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**JANUARY, 2001**

**Volume XCII**

**Number 1**



UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, volume 92, number 1, January, 2001, Portable Document Format (PDF) Edition, for use with Acrobat® Reader. Copyright © Concordant Publishing Concern, 15570 Knochaven Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91387, U.S.A. This publication may be reproduced for personal use (all other rights reserved by copyright holder).

# Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE  
FOR GOD AND HIS  
WORD

VOLUME XCII

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## *New Year's Soliloquy*

The sacrifice You made for me  
Has caused a change within;  
You've filled my heart with love and peace,  
Where once was hate and sin.  
I've seen the love that filled Your heart  
On that accursed tree  
To justify the human race  
And thus set all men free.  
You gave me faith to see the gift  
Of life You purchased there,  
And now I have a blessed hope,  
Where once there was despair.  
Now as I walk my daily life,  
I live it by Your grace,  
For I have seen the love that flows,  
And the smile upon Your face.  
And when the ones who injure me  
Would scoff upon Your name,  
I'll gladly suffer there with You,  
To shed abroad Your fame—  
To make men see how great You are  
And that You love them so,  
You'll reconcile them all to God,  
And this, one day, they'll know.  
I have no fear when I should fail—  
It's in God's grace I stand.  
I've glimpsed the wondrous future that  
For them in grace is planned.  
I'm glad that though great sin abounds  
(And sin must needs increase),  
You've made of me an instrument  
Of Your eternal peace.

Sheila Osgood

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2001  
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-TWO

## EDITORIAL

NO DOUBT, when the first issue of *Unsearchable Riches* was prepared more than 92 years ago, the editors, Vladimir Gelesnoff and A. E. Knoch, had no thought of it still being published in 2001. The consoling words of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 centered their expectation on Christ and not on distant prospects for this effort they had undertaken. Nevertheless, they did have a continuing goal in mind as outlined in the editorial for the first issue, dated October, 1909: "The aim we have in view is *recovery* of truth. Much of it was lost immediately after Paul's departure from this earthly scene. Some has been recovered, but a great deal still remains buried beneath the rubbish of decayed theology. Current teaching, especially on the subject of Paul's ministries, needs readjustment."

This task remains far from completion. But much truth that has been preserved as well as that which has been recovered needs repeating and, sometimes, restating in more scriptural terminology. We try to keep this in mind as we prepare the magazine.

Of course, since we have the Scriptures in translations from Hebrew and Greek (and Aramaic for some small portions), and the manuscripts on which our translations are based are copies of copies many times over, the task of "recovery of truth" is no small one. There are many opportunities for discouragement. Yet the endeavor, both that relating to translation and that relating to listening to, considering and sharing the Word, is exciting and rewarding.

Perhaps the reader will feel some of my own excitement in the investigations leading to the CV of 1 Samuel 10:1 and 10:27 described in the article beginning on page

39. Many years ago, Brother Knoch had directed that the CV of 10:1 should include the passage about Saul steering and saving Israel, as preserved in the Septuagint translation. Now in seeing how important this prophecy was as God's *declaration*, not challenge, but His *promise*, to Saul concerning Saul's kingship, I have a greater appreciation of the value of this insertion as well as conviction of its genuineness.

Brother Knoch, however, was not aware of the addition at the end of the chapter supplied by a small fragment of I Samuel found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. A few years ago, Brother Herman Rocke and I procured some studies concerning this fragment, published by scholars working with the Dead Sea Scrolls, and we discussed its possible value for the CVOT. The result was that we decided, just a few months before Brother Rocke died, that we should include a translation of this paragraph about the Ammonite king, Nahash, in a footnote. We felt there was good support for its genuineness.

Then, looking again at the evidence and relating the passage to the whole context of chapters 10 and 11, and the issue of Yahweh's great work of salvation of Israel from the enemy, Nahash, led me within this past year to the decision to put the passage in the CV text itself. I have tried to bring out the value of its contribution to this portion of God's Word in my article.

I mention all this here, not to suggest we always make the right decision on translation or scriptural studies, but to indicate something of our struggles in the "recovery of truth" (as well as the "restating of truth") and certain of our standards in reaching our decisions. It is our conviction that truth glorifies God, and in doing so is beneficial to our lives of faith. That is the bottom line.

May God give us all grace and peace in believing.

D.H.H.

## THE SPIRIT IN GENERATION

GENERATION, which seems to be confined to humanity and the creatures subject to it on the earth, is, in some respects, even more wonderful than creation. The spirit, or breath of life (literally, breath of *lives*) breathed into Adam, is still alive in his posterity. His body, and those of billions of his descendants, lie moldering in the grave, or have become entirely one with the soil. Indeed, its elements may have formed part of many other men, or even of animals or plants, since its death. But, even though Adam's spirit has returned to God Who gave it, its life and power has been transmitted to all the race, so that there is an unbroken life line from the first human to all who are alive today. His body never could have provided the material for all his progeny, but his *spirit* was the spark which lit the torch of life in every human ever since.

Spirit must be distinguished from breath. In Greek they come from the same stem. *Pnoe* means *breath*. With *ma* added to it, *pneuma*, we have breath-effect, *spirit*. So that spirit is the effect of breath in humanity. When breathing stops, the spirit leaves. The spirit gives life to all that lives. It is the vital, essential part of every plant and animal. The body may change from moment to moment, but this does not affect its so-called "identity." Plants may be pruned, animals shorn, or these may even lose a large part of their frame; so long as the spirit remains they retain enough to carry on the vital functions, and their identity remains. By generation they may even pass on a part of their spirit and body to form a new and distinct life, but they still remain themselves.

The unbeliever today has a spirit, which he received from God through Adam, and which will return to its Giver (Ecc.12:7). But the believer has more than that. Besides possessing the spirit that vitalized his body even in unbelief, he is the *home* of God's holy spirit, which gives *divine life* to all the saints, and which *anoints* them for service.

We have already marvelled at the myriads of seeds which spring from one life germ created by the spirit of God. In living souls this marvel is multiplied many many times, for the spirit is the force giving a life-long *experience* to each one, and each act is due only to the spirit's power and direction. An infant's wail may seem immaterial to us, but the fate of Israel hinged on the lament of the little laddie Moses, and this people's whole history was influenced by his cries. Our Lord Himself assured His disciples that not one sparrow is forgotten in God's sight. Yea, the hairs of our head are all numbered (Luke 12:6,7).

Let us not despise seemingly insignificant events. They may lead to tremendous sequels. It is said that a pig started the war of 1812, between England and the United States. Two friendly neighbors of the same political party lived on adjoining lots. One had a garden. The other bought himself a pig. The pig got into the garden, and ended their friendship, so that, when the gardener ran for Congress, he was defeated for lack of his friend's vote. When the question of war came up in the House of Representatives, it would have been defeated had he been there. So it seems that the pig was the deciding factor in a war which cost much bloodshed and even the destruction of the capital itself. Yet it was not even the pig, but only one of its acts that turned the tide of a nation's history.

Man was formed of the *soil*, not dust, as the AV has it. Nothing can *grow* in the dust (*cf* Job 8:19). The human frame is not dry as dust, but very moist indeed. Soil is that part of the earth or the ground in which plants can

grow. It is that portion of the surface which has been oxidized by the sun's rays and the weather, so that the roots of plants can absorb its elements. Here we see repeated the operation of God's spirit as in the beginning of the restoration of the earth. Sunlight acts upon the ground and gives it life-giving force from which plants are sustained. Then the animals and man share this vital force when they eat the plants. Of such *vitalized ground* was the first human formed. Indeed, *adm* [Adam] was taken from *adme* [ground].

It is interesting to note, in this connection, that one of the five Hebrew words the AV translates *world*, means *disintegrate* (rendered "habitation" in the CV, as in 1 Sam.2:8) which is quite the opposite in sense from *kosmos*, the one that is rendered *world* in the Greek Scriptures. Different derivatives of the same stem *bl* are *decay*, *disgrace*, *carcass*, *deluge*, *Babel*, and *Bul* (a month, about our October, when the vegetation disintegrates). Ever since the disruption, the earth has been eroding and decomposing. We do not realize that this would finally wash all the dry land into the sea, and we would have none left to live on. Yet the story is repeated for us every year by the dissolution of much of the plant life, and we are given a preview of the new creation when Spring revives all the dormant flora of the earth.

God has named the present earth a "disintegrating" habitation since the disruption, and the deluge was given a name from the same stem *m-bul*, for it greatly accelerated this process. The previous earth was *not* like this, neither will the future new one be. In them all was and will be permanent. The present one is in accord with the life that lives upon it. It is in harmony with decaying humanity. It lacks spirit power to sustain a life without gradual disintegration and death. How few of the learned scholars who explore and study the surface of the earth see the sense

of it all, or grasp the great truth that *the insufficiency of God's spirit* leads inevitably to decay and dissolution.

