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**UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 1996
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN**

EDITORIAL

THE APOSTLE PAUL did not know the details of his immediate future, even though he received many special revelations concerning what lay ahead for him. Yet he made plans and expressed his hopes in prayer. We can see this in Romans 15:22-33 when he wrote concerning his upcoming journey to Jerusalem and his desire to travel from there on to Rome and continuing afterwards to Spain. Anticipating troubles in Jerusalem, he struggled in prayer that he be “rescued from the stubborn in Judea.”

He did go to Jerusalem (despite opposition) but was not rescued from severe adversities there. He did reach Rome, though not exactly in the manner he expected. We do not know if he ever saw Spain.

But the point is that he did make plans and set forward with prayer in carrying them out. Of course Paul received unusual guidance from the Lord, but as a whole, this series of incidents is similar to our own experiences in many ways. It is right that we make plans in accord with our responsibilities as God has placed us in the world. Our hearts should *devise* our way, as Proverbs 16:9 puts it, but in making our plans we remain aware that God *establishes* our steps (see also Proverbs 19:21).

Paul's words in Romans and this principle laid down in Proverbs, along with similar passages of scripture, are much in my mind these days, especially in light of the recent loss of our co-worker, Herman Rocke. Friends are asking how this affects the Old Testament translation project, and if any changes are required. It seems a proper time at least to review our plans and assess our situation, and certainly

to make it a matter of prayer in which, hopefully, our readers will join. We know that God will accomplish His will.

Recognizing that our steps are of the Lord, we enthusiastically plan to continue our testimony in this magazine and our other publications to the glories of God's purpose and the grace in the evangel heralded by Paul (see the articles on Paul's Personal Letters and on Galatians in this issue). Concerning this, there remains after more than 1900 years, a *struggle* of considerable amount (*cf* Col.2:1). This is not to say that we are alone in speaking of God's "multifarious wisdom" (see Brother Fielding's article starting on p.169), but it does seem that there is today less and less appreciation of the gratuity of God's grace and less boldness in making it known than ever before. And there also seems to be an increase in stubborn opposition to the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ. Yet how priceless is this message of the riches of grace in Christ Jesus (see the thoughts on contentment and rejoicing, starting on p.175).

Regarding the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, our desire is to complete the translation and then bring it through the publishing process. It is not wholly clear how best to do this in light of our resources and in order to meet the needs of our friends and brethren in Christ most effectively. But our plans are to continue forward in preparing for the publication of the complete "Old Testament," and eventually the whole of the scriptures in a Concordant translation. We hope to make further announcements concerning this project in subsequent issues of the magazine.

In the meantime we want to continue and even expand the use of portions of the Old Testament in the magazine, as we are presently doing with the book of Job.

We ask our readers to struggle together with us in prayers concerning these matters.

D.H.H.

The Epistles of Paul

PAUL'S PERSONAL EPISTLES

BOTH Timothy and Titus are called children by Paul in his letters to them. He is their spiritual father. He deals with them as a father with his son, charging and encouraging them in their career as men of God. In his first letter to each he adds the epithet "genuine," or "legitimate." Just as the actual child cannot but resemble his parents, so we find in Timothy and Titus many of the features of their spiritual father.

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

Philemon makes most gracious provision for those in bondage to believing masters.

1 TIMOTHY

As a guide in understanding the great contrast between Paul's two epistles to Timothy it is important to know *when* the first epistle was penned. If it was written to Timothy in Ephesus while Paul went to Macedonia, we have no situation corresponding to it in the book of Acts,

and it is difficult to understand why the instructions given should be needed in Ephesus where Paul had labored so long and which had the benefit of his personal superintendence for years.

If we reverse the situation and send Timothy to Macedonia to the ecclesias from which Paul had been driven before he could set them in order, and to which he dared not go on peril of his life, every precept in the epistle is full of point, and we have circumstances which exactly correspond in Acts 19:22. This places the epistle at the second crisis in the apostle's ministry (Acts 19:21; Rom. 15:19; 2 Cor. 5:15). His second epistle was written after the third and final crisis. This places a great gap between them which accounts for the vast difference in the aspect of affairs.

In the first epistle we have the ecclesia described as God's house, the pillar and base of the truth (3:15). In the second it has become a "great house" with utensils of various kinds, both honorable and base (2:20). In the first the pristine power of faith holds all together. In the second the dominant note is apostasy.

FRAMEWORK OF 1 TIMOTHY

Grace (1:1,2)

Admonitions Regarding Teaching (1:3-20)

Saviour of All Mankind (2:1-7)

–Rules for the Ecclesia (2:8-3:13)

Temporary Instructions (3:14)

–Secret of Devoutness (3:15,16)

Subsequent Eras (4:1-5)

–Exercise in Devoutness (4:6-8)

Saviour of All Mankind (4:9-16)

–Rules for the Ecclesia (5:1-6:2)

Admonitions Regarding Walk (6:3-21)

Grace (6:21)

2 TIMOTHY

Paul's second epistle to Timothy is, perhaps, the last letter from his pen. In all his other epistles he looks forward to further service. Now he tells Timothy that he had finished his career (4:7). The period of his dissolution was imminent (4:6). The whole epistle takes character from this fact.

The first epistle was probably written at that great crisis in the apostle's ministry when he first formed his purpose to go to Rome (Acts 19:21). Its subject is service. Its object was the organization of the ecclesias to uphold God's truth. The subject of the second epistle is suffering (2:3). Even within the "great house" of those called out, there is a swerving from the truth (2:16-20). Separation from such evil becomes the duty of all who wish to please God.

The letter should be especially prized by the Lord's slaves in these last days, for the apostasy which began even in Paul's time has become worse with each succeeding century. The practical question, How shall we serve in the midst of present day departure? is fully answered in this letter.

The first injunction in 2 Timothy is of principal importance today. "*Have a pattern of sound words, which you hear from me*" (1:13). So prevalent is the use of unscriptural words, and so loose are the translations of Paul's words that it is no marvel that the Bible is supposed to buttress the babel which pretends to the dignity of "Christian doctrine."

The corresponding injunction, "*Herald the word. Stand by it*" (2 Tim. 4:2) is as critical as the earlier one. After having the proper words it is necessary to proclaim *them*, and not the multitudinous substitutes which today have supplanted the preaching of the Scriptures.

But even if we have the proper expressions and proclaim the Scriptures, there is yet one other injunction which is vital to the truth. Without it there is confusion and error in its most subtle and destructive form. Without it the Scrip-

tures themselves become the exponent and champion of error. With it they are clear and unconfused, upholding the truth. Paul exhorts Timothy to present himself as an unashamed worker, *correctly cutting the word of truth* (2 Tim.2:15). An example follows which leaves us in no doubt as to its meaning. Some said that the resurrection had already occurred. They *misplaced* the truth. They did not deny it, or corrupt it. They put it in the past, when it was still future. Thus it is with the great bulk of Scripture today. *It is misplaced*. That which is truth at one time is destructive error at another. So, today, many things in the Bible are vehemently maintained in all good conscience, when a correct apportionment of truth would leave them for another time.

FRAMEWORK OF 2 TIMOTHY

The remedy for the present distress is clearly shown in the literary framework.

- Salutation of Grace (1:1,2)
- Timothy's Gift (1:3-7); Paul's Commission (1:8-12)
- Sound Words in View of Apostasy (1:13-18)
- Exhortation for Endurance (2:1-18)
- Exhortation to Remain (2:19-3:17)
- Herald the Word in View of Myths (4:1-4)
- Timothy's Service (4:5); Paul's Career (4:6-18)
- Benediction of Grace (4:19-22)

The epistle proper begins with an exhortation to have the pattern of sound words (1:13). It closes with the charge to herald the word (4:2). Its central subject contains the command to "correctly cut" the word of truth (2:15). The Sacred Scriptures are the one great need for these degenerate days (3:16).

TITUS

The only recorded visit of the apostle Paul to Crete was

when his ship was detained there some time on his journey to Rome (Acts 27:7-12). The writer of Acts was with the apostle, and doubtless others (such as Demas and Crescens) accompanied him, including, it would seem, Titus, as far as Crete. Paul's direction that he should leave the island and meet him in Nicopolis (3:12) seems to confirm this, for, later, Paul writes to Timothy that Titus had gone to Dalmatia (2 Tim.4:10). There was a Nicopolis on the Adriatic near the boundary of Macedonia and Dalmatia. Hence this letter was probably written from Rome not long after his arrival. His early intention to visit Spain (Rom.15:24), and his decision to winter in Nicopolis (3:12), seems to have failed of fruition, for Paul is still in Rome when he informs Timothy of his imminent dissolution (2 Tim.4:6).

