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Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE

FOR GOD AND HIS

WORD

VOLUME LXXXVII

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Grace Triumphant

Before the world was made
Or sun or planets shone,
Salvation's base was laid
In God's anointed Son,
Who came to spread the truth abroad
And reconcile a world to God.

By mercy's hand upheld,
Firmly His purpose stands:
What love His bosom filled!
What kindness moved His hands!
What pity warmed His pleading breath,
Who meekly blessed His foes in death!

Now raised to realms above
Where boundless mercies shine,
Will Christ forget His love?
Forget this heart of mine?
O, no; His favors never end;
He's there, as here, the sinner's Friend.

Hail, all-triumphant hour
In which my Saviour rose!
The grave has lost its power;
My soul, forget thy woes.
Widely He'll spread His grace abroad
And safely guide a world to God.

S. Streeter

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 1996
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

MORE AND MORE we treasure the saying that "we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour" (2 Tim.4:10), welcoming it as a faithful word for each new day of our lives. We can put no reliance on our leaders, our thinkers, our social, educational, economic and ethical systems, no matter how well-meaning they may be, how sensible and hopeful they may seem. We pray for those in superior station and for all mankind, our neighbors and relatives, and those in distant places, millions upon millions of fellow human beings. But we don't *expect* ("expect" and "rely" are used for the same Greek word in the Concordant Version) anything of lasting value from them.

Our expectation is built and settled on the living God. That means we are optimistic in every way. As we begin this new year we look forward to great things. But these are not great things of our accomplishment or as measured by the world about us. We expect the great blessings of joy that issues from appreciation of God's grace; of peace that issues from acquaintance with God's work of conciliation; of invigoration that issues from the evangel that is God's power for salvation. Like Paul, we are not despondent, even though our bodies are decaying and we stumble into all sorts of troubles and perplexities, because we know these things are temporary, even momentary in comparison to what God is leading us into (*cf* 2 Cor.4:7-18). God is living, and He is saving, and He is bringing about "a transcendentally transcendent eonian burden of glory."

It is significant that Paul reminded the Galatians of both former suffering (Gal.3:4) and happiness (Gal.4:15). Even though they had turned from the message of grace

Paul was heralding, the two experiences of affliction and joy had accompanied their believing of the evangel (see also Phil.1:29;4:4). Indeed for all human beings there is much suffering, but for those who believe there is the special joy of seeing all, including pain and sorrow, under the hand of our gracious God, and though special afflictions are also added for those who believe, in connection with our believing, yet the grace in the evangel gives meaning and purpose to all our struggles.

When we hear of the illnesses of longtime friends of our work, and witness troubles in the lives of fellow believers, and receive whatever portion of evil God sends our way (*cf* Job 2:10), we remember that God is living, and He is saving. We know there are Goliaths to face in the coming year, but the *living God* will provide His arrays (see p.35). Yet where we can go beyond Job (see p.23) and beyond David in this recognition of God's hand operating in all things is that we have accepted and are believing that Christ died for our sins and has been roused from among the dead and exalted above all powers (1 Cor.15:1-4; Phil.2:9-11). Because of the evangel concerning "the grace of Christ" (Gal.1:6), we see the character of the operations of the living God, that they are certain of success and are glorious!

Consequently, as believers, we are aware of such arrays of the living God, as those of grace in the evangel brought by Paul (see pages 5-8 on Philippians and pages 9-22 on Galatians), and of the way in which we have been *set* upon this pathway of grace (see p.43). The living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, is saving us who believe in special ways even today, bringing His arrays of grace transcendent and of love and faith and expectation into our lives. What a glorious prospect! As we look about at the multitudes of humanity, the ignorance and estrangement and confusion of this eon, we are made exultant by the faith that is given to us. D.H.H.

The Epistles of Paul

PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS

THE Philippian epistle is a divine commentary on the latter half of Ephesians, and, like it, is especially concerned with the deportment demanded by the transcendent doctrines developed in the first half of the Ephesian letter. This is the key to its contents. *It does not deal with doctrines, but with deportment.* This will illumine many a difficult passage in it, and this has been allowed to color the wording of the Concordant Version.

The letter comes to us from two *slaves*, not from an *apostle*. It is an *exhortation*, designed to affect our feet, rather than a revelation for the enlightening of our minds. Paul and Timothy do not present the truth as to our position in Christ, but the path to be pursued by the Philippians, after they know their place in Him.

Philippians occupies the same relation to Ephesians that the Corinthian epistles do to Romans. In this epistle we may expect to find set forth the *conduct* which flows from our relationship to *Christ* and to our *fellow saints*. The power of the appeals will depend largely on our apprehension and appreciation of the last two items of the secret—that we are a joint body, and are joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul became the dispenser.

As shown in the literary framework, the epistle is a perfect, though complex reversion. Its controlling theme is Participation in the Evangel, not only by its public proclamation, but especially by a conduct consistent with its teachings.

FRAMEWORK OF PHILIPPIANS

- Introduction (1:1)
 - Salutation (1:2)
- The Philippians—Contribution—Doxology (1:3-11)
 - Paul—his bonds in Christ (1:12-18)
 - Paul—his indifference to death (1:19-26)
- The Philippians—suffering with Paul (1:27-30)
 - Exhortation to imitate Christ (2:1-4)
 - Christ (2:5-11)
 - Exhortation to Obedience (2:12-18)
 - Timothy—his character and service (2:19-24)
 - Epaphroditus—his character and his sufferings (2:25-30)
 - Exhortation to Beware (3:1-3)
 - Paul (3:4-16)
 - Exhortation to imitate Paul (3:17-4:9)
- The Philippians—their care of Paul (4:10)
 - Paul—his complacency in want (4:11,12)
 - Paul—his strength in Christ (4:13)
- The Philippians—Contribution—Doxology (4:14-20)
- Conclusion (4:21,22)
- Salutation (4:23)

THE BELIEVER'S CONDUCT

Both Ephesians and Colossians are easily divisible into two parts, doctrine and deportment. No such division can be seen in Philippians, for it is all devoted to conduct. It, indeed, divides into two complementary halves, for a glance at its structure will show that it is a reversion, dealing principally with living expressions of the evangel. In the first half are the examples of Christ and Timothy. These are balanced in the second by those of Epaphroditus and Paul. In the first part we are exhorted to imitate Christ (2:1-4); in the second we are bidden to imitate Paul (3:17-4:9). These facts are of vital value in the interpreta-

tion of this epistle, for some passages in it, divorced from its controlling theme, may be made to appear to teach truth quite beyond and contrary to Ephesians, but when kept within the bounds set by the epistle itself, and applied to our experience, they are in fullest accord with the previous epistle and its transcendent revelations.

A casual reading of Philippians gives little idea of the symmetry and beauty of its structure. Yet, for a close consideration of the epistle, there is no key comparable to a clear exhibition of the literary framework. The mind is likely to be lost in a maze of detail and forget the theme under discussion. Indeed it is not always easy to seize the real subject without some such aid as the structure affords. Perhaps the common impression of this epistle is that, like our own letters, it is a jumble of this and that and the other, without any designed relation between its parts. A so-called "analysis" is apt to be arbitrary and is usually derived from the interpretation, instead of aiding it. But a real "framework" should be as self-evident as the skeleton of an animal, with all its parts symmetrical and complementary, making their relationships quite obvious to all.

THE FOUR EXAMPLES

The framework of Philippians shows that its subject is *participation in the evangel*. We must not limit this to the heralding of "the gospel" to unbelievers. It includes all of the glad message as it was revealed, not only as imparted to faith, but as expressed in life. In the second half of Ephesians we are *told* how we should walk; here we are *shown*. There the basis of conduct is *truth*. Here it is illuminated by *example*. The greater part of this epistle is devoted to *living expressions* of the evangel. The service and suffering of its greatest exponents are presented for our consideration. Christ Himself, in His descent from the form of God to the shame of the cross, is presented for our imita-

tion. Corresponding to this we have Paul's descent from a self-righteous Pharisee to conformation to the death of Christ. The center of the epistle depicts two ideal characters—Timothy for service, and Epaphroditus for suffering.

Practice is a more powerful teacher than precept. Deeds may do more than declarations in directing our lives. In Ephesians we have already been told how we should walk. In Philippians we are given examples of such conduct in the careers of others. We are pointed to the emptying and humiliation of Christ, the forfeits of Paul, the solicitude of Timothy, and the suffering of Epaphroditus. These are the special characters in Holy Writ who are presented for our emulation within the boundaries of this present secret administration. Hence they should be frequent and foremost in our exhortations. They should be the leading characters in Christendom.