As with the soil, so with the breath. Man cannot use all parts of the air, any more than he utilizes all of the ground. Only *vitalized* air, which has some oxygen, can be absorbed by the lungs. Much of the air is inert, dead. Only about a quarter of it is oxygen, fit to sustain life in animals. Some of it is combined with carbon to fit it for plant life. The same vital element, oxygen, which makes the *soil* life-sustaining, is found in much larger quantities in the *air*. We may trace all this back to the very beginning, when the spirit of God's vibrations produced light, for it is sunlight which vitalizes both the soil and the air, and this comes from the divine spirit.

The bodies of all living things are composed of soil. This is that part of the earth's surface which, having been oxidized by sun and air, contains the minerals of which these bodies are built. But, in a soilish body, such as mankind has at present, the soil is not permanent or stable, but is continually changing. It is constantly renewed by the ingestion of food and drink, and at the same time, broken down and eliminated by catabolism. So long as this operation is balanced after maturity, and the body gains as much as it loses, and its organs operate properly, this process of dying will not be fatal. But when its functions fail, or the body is not renewed, then the spirit leaves, and the body returns to the soil.

#### DEATH IS A LACK OF SPIRIT

The body apart from the spirit is dead (James 2:26). Even Adam, who received the breath of life direct from God (Gen.2:7), lived only so long as God's spirit remained in him. After he had transgressed and offended God, and mankind began to multiply, Yahweh Elohim said concerning it, "My spirit shall not abide in the human for the eon, in

that he too is flesh" (Gen.6:3). The AV translates, "my spirit shall not always *strive* with man." But the word *dun* does not signify "strive," but *adjudicate*. They could not very well translate this "judge," their usual rendering of this stem, for Yahweh Elohim was not judging at that time. Moreover, the Greek version renders it *reside* [*katameine*]. The change of a single letter in Hebrew makes it *abide*, which fits perfectly into the context. Hence the CV so renders it. When man sinned, God's spirit was withdrawn in some measure, and death began to disintegrate his body. At the deluge all, except a single family, perished.

#### LIVING SOUL

Few renderings in the AV are more deplorable than the substitution of *creature* for *soul* in the first chapter of Genesis. The matter is made worse, rather than better, when it suddenly changes to the correct rendering in the formation of Adam. The impression is given that the animals are *not* souls, and that man *alone* has a soul. This false idea is further strengthened by reverting to *creature* in the rest of Genesis when animals are in view (2:19; 9:10,12,15,16), but using *soul* or *person* when man is mentioned. The confusion is further confounded by changing to *life* on some occasions (9:4,5,5; 19:17,19; 32:30; 44:30).

The Bible is generally supposed to be a bloody book. The implication is that the sacrifice caused untold *suffering to innocent animals*. Some shudder with horror at a religion that would give so much pain and agony to harmless, inoffensive, blameless beasts. But this is due to a misunderstanding of the function of the blood, for the fact is that the bloodiness of the Jewish ritual was largely due to the desire to make it *painless*, and *save* the animals all unnecessary suffering. The hunting law, which demanded that the blood of the prey must be poured out, is also a provision to save the animal suffering. Where there is no

blood, there is no sensation. An animal whose blood has been poured out cannot feel either pleasure or pain, and is past all suffering. The many thousands of sacrificial victims slain on Jewish altars probably suffered very little when they were killed, for the blood was immediately drained away (Lev.17:13).

The havoc which this discordant rendering has wrought may be seen in the following quotations from an encyclopedia: "SOUL: The principle of life, regarded as existing as a *separate* entity apart from the body of men and animals." [There can be no soul sensation apart from the body.] "The ancient Hebrews conceived it to be the principle of life in living creatures, and this idea persists throughout the Bible." The reason for this false conception of the soul is due to the fact that, in our Authorized Version, we read *life* where it should be *soul*, one hundred and fifty-nine times! No wonder it is defined as "the principle of *life*" in standard works of reference, even though it is *never* so in the Original.

#### SOILISH, SOULISH, AND SPIRITUAL

But for those who have a celestial allotment a great change is needed. A soulish body can breathe only near the surface of the earth. Even if we ascend a high mountain we find it hard to get sufficient air to keep active. In the high altitudes we must take our air with us or we would "black out." What good would it do if we went to "heaven" and lost all consciousness for lack of air to breathe? The celestial saints must not only be resurrected, like the Circumcision, but their bodies must be *changed*, from *soulish* and *soilish*, to *spiritual* bodies (1 Cor.15:52). These will not depend on the soil for food, or the blood for sensation, but directly on the spirit of God for life.

Although Christ was human, and like the rest of the race in most things, we must not drag Him down to our level

in the matter of *life* or *vitality*. His superiority to other humans lay in the realm of *spirit*. Others receive their spirit by generation from Adam, but He was generated directly by God's holy spirit, without any human intervention. It is called the *power* of the Most High. Although He became a Son of *humanity* from His mother's side, He is the Son of *God* on His Father's. This power continued with him through life, and not only vivified Him but enabled Him to heal the sick, and even restore life to the dead. The life He had, no man could take from Him, even if they broke His body or drained His blood. He Himself gave it up and committed it to His Father (Luke 23:46; John 19:30).

The crucifixion could not take His life. He could cry out with a loud voice just before He voluntarily let out His spirit. His body saw no decay. When He was roused, He had no blood, and His body became a spiritual body, such as ours may become when He descends and calls us to Himself. In Him we can see the operation of God's spirit at its highest, hence the clearest.

#### MAN'S RULE IN GENERATION

The *character* of human rule, as connected with *generation*, is very different from the sway over the lower creatures in *creation*. Generation led to the rule of the husband over the wife, although she was not beneath him, but his complement. It also involved the rule of the parent over the child, due to its immaturity, not its rank. Each son, in his turn, inherits the place of his father. This rule is based on close relationship, common interests, and natural affection, and foreshadows the rule of God, as Father, in the consummation.

This rule in marriage and family life is not eternal, but *limited in time* to the eons. That is why it is associated with Yahweh, the One Who is and was and is coming. It is not a permanent institution, or an end in itself. It is intended to

teach us our heart relationship to God. It is connected with our souls, our feelings, rather than our wills or wisdom.

A human infant is said to be the most helpless of all living things. Without care by parents or others, it would soon perish. It must be nurtured for many a long day before it is mature and able to fend for itself. Eventually all mankind will learn the lesson that this teaches, for we are just as helpless, in relation to God, as babes are in reference to their parents. This is doubtless the object in generation. Not only is it meant to teach us our own helplessness, but also to put us in the place of God toward our families and to demonstrate to us how God cares and provides for and loves His spiritual children. Our affection is drawn out unselfishly by our offspring. So is the love of God for us.

The rule of man over the living souls below him seems to be permanent, but the rule of the father of a family is continually shifting, from generation to generation. The child of today is the father of tomorrow. Normally, each man goes through all the experiences of childhood, maturity and parenthood, in order to fit him for a realization of God's relations to the race. He first sees God's provision, care, and love in his parents, and then experiences it himself with his own offspring. But this passes on from one generation to the next, and is probably unknown in the resurrection. At the consummation God Himself becomes the All-Father, and all other rule is superfluous. This will be the fair fruitage of generation when all will find their peace in loving obedience and communion with God as their Father.

A. E. Knoch

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Our sister in the Lord, **Margaret Mann**, age 90, passed away on December 4, 2000. Margaret and her husband Bromley (who died some years ago) were our faithful friends in Christ for well over fifty years. They hosted Bible classes at their home in North Denver on a consistent basis. These studies always proclaimed the great truth of universal reconciliation as well as other precious gems of wisdom and truth.

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*Questions and Answers*

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## INSIGHT AND DISCERNMENT

### Question:

Can you explain 1 Corinthians 4:7 to me? In the Concordant Version it reads, "For who is making you to discriminate? Now what have you which you did not obtain? Now if you obtained it also, why are you boasting as though not obtaining?" Yet in the Authorized Version this verse is translated, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" The AV rendering here is easier to understand; but it seems to convey somewhat a different thought than the CV.

Also, I am troubled by the fact that so many different and conflicting doctrines are held among believers; this is so to quite an extent, even among those who are acquainted with your ministry. I realize that each one needs to think and decide for himself; and, I realize too that, by the grace of God, some are more able and enlightened than others. Still, I do not like controversy, even as its usual consequence, that of strained personal relations if not outright estrangement between believers.

### Answer:

A FRIEND recently mentioned to me that perhaps not a single disputation which he had ever had over the years, between himself and other believers, had ever been fruitful. He spoke of such contentions instead, as being an object lesson in, "How to lose friends together with any ability to influence people." I replied by saying that I expect that all

challenges even as contentious disputes among believers are condemned by Scripture.

Perhaps we have all failed (I certainly have) in this matter, even as in so many other aspects of our walk. Yet may we be learning from our mistakes, becoming transformed by the renewing of our mind, for us to be testing what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect (Rom. 12:2).

If we suppose others to be mistaken, we should still consider them “in the faith” (since they are believers) even if “infirm in the faith.” The sense of Romans 14:1 seems to be that we are freely to take those who are simply “infirm in the faith” (ones who are not mean or troublesome) to ourselves; yet we are to do so in a way that does not result in “discriminations [ones which are the fruit] of reasonings.”