FRAMEWORK OF TITUS

- Salutation of Grace (1:1-4)
- Order in the Ecclesias (1:5-9)
- Expose the Contentious (1:10-16)
- Ideal Acts of Aged, Young, Slaves (2:1-10)
- Advent of God's Grace (2:11-14)
- Charge to Speak (2:15)
- Charge to Remind (3:1-3)
- Advent of God's Grace (3:4-7)
- Ideal Acts of Believers (3:8)
- Stand Aloof from Contentious (3:9)
- Refuse Sectarianism (3:10,11)
- Benediction of Grace (3:12-15)

The evident purport of this epistle is hortatory. It deals with the practical duties of life. No doctrine is developed. As Shown by the literary framework, the chief subjects are the appointment of elders who are to serve as supervisors, and the conduct of those who are slaves. The paragraph dealing with elders is logically followed by one describing their duties and difficulties due to the insubjection of

some. The section on slaves is fittingly followed by one on subjection, for even those who are not in physical bondage owe subjection to the government and to their fellow men.

The central subject sets forth the ideal character of men and women, old and young.

PHILEMON

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

This note was doubtless written at the same time as the epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians. Onesimus accompanied Tychicus (Eph.6:21) to Ephesus and Colosse (Col. 4:7-9). From the fact that Onesimus is spoken of as "one of you" (Col.4:9), we may infer that Philemon belonged to the ecclesia at Colosse, and that he was given the message to masters in that epistle at the same time (Col.4:1).

But this little letter goes far beyond what is "just and equal" so far as Onesimus is concerned. No picture of God's grace can better this. Not only a slave, but subject to torture and death for stealing from his master, he is first reconciled to God through Paul's preaching, and then is reconciled to his master through Paul's pleading. He is caught upon the very crest of the great tidal wave of grace which was just then ready to overflow the whole world. The transcendent grace of Paul's perfection epistles was doubtless his precious possession even before it was delivered to Philemon. Can we realize what this must have meant to him? To be taken from the deepest depths of social degradation and to be seated with Christ in the celestial realms, by faith, almost exhausts the possibilities

of grace. And now upon all this, he is given this precious passport to his master's heart!

FRAMEWORK OF PHILEMON

Salutation, Grace (1:1,2)

Prayer of Paul for Philemon (1:4-6)

Paul's Joy, Saints Soothed (1:7)

Paul Entreats Concerning his Child (1:8-10)

Onesimus Useless, Useful (1:11-13)

Onesimus Slave, Brother (1:14-17)

Paul Offers Refund For Onesimus (1:18,19)

Paul's Profit, Paul Soothed (1:20)

Prayer of Philemon for Paul (1:21,22)

Greetings, Grace (1:23-25)

In literary form, too, it is a perfect example of a simple reversion. Every topic is repeated in reverse order, as set forth in detail above.

SUMMARY

Paul is the apostle of the nations, the Uncircumcision; the twelve ministered to the Circumcision, the nation of Israel. They brought mercy to the other nations, conditioned on Israel's blessing: his ministry follows the *defection* of Israel. They were confined to earth; he includes the heavens. They are confined within the eons, Paul propounds a purpose which preceded the eons and which will not be accomplished until after they have run their course. Paul alone gives us present truth. All truth is profitable in that it teaches us the ways of God; but only that truth is *applicable* which was written for the present administration.

Let this sink deeply into our minds and hearts: *Paul's epistles deal with present truth*. May the application of this great principle bring as much blessing to each reader of these lines as it has brought to the writer!

A. E. Knoch

THE HAND OF ELOAH

AFTER seeking to silence Job from his “multitude of words” (11:2-4), which seem so shocking and impious, Zophar cries out, “O that Eloah would speak!” (v.5). In this there is agreement with Job’s own longing, if not with his despair as expressed in 9:15,16. But Zophar is immediately ready to speak *for* Eloah.

With patient condescension Zophar explains what sort of thing Eloah would say to Job if He did speak. “Then He would tell you obscured secrets of wisdom.” And more to the point as far as Zophar is concerned, Eloah would make Job understand that He “is granting you oblivion of some of your depravity” (11:6). Zophar is convinced that Job has committed some great depravity, but allows that Eloah may have given Job some measure of forgetfulness of what he did.

Yet again, Zophar directs attention to Eloah and His perfection and authority (11:7-11). These verses, like 5:9,10, spoken by Eliphaz, seem to accord with the extended passages in chapters 38-41 when Yahweh Himself does speak. Still, the reason such references to God’s deity by Job’s associates do not make these words “rightly so” (*cf* 42:7) is that they are voiced for the wrong reason. Like Eliphaz and Bildad, Zophar speaks of the greatness of Eloah in order to lead to the themes of judgment and religious warnings. The concern is not to focus attention on God and the wisdom of His ways, but rather to direct Job in his own personal behavior before the majestic Deity.

Zophar points to possible lawlessness in *Job’s hands* that

JOB 11-14

- 11** ⁺Then Zophar the Naamathite ^lanswered, ⁺ ^lsaying:
² **Shall this multitude of words not be answered?**
And should this man of glib lips be ^ljustified?
³ **Shall your inventions ^cturn ^{ad}men to silence?**
And shall you keep deriding
⁺while there is no one criticizing?
⁴ ⁺Now you ^lsay, My doctrine is spotless,
And I ^bam purified in Your eyes.
⁵ ⁺ Nevertheless—^o ^{lg}that Eloah would speak,
⁺That He should open His lips ^{wi}before you!
⁶ ⁺Then He would ^ltell [›] you obscured secrets of wisdom,
For reality [›]has double sides;
⁺Hence know this: that Eloah is ^cgranting [›] you
oblivion of some ^fof your depravity.
⁷ Can you ^lfind out the fathoming of Eloah?
^{if}Could you ^lfind out ^{fr} the ^{all}perfection
of Him Who-Suffices?
⁸ These are loftier than the heavens;
what can you ^lcontrive?
Deeper ^fthan the unseen; what can you ^lknow?
⁹ Its measure is longer ^fthan the earth
And wider ^fthan the sea.
¹⁰ If He should pass by ^{›or} lock up
⁺Or ^ccall an assembly, ⁺ ^awho could ^lturn Him back?
¹¹ For He Himself knows ^{ad}men of hypocrisy;
⁺When He ^lsees lawlessness, ⁺ shall He not consider?
¹² ⁺ The hollow ^l man shall become wise of heart
⁺Whenever the colt of an onager is ^lborn a human.

must be put away (11:12-14). This shows us that Zophar really thinks of God's actions as responses to human behavior rather than operations in accord with a divine purpose. If Job would confess his secret sins, then Eloah would be able to bless him, and he would forget his misery and trust with expectation (11:15-19). But the fact remains that Job has always spread out his palms to God (v.13), and his condition currently fits Zophar's description of the fate of the wicked. Job's eyes are "exhausted" *right now* with tears; for Job there is presently no visible "flight to safety," and the only expectation he has for his soul is death (11:20).

None of this advances any understanding of God's dealings with Job. It does not encourage Job's trust in the perfect sufficiency of Him Who-Suffices, or his appreciation of His wisdom. God is aware of all human hypocrisy and lawlessness (11:11), but Job's need is to become more aware of divine faithfulness, wisdom and righteousness.

SO JOB ANSWERED
(Job 12:1-25)

Job's associates have spoken of God but have not helped Job keep focusing on Him as One involved in the events and experiences of our lives. This is because what they have said concerning God has really directed the attention onto Job and what he must do in order to come under divine favor once again. Now in Job's reply to Zophar he stoops to their level and joins the fray, man against man. His attacks take the form of sarcasm. "Truly, you are the people, and with you wisdom shall die!" (12:2). This leads to a defense of himself (12:3), followed by further complaints about his associates' attitudes (12:4,5).

Nevertheless, Job recalls how he had always been one "who was calling on Eloah" (v.4). This leads Job's mind back to the major problem of squaring the presence of evil with the power and righteousness of God.

- ¹³ **If you yourself prepare your heart,
And you spread out your palms to Him,**
- ¹⁴ **If lawlessness is in your hand, ^cput it far away,
And do not ^callow iniquity to ^ttabernacle in your tents,**
- ¹⁵ **^t Then ^fwithout blemish, you may lift up your face,
And you will become solidly^l set and shall not fear.**
- ¹⁶ **For you' would ^tforget the misery;
You would ^tremember it only
like waters that have passed.**
- ¹⁷ **And higher ^fthan the noonday sun
your life-course shall rise;
Should it be faint, it shall become like the morning.**
- ¹⁸ **+ You will trust ^tbecause there will be expectation;
+When you reconnoiter, you may lie down in trust.**
- ¹⁹ **+When you recline, + there will be no trembling,
And many will beseech your face.**
- ²⁰ **+Yet the eyes of the wicked shall be ^{all}exhausted,
And flight to safety will perish ^ffor them
And their expectation become an expiring of soul.**
- 12 +So Job ^tanswered, + ^tsaying:**
- ² **Truly, ^t you are the people,
And with you wisdom shall die!**
- ³ **^{mr}However, I ^thave heart understanding as well as you;
I am not falling ^f behind you;
^tFor ^awho is there not knowing such things as these?**
- ⁴ **As the sport ^tof his associates am I becoming,
Who was calling ^ton Eloah, and He ^tanswered him,
Made sport of, though righteous and flawless.**
- ⁵ **Contempt ^tfor misfortune^t is ^tin the reflections
of the self-satisfied one,
Readied^l for those of tottering feet.**
- ⁶ **The tents ^tof devastators^l are at ^tease,
And for those disturbing El there is serenity,
For him who brings along an eloah in his hand.**

First of all, Job points out, the wicked seem to get away with their wickedness. Even for those who disturb El there is serenity (12:6). And secondly, “the *hand of Eloah*, it has done this” (12:9)! It is not, as Zophar had insisted, a question of what *Job's* hands have done, whether intentionally or not, whether obvious to others or obscured, but of what *Eloah's* hand has done.