EXHORTATION TO SERVICE

In accord with its character, the hortatory passages in Philippians are not grouped together at the close, as in Ephesians and Colossians, but are scattered symmetrically throughout the epistle. They appear before and after the two great examples. The apostle pleads for a humble and obedient disposition like our Lord's (2:1-5, 12-18). He exhorts us to imitate himself and beware of those who act otherwise (3:1-3, 17-21). The question may arise, Since Ephesians has already dealt with the conduct which comports with its new revelation, what room is left for exhortation in Philippians? The answer is that here also we see the special character of this epistle. The exhortations are general in Ephesians, here they apply particularly to *service*. Ephesians indeed dealt with the slaves of masters on earth. Philippians deals with the conduct of all saints in their character of slaves of a heavenly Master.

A. E. Knoch

“LET HIM BE ANATHEMA!”

IN APPROACHING our consideration of Paul's epistle to the Galatians, in which the apostle defends his evangel of grace, we are especially struck by a recognition of our total dependency on God for the sake of faithfulness in the task at hand. If within Paul's epistles there are “some things hard to *apprehend*” (2 Peter 3:16), there are a great many other things that are easy to *apprehend*, even if difficult to *accept and believe*, due to the power of false tradition.

When we read in this same verse, written by the apostle Peter, that it is “the unlearned and unstable,” who are twisting the words of Paul, “as the rest of the scriptures also,” to their own destruction (or “loss”; *apōleia*, FROM-WHOLE-LOOSING), we are apt to suppose that it is primarily those with little formal education, perhaps ones who are mentally unstable as well, who twist the words of Scripture. In contradistinction to such persons of low estate, we are apt as well to call to mind the *learned* scholar and the *stable* citizen, only to suppose that such ones of high station, at least if they should be consecrated believers, are not apt to be guilty of any such twisting of Scripture as contemplated here by Peter. Such, however, is a naïve supposition indeed. In fact, it is a supposition which few scholars would make, for they are well aware of the tremendous diversity of opinion, even within their acknowledged circle, on a vast range of issues, including topics of great importance, whether within the Pauline writings or elsewhere in Scripture.

Perhaps if one insists on taking “unlearned” and “unsta-

ble” in such a sense that all honorable academicians of renown are excluded, we should reply, “All right, but I would have you know that *in addition* to the destructive twisting of Scripture which is engaged in by the unlearned and unstable, there is much Scripture-twisting engaged in as well by the learned and stable!”

It is not at all likely, however, that such a sense as most conjure up when hearing the word “stable,” and especially the word “learned,” is the thought that Peter had in mind. One may be a stable citizen, friend, and comforter, while being by no means stable in the faith. A man may be solid in his business dealings or otherwise in common points of character, and yet be altogether weak-kneed in standing for truth, or even in recognizing it. Similarly, one may be highly learned and enlightened in many a scripture-related discipline, rendering invaluable service to many in various ways, and still be quite *unlearned* as to many important scriptural teachings. In such cases, all their learnedness notwithstanding, it is simply that otherwise-learned men, have nevertheless not *learned* the truth as to various scriptural revelations of great consequence.

“All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed*” in Him, in the God and Father of Christ (Col. 2:2,3). Paul does not say that, for one who is a good fellow and scholarly, this is no longer true; that such a one may forego divine enlightenment, and has no need of saving grace in matters of spiritual judgment.

Similarly, Paul declares, “I plant, Apollos irrigates, *but God makes it grow up*. So that, neither is he who is planting anything, nor he who is irrigating, *but God Who makes it grow up* God’s fellow workers are we. *God’s farm, God’s building*, are you” (1 Cor.3:5-9). Again, Paul does not say that, if one is of prodigious intellect and lauded by all the orthodox as being both astute and consecrated, such a one’s intellectual and moral virtues may serve as a sub-

stitute means with a view toward that growth in truth for which lesser mortals must wait upon the divine determination. Nor does Paul say that in some mysterious, originative sense, such a one is ultimately responsible for his own growth; that he is *not* God’s farm and building, but is his own farm and building.

As a means of grace, factually correct, scripturally-pertinent, advanced learning is often invaluable in the cause of truth, with a view toward its demonstration or proof. While at least in its vital elements, such scholarship will *be* intellectually sound, this is by no means to say that it will be *recognized* as such by all conservative and sincere theological academicians or other such professional theologians. Let us not be wise in our own conceit (Prov.26:12). “Let no one be deluding himself. If anyone among you is presuming to be wise in this eon, let him become stupid, that he may be becoming wise, for the wisdom of this world is stupidity with God. For it is written, ‘He is clutching the wise in their craftiness.’ And again, The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. So that, *let no one be boasting in men*” (1 Cor.3:18-21a).

GRACE TO YOU, AND PEACE!

Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who rouses Him from among the dead), and all the brethren with me, to the ecclesias of Galatia:

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1-3)

In this epistle to the Galatians, the characteristic words of thanksgiving or blessing, which introduce Paul’s other epistles, are conspicuous by their absence. Instead of giving thanks, Paul “marvels” (1:6); instead of a word of blessing, he pronounces an emphatic anathema (1:8,9). Indeed, Paul, immediately, without delay, begins by emphasizing

the *authority* which inheres in his apostleship and evangel, though this authority may be challenged or even denied by the Galatians. Without any deference either to formality or pleasantries, Paul abruptly begins by insisting that his apostleship is “*not* from men, *neither* through a man,” but that it is instead “through Jesus Christ and God, the Father.”

By his very first words, Paul emphasizes that “all the brethren with [him],” join him in acknowledging his authoritative apostleship, even as in concurring in the substance of the epistle which is to follow. But, far more significantly, Paul intimates here what he soon goes to extraordinary lengths both to stress and elucidate, that he is speaking by the word of the Lord in making this emphatic asseveration of his apostleship. Accordingly, in making the following extended presentation in defense of his evangel, a presentation with which the entirety of the remainder of the epistle will be concerned, Paul thus presses upon the Galatians the fact that he not only has the right to speak, but the right to be heard, and heeded. If the Galatians should dismiss his testimony, it is at their own peril that they do so.

As sobering as all of this is, what is more striking is that even if Paul must omit his usual introductory words of thanksgiving or blessing, that he might lose no time in pressing the urgency of his message upon the recipients of this epistle, he nevertheless does *not* omit his always-applicable (and, always-appropriate) words of greeting, “from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” This word of greeting is, “*Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*” If the believer should involve himself in both moral and doctrinal evil, as at Corinth, and even if, as in Galatia, he should go so far as to become transferred from the glorious evangel through which he was called in the *grace* of Christ and become transferred to a *different* evangel (1:6)—and even if in so doing he should *repudiate* the grace of God (*cp* 2:21)—the word of truth

declared unto him remains: “*Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

What if some should come to disbelieve, and even repudiate, the grace which they once accepted? “Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? May it not be coming to that! Now let God be true, yet every man a liar . . .” (Rom.3:3,4a). What God has promised in grace to His chosen ones, will surely come to pass concerning them. Simply because it is grace, it will not fail to bestow its blessing!

That which is in grace is not out of works, “else the grace is coming to be no longer grace” (Rom.11:6). While a wage is not reckoned as a favor (or gracious gift), but as a debt (Rom.4:4), that which *is* reckoned as a gracious gift, is not reckoned as a debt. Since such a gift is not owed in the first place, and neither at any time does it become owed, it follows that any deficiency of service—however extreme—on the part of the one to whom its endowment has been granted, cannot deprive such a one of its blessing.

Consequently, when believers, such as the Galatians, “fall out of grace” (Gal.4:4b), they do so only in their apprehension of grace, and in an appreciation of it, with all the practical benefit that this entails. One does not, through disobedience, remove himself from the sphere of whatever divine blessing has been afforded him in grace. While this is so, he nevertheless may very well thereby remove himself from the sphere of a recognition and enjoyment, as such, of God’s gracious blessings. This is especially so in the case of one who denies and rejects the truth of grace.

For example, in the coming eons, all the members of the ecclesia which is Christ’s body will joyfully partake of the allotment of life eonian. This is simply because that allotment is a gracious gift (Rom.6:23). Yet only those members of the ecclesia today, who, in fact, and apart from contradiction, *believe* that eonian life is a gracious gift, presently recognize and enjoy this gift according to its true nature.

Many cannot possibly be at peace in their hearts, for they fancy themselves to be at least possible candidates for divine wrath. They imagine that *if* they should avoid coming under such judgment, it will finally be thanks only to themselves that they avoided such an awful end. We cannot convince them that they are in error; and God has yet to convince them, whether through ourselves or some other means. So we must deem such strong delusion as being in accord with His wisdom, and ultimately being out of Him (Rom.11:36).