Such discriminations “of reasonings” are those discriminations which follow from the misuse of the ratiocinative (i.e., reasoning) process. It is not that Paul is being critical of good logic (which we can hardly do without), but of bad “reasonings,” and especially of the usual consequences associated with them. “Discriminations” are differences; connotatively (and that is the sense here), those who make such “discriminations” do not merely note such differences of opinion as may exist, but become “puffed up” concerning the correctness of their own views, the result being that “one [is] over the one, against the other” (1 Cor. 4:6). Such is not the result of merely judging one’s own findings correct, but of being proud and unloving concerning them.

To correct this problem, Paul declares, as rendered in the Concordant Version, “For who is making you to discriminate? Now what have you which you did not obtain? Now if you obtained it also, why are you boasting as though not obtaining?” (1 Cor. 4:7). Yet most versions translate along the lines of the New King James Version, which is, “For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?”

Paul’s main point, however, comes through in both these renderings. Yet in the first sentence here, in the CV, in the words, “who is making you to discriminate?” we may wonder if the sense is, “Who is teaching you to make such discriminations? It must be someone among yourselves, for neither Apollos nor myself have encouraged any such behavior” (*cf* v.6).

Or perhaps we might take Paul to be saying the following: “Who is [or, ‘Are there any who are’] discriminating *you* [i.e., thus treating you improperly]”? Since there are indeed those who thus discriminate against us, the rhetorical implication would then seem to be, Since you do not like it when others treat you in such a way, do not treat anyone else in such a (unjustly discriminatory) way yourself (*cp* Matt. 7:12).

It seems to me that Paul’s thought is along these lines. But even if so, it is impossible to bring out such an idea simply in translation alone.

Even if it is not so easy to grasp, it appears that the Concordant Version of 1 Corinthians 4:7a is an accurate rendering. Still, however, grasping the true sense here is difficult. Indeed, for most readers, our rendering of this text no doubt tends to confuse more than clarify the overall passage. This would seem to be so, even though the remainder of the verse is quite clear as it stands, as rendered in the CV.

Yet according to the context, and especially in consideration of the rhetorical flow of the three questions which Paul herein asks, it might seem “truer to the truth” to render the first of these questions as, “Who is making you to differ?”

Such a rendering, however, would be contrary to the concordant method; and, it would fail to convey what is actually being said. The Greek is THROUGH-JUDGING (*diakrinei*). This word does not mean “to [be made to] dif-

fer,” (i.e., so that, as a result, one person is different than another). Therefore, we cannot render it by such an English expression. We say this, however, being zealous ourselves for the *sentiment*, “Who maketh thee to differ from another?” (AV) to which the only answer is: God alone. It is evident, on other grounds, that this is a gloriously true thought; it would not, however, seem to be an accurate translation of this text. Since all is out of, through, and for God (Rom. 11:36), we may be certain that He alone “makes us to differ,” that is, to be different than others, wherever we may be worthy. Even so, let us not merely presume that such is therefore necessarily the revelation of 1 Corinthians 4:7a.

*Diakrinō* speaks of the process of judging, with a view toward adjudication, or, in an adjudicatory sense, with a view toward “discrimination.” (It is rendered “doubt” in instances where, in the process of adjudication, one is uncertain how to decide.) As a consequence of judging, or decision, one certainly will distinguish one thing from another, or one person from another. Differences do exist. Yet while we need to recognize them, we must not, in a connotative sense, *unjustly* discriminate among ourselves because of them.

It is not that we may not note whatever distinctions there may be between the faith of one believer and another, but that we must not act unjustly in consideration of those differences. The primary injustices which we must avoid are self-pride and an unloving spirit. If we are “puffed up” (i.e., proud) or are boasting, we will taint the very truth for which we would stand. It will not do merely to attempt to keep such prideful attitudes within, for that is impossible, and will only make us hypocrites as well. Instead, we are to get rid of such attitudes; we are to “put them out” that they might be “taken away” (cf Eph.4:31).

For this we need a Saviour from ourselves. The good news is that Christ Jesus is our Saviour from ourselves.

As we attend to the reading, the entreaty, and the teaching (cf 1 Tim.4:13), we find it to be so that He is our Saviour too, even in the practical affairs of our daily lives. Let us be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim.2:2). Let us not seek for invigoration from the world, or from within our own selves. Let us rather “be invigorated in the Lord and in the might of *His* strength” (Eph.6:10). Paul does not entreat us to “do our part,” in some independent way that finally looks to man for the victory. Instead, he entreats us to be doing what is faithful; and, while we are so doing, to be thanking God that we are indeed so doing.



**Question:**

Does not Romans 11:19-24 show that the church is spiritual Israel, and, as well, that we can lose our salvation?

**Answer:**

No, Romans 11:19-24 does not show that the church is spiritual Israel, or that we can lose our salvation. Here is the complete text of that passage:

*You will be declaring, then, “Boughs are broken out that I may be grafted in.” Ideally! By unbelief are they broken out, yet you stand in faith. Be not haughty, but fear. For if God spares not the natural boughs, neither will He be sparing you! Perceive, then, the kindness and severity of God! On those, indeed, who are falling, severity, yet on you, God’s kindness, if you should be persisting in the kindness: else you also will be hewn out. Now they also, if they should not be persisting in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were hewn out of an olive wild by nature, and, beside nature,*

*are grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much rather shall these, who are in accord with nature, be grafted into their own olive tree!* (Rom.11:19-24).

Note that the nations (*cp* v.13) are not grafted in to Israel; they are grafted in to the “olive tree.” It is not true (as some claim) that “olive tree” is a figure of speech for Israel. Instead, “olive tree” is a figure of speech for *God’s agency of enlightenment in the world*, and, in certain eras, this service is appointed unto the nation of Israel.

It is not at all that “gentile Christians” become, in the sight of God, effectually, “Israelites” (so-called “spiritual Israelites”), much less that if they should backslide they will “lose their salvation” and be sent to Hell. It is rather that, in this era, the *nations* (the non-Israelite national groups themselves) are “grafted in,” that is, *placed into a [temporary] service* which, “by nature” (i.e., by God’s original appointment) belonged to Israel, that of being God’s agency of enlightenment in the world. Even as the time came when Israel disqualified herself for such service and so was removed therefrom, the day will come as well when the nations, in the fullness of their own unbelief, will fully disqualify themselves for such service and will likewise be removed therefrom. Subsequently, however, as Paul explains, this service will return to Israel, whose ministry it is “by nature.”

The passage is not concerned with personal salvation, but with the respective service of both Israel and the nations, each in its own era, as the divine means of enlightenment among men. Israel has already lost this privilege (though they will regain it in the future; *cp* vs.23,26). And those peoples, those of the nations, whose portion it has been during the past two thousand years to have been engaged in such service (in the figure, who have been “grafted in” to the olive tree) will lose it as well, in due time, as the conclusion of the eon approaches.

The common error is to claim that Israel is herein “identified” as the olive tree, and then to reason that therefore “the church,” in turn, is to be spiritually identified as Israel. It is true that Israel, in her own eras, *serves as* the olive tree, and that we may say that, in former and future eras, Israel will be “the olive tree.” But this is only to say that, in such instances, Israel “is” (representatively) the olive tree; that is to say, that Israel, originally, was placed into the service of being God’s agency of enlightenment in the world, which of course is true. But it does not follow from this that *wherever* we read of the “olive tree” here, we are to think “Israel.”

Paul, effectually, merely says that Israel, by nature, and in certain eras, is *put into the service of* being “God’s olive tree.” He nowhere says that Israel, timelessly and abstractly, is God’s sole means of human enlightenment, and that hence if we would be faithful to Him we must become some sort of Israelites and then take up with Israel’s law!

It is not true that Israel is *abstractly and timelessly* to be identified as the agency of light—much less that believers of the nations are somehow to be reckoned as Israelites!

The nations’ service in the “olive tree” (their service as the present agents of divine enlightenment among men) has nothing whatever to do with the question of whether any individuals among such national groups should personally observe any certain portion of the law of Moses. To suggest that it does, much less to claim that it is because of such service that such ones must keep portions of the law, is simply illogical.

Paul, primarily, is the apostle of the *nations*, and his evangel, that of the *Uncircumcision* (Gal.2:7; even though, according to God’s choice, certain ones of Israelite descent enjoy its blessings as well). According to his evangel, we are chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world, and designated beforehand for the place of a son for God

Himself (Eph.1:4,5). It is according to this evangel, that where sin increases, grace superexceeds, for life eonian (Rom.5:20,21). And, it is according to this evangel as well that God vivifies us *together* in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us *together* and seats us *together* among the celestials, in Christ, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:5-7). Consequently, then, we would imitate Paul and deem the righteousness which is of law (the righteousness which comes from heeding the law's precepts) simply as refuse, as that which, however suitable and needful in its place, we now have no need of whatever (Phil.3:6,8).



**Question:**

While not intended in a sense of personal disrespect, let me say this about the Concordant "ministry": Since you do not, in the Trinitarian sense, believe that Jesus is God, you are therefore lost and not in Christ.

