must always be looked for farther off in the knowledge of Christ. They are beyond that revelation of Himself which constitutes the basis of His relationship with the churches in the normal position which He takes towards them here.

In the church at Sardis then, the testimony of the churches, in a certain sense, begins as it were anew, while still remaining part of the whole. The Spirit repeats this characteristic trait -- Jesus holds the seven stars in His right hand. But the position is less ecclesiastical, and has more of what is essential in the nature of His relation with the churches. There is an exception to be made to what has been said in the case of Thyatira. "Son of God" is not part of the revelation of Christ in the preceding chapter. But it seems to me that the apostasy in principle which characterizes the church in Thyatira (association with idols, and this being tolerated) -- this fact had its place when a well-known ecclesiastical relation was coming to an end. Christ is the Son of God; it is under this essential title of the glory of His Person that He laid the basis of the church, and was the object of her faith. Thus the claims of the church, as being associated as co-heir with Him, in contrast with the nations, come in entirely in their place, when the professing church was abandoning her only faith, and the hope which was hers as set apart to God. The Morning Star, the dawn of a new day, shone in the heart of him that overcame under such circumstances. (Cp. Rev. 22:16.)

These seven churches, considered as a continued series of the history of the church, would then present to us the following epochs. Her first declension already in the time of John; the time of persecution; the professing church established in the empire or in the world, and the germ of the ecclesiastical apostasy; the time of this ecclesiastical apostasy, when Jezebel is seducing and tolerated; Sardis, the time of Protestantism as a system established in the earth; the time when, deprived of strength, faithfulness to the word of the patience of Christ characterizes those who knew it; the time of saying We are rich, when, in true riches, everything is wanting. This last is the final state -- the lukewarmness which Christ spues out of His mouth.

Observe, that we must not look for energy producing effects, but for the effect produced by that energy. This is what God judges. He acts in energy. Thus the

Reformation was the energy of the Holy Ghost; the state of Protestantism is a thing which He judges. The churches characterize the state, the position of the Christian testimony which attracts the attention of the world -- the candlestick which is there to give light. If this is the case, it is evident that the study of the speciality of these churches is of the utmost interest to my reader. I earnestly entreat him to make it his study -- so much the more, because the most precious traits of the heavenly joy are found therein.

I shall only add a few words more in general on the whole. The promises made to the first two churches relate to the general recompense, and are, of course, so to speak, for every Christian. The promise made to the third relates to a personal and individual knowledge of Jesus, which supposes that strength for faithfulness of walk is already found more in the faith and in the faithfulness of the individual. Jesus is known alone, and also enjoyed alone. There is in the church of Thyatira, amidst the general iniquity, a remarkable faithfulness and devotedness; and the Spirit of God, while leaving to the body the character of the candlestick, that is to say, the responsibility of witnessing before the world, distinguishes entirely those who had not taken part in this iniquity. Observe Rev. 2:24, where the lesson is still stronger, or at least more clear, in all the critical editions.

We may observe that in the last three churches that of Sardis is threatened with the judgment of the world. (Cp. 1 Thess. 5.) That of Philadelphia becomes of an inestimable price for the faithful of this time. The coming of Jesus is declared therein to sustain faith in a peculiar manner. And, finally (showing at the same time His perfect patience, if any of His abode there still), we see in the case of Laodicea the professing church spued out of the Lord's mouth.

In the important foreshadow viewpoint, the removal of the candlestick, or lamp, is still future to us, for the church fell into ruins early and there was never a return to first love as characterizing the church on earth as it had once been. Sometimes we speak of the removal of the candlestick at such and such a place and the tendency of this is to hinder appreciation for the exposition in the above quotation. And no doubt there is a sense in which it is true that a light goes out here and there, but we must not confuse this with the Lord's coming to remove the candlestick.

What we have just considered is in keeping with the fact that a mystery is contained in the subject of the seven churches.

### ***Judgment Must Begin at the House of God***

The ruin of the church seen on earth in testimony began early. 2 Timothy shows it, as do other Scriptures, while Revelation is written in view of the ruin having already occurred. ***Failure is the occasion of prophecy***; i.e., prophecy is given consequent upon failure having come in. In 1 Pet. 4:7 we read:

For the time of having the judgment begin from the house of God [is come].

It is the Son of man to whom all judgment is committed (John 5) and He is Son

over the house of God (Heb. 3:6). In Rev. 1 we find the Son of man depicted as Judge pronouncing His judgement, though the execution of that judgment still lingers.

### *Displacement of the First Three Phases*

The foreshadow view sees that the first four churches represent a sequence of ecclesiastical position in the world, of which the first three ended, and one (Thyatira) continues on. So one might argue that since Thyatira replaced Pergamos, the grouping is 3 and 4. But Thyatira is the development of Pergamos and it was much later to this development that the Reformation took place. The seven divides into the customary 4 and 3. (For example, this is the same division as in the seven things in Lev. 23 and Matt. 13).

### *The Threatened Judgment*

The threatened judgment has a definite change also.

A closer examination of the churches will lead us to see that in the four first, where there is blame (in the epistle to Smyrna there is none) and threatened judgment, the threat is to be executed not on the angel, but on the candlestick in Ephesus -- or on the guilty parties, as in Pergamos and in Thyatira. But in the three last it is not so. In Philadelphia there is no blame; and here, as in Smyrna, the angel and the church are not distinguished in the address itself; but in Sardis and in Laodicea the threatenings are continued as a part of the address to the angel himself. This, I suppose, connects itself with the distinction already made between these two classes of church; the four first have a definite church-place, and the angel, that part which in God's sight really represented the church, is abidingly owned at all events, and the judgment is on the inconsistent part, or what falsified the public testimony. But, when we come to Sardis, we go back (for Thyatira goes on to the end); when speaking of the mass, the better and witnessing part comes out as witness, witness against Jezebel; if they are not a witness they are nothing at all. The corporate constitution is null here. Hence, if there be failure, the whole thing fails and is judged with the world, and any faithful ones become a distinctive blessed remnant; because faithful witness is the whole thing. Hence, when Christ has to become that, the church so ruined is to be spewed out of His mouth.<sup>1</sup>

This consideration of the way judgment is presented views them grouped as 4 and 3.

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1. *Collected Writings of J. N. Andrews*, Truth Publishers.com

## *"I Have this Against Thee"*

A statement such as this is found in the first four addresses, except Smyrna, but not in the last three. These words were spoken to those churches which represent displacement of one by the other. It follows the pattern of dividing the seven into four and three. Thyatira also marks a transition point where "the rest" are distinguished, bringing forward the thought of remnant character. In its character as the successional state to Pergamos, Thyatira continues on to the end, and in that way is present with the last three, going on to the rapture and somewhat beyond that into Daniel's 70th week.

## *The Lord's Coming*

The Lord's coming is not mentioned in the first three letters. It is spoken of to Thyatira (2:25), Sardis (3:3) and Philadelphia (3:11). It is not directly mentioned to Laodicea (3:21) though co-seating in His throne is promised to the overcomer.

The implication of "hold fast till I come" (3:25) is that what is represented by Thyatira will go on until Christ comes again. (This is not the same as His coming quickly to Ephesus (2:5) which is judgmental in nature for the removing of the lamp). This phenomena concerning the introduction of the subject of His coming not only distinguishes the first three from the last four but indicates that the last four continue to the end, while the first three do not.

## *The Call to Hear*

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

Do you have an ear? And is it capable of spiritual hearing? This text, repeated seven times, brings to each believer the solemn responsibility to have before his conscience and heart all that the Lord has addressed to the seven churches. The fact that the call to hear is not attended by instructions concerning what to do does not show that no action is required. Such instructions are found elsewhere in the NT.

In the first three churches, the call to hear (see ch. 2:7,11,17) is given before the word to the overcomer. But in the last four this order is reversed (see ch. 2:29; 3:6, 13, 22; cp. ch. 2:27; 3:5, 12, 21. In Thyatira the thought of the remnant character is introduced in the reference to "the rest." It is in connection with that remnant character that the call to hear follows the promises.



## *The Overcomers and the Promises* <sup>2</sup>

### THE SPHERE TO WHICH THIS OVERCOMING APPLIES IS THE CHURCH SEEN IN RESPONSIBLE TESTIMONY ON EARTH

While overcoming has a *general* bearing in our lives, we must keep in mind that overcoming in Rev. 2 and 3 has a *specific* bearing.

There is individual energy to overcome, and it is overcoming in the condition in which they were -- it is overcoming things within, not overcoming the world. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith" -- there was that as well, of course; but here it is overcoming evil in the church. We must remember that the church has fallen from its first love, when Smyrna is addressed; and the church ceases to be a place of security to the saint, the moment the Spirit so addresses the church as failing; therefore individuals are singled out. I get myself as an individual singled out, but the church addressed. I have to make good my certainty by the word. The church may be right in this or that; but I have to discern by the word what I can follow, and what I cannot. This is a principle of great importance. It is not that there were no blessings for these churches -- they were highly commended in many things. But the churches were being judged by Christ's word. <sup>3</sup>

Such texts as John 16:33, 1 John 2:13-17, 4:4, and 5:4 have their place concerning overcoming, especially the *world*. The Jewish remnant also overcomes (Rev. 12:11) in the circumstances in which they are placed. Rev. 21:7 is general, embracing all overcoming.

The Lord Jesus is Himself the great overcomer:

Behold, the lion which [is] of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, has overcome [so as] to open the book, and its seven seals (Rev. 5:5).

### OVERCOMING

Let us take a lesson from Saul as to overcoming. He overcame the Ammonites; but the Philistines, whom he was specially raised up to conquer, he never overcame. If people do not do the thing they are sent to do, it does not matter how much they do. <sup>4</sup>

Now what is overcoming? Many have had the thought awakened as to overcoming. It is the victor who overcomes, but the mind does not take in what victory really is. If I look at Saul, I see a man with a high opinion of the God of his imagination, but wishing to put the true God to death. And then I see Paul come forth as the victor, one in whom is nothing contrary to Christ. The contrast between light and darkness is over. You answer: But can I turn out self? Surely not; nothing but faith can do it, faith which lays hold of the One who has

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2. See, "To Him that Overcometh," *Collected Writings* 17:348-360.

3. *Collected Writings* 34:154.

4. *Collected Writings* 34:166 [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

overcome. The more nature comes out, the more there is for God to put down. You must get Christ in. He is the only overcomer. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." As to detail, if we look at our daily life, is the task less arduous now than it was at the first entrance of blessing to our souls? Not a bit as to ourselves, it has not changed us; there is the old man in us as well as the new to the end.