We long for others to rejoice with us in common faith. We know how helpful it has been for ourselves no longer to repudiate God's grace, but instead to repudiate our own self-righteousness and pride (to the degree that we have succeeded in so doing). We long for our fellow believers to join us in pursuit of a walk consistent with the truth that all is of God, through Him, and for Him. But until God grants them this awareness, and whatever they may say or do in repudiation of grace in the meantime, let us rejoice that the word of truth to them remains: "*Grace* to you and *peace* from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

ESTABLISHED, YET NOT STEADFAST

Who gives Himself for our sins, so that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon, according to the will of our God and Father, to Whom be glory for the eons of the eons. Amen! (1:4,5)

Even as God "extricated" ("lifted out") Joseph out of all his afflictions" (Acts 7:10), and, later on, extricated the sons of Israel out of Egypt (Acts 7:34), thus also, Christ Jesus "gives Himself for our sins, so that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon." In each case, the respective extrication is "according to [literally, "down"] the will of our God and Father, to Whom be [the] glory" (*cp* v.5). The basis of the blessed deliverance is God's own decision

so to act. What it "comes down to," then, is that Christ gives Himself for our sins, so that, according to God's own will, such a glorious deliverance of us, out of this wicked eon (*cp* 1 Thess.4:15-17), should actually come to pass. It is not that Christ gives Himself for our sins so that such a deliverance might *possibly* come to pass, but then again might never come to pass at all. If God must wait on man, and worse yet, *depend* on man, He can never act in grace, much less, can He glorify His own name, alone, in our deliverance.

It is with such considerations having already been presented, that Paul then moves directly to the heart of the Galatians' error:

I am marveling that thus, swiftly, you are transferred from that which calls you in the grace of Christ, to a different evangel, which is not another (1:6)

Though Paul had once labored among them, "establishing all the disciples" (Acts 18:23), it is evident that the Galatian believers were unable to remain steadfast. Though for some time, they remained in the teaching which they had accepted through Paul, they never became "settled, [and] unmovable" therein (*cp* 1 Cor.15:58). They were by no means mature in the faith, readily able to discern contradictory teachings. Any objections that they may have initially had to such a different evangel as that introduced by Paul's opposers, were subsequently quelled, through the persuasiveness of the entrancing error with which the Galatians eventually became enthralled (*cp* 3:1; 5:1,8).

Whether or not their "insurrection" (5:12) also startled him (*cp* Phil.1:28), it at least caused Paul to "marvel" (1:6). He frankly admits that the Galatians' swift transfer from his own evangel of the grace of Christ to a different evangel, was an object of wonder, full of astonishment!

It was not that the Galatians immediately, as soon as Paul was out of reach, turned away from the truth to such grievous error. It was instead that, however long it may have

been before the incipience of their apostasy, once they came under its spell, they then “*swiftly*”¹ became “transferred” from Paul’s evangel of grace to a *different* evangel.

“A *DIFFERENT* EVANGEL, WHICH IS *NOT ANOTHER*”

Note that the Galatians were transferred from “that which” called them in the grace of Christ to a *different* evangel. “That which,” in the Concordant Version, simply represents the Greek definite article (“the”). It is evident from what is said, however, that “the [evangel]” through which the Galatians were called into the *grace* of Christ brought by Paul, was that from which they were transferred to a *different* evangel. This is the central point: the message to which the Galatians had been transferred, which they deemed a message of good news, was nonetheless *different* than the evangel of the *grace* of Christ.

At least in the eyes of those who boast in themselves, it is possible to conceive of a message which holds out blessing as a reward for obedience to law-works, apart from grace, as a message of good news. It is not that, theoretically, such a message could not be a message of good news; it is instead that, as Paul insists, *such an evangel is not the evangel of the grace of Christ*. This is so whether by this expression one has in mind either the evangel of the Uncircumcision or that of the Circumcision (2:7); or, both of these together, as considered in their essential unity.

The evangel to which the Galatians had been transferred, is first described as being “different” (1:6). The Greek word, *heteros*, present in such English words as “heterogenous” and “heterosexual,” speaks of “*essential* difference,” or difference in *kind*.” Certainly grace is the essential character-

¹*Tacheōs* (SWIFT-AS) signifies “a *speedy kind*” of occurrence (e.g., John 11:31; cp John 20:4). It speaks of inherent *rapidity of succession*, apart from a consideration of a thus-characterized activity’s relation to other events, whether antecedent or subsequent.

istic of the evangel of Christ. Yet through his use of *heteros*, Paul thus insists that the spurious evangel by which the Galatians had become deceived, was, in its very essence, *different* than the true evangel, that of the *grace* of Christ. Therefore, at its core, this corrupt gospel was not, in fact, a gospel of grace, but of something different than grace, a gospel of blessing by means of law-obedience, *apart from the grace of Christ*. It is the grace of Christ which ultimately underlies the evangel of the Circumcision, even as, on its face, grace is the essence of the evangel of Christ which Paul was heralding among the nations (2:2).

Therefore, this spurious gospel by which the Galatians had become deceived, was “not another.” That is, it was not actually the evangel of the Circumcision, even if the Galatians were so ignorant of the true nature of that evangel as to identify the heterogenous corruption which they had embraced as the evangel of the Circumcision.

Here, for the English “[an]other,” the Greek is *allos*, from which “allotropic” is derived, which points to variation of *form*, to changes of properties *shown* by elements, without change of essential composition. Whatever the Galatians themselves might claim or imagine, Paul insists that their false gospel is *essentially different* from the evangel of the grace of Christ. It is *not* the “other” true evangel (the evangel of the Circumcision) at all, but only a pseudo-evangel which is a gross caricature of the evangel of the Circumcision. According to truth, it is no evangel at all. Therefore, it should be rejected, not embraced.

It is glorious to recognize that the true evangel of the Circumcision *was* the “other-evangel,” to which Paul here alludes. Though the evangel of the Circumcision differed from Paul’s in “other” (lesser) things—in externals of form and practice, as well as in allotment and in relation to the law—in *essence*, it was the same as Paul’s. That is, in the wider sense, it too was the evangel of the *grace* of Christ. Under

the evangel of the Circumcision, as much so as under that of the Uncircumcision, all blessing flows from the grace of God, through Christ, with all boasting in man debarred.

Hence, only by a fundamental distortion of the true evangel of the *grace* of Christ itself, could it ever be said that the Galatians’ pseudo-evangel, while being distinct from Paul’s evangel in non-central externals, was nevertheless, in essence, quite the same as the evangel which the apostle himself heralded.

But if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema! As we have declared before and at present I am saying again, if anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be anathema! (1:8,9)

In verses 8 and 9, the New International Version renders the dual phrases, “let him be anathema!” as “let him be eternally condemned!” Those who approve this supposed “dynamic equivalent” for the literal rendering, evidently reason that since the gospel which Paul herein opposes was not a true gospel at all, it must be that those who herald such a message are themselves lost, which, it is alleged, is to be equated with being “eternally condemned.”

We can understand why, as traditional “evangelicals,” such “translators” would conclude that false teachers, ones who themselves were unsaved, would have to be punished eternally. After all, according to them, the vast majority of the entirety of the human race, will be forever damned in the horrors of hellfire. So it is hardly surprising that unsaved, false teachers as well would have to be included, within the company of the damned.

It is not a matter, however, of a failure to believe other important teachings, but of a failure to believe the central message of “Christ crucified,” His death and resurrection, that shows that one is lost. Conversely, where these same

glorious essentials *are* believed, we have the evidence that one is saved. All who see in Christ, God’s own wisdom and power, who believe as well that Jesus died and rose, are included among God’s people (*cf* 1 Cor.1:21-25; 1 Thess. 4:14). This is so, even if they should be utensils of dishonor as to their service, having been given over to foolish myths.

There is no indication that those who were disturbing the Galatians denied these most basic elements of faith. Indeed, it is not credible to suppose that they did do so. The Galatians would hardly welcome the teaching of any who actually made any such extreme, foundational denials. Therefore, even on so-called “evangelical grounds,” such a remarkable rendering as, “let him be eternally condemned!” should hardly be countenanced.

Paul’s words, “if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema!” (1:8), make it clear that an evangelist’s divine authority is vested not in the messenger, but in the message. If Paul himself, or even “a messenger out of heaven,” must be anathematized should he bring a different evangel than that of the grace of Christ, it is impossible to believe that any contemporary man, whether priest or pastor, would be exempt from this same proscription.

“DEVOTED TO DESTRUCTION”

But what does it mean to be “anathema,” and of what does the anathema consist here in Paul’s warning?

In the Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament), *anathema* is the translation of the Hebrew *cherem*. It speaks of something that is “devoted,” yet in the sense of, unto adversative judgment; hence, “devoted to destruction” (or “loss”; e.g., Deut.7:26; Joshua 7:1,11-13). Certainly, an anathema is something that no one would care to invite upon himself. When Paul, then, says of any who bring

a false gospel, “let him be anathema!” the sense is, Let him be subject to *certain, adversative judgment*. The word itself, however, tells us nothing of the particulars or duration of any such judgment. For this we must consider the nature of the case, in any specific pronouncement of anathema.