Therefore you should not complain when someone such as myself states that you are not really Christians but only members of a non-Christian cult.

Does it not speak to you at all that your doctrines are contrary to the teachings of so many devout and learned scholars? Since your views in favor of various ancient heresies such as universalism, soul-sleep, and dispensationalism, are also contrary to the teachings of the historic Christian church, it is a practical certainty that you are mistaken on such lesser subjects as well.

What I would like to know at present, however, is whether you have anything available about your translation principles. It troubles me particularly that "eternity" is nowhere to be found within the Concordant Version, which includes only the renderings, born of wishful thinking, "eon" and "eonian."

**Answer:**

It is difficult to know how to reply to your letter helpfully. I accept that you mean us no personal disrespect in stating your opinions concerning our teachings, which you believe to be mistaken. However, all you have actually claimed is that since our teachings are not "orthodox" and are deemed "heretical" by those who identify themselves as members of traditional orthodoxy, it is therefore "a practical certainty" that our views on the subjects you mention are in error. Beyond this, you only add the further claim that since our teaching concerning the nature of Christ, again, is not "orthodox," we are therefore necessarily in error here, insisting that in this case the error is so egregious that it even precludes our membership in the body of Christ.

I can only assume that you simply wished to state your opinion about us directly to us, personally, and, that you feel that no further proof against us is needed beyond the fact that we do not hold to "orthodox" doctrine. Since you have not asked for my help here, I will simply accept your "non-disrespectful," nevertheless extremely negative evaluation as it stands without further comment.

You did ask, however, whether we have anything in print setting forth the Concordant translation principles. I would say at the outset that our translations "eon" and "eonian" are made in an endeavor to be faithful and objective in our work of consistently translating the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Scriptures. I would even suggest that if you should gain an understanding of our actual principles of translation, you will no longer presume or suppose that these renderings are "born of wishful thinking."

Actually, we have a great deal in print (and on the internet as well: [www.concordant.org](http://www.concordant.org)) concerning issues and principles of translation. In fact, how familiar are you with the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT? In any case,

if even a modest portion of the explanatory matter in this volume (especially within pages 613-624) together with similar sections in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT is understood, one will then possess a reasonable idea of what is comprised in Concordant translation principles. In addition to such introductory, explanatory matter, there are many articles within the writings of *Unsearchable Riches* which, incidentally, give much additional information concerning our translation principles.

In brief, our principles of translation are simply this: We seek to discover the essence (or basic significance) of scriptural terms through their usage in definitive contexts. Definitive contexts are not contexts in which a certain idea can fit, but are contexts in which a certain idea alone can fit. We take the knowledge gleaned from definitive passages and apply it to indefinite passages. After all, since indefinite passages are, at least, less than decisive, and, in many cases, are of no definitive value at all, we can hardly consult them for definitive information.

Now in any certain passage, a given word may be used in a wide variety of different ways, whether literal or figurative. While varied usage will not change a word's essence, it will indeed change the leading idea that may be in view in any certain passage. Such considerations, however, since they are matters of interpretation, not translation, should not be introduced in translation. A translator must (1) note the ideas inherent in the vocabulary terms and grammatical forms of the Original, and then, as much as possible, while seeking to preserve good diction, (2) convey and reflect those ideas in translation.

Nearly all will acknowledge that, in many passages, the Greek *aiōn* refers to a long period of time, that is, an age or eon. It is claimed by most, however, that in some places it means instead, that which is without end, that is, (for) ever.

All advanced (and indeed, most elementary) dictionar-

ies give two definitions for the English "eon": (1) a long period of time; (2) endlessness.

The Concordant translators, having found definitive scriptural evidence that *aiōn*, itself, simply signifies *duration*, translate the Greek accordingly, simply by the *anglicized transliteration*, "eon." They do so being aware both of the theological dispute concerning the meaning of this word in some passages, even as of the two diverse English definitions of "eon". What could be more sensible, fair, and non-interpretative than this? (Any hermeneutical opinions of the Concordant translators related to this matter are entirely beside the point.)

When employing solely the Greek text itself, one may, as a matter of interpretation, affirm whatever his judgment may be concerning any connotative sense perceived to attend any certain usage of *aiōn*. But, in any event, he will read, and say, *aiōn*, not some other word. One may do the same thing when reading and saying "eon" from the Concordant Version. Whether the notion of endlessness is correct or incorrect with respect to a concept which may attend any certain usage of "eon," is, in any case, a matter of interpretation, not translation. Most translators are evidently simply blind to the fact that their renderings are often not translations at all, but interpretations.

The great majority of Bible students, for the most part, merely copy scholarly opinion in order to "build their case." Such ones themselves possess hardly any real knowledge of a linguistic nature. At best, they are like the high school biology student who may do an excellent job of memorizing the many assertions of his teacher. Such a one himself, however, does not really grasp the issues involved, and so is quite at a loss to tell where it is that his teacher leaves the realm of proven science and enters the realm of speculation or even of proven error.

The rendering "eon" ought to be applauded, not crit-

icized. Nothing could be more unfair and presumptuous than the claim that the motivation for this translation, eon, was the propagation of the universalist views of the Concordant Version's translators. It would be just as "fair" to claim that the renderings "everlasting" and "eternal" by orthodox translators are the product of their desire to teach eternal punishment. Besides, the issue is not the presumed motives of any certain translators for their renderings, but the actual validity of their renderings themselves. "Eon" is the only possible non-interpretative rendering for the Hebrew *olam* and the Greek *aiōn*. Rather than "eon" being unfair, it alone is fair.

In many instances, a single term in the Original can be faithfully represented by a single, corresponding term in a translation. In many other instances, however, the idiom between languages is such that a variety of synonyms are necessary in order to reflect the sense of the Original as closely as possible in the translation. Often there is a close idiomatic "match" between words in both languages; often as well, there is not such a match.

Now few believers have the aptitude for, nor even the inclination toward the serious study of any such considerations. Indeed, whether due to prejudice or blindness, even a person of much linguistic expertise may nevertheless not have the special ability truly to keep these things straight and to make objective, wise judgments concerning them.

Aptitude, intelligence, and education are vital for many things. They are not, however, sufficient in themselves. What is needed as well is the provision of conclusive evidence and the grace to recognize and accept it accordingly.

It is no great thing to "critique" and "disprove" our views, even after having convinced oneself that our views have been given an adequate hearing. But to grasp the truth (whether or not any certain Concordant teaching is the truth), that is a great thing indeed.

J.R.C.

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*If One Died For the Sake of All*

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## GOD'S PURPOSE IN CHRIST

THE book of Ephesians begins with a stirring blessing-song of praise to the laud of the glory of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph.1:3-14). It speaks in superlatives of God's blessings of love and grace and wisdom in Christ. The passage is one sentence, one complete thought made up of about 170 Greek words grouped into 15 to 20 clauses, often compounded, and expanded by numerous prepositional phrases. It flows with wave after wave of revelation of God as He is made known in, and operates through, His beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

### THE BLESSED GOD WHO BLESSES

Paul's heart is filled with applause for the blessed God Who blesses us in and through His Son. God blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials (1:3), three of which, centered in His love, grace and wisdom, are distinguished here: (1) God chooses us in Christ before the disruption of the world, in *love* designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (1:4,5); (2) God lavishes His *grace* on us in the Beloved with deliverance through His blood and forgiveness of offenses (1:5-7); and (3) in all *wisdom and prudence*, God makes known to us the secret of His will (1:8-12).

We will look at the first two of these operations briefly, but our main interest here comes under the third heading, especially verses 9-11 where the apostle speaks of God's purpose for all and His operating of all. The emphasis throughout is on God's blessings for the ecclesia, His

choosing of us, His deliverance of us through the blood of His beloved Son, and *His* revelation to us of the glorious future He has purposed in Christ, and the part He allots us in that purpose. But none of these blessings, for all their special and transcendent favor with respect to us, are narrow and coiled inward. And, in fact, all of them are founded on what God has done and purposes to achieve in Christ for all.

THE GOD AND FATHER  
OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

God would have us appreciate His blessings as specifically centered in and carried out by His Son, Who is the Saviour, anointed with power and authority. God does not operate alone. It is in relation to His love for His Son and His love channeled through His Son that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ chooses us in Christ before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4). In love, commended in the death of His Son for sinners, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ designates us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:5).

PREDESTINATION AND HELL

There is no doubt that Ephesians 1:4,5 teaches that God chose us long before we were born, and He determined ahead of time that we would have the place of a son for Him. We had nothing to do with it. This has become known as the doctrine of "predestination," which in turn has become a great source of contention and division. However, the cause of division is not in the idea of God predestinating us but in divorcing Ephesians 1:4,5 from its context and in relating the blessing of predestination to the idea of an eternal hell.

Many of those who accept Paul's words concerning God's choice, in the distant past, of certain individuals to

become sons to God connect this, not with God's purpose to head up all in the Christ, but with the fantastic idea that the chosen are predestined to no other end than a subjective happiness, and with the hideous idea that those who are not chosen will be given over (by default, as it were, not having been predestinated to salvation) to an everlasting hell of shame and distress, or of final and irreversible destruction.