Another thing that troubles souls is, that they ask the question, Is not joy the mark of an over-comer? Joy? The very contrary! If I would be an overcomer, God must so deal with me as to put self out. He lets the soul perhaps have a slip, and it is crushed. It is by humiliation that God leads on step by step; it is not by joy. Is the nipping of evil joy? or of its shoots? God crippled Jacob, but it was no pleasure to him; and he has got to nip the root; He has to crush it; it is a horrid thing -- this self. It will grow again out of the least little fiber, and He leaves fibers. Daniel fainted and was sick certain days, when he had revelations from God. It is not pleasant work to the flesh, the soul being brought into communion with God. It is blessed to know that Christ will change us into the same image from glory to glory; but the process by which it is accomplished is remarkably humbling to the flesh. Nothing but the truth burning in us will carry us on where human energy fails; the only thought that will help us is, Christ must be spoken of, for He is worthy.

We look at acts; God looks at habits. I may, perhaps, to-day be walking quietly on under a cross under which I once winced. Christ alone can take the bad clay, put it on the wheel, and bring it out a vessel to His own praise. He nips the evil, and this is a very solemn thing. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." God is working in you, take care how you walk. If God works in me I may well be confident; but if God works in me I must also be careful.<sup>5</sup>

## **DO ALL CHRISTIANS OBTAIN WHAT IS PROMISED TO THE OVERCOMERS?**

**Does Each Overcomer Receive All These Rewards?** J. N. Darby was asked:

Ques. Do all Christians get all the rewards in the seven churches?

I suppose there will be a special sense of them given to those who have been faithful. All will sit upon His throne, though to me that is the lowest.

Reward is encouragement; if it is motive, it is wrong altogether. {Love is the motive.} The crowns are all one to me, but different circumstances may bring out the characters; faithfulness to death has a crown of life, but all believers will get it.<sup>6</sup>

The overcomer in Ephesus will eat of the tree of life (Rev. 2:7). This is true of all who have washed their robes (Rev. 22:14). Those who have not washed their robes are not believers.

5. G. V. Wigram, *The Addresses to the Seven Churches*.

6. *Notes and Jottings*, p. 209. See also *End Bible*, *Thy Precepts*, 660.

The overcomer in Smyrna will not be injured of the second death (Rev. 2:11). The fact is that the second death will have *no power over anyone of the first resurrection* (Rev. 20:6). Those hurt by the second death are not believers. To say that a saint may be injured of the second death, or to say the second death may have power over a saint, is directly injurious to the work of Christ!

This is the second death, [even] the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15).

The lake of fire has no power over any believer, nor can he be injured by it. Beware of substituting *reward* as motive *instead of love as motive*. Reward is for encouragement in the path of following Christ.

Last, observe that the overcomer of Thyatira receives the morning star (Rev. 2:28). In Rev. 22:16 the Lord Jesus is brought before us as “the bright [and] morning star.” It is Himself. And immediately we read:

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come (Rev. 22:17).

Are you in the good and enjoyment of this? Do you say, “Come, Lord Jesus”? Or is a theological system blocking you? Does it only mean that He will come some day? -- or are you truly expecting Himself? He will come as the bright and morning star at the rapture, before the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings (Mal. 4) for the appearing in glory to set up the millennial reign. Not one saint now in the path that leads to glory will miss the Morning Star; and subsequently when He who is our life is manifested, then shall we be manifested with Him in glory (Col. 3:4).

#### **Will There Be Differences in Enjoyment Of What the Overcomers Receive?**

Yes. There are some indicators of this in Rev. 2 and 3. While the reward for an overcomer in Laodicea is, perhaps, the lowest of all, the promise of reigning with Christ (Rev. 3:21) is the portion of all who are part of the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4). This is the resurrection of the just. There are parables in Matthew which show that there will be differences among those who reign with Christ. Moreover, you will recall the Lord Jesus speaking of the placement on His right hand and His left. The Father will determine this. Such things do not depend on the value of the precious blood, else it would make variation in that value. The differences depend on other factors.<sup>7</sup>

Another indicator of difference is that to the overcomer in Pergamos is promised a white stone with a new name written, which no one knows but he to whom it is given (Rev. 2:17).

We might note here that the twelve apostles will have a special place in the kingdom (Matt. 19:28).

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7. See *Collected Writings of W. W. Lucy*, 1907, pp. 807-808, [www.lucypublishers.com](http://www.lucypublishers.com)

## *Presentation of the Lord in The First Three and Last Four*

There is a change in the way the Lord is presented to the seven churches. A transition point at the fourth (Thyatira) occurs.

**First Three.** In the first three churches Christ is presented according to the features seen in Him in Ch. 1 (see Ch. 2:1,8,12).

**Fourth.** In Thyatira a transition occurs. Two features that marked Him in Ch. 1 are presented but with this He is also presented as Son of God, which was not the way He was presented in Ch. 1. There is another transition in Thyatira, namely that "the rest" were singled out, introducing the thought of remnant character.

**Fifth.** In Sardis, one feature of the Judge noted in Ch. 1 is presented and additionally He is noted as the One Who has the seven spirits of God. While they are mentioned in Rev. 1:4, they were not presented there as one of His features.

**Sixth and Seventh.** The transition is complete here. Not one of the nine features noted in Ch. 1 are mentioned. The features presented are moral or positional, in the sense of being a contrast with those nine features.

In general, it should be observed that the Lord is presented in a different way in each of the seven cases. Some features of Himself are first of all brought forward which have a bearing upon the state that meets His eyes, which are as a flame of fire. Additionally, within the last four presentations of Himself there is a distinction in the presentation to Thyatira and Sardis in that to them, while there is the introduction of what is personal (Son of God -- Thyatira) and governmental (the seven Spirits of God -- Sardis) there still are presentations of Christ according to what John saw in Ch. 1; with Philadelphia and Laodicea there are no presentations of Christ concerning what John saw in Ch. 1. Philadelphia and Laodicea come out of Sardis, sequentially, Laodicea being a movement in *opposition* to Philadelphian light *by imitation*. Each of these assemblies is addressed in a unique way in the presentation of Christ to them.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

## *Elements of Dispensational Truth* *Romans 9-11*

### *Chapter 9.3*

## *Romans 11: The Administration of Privilege, God's Ways, and Israel's Future* (Continued)

### *Romans 11:11-15 The Results of Israel's Fall and Restoration*

- 11 I say then, Have they stumbled in order that they might fall? Far be the thought: but by their fall [there is] salvation to the nations to provoke them to jealousy.
- 12 But if their fall [be the] world's wealth, and their loss [the] wealth of [the] nations, how much rather their fullness?
- 13 For I speak to you, the nations, inasmuch as *I* am apostle of nations, I glorify my ministry;
- 14 if by any means I shall provoke to jealousy [them which are] my flesh, and shall save some from among them.
- 15 For if their casting away [be the] world's reconciliation, what [their] reception but life from among [the] dead?

#### **THE STUMBLING OF ISRAEL (v. 11)**

The following translation is by W. Kelly:

I say then, Did they stumble in order that they should fall? Far be it: but by their trespass salvation [is come] to the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy. But if their trespass be [the] world's riches and their loss [the] Gentile's riches, how much more their fullness?

It is indicated here that Israel fell down by stumbling. The word for "fall" in verse 11 in this context has the thought of falling so as not to regain the former place.

Clearly, the stumbling which took place will not result in that.

The word for "trespass," we are told, denotes a moral trespass, a misdeed. This refers to an extraordinary trespass and is, no doubt, the rejection of Christ. In Rom. 9:32, 33 we learn that they "stumbled {struck against} at the stumbling stone" for He is "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." The cross is the great turning point.

The answer to the question, Did Israel stumble so that they should irrevocably lose their national place?, is, No!

Israel stumbled, and stumbles, over Christ. They would not have Him since they sought after righteousness by trying to establish their own righteousness (Rom. 9:30-33). He was the end of the law for righteous to everyone that believes (Rom 10: 3, 4). They preferred Barabbas (bar = son; abba = father) to the true Son of the Father.

Have they stumbled in order that they might fall so as not ever to regain a national place? No, says Paul. The nation shall again have a national place. It is the *nation*, not individuals, that has stumbled but *will regain its place*.

Thus the very slip of Israel from its place of witness and depositary of promise, turned as it is through divine mercy into present favor towards the Gentile world, becomes an argument in the hands of grace to assure their future restoration. The apostle alludes to the words of Deut. 32, the bearing of which on the question is as evident as to the Jew their authority is indisputable. It was not Paul but Moses who declared that the Jew provoked Jehovah to jealousy, that he was unmindful of the Rock who begat him, the glory of God that formed him. It was Moses who testified that Jehovah said, "I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with [that which is] not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with [those which are] not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation." Undoubtedly it is the sure and solemn threat of God's displeasure in turning from Israel to the Gentiles, as certainly as Israel used to turn from Jehovah to false gods. But the threat, now accomplishing after the utmost patience, and only accomplished when they added to their old idolatry the still graver sin of rejecting the Messiah and disdaining the gospel that offered them the pardon of these and all other sins by His blood, -- the threat itself contains the no less sure intimation of restoring mercy in the end. For certainly He who acts with a view to provoke them to jealousy through blessing the Gentiles does not mean to cast them off eventually; rather the very reverse. One sees by such admirable reasoning and such profoundly accurate employment of the Old Testament scripture how truly it is the same Spirit who wrote of old by Moses working now by Paul.

Apart from any particular allusion, the state of things whether now or by and by accords perfectly both with the facts of Christianity and with the general prospects for the world according to the prophecies. For it is just when the Jews

lose all their place and nation no less than distinctive rank as a witnessing and worshipping people in their land that we see the Gentiles gradually renouncing their idols, and the true God and His word incomparably better known than even of old in Israel. Revealed truth, having its center and display in Christ, alone accounts for the eclipse on the one side and the possession of a brighter light on the other. Did not the Jews reject the true light which now shines on nations so long benighted in idolatry? Again, while owning the mercy of God, which has thus wondrously turned aside to visit the Gentile with the gospel during the continued unbelief and consequently dark and wretched nothingness of the Jew, who can overlook the rich and full stream of Old Testament scripture which depicts the joy and blessedness of the whole earth only when God causes His face to shine on Israel? "God shall bless us" (says the inspired Jewish psalmist); "and all the ends of the earth shall fear him." It is right to preach, a privilege to look for souls to be blessed; but it is vain, because unscriptural, to expect universality of blessing and delivering power over the world as a whole till Zion's light is come and the glory of Jehovah is risen on her. Then and not before shall the Gentiles come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising then the nation and kingdom that will not serve Zion shall perish -- a state of things in evident contrast with the grace that goes out now to Jew and Gentile indiscriminately, and gathers believing souls by the Spirit for heavenly and eternal glory, instead of being a display of the righteous government of Jehovah-Messiah in Israel and over all the earth.