The “anathema” which Paul pronounces in Galatians 1:8,9, consists of many grave consequences, but these do not include being subjected to “eternal condemnation.” Life’s justifying is for all mankind; and through the obedience of Christ, the entire vast throng of the human race shall be constituted just (Rom.5:18,19). We rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10), Who will abolish death and become All in all (1 Cor.15:26,28).

Neither does Paul’s anathema consist in the loss of eonian life for any such opposing teachers, those who nevertheless are in Christ. Eonian life is a gracious gift (Rom.6:23); grace reigns, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom. 5:21; *cp* Titus 3:7). Nor does Paul’s anathema consist, in the case of any in Christ who indeed must come under its judgment, of also coming under God’s indignation. God has not appointed us to indignation (1 Thess.5:9a); we shall be saved from the indignation of God through Christ (Rom.5:9).

Finally, Paul’s anathema does not impose soulish suffering. There is much that is *destructive*, that nonetheless is not at all destructive to health, wealth, and pleasure. For example, untroubled resignation concerning, combined with an unbridled zeal to uphold, the teaching of a horrible hell where the vast majority of men must spend eternity, coupled with an ethic that can finally only thank oneself for one’s exemption therefrom, is conducive neither to pity nor humility. Yet since most, especially if they should enjoy a good measure of conventional well-being, are insensitive to the deep injuriousness of such attitudes and beliefs, they remain oblivious to the very real anathema to which their own apostasy has subjected them.

For all the things which Paul’s pronouncement of anathema does *not* bring upon those who come under its judgment, this anathema *does* result in the preclusion of its subjects from the circle of those who are faithful dispensers of Christ (Col.1:7), and ensures all such persons’ inclusion among that company who are fraudulent workers (2 Cor.11:13), deceivers (2 Tim.3:13), and enemies of the *cross* of Christ (Phil.3:18). One may be all of these, without intending to be any of these, while being confident that one is none of these.

Paul’s anathema upon those who proclaim a different evangel, entails their loss of wages at the dais of Christ (*cp* 1 Cor.3:14,15; 2 Cor.5:10), even as their disqualification for a position of reigning (*cp* 1 Cor.9:27; 2 Tim.2:12a). It means that, apart from repentance, such will spend their careers in essential and vital opposition to the grace of God. It means that their ministries cannot but become a substantial disservice to others, through which many are injured and deceived. Worst of all, Paul’s anathema entails God’s displeasure with the ministry of all such ones, at least with respect to the essential character and content of their teaching. It means a life lived under the power of strong delusion; a strong delusion of a most insidious nature.

If one finally owes their enjoyment of divine blessing to themselves, it is impossible for them to thank God for it. Such cannot glorify God as God, and must to a considerable extent involve themselves in the veneration of the creature rather than the Creator. They cannot thank God alone even for their virtues, much less for their failures, which will yet bring glory to Him, for they imagine that they themselves are ultimately responsible for their deeds.

Anyone who is subject to such dreadful consequences as these, certainly has come under a great anathema; a tremendous course of destruction, to one’s own great loss. And, anyone who repudiates the grace of Christ for a dif-

ferent evangel—so long as he continues on in such a course—is indeed subject to just such consequences.

It is not that God is indignant with such ones and so is reckoning their offenses against them. This is by no means the case (*cf* 2 Cor.5:18,19; Rom.5:9,10). It is simply that, as in the case of all evil doing, when one is resolute in the advocacy of fundamentally false teaching, injurious consequences must follow in response to such improper actions. All such chastenings are designed to accord with God's purpose, and are in perfect harmony with His wisdom and love. Eventually, through such disciplines, and especially, through the saving grace of God itself, all will be brought not only to their senses but to salvation, even as to a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4).

Even if some (indeed, the vast majority) are ignorant of God and of the evangel of the grace of Christ, may such ignorance not be our portion. Let us “sober up justly and . . . not be sinning” (*cp* 1 Cor.15:34). While Paul's anathema is formally pronounced only upon those who *bring* an evangel beside that which the apostle first brought to the Galatians, many of the same injurious consequences which most especially accrue to the heralds of such delusions, necessarily accrue as well to those who accept and live according to the selfsame teachings.

Even so, having duly considered this baneful anathema pronounced by Paul, how we rejoice to know that for those who are in Christ, even if, like the Galatians, they have come under the sway of the teachings of Paul's antagonists, there is a word of grace and peace. Accordingly, Paul writes to all such ones: “*Grace* to you and *peace* from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal.1:3). Hence, as the apostle further declares in closing this epistle, we say as well to our readers in closing this exposition: “The *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit brethren! Amen!” (Gal.6:18).

J.R.C.

THE ENDURANCE OF JOB

THE SCENE set before us is grim. A good and compassionate man sits among the ashes, full of boils from head to foot, bereaved of his children, deprived of all his acquisitions, utterly cast down from his position of respect and honor within his world. Three close associates, evidently holding similar positions of responsibility in their respective city-states, have traveled to comfort him. But they are so astounded by his misery they cannot speak.

WHY THIS SUFFERING?

As we try to visualize this scene we find ourselves asking the question, Why? Why is Job experiencing this great evil? And more than this, Why is there evil at all? And most importantly of all, Why is there evil when there is also God?

We cannot expect the book of Job to answer this deepest of questions fully, but we can expect it to provide some important understanding. The book will indeed testify to the most basic principles of all, that God is in charge and has goals of good in view and is operating toward those goals.

Two of these goals are suggested in James 5:11. The most immediate purpose for Job's afflictions is the development of *endurance*. But as Paul reminds us in Romans 5:3-5, endurance is not an end in itself, but is a good that leads to further blessings. Hence James speaks of the *consummation* that the Lord provided for Job, the insight Job gained through the words of Yahweh concerning His deity and the enjoyment of God's abundant provisions in Job's “latter years” (Job 42:12-16).

ENDURANCE

It is in view of the severity of Job's sufferings that we can truly speak of his *endurance*. The measure of Job's afflictions is the measure of his endurance. We are apt, however, to think of endurance as a kind of passive acceptance. But, though it would include the seven days and nights of silence, Job's endurance involved his outcries and lamentations starting with chapter 3. Job's endurance was an insistence on connecting the evil he was suffering with the God Who brought him into existence and Who is operating all.

The elements of the Greek word for *endurance*, used by James, are: UNDER-REMAIN. Job remained under his afflictions, but not under the afflictions alone. He remained under the conviction that whatever he received in life, whether good or evil, it is from God. Job's endurance involved a continually honest facing of the facts. The sufferings were genuine; they were not divine judgments against wickedness in himself; he must look to God alone concerning them. Job's endurance involved his refusal to be deviated from this position.

THE CONSUMMATION

The word "consummation" suggests more than a ceasing or coming to an end. It speaks of coming to ends that were in view from the beginning, in this case to the goals that the Lord had purposed. Job's sufferings and the endurance given to him under his sufferings lead forward to "the consummation of the Lord," that is, that achievement of good that the Lord had in view from the beginning.

At the end of the book, Job realizes that he had professed ideas without understanding them: "Things too marvelous for me, that I did not know" (Job 42:3). What he had said was "rightly so" (42:7), but as he spoke he was not *seeing* Yahweh (42:5) with clear realization and confidence. That was reserved for the consummation of his experience.

In considering the long exchanges of words between Job and his associates, and then between Job and Yahweh, along with the observations of Elihu, we will find many marvelous things, ideas that must finally be related both to the great evil that has come upon Job and to God Who is over all, Who is the First Cause of all, and Who knows what He is doing.

JOB AND HIS ASSOCIATES

The series of speeches between Job and his three associates begin with chapter 3 and extend through chapter 31. They open and conclude with addresses by Job, who also replies to each of the speeches of his associates. Eliphaz and Bildad each speak three times, but Zophar speaks for himself only twice. Where we would expect Zophar to speak a third time, and where indeed the thoughts of his two addresses actually reappear in the text (Job 27:13-28:28), they are uttered through the lips of Job himself. It is as though Zophar and his companions have exhausted their ideas before the debate can be concluded, and Job has to recapitulate their arguments for them. The section closes with Job's summation of his own concerns (29:1-31:40).