In reacting against this distortion of Paul's beatitude of praise to God, many others have gone so far as to deny, in effect, the blessings of divine choice and predestination altogether and make them seem to be divine payments to certain individuals who have made themselves bless-able, the rest being left to their fate in eternal hell. In both cases the end for the unbeliever is pretty much the same. And whether or not either view can truly lead the believer to bless God for His blessings to us, under such circumstances of loss for countless others, is seriously questionable.

THROUGH THE BLOOD OF GOD'S BELOVED SON

God lavishes the riches of His grace on us who were chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world. This is the "evangel of [our] salvation" (Eph.1:13), which is expounded in Romans. In view of the fact that all have sinned and offended God (*cf* Eph.2:1), we can only be delivered from this miserable condition "through the blood of Christ" (Eph.1:7), "justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24).

When Paul writes in Ephesians 1:7 concerning the deliverance through the blood of Christ for us, he is saying first of all that there *is* deliverance through the blood of Christ. Because of the lavishing of God's grace on us, this deliverance is being given to us in Christ, but God's work of deliverance does not disappear in relation to other sinners. Part of the vital interconnecting of thoughts in Ephesians

1:3-12 is the reminder of the evangel that there is deliverance for sinners, in Christ and through His blood. This fact of deliverance in God's beloved Son must not be disconnected from what Paul writes next concerning the secret of God's will to head up the all in the Christ.

#### GOD'S WILL AND DELIGHT

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ graces us lavishly in the Beloved. Through Christ's blood God has provided us with deliverance and the forgiveness of offenses.

But why should He do this?

It is His *will* (Eph.1:9,11).

It is His *delight* (Eph.1:5,9).

But it is that will and that delight of God's which He has *purposed in Christ* (Eph.1:9). God Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will has a purpose in view. He knows exactly what He is doing and where it all is leading. In many ways, for us who live in the current era, this assurance of God's deity and purpose is the greatest blessing of all.

#### BLESSED IS GOD

Therefore we bless and honor God, not only because He Himself blesses us, but because He has a purpose in blessing us and is carrying out that purpose in His Beloved Son. When Yahweh called Abram from his father's household, He promised to bless him and make him a blessing. There are two factors here that have been often overlooked and sadly forgotten by Israel. First of all it was *Yahweh* Who would bless Abram and his descendants. The word was not given as a challenge for the human to become blessed, but as Yahweh's promise that He Himself would make Abram great, and He Himself would bless him. And, secondly, Yahweh not only promised that He Himself would make Abram into a great nation and bless

him and make him great, but He promised that Abram would have the blessing of becoming a blessing. In Abram (Father-high), whose name would be changed to Abraham (Father-most-high), "all the families of the ground" would be blessed (Gen.12:1-3).

If these features of God's blessing of Abraham were often overlooked and neglected by Israel, it certainly is not outside the realm of possibility that we might overlook and neglect the very same features in God's blessing of us. After all, we are human beings, corrupted by death and sin within us. It is easy for us to think of our blessings as somehow related to some sort of superiority in ourselves, and from this deception it is easy for us to suppose our enjoyment of our blessings is the sole end for which they are given.

It certainly is a fact that Ephesians 1:3-14 prominently features the grace of God's achievements in Christ, not our own, and presents God's purpose as it embraces more than ourselves alone. It is God Himself Who blesses us in Christ. We are not called upon to become bless-able; we could not do so if we tried with every ounce of our being. And we are not blessed as an end in itself, or to an end that we devise. God's blessing of us is in line with God's own purpose, toward the end that He has in view. For this very reason it is all to the laud of the glory of God (Eph.1:6,12,14).

God purposes to bring all into a willing and glorious subjection to the One Who shed His blood for sinners. Then all will find their all in the God of all power, wisdom and love. It is our blessing now to know of this blessed purpose. It will be our blessing in the oncoming eons to be associated with Christ in the display of God's transcendent grace. We will have the blessing of being a blessing, and of being part of that great future process leading to the goal of all being headed up in the Christ.

## MAKING KNOWN THE SECRET OF HIS WILL

God has chosen us and designated us ahead of time for the place of a son and has graced us in His beloved Son with deliverance from offenses and sins, and in addition He is making known to us His will and delight concerning the future which He has purposed in Christ. As He did with Abram long ago, so in telling us of His blessings for us, God points to His purpose for choosing us out from the rest and bringing us into a close association with His Son even now. This purpose in which we play a special part embraces more than ourselves. All in the heavens and on the earth are to be granted a glorious association with Christ, headed up in Him, finding their being wrapped up in Him Who becomes their Head.

Let us rehearse the thought in the words of this epistle, not only in 1:9-11 but in later passages as well: The secret of God's will is to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth (Eph.1:9,10). God seats Christ at His right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending; and subjects all under the feet of Christ, Who is the One completing the all in all (Eph.1:20-23). God, *Who creates all*, will make known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials His multifarious wisdom, in accord with the purpose of the eons which God makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Eph.3:9-11).

I have deliberately omitted the references to the ecclesia in these passages so the reader can reflect on the broader purpose of God, embracing the universe. The grace which God lavishes on us is that we are given a uniquely blessed relationship to Christ in His work of completing the all in all. In the oncoming eons, God will display the transcen-

dent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For in grace, through faith, are we saved, and this is not out of us; it is God's *dōron* (His sacrificial present for approach unto Him), 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.2:7-10). What God does for us has grand implications for the all.

## ALL HEADED UP

There has been much discussion concerning the application of the word "all" in this passage and the meaning of the Greek verb, *anakephalaioō*, translated "be headed up" in the CV. Any attempt, however, to limit or confine "the all," so that it excludes certain sinners or situations, runs into difficulties when the revelations of God made in this passage are taken into account. The apostle speaks of God in relation to His Beloved Son, and to His delight and glory. To speak of God's will and of His delight within a context centering on the revelation of God in the Lord Jesus Christ encourages us to give the word "all" its widest scope. And this is well supported by the phrase "that in the heavens and that on the earth."

But what is intended by the verb "headed up"? The idea of "recapitulation," or "summing up," is certainly supported by its use in Romans 13:9. The precept, "You shall love your associate as yourself," gives all the other precepts their meaning, and brings them all together in close association under the character of love.

Yet this significance is seldom explored. We read of "the unifying" and of "the gathering up" of the alienated universe, all to be "subsumed" under Christ's feet. But along with such views of universal order under Christ, many expositors struggle to preserve the traditional views of everlasting loss for those found to be God's enemies at

His future judgments. This means evidently that, in being headed up in the Christ, they will be brought together in some association with Christ involuntarily against their own wishes, obedient but sullen, acquiescent and pacified, but without any appreciation or enjoyment of God as He is revealed in Christ.

Such an idea is wholly contrary to the view of God given here in Ephesians. What God is to us is what God *is*. He is not putting on a mask of love and glory for us and a different mask for others, but He is truly a God of love and glory. The revelation of His indignation against sin and upon the sinner does not make it impossible for Him to reveal Himself to all as He has revealed Himself to us. Rather, the revelation of divine anger must be, like all experiences of pain and sorrow, only a dark background for the illumination of God's blessedness.

What can be meant if we say that the God Who blesses us is blessed and we also say God will not bless others because He is unable to do so or has sovereignly decided not to do so? What is the nature of a love which is lavished on a few but eternally denied to others? Replies to questions such as these invariably seek to divert attention from what is being said about God to philosophical questions that go round and round but never stop.

#### GOD IS OPERATING ALL

We learn from Ephesians 1:3-14 that God graces some but He also wills to head up all in the Christ, both that in the heavens and that on the earth. We also read that God chooses some, but He also is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. We must be willing to accept the connections of thought which are made in this passage. God's choice of us does not keep Him from bringing all into a blessed relationship with Christ. God's will and delight to bless us does not exhaust the operations that He has coun-

seled to carry out. We must be prepared to take this which speaks of God's will, His purpose and intention, and the comprehensiveness of His operations as God's Word. We cannot suppose that the words are meant to say less than they say, especially since they speak of God's glory!

Why should we find the claim that God is operating all a matter needing qualification? Especially since His operating of all is shaped by the counsel of His will, where is ground for objection? Do we feel that when God's will differs from ours, as it often does, that His will must submit to ours? Do we suppose His counsel could be thwarted?

No! God has said His will and delight and purpose is to head up all in the Christ. And He has also said that He is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. These claims of supreme deity are not overstated. Since God is operating all in and through His Son, all will be headed up in the Christ, to the glory and laud of God.

#### ALL HEADED UP IN THE CHRIST

The words "in the Christ" in Ephesians 1:10 have the same Reference as the words "in the Beloved" in Ephesians 1:6. In the earlier passage He is presented as God's beloved Son Who achieves deliverance for us through His blood. In this evangel of our salvation we see Christ in His death for sinners. Now in Ephesians 1:9-11 the Same One is presented as the Christ in Whom God is carrying out His purpose. He is not presented here as Avenger or Judge, which indeed are temporary roles. In the place of authority presented here He is God's Beloved Son Who shed His blood for sinners, and He is the One, Anointed by God, by means of Whom God carries out the desires of His heart which He has purposed and willed.