Hence it is obvious with what strict truth the apostle could affirm that the salvation to the Gentiles, by the slip or trespass of the Jews, is but to provoke them to jealousy instead of being a sign of being abandoned for ever as a people by God. Nay further he could reason, in harmony with the prophets, that if their trespass is the world's wealth, and their loss and diminution the Gentiles' wealth, how much more their fullness? The apostle here accounts, or, if one will, apologizes, for his bringing in the Gentiles when discussing the destiny of Israel. He was speaking to the saints at Rome, "to you the Gentiles." Further, "inasmuch therefore as I am apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry": how or why should he forget the divine mercy to such hinging on God's ways with Israel that now occupied him? Especially too as he was thereby seeking to further that provocation to jealousy for which he had the authority of Him who alone is good and of whose compassion toward Israel he was no less assured than of His righteous displeasure at their sins. "If by any means I may provoke to jealousy [those who are] my flesh and may save some of them" (v. 14). "For if their rejection [be the] world's reconciliation, what their reception but life from among [the] dead?" Such we have seen is the uniform impression left by the Psalms and the Prophets, as every candid and intelligent Jew must feel.<sup>1</sup>

The blessing and privilege granted to the Gentiles is, in the ways of God, a provocation to jealousy of Israel, and Paul hoped that some might be stirred to

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1. W. Kelly, *Notes on Romans*, 1862, [www.truthpublishers.com](http://www.truthpublishers.com)

avail themselves of the grace of God.

### HOW MUCH RATHER THEIR FULLNESS (v. 12)

Israel shall have a fullness as well the nations (cp. vv. 12 & 25). This proves that the expression "fullness of the nations" cannot mean the conversion of the world because "conversion of the world" necessarily would include the Jews. Israel's fullness will take place subsequently, consequent upon Christ's appearing in glory and turning ungodliness away from Jacob. He will purge out the rebels from among them (Ezek. 20) and thus they shall all be righteous (Isa. 60:21). So all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:26) because all those left are born of God and these compose the entire nation. At that millennial day the nations will rejoice with Israel (Deut. 32:43), for the knowledge of Jehovah will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Read Isa. 2:2, 3; 12:4-6; 60; Zech. 14:16.

Israel is *now* in a condition of "loss" (v. 12), or diminishing, during the time which will result in the fullness of the nations. The fullness of the nations precedes Israel's fullness (v. 25) but v. 12 shows that a wider (not deeper) extent of blessing to Gentiles (during the millennium) will follow Israel's fullness. *Then* blessing will flow out through Israel. This is not the situation now. It is a profound difference.

The riches of the nations stands in contrast to Israel's loss of something. These are riches that can be lost. It is an *external place of nearness* that is meant in v. 15. The old Israel had a place of nearness in this sense. And while the Gentiles have come into a new place with regard to the administration of privilege, blessing will be more widely effective consequent upon Israel's fullness. However, and this is important to observe, Gentile blessing in the millennium will be *through* Israel, which is not the case now. Of course, the portion of a saved Gentile now is heavenly and vastly richer than will be the character of blessing for Gentiles in the millennium, though then blessing will be more wide-spread in the earth.

### I SPEAK TO YOU, THE NATIONS, ETC. (vv. 13, 14)

**The Apostle of Nations Speaks to Them.** It is Gentilism that Paul has before him up to v. 25.

My reader should remember, that if there had not been something peculiar, there would have been no need to speak of Gentiles. Nay, one could not have done it. A Christian, once a Jew, needed warning as much as another.<sup>2</sup>

To me it is evident, that as to the practical bearing and application of these words -- "you Gentiles," though all Gentiles be liable to their application, those who are referred to in the words of Simeon (Luke 2) are the only ones who are the object of them; the rest, as the inhabitants of Central Africa, for instance, exist not for



the application of the reasoning of God in this chapter. When God will apply them so, He will take care, by the preaching of the everlasting gospel, that all the Gentiles should be the objects of the judgment which will show the justice of His government; but we cannot exactly address to them these warnings; we should be right in applying to them the doctrine which Paul applies (Acts 17); there he preaches to the world, here he speaks to professors.<sup>3</sup>

More will be said on this when we consider the good Olive Tree.

**I Glorify My Ministry.** It is not that Paul glorifies himself, but his ministry. Indeed, it is characteristically a ministry of the glory, as may be seen in numbers of Scriptures, 2 Cor. 4 being one of them. The Apostle of this ministry to the Gentiles also desires the provocation of his kinsmen according to the flesh -- provocation to blessing also, that they might participate with the Gentiles in the mercy towards them.

**Provoking to Jealousy to Save Some of His Kinsmen v. 14.** It is clear from this text that Paul had no such idea as that the nation of Israel would be saved in the present period of God's work through the gospel which Paul preached. "Save some from among them" makes this clear.<sup>4</sup> Yet, in Rom. 11:26 we read that "all Israel shall be saved." This will take place, not during the epoch of the preaching of Paul's gospel, but when Israel enters the millennium. That will be Israel's reception, as life from the dead, noticed in v. 15.

#### THE WORLD'S RECONCILIATION FOLLOWED BY ISRAEL'S RECEPTION (v. 15)

**The Casting Away of Them (v. 15).** Paul himself was proof that "the casting away of them" does not mean all of the Jews, for he himself was a saved Jew -- not cast away. The phrase refers to the nation, as such

**The World's Reconciliation.** Obviously the phrase, "the world's reconciliation," does not mean that the world will actually be saved. The expression denotes that the Gentiles are brought into view, before God, for the administration of privilege while Israel as a nation is cast away (laid aside), in the ways of God, meanwhile.

It is not exactly the inhabitants of the countries in which the gospel has been preached who are the Gentiles "brought to light," only the light is come there to

3. *The Present Testimony* 4:132.

4. Daniel Fuller contradicts the Word of God:

... there is no hope for Israel apart from the gospel of grace which is proclaimed by local churches, to whom alone, as the pillar and ground of the truth, Christ has entrusted "the faith" until the end of this present evil age. Thus there may well be an ingathering of Jews after "the times of the Gentiles." But when and if this happens, Israel will be "saved" and joined to the body of Christ by believing the same gospel as Paul preached to his brethren in the flesh (Fuller, p. 362).

Nor is he sure that there will be an "ingathering" of Jews"; but he is sure that if it happens Israel will be joined to the body of Christ -- [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

bring them into light; but it is the countries of the baptized, where Christianity is professed. In theory, all the Gentiles have been brought into light. God takes knowledge of it. It is therefore the apostle can say to the Colossians -- "The gospel is come into all the world, and brings forth fruit;" but as to the position of responsibility as a body, that is realized there where they have been Christianized.<sup>5</sup>

Sometimes this is spoken of as bringing the Gentile dispensationally into view for blessing, in an effort to explain it and make clear the distinction between the present place of the Gentile and the place the nations shall have in the future in relation to Israel as the center of blessing. The way James expressed it in Acts 15:14 is that "how God first visited to take out of [the] nations a people for his name." The present work is not the fulfilment of the OT, but, James said, "with this agree the words of the prophet . . ." It was consistent with the OT prophecies concerning blessing for the nations. A Jew, on principle, cannot object to Gentiles being blessed.

**Israel's "Reception" (v. 15).** The casting away of the nation (v. 15), which means that they are laid aside, but not irrecoverably so, synchronizes in time with the message of salvation going out to the Gentiles. Verses 11-14 prove this. The fall of Israel (v. 12), or rather the trespass of Israel (the rejection of Christ), synchronizes with the message of salvation going out to Gentiles. This synchronization is also seen in what is said concerning the Olive Tree, which we will consider below.

Israel's "reception" denotes that Israel as a nation will again be brought near as a nation, into view, before God, for the administration of privilege; but in the future, spiritual Israel's blessing will have a different aspect to it than in the past in that all Israel shall be saved (v. 26; Isa. 61:9) whereas in the past, while Israel was owned of God, and in the place of the administration of privilege, not all were children of God (Isa. 64:6).

**Life from Among the Dead.** Verse 15 compares the future reception of the nation of Israel to resurrection, used figuratively here. Verse 25 tells us that the blindness of Israel is until a certain time. Verse 26 tells us that all Israel shall be saved; and v. 27 tells us that they will be in covenant relationship again.

So resurrection is used as a figure of Israel's restoration to the place of privilege and blessing *as a nation*. This figure is also used in Dan 12:1, 2; Ezek 37; Isa. 26:19, 20. Yes, all of these use resurrection in a figurative way for the restoration of Israel.

## *Elements of Propitiation, Substitution, and The Righteousness of God*

### *Chapter 9*

## *The Showing Forth of The Righteousness of God* *Romans 3:19-26*

### *The Righteousness of God* <sup>1</sup>

Sin is measured by God's glory and righteousness, by what He is; and also by what the cross means. By the righteousness of God <sup>2</sup> is meant God's consistency

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1. There is a section on the righteousness of God in *Selected Ministry of A. H. Rule* 1:59-68.
  2. The remarkable fact may here be noticed that confessedly the majority of commentators, who shrink from the plain meaning of the phrase in Phil. 1:17 {sic -- Rom. 1:17?}, and even in Rom. 3:21, 22, confess that in Rom. 3:25, 26, it does signify, not God's mercy, nor His method of justification, or act of justifying (which in Greek is expressed by *dikaiosis*), nor that righteousness which is acceptable to God, but His justice. Here this is allowed to be the proper meaning of the terms, and what the context demands. Not merely did justice seem compromised by pretermission of past sins, and therefore require vindication, but the work of Christ had so glorified God in the judgment of sin that it was only just for God to remit sins, yea, to justify him that is of faith in Christ Jesus. And so, it cannot be denied, the apostle but explains what he means by *dikaosune Theou*, when he adds that God set forth Christ a propitiatory, or mercy-seat, that He might be just and justify the believer.

If then it be so, that *dikaosune Theou* can only mean God's righteousness where it is fully expounded (as in vv. 25, 26), how unreasonable to give the same phrase a different force in the same context! (Rom. 3:21, 22, just before.) If this be owned, with what consistency can one question its meaning in Rom. 1:17? Even Rom. 3:5 makes this apparent, for there beyond controversy the phrase means the consistency of God with His character (that is, His righteousness) in judging the world which rejects Christ, as the other passages shew His righteousness in justifying those who believe in His name. Compare also Matt. 6:33, James 1:20. Elsewhere (save in 2 Cor. 5:21, which stands alone in using the abstract for concrete, but otherwise strengthens the same truth) the terms in the Epistles of Paul signify God's justice in justifying those who, resting by faith on Jesus and His

with what He is in His nature as light and love. It is in the NT that we read that God is light (1 John 1:5) and God is love (1 John 4:8) – and it is in that order that we read of it. That is a moral order of unfolding this in the Scripture: light first, then love. That is what God *is*: light and love. He must necessarily act in accordance with what He is in Himself as light and love. To do otherwise would be inconsistency, and therefor unrighteous.<sup>3</sup>

In the OT, the righteousness of God was not shown forth, i.e., not manifested. The righteousness of God could not be manifested until Christ had shed His precious blood, offering Himself as a propitiation, rendering a satisfaction to God for the outrage of sin against His nature, majesty, and glory; and glorifying God in doing this. This propitiation is the foundation upon which God has based, and bases, His ways in grace. Whatever grace God had shown to any before the cross was based upon His looking forward to the work of Christ on the cross; and it was necessary that God be shown to be righteous in having done so. But it was not manifested in the OT how that God was righteous in this.

