

# THE APOSTLE OF THE RECONCILIATION

OR

THE DISPENSATIONAL POSITION OF THE ACTS  
AND THE MINISTRY AND EPISTLES OF PAUL

BY

CHARLES H. WELCH

AUTHOR OF

*Dispensational Truth*  
*United, yet Divided*  
*Just and the Justifier*  
*In Heavenly Places*  
*Far above all*  
etc.

*'For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be,  
but life from the dead ?' (Rom. 11:15).*

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## PREFACE

The purpose of God which is unfolded in the Scriptures proceeds from glory to glory, from the glory of a redeemed earth to the glory which is 'far above all'. The climax of revelation is reached in the 'prison epistles' of the apostle Paul. To make known the ministry of the apostle to the Gentiles, to point out its grace and its glory, to combat the antagonism of those who raise the misleading cry, 'Back to Pentecost', to lead on to the heights and depths of the epistles of the mystery this is the goal, indeed the *raison d'être* not only of the present Volume, but of all the literature published in our name.

Let it, however, be clearly understood, that we adopt the attitude of the apostle who said:

'Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers? ... we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord' (1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 4:5).

Paul is but the mouthpiece, the channel. He who speaks is Christ. We are not worshippers of Paul, neither do we speak of his doctrine as Pauline. We do, however, 'magnify' his office, realizing that in neglecting the witness of Paul Christendom is in reality turning away from the testimony of the risen and ascended Christ.

In the present Work we seek to show the dispensational place of the Acts, and the earlier epistles of Paul. This in its turn provides a basis for the final revelation given to Paul, namely, the dispensation of the mystery, which is contained in the epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and 2 Timothy.

The great keyword which dominates this Volume is *Reconciliation*. We believe that once the dispensational meaning of the reconciliation has been recognized, the Acts of the Apostles and the ministry of Paul will be appreciated at their true worth. While we realize that no one but a sincere lover of the Word of God will find much to his taste in these pages, we make no apology for taking the opportunity in the opening chapter of stressing the fundamental truth of the plenary inspiration of all Scripture.

In such matters as archaeology and chronology we are necessarily indebted to those who have made these departments their special study; but for the main issue of the book we are alone responsible before the Lord. We take this opportunity of acknowledging the great help received from the writings of Sir W.M. Ramsay, particularly with regard to the archaeology of Asia Minor, the re-discovery of 'Galatia', and the historical accuracy of the Acts generally. As to chronology, we have consulted numerous and ponderous works, but feel indebted particularly to the writings of Mr. C. H. Turner.

In the preparation and criticism of the MS for and through the press, we have had the fellowship of several brethren and sisters in Christ, which we here most gratefully acknowledge.

Should the Lord be pleased to permit us to reach the goal of our ministry, we trust to meet the reader once again in a subsequent Volume, which will deal with the epistles of the mystery. The present Volume, while complete in itself, would naturally form the basis of such a work.

We now commend the testimony to the Lord, praying that it may be owned and blessed to many who shall find therein not only 'seed for the sower', but also 'bread for the eater'.

'And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles' (Acts 14:27).

That this book may lead the reader to praise the Lord for that 'open door' is the hope of the Author,

CHARLES H. WELCH

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## FOREWORD

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### The purpose of the present Volume.

In the Volume entitled *Dispensational Truth* we were not able to do more than take a wide view of the general trend of Scripture. We observed the working out of a purpose, and saw that it was carried forward to a conclusion under a series of dispensations, and were enabled to see that 'the Jew, Gentile, and Church of God' indicated dispensational distinctions which are of first importance to observe.

The present Volume deals mainly with the Church of God, and with that set of Scriptures which is bounded by the history of the Acts of the Apostles. The epistles of Paul which were written during or after his imprisonment belong to a dispensation which was not instituted until the ministry of the Acts period had come to a close. Their study demands separate treatment, and the present Volume will be useful largely in clearing the way for their examination, and in showing the foundation upon which they are built.