It is the hand of God that has shaped us as living souls, and our spirit comes from Him (12:10). It is as a living *soul*, instilled with spirit by the hand of Eloah, that Job can feel the aching loss of his children. God has made him a sentient being who can know the pain of the boils covering his body and the horror of his destitution. God has granted him spirit that keeps him alive in an existence of searing agony and unrelieved sorrow.

If Zophar would speak for Eloah, why has he not spoken about what is so obvious? Those who disturb El live in comfort, and one who called on Him is made sport of, “though righteous and flawless.” And that is a serious problem. Even the beasts of the field, the birds and fish, know this (12:7-9). How can we ever become acquainted with God's power and wisdom unless we face up to the evils we hear and see and feel all around us?

Don't we learn by listening and observing and exercising our senses (v.11)? We begin our education as infants and do not have to wait until we are old before we recognize that God does whatever fits His counsel and wisdom (12:12-15). Both the sinner and the one who leads him down the pathway of error are God's (v.16). God causes counselors and judges to do stupid things and be cheated, kings and priests and solid citizens to be overthrown, elders and patrons and the powerful to fall (12:17-22). The fate of nations and the policies of their leaders are all under God's control (12:23-25).

Evil is a fact, and the perfection of the all-powerful

- 7 + **Nevertheless, ask, I pray, one of the beasts,
and let it direct you,
And the flyer of the heavens, and let it tell ^ν you,
8 Or importune to the earth, and it shall direct you,
And let the fish of the sea recount it to you.**
9 ^a**Who ⁱamong all these does not know
That the hand of ^MEloah^s, it has done this?**
10 **In Whose hand is the soul of every living creature
And the spirit in all flesh of man.**
11 Does **not** the ear ^ltest declarations
+As the palate ^ltastes its food?
12 Does **wisdom** come ⁱwith being **hoary headed,
And understanding with length of days?**
13 **With Him are wisdom and mastery;
His are counsel and understanding.**
14 ^{bd}**If He ^ldemolishes, + it shall not be rebuilt,
He ^llocks ^{on}up a man, + it shall not be opened.**
15 ^{bd}**If He ^lrestrains ⁱ the waters, + they shall dry up,
+Or He ^lsends them forth,
+ they shall overrun the earth.**
16 **With Him are strength and prosperity;
Both the erring one and the one causing error are His.**
17 **Causing counselors^l to go forth looted,
He ⁺also makes judges^l rave as fools.**
18 **He unlooses the disciplining authority of kings,
And He ^lbinds a belt ⁱabout their waists.**
19 **Causing priests to go forth looted,
He ⁺also overthrows the well-established.**
20 **Putting away the eloquence ^νof the sure^l,
He ⁺also ^ltakes away the discretion of elders.**
21 **Pouring out contempt on patrons,
He ⁺also makes the cordon of the mighty repressors
fall slack.**
22 **Exposing the deep things ^lout of darkness,
He ⁺also ^lbrings ^lforth the blackest shadow to light.**

God Who has made us is a fact. Job is saying the right thing when he puts these two facts together in his declarations. The hand of Eloah is involved in the failures of worthy human beings and in the stupidity of our most capable leaders. Indeed the word “involved” is not strong enough. Several times, especially in 12:17-25, Job uses the Hebrew verb form that speaks of *causing* the action to happen. God causes counselors and priests to be looted. He causes the putting away of eloquence (v.20) and heart understanding (v.24), and He causes leaders to “stray in wayless wasteland” (v.24).

TO PLEAD WITH EL
(Job 13:1-27)

Job's experience by means of his eyes and ears has made it evident to him that God is the First Cause of all these things. Job is well aware of his own sinfulness, but this should not be related only to divine judgments and divorced from trust in God. His associates obviously cannot explain the involvement of Deity in this evil, nor do they want to discuss it in any clear way. It is the issue of all issues that they most want to avoid.

Zophar wanted to speak for Eloah, which, if he could have done so truly, would have been welcome to Job. But as for Job himself, he would speak *to* God as the One Who Suffices. He longs to plead his case before the Supreme Subjector (13:3).

Verses 4-13 of chapter 13 show us a distracted and frustrated Job, falling once more into sarcasm and outright anger. Job longs to speak to Eloah. Nevertheless, he has had to listen to a man who has already judged his case. And what Zophar has said is “falsehood,” and “iniquity.” There is no healing for Job in such talk.

It appears to Job that Zophar wishes to curry favor with God, claiming to contend for Him by showing par-

- 23 **‘Making** › nations grow great, **He** +also **destroys** them;
Spreading out › nations, **He** +also **guides** them away.
- 24 **Putting away heart** understanding from the **heads**
of the people of the earth,
He +also causes them to **stray** in a wayless wasteland.
- 25 **They** **grope** in darkness +with no’ light,
And He **‘makes** them **stray** like a drunkard.
- 13 **Behold, my eye has seen** all **‘these** things^{cs};
My ear has heard and **‘understands** › it.
- 2 **‘Where** you have knowledge, so **‘also** do **I** know;
I am not falling ^f behind you.
- 3 **Nevertheless,** as for me,
I would **‘speak** to Him **Who-Suffices,**
And to plead ›with EL is what **I** **‘desire.**
- 4 + **Nevertheless,** you are **smearing** with falsehood,
Useless healers’ are all of you.
- 5 **‘O** **‘g**that you would **‘keep** **‘silent,** yea **silent**ˉ,
+ That would **‘be** › wisdom for you.
- 6 **Hear** ^{pr}now my pleading,
And to the arguments of my lips, attend.
- 7 Is it for EL that you **‘speak** iniquity?
And for Him that you **‘speak** deceitfully?
- 8 Would you **‘show** partiality toward Him?
if **Would** you **‘contend** for EL?
- 9 **Would it be well** *‘if* He were investigating you?
if **Could** you **‘delude** ⁱ Him as one **deludes**ˉ ⁱ a mortal?
- 10 **He shall reprove,** yea **reprove**ˉ you,
If in secrecy you **‘show** partiality.
- 11 Will His majestic bearing not **‘frighten** you,
And alarm of Him **‘fall** upon you?
- 12 **Your maxims** are proverbs of ashes;
Your bulwarks are › bulwarks of clay.
- 13 **‘Keep** silent ^f before me, and do let me’ speak,
And let whatever comes pass upon me.

tiality toward Him (13:7,8). But what he says about Job is not true. Zophar himself needs to be investigated; he may delude human beings, but God, Who knows Zophar's secret thoughts, will not be deluded. It would be better if Zophar would simply keep silent (13:5,13).

In 13:9-12 we find Job turning Zophar's warnings against him. This is all very well from a human standpoint, but it is a distraction from the major point of God's place in all the evil that has come upon Job. But once Job gets this out of his system, he seems to get a better hold on himself and prepares for the pleading of his case before God (13:14-19). Like David in later times, Job would have God be his judge (*cf* 2 Sam.24:14).

JOB, THE ENEMY

Job first calls for protection from the One before Whom he pleads (13:20,21). Then he proposes a two-way exchange of thought (22). And finally, evidently without waiting for God to speak, Job bursts out with what he wants to say.

Job's questions and complaints in 13:23-27 center upon the explosive address to Yahweh in verse 24. "Why should You conceal Your face and reckon me as Your enemy?" Because the name "Job" and the word for "enemy" are practically the same in Hebrew, we cannot help but feel there is a great deal of irony packed into this plea.

Job, who, relative to other human beings, "was flawless and upright, fearing Elohim and keeping away from evil" (Job 1:1), nevertheless was reckoned as God's enemy. (Here is a matter that hits home for us all, and for believers this calls for renewed appreciation of passages such as Romans 5:1-11 and Colossians 1:13-23.)

In voicing this significant problem of human enmity and alienation from God, Job is being prepared to receive God's own assurance of divine purpose and ability in carrying out this purpose.