The showing forth, the manifestation of, the righteousness of God, has as its foundation the cross, wherein what God is as light and love was expressed. What God required as light was provided by what God is as love. Christ Himself, as the propitiation, is the display of God as light and love. And Christ Himself is both the propitiatory sacrifice *and* the mercy-seat, the propitiatory of Rom. 3:25.

The glory of God, the glory of Christ, accounting the believer righteous before God, and the justification of the believer are all involved with the righteousness of God and its acting in its manifestation:

2. (...continued)

blood, are accepted in all the value of His acceptance before God. (*Collected Writings* 23:332, 334).

3. In connection with God being light and love, the following remark by J. N. Darby is apropos:

I do not say love caused, for it was infinite love gave the Son to be the lamb of propitiation; but that love wrought by a work which maintained the righteousness and holiness of God in forgiving and justifying: and, though the word may be used for the effect, it is applied to God in the New Testament, and its meaning is "propitiation" or "appeasing." "Reconciling," which is applied to believers, is a totally different word, *katallasso* *katallage*. The *ilastos* was offered to God, *ilasterion* was where His blood was placed on God's throne, and it was God who was the object of *ilaskesthai*, man of *katallage* (1 John 2: 2; Rom. 3: 25; Heb. 2: 17); and as to *katallasso*, see Rom. 5: 10, 11; 2 Cor. 5: 18-21; Col. 1: 20, 21 (*Collected Writings* 29:260). ♦

And it is an unhappy thing, because the effect of atonement (when wrath would justly come out against us) is to cleanse and reconcile us, to weaken the truth of that righteous wrath, and its being righteously arrested by the precious blood presented to God, and that bearing of sins, which makes it righteous in God to justify the ungodly and forgive their sins. Appeasing God, *ilaskomai*, *placare*, let the word be what it may, is not changing God, but glorifying and satisfying God's righteous judgment; so that He may say, "when I see the blood, I will pass over *sin*." (*Collected Writings* 29:277). ♦

In John 16: 10 we see wherein the righteousness of God has been shown; namely, that God has set Christ at His right hand in His own glory, because Christ has perfectly glorified Him. The righteousness consists in this, that the Father has exalted Christ as Man to His own glory -- the glory which He had with Him before the world was; and God, as a *righteous* God, has glorified Him because *He* has been glorified in Christ on the cross; John 17:5; ch. 13:31, 32. In the above-cited passage (John 16:10), the Lord says: The Spirit "will convince the world of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." By the rejection of Christ, the world has for ever lost Him as come in grace; but God has accepted and glorified Him. When the Lord speaks of the world, in John 17:25, He says, "*Righteous* Father!" on the other hand, in His prayer for His own, He says, "Holy Father!" (v. 11). Thus the proof of the righteousness of God lies in His having glorified Christ. When God was in Christ in the world, it had either to accept or reject Him. It has rejected Him, and is thereby judged, and will see Him no more until He come in judgment; but Christ, as Man, has perfectly glorified *God* in all that He is, and God according to His righteousness has glorified *Him*. Now the gospel announces this righteousness of God; namely, that Christ, in what He has done for us, having glorified God, has been glorified as Man, and is seated at God's right hand, clothed with divine glory; moreover, that our position before God is the consequence of what Christ has accomplished. *Our* justification and being glorified are a part of the righteousness of God; because what Christ has done to glorify God, has been done *for us*. We are the righteousness of God in Him; 2 Cor. 5:21. Christ would lose the fruit of His work if we should not be with Him in glory as the fruit of the travail of His soul, after He has glorified all that is in God, although in ourselves we are absolutely unworthy.<sup>4</sup>

W. Kelly answered a question about what was the righteousness of God:

"The righteousness of God" embraces the entire display of God's ways in Christ, one of the least of which, if we are to compare things which are all perfect in their place, was His accomplishment of the law here below. For the law was not intended to express fully and absolutely God's nature and character. It stated, if we may so say, the lowest terms on which man could live before Him. It was the demand of what God could not but require, even from a sinful Israelite, if he pretended to obey God. Whereas, though the Lord Jesus was made under the law, and submitted in His grace to all its claims, He went much farther, even in His living obedience, and infinitely beyond it in His death. For the righteousness of the law threatens no death to the righteous, but necessarily proclaims life for his portion, who magnified and made it honorable. But *God's* righteousness goes immeasurably deeper as well as higher. It is a justifying righteousness, not a condemning one, as that of the law must be so to the sinner who has it not. Hence the Lord Himself established the sanctions of the law in the most solemn way by suffering unto death under its curse: He bore the penalty of the ungodly, of which substitution the Ten words knew nothing, because they are *law*, and so to die is

*grace*. There was no mitigation, much less annulling of the law's authority. Divine righteousness provided One who could and would settle the whole question for the sinner with God. Nor this only; for *God* raised Christ from the dead. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father; His moral being, His purposes, His truth, His love, His relationship, His *glory*, in short, was at stake in the grave of Christ. But God raised Him up, and set Him at His own right hand in heaven, as a part of His divine righteousness; for no seat, no reward inferior to that, could suit the One who had vindicated God in all His majesty, holiness, grace, and truth, who had, so to speak, enabled God to carry out His precious design of justifying the ungodly, Himself just all the while. Thenceforward, to him who has faith, it is no longer a question of the law or of legal righteousness, which rested on the responsibility of *man*, but Christ having gone down into death in atonement, and thus glorified God to the uttermost, the ground is changed, and it becomes a question of *God's* righteousness. If man has been proved by the law to have brought forth *wrongs*, and only wrongs, God must have *His* rights, the very first of which is raising up Christ from the dead, and giving Him glory. Hence the Holy Spirit is said, in John 16, to convince the world of *righteousness*; and this, not because Christ fulfilled that which we violated, but because *He is gone to the Father*, and is seen no more till he return in judgment. It is not righteousness on earth, but its heavenly course and character, in the ascension of Christ, which is here spoken of. So again, in 2 Cor. 5, it is in Christ glorified in heaven that we are made, or become, divine righteousness. It is plain, then, that the phrase, though no doubt embracing what Christian's mean when they speak of Christ's righteousness imputed to us, is a far larger and more glorious thing. It includes not only that which glorified God on earth in living obedience, but the death of the cross, which if it met the deepest need of the sinner, broke the power of Satan in his last stronghold, and laid the immutable foundation for God's grace to reign through righteousness. Thus in Rom. 1:17, God's righteousness is said to be revealed in the gospel in contrast with man's righteousness claimed in the law; and being *revealed*, it is "from faith," not from law-works: that is, it is a revelation on the principle of faith, not a work to be rendered on the ground of human responsibility. Therefore it is to "faith." He that believes gets the blessing. In Rom. 3:21, 22, it is formally contrasted with anything under the law, though the law and the prophets witnessed respecting it. It is "God's righteousness without law," by faith of Jesus Christ, and hence "towards all men" in native tendency, but taking effect only "upon all them that believe." It is here in special connection with redemption, and therefore it is added *through faith in His blood*. See verses 24-26. In Rom. 10, it is shown to be incompatible with seeking to establish one's own righteousness, God's righteousness being complete, and the object of faith in Christ has to be submitted to, or we have no part or lot in it. 2 Cor. 5 rises higher, and shows what the saint is, according to the gospel of the *glory* of Christ -- made divine righteousness in Him risen and glorified. Hence in the later epistle to the Philippians, the ripe sample and development of Christian experience, Paul, transported even to the last with this new and divine righteousness, shows us that, compared with it, he would not have the righteousness of the law if he could. For what was of the law had glory no longer in his eyes because of the glory that excelled -- that which is

through the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God through faith (Phil. 3). Far from superseding practical godliness, this righteousness of God in Christ strikes deep roots in the heart, and springs up in a harvest of kindred fruit, which is by Jesus Christ to God's glory and praise. (Phil. 1:11).

It is a singular fact that, while God used Rom. 1:17 to Luther's conversion, and we may say to the Reformation, neither he, nor his companions, or their followers, ever apprehended the full truth conveyed by this blessed expression -- "righteousness of God." Hence it is habitually mistranslated in Luther's German Bible, where δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ is rendered "the righteousness which is available before God." This, evidently, is far short of the truth; for a *legal* righteousness, if accomplished by man, would have availed before God. But God, in His grace, has accomplished in Christ and given an incomparably higher, i.e., a divine, righteousness, and nothing less than this are we made in Christ. Perhaps the imperfect view entertained by the great German Reformer may account in large measure for the fluctuations in his enjoyment of peace. The same thing applies to most Protestants up to our day, even where they are devoted Christians, and perhaps from a similar cause; for they have advanced little, if at all, beyond the light on this head possessed by Luther.<sup>5</sup>

### *No Justification by Works of Law*

No doubt many Christians have no room in their "theology" for the statement that the law did not show forth, manifest, the righteousness of God. They might point to a Scripture which speaks of the righteous requirements of the law (Rom. 8:4) and think their "theology" is proved. But, the fact that the law had righteous requirements does not at all address the matter of the NT doctrine of the manifestation of *the righteousness of God*. False views like that lower the spiritual apprehension and hide truth from those who hold such notions; but more importantly, it misrepresents the display of God's glory in Christ. I do not say that this is intentional, but it is true nonetheless.

The fact is that the express teaching of Romans is that the righteousness of God is shown forth apart from the law. The Spirit had indicted all as exposed sinners:

... for we have before charged both Jews and Greeks with being all under sin  
... (Rom. 3:9).<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, concerning the law:

Now we know that whatever the things the law says, it speaks to those under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world be under judgment to

5. The Bible Treasury 1:196

6. Why does the Scofieldian age-ism system claim that man is being tested now when the conclusion of testing was long ago reached - [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

God. Wherefore by works of law<sup>7</sup> shall no flesh be justified before him; for by the law [is] knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:19, 20).