This series of speeches can be outlined as follows:

Job's First Address (3:1-26)

Eliphaz's First Address (4:1-5:27)

Job's Reply to Eliphaz (6:1-7:21)

Bildad's First Address (8:1-22)

Job's Reply to Bildad (9:1-10:22)

Zophar's First Address (11:1-20)

Job's Reply to Zophar (12:1-14:22)

Eliphaz's Second Address (15:1-35)

Job's Reply to Eliphaz (16:1-17:16)

Bildad's Second Address (18:1-21)

Job's Reply to Bildad (19:1-29)

Zophar's Second Address (20:1-29)

Job's Reply to Zophar (21:1-34)
 Eliphaz's Third Address (22:1-30)
 Job's Reply to Eliphaz (23:1-24:25)
 Bildad's Third Address (25:1-6)
 Job's Reply to Bildad (26:1-27:12)
 Job's Review of Zophar's Thoughts (27:13-28:28)
 Job's Summation (29:1-31:40)

LET IT BE DARKNESS!
 (Job 3:1-26)

After the seven days and nights of silence, Job opens his mouth and words pour out. It is the reverse of Genesis chapter 1. In Genesis the brief and powerful words of God burst through the darkness and the chaos and bring forth seven days of creative activity and achievement. In Job the seven days (with their seven *nights* of darkness, appropriately noted) lead to the many words of Job pleading for a negation of his own beginnings. Job would have the light turn back to darkness, and his life undone.

Far from forgetting his words of 2:10, Job associates the evil he is experiencing with his Creator by paralleling his words with the opening words of Genesis, though in reverse order. In effect, Job points to God as the One with ultimate responsibility. God has given life to Job and has brought him into a world energized by light, but a world nevertheless where darkness remains. Life and light are not the problem, but rather the experience of evil within life, and evil so severe that Job longs for a reversal of the light into the darkness of Genesis 1:2. And for this, Job looks to God.

It is in this pathway, the struggle to perceive God in and through his experience of evil, that Job's thoughts take us. His words lead backward from the evil of his afflictions to a longing for the darkness of Genesis 1:2, and this will eventually bring us to a fresh insight into the mean-

3 Thereafter Job opened 'his mouth, and he 'maledicted 'his day. ²+Thus Job 'asserted, + 'saying:

- ³ May the day perish in which I was 'born,
And the night that said, A master is engendered!
- ⁴ 'That 'day! let it ^bbe darkness;
Let not Eloah from above 'seek after it,
And let not a light beam 'shine on it.
- ⁵ **May darkness** and the blackest shadow redeem it back;
May a cloud tabernacle over it;
May rolling fogs of the day frighten it.
- ⁶ 'That 'night! may gloom take hold of it;
May it not be 'one ⁱof the days of the year;
In the numbering of the months, may it not enter.
- ⁷ **Behold, that 'night!** may it ^bbe stark;
Let no' jubilant song 'enter into it.
- ⁸ **May** those who **curse'** the day revile it,
 'Who are **equipped** to rouse^e the dragon.
- ⁹ **May the stars** of its morning gloaming be darkened;
May it expect ^ylight and there be none,
And let it not 'see ⁱthe eyelids of the dawn.
- ¹⁰ **For it did not close** the doors of my mother's belly
 +**Or** 'conceal misery from my eyes.
- ¹¹ **Why** did I not 'die from the womb,
From the belly come forth and 'breathe my last?
- ¹² For **what reason** did two knees anticipate me,
And ^{wt}why the two breasts that I could 'suck?
- ¹³ **For now I would lie and be** 'quiet;
I would sleep; then there would be 'rest for me,
- ¹⁴ **With kings and counselors'** of the earth,
The builders' of desert tombs for themselves,
- ¹⁵ **Or with chiefs** who ^yhad gold,
 'Who were **filling their houses** with silver.
- ¹⁶ *or* **Why** ^{lb}was I not like a buried' stillborn child,
Like babes who have not seen light?

ing of Genesis 1:1 and a clearer recognition of God, Who gives light and life.

ELOAH

In addressing Deity or speaking of Him, Job uses the title “Eloah” more often than any other designation. He uses “Elohim” only once, and “El” eighteen times, but he uses the rare title “Eloah” twenty-five times.

The common Hebrew term for God is “Elohim” which is plural in form. “Eloah” is the same term in its singular form and means literally: TO-SUBJECTOR. A. E. Knoch comments on this in relation to the book of Job, as follows:

“The book of Job is remarkable in many ways. As it is one of the earliest pieces of literature, it deals with the relations between man and his Maker in a very simple and primitive fashion. In our present study, it is worthy of note that . . . [Eloah] is more frequent [in Job] than in all [other books] combined . . . Job seems quite sure that his fate lies in the hands of the To-Subjector, Whose function it is to make him bow to the Subjector’s will.”¹

DIFFERENT CONCERNS

There are distinct differences in tone and direction between the speeches of Job and those of his associates. Job is obsessed with the evil he is suffering and often speaks imprudently as he cries out for understanding and relief. His three associates are shocked by Job’s outbursts and try to redirect his thoughts into more conventional channels. But they forget that Job’s situation is not a conventional one.

Job’s lamentations continually direct attention to searching questions concerning the origin and the purpose of evil, and lead inevitably to thoughts regarding God’s rela-

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.45, pp.146,147.

- ¹⁷ **There the wicked leave off all disturbance,
And there those wearied from vigor are resting.**
- ¹⁸ **Prisoners are tranquil together;
They do not hear the voice of the taskmaster^l.**
- ¹⁹ **Small ⁺or great, he is there,
And the servant is free from his lords.**
- ²⁰ **Why is He giving light to the miserable,
And life to the bitter of soul**
- ²¹ (^lWho tarry^l for death, ⁺yet it is not coming,
And ^ldelve for it more ^fthan for buried treasures,
- ²² ^lWho rejoice^l unto exultation,
And are ^lelated ^lwhen they ^lfind the tomb),
- ²³ **To a master whose way is concealed
⁺When Eloah has ^lscreened him about?**
- ²⁴ **For ^{bf}like my bread ^lcomes my sighing,
And my roarings ^lpour forth like water.**
- ²⁵ **For the alarm I was afraid of, ⁺ it ^larrives for me,
And ^wwhatever I shrink from ^lcomes to me.**
- ²⁶ **I have no^l ease, and I am not quiet;
⁺ I have no^l rest, and disturbance keeps ^lcoming.**
- 4 ⁺Then Eliphaz the Temanite ^lanswered, ⁺ ^lsaying:**
- ² Can one try a word ^lwith you? You would ^ltire;
⁺Yet ^wwho is ^lable to restrain⁻ ^lfrom declarations?
- ³ **Behold, you have admonished many,
And you ^lreinforced slacking hands.**
- ⁴ **Your declarations ^lraised one who was stumbling,
And you made the bowing knees ^lresolute.**
- ⁵ **^lBut now it is coming ^lon you, and you ^ltire;
It is touching unto you, and you are ^lflustered.**
- ⁶ **Is not your devout fear your confidence,
And your flawless ways your expectation?**
- ⁷ **Remember, I pray, ^wwho that is innocent perishes?
And where are the upright suppressed?**
- ⁸ **Just as I have seen, those who plow^l lawlessness
And sow^l misery are reaping it.**

tionship to his sufferings. In 2:10 he had spoken of this evil as being received from Elohim. This lies at the heart of his concern and his hope for understanding. The associates also trace pain and suffering to God, but in a qualified way that does not fit the situation before them.

Where Job would probe, his associates would keep him from probing or get him to soften the probing lest he make matters worse by what seems rash impiety. The struggle is not so much between truth and error as between a searching out of the problem of evil and a caution not to enter into matters of "proper" human concern. Job's words are "rightly so" because they point us toward God and prepare the way for Him to reveal Himself. The words of the three associates, however, in effect, direct attention away from God to the human. What they say about God ends up by focusing on Job and what they feel he must do.

A WORD FROM ELIPHAZ
(Job 4:1-5:27)

It is not that what Eliphaz says is wrong in itself, but it is "not rightly so" in the context of the evil set before him. Like Bildad and Zophar, Eliphaz seeks to restrain (*cf* 4:2) and redirect Job's thoughts. Hence he speaks of Job's former qualities of leadership (4:3-6) and reminds Job of principles concerning divine operations that Job had previously held in common with his associates (4:7-11).

In no way would Eliphaz continue along the lines of thought that Job had introduced in chapter 3. Instead he would speak of Eloah with caution and a dose of mystery as we see in 4:12-16. When Eliphaz first speaks of Eloah his point concerns humanity rather than God: "Can a mortal be righteous before Eloah?" (4:17).