In a former Volume we were content to speak of the 'generally accepted order of the epistles of Paul', but in this Volume the chronology both of the Acts and the Epistles will form a subject for enquiry. The first part of this Volume will be taken up with matters which are mainly chronological, geographical, and critical. We can fully sympathize with those who, having tasted the blessings which were promised before the age times, will not feel very interested in the dates of the Acts; and who, having realized that their citizenship is in heaven, will have lost interest in the townships and colonies of the earth. Yet the highest pinnacle of blessedness revealed in the epistles of the mystery is founded upon historic facts which were enacted in geographical places by real persons, whose names and titles, lives and deaths, occur in the annals of secular Roman history.

What heart-moving doctrines arise out of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus! Yet we must keep prominently before us that the resurrection is not a beautiful, soul-stirring theory, but a fact of history as unsentimental and as unalterable as '1066, William the Conqueror'. Doctrines deduced from facts may change, but the facts themselves remain unaltered. The doctrines that arise out of them are only possible and practicable because the transaction is a fact of history. Notice the way in which the apostle establishes the fact of the resurrection of the Lord before he proceeds to deal with its effects. Having cited a whole series of witnesses he follows with a statement to the effect that if Christ be not risen from the dead :

1. Then is our preaching vain;
2. Your faith is vain;
3. We are found false witnesses of God;
4. Ye are yet in your sins;
5. They which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

Not only do we need to realize the foundation upon which our faith rests (to say nothing of the finer dispensational sub-divisions which are our more immediate concern), but also to remember that we are facing days *when the truth of God will be rejected, undermined, and explained away*, so that from all standpoints a thorough examination of the basis of our position seems desirable. We therefore turn our attention to the Acts of the Apostles, considering its authorship and object, the chronology of the various events of the book, and the chronological order of the epistles.

The important question of the dating of the epistles cannot be approached without reference to geography; in fact, the accepted dating of one epistle is the result of meagre geographical evidence which made a late date at the time a necessity. We speak of the epistle to the Galatians, which will be dealt with in its place. The dispensational changes indicated by the narrative are connected with various nations and countries, all of which demand careful examination.

When these preliminary studies have been undertaken we shall be in a position to consider more closely the epistles of the period, and their doctrine, practice, and dispensation will be grasped the better for our having given time and attention to these less interesting opening studies.

## CHAPTER 1

**Many Infallible Proofs****A question of Authorship, Accuracy and Authenticity.**

When we commence the Acts of the Apostles we realize that we are reading a second volume, and that the same writer had addressed the same individual in a former treatise.

'The former account I made, O Theophilus, concerning all things which Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up' (Acts 1:1,2 Author's translation).

We already possess in the inspired Scriptures four such records, which take us at least to the resurrection if not to the ascension of the Lord. The Gospel according to Matthew does not record the ascension, it being more in harmony with the purpose of that book to leave Christ upon the earth in possession of 'all power'. John likewise stops short of the ascension. This leaves us Mark and Luke. Mark records the ascension, and in the closing verses thus epitomizes the story of the Acts:

'And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following' (Mark 16:20).

Luke's Gospel also records the ascension; and the parallels which may be seen between the closing verses of Luke and the opening section of Acts are so intimate that really to see them will practically convince the reader that the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts are Volumes 1 and 2, written by the same writer. Note the parallels between Luke 24:36-53 and Acts 1:1-14 :

## LUKE

'And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them His hands and His feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them'.

## ACTS

**Many Infallible Proofs.**

'... the apostles whom He had chosen: to whom also He shewed Himself alive after His passion by *many infallible proofs*, being seen of them forty days'.

*(It will be seen that what Luke wrote in fuller detail, Acts summarizes under one head. This is exactly what we do when referring to previous correspondence on any subject).*

### The Lord's Words to His Apostles

And He said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures'.

... speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God'.

*(Notice how these two aspects of truth are brought together in the last verse of Acts, 'preaching the KINGDOM OF GOD, and teaching those things which concern the LORD JESUS CHRIST' - an unobtrusive connection such as delighted Paley. Further, the fact of their opened understanding shows their question in Acts 1:6 to be right and fitting, as also 1:16-26.*

### The Commission

... repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things'.

... ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth'.

### The Enduement.

... behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high'.

... commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me ... ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost (holy spirit) not many days hence ... ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost (Spirit) is come upon you'.