It is a myth of the same “theology” mentioned above that the law is a “transcript of the mind of God,” in effect limiting God to what the law expressed. Coupled with this is the false notion that Adam had *the* law.<sup>8</sup> The truth is that Adam had *a* law, not to eat of a certain tree; but it is an idle notion that he had *the* law. The ones who had *the* law were the Jews. The Gentiles never had it, as is recognized in Rom. 2:14 and elsewhere. This same book (Rom. 9:4) states that the law-giving belongs to Paul’s kinsmen according to the flesh.

In Rom. 3:19 we see that the law speaks to those under it. What was the purpose for its speaking? We should understand that in the OT it was man as in his Adam standing, called *the first man* in 1 Cor. 15:47, that was under testing, under probation. The testing took various forms. It took a distinctive form in Israel under the law. Israel represented *the first man* being tested by law. Israel was a sample, was a representative, of *the first man*. The law addressed itself to man in the flesh, to man in Adamic standing, but in the persons of the people of Israel. And as the sample, the representative, of the first man, the law was given to Israel and in this test the first man failed. Finally, they were also tested by grace and truth in the Son (John 1:14) and rejected the revelation of the Father in the Son (John 15:24); as also they were tested by the kingdom, and rejected the King and the kingdom as embodied in Him (Matt. 12:28). All testing of the first man was completed, and thus the time for the showing forth of the righteousness of God arrived – when man was fully exposed to be unrighteous and totally lost.

Israel, then, stood as representing the first man in these particular tests; and so the results are applicable to every individual ranged under that sweeping classification: *the first man*. Therefore it is that Rom. 3:19 applies the result to the entire world – “that every mouth may be stopped.” Oh, men keep blabbering against God, but like the man who came into the wedding without the provided wedding garment, he was “speechless.” There will certainly not be one word of back-talk at the great white throne judgment. The second thing stated as the result of the test under law is: “and all the world be under judgment to God.”<sup>9</sup> In a footnote to the word “be” J. N. Darby says:

i.e., ‘become in that state,’ not future, but the existing consequence.

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7. Note that the point here is not *the* law, but law as a principle of approach to God – though *the* law is a particular form of law, and is, of, course included under this larger view.

8. See “Divine Righteousness,” *Collected Writings*, vol. 10, especially p. 149, 154.

9. Why does the Scofieldian age-ism system teach that the probation of man is continuing when sentence is already passed by God?



The world is already judged. The Lord Jesus had anticipated that just before the cross: "now is the judgment of this world" (John 12:31).

The *state* has been exposed by God, the *sentence* has been passed, but the *execution* of the sentence (committed into the hands of the Son of man, John 5:27) awaits its appointed time.

### THREE POINTS REGARDING THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

**The Revelation of Righteousness of God.** In Rom. 1:16, 17 we read:

For I am not ashamed of the glad tidings; for it is God's power to salvation to everyone that believes, both to Jew first and also to Greek: for righteousness of God is revealed therein, on the principle of faith: according as it is written, But the just shall live by faith.

You should have noticed the absence of the word *the* in front of the word righteousness. A footnote to this verse, by JND, is very helpful regarding this:

"Righteousness of God." The absence of the article may arrest the mind here, and in some other places, in this part of the epistle. It is likely to do so, because *the* righteousness of God is now a known doctrine; not so when the apostle Paul taught. The righteousness of God was a wholly new thought, as was indeed wrath from heaven: wrath on earth was not. The gospel, or 'glad tidings,' was the power of God to salvation, because righteousness of God (that kind of righteousness) was revealed – not a righteousness required of man. See ch. 3:21.

**The Manifestation of Righteousness of God.** Rom. 3:21 says:

But now righteousness of God is manifested, borne witness to by the law and the prophets.

The passage goes on to tell how it was manifested. The manifestation of it based upon what God has done by and through the cross. This passage, as is true of Romans, has to do with the actings of God's righteousness and His accounting persons righteous.

**Non-submission to the Righteousness of God.** While most people will not submit, Rom. 10:3, 4 speaks particularly of resistance by the Jews:

For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own [righteousness], have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is [the] end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes.

## *God's Righteousness and the Law*

### GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS MANIFESTED WITHOUT LAW

We have arrived at Rom. 3:21. Connect this directly to the end of Rom. 1:17 and think of the intervening text as forming a parenthesis:

... For righteousness of God is revealed therein, on the principle of faith, to faith: according as it is written, But the just shall live by faith (Rom.

1:17).

(Parenthesis: Rom. 1:18 through Rom. 3:20)

**But now without law righteousness of God is manifested, borne witness to by the law and the prophets (Rom. 3:21).**

Law has to do with man's righteousness,<sup>10</sup> and in that there was total failure. When is, or was, the righteousness of God manifested? We read, "But now." Not in Israel; not under the law; not before the cross; *but now*. It involves the cross and the display of what God is, and is now manifested. Certainly Christ lived a righteous life; but His personal righteous living and law-keeping is not what is meant by the righteousness of God. Yes, it required that the Holy One, who knew no sin, should be the propitiation and the substitute, and the cross could not be what it is without the Holy One having given Himself; but the righteousness of God, which the believer is made (2 Cor. 5:21) is not the righteousness of Christ or His righteous law-keeping transferred to us. The idea violates the direct statement of this Scripture.

God's righteousness, says this Scripture, is manifested *without law*. The idea of Christ's righteous law-keeping put to our account does indeed bring in the law via that route. "Without law" means 'apart from.' It is apart from the law that God's righteousness is manifested:

... for if righteousness [is] by law, then Christ has died for nothing (Gal. 2:21).

10. This righteousness stands in no relation to the law, which was only the perfect rule for man. But God cannot measure His righteousness by the standard of man's righteousness, or his responsibility. It is according to this standard that He *judges* those who have had the law. His righteousness must be measured according to His own nature, and His nature is revealed in what He does. He must glorify Himself; that is to say, manifest Himself; for with God to be manifested is also to be glorified. If He judges, He judges man according to his human responsibility; if He acts, it is in accordance with His own nature. The law knows nothing of this nature; it says we ought to love God, but what is He? The law is adapted to man and his relationship towards God. The righteousness of God stands entirely outside all question of the law, of every description of law, unless the nature of God be regarded as such. He is a law for Himself, perfect in His nature. His righteousness is now shown in what He has done with regard to the Person of Christ, by having set Him at His right hand as the result of His finished work. The law and the prophets testified of it. The righteousness of God has been exercised in the acceptance and glorifying of Christ in virtue of His work, and in this acceptance we share by faith, because He accomplished this work for us. Precisely because it is the righteousness of *God* founded on the work of Christ, in that He died for *all*, it has to do with the whole world and with all men. All who believe on Christ, whether Jews or heathen, have part in it, and in all the privileges which flow from it. Were it human righteousness it would have to be according to the law; were it according to the law only the Jews would have had part in it, because they alone had the law. But as it is the righteousness of *God* it is manifested for all, and righteousness is reckoned to all who believe. Thus the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ is manifested for all sinners; it rests on all who believe in Him. "For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (*Collected Writings* 33:234, 235).

For if a law had been able to quicken, then indeed righteousness were on the principle of law (Gal. 3:21).

There is no such thing as any kind of transference of law-righteousness from Christ to the believer, nor any imputation of law-righteousness from Christ to the believer.

The teaching of Scripture concerning Christ is vicarious sufferings on the cross, not vicarious obedience during His entire life. What is brought before us in Scripture in connection with God's righteousness is God's grace (v. 24), redemption (v. 24), mercy-seat (v. 25), and blood (v. 25).

Let us notice here a particular Scripture that is erroneously used to get the law connected to the Christian:

There is a text referred to, "By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous" {Rom. 5:19}. But so far from there being a word of law or obedience to law here, it is in express contrast. "Moreover the law entered," *pareiselthe*, was no part of this great scheme in the two Adams, only came in by the by that the offence might abound. Mark, no word about keeping it. It had an object; it was to convict -- bring in offence -- make sin sinful. So Luther, *passim*. The obedience of Christ is in contrast with law. It is a monstrous idea to make Christ's obedience merely legal. He kept the law, surely; He was born under it, though as Son of man above it in title. But His obedience was absolute. What righteousness of the law called upon Him to give His life for sinners? But that He did as obedience. What, to bear the law's curse for another? All His life was obedience, but far beyond law; He laid down His life so, not according to law. And here it is obedience as a principle contrasted with disobedience, and no thought of law. There was a disobedient man and an obedient one -- Adam and Christ. The law came in by the by. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Did the law make a righteous man suffer? Christ's obedience was perfect and absolute. To reduce it to fulfilling the law is horrible, though He fulfilled the highest requirement of the law. The law was suited to the first man, Christ's obedience to the glory of God, into which He is entered because He finished the work His Father gave Him to do. So in Phil. 2, He was obedient unto death (*mechri thanatou*). It is the character and extreme possible limit of a principle of obedience -- He was obedient even to death. Think of saying, He fulfilled the precepts of the law even to death! What precept commanded a person to die? No; His obedience was the principle of perfect submission to His Father's will, whatever the cost might be.<sup>11</sup>

#### IT IS NOT "A RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS VALID BEFORE GOD"

The reformers started out incorrectly on the subject of the righteousness of God. In connection with calling attention to the mistake of Luther and Calvin, J. N.

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11. *Collected Writings* 7:314, 315 [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

Darby wrote:

It is God's, not man's. It is -- has its character, quality, and source -- from God, not from man. It is what it is that is spoken of, not how it is. It is a righteousness after this fashion, not man's. It comes from God for man, not from man for God. Hence it has the character and qualities of its source, whoever may be given to profit by it.

So wrath of God from heaven: it is not human wrath or justice on earth ending there in its nature and quality, nor even divine wrath exercised in an earthly way by earthly instruments. It is divine, from heaven.

It is not "the" righteousness of God, a fact, an existing thing, which is spoken of, but "righteousness of God"-this quality of righteousness. But hence it must first be found in God Himself; or it would not have that essential quality. Hence we are after God as to the new man created in righteousness and true holiness.

"The righteousness which is valid before God" (which is the sense put by Luther and Calvin on the expression) is utterly astray, because legal righteousness, where it existed, would be valid before God. If accomplished, it would be accepted. Man would live in doing it; but then it would be not God's righteousness, but man's: whereas the whole point on which the apostle insists in this expression is, that it is God's, and not man's . . .

It is righteousness before God which the epistle treats of {not "inherent Righteousness".<sup>12</sup>

#### **BORNE WITNESS TO BY THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS**

This again shows that the righteousness of God was not manifested in the OT times. It is viewed in the OT as something that was to come. *Bearing witness to*, is hardly the same thing as "*But now . . . manifested.*" The contrast is quite clear. Think of the great day of atonement and how it pointed forward to the work of Christ. We see both propitiation and substitution foreshadowed there, and God going on with the people for another year. This pointed to something, but was not a *manifestation* of the righteousness of God. See Psa. 22:31; Isa. 46:13; 51:5, 6, 8; 56:1.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

## *“Faint, Yet Pursuing”*

### *Judges 8:4*

**And Gideon came to Jordan and passed over, he and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing.**

The opening of a campaign, the carrying on of the struggle, with endurance to the end, are all included in Paul's memorable summary --

I have fought the good. fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day (2 Tim. 4:7, 8).