- 14 [◇] **I shall take up my flesh in my teeth
And place my soul in my palm.**
- 15 **Behold, He may despatch me, yet I shall wait for Him;
Yea, I shall plead my ways ^ʔbefore His face.**
- 16 **Moreover, this will be ^ʔsalvation for me,
For a polluted man would not ^lcome before Him.**
- 17 **Hear, yea hear^r my declaration,
And let my disclosure come into your ears.**
- 18 **Behold ^{pr}now, I have arranged a plea;
I know that I^r shall be justified.**
- 19 **^aWho is he who shall contend ^{wi}against me?
For I would ^{now}then ^ekeep ^lsilent and ^lbreathe my last.**
- 20 **^yOnly two things, O do not ^{do} ^{wi}to me;
Then I shall not conceal myself from Your face:**
- 21 **^eKeep Your palm far from ^{om} me,
And let not the dread of You ^lfrighten me.**
- 22 **+Either call, and I^r shall answer,
Or I shall speak; ⁺then, I pray, reply to me.**
- 23 **How many are my depravities and sins?
^eLet me know my transgression and my sin.**
- 24 **Why should You conceal Your face
And reckon me ^ʔas Your enemy^l?**
- 25 **Would You ^lterrify a leaf being whisked away?
And would You ^lpursue dry stubble?**
- 26 **That You may list bitter things ^{om}against me,
And ^limpute to me the depravities of my youth,**
- 27 **And that You may place my feet in shackles
And ^lkeep watch over all my paths;
That You may set a statute ^{om}for the bottoms of my feet.**
- 28 **+ A ^sman, like a rotten thing, he is disintegrating,
Like a cloak when a moth has eaten it.**
- 14 **A human, born^l of a woman,
Is short of days and surfeited with disturbance.**
- 2 **He comes forth like a blossom and is ^lsnipped off;
+ He races ^laway like a shadow and does not ^lstand.**

13:14 Hb begins with **On what** (meaning "why"), repeated from the end of v.13 but absent in LXX.

DESPAIR AND EXPECTATION
(Job 13:28-14:22)

We, even as believers, may often feel a oneness with Job, the enemy, in many of his thoughts, feeling sometimes (rather, often) like a rotting cloak (13:28), “short of days and surfeited [up to the gills] with disturbance” (14:1). It is altogether human to cry out to God as Job does in 14:3-5, saying in effect, “I don’t get it! Why make such a big thing of such a miserable, little, temporary creature as I am?” But the great difference between Job and ourselves is that, in faith, we have received the conciliation (Rom.5:11).

As for Job, however, he remains without assurance of divine purpose for this enmity. He can only cry out in “declarations without knowledge” (Job 38:2). Nevertheless, despite all Job’s professing of ideas without understanding (*cf* Job 42:3), the Godward directing of his thoughts and words is altogether right. And even here, in the depths of his despair, he is led to a growing confidence in El.

An indication of this developing trust can be seen in Job’s use of the little word “until” in 14:6-14. At first Job’s only hope is that God would forbear from paying attention to him, “*until*, like a hireling, he may fill in his days” (v.6). Then, in death, the human shall remain in oblivious sleep “*until* the heavens fail,” (v.12), which would seem likely a long, long time. Here Job would be concealed by God *until* His “anger turns back (v.13), which is suddenly a more encouraging thought, for indeed God’s anger may not be permanent, and there is no need for concealment apart from divine anger.

Finally, as the high point of Job’s thoughts in this reply to Zophar, he asks, “If a master dies shall he live again?” and declares, “All the days of my enlistment I shall wait *until* my relief comes” (Job 14:14). Here is a marvelous ray of hope in the midst of Job’s despair. Like other passages of

- ³ **Indeed**, it is **on** one like **this** that **You focus Your eyes**,
And You 'bring me into judgment *wi* **before You**.
- ⁴ *Who* can *lg* **make** what is **clean from the unclean?**
No^t one.
- ⁵ *If* **Since his days are decided**,
The **number of his months** are set *by* **You**,
And **You have** *d* **made his statutory** time,
+Which he cannot 'surpass,
- ⁶ **Be heedless of him, and** *M* **forbear~**,
Until, like a hireling, he may fill in his days.
- ⁷ **For there is expectation for a tree:**
If it is 'cut down, +then it may rejuvenate *f* **again,**
And its young shoots may not be halted.
- ⁸ **If its roots 'grow 'old in the earth,**
And its trunk-base 'dies in the soil;
- ⁹ *f* **At the scent of water it shall bud,**
And it will *d* **produce harvest** branches like a **plant.**
- ¹⁰ **+Yet a master shall die and be laid 'defeated;**
+ A human shall breathe his last, and where is he?
- ¹¹ As **waters depart from a lake,**
And a stream is 'drained and dries up,
- ¹² **+So a man lies down and shall not rise;**
Until the heavens fail, they shall not awake,
Nor shall they be roused from their sleep.
- ¹³ *O* *lg* **that You would 'seclude me in the unseen,**
That **You would 'conceal me**
until Your anger turns back,
That **You would 'set a statutory** time for me
and then 'remember me.
- ¹⁴ **If a master 'dies shall he live again?**
All the days of my enlistment I shall wait
Until my relief comes.
- ¹⁵ **You shall call, and I' shall answer You;**
You shall long for the *d* **work of Your hands.**

14:6 *M*-- forbear: Hb he shall forbear.

- 16 Even **'if You are now numbering my steps,**
You shall then no' longer observe^{on} my sin,
- 17 **My transgression shall be sealed' up in a pouch,**
And You shall cover over^{on} my depravity.
- 18 **Nevertheless, +even the mountain falls' and 'decays,**
And the rock 'shifts from its^{ri} place.
- 19 **Water reduces stones to 'powder;**
⁷The **flattening** rain 'overflows~ the **soil of the earth;**
+So do You cause the expectation of a mortal to perish.
- 20 **You 'overpower him > permanently, and he 'goes away;**
His face alters', and You 'send him afar.
- 21 **His sons may attain glory, +yet he does not 'know it;**
+Or they may be discredited,
+yet he does not 'understand it >of them.
- 22 **Yea, his flesh shall be in pain over himself,**
And his soul shall mourn over his state.

14:19 7-- The flattening rain 'overflows: Hb She 'overflows her self-sown plants.



explosive joy in the midst of deep sorrow, such as Lamentations 3:21-24 and Micah 4:1-8, Job 14:14-17 stands out in brilliant light because of the darkness of its surroundings. Relief will come because God will long for the *work of His hands* (14:15).

No doubt Job says more than he can feel assured about here, for he immediately falls back into morbid thoughts of death and forgetfulness, starting with the word “nevertheless” in 14:18. Job looks at the evidence of his present suffering and lack of expectation, ending his speech with a sob.

“Nevertheless” the damage has been done, or rather the *counter-damage*, in Job’s words of hope. Words of mourning are not to be the final words of Job.

D.H.H.

THE WAYS OF GOD AND MAN

JOB’S ASSOCIATES were good men—good, that is, in intention, good in the deepest desire of their hearts, but utterly wrong in their knowledge of God’s ways. They knew God, yet did not speak of Him the thing that was right: they were grave, yet uttered folly. Theirs was a pattern case. In them are set forth the flimsy substitutes for divine revelation to which we are ever prone to turn: leaning on *antiquity* and *majority* and *erudition*.

They held tenaciously to their own teaching because it was ancient. “Among us are both the greyhaired and hoary headed, more abundant in days than your father” (15:10). The antiquity of a belief is no proof of its truth. In our quest after truth we should be influenced by nothing save the ruling of Scripture.

They were also much inclined to lean on the number and distinction of those “with them.” But majorities and minorities cannot be recognized as factors in establishing the truth.

Again, Job’s opponents reposed implicit confidence in *education* and *erudition*. Their speeches are replete with personal observations, profusely seasoned with quotations from the fathers, and abound in reference to arts and sciences, but contain only one reference to the Word of God (22:22).

The knowledge of Job’s friends was not of faith. They knew only what is seen. Nature was their text-book. However, they ignored that nature reveals God’s *works*, but not His *ways*. These are unfolded by God’s Word. Psalm

19 elaborates this distinction; its first part (verses 1-6) is occupied with the revelation of God written in the *heavens*, and its latter part (verses 7-14) with the revelation of God written in the *Word*.

The heavens recount the perfection of God's handiwork; the Scriptures make known God's dealings with His servants. In the universe about us all is order, harmony, law, symmetry. In the world of humanity all is confusion and disorder;—we read of "error," "faults," "sins," "transgressions."

This antithesis between the works of God in creation and His ways with mankind, the friends could not account for, but labored to "reconcile" it with their theory. Grounded on this false hypothesis as to the "course of the world," they inferred that all calamity is a judgment on sin, and prosperity a reward for uprightness. The position of the three friends is substantially the same, only Eliphaz supports it by experience, Bildad by tradition, Zophar by human merit.

In relating Job's sufferings only to divine judgment upon sin, in accord with their established viewpoint, the friends essentially ruled out any association of this evil with God's operations. Because Job knew his troubles were not retribution for secret sins, this viewpoint was devastating to him; it meant that there was no reason at all for this evil.

It is not calamity that oppresses and depresses, but calamity unrelated to any divine purpose, that springs from nothing and leads to nothing. If it is appointed by God for His purposes, whether or not we are aware of His purposes, it can be viewed with equanimity and borne with fortitude. God is in the darkness as well as in the light, in death as well as in life. This is what Job longed to hear, but concerning which his associates had nothing to say.

V. Gelesnoff

God's Multifarious Wisdom

CONCEALED IN GOD

"TO ME, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord; in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, *through His faith*" (Eph.3:8-12).