### The Ascension

And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven'.

And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight'.

Notice how each supplements the other. The Gospel tells us, 'He was parted from them', but does not say how; Acts adds the information concerning 'the cloud'. Acts also adds statements regarding the angels and the second coming of the Lord.

**The Apostles' Return**

And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God'.

Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room ... These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication'.

According to the purpose with which Luke resumes the pen, the names of the eleven apostles are given together with the women, Mary the mother of the Lord, and His brethren.

It will be seen that Acts proper commences with verse 15; the fourteen opening verses being a résumé of the conclusion of the Gospel narrative. This has an important bearing upon the Structure of the book, which will appear later in this work.

Luke is not mentioned by name in any part of the Acts of the Apostles, but the evidence we have already considered is more than confirmed by the internal testimony of the book itself. T.R. Birks, in his *HORAE APOSTOLICAE, No. 25, 'Internal evidence of the Acts of the Apostles'*, shows by a careful examination of the subject that no other writer than Luke can satisfy the requirements or fulfil all the conditions. The following is a synopsis of the argument. The reader is referred for fuller details to the original work.

In Acts 16:10 the writer of the book associates himself with the apostle; and we learn from the record that he was with the apostle in his journey from Troas to Philippi; was absent after Paul's departure from Philippi during his double stay at Corinth and Ephesus; joined him again at Philippi; continued with him from Greece to Palestine during his imprisonment at Caesarea, his voyage, and at least the earlier part of his imprisonment at Rome. None of the epistles were written until after the arrival at Corinth. Six epistles (1 and 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans) were written during the writer's absence; his name therefore will not occur in the lists mentioned in these epistles as Paul's companions at the time. Four epistles written during the Roman imprisonment were Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and Philippians; the writer's name therefore will probably appear in these epistles: hence we may infer that the writer of the Acts was either Tychicus, Timothy, Epaphroditus, Epaphras, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Marcus, Jesus Justus, Luke, or Demas.

*Timothy, Tychicus, and Aristarchus.* - These accompanied both Paul and the writer from Greece (Acts 20:4,5), and so are excluded.

*Onesimus*, being converted during Paul's imprisonment at Rome (Philemon 10), is excluded.

*Marcus* is mentioned in Acts as being rejected by Paul as a companion on that very journey wherein the writer joins the apostle.

*Epaphroditus* was not with the apostle at the beginning of his imprisonment.

*Epaphras* arrived at Rome after his imprisonment began.

*Jesus Justus*, being a Jew, is excluded, for the writer of the Acts is evidently a Gentile.

*Demas* forsook Paul at the end, whereas Luke remained faithful; and, as the choice lies between Demas and Luke, none can hesitate in accepting this most circuitous evidence that Luke, and none other, was the writer of the Acts of the Apostles.

*The 'we' sections.*- The sections of the Acts where the writer is introduced by the first personal pronoun 'we' have come to be called the 'we' sections; and these have been exhaustively examined and compared, both with the rest of the Acts, and with the Gospel of Luke, noticeably by Harnack. Literary criticism can produce no clearer evidence of the unity of authorship. Again the character of this volume permits only of a synopsis: the reader is referred to the English translation of Harnack's work.



The `we' sections of the Acts are as follows:

- (1) Acts 16:10-40. Troas and Philippi.
- (2) Acts 21:1-18. Tyre and Jerusalem.
- (3) Acts 27:1 to 28:16. Caesarea to Rome.

If these sections are read and compared with other parts, it will be seen that they are characterized by exact data, lengths of halts, small details, and the usual features of the narrative of an eye-witness. Harnack's research reveals that the `we' sections have in common with

The rest of Acts and Luke, but omitted from Matthew, Mark and John.....	44	words.
Luke, but omitted from the rest of Acts, and Matthew, Mark and John.....	20	words.
	-	
Total .....	64	words.
	-	

Over against this strong link with Luke's writings and the rest of the Acts, place the following small items:

`We' in common with the rest of Acts and Matthew.....	3	words.
`We' in common with Matthew only.....	3	words
`We' in common with the rest of Acts and Mark.....	2	words
`We' in common with Mark only.....	1	word
`We' in common with the rest of Acts and John .....	2	words
`We' in common with John only.....	2	words
	-	
Total .....	13	words
	-	

The investigations reveal that there are in all 130 words or phrases, in 190 places, which the `we' sections have in common with the rest of Acts or Luke, or together, *but which are absent from the other Gospels*.