A ship may be making little progress and yet answer her helm; ready to take advantage of a favorable breeze. Delays unlooked for may occur: yet her log-book of the course she kept, with the winds that blew, may justify the master and crew in the eyes of her owners that all had been done that could be accomplished, in our Christian career unlooked for difficulties may arise (and necessarily so for the trial of our faith). We may have to encounter opposition where we looked for assistance. We may have to suffer most from those with whom we once held sweet fellowship. It may be our lot to have bitter experience of the words in Psa. 55:12:

For it was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated inc that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide and mine acquaintance, we took sweet counsel together and walked to the house of God in company.

How little, after all, have we been prepared for it; how impatient under it! What scope has been given to the exercise of reason: how little for the exercise of faith? We have held truth in the head, and it could not meet the necessities or trials of the heart. And it is gracious of the Lord to shew this to us, and to bring us to acknowledge it before him, and to have bowels of sympathy for those who entered into conflict without tried weapons of war (1 Sam. 17:9).

Yet, let us not be misunderstood. Strength to pursue a course depends upon the course being right. The right object attracts forward, has propelling power in it, because it is right. Hence the momentous importance of truth simply as truth. How well does it repay any real regard for it. What provision for necessities, what charges it undertakes! In Prov. 4:

Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee . . . Exalt her and she shall promote thee to excellent honour.

And what is here advanced of Wisdom is true also of the Lord Jesus. A due regard to His glory and His honor is the charge of His people's safety. The precept given by Him, "No man goeth a warfare at his own charges," is made good in His service. He amply provides for every emergency. It is true wisdom to apprehend this. And here the simplicity of present truths, the doctrine of justification by faith

may be peremptorily insisted upon and Scripture ransacked in support of it; yet the very ablest advocates of this truth, and convinced, too, of its being true, may break down in the sister fact, that we must walk by faith, put on faith; -- have faith in God, and whatever we enter upon or undertake, perform it in dependance upon God.

What mistakes arise from forgetfulness of this! How men plunge into the Lord's battles with their own weapons: bringing their own artillery to play upon their antagonists, and exposing, in their censure of other men's motives, the whereabouts of their own. But the Lord hath no need of this. The dignity of the truth is above this. Faith will act the part of a general who makes his observations before entering into the *melee*, and disposes his forces for the attack, and continues his plans unmoved by the din of conflict, or the clouds of smoke and dust. Combatants there will be in the ranks who fight on for fighting's sake. Without principle to lead them into action, and having no energy but their self-will to maintain them there; and if this be crossed, and their own importance interfered with, are forward to throw aside their weapons in disgust, or discharge them, when retreating, in the faces of those who had been companions in service. Alas! how sorrowful is all this to the heart quickened of Jesus to have sympathy with Him. The triumph of the truth swallows up in its grandeur, the individual share in promoting the victory. So the fall of an opponent in such a struggle gives no room for self-exultation, but rather for commiseration: Victory is hallowed by tears of regret for those who, from love of ease, carnal security, carelessness of walk, error in judgment, or weakness of faith, were led into a position where they were sure to be vanquished.

Still, while it is the privilege of faith to anticipate the end, ever assured of blessing from God, yet the way is weary, and often the hands are heavy, the spirits droop, and then the trial of constancy of purpose comes on; and, though faint, yet to be found pursuing, is the precursor of blessing and triumph. And this is the turning point of the career. Unbelief sheers off when difficulty threatens. Faith escapes none of these trials, yet holds on her course "though faint, yet pursuing." Let us beware of misjudging our condition by our feelings or perceptions; of putting our enjoyment in the service, in the place of the service itself; and so, contrariwise, of confounding our trials, which necessarily arise from it, with the end in view. It is easy to do this. How many are the ways by which men delude themselves into supineness. It is the cause of a controversy which justifies one. It is at all times unpleasant in itself, but still it may be imperative duty to engage in it. The plea of the evil of it, as such, may be made an excuse of by some. Its tendency to lead bystanders to mock at the truth, the apology of others. Yet if it comes in the way of duty, we cannot avoid it. To everything there is a season; "a time of war, and a time of peace" (Eccl. 3:8), but servants have no right to be choosers, much less to refrain from action, when the service is arduous and attended with difficulty, seeking into the future for excuses for inertness, instead

of being earnest and zealous in the work of to day.

The book of Judges gives the history of man's unfaithfulness in the very place of blessing, sinning in the very face of the bounty and grace which had put him there. It gives also the dealings of God with His people, in chastisement and repeated deliverance. Such was His love and regard, that He pitied them in their sufferings, which their own sin brought upon them. "Yea, many a time turned He His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath" (Psa. 78:38) The sixth chapter of Judges opens with a renewed account of Israel's iniquity, and the consequences of it.

The hand of Midian prevailed against Israel, . . . and Israel was greatly impoverished; . . . and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.

How gracious His ways! He sent a prophet unto them, to remind them of His goodness, how He had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all them that oppressed them, and gave them their land.

And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

The testimony to their evil is recorded. The bounty of His grace is unfolded to meet it. Gideon is appointed a deliverer. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." And Gideon said unto him,

If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all His miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?

It is hard, in the midst of the chastening for departure from God, to realize that it is because relationship had existed that this had befallen them. To recognize His hand, was the germ of faith; to see His deliverance in purpose, the growth of it. "If the Lord be with us, why then has all this befallen us?" When he was grieved with their sins, and insulted by the setting up of false gods, He left them to reap, as they had sown, confusion and strife -- to be scattered and peeled. Yes, He noticed them in chastening, because they were His. And Gideon said,

O my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the Lord said unto him, SURELY I WILL BE WITH THEE, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

And it is just here that the spring of confidence rises, -- "*I will be with thee.*" It was so with Moses of old. If the Lord be not with me, carry us not up hence. The starting point of faith is "God with us." Without this, all contest is in vain and worthless. He met them as they were, and acted on His faithfulness to His promise to their fathers, passing by in marvelous grace their own sinfulness and unbelief.

But how should Gideon be assured of this? The Lord would accept of his offering; and so little did Gideon apprehend his ways, that the seal of his

acceptance was regarded by him as the knell of his death; for he said, "Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face." And the Lord answered him. "Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die." And Gideon built an altar there. His soul is awakened for his work. There is struggle for establishment, and the Lord condescends to his weakness, and submits to be proved, that his servant might trust him (vv. 36- 40). He has evidence of His favor, and starts on his career. What wretched confusion was around! What prospect of remedy! How hopeless, to reason, the task! Yet faith laughs at impossibilities, for they exist not before Him with whom we have to do. Omnipotence sees hills as the plains, and water in the flinty rock. Now Gideon had got hold of a great principle -- the Lord with his people in chastening them, and therefore His hand in deliverance. Being *His*, they were sure of the *former*, and equally safe for the latter. Looking at troubles amongst saints apart from the Lord's hand in permitting them, the eye discerns no remedy; the heart is overwhelmed with consternation. Fear enters; and that which in communion would have been the precursor of blessings, becomes to unbelief the harbinger of defeat. But, blessed be God! it is not so, the name of the Lord invoked, the two or three assembled together in that name, the Holy Ghost recognized in the body, surely the Lord will shew He acknowledges us by chastening when needed, that He may bless us the more. "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord and shall not we receive evil." But, as was before stated, this is the trial of faith, it is a step in the right direction to discern the Lord's dealings with His people. "The Lord with them" becomes recovered strength to Gideon; and accordingly as this was discerned, there was blessing in his career. How his faith sought encouragement, and how the Lord dealt graciously towards him, the scripture records.

How pride should be hid from man, and salvation of the Lord fully manifested, the sequel discloses -- three hundred only of the many thousands of Israel, and with such weapons of war as appeared very folly in the eyes of the world. But the deliverance would be more manifestly of God, and the hearts of the people brought back to *Him*; for this was the object, not the triumph of a party but the blessing of the whole people of Israel. We lose sight of this. We are apt to narrow our views to our localities. The blessing we have enjoyed belonged to the body, we sought to keep it in our own hands, hedging ourselves in, and stipulating conditions of access which the Lord had not imposed upon us. Now the pulling down of our fences and tearing up of our stakes, creates no little consternation among us; but what if the Lord's purpose (as surely it is) is only that our area may be enlarged, our charity widened, our affections called forth for the church as a whole? Surely there is encouragement for faith from the very fact of our chastening. Let us beware of writing (as has before been observed) the sentence of death upon our *position* and *privileges* instead of upon ourselves. To recognize the hand of our Father and to acknowledge the needs be, is the first step towards recovery.



This was attained to by Gideon. The Lord's hand was seen in permitting the chastisement; the Lord's hand made bare to faith in working deliverance. But the position of faith is the path of trial, and that, too, because it is the one of faith. We have forgotten this in our folly. We have asked, with Gideon, if it be so, why, then, has all this befallen us? And, instead of the language of Nehemiah, "Should such an one as I flee?" (Neh. 4:11), "we have run every man into his own house," whilst the Lord's house lay waste (Hag. 1:9). Trial by the way, is no excuse for getting out of the way; failure in man, no reason for quarreling with God. But the rather, our every discomfiture should quicken our feet to our hiding-place. "Thou art my hiding-place" (Ps. 109:114). But the path of faith is one of trial. Service for God can only be sustained in the power of God. There is danger whilst working ostensibly for Him, of ceasing to abide in Him; and then leanness of soul enters, and the heart, unsustained by communion, shrinks under trials which, in a healthy condition, would have had no pressure upon us. Now, Gideon had eminent service, and consequently trials in it. He had wrought a victory in the energy of the Spirit of God, and this exposed him to the envy of Ephraim (ch. 8). He came to Jordan and passed over, he and the three hundred men that were with him, "faint, yet pursuing." And he asked bread of the men of Succoth and he was mocked of them; the princes of Succoth saw nothing imposing in the small band of the faithful so wearied and famished, for whom unbelief had no sympathy, and less of discernment, when acting for God. And he passed on to Penuel, where a like reception awaited him. There are few allies for faith, and few spirits to lead on a forlorn hope into conflict. Yet pursuing God's enemies, and employed in His service, though faint, *He* sustains them.

He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increases strength.

The hosts of Zeba and Zalmunna are defeated in Karkor, and the two kings taken (ch. 8:11) and slain; the elders of Succoth taught with thorns and briers in the wilderness (v. 16); the men of the city of Penuel slain, and their tower beaten down (v. 17), and all this by a feeble few, "faint, yet pursuing."