Hence our thoughts are directed to the fact that human beings are sinners. But the sinner Job, who owes his being to God, is suffering from severest bereavement and throb-

- ⁹ *f*By the **breath of Eloah** are they perishing,
And *f*by the **spirit of His nostrils**
are they being *all* consumed.
- ¹⁰ The **roaring of the lion**
and the **voice of the black lion** are gone,
And the **teeth of the sheltered lions** are broken out;
- ¹¹ The **long-maned lion** is perishing from lack of prey,
And the **cubs of the lioness** are **'parted** away.
- ¹² ⁺Now a word was brought **'stealthily to me,**
And my ear **'took** hold of a little **buzz** *f*of it.
- ¹³ **In disquieting thoughts from visions of the night,**
In that stupor which falls on mortals,
- ¹⁴ **Alarm befell me and quivering,**
And it **'made** the **multitude of my bones** afraid.
- ¹⁵ ⁺Then a wind **'passed by** *on*before my face;
The **hair of my flesh** **'bristled.**
- ¹⁶ Something **'stood** there,
⁺yet I could **not** **'recognize its appearance;**
A **representation** was **in front of my eyes;**
It was **still,** and I **'heard** a voice:
- ¹⁷ Can a **mortal** be **'righteous** *f*before Eloah?
*if*Or a **master** be **'pure** *f*before his **'Maker**?
- ¹⁸ *bd*If He **'places** **no** *f*faith in His servants,
And He **'charges** His messengers with **'impropriety**,
- ¹⁹ **How much more so** those who **tabernacle**
in **houses of clay,**
Whose foundation is in the soil?
Forces **'crush them** *bf*like a moth.
- ²⁰ *f*Between morning **'and evening**
they are being **pounded;**
*f*Without being **'regarded,** they **'perish** **'permanently.**
- ²¹ **Has not their tent cord** been **pulled up** *i*from them?
They **'die,** ⁺but **not** *i*with wisdom.
- 5** Call *pr*now! is there one who will **answer** *i*you?
And to *a*whom from the **holy ones** shall you face?

bing pain, and he is struggling for some understanding that relates this all to God. Eliphaz has missed the point, or rather, he refuses to deal with it.

Not only does Eliphaz want Job to concentrate more on himself as a mortal and a sinner, but he would have Job see God as One at a distance from dying and foolish humanity (4:18-5:7). He makes much of inquiring of El and placing his cause before Elohim. He speaks of God's great deeds and marvelous works, but he refuses to go beyond what he has always understood of God, namely that God provides necessities and safety for the needy and appropriate retribution for the wicked (5:8-16). God causes pain (5:18) but in connection with correction of human failures (5:17). He assures Job that things will work out; as long as Job is innocent God will rescue him and restore him to prosperity (5:19-27). Again, this is what happens to Job, but it happens as God's consummation rather than as God's response to human deservings.

Besides using the characteristic title, *Eloah*, Eliphaz is the first to use the equally distinctive designation, *Him Who-Suffices* (5:17). Yet Eliphaz's view of God's sufficiency is applied only to human worthiness, so that, in effect, the thoughts of Eliphaz are discouraging to Job.

In 1 Corinthians 3:19, Paul cites the words of Eliphaz from Job 5:13. God is clutching or seizing "the wise in their craftiness." This certainly is a good principle to remember concerning the wisdom of this eon (1 Cor.3:18), but it has little to do with Job's situation, which would parallel more closely Paul's situation described in 2 Corinthians 12:7. What Paul heard from the Lord then is surely something Job would have rejoiced to hear, and, we believe, truly in accord with that dimmer revelation of divine purpose that Yahweh finally gave to Job: "Sufficient for you is My grace, for My power in infirmity is being perfected" (2 Cor.12:9).

D.H.H.

- ² **'Indeed vexation shall kill** ^γ the **foolish** man,
And jealousy shall ^εput the **simple**^l one to **death**.
- ³ **I myself have seen** a **foolish** man ^εtaking root,
And I saw his homestead suddenly ^lreviled:
- ⁴ **May his sons go far from safety,**
And may they be crushed in the gate
⁺when there is **no rescuer**^l.
- ⁵ ^w **His harvest, the hungry one shall eat,**
And he shall take it away to [~]secluded places[~];
⁺ [~]Those **thirsting**[~] will **gasp for their estate**.
- ⁶ **For sorrow does not grow** ^lforth from the **soil,**
And from the ground, misery does not ^lsprout,
- ⁷ **'But humanity is born to misery,**
⁺Even as ^{son}sparks of **burning coal fly** ^laloft.
- ⁸ **Nevertheless, as for me, I** ^linquire ^γof **El,**
And ^γbefore **Elohim** do I ^lplace my ^γcause,
- ⁹ **Doer**^l of **great deeds,** ⁺of which there is **no fathoming,**
Marvelous^l works ^fof which there is **no enumeration,**
- ¹⁰ ^γWho is **giving rain on** the surface of the **earth**
And sending waters over the surface of the **open places.**
- ¹¹ In order to ^{pl}set the **lowly** ^γon **high,**
And so the somber^l may become **impregnable** in **safety,**
- ¹² He is **annulling** the **devisings** of the **crafty,**
 So ⁺that their hands may not ^lachieve **prosperity,**
- ¹³ **Seizing the wise in their craftiness,**
 So ⁺that the **counsel** of the **cunning**^l is carried **headlong**^l.
- ¹⁴ **By day they** ^lencounter **darkness,**
And they ^lgrope ^lat noon as in the **night.**
- ¹⁵ ⁺Yet He ^lsaves the **needy** from the **sword** ^fof their **mouth**
And from the hand of the unyielding.
- ¹⁶ ⁺Hence there comes to ^lbe **expectation** for the **poor,**
And iniquity, it shuts its mouth.
- ¹⁷ **Behold, happy is the mortal whom Eloah** ^lcorrects;
⁺Thus you must not ^lreject the **admonition**
 of **Him Who-Suffices.**

- 18 **For He Himself causes pain, and He shall bind up;
He transfixes, and His hands, they shall heal.**
- 19 **In six distresses He shall rescue you,
And in seven, evil shall not touch you.**
- 20 **In famine, He will ransom you from death,
And in battle from the hands of the sword.**
- 21 **From scourge of tongue shall you be hidden,
And you shall not fear devastation when it comes.**
- 22 **Devastation and starvation shall you ridicule,
And you shall certainly not fear the wild animal
of the earth.**
- 23 **For you will have a covenant with the stones of the field,
And the wild animal of the field
will be at peace with you.**
- 24 **+ You will know that your tent lies in peace,
And you will check over your homestead
and shall not miss anything.**
- 25 **You will know also that your seed will be abundant,
And your offspring like the herbage of the earth.**
- 26 **You shall come to the tomb in mature age,
Like a shock of grain that ascends in its season.**
- 27 **Behold this, we have investigated it; it is so;
Do hear it; and you, get to know it for yourself.**

3:1-10: cf Jr 20:14-18.

3:7 **jubilant** song: cf Jb 38:7.

3:8 **dragon**: or, **leviathan** (possibly the crocodile); cf Jb 41:1; Ps 74:14; 104:26; Is 27:1.

4:18 **impropriety**: Hb raving.

5:5 **secluded** places: Hb pricking thorns; **Those thirsting**: Hb Asnag.

5:13: cf 1 C 3:19.

5:17: cf Ps 94:12; Pr 3:11,12; Hb 12:5,6.



ARRAYS OF THE LIVING ELOHIM

WHEN SAMUEL HAD ENDED his last meeting with king Saul and “turned around to leave, Saul held fast to the hem of his robe, and it was torn. Samuel said to him, Yahweh has torn the kingship over Israel away from you today and has given it to an associate of yours who is better than you” (1 Sam.15:27,28). The prophet declared that this incident was a symbol of what had happened to Saul’s dynasty: Yahweh had annulled it and had given the kingship to an associate, to a better man.

Saul may have thought that Samuel might go out some day and anoint that man secretly, just as he himself had once been anointed in secret. A man of Samuel’s power and influence could not make such a trip unnoticed, since it would be outside his routine movements to Bethel and Mizpah as a circuit judge. Hence Samuel’s curious question (in 16:2): “How can I go?”

Just before Samuel left, “Saul pleaded, I have sinned, yet now, I pray, bring glory to me in front of the elders of my people and in front of Israel. Return with me so that I may prostrate myself before Yahweh your Elohim. So Samuel turned back, following after Saul, and Saul prostrated himself before Yahweh” (15:30,31). Here Saul asked for at least a token show of honor before his people, and Samuel accommodated him.

“Then Samuel went to Ramah; as for Saul, he went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. Samuel did not come again to see Saul until the day of his death, though Samuel mourned for Saul” (15:34,35).

FILL YOUR HORN WITH OIL!

“Yahweh said to Samuel, How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go! I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected among his sons a king for Myself. Samuel replied, How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me. Yahweh answered, Take a heifer of the herd in your hand and say, I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh. You must invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and then I shall make known to you what you should do. You must anoint for Me the one whom I shall designate to you” (1 Sam.16:1-3).

Jesse the Bethlehemite was grandson of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 4:17-22). Coming from Ramah, Samuel would have to travel through Gibeah, Saul’s hometown. The latter would call Samuel’s anointing another man an act of treason, if word of it ever reached him. So Samuel was given a cover story. He was to take a heifer with him and make a sacrifice to Yahweh in Bethlehem. When he arrived there, “the elders of the city trembled as they met him. They asked, Are you coming in peace, O seer? He replied, I have come in peace to sacrifice to Yahweh. Hallow yourselves and rejoice today with me. He himself hallowed Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice” (16:4,5).