In His exaltation of His Son, God will have no less than all entering into this grand consummation.

## OUR LOT ALSO

The doctrine of everlasting hell has kept many believers from a proper and productive appreciation of their own blessings in Christ. It breeds callousness in heart (*cf* Eph.4:19) toward those it claims are eternally doomed. In allowing God's love to be eternally restricted to themselves, or to be expressed in terms of damnation as well as in terms of salvation, any progress toward walking in love (*cf* Eph.5:1,2) will surely be impeded.

What is this vast love (Eph.2:4) and this transcendence of power for us who are believing (Eph.1:19) if they cannot ever break through the bulwarks of unbelief and stubbornness that infest God's creation? In the end, is the cross of Christ to be ineffective for many, and must we who are graced with deliverance and peace because of the cross become resigned to such limitations? And how are we to suppose God, as He is revealed through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, could or would be satisfied with such a fragmentary and partial appreciation of His love?

The allotment God has graciously given us is firmly and essentially associated with God's purpose to head up all in the Christ. It is not an exclusive privilege with no purpose other than our enjoyment. We are not blessed in a vacuum. Just as all are to be headed up in Christ, so do we *also* find our lot in Him. The "also" joins us with the all, albeit in a special way, chosen beforehand and graced with the riches of God's grace.

What could be more blessed than to be given the place of a son for God, as a part of God's operation to head up all in the Christ? What a great blessing it is for our present lives, as believers, for our peace and joy, to be graced with the awareness of this wise purpose of God! Indeed the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is blessed!

D.H.H.

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*Notes on 1 Samuel*


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## DAVID LEAVES THE LAND OF ISRAEL

**27** + David 'said ›in his heart, Some day now I shall be swept away 'by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me 'than to 'escape, yea escape<sup>̄</sup> to the land of the Philistines. +Then Saul will despair /of me to seek me further in all the territory of Israel, and I will escape from his hand. <sup>2</sup>+So David 'arose, and 'crossed over, he and six hundred men <sup>w</sup> with him, to Achish son of Maoch, king of Gath. <sup>3</sup>+ David <sup>bsit</sup> stayed with Achish 'at Gath, he and his men, each man +with his household, and David +with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail, former wife of Nabal, the Carmelite. <sup>4</sup>+When › Saul was 'told that David had run away to Gath, + he did not continue to seek him further.

<sup>5</sup>+ David 'said to Achish, <sup>pr</sup>Now if I have found favor in your eyes, let them <sup>g</sup>grant › me a <sup>n</sup>place in one of the field cities, and let me 'dwell there. + Why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you? <sup>6</sup>+So Achish <sup>lg</sup>granted › him 'Ziklag <sup>i</sup>on 'that day; wherefore Ziklag has <sup>b</sup>belonged to Judah's kings until 'this 'day. <sup>7</sup>+ The number of days <sup>w</sup>that David dwelt in the field of the Philistines <sup>lb</sup>was a years' days and four months.

<sup>8</sup>+ David +with his men went 'up and 'ransacked › the Geshurite, + the Gizrite and the Amalakite; for they were the dwellers<sup>l</sup> of the land <sup>w</sup> from <sup>7</sup>Telam~ as you come<sup>̄</sup> to<sup>d</sup> Shur, + as far as the land of Egypt. <sup>9</sup>+When David smote 'the land, + he would not <sup>m</sup>leave a man +or a woman 'alive; +yet he would take flocks and herds, + donkeys and camels, and garments. +When he 'returned and 'came to

**Achish,** <sup>10</sup> +then Achish would <sup>lsa</sup>ask, <sup>7on</sup> Whom~ have you ransacked today? And David would <sup>lsa</sup>reply, <sup>on</sup> The Negev of Judah, +or <sup>on</sup> the Negev of the Jerahmeelite, +or <sup>o</sup> the Negev of the Kenite. <sup>11</sup> + David would not <sup>m</sup>leave a man +or a woman <sup>l</sup>alive to bring them to Gath, for he <sup>s</sup>thought, **Lest they <sup>l</sup>denounce <sup>on</sup> us, <sup>o</sup> saying, Thus did David.**

+ Thus was his custom all the days <sup>w</sup>while he dwelt in the field of the Philistines. <sup>12</sup> +Now Achish <sup>e</sup>put his <sup>l</sup>faith in David, <sup>o</sup> saying, He has <sup>e</sup>made himself a <sup>t</sup>stink, yea a stink <sup>l</sup>among his people in Israel, and so he has become mine <sup>o</sup>as a servant for the eon.

In the previous chapters David had repeatedly escaped Saul, being delivered in God's protective care. But, believing Saul would only return to pursue him later, David became exasperated and decided to leave the country. His frustration had shown through in his reply to Saul, "They have driven me out today from adhering to the allotment of Yahweh, saying, 'Go, serve other elohim'" (1 Sam.26:19).

This statement associates God's presence with the promised land. To leave that land was viewed as going into the lands of other gods. This thought is reflected in some of the Psalms and exilic literature, and in customs such as Daniel's praying while facing toward Jerusalem (Dan. 6:10). This highlights one of the great differences between God's relationship to Israel and to the body of Christ. God's Spirit is making its home in us (Rom.8), and we have no geographical focus on this earth. Our realm is inherent in the heavens (Phil.3:20).

David formed a subservient alliance with Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. Achish gave David the city of Ziklag as a place for him, his 600 men and their families to dwell in. From there David raided other enemies of Israel. Yet he was always in fear of Achish discovering his true allegiance, so he was always careful to leave no living witness

ses from the cities he raided. Achish believed David's false reports and came to trust him.

#### DOUBLE WORDS

Like David, many of us have come to the point where we have thrown up our hands in despair and said, "That's all! That's the straw that broke the camel's back! I give up." The wonderful thing about those situations is that they become benchmarks for us to compare the faithfulness of God to our own unfaithfulness.

Several times in these later chapters of 1 Samuel words are repeated for emphasis of an idea. These double words emphasize the thought of David's unfaithfulness in contrast to God's faithfulness. The first three occurrences of double words were all spoken by Saul. The first at the cave where David cut the hem from his robe, and the other two when David had stolen his spear and cruse of water. "Now behold, I know that you shall be king, yea king, and the kingship of Israel will prosper in your hand" (1 Sam. 24:20). "You shall surely accomplish, yea accomplish all, and you shall surely prevail, yea prevail" (1 Sam.26:25). Saul himself spoke these words to David, prophesying David's success.

But David's frustration could not find enough encouragement to sustain him, either in these words, or those of Samuel at his anointing. "David said in his heart, Some day now I shall be swept away by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than to escape, yea escape to the country of the Philistines" (1 Sam.27:1).

Achish desired to have David as his servant and ally. By allowing David to dwell with him he felt sure that he could manipulate David's loyalty. "He has made himself a stink, yea a stink among his people in Israel, and so he has become mine as a servant for the eon" (1 Sam.27:12). And when the time came that Achish was to fight with the rest of the Philistine lords against Israel, he said to David, "You

realize, yea realize that with me you shall march forth into the army camp, you and your men” (1 Sam.28:1).

God delivered David even from these circumstances into which his faithlessness had brought him. And on returning to Ziklag, David found that all the families and possessions belonging to him and his men had been carried away by the Amalakites. Furthermore their city was burned. At such a point David could easily have said, “This is my fault, I should never have left the land of Israel. God has punished me. I got what I deserve!” But he did not. Instead, David encouraged himself in Yahweh and inquired of Him for direction. Yahweh answered, “Pursue, for you shall overtake, yea overtake, and you shall rescue, yea rescue” (1 Sam.30:8).

God’s faithfulness is independent of our faithfulness. And David learned a great lesson from this. When they had rescued their people and possessions, some did not want to return the possessions of the men who stayed behind, since they had not helped in the rescue. David replied, “You shall not do so after what Yahweh has given to us. He guarded us and delivered into our hand the raiding party that had come against us” (1 Sam.30:23).

It is a great thing when we can separate ourselves from our works and see the hand of God in them (Phil.2:12-13; Eph.2:10).

#### PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

David’s absence from Israel before he came to them as king is similar to that of Moses before his deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and that of Joseph before he saved his family from famine. In all these examples may be seen a representation of the absence of Christ before His reception by Israel as their Messiah.

J. Philip Scranton

#### A PROPHETIC TEXT

TWO MAJOR ADDITIONS to the traditional, “Masoretic” Text of 1 Samuel 10 appear in the Concordant Version. The first is a widely accepted expansion of the first verse based on the ancient Greek translation called the Septuagint (LXX). And the second is an entire paragraph added to the last verse of the chapter, based on the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS). Both insertions make important contributions to our understanding of this portion of God’s Word concerning the early days of Saul’s kingship.

In addition, a small insertion in verse 26, based on both LXX and DSS, helps draw our attention to a valuable distinction between those who scorn God’s words and those who are strengthened by them.