What comfort and encouragement is here! Have faith in God. How imperative the precept! How certain the results! The Lord strengthen the hands that hang down! *May the good of His church be the object of pursuit, the truth of His presence where two or three are gathered {together}, the testimony borne;* and though Ephraim wax wroth in the spirit of envy, and Succoth and Penuel will furnish no sustenance, yet onwards is the word, -- "Speak to the people that they go forward." May the Lord encourage us that we may be found though "faint, yet pursuing."

Anon.

*Extract From*  
*“The Man Christ Jesus”*  
*1 Timothy 2:5*  
*Remarks on a Tract Entitled*  
*“The Person of the Christ” {by F. E. Raven}*  
*By A.C. Ord*

{NOTE: The paper from which this extract is taken is from a paper by A. C. Ord, ca 1895, and has been reprinted as a 46 page paper, with subject and scripture indices added; available from Present Truth publishers. The extract is from pages 6-13. The reader should be aware that the Ravenites, C. A. Coates and James Taylor Sr., held the same evil views as F. E. Raven. See *The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead* for documentation; available from Present Truth Publishers.}

. . . We solemnly charge Mr. R. with presenting teachings utterly subversive of the doctrine hitherto taught and received amongst us as *the truth* concerning the Person of Christ: and, under the pretext of removing the offshoots of pious ignorance, with secretly sapping the foundations of the common faith of Christians.

Our endeavor will be, the Lord helping us, so clearly to trace to its fountain-head this evil stream of anti-christian doctrine, as to put the simple soul on its guard against its seductive downward current, and set the warning lamp of Scripture so plainly before the eyes, that the Christ-dishonoring results, to which its rapids hurry the unwatchful, may be seen before it is too late. If the light, which makes all things manifest, shines fully on the source and spring of error, we shall the more easily trace the course whither it tends, and be enabled the better to see how it is that so many have been engulfed in its dangerous waters, who, finding themselves involved in it only on its emergence from the bewildering recesses which ecclesiastical craft had cunningly wrought for it, little suspected the nature of the source or the fearful catastrophe towards which the stream was carrying them, even *shipwreck concerning the faith*.

It is another than Mr. R. who is the originator of this stream of evil doctrine, another than he who excavated its fountain-head and brought forth thence this devastating flood: one who knowing fully the relation of cause and effect throughout the whole of its course of error, and thoroughly aware of what he aims at in it, has known how to bring it forth and present it to the eye in the way most deceptive to the saints of God. He has used the more effectually to achieve his ends, much that appears like the truth, both in substance and form, but so

perverted or removed from its right connection with the Truth Himself, and the doctrine of His Person, that it absolutely falsifies the truth. But God has fully provided in His Word everything we may need both to escape from error and that we may not be ignorant of the devices of Satan. As to the instrument employed by the enemy to open the floodgates of error, it is likely enough that it is only little by little that he has become aware of the springs and upper courses of that which he was at first employed to let loose.

Two words used by him in connection with his treatment of the Person of Christ on page 3 of his tract are plain evidence of the fatal character of his teaching upon the question at issue. And it is important to notice that these words are used not unadvisedly nor without due consideration, but the contrary, for, as the italics show, special attention is directed to them. The author knows that the "real force" of *these* words, at any rate, and their bearing upon the subject matter of his tract, is a point of the last importance.

Mr. R. charges those who maintain "that the truth of *Christ's Person* consists in the union in Him of God and Man" with "confusion of thought as between *person* and *condition*," and, in his attempt to sustain this charge, he abandons what in all ages has been the common faith of Christians. Let us see what the doctrine is which he thus assails and rejects.

We, in common with all orthodox believers, believe that Christ is God as to His *Person*: we also believe that he was in the form (or condition) of Godhead.<sup>1</sup>

We believe, in common with them, that Christ became Man as to His *Person*, ("the Word became flesh") without thereby ceasing to be God, or affecting in any degree the unity of His Person: we also believe that He took upon Him the form of a servant, *i.e.*, human condition.<sup>2</sup>

We distinguish in the case of His humanity, as in that of His Divinity, between "*person* and *condition*," nor is Mr. R. warranted in calling this "*confusion*."

We believe that in the *Person* of Christ the Divine and human natures are inscrutably united, each, but without separation or confusion, essential to what He now is as "the Christ": and that this wondrous truth forms the *mystery* of the *incarnation*, and is the truth of the *Person* of Christ. "Man taken into union with

1. John 1: 1-3, 18; 8:58; Heb. 1:2, 3; Psa. 102:25; Phil. 2: 5-7.

2. Matt. 1:21-23; 11:27; Mark 1:1, 3, 11; Luke 1:31, 32; John 1:14; 8:58; 6:51, 62; 17:3-5; Acts 2:30-36; Rom. 1:3, 4; 9:5; 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 4:4; 5:19; Gal. 1:16; 2:20; Eph 4:9, 10; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:19; 2:9; 1 Thess. 1:9, 10; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 1 Tim. 3:16; 6:14-16; 2 Tim. 4:8; Titus 1:3, 4; 2:13; Heb 1:1-3; 2:9, 14; James 2:1; 1 Pet. 3:22; 2 Pet. 1:2, 17; 1 John 1, 2; 3:8; 4:2, 3, 9, 10, 14, 15; 5:5, 20; Rev. 1:8, 18; 19:13-16; 22:13; Isa. 2:2; 45:6, 7, 10; 60:1-3; 61:1-4; 66:1-5; 71:4; Zech. 13:7.

God in one person.”<sup>3</sup>

We believe that Scripture, by the enlightening power and grace of the Holy Spirit, teaches in the most unmistakable manner, to the simple soul, these unfathomable truths concerning the Person of Christ, and that, although *no change* has taken place in His eternal Being and Nature, no change of the Person -- He is the same Person, the Son -- yet that this Person *has become*, in assuming humanity, that which He was not before -- He has *become Man*: nor do we confound this truth with that which is inseparable therefrom, and is indeed collateral therewith, namely, the *status* or *condition* or *form* of humanity He took.

Mr. R. repudiates this doctrine as “confusion” begotten of ignorance: and he asserts that the thought “that in becoming man a change has taken place as to His Person -- He is *in person* something which He was not before” is “very derogatory to the truth of the Son.” He teaches that to hold that Christ became “*in person* something which He was not before,” that is, *Man as to His Person*, is inconsistent with the truth that He is “the same Person,” who was “eternally with the Father,” *thus confusing His personal identity with His Person*. These truths are in no way inconsistent the one with the other: there is no antagonism whatsoever between them. Nor, be it noticed, unless it be to remove the *mystery* of the incarnation, is there any need to deny that Christ is in person Man as well as God, and thus, to limit His humanity to “*condition*,” as we shall see Mr. R. does in his tract.

We fully accept and, by grace, tenaciously hold the truth both of the eternal and unchangeable personality of Christ, and of that which is expressed by the words “form or condition” in their connection with the Person of Christ. The truth of Phil. 2, that He who subsisted in the form of God, emptied Himself, and assumed a servant’s form, is only rightly apprehended when the truth of His human as well as Divine Being is acknowledged. The truth, that the personal identity of the One who was in the form of God and who assumed a servant’s form is unchanged, is absolutely essential to the truth of His Person. It cannot be too strongly insisted on. But together with it the truth must be maintained, that He whose personal identity is unquestionably unaltered and unalterable, who was, when He became Man, the same Divine Person that He was from eternity, yet this *Person* is He who became something -- “was made flesh” -- He *Himself* became “something which He was not before.”

But this is not included in the thought of “form or condition.” The form of God belonged indeed to the very same Person who took the form of a servant, but to assert that His humanity is that of “form or condition” alone, and not of *nature* or “*person*” is no less evil than to teach that His Divinity was that of “*form*” alone

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3. Coll. Writings, Vol. 2, p. 226. {30:151 and 17:261 }  
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and not of *nature* or "*person*." Yet this is what Mr. R. necessarily does, and, practically and in effect limits, as will be shown in the sequel, His humanity to "condition" or "form."

These truths are collateral but not identical: another has brought them together in one passage, equally insisting on each. He says

But here is One who was in the form of God, the very *status* and condition of Divinity, and takes another form and goes down to death, even the same Divine Person, never proved more so than in His humiliation, but *who became something* ("was made flesh").

With a quality that is impossible --

it (the quality) is always the identical idea it was before, if not, it is not it. The Word became flesh, did not cease to be the Word, but was what it was not before -- *became something* -- and subsequently took manhood into Divine Glory. Personal identity can change its state or form -- ideal identity must remain what it is or identity is gone.<sup>4</sup>

Here we have a Divine *Person* who not only acted "in regard to His form or condition, divine or human"; (Mr. R. will allow this much, and, in effect at least, *no more*;) but here we have *also* the fact clearly insisted upon that this Divine *Person* became something which He was not before. Of this truth Mr. R. says "This is not the teaching of Scripture, nor do I think that it can be entertained."

Having thus before us the distinct denial of the truth that the Lord became "*in person* something which He was not before," that is, clearly, *Man*, we will now see what the character of His humanity is according to this teaching. The author owns (and here we should not object) that the distinction "between *person* and *condition*" as he puts it, exists in respect to the *Divinity* of Christ, for he speaks of "the form of God" as distinct from "A divine Person," and says "We have thus a divine Person presented, even apart from the question of form," so that thus far the ground appears to be common; yet with this his application of the thought of "*person*" ceases, and the Lord's humanity is placed upon a lower plane, as a thing of "*condition*" alone, from which what He is HIMSELF "*in person*" is carefully separated.

All thought of "What He was in His Person as Man"<sup>5</sup> to use again the words of another, is refused unequivocally by Mr. R.<sup>6</sup> and where this is denied, it is

4. *Notes and Comments*, J. N. D., Vol. 2, pp. 398, 399. {P. 283.}

5. *Notes and Comments*, J. N. D., Vol. 2, p. 25. {P. 17}.

6. If Mr. R. would be consistent he must drop J. N. D. altogether. To boast "in another's rule of things made ready to hand" is at all times to be condemned: but to use another's name to destroy the very things which with his whole soul he built up, and that other now passed away, is such, that no words can be found sufficiently strong to denounce it. The writer of the tract is surely not unaware  
www.presenttruthpublishers.com (continued...)

plain that, as he says, it “is not a question of unity of a Person.” To speak of “The absolute unity of His Person,”<sup>7</sup> He must have become in His Person man, or no question can arise as to the unity of His Person. In the following sentence we have the clear and positive enunciation of his doctrine. Mr. R. says, “The truth of a divine Person assuming human condition, the Word becoming flesh, and in such wise as that He can be viewed objectively as man, I believe; but that is not a question of unity of a Person. It is a Person in a condition in which He was not previously.”