Such astonishing revelations of God's purpose in creation are rare. Even when they are plainly expressed, without equivocation or sophistry, so as to appear quite simple to understand, comprehension of God's wisdom is nevertheless limited. Concerning recognition of God the Father and His Son, our Lord, Paul had previously declared, ". . . not in all is there this knowledge" (1 Cor.8:7).

The significance of Paul's stupendous announcement leads him to petition God: "On this behalf am I bowing my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after Whom every kindred in the heavens and on earth is being named, that He may be giving you, in accord with the riches of His glory, to be made staunch with power, through His spirit, in the man within, Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, having been rooted and grounded in love, should be strong to grasp, together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height—to know

the love of Christ as well which transcends knowledge—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God” (Eph.3:14-19).

Secret! Untraceable! Concealed! Were we not designated, called, and justified, then we would be quite unable to understand this transcendent revelation. These words are addressed “. . . to all the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus.” They are the very pinnacle of divine confiding! When such disclosures are confused with the evangel pertaining to the Uncircumcision and their expectation of the kingdom, then this is a clear sign of immaturity or deception.

THE FULLNESS OF TIME

There is a delightful parallel to be drawn between the guardian shepherds on the night of the nativity, and those to whom Paul was writing. Small wonder that these shepherds were startled! Small wonder that they came hurrying into Bethlehem! We may also feel some sympathy with those who remained in the fields to tend the flocks. An essential difference is that not a single one of the ecclesia will be left behind when they are snatched away in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air!

But what news of the nativity! What incredible, glorious news! The heavenly host could not contain their joy at the significance of the birth of the royal Babe. God's great purpose for all creation was centered in the wonderful gift of His dear Son.

These same host could not possibly anticipate Golgotha. When it occurred, how perplexed they must have been until the exaltation, when Christ Jesus was raised and presented in celestial glory. And yet, once more we are able to perceive that full realization and acceptance of His just and worthy honors was not granted to all, *even among the celestials.*

Humanity is apt to become preoccupied with God's purpose here on earth, but those who recognize the glories of His Son soon come to perceive His universal dignity. Indeed, in the astounding announcement which the apostle declared, he stressed that the multifarious wisdom of God was to be made known “*through the ecclesia.*” Yet there are some of this privileged body who are inclined to overlook the fact that their very unworthiness is a necessary contrast to enhance the gracious love which the Father lavishes on His children. Lessons concerning the gratuitous grace of this love are made crystal clear when lavished on the least deserving of all.

“For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them” (Eph.2:8-10).

Paul, who humbly wrote, “Make room for us” (1 Cor.7:2), kept the above glorious revelation to himself for over fourteen years! He fully understood that in the fullness of time he would be able to share his delightful news, but first, paralleling the inevitable ascending from tender faith to maturity, there was a vital need for patience and gentle encouragement. What must that have meant for him? How could we have subdued our elation?

What forbearance and pathos there is in his words; “And I am acquainted with such a man (whether in a body or outside of the body I am not aware—God is aware) that he was snatched away into paradise and hears ineffable declarations, which it is not allowed a man to speak” (2 Cor.12:3,4).

We have no means of knowing what prompted the timing of disclosure of God's revelation through His apostle, but we do know for certain that it would have come as an essential development to those who had carefully followed

Paul's teaching. Even so, none could possibly have speculated the distinct honor which God then revealed. Never before had the celestial destiny of the ecclesia been set forth. But, if the honor was startling to the ecclesia, what must it have meant to the celestial sovereignties and authorities?

AMONG THE CELESTIALS

The entire Ephesian epistle is a comprehensive declaration of God's love for His Son, our Lord, but in a breathtaking blaze of glory, we are uplifted by the statement that as part of the high honors justifiably bestowed upon the Son, He is given, "... as Head over all to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all" (1:22,23)!

Already, in spirit, we are confirmed as being seated together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus. Did Paul, as he tenderly entreated and instructed, provide hints concerning the celestial destiny of the ecclesia as he wrote, "Are you not aware that we shall be judging messengers, not to mention life's affairs?" (1 Cor.5:3). In the light of his prior knowledge, there can surely be no misunderstanding that he plainly taught a future, blessed fullness of realization in his words regarding seeing, no longer out of an instalment, but face to face (13:12).

Although he withheld the secret of celestial honors revealed in the Ephesian epistle, he was able to provide a powerful encouragement in divulging the blessed secret of resurrection to the stumbling ecclesia in Corinth.

The reality of our present humiliation is far removed from the glories or our expectation. Together with the apostle we also are considered weak, stupid and dishonored. Our message is rejected, yet we persist. How else may we reflect just a little of the grace which is lavished? Like Paul, we rejoice in infirmities, for Christ's sake.

In the closing words of this mighty epistle of Ephesians,

Paul urges all to receive the defensive armor against the stratagems of the Adversary, emphasizing that we are not to wrestle with flesh and blood, but "... *with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials*" (6:12).

This can only mean that these same forces must regard the future exaltation of the ecclesia with some trepidation. If God were *all* in these celestials, then surely they would anticipate and welcome the Lord's brethren in their transformed glory, with open arms. Are these, as with humanity, also indifferent to the glory of God's Son? In their arrogance do they view the terrestrial with contempt? It requires no special imagination to understand that there is a need, and that need is for a realization of the immensity and wonder of God's love. God's wisdom chooses the ignoble and contemptible to be disgracing the wise. This aspect of God's purpose confounds humanity. It is equally enigmatic to the celestials. Once more, we are instructed that this wise choosing was a secret; a wisdom, "... *which has been concealed*" (1 Cor.2:7).

BE REJOICING

And thus God's glorious purpose in creation unfolds. There is no experiment; no adaptation. True, there is adjustment. Our Lord made this perfectly clear when He explained to His disciples why He began to speak in parables: "Now answering, He said to them that 'To you has it been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens, yet to those it has not been given. For anyone who has, to him shall be given, and he shall have a superfluity. Yet anyone who has not, that also which he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore in parables am I speaking to them, seeing that, observing, they are not observing, and hearing, they are not hearing, neither are they understanding'" (Matt.13:11-13).

Jesus then declared the solemn prophecy of Isaiah con-

cerning the nation of Israel, and to this very day, following on Paul's quotation of this same prophecy (Acts 28:26-28), this special people, beloved because of the fathers, are set aside, in callousness. "For unregretted are the graces and the calling of God. For even as you once were stubborn toward God, yet now were shown mercy at their stubbornness, thus these also are now stubborn to this mercy of yours, that now they also may be shown mercy. *For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all*" (Rom.11:29-32). Once again, we must be careful to note that these words were addressed to "... the called of Jesus Christ."

"Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4-7). Worry can cause real physical disability, even death. But genuine peace is imparted when we learn of God's loving, immutable purpose which nothing in this whole wide universe can possibly frustrate. We may indeed be rejoicing in the Lord!

The special revelation which we have been considering is a powerful encouragement for peace in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Just as it was gradually unfolded, then we may rest assured that there are still many such rich disclosures in our Father's superabounding love for all creation.

"Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eons of the eons! Amen!" (Eph.3:20,21).

Donald Fielding

Contentment and True Rejoicing

NOT ALREADY PERFECTED

OUR IMPERFECTIONS in the flesh can be a real spoiler of spiritual joy. Our awareness of not perfectly measuring up to the standard set before us by Paul to walk worthily of the calling with which we were called is often overpowering. As a consequence, the peace of God does *not always* fill our hearts and minds. How do we cope with this? We will give twelve points which we hope will be helpful in "endurance and patience with joy" (Col.1:11).

1. As long as we are here in our terrestrial tabernacle, we know that God is not finished fashioning and framing us. From Colossians 1:12 we learn that our heavenly Father is *making us competent* for the allotment awaiting us. Thus, let us not run ahead of Him, but let us be gracious with others and ourselves.

2. For reasons best known to God, we have been given only an earnest of His holy spirit and not as yet a full measure. But how good and encouraging to know that we also have been sealed with the holy spirit of promise for the day of deliverance (Eph.1:13; 4:30). Furthermore, we have not been given a full measure of faith, but a limited measure (Rom.12:3). Some receive more than others. That is one reason why we should never compare ourselves with ourselves (2 Cor.10:12), but be as helpful and lenient as can be, without being presumptuous or condescending. We are all objects of God's grace.

3. The apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:11 that he had *learned* to be content. This means to us that Paul was not born with that blessing, but that in the "school of God" he

had learned it. Some of us may not learn it until the last day in "school." Paul learned a very important lesson spoken of in 2 Corinthians 12:9. We are thankful for the many precious declarations given in this administration of grace, but we should be especially grateful for the one given to Paul when he had earnestly prayed for the removal of an infirmity (imperfection). Paul simply was told, "Sufficient for you is My grace." This might be called one of the understatements of the eons. What more and what better can be granted us in our infirmities than knowing that we have been saved by grace and in grace (that is into the sphere of grace). As a fish in the ocean encounters water always, in all its movements, so we, in all our experiences in "school," encounter God's grace in Christ Jesus no matter how many imperfections we still have.