Unlike *emendations*, these changes do not replace readings in the Masoretic Text. They are *additions* which we view as restorations of original passages which, for one reason or another, dropped out in the course of time, generally because of errors in copying the text by hand.

The evidence that these readings are original is strong. Both the extant manuscripts of the Septuagint in Greek and the Dead Sea Scrolls in Hebrew (mostly fragmentary) are older than the oldest manuscripts of the Masoretic Text in Hebrew still in existence. Even though this by itself may not be enough to establish their originality, in these cases these ancient readings supply details that are altogether harmonious with the theme of this portion of God’s Word and enrich our appreciation of that theme. They clarify and complete the thoughts of the context.

The books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings are called the “Former Prophets.” They are not simply books of history. Rather they center on revelations from God to man, mostly delivered by means of chosen prophets. The message spoken is not always predictive of the future (though it often is), but it is always directed from God to man.

The tenth chapter of 1 Samuel opens with the prophet Samuel’s first anointing of Saul as governor over Israel.<sup>1</sup> The anointing is in itself a message for Saul and Israel from God. But in association with this anointing, Samuel brings a word of prophecy to Saul revealing God’s objective in empowering this young man. It is this prophetic message that was lost from the Masoretic Text by scribal error.

1 SAMUEL 10:1

**10 +Then Samuel 'took `a vial of `oil, + 'poured some on his head and 'kissed him. + He 'said, Has not <sup>7</sup>Yahweh anointed you `as governor over His people, over Israel? And you, you shall steer the course `of the people of Yahweh. + You´ shall save them from the hand of their enemies! <sup>f</sup>round about. And this is the sign for you<sup>0</sup>, that Yahweh has anointed you `as governor over His allotment . . . .**

The reader will notice here that the words concerning Yahweh anointing Saul occur twice in this passage, first as a rhetorical question: “Has not Yahweh anointed you as governor over His people, over Israel?” and then as a declaration: “Yahweh has anointed you as governor over His allotment.” It appears, as indicated by the Septuagint, that somewhere along the line in the transmission of the Hebrew text, a scribe’s eye jumped from the first occurrence of the clause to its second occurrence, thus skipping the words in

1. cf *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.86, p.119; vol.88, p.165.

between (the words between the superior 7 and superior 0 in the CV). Anyone who has copied a piece of writing by hand knows how easily this kind of omission can occur.

Two important prophetic revelations from God were thus lost, at least partially:

1. Saul would steer the course of the people of Yahweh.
2. Saul would save Israel from the hand of their enemies.

THE SIGNS

Immediately after making this prophecy Samuel informs Saul that Yahweh would give him a sign “that Yahweh has anointed you as governor over His allotment.” This series of events are foretold in great detail in 1 Samuel 10:2-6. But why did Saul need such strong supporting evidence? It was surely because of the serious significance of the anointing and Saul’s own personal shortcomings. To be the first ruler over all Israel involved, as the restored words of verse 1 implied, great wisdom and courage in steering the course of the people, as well as courage and steadfastness in meeting the enemy. In 1 Samuel 9 we learned that despite his physical superiorities Saul was not naturally a steady or able leader; he could not find his father’s lost jennies and would have returned home early on had it not been for the advice of his servant lad.

Consequently, it is imperative that Saul recognize and appreciate the reliability of Yahweh in invigorating him and granting him wisdom and valor in leadership.

“*And all these signs came true on that day*” (1 Sam.10:9).

Samuel was the human instrument for the anointing of Saul, *but Yahweh anointed him*. And Samuel was the human instrument for the prophetic revelation that Saul would steer and save Israel. But this revelation was from Yahweh, and *it is Yahweh Who must fulfill these words!* The signs which also were from Yahweh are meant to encourage Saul, to assure him and give him confidence

in Yahweh's words through the prophet. Because the signs all occurred as Samuel said they would, Saul should have been strengthened in reliance on Yahweh and in conviction that he would be God's instrument for guiding the course of Israel and saving them from their enemies.

But Saul's transformation was only temporary, and his absorption with himself returned.

## SAUL HIDES

<sup>17</sup> + Samuel <sup>lery</sup>summoned 'the people to Yahweh at Mizpah <sup>18</sup> and 'said to the sons of Israel, Thus <sup>sa</sup>speaks Yahweh Elohim of Israel: I' 'brought 'Israel up /out of Egypt and 'rescued you from the hand of <sup>7</sup>Pharaoh king of<sup>0</sup> Egypt and from the hand of all the kingdoms 'that were oppressing you. <sup>19</sup> +Yet you' have today rejected your Elohim Who has been 'bringing salvation' to you from all your evils and your distresses. +But you 'said, <sup>7</sup>No<sup>t~cs</sup>, for you should <sup>pl</sup>set up a king over us. + Now station yourselves before Yahweh 'by your tribes and 'by your thousands.

<sup>20</sup> +When Samuel 'brought 'near all the tribes of Israel, + the tribe of Benjamin was 'selected by lot. <sup>21</sup> +When he 'brought 'near 'the tribe of Benjamin 'by its families, + the Matrite family was 'selected. <sup>7</sup> +When he 'brought 'near the Matrite family 'by masters<sup>0</sup>, + Saul son of Kish was 'selected. +Yet when they 'sought him, + he was not found. <sup>22</sup> +Then they 'asked <sup>i</sup> Yahweh <sup>fr</sup>again, Has <sup>7</sup>the<sup>0</sup> man come here <sup>fr</sup>yet? + Yahweh <sup>lsa</sup>replied, Behold, he is hiding 'among the <sup>all</sup>baggage. <sup>23</sup> +So they 'ran and 'took him from there.

But when Samuel calls the people together for introducing Saul as their king, Saul is reticent. He had already been anointed once and had heard the words of prophecy. He had seen the signs and had experienced God's spirit on him and had been transformed. Nevertheless, his former

traits reassert themselves, and his doubts and fears send him into hiding (1 Sam.10:21,22).

## SONS OF WORTHLESSNESS

+Then he 'stationed himself in the midst of the people; + from his <sup>bk</sup>shoulders + upward, he was 'taller /than any of the people. <sup>24</sup> +Now Samuel 'said to all the people, Do you see <sup>i</sup> whom Yahweh has chosen? 'Indeed, there is no one like him <sup>i</sup>among all the people. +At that all the people 'shouted, + 'saying, Long 'live the king!

<sup>25</sup> + Samuel 'spoke to the people 'about the customary rights of the kingship; + he 'wrote them in a scroll and 'left it before Yahweh. +Then Samuel 'dismissed 'all the people, each man to his home. <sup>26</sup> + Saul <sup>mr</sup>too went to his home at<sup>d</sup> Gibeah; and going with him were <sup>7</sup>sons of<sup>0</sup> valor <sup>i</sup> whose heart Elohim had touched. <sup>27</sup> +But some sons of worthlessness said, <sup>wt</sup>How shall this one save us? +So they 'despised him and did not bring any present to him.

In addition to Saul's own uncertainty, and no doubt partly because of his reticence, some among Israel, called "sons of worthlessness," rejected Saul as their king (1 Sam.10: 27a; cp 10:11,12). On the basis of both LXX and DSS, the CV has restored the words "sons of" before "valor" in verse 26. This draws attention to a definite and intentional contrast between the *sons of valor* and the *sons of worthlessness*. The former supported Saul, and the latter scorned him. And in so doing, the former group indicate faith in Yahweh's anointing of Saul for guiding and saving Israel, while the latter group indicate rejection of that prophecy.

## DOUBTS

Saul is now presented to the people. But the truth of Samuel's words of prophecy given in verse 1 is left in doubt. How is Yahweh to use such a one as Saul, timid in disposi-

tion even though imposing in figure, to steer the course of the people and save them from their enemies? We will find the answer to that question in the next recorded events, starting with the paragraph inserted on the basis of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

## AN ENEMY ARISES

<sup>Q+</sup>As for Nahash king of the sons of Ammon, he had oppressed <sup>i</sup>the sons of Gad and <sup>i</sup>the sons of Reuben <sup>i</sup>unyieldingly. + He had gouged out all their right eyes, +thus <sup>g</sup>allowing <sup>g</sup>Israel no saviour!. + No<sup>t</sup> one remained <sup>i</sup>among the sons of Israel <sup>w</sup> in Transjordan <sup>g</sup>of whom Nahash king of the sons of Ammon had not gouged out every right eye. But 7,000 men had fled before the sons of Ammon and had come to Jabesh-gilead.~

<sup>7+</sup> The following <sup>lb</sup>occurred <sup>as</sup>about a month later~<sup>Q</sup>:

11 + Nahash the Ammonite marched <sup>up</sup>and <sup>encamped</sup> <sup>on</sup>against Jabesh-gilead. + All the men of Jabesh <sup>said</sup> to Nahash, Contract a covenant <sup>g</sup>with us, and we shall serve you. <sup>2+</sup>But Nahash the Ammonite <sup>lsa</sup>replied to them, I shall contract a <sup>7</sup>covenant~<sup>cs</sup> <sup>i</sup>with you <sup>i</sup>on this condition, <sup>i</sup>that all your right eyes are gouged<sup>-</sup> out; + I will <sup>pl</sup>make <sup>#</sup>this a reproach <sup>on</sup>for all Israel. <sup>3+</sup> The elders of Jabesh <sup>said</sup> to him, Hold back <sup>g</sup>from us for seven days, and let us <sup>send</sup> messengers <sup>i</sup>throughout the whole territory of Israel; + should there be no saviour<sup>l</sup> <sup>g</sup>for us, +then we will come forth to you.

