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Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS
WORD

VOLUME XCIII

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A Sonnet

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

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

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

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

D.H.H.

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

EDITORIAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And happy are we! "For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh; not many powerful, not many noble . . ." (1 Cor. 1:26). "For to you it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29).

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

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

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

THE WAY OF CAIN

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

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

GENESIS 4:1-16

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

+ Abel ^bbecame a shepherd^l of the flock, ⁺while Cain ^bwas serving the ground. ³ And it came to ^{be} ^fat the end of days ⁺that Cain ^bbrought an approach present to Yahweh from the fruit of the ground. ⁴ ⁺As for Abel ^mhowever, he ^fbrought ^fsome firstlings of his flock and ^ftheir fat portions. And Yahweh gave ^hheed to Abel and ^ghis approach present. ⁵ ⁺But to Cain and ^ghis approach present He did not give heed; ⁺so Cain's anger grew very ^hhot, and his face ^hfell. ⁶ ⁺Then Yahweh ^ssaid to Cain:

Why is your anger hot?

And why is your face fallen?

⁷ If you had ^cdone ^lwell,

Would you not lift up your face?

⁺But ^hsince you have not ^cdone ^lwell,

There is a sin offering,

A flocking reclining ^gat the portal,

And for you is ^rrestoration[~] in his sacrifice;

⁺ You ^{are} ^ldominant in authority ⁱover him.

⁸ ⁺ Cain ^ssaid to his brother Abel: ^rLet us go into the field^{lc}. ⁺Now it ^ccame to pass ⁱwhile they ^bwere[~] in the field ⁺that Cain ^lrose up ^gagainst his brother Abel and ^lkilled him. ⁹ ⁺So Yahweh ^ssaid to Cain: Where is your brother Abel? And he ^lreplied: I do not know. Am I my brother's guardian?^l ¹⁰ ⁺Then He ^ssaid: What have you done? The voice or your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground. ¹¹ ⁺ Now you are cursed^l, away from the ground which has opened wide ⁱits mouth to take ^gyour brother's blood from your hand. ¹² ⁺When you ^lserve ^gthe ground, it shall not continue to give[~] its vigor to you. A rover^l and a wanderer^l shall you become ⁱon earth.

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

me shall kill me.

¹⁵ ⁺Yet Yahweh ^ssaid to him: ^rNot so^c; anyone killing Cain—sevenfold shall he be avenged. ⁺So Yahweh ^lplaced a sign for Cain, by no means to smite[~] ^ghim, should anyone find^l him. ¹⁶ ⁺Then Cain went ^lforth from the presence of Yahweh and ^ldwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

CAIN AND ABEL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TYPES

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

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

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

CAIN'S PRESENT

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

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

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

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

ABEL'S PRESENT

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

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

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

THE PLACE OF SUFFERING

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

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

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

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

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

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

OFFERINGS

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

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

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

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

Moreover, he needed far more than a mere substitute.

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

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

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

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

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

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

A SIN OFFERING

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

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

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

RESTORATION

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

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

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

A. E. Knoch

CAIN'S STUBBORNNESS AND FEAR

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

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

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

CONSCIENCE

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

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

YAHWEH'S INSTRUCTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

YOUR BROTHER

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

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

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

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

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

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

CAIN DISMISSED FROM HIS FATHER'S FAMILY

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

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

THE KINSMAN REDEEMER

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

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

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

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

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

GOD’S LENIENCY TO CAIN

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

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

E. H. Clayton

God and His Work

OUTSIDE THE GARDEN

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

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

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

GOD IS OPERATING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SEVERITY AND LENIENCY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Indeed they are.

TYPES OF CHRIST

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

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

DIVINE HEED

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

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

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

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

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

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

THEN YAHWEH SAID

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

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

TO DO WELL

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

There was a sin offering reclining at the portal. Cain

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

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

LOCKED UP IN STUBBORNNESS

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

YAHWEH SPEAKS JUDGMENT

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

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

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

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

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

GOD'S WAYS

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

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

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

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

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

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

THE MAN, CHRIST JESUS

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

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

D.H.H.

Questions and Answers

A PRESENT RESURRECTION?

*

DISQUALIFICATION AND FAITH

*

JEWS, ISRAELITES, AND JUDEANS

Question:

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

Answer:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Question:

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

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

Answer:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Question:

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

Answer:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A PRACTICAL EQUIVALENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

J.R.C.

Notes on 2 Samuel

ISRAEL UNDER NEW RULE

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

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

⁸+As for Abner son of Ner, chief of the military host ^wthat Saul [›]had, he had taken ^lIshbosheth son of Saul and had ^ltransferred him ⁷from the army camp⁰ to Mahanaim. ⁹+ There he ^emade him ^lking [›]over ^lGilead and [›]over ^lAsher^o, + [›]over Jezreel and over Ephraim and over Benjamin, +

2:9 Asher: lit, the Ashurite.

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

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

¹⁴ + Then Abner ^lsaid to Joab, ^{pu}Now let the lads rise up and make ^lsport before us. ⁺ Joab ^{lsa}replied, Let them rise up. ¹⁵ + So they ^larose and ^lcrossed over in equal numbers, twelve for Benjamin, ⁺ that is for Ishbosheth son of Saul, and twelve from David's servants. ¹⁶ + Then each man ^otook ^lfast hold of his associate ⁱby the head and thrust his sword into his associate's side; ⁺so they ^lfell down together. ⁺Therefore ⁺that ^{ri}place was ^lcalled Helkath-hazzurim^o, which is in Gibeon.

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

2:13 Zeruiah: a sister of David.

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

outfit for yourself. ⁺Yet Asahel would not ⁺withdraw⁻ from following him. ²² + So Abner ^lcontinued to ^{sa}warn ⁺Asahel once ^fmore: Withdraw from following me, ^{off}with you! Why should I smite you to^d the earth? How could I ⁺then ^llift up my face to your brother Joab? ²³ + But he ^lrefused to withdraw. ⁺So Abner ^lsmote him ⁱwith the butt end of ^hhis spear ⁺on the fifth rib, and the spear came ^fforth ^fthrough his ^{af}back. ⁺ He ^lfell there and ^ldied on the ^uspot where he was. And it came to ^{be} ⁺that they ^lstood still, everyone ^{wh}o came ^lto the ^{ri}place where Asahel had fallen and ^ldied.

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

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

²⁹ + As for Abner and his men, they ^{go}marched all ⁺that ⁺night ⁱthrough the Arabah, ⁺ ^lcrossed ⁺the Jordan, ⁺ ^{lgo}marched through the entire Bithron gully and ^lcame to Mahanaim. ³⁰ + As for Joab, he returned from following Abner and ^lconvened ⁺all ^hhis ^{wi}soldiers; ⁺ nineteen men from David's servants were ^{ln}missing, ⁺besides Asahel. ³¹ + Yet David's servants, they had smitten those ^fof Benjamin and ⁱof Abner's men of whom 360 men had died. ³² +

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

They ¹carried **Asahel** and ¹entombed him in his father's tomb ^w at **Bethlehem**. ⁺Then **Joab** and his men ^{lgo} marched all ¹night ⁺until dawn was lighting up for them ¹at **Hebron**.

DAVID INQUIRES OF YAHWEH

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

And where did he go from here?

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

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

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

HEBRON

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

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

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

COMMENDATION OF THE GILEADITES

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

ABNER

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

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

CIVIL WAR

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

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

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

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

WOUNDS OF BITTERNESS

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

J. Philip Scranton