4. Since we will never come in this life to that degree of perfection that will allow us to say with honesty that we practice flawlessly the standard set before us, it is very helpful to consider what Peter, as a disciple, experienced when he was granted permission to walk on the water toward Jesus (Matt.14:27-33). As long as He kept his eyes focused on His Lord, he was successful. When he looked at the billowing waves, he became afraid and began to sink. Of course, Jesus saved him. One important lesson to learn from Peter's experience is to keep our focus on the truth as it was revealed to Paul by our glorified Lord and Saviour. The truth will be making us free, also from the frustrations of our imperfections.

5. Yes, as we walk on the stormy sea of life (perhaps too many times with a sinking feeling), we would heed Paul's entreaty, "Do not worry about anything" (Phil.4:6). That includes, not worrying about the fact that we are not as yet perfect. How may we accomplish this? Simply by keeping in mind that because of the death of Christ we will be presented holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight

(Col.1:21,22). This is a powerful way to cope with such shortcomings as fear and worry, or anything else that tends to make us aware of our imperfections.

6. Someone has said that we must never look back "when trying to plow a straight furrow." For spiritual maturity it is very important not to look back on any successes or any failures we have experienced. This does not mean to be dishonest and to pretend that we are capable through mental acrobatics to remove from our memory past experiences, good and bad. No, it simply means not to live by our experiences and feelings; but to let God's declarations concerning His grace in Christ, and His operation in this administration of grace determine our daily walk *and feelings*.

7. While we are in this tabernacle of flesh, we need to comprehend the meaning of what Paul says when he uses the word "reckoning" in Romans 6:11. "Thus you also, be *reckoning* yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, *yet living to God* in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Now, since "sin" means "missing the mark," then we have here a basis for not looking at our failures. The standing, or position we have with God is secure in Christ Jesus, and since nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom.8:31-35), we have very much to encourage us to live by *God's success in Christ Jesus*.

8. Sometimes we wonder what would happen if God granted us complete maturity, and mastery over the flesh at this time. Would it not make us difficult to live with? Just suppose that, for instance, we could tell another that we never worry about anything anymore. Would that not sound conceited and unreal? Would that not make us walk about with an air of self-righteousness? How wonderful and humbling to realize that we are given God's righteousness in Christ Jesus in Whom we are instructed to boast (1 Cor.1:31).

9. It is more realistic to *pursue* joyfully that for which

we have been grasped. Paul said it so well in Philippians 3:12-14. “Not that I already obtained, *or am already perfected*. Yet I am pursuing, if I may be grasping also that for which I was grasped also by Christ Jesus. Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God’s calling above in Christ Jesus.”

In this passage Paul plainly acknowledges that he does not consider himself to be perfect. He also states that he is not dwelling on those things that are behind him. And is it not interesting that (as mentioned above under #3) Paul, nevertheless, *has learned to be content*. He is content because he revels in the truths of justification, conciliation and glorification (in spirit he—and we as well—have already been given every spiritual blessing among the celestials in Christ, Eph.1:3). He does not allow his imperfections to make him “uptight.” Instead, he is living by the perfection he has in Christ Jesus. This gives him a great amount of energy in the pursuit of grasping and laying hold on eonian life. The marvelous truths he was commissioned to proclaim, plus his constant contact in prayer with the God of all power, wisdom and love, enabled him to live by faith and to cast out frustration. He encouraged us to imitate him.

10. The physical conditions of life can at times be very trying. We are not asked to become unnatural, but the Scripture says that we do not sorrow as the world does (1 Thess.4:13). We do groan, yet our groaning is different from the groaning and moaning that goes on in society. We are entreated to do all without murmurings and reasonings (Phil.2:14), yet the difficulties of life often cause us tears and sadness while we rejoice in the truth that all is out of, through, and for God! We are fully persuaded that all things that are taking place in our lives and in the billions of other human lives, contribute to the universal goal so

succinctly stated in 1 Corinthians 15:28—“that God may be All in all.” This must mean that we, as creatures, through the experience of good and evil, have to become nothing in ourselves. Creatures can only find true fulfillment and perfect satisfaction by having the Creator as their all, the Creator Who has revealed Himself as Father, and has told us that we belong to His family (Eph.2:19). How good to know that God is establishing a family relationship with His creatures; not a cold business-like relationship, but a relationship of intimacy and love!

11. It is very interesting to read in Hebrews that Christ learned obedience by the things He suffered. We do not have to learn obedience *but we may learn contentment*. And this while we suffer from many imperfections. It is a great relief that we are complete in Christ (Col.2:10), and live by His faith (Gal.2:20). This indeed, is more than enough to help us forget our own short comings, and to be invigorated for positive living. This positive living is to be understood not merely as being free from worry (although that is very important), but to rejoice in serving the Lord and to remember that the Lord is always near. The more we rejoice in the Lord the less we worry in our imperfections. That it is important to rejoice is clearly indicated in Philippians 4:4, “Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing!”; as well as in Romans 15:13, “Now may the God of expectation be filling you with all joy and peace in believing, for you to be superabounding in expectation, in the power of holy spirit.”

12. We feel that it is very important to keep in mind that the Great Potter is ultimately the One Who will achieve all these commendable qualities in us. In Ephesians 2:10 it says that we are *His achievement*. and in Philippians 2:13 it clearly states that God is “operating in us *to will* as well as *to work* for the sake of His delight.” Isn’t it marvelous to know that it all depends upon Him to what degree we

succeed? This knowledge is invigorating and of tremendous importance in terms of worthy walk. This helps us to avoid indulging in too much introspection or “navel-gazing.” Let us *look up*, for our deliverance is drawing near!

May these twelve points help us to cope victoriously with the “painful” awareness of not always being able to perfectly walk worthily, to banish worrying, and to bask in the peace of God. These points, of course, are not given as an excuse for our imperfections. On the contrary, we hope that a proper reading of these may be of great help in becoming more involved in pursuing the goal of walking worthily, in the spirit of contentment and true rejoicing in full appreciation of the perfection we have in Christ Jesus our Saviour and Lord.

Peter Feddema

OCTOBER CONFERENCES

The Autumn Fellowship in Baldwin, Michigan is scheduled this year for October 4-6 at the Grace and Truth Chapel. Andrew Maclarty (editor of *Grace and Truth* magazine) from Nottingham, England, is planning to attend, as well as to bring messages from God's Word. Other speakers planning to attend include Phil Scranton, Jeff Priddy and Dean Hough. Meetings begin at 9:30 Friday morning and conclude about noon on Sunday. For further information contact Dean Hough (daytime phone: 810-798-8131).

Brother Maclarty will also be speaking at the monthly meeting in Waterloo, Ontario on October 12. Harry Watts of Kitchener, Ontario, can supply further information concerning this time of fellowship (phone: 519-745-3154).

REPORTS

Pastor Rick Farwell from Wagener, South Carolina, and Jeff Priddy from Greenwich, Ohio, brought messages of grace and expectation during a weekend conference in Waterloo, Ontario, May 10-12. Four weeks later, Brother Priddy hosted a similar series of meetings in Willard, Ohio. There was good attendance on both occasions with gratifying interest in the evangel given to Paul.

Studies in Galatians

THE EVANGEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION

(Galatians 2:6-14)

IN Galatians 2:3, Paul refers to the time when “not even Titus, who is with me, being a Greek, is *compelled* to be circumcised.” This was during the period of Paul's second visit to the holy city, after the lapse of fourteen years, when he again went up to Jerusalem together with Barnabas, taking Titus along with him (2:1). Yet while not even Titus, who was with Paul, being a Greek, was *compelled* to be circumcised, Paul adds that nonetheless, “it was because of the false brethren who were smuggled in, who came in by the way to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they shall be enslaving us—”(2:4). That is—and the sense is so evident that Paul breaks off his words without actually expressing his thought—it was because of the claims (*cp* Acts 15:1,2,5) of certain “false brethren” that Titus *was* then *pressed* by some to be circumcised, even though even these could not well *compel* him to undergo the rite, contrary to the counsel of the pillars of the Jerusalem ecclesia.

Now from those reputed to be somewhat—what kind they once were is of no consequence to me (God is not taking up the human aspect)—for to me those of repute submitted nothing. But, on the contrary, perceiving that I have been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision (for He Who operates in Peter for the apostleship of the Circumcision operates in me also for the nations), and, knowing the grace which is being given to me, James and Cephas and John, who are supposed to be pillars, give to me and Barnabas the

right hand of fellowship, that we, indeed, are to be for the nations, yet they for the Circumcision—only that we may be remembering the poor, which same thing I endeavor also to do. (2:6-10)

In speaking of the twelve as “those reputed to be somewhat,” Paul should not be understood as disparaging them. Paul does not refer to any exalted claims which the twelve made for themselves, but to those advanced in favor of the twelve by the circumcisionists, in the interests of their own legalistic devisings.