<sup>4+</sup>When the messengers <sup>came</sup> to Gibeah of Saul and <sup>bsp</sup>reported <sup>these</sup> <sup>sp</sup>events in the ears of the people, +then all the people <sup>lifted</sup> up <sup>g</sup>their voice and <sup>lamented</sup>. <sup>5+</sup> <sup>bd</sup>Now Saul came in from the field, following the herd of cattle. And Saul <sup>lsa</sup>asked, What <sup>g</sup>ails the people that they should lament? +So they <sup>related</sup> to him <sup>the</sup> <sup>sp</sup>message of the men of Jabesh.

<sup>6+</sup> The spirit of Elohim <sup>prospered</sup> over Saul <sup>i</sup>when

he heard<sup>-</sup> <sup>g</sup>these <sup>g</sup>words; and his anger was exceedingly hot. <sup>7+</sup> He <sup>took</sup> a team of oxen, + <sup>m</sup>cut them in <sup>pieces</sup> and <sup>sent</sup> them <sup>i</sup>throughout the whole territory of Israel <sup>by</sup> the hand of messengers, <sup>g</sup>saying<sup>-</sup>, Should <sup>w</sup>anyone not come forth<sup>l</sup> following Saul and following Samuel, thus shall be done to his oxen! +Then the awe of Yahweh <sup>fell</sup> on the people, and they came <sup>forth</sup> as one man. <sup>8+</sup>When he <sup>m</sup>mustered them <sup>i</sup>at Bezek, + there <sup>lb</sup>were 300 contingents of the sons of Israel and 30 contingents of the men of Judah. <sup>9+</sup> <sup>7</sup>He~<sup>c</sup> <sup>said</sup> to the messengers <sup>who</sup> had come<sup>l</sup>, Thus shall you <sup>sa</sup>speak to the men of Jabesh-gilead: Tomorrow victory shall <sup>b</sup>be yours <sup>i</sup>when the sun is brightly warm. +When the messengers <sup>came</sup> and <sup>told</sup> this to the men of Jabesh, + they <sup>rejoiced</sup>. <sup>10+</sup>So the men of Jabesh <sup>said</sup> <sup>7</sup>to Nahash the Ammonite<sup>o</sup>, Tomorrow we shall come forth to you, and you may do to us <sup>all</sup>just as it seems <sup>good</sup> in your eyes.

<sup>11+</sup> It <sup>lb</sup>was <sup>f</sup>on the morrow +that Saul <sup>pl</sup>positioned <sup>the</sup> <sup>w</sup>force in three bands. + They <sup>lm</sup>advanced into the midst of the camp <sup>i</sup>during the morning vigil and <sup>smote</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>7</sup>sons of<sup>cs</sup> Ammon until the day was brightly warm. +Thus it came to <sup>be</sup> that <sup>those</sup> remaining + <sup>scattered</sup>, and not two <sup>i</sup>among them remained together.

<sup>12+</sup>Then the people <sup>lsa</sup>asked <sup>g</sup>Samuel, <sup>a</sup>Who was it <sup>who</sup> said<sup>l</sup>, Saul, he shall <sup>7</sup>not<sup>cs</sup> reign over us! Give us <sup>these</sup> men, and we shall <sup>c</sup>put them to death. <sup>13+</sup>Yet Saul <sup>lsa</sup>replied, No<sup>t</sup> man shall be <sup>c</sup>put to death <sup>i</sup>on <sup>g</sup>this day! For today Yahweh has <sup>d</sup>given a victory in Israel.

## PROPHECY FULFILLED

Thus the prophecy given through Samuel becomes truly operative in the events of chapter 11. The spirit of Elohim “prospered over Saul,” and he becomes actively involved as a leader. In the fields following the herds, Saul was insulated from the troubles of his brethren east of the Jordan.

He was not concerned about the dangers that threatened the whole nation from Ammon. But now we find Saul filled with anger over the cruelty of Nahash, sending a stern message throughout Israel, gathering an army together, reassuring the men of Jabesh-gilead, positioning the forces, advancing to battle and smiting the sons of Ammon. Here Saul is actually steering the course of Israel and saving them from their enemies.

Added to this, the spirit of Elohim leads Saul to utter words of prophecy himself. In rejecting the request to put the “sons of worthlessness” to death, Saul says, “Today Yahweh has given a victory in Israel” (1 Sam.11:13). That is probably the greatest prophetic message from the lips of Saul. Even if it did not penetrate into his own heart, it was true, and it was a truth that must eventually be realized by Saul and all those involved in this battle.

But here again, the introductory information for the important events of chapter 11 was omitted by scribal error in the transmission of the Masoretic Text. But it was not entirely lost. The information concerning Nahash’s violence among the sons of Gad and Reuben and the escape of 7,000 men, which we have added to 1 Samuel 10:27, is preserved in a fragment of an ancient scroll of Samuel found near the Dead Sea. It was also known to Josephus, the Jewish historian of the First Century A.D. (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 6, Chapter 5).

In this case, to be sure, the passage does not supply such a vital piece of prophetic information, as the LXX supplies for 1 Samuel 10:1. But it does add very helpful background information which makes the fulfillment of 1 Samuel 10:1 even more striking than it is in the traditional text. This information concerning Nahash’s *unyielding oppression* enhances our appreciation of Yahweh’s victory through the instrumentality of Saul. By showing that Nahash’s tyranny was his established policy, the restored information lays

additional emphasis on the prophetic revelation of Yahweh’s power for victory (or *salvation*) in Israel. In “allowing Israel no saviour,” Nahash prepares the way for Yahweh to save Israel from their enemies through Saul.

Thus some of the details of chapter 11 are made more understandable with the background information now recovered. The character of Nahash stands in more obvious contrast to the timidity of Saul. Whereas Saul hid himself from the people, Nahash thirsted after conquest. The Ammonite king was not satisfied with his defeat of the Israelites in the territory of Gad and Reuben east of the Jordan, but pursued those who escaped to the north in Jabesh-gilead far from Nahash’s home base. Seeing this, we perhaps can better understand why Nahash was willing to hold back from seizing Jabesh-gilead until reinforcements could come from the other tribes of Israel west of the Jordan (1 Sam.11:3). He was confident of victory and desired the glory that would come from defeating an enlarged force.

But through the invigoration of Saul with the spirit of Elohim, Nahash is defeated and Yahweh is glorified. Saul is transformed into a leader who recognizes that deliverance is from Yahweh.

No doubt this information now given in 10:27, had it not been lost, would have appeared in our translations as the opening verse of chapter 11. But because a small part of this restoration replaces the very last words of chapter 10 as rendered in our translations of the Masoretic Text,<sup>2</sup> we have placed the entire passage at the end of the tenth chapter (as done also by the *New Revised Standard Version*).

Admittedly, there is a certain awkwardness in placing the

2. The clause, “It occurred about a month later,” which appears in both DSS and LXX, replaces (by changing a single Hebrew letter) the Masoretic reading, “Yet he was silent.”

restored information about Nahash at the end of chapter 10. And yet it has this advantage, that the events of chapter 11 are thus connected more closely in the reader's mind with the prophecies of chapter 10. Nahash's vicious treatment of certain Israelites opens the way for the display of Saul's leadership. And this in turn supports our appreciation of the greater prophetic revelation that it was actually Yahweh Who saved Israel, Saul being simply Yahweh's chosen instrument for this rescue.

This revelation of God as the Saviour is the high point of these two chapters. Whether or not Saul or Israel realized it, this testimony of Saul as He was enlightened by God's spirit, is the greatest prophecy of the whole passage, the most significant word from God to Israel (and indeed mankind) in this portion of Scripture. All else simply serves to highlight the truth that God saved Israel on that day.

Hence we trace in these two chapters a prophetic pattern. A word of prophecy is given but is not fulfilled until it is apparent that God Himself must fulfill it, so that the greater prophetic revelation that God Himself is the Saviour can be heard.

D.H.H.

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KEVIN J. BERRY

Kevin J. Berry, of Williamston, Michigan, died on December 25, 2000 at the age of 46. Kevin not only was our good friend, but was a cheerful evangelist as well, one who loved to make new friends, telling them of the living God, the Saviour of all mankind, Who will someday be All in all.

For many years, Kevin endured severe physical afflictions; yet he found consolation that, at his not "noting" these afflictions, they were producing for him a "transcendently, transcendent eonian burden of glory" (*cp* 2 Cor.4:17,18).

Kevin's smile, sense of humor, and love for God and His Word will not be forgotten. His encouragement and support of brothers and sisters in ministry is fondly remembered. We look forward to greeting you once again, Kevin, in that happy day of the presence of Christ.