Bethlehem lay about six miles south of Jerusalem in Judah. The elders were not trembling before the prophetic office, but because of political risk. The high status of the visitor would certainly mean trouble for the city. Either Samuel was Saul’s man who came with acquisitive intentions to the unclaimed south of the land, or he was not Saul’s man, which might put them at risk with Saul. And now the great prophet from the north had come south for a mere sacrifice! Yet Samuel was obviously able to alleviate their fears when he invited them to the sacrifice.

YAHWEH’S SPIRIT PROSPERS ON DAVID

Samuel hallowed Jesse and his sons, carrying out the appropriate ritual of purification before the sacrifice. In this way Samuel was shown each of Jesse’s sons, and he was ready to hear the word from Yahweh whom *He* had chosen. Looking at the handsome and tall appearance of Eliab, the eldest son, Samuel thought, “Surely, in front of Yahweh is His anointed. But Yahweh said to Samuel, You must not look at his appearance and at the loftiness of his stature, for I have rejected him. For not as a human sees, does the One, Elohim, see. A human sees the visible appearance, yet Yahweh sees into the heart” (16:6,7).

Samuel thought that he had before him all the sons of Jesse. As he viewed them, he imagined that in one of them he was looking at the person whom Yahweh had chosen. Samuel was impressed by the eldest son, Eliab, a striking looking young man; and so he felt sure that the latter must be Yahweh’s anointed (16:6). Yet Yahweh urged Samuel not to look at the lad’s appearance and the loftiness of his stature. Samuel, like people in general, was impressed by what is on the surface. Yet Yahweh perceives the inward qualities and sees into the heart. And so He told Samuel that He had rejected Eliab.

Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But the prophet told Jesse, “Yahweh has not chosen any of these. Then Samuel asked Jesse, Are the lads finished? He replied, There remains yet the youngest. Yet behold, he is shepherding the flock” (16:10,11). At Samuel’s request, Jesse “sent and had him come; he was ruddy, with lovely eyes and of good appearance. And Yahweh said [to the prophet], Rise and anoint him, for this is he. So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the spirit of Yahweh prospered on David from that day onward. Then Samuel rose and went to Ramah” (16:12,13).

David received the anointing silently; no word was spoken by him, nor by his brothers, nor by Samuel. The anointing was a private act and was not publicized. David's fine appearance was an external sign of his inward merit; Yahweh had seen into his heart, and from that day onward His spirit prospered on David. So by intuition he would come to discern in Israel's soldiers more than a bunch of dismayed people; hence he would call them "*the arrays of the living Elohim.*" For the time being, David would be king in Yahweh's sight only, Who had sought out for Himself a man in accord with His own heart (1 Sam.13:14).

DAVID MEETS SAUL

"As for the spirit of Yahweh, it had withdrawn from Saul, and an evil spirit from Yahweh frightened him. Saul's courtiers said to him, Behold now, an evil spirit from Elohim is frightening you. Let our lord now order your courtiers, who are before you, that they should seek a man who knows how to play the harp. Whenever it occurs that an evil spirit from Elohim comes over you, then he will play with his hand, and it will be well with you and give you rest" (1 Sam.16:14-16).

Once the spirit of Elohim had prospered over Saul (11:6) and had enabled him to win victories. This divine power is now said to have withdrawn from him; and the void is filled by an evil spirit from Elohim that frightened him. Hence Saul suffered from fits of extreme depression and later from a kind of persecution mania.

We know from Isaiah 45:6,7, that Yahweh is not only the Former of light and the Maker of good, but also the Creator of darkness and the Creator of evil.¹ Now Saul's courtiers had told him, "An evil spirit from Elohim is frightening you," and they recommended the power of music to

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, September 1995, p.214.

assuage the depression. So Saul said to them: "Select now for me a man who can play well, and bring him to me. One of the young attendants answered, saying, Behold, I have observed a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who knows how to play. He is a master of valor, a man of war, proficient in speech, a handsome man, and Yahweh is with him" (1 Sam.16:15-18).

So Saul sent word to Jesse, "saying, Do send to me David, your son who is with your flock" (16:19). This royal message was a command that required immediate obedience. Since no one would appear before the king empty-handed, Jesse sent not only his son David, but also some of the produce of his farm: a load of bread, a skin-bottle of wine, and a kid of the goats.

David² must have been a lovable character. The affection that Saul had for him may have helped toward Saul's healing, while the therapeutic charm of the music of the harp "inspired Saul, and it was well with him [for the time being]. Then the evil spirit would withdraw from him" (16:23).

We may surmise that David's appointment in 16:22 ("Let David now stay before me") was not intended to be permanent, and that he was only summoned when Saul's intermittent bouts of depression required his services as a musician.

We also read in 16:21: "Later David became a gear-bearer for him." This happened a few years later when David had matured into a bearded adult who looked very different from the youth of 1 Samuel 16. Hence Saul did not recognize the young man who had slain Goliath, the champion of the Philistines.

THE ARRAYS OF THE LIVING ELOHIM

The Philistines had sent an invading army on to Israelite territory, not this time to the central hills from which the

2. David, literally: Endearing, or Beloved, Darling.

enemy had been chased westwards. Now the Philistines had gathered their forces (1 Sam.17:1) on the borders of Judah and nearer their own territory. The villages mentioned in verse 1 were located about 15 miles west of Bethlehem. Saul and his army “were gathered and encamped in the vale of Elah” (17:2), that ran westwards from the hill country of Judah, roughly in the latitude of Bethlehem.

“Now the Philistines were standing on this side on a hill, while Israel was standing on that side on a hill, with a ravine between them. A champion³ marched forth from the array of the Philistines; his name was Goliath” (17:3,4), and he was over nine feet in height. This giant taunted the arrays of Israel for forty days (17:16), saying: “Choose for yourselves a man and let him come down against me. If he should prevail in fighting with me and smite me, then we will become servants to you. Yet if *I* should prevail over him and smite him, then . . . you must serve us . . . *I* challenge the arrays of Israel this day! Give me such a man, and let us fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and exceedingly fearful” (17:8-11).

“The three elder sons of Jesse had left and gone following Saul to the war . . . yet David would go and return from attendance on Saul to graze the flock of his father at Bethlehem” (17:13-15). Since the three brothers were needing supplies of food, Jesse sent David out to bring toasted grain and ten loaves of bread to them in the military camp, and to check about their well-being. Jesse added ten fresh milk cheeses for the chief officer of their contingent (17:17,18).

When David arrived at the camp, the army was marching forth to the array. Hence he left his supplies in charge of the quartermaster, so that he could run to the battle line and find out about his brothers' welfare. While he was still speaking to them, Goliath the Philistine came up. “He

3. champion, literally: man of the [space] between [two armies].

spoke those usual words, and David heard them. All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled before him and were exceedingly fearful” (17:23,24).

Yet David was indignant about those insulting words. He asked, “What shall be done for the man who smites this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he challenges *the arrays of the living Elohim?*” (17:26). David recognized that the Philistine champion was actually taunting Elohim when he said: “I challenge the arrays of Israel this day” (17:10). We may assume that David's confidence in the power of his Elohim was absolute, knowing that only faith in Him would overcome the gigantic champion of the Philistines; for the spirit of Yahweh prospered on David (16:13). So to him, Goliath was just a dangerous predator, comparable to the wild animals that used to attack his father's flock.

In answer to his question, David learned of the three privileges for the one who would kill Goliath: “The king shall enrich him with great riches, he shall give to him his daughter, and he shall make his father's house free”⁴ (17:25). When David asked other soldiers, he received the same answer; and he may have repeated his denouncement: “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he challenges *the arrays of the living Elohim?*”

David's words were reported to Saul who sent for him. David announced his offer to fight the giant, but the king tried to discourage him. So David reported of his experience as a shepherd of his father's flock, “when a lion or a bear came and he carried off a flockling from the drove” (17:34). He would go after the predator and rescue the flockling from its mouth and kill the wild animal. He added: “Your servant has smitten both lion and bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will become like one of them, for he has reproached *the arrays of the living Elohim* . . . Yah-

4. either tax-exempt, or free from statute-labor for the king.

weh Who rescued me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, *He* shall rescue me from the hand of this Philistine” (17:36,37).

So the king said: “Go! And Yahweh, He may be with you” (17:37). Then Saul offered David his own armor. This was a most generous offer since only he himself and his son possessed full battle dress. David tried it on, but he was unable to walk in it (17:39); it was probably too large for him.