Those who were apostles before Paul “submitted nothing” to him. The twelve acknowledged the message and ministry of Paul as sufficient unto itself. Paul's evangel needed *no addition*—and received none—from the twelve. But, on the contrary, since God was *operating* in Paul for the apostleship of the nations, as well as in Peter for that of the Circumcision, the twelve *perceived* that Paul had been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision. Hence, James, Cephas, and John “knew” the grace which was being given to Paul. As a result, they gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, acknowledging that Paul and Barnabas were to be for the nations, yet they themselves for the Circumcision. The only word they wished to add was a request that Paul and his fellow workers may be remembering the poor among the Jews, which same thing, as Paul assures us, he endeavored also to do.

Considered in itself, it is possible to understand the phrase “the evangel of the Uncircumcision” as a metonymy for “the evangelization of the Uncircumcision.” But it is not translation but interpretation to render this phrase, as in most modern Bibles, “the gospel *to* the Uncircumcision.” Such a rendering supports the popular claim that in all respects Paul's gospel is the same as that of the twelve. It gives credence as well to the related common assertion

that by the words “the gospel of Christ,” we are to understand a *singular* message of good news which, in all particulars, applies to all who are in Christ.

Both “Uncircumcision” and “Circumcision” are in the genitive case. As will be explained later in this article, the sign of the genitive in English is OF- not TO-. Ideally, objective translation requires the former and precludes the latter. There may be a few cases where, due to the idiosyncracies of English, good diction may be strained if the genitive should be represented by OF. Nearly always, however, and certainly in this case at hand, it makes perfectly good English to say “the evangel of the Uncircumcision,” as much so as to say, “the epistles of the apostle Paul.” They are not the epistles *to* the apostle Paul, but the apostle Paul's epistles. Similarly, Paul does not speak of the evangel *to* the Uncircumcision, but of the Uncircumcision's evangel.

No one claims that the phrase “the apostleship *of* the Circumcision” (2:8), ought to be translated “the apostleship *to* the Circumcision.” Further, it should be noted that by the words which follow in verse 9, “we, indeed, are to be *for* [lit., “into”] the nations, yet they *for* [i.e., “into”] the Circumcision,” any general thought of evangelization directed, respectively, *to* both the nations and the Circumcision is thereby adequately expressed. Hence it becomes all the more untenable to render verse 7 as “the evangel *to* the Uncircumcision.”

We are plainly told that the One Who operates in Peter for the apostleship *of* the Circumcision, is the One Who operates in Paul also for (the apostleship of) the nations. And, the word *to* us also is, that *Paul* has been entrusted with the *evangel of* the Uncircumcision, according as *Peter* (with the evangel) *of* the Circumcision. Let us accept the Scripture for what it says, while adjusting our faith accordingly.

Paul speaks explicitly of “the evangel *which* I am heralding among the nations” (2:2); “the evangel *which* is being

brought by me” (1:11); *which* he neither accepted from man nor was taught by man, that instead came to him “through a revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:12). The apostle himself will inform us as to its particulars. If we *believe* and *understand* both the revelations of Paul’s evangel, according to Christ Himself, as well as the teachings of the twelve according as the Lord instructed them, we will soon know whether Paul’s evangel “of the Uncircumcision” is a fresh revelation, distinct in various respects from the teaching of the twelve, or is, however expressed, essentially merely a restatement of their teaching.

It is not that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is the exclusive province of those of the nations; nor is it that the evangel of the Circumcision debars all but those who are Israelites by nature. It is rather that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is the evangel which is primarily for those of the nations, as brought to the nations through the ministry of the apostle Paul, who is the apostle of the nations (Rom.11:13; *cp* 1 Tim.2:7; 2 Tim.1:11; Eph.3:8).

Certain Israelites (such as Paul himself) are also called and blessed according to that evangel which, characteristically, is the evangel of the *Uncircumcision*. Similarly, certain non-Israelites were themselves called and blessed according to that evangel which, characteristically, is the evangel of the *Circumcision*.

In the former case, any such descendants of Jacob lose their standing as Israelites and forfeit the advantages of the law—while concomitantly gaining the even greater benefits of the evangel of the *Uncircumcision*. If they are faithful, like Paul, they gladly forfeit all such benefits of flesh, while deeming them mere refuse (*cf* Phil.3:4-8).

In the latter case, like those of old who sojourned in Israel, any such non-Israelite believers who were nonetheless called and blessed according to the evangel of the *Circumcision*, were required to heed the law of Yahweh, which

attended that evangel. Any such ones must become proselytes (*cf* Acts 2:10; 6:5; 13:43); that is, they must “come toward” Israel and observe the “one law,” which applied not only to the native-born, but to the naturalized citizen as well (Ex.12:49). Initially, such ones had to undergo the rite of circumcision; subsequently, they would make a pass-over to Yahweh. They would then be deemed “natives of the land [of Israel]” (Ex.12:48,49). As naturalized Israelites, they would also be required to keep from violating the sabbaths, as well as to keep their hand from any evil, according to the law of Moses. Only thus could they hold fast to Yahweh’s covenant (Isa.56:1-7; *cp* Acts 15:21) and be *worthy* of the resurrection of the *just* (*cf* Luke 14:14; 20:35; *cp* Matt.5:17-20; 7:21-23).

Thus it is fitting for Paul to declare that God will be justifying the *Circumcision* “*out of faith*” and the *Uncircumcision* “*through the faith*” (Rom.3:30). In each case, the faith which justifies is “Jesus Christ’s faith” (Rom.3:22); “the faith of Jesus” (Rom.3:26). As in Romans 11:36, where it is revealed that all is not only *out of* God, but *through* God as well, here too in Romans 3:30, it is certainly likewise true that, under God, both the *Circumcision* and the *Uncircumcision* owe not only the origin but the agency of their justification as well to the faith of Christ.

Yet in the case of the *Circumcision* believers, who must center much of their attention upon their own observance of the law, it is not so obvious that, even so, their justification is solely out of Jesus Christ’s faith. After all, this truth, as such, is not even a part of the evangel of the *Circumcision*, even though it is certainly true concerning them, even as Paul declares.

However, in the case of the believers of the *Uncircumcision*, who are not under law at all (Rom.6:14), for whom Grace reigns even where sin increases (Rom.5:20,21), whose very evangel *brings to the forefront* the fact that

their justification is not only out of (the faith of) Christ, but is *through* (the faith of) Christ as well, it becomes fitting for Paul to emphasize that God will be justifying them “*through the faith [of Christ].*”

FEAR AND HYPOCRISY

Now when Cephas came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, for he was self-censured. For, before the coming of some from James, he ate together with those of the nations. Yet when they came, he shrank back, and severed himself, fearing those of the Circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also play the hypocrite with him, so that Barnabas also was led away with their hypocrisy. (2:11-13)

Cephas was “self-censured” concerning his hypocrisy; he knew he was wrong and experienced guilt. Before the coming of “some from James,” he had eaten together with those of the nations. “Yet when they came, he shrank back, and severed himself, *fearing* those of the Circumcision.” Then the rest of the Jews joined in, and they too played the hypocrite, together with him. They were all aware that even though the believers of the Uncircumcision did not observe the law, this was no reason to decline their fellowship, much less to sever themselves from them. It was those who came “from James” who were in the wrong, not Paul or the believers of the Uncircumcision. In supposing that those of the Uncircumcision must be circumcised and keep the law if they would be saved (*cf* Acts 15:1,2,5), or at this juncture, at least in imposing their own opinions as to practical holiness and perfection upon others, these unnamed men behaved most improperly. Yet to have such a profound influence not only upon Cephas but upon the rest of the Jews and even Barnabas besides, they must have been highly esteemed men of renown. Yet even so, they were in fact but self-appointed authoritarians engaging in shameful (albeit highly effective) fear tactics.

But when I perceived that they are not correct in their attitude toward the truth of the evangel, I said to Cephas in front of all, “If you, being inherently a Jew, are living as the nations, and not as the Jews, how are you compelling the nations to be judaizing?” (2:14).

It was not that they were wholly ignorant of the evangel heralded by Paul, but that they were incorrect in their *attitude* concerning it. They failed to give it sufficient honor and recognition. Thus under the duress of circumstance, their remarkable fear of these Circumcision authoritarians, became the decisive influence in determining their behavior.

Cephas was “inherently” (i.e., originally, by right) a Jew; it was not that he had become a naturalized citizen, but that he was a Jew “by nature” (*cp* 2:15). Even so, in acknowledgement of Paul’s evangel, Cephas properly *had been* living “as [those of the] nations” live, and “not as Jews,” who commonly had little or no association with non-Jews. This is simply to say that in respect of free intercourse with those of the nations, Cephas, hitherto, had behaved as if he himself were one of the nations. Yet when some formidable ones from James came, due to his fear of these men of the Circumcision, he shrank back and even went so far as to sever himself from those of the nations.