Thus plainly is the truth denied. As J. N. D. said of Mr. Sen:

The true Christ in both parts of His Being, *i.e.*, the Divine and the human,”<sup>8</sup> is not held; but is set aside in one essential respect by this destructive teaching, which admits a divine Person, and a divine Person *only*, and persistently separates therefrom the *humanity* of Christ: distinctly alleging that

the idea of the unity of the Person in the sense asserted is not found.

It acknowledges only *one* part of His Being, *i.e.*, the Divine, and really sets aside the other part of His being, *i.e.*, the human. Is this the “Christ whose Person, God and Man,”<sup>9</sup> has formed the substance of the teaching which we have heretofore received? The same writer, from whom I have just quoted, has said of the First Epistle of John, “The way in which God and man in One Person are united and presented in the blessed Lord in this Epistle, strikes me more and more, so that it is impossible to<sup>10</sup> apply them distinctly; 1 John 5:20, giving the clue to it.”<sup>11</sup> And he again speaks of

the wonderful bringing together of God and Man in the Person of Christ, which we get “in the end of ch. 2 and beginning of ch. 3.”<sup>12</sup> Will the author assert that “the idea of the unity of the Person in the sense” of His being “God

6. (...continued)

of the fact that J. N. D. taught that in John’s Gospel “We always find Christ *personally as Man*,” and yet F. E. R. at Quemerford, in reply to the question “Why is He not *personally* man?” replied, not with J. N. D. that He was so, but that, “He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one.” Did then J. N. D. teach “the idea of two personalities”? Mr. R. knows he did not. Yet he taught distinctly and unequivocally that He was personally Man. Why then the effort to square these contrary teachings? They distinctly clash.

7. *Notes and Comments*, J. N. D., Vol. 2, p. 419. {P. 298.}

8. *Notes and Comments*, J. N. D., Vol. 2, p. 394. {P. 280.}

9. *Ibid.* Part XXI., p. 83. {*Notes and Comments* 6:58.}

10. {The present edition adds the words here: “separate and.”}

11. *Ibid.* Part XXI., p. 74. {*Notes and Comments* 6:52.}

12. *Ibid.* Part XXI, p. 76. {*Notes and Comments* 6:54.}

and man in One Person”<sup>13</sup> is not found here? He dare not do so. Will he then tell us plainly that he has abandoned that which this honored servant of Christ ever insisted upon as the foundations of the faith? That he *has* done so, whatever he may *think or say*, is alas! but too plain from what we have already seen.

But these are not all the proofs this tract supplies us with of the fact that this system denies the Christ of God: for, consistently with the denial that Christ became as to His “*person*” man, and the consequent limitation of His *humanity* to “*condition*” under point two, it severs the *incarnation* from the *Person* of the Son under point one: the one error being but the counterpart of the other. It is a solemn and pregnant testimony to the unsoundness of this teaching that it renders it an imperative necessity to separate the Scripture “No one knows the Son but the Father,” from the *Person* of Christ in order to prevent the overthrow of the system thereby. For, if it be applied to the mystery of His *Person* as become incarnate, then it proves that His humanity, as well as His Divinity, belongs to His *Person*, and the theory fails.

Another has remarked upon this Scripture

Now that He has clothed what is Divine in human *nature* none can fathom it.<sup>14</sup>

The teaching of the tract studiously ignores all thought therein of His *Person*, the *substance* of the teaching in connection therewith on page 1, paragraph 5, being, No one knows the Son in His two aspects as man -- Apostle and High Priest -- i.e., so as to grasp these two thoughts at one and the same time, save the Father. Thus the union in *One Person* of Godhead and manhood is again denied, and a counterfeit duality of two “wholly distinct conceptions” of Christ *as man* is presented in its stead; His Divine *Person* being scrupulously eliminated therefrom. And these two aspects of Christ *as man* are set forth, apparently, as the author’s “great reality of the incarnation,” the charge against us being, substantially, that, by maintaining that what Christ *is* as man cannot be seen apart from what He *is* as God, i.e., by maintaining the truth of the indivisibility of His *whole Person* -- “God and man in One Person”<sup>15</sup> -- we betray “a singular inability to apprehend” one of these two “essential” aspects of it. Whether any other aspect thereof is considered *essential* is not stated, but one thing is very clear, namely, that the doctrine “that the truth of *Christ’s Person*” -- the *mystery* of the incarnation -- “consists in the union in Him of God and man,” i.e., of Godhead and manhood, forms *no part of it whatever*; neither essential or non-essential.

Let the reader make no mistake, or imagine that there is any misapprehension

13. *Ibid.* Part XXI., p. 74. {Notes and Comments 6:52.}

14. Notes and Comments, J. N. D., Vol. 2, p. 396. {P. 281.}

15. Notes and Comments, J. N. D., Vol. 2, p. 396. {Notes and Comments 6:52.}

of the author's meaning. It is in direct support of his first proposition, (which necessarily involves the partition of Christ's *Person*, if the incarnation be what we have *ever held* it to be,) that he proceeds to present as "the great reality of the incarnation," etc., these two aspects of Christ *as man*, two aspects which can be here in no way essential to His *Person*, as he insists on page 3 that Christ's humanity is that of "*condition*" as opposed to "*person*." There can be no misunderstanding the teaching here, if carefully read, for although the last clause of paragraph 5, "The one presents God, the other, man," looks marvelously like, The one presents Christ *as God* -- a Divine Person, in contrast to the other presenting Him on the other side of His Person *as Man*, it will be plainly seen upon examination of the whole clause, in its relation to the first proposition, and in its connection with the teaching of the third page, and indeed, of the entire tract, which wholly denies this truth, that no such thought is *intended* or can be *entertained*. "The one presents God, the other, man" is not His Godhead Being in contrast to His Manhood, but forms a brief summing up of Christ viewed in the two aspects *as Man*: i.e., *Apostle* -- His place *as man towards men revealing God*: *High Priest* -- His place *as man towards God*. So Mr. R. explains

As Man He is both Apostle and High Priest. In other words, in the Apostle God has, so to say, come out, and in the High Priest man has entered in.

These two thoughts of Christ *as Man* form together his "great reality of the incarnation," etc., to which he applies Matt. 11:27: two thoughts which he says "cannot be grasped at one and the same time by any finite mind" for "No one knows the Son save the Father," but he adds

Now these two thoughts, though realized in one Person, must of necessity be separately and distinctly apprehended.

These two "distinct conceptions" take the place in this system of the union in the Person of Christ, of both God and Man -- the *mystery* of the incarnation; which is refused by this teaching.

Thus the writer not only betrays his inability to apprehend the great reality of the incarnation, *which he has clearly assumed to do*, and, by presenting "two thoughts . . . realized in one Person" for the apprehension of the "finite mind," destroys the *mystery* of the incarnation, which in Scripture is presented as the truth of the *Person* of Christ, "God and Man in One Person":<sup>16</sup> but it is worthy of note, in connection with his charge against us, that, by thus subverting the truth of Christ's Person, His real human *nature* is lost which fits Him for our High Priest, i.e., for His place as man Godward: and at the same time the reality of Christ's *Person* is set aside, as the Word become flesh dwelling among men and revealing God; the One in whom all the fulness was pleased to dwell. For the incarnation, or coming in flesh of Jesus Christ, is separated from His *Person* and

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16. *Coll. Writings*, Doc. Vol. 3, p. 521, {P. 331.} [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)



presented only as a *means* by which "He can be viewed objectively as man." And thus for the purpose of viewing Christ "as man, distinct and apart from what He is as God," or in other words, apart from what He *is in Person* (for these words have plainly this meaning in the tract), His holy *Person* is ruthlessly dissected, the reality of His humanity totally destroyed, and the mystery of the incarnation absolutely denied . . .

## *Christ is the Test of Love*

There is nothing to be more cordially abhorred than the pretense of love and unity being used to dishonor Him who is the center, life, and sole object and title of it. There is no devil so bad as the devil who clothes himself with charity. It is the spirit of the day -- latitudinarianism. "Charity is the bond of perfectness," but Christ is the test of all this, as of all else, and He makes it so. "The poor ye have always with you, and me ye have not always." Thus we must judge -- judge, I mean our own conduct . . . Local unity {and any other unity}, founded on the abandonment or indifference to the truth, is a miserable hostility (in sparing oneself) to gathering with Christ, the only true and universal unity . . . I do not know what is meant by unity, if the foundations of all unity that is worth anything are denied.

From *The Girdle of Truth* 2:444.

## *Christ's Desire*

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world (John 17:24).

It is an affecting thing to one's heart to see how little really that which is so much in His heart is in ours, *i.e.*, what remains: He has finished everything, accomplished everything, glorified His Father in everything, and only one thing remains, and that is, to have us with Himself; "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am"; because you know it is one of the distinct characteristics of love, love never tolerates absence; it may bear it, and have to endure it, but it is impatient of it and therefore when you look at Him, how blessed to know it, because I believe it is the spring which creates a kindred affection in our hearts when the fact is grasped, that He longs to have us to be forever with Himself. Do we believe that, beloved? do we believe that there is that one (shall I say it with reverence) unsatisfied yearning in the heart of Christ, to have the people of His love with Him? "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." How much

is it in ours; how much is there of that longing of heart with us, that divine affection in our souls, that we long to be with Him?" We have Him with us now; of course that is blessedly true, as we walk through the world, this poor scene of death; we cannot get on without Him, but to be with Him, and to be like Him when we see Him, how much is that before us? I shall see Him; see that blessed face which was more marred than any man's -- see Him as He is, not as He was. I shall see Him as He is, but I shall be like Him when I see Him, and shall be with Him, and that is what He waits for; that is the longing of His soul, the yearning of His heart at this present moment. He cheers us along the waste with the sustainment of His presence, and the comfort of His love; but the thing that is in Christ's affection, with respect to us, is, He wants to have us with Himself.

How wonderful to think of it! There is one thing that remains, "Father; I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." It is the one thing that remains: He owes one service to His Father and God, and He owes it to us, the people of His love, and He will perform it. May our hearts be on the lookout with the expectancy of hope, for His name's sake.

He comes -- for, oh; His yearning heart  
No more can bear delay --  
To scenes of full unmingled joy  
To call His Bride away.  
This earth, the scene of all His woe,  
A homeless wild to thee,  
Full soon upon His heavenly throne,  
Its rightful King shall see.  
Thou, too, shall reign -- He will not wear  
His crown of joy alone!  
And earth His royal Bride shall see  
Beside Him on the throne.  
Then weep no more -- 'Tis all thine own --  
His crown, His joy divine,  
And, sweeter far than all beside,  
He, He Himself is thine.

*From Collected Writings of W. T. Turpin, p. 329.*

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