“Then he took his stave in his hand, chose for himself five smooth stones from the wadi With his sling in his hand he came close to the Philistine” (17:40), who maledicted him in the name of his gods. David replied: “I am coming against you in the Name of Yahweh of hosts, *the Elohim of the arrays of Israel*, Whom you have challenged today I will smite you Then the whole earth shall know that there is an Elohim in Israel. And this whole assembly shall know that Yahweh shall give victory without sword or spear. For *Yahweh's is the battle*, and He will deliver you into our hands” (17:45-47).

“David, with sling and stone, was faster than the Philistine; he smote the Philistine and put him to death Then the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines” (17:50,52). Thus *the arrays of the living Elohim* responded to the vaunt and the challenge of the enemy (17:10). And David may have rejoiced with words like these (Psa.68:1-4):

*Elohim shall arise! His enemies shall be scattered,
And those hating Him shall flee from His presence!
Like the whisking away of smoke . . .
So shall the wicked perish from the presence of Elohim.
Yet the righteous shall rejoice;
They shall be glad before Elohim,
And they shall be elated with rejoicing.
Sing to Elohim! Make melody to His Name!*

H.H.R.

(To be continued)

The Father's Love

SET FOR LIFE EONIAN

“Now on the coming sabbath almost the entire city was gathered to hear the word of the Lord. Yet the Jews, perceiving the throngs, are filled with jealousy, and they contradicted the things spoken by Paul, blaspheming.

“Being bold, both Paul and Barnabas say, “To you first was it necessary that the word of God be spoken. Yet, since, in fact, you are thrusting it away, and are judging yourselves not worthy of eonian life, lo! we are turning to the nations. For thus the Lord has directed us: I have appointed you for a light of the nations; for you to be for salvation as far as the limits of the earth.”

“Now on hearing this, the nations rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord, and they believe, whoever were *set for life eonian*” (Acts 13:44-48).

These special words; “*set for life eonian*” are most significant! *Designated, called, and justified*, these are familiar terms to our ears. They should be, for these are not merely “terms;” rather they are the precious “keys” which released us from the bondage and misery of despair into the glorious intimacy of reconciliation. Of the hundred and one definitions of this word “set” in the dictionary, we choose two: “*to set someone free,*” and “*to put into order or readiness for use.*”

On the previous sabbath, Paul and Barnabas had entered the synagogue, and were courteously invited by the chiefs for “any word of entreaty” (Acts 13:15). While Paul discounted his expert knowledge of ritual and the Mosaic law, deeming his brilliant legalistic experience to be refuse

(Phil.3:8), both he and his companion, a Cyprian Levite, were eminently qualified. Their bearing and Paul's words would plainly testify to their maturity. He spoke fearlessly of his Lord, declaring, for the first time, "Let it then be known to you, brethren, that through this One is being announced to you the pardon of sins, and from all which you could not be justified in the law of Moses, in this One everyone who is believing is being justified" (Acts 13:38,39). Remarkably, on this occasion, there was no dissent. Outside the synagogue, many of the Jews and reverent proselytes spoke privately to Paul and Barnabas, and these were persuaded to remain in the grace of God.

Now, as initially noted, on this second sabbath, Paul's opening words made it plain that he was speaking mainly to the gentile population. Almost the entire inhabitants of Pisidian Antioch had gathered to hear the evangelists. The manner in which the evangel was thankfully received as well as the rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord thoroughly exasperated those Jews who showed themselves neglectful of so great a salvation. With a cunning ploy which seems uncomfortably familiar, they spurred on the *reverent*, the *respectable*, and foremost citizens of the city to eject the apostles from their midst! Now in this present day of apostasy, these hypocritical opponents have other allies, *apathy and indifference*.

Should we today insist that the evangel of the Circumcision must not, under any circumstances, be confused with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, and, moreover, should we insist on a recognition of the—as yet unfulfilled—promise of a glorious millennium for Israel, then our listeners would shake their heads in confusion, or, perhaps like the Jews of Antioch, would do all in their powers to oppose our ministry.

With gentle persuasion and the consummate skill of brilliant oration, the apostle had vainly attempted to reach the

hearts of those in the synagogue by referring to those tender words from the second psalm, "My Son art Thou; I today have begotten Thee" (Acts 13:33; Psalms 2:7). He brought them the stupendous evangel of justification, associated with the law of Moses. Although this loving kindness was far below the soaring high plateau of justification *apart from law*, and included a pardon which could and would be revoked, even this made little impression.

"WOE TO ME"

"For necessity is lying upon me, for it were woe to me if I should not be bringing the evangel!" (1 Cor.9:16). We know what the apostle suffered in bringing the evangel. We may read of his profound heartache for his brethren, his relatives according to the flesh as he witnessed their rejection and callousness (Rom.9:1-5). After many, many hard years of suffering infirmities, outrages, necessities, persecution, distresses, he now embarked on carrying his own salvation into effect in heralding the evangel of the Uncircumcision. We may depend on the fact that this would be undertaken with great courage, and "*without murmurings and reasoning*" (Phil.2:14). What tremendous joy would fill his loving heart in witnessing the glad acceptance of the evangel!

He had no way of knowing those whom his Lord would be calling. We may be sure that he fully honored the Jerusalem agreement, and would confine his commission to the nations. He even went further than mere observance, to the loving gesture of bringing gifts for the poor saints in Judea. The response? Harassment of the young ecclesia and attempted assassination!

"MY SON, THE BELOVED"

What then is persecution but a privilege in light of God's love in *setting* us for life eonian? Let us, then, meditate on

the particular reference which Paul used to reach the hearts of those in the synagogue in connection with the filial love of the Father for His dear Son. In this we are reminded of the joyful—dare we say *proud*—announcement, “This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight” (Matt.3:17).

“Open my eyes that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my ears that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my ears, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my mouth and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my heart, illumine me,
Spirit divine!”¹

The motto on my desk calendar was “Let your religion be less of a theory and more of a love affair.” While this speaks of temporal affection, and may not compare with

1. hymn by Charles H. Scott.

that higher, divine love, yet the very intensity of many such renowned loves may cause some of insipid faith to pale into shame. We ought not to despise this human relationship, for it has much to teach us. Our own dear Father speaks of us as His children. Our Lord drew on this same relationship to provide many instances of filial tenderness. How poignant the sore challenge of Abraham through this same kinship:

“The messenger of Yahweh called to him and said: Abraham! Abraham! And he replied: Here I am. He continued: Do not stretch out your hand on the youth, and do not do anything to him; for now I know that you fear Elohim since you have not kept back your son, your only one from Me” (Gen.22:11,12).

Consider well the precious intimacy of those incidents concerning Jacob and his son, Joseph in Egypt. We can scarce do this casually or with indifference, for here is a searching insight into the suffering and pain of God, for His beloved Son.

“He asked them about their well-being and said: Is all well with your old father of whom you spoke? Is he still alive? They replied: All is well with your servant, our father; he is still alive. And they bowed the head and prostrated to him” (Gen.43:27,28).

Finally, at the conclusion of this drama we read: “Joseph had his chariot hitched up and went up to meet his father Israel in Goshen. When he appeared before him, he fell and wept long on his neck. Then Israel said to Joseph: I am willing to die at this time, after I have seen your face, and that you are still alive” (Gen 46:29,30).

A TIME OF APOSTASY

“Let us not gauge our service by apparent results or so-called success. By that standard the later ministry of our Lord was a failure. Fewer followed Him as He went

on unfolding His sufferings. But surely this phase of His earthly service, culminating in the cross, was most appreciated by His God and Father. Paul also went from service to suffering. But shall we say that the aged apostle, in his chains, rejected by the saints in Asia, forsaken by his friends, was not a success? Then it was he wrote his greatest epistles and, in his infirmity, really accomplished far more than all the rest of the apostles together.

“It has always been God’s way to reserve a remnant in the midst of apostasy. Such there is now. We cannot stay the tide of evil. That is in fulfillment of His Word. But we can accomplish a work in the midst of it far more pleasing to God than is possible at any other time. This should encourage us in the midst of apparent failure and when called upon to face opposition. As a soldier our principal business is to suffer evil.

“At the same time God is preparing hearts for the message He has given. We must depend on Him for that quite as much as for the truth itself. Men will not have it unless constrained by His spirit. Let us seek to fall in line with His operations. With gracious persistence, let us present the truth wherever possible, and press it upon all who will hear. Let us not aim merely at the blessing of our fellow saints, but at the higher goal—the glory of God, on which all ultimate blessing depends.”²

“Grace be with you all. Amen!”

Donald Fielding

2. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.20, p.130.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES VOLUME FOR 1995

Unsearchable Riches Volume 86, for the year 1995 (288 pages, bound in dark green cloth), is now at the bindery, and should be available for shipping in a few weeks. The price is \$15.00 plus \$1.50 shipping (California residents please add sales tax). A list of available *U.R.* volumes (as well as photocopied sets) is available upon request.