How is it, then, Paul asks, that *you*, Cephas, are *compelling* the nations to be judaizing? It was by no means Peter’s *teaching*, in word, that judaizing was compulsory for those of the nations; in fact, earlier, he had spoken against any such claim (*cf* Acts 15:7-11). Even though Cephas did not verbally affirm that it was compulsory for the nations to be judaizing, nevertheless, by his actions, he *effectually* did this very thing. That is, in light of Cephas’ own behavior, the non-Jewish believers might well conclude that the only way for them to be accepted as faithful at least by their Jewish fellow believers if not by God Himself as well, would be by their taking up with Judaism. How inconsis-

tent it was of Cephas to behave as he did, in light of the strong, negative influence that this would bring to bear upon the believers of the nations.

THROUGH FAITH *OF* CHRIST,
OR FAITH *IN* CHRIST?

In the next article in this series, we intend to consider Galatians 2:16, which is centered in the revelation that “we may be justified through the *faith of Christ* and not by works of law.” But in preparation for that study, we first need to consider the translation itself, “faith *of* Christ.” This becomes a special need since most modern translations, even as they render “the evangel *of* the Uncircumcision” (2:7) as “the gospel *to* the uncircumcised” (e.g., the NASB), translate “faith of Christ” similarly, as “faith *in* Christ.”

This question as to the sense of the phrase, “the faith *x* Christ,” is by no means solely a question of grammar; yet it is indeed a question in which grammatical issues are an important consideration. Grammatically, the question as to what is to be understood by *pistis Iesou Christou* (i.e., “faith *x* Jesus Christ”), is a question of the usage of the *genitive* case. Grammatical *case* is the syntactical relationship of a noun, pronoun, or adjective to other words in a sentence, generally indicated by declensional endings in inflected languages (such as Greek), or by prepositions and word order in non-inflected languages (such as English).

The Greek genitive case includes the English possessive case. The genitive’s presence is indicated in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT’s sublinear by *OF-* (when no connective is present; e.g., “son *of* David,” Matt.1:20). *OF* is intended as a neutral means by which to indicate the genitive (that is, to indicate that, in some respect, “this is *of* that”).

Though the Concordant Version sometimes renders the genitive as an adjective (e.g., “His messengers *OF-POWER*” as “**His powerful messengers**,” 2 Thess.1:7), otherwise,

the CV nearly always represents the genitive case by the English “*of*.”¹

The genitive case is the case of genus or kind. It is the *specifying* case; the case of appurtenance. The function of the genitive is largely adjectival (e.g., “the day of preparation,” was the preparation day; Luke 23:54).² Indeed, the Concordant Version renders “[after] the exile *OF-BABYLON*,” as “[after] **the Babylonian exile**” (Matt.1:12). Similarly, “the blasphemy of the spirit” (Matt.12:31), in the Greek syntax, is “**THE . . . OF THE** spirit blasphemy.”

The usual claim, however, is that the genitive “*OF-Christ* faith” is nonetheless translated true to sense as “faith *in* Christ,” since, we are told, this phrase is an “objective genitive.” It is said that as the phrase “faith of God” in Mark 11:22³ concerns man’s faith God-ward, the Pauline phrase “faith of Christ” concerns man’s faith Christ-ward.

The answer to this, of course, is that it does not follow that if, in the nature of the case, “faith of God” in the preceding text involves man’s faith God-ward, “faith of Christ,”

1. An exception is the genitive “faith *OF-TRUTH*” in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, which the 1976 edition renders “**faith** in the **truth**.” Perhaps the idiom is along the lines of the thought that the Thessalonians’ faith partook of the nature of truth. Thus it was “of-truth faith.” Truth indeed fosters confidence in itself. Like ourselves, the Thessalonians found faith growing in them as they received truth; hence, “faith *OF-TRUTH*.”

2. *cp* A. T. Robertson, A GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH, p.493; Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1934.

3. “And answering, Jesus is saying to them, ‘if you have *faith of God*, verily, I am saying to you that whosoever may be saying to this mountain, ‘Be picked up and cast into the sea,’ and may not be doubting in his heart, but should be believing that what he is speaking is occurring, it shall be his, whatsoever he may be saying.’ It should be noted that *genuine* “*OF-God* faith” (as opposed to mere fleshly credulity in its name), necessarily incorporates the ablative sense of faith which is *from* God, according as He has spoken. Only then, in turn, does it become faith that is also God-ward.

as Paul uses this expression, refers to man's faith Christward. By such faulty logic as this, nearly anything can be "proved." Yet beyond such fallacious arguments, there is little to commend the claim that "faith of Christ" means *man's faith in Christ*.

In fact, the main reason for the acceptance of this interpretation (which is made a part of the translation itself in most modern Bibles) is the age-old tradition that affirms that one is saved by his own believing. Such a notion is then read into the text. In turn, it is further claimed that through such very passages, Paul himself sets forth the self-same teaching. Thus, through such circular reasoning, the rendering "faith *in Christ*" is justified by its advocates.

All that the Greek says is: OF-Christ faith; that is, faith that, in some respect, has reference, or relates to Christ. The translation "faith *in Christ*," then, is not really a translation at all, but an interpretation. And, as popularly understood, it is certainly a mistaken interpretation as well.

Even on grammatical grounds the case here for an "objective" genitive (i.e., for a faith that is directed Christward) is very weak. Yet if one insists on such an interpretation, it would then become necessary to refer this "faith *in Christ*" to *God*, not to man, in order for this expression to accord with the evangel itself, the revelation that justification is gratuitous and in grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus*.

In the Pauline epistles, apart from the disputed cases in which the genitive is "Christ" or its equivalent, in every case (approximately twenty-four instances) in which "faith" is followed by a proper noun or pronoun in the genitive case, the genitive is unmistakably subjective. Twenty instances refer to the faith of believers; one to the faith of anyone who believes; two to the faith of Abraham; and one to the faithfulness of God.

When Paul wishes to speak of the believer's faith in (i.e.,

"into") Christ, he does so not by means of a genitive noun apart from a preposition, but by means of an accusative (i.e., objective) noun together with an accusative preposition: "... rejoicing and observing your order and the stability of your faith *in* (i.e., "into") Christ" (Col.2:5).

A parallel expression to the *faith* of Christ, is that of the *grace* of Christ: "*grace* which is *of* the One Man, *Jesus Christ*" (Rom.5:15). It would never occur to anyone to translate this text as "grace *in Christ*," much less to claim that it speaks of the *believer's* grace! Yet the only real difference between the genitive "of Christ" here and those which we have considered elsewhere, is that here the phrase is appended as a modifier of grace, while in the others (as in Galatians 2:20) the same phrase functions as a modifier of faith.

Similarly, just as Romans 3:3 speaks of "the faith(fulness) of God," Romans 3:22, 26 speaks of the "faith(fulness) of Jesus Christ," the "faith(fulness) of Jesus." Further, the phrase "the faith of Abraham" in Romans 4:16 forms a precise formal parallel to the phrase "the faith of Jesus" in Romans 3:26. Thus, as these parallels between the faith of Abraham and the faith of Christ make clear, "the faith of Christ" refers to His faithful obedience unto death; our Lord's trust in God concerning the cross.

The very notion that those texts which say "faith of Christ" nonetheless have in view faith *in Christ*—*namely the believer's own faith in Christ*—is but the stepchild of the long-standing tradition that affirms that "justification *by faith*" means man's justification not by his performing works of law, but by his acceptance of Christ and assenting to faith in Him. The idea is that man saves himself, or if it is preferred, qualifies for God to save him, not by a former method, that of performing righteous deeds, but by a new method, that of acquiescing in faith.

Traditional theology is not merely saying that salvation comes upon believing in Christ, and not apart from or

prior to. What it is also saying (even if more implicitly than explicitly) is that salvation is of the nature of an exchange, a reward, requital, or compensation. When preachers say that salvation is “by faith [i.e., man’s faith],” they are using “by” in a transactional sense, according to the meeting of a requirement (as in, “by doing your work, you are entitled to your wages”).

The phrase faith OF-Christ, however, is parallel to and must agree with the essence of the evangel itself, the revelation that we are “being justified gratuitously in [God’s] grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus*” (Rom.3:24). The deliverance is not said to be through *our faith in Christ Jesus*, but through Christ Jesus Himself. Similarly, it is not revealed that we were conciliated to God through *our faith in* the death of His Son, but that we were conciliated to God *through the death of* His Son (Rom.5:10). Further, it will not do to attempt to avoid this truth by artfully claiming that while this is so, it is only so on the “condition” (i.e., based upon a requirement) that we accept and believe on Christ. Any such claim is spurious; for we are not justified on a “conditional” basis that we meet some sort of requirement. Instead, we are justified apart from law, on a gratuitous and gracious basis, which precludes any and all requirements.

Therefore, all passages which declaim “the faith of Jesus Christ,” out of which we are justified, must be understood to be referring to a faith which is His own: Christ’s own perfect faith—not man’s faulty faith in Him.

Of course we ourselves can only *speak* of our justification by means of our own faith, since it is by faith that we apprehend what God has achieved through the work of the cross, even as what He will yet achieve in the eons ahead, when His promises are fulfilled. Still, the saint’s own faith only gains for him a recognition of the justification which God has already established for him—through the faith of Christ (*cf* Rom.4:25,5:1; 5:9).

J.R.C.