Rackham, quoting Dr. Plummer and Professor Blass, says that there are 750 words in the Gospels and the Acts which are *peculiar* to Luke. Can literary criticism in any of its branches produce such a testimony comparable with this? Of these 750 words we propose to examine the 20 that are set by Harnack as being common to the `we' sections of Acts and Luke, but omitted from the rest of the Acts and Gospels.

1. *Anaphainein*.- `They thought that the Kingdom ... immediately *to appear*' (Luke 19:11).  
`Now when we had *discovered* Cyprus' (Acts 21:3).
2. *Aneuriskein*.- `They *found* Mary' (Luke 2:16).  
`*Finding* disciples' (Acts 21:4).
3. *Anaptein*.- `Fire ... already *kindled*' (Luke 12:49).  
`They *kindled* a fire' (Acts 28:2).

(Harnack has here *Aptein luchnon* and *pur*. So far as we can find, this has no reference to Acts. We record Harnack's words, however, in case further investigation should warrant the reading. He gives as reference, Luke 8:16; 11:33; 15:8; 22:55; Acts 28:2).

4. *Apospasthenai apo*.- `He was *withdrawn* from them' (Luke 22:41).  
`To *draw away* disciples' (Acts 20:30).

(Harnack includes this reference evidently in the `we' section).

5. *Apotinassein*.-`Shake off the very dust' (Luke 9:5).  
`He shook off the beast' (Acts 28:5).
6. *Diistemi*.-`About an hour having intervened' (Luke 22:59).  
`A short space having intervened' (A.V. `Gone a little further') (Acts 27:28).
7. *Epimeleia* and *epimelomai*.-`Took care of him' (Luke 10:34).  
`To refresh himself' (R.V. margin. Gk. to receive attention) (Acts 27:3).
8. *Epiphanein*.-`To give light to them' (Luke 1:79).  
`Neither sun nor stars appeared' (Acts 27:20).
9. *Euthetos*.-`Looking back is fit' (Luke 9:62).  
*Aneuthetos*.-`The haven was not commodious' (Acts 27:12).
10. *Katakoulouthen*.-`The women followed after' (Luke 23:55).  
`The same followed Paul' (Acts 16:17).
11. *Thrix ek tes kephales apoleitai*.-`There shall not an hair of your head perish' (Luke 21:18).  
`There shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you' (Acts 27:34).
12. *Notos* (with reference to the wind).-`The south wind' (Luke 12:55; Acts 27:13; 28:13).
13. *Parabiazesthai*.-`And they constrained Him' (Luke 24:29).  
`And she constrained us' (Acts 16:15).
14. *Peripiptein*.-`Fell among thieves' (Luke 10:30).  
`Falling into a place' (Acts 27:41).
15. *Plein*.-`And as they sailed' (Luke 8:23).  
`To sail' (Acts 27:2,6,24).
16. *Plethos* (of things).-`A great multitude' (Luke 5:6).  
`A bundle of sticks' (Acts 28:3).
17. *Trachus*.-`Rough ways shall be made smooth' (Luke 3:5).  
`Fallen upon rocks' (Acts 27:29).
18. *Me phobou* (with vocative).-`Fear not, Zacharias' (Luke 1:13).  
`Fear not, Paul' (Acts 27:24).

No. 2 is peculiar to Luke. *Euriskein* is used by Matthew 27 times; and, with the exceptions stated, is the word constantly used in the New Testament.

No. 5.- While Matthew 10:14 and Mark 6:11 use *ektinassein* to translate the original word spoken by the Lord, Luke uses *apotinassein*; Acts 13:51 shows that Luke could have used the other word.

No. 14.- *Piptein*, to fall, is used in combination with *apo*, away; *ek*, out of; *en*, in; *epi*, upon; *kata*, down; *para*, near; *peri*, around; *pros*, towards; yet Luke alone of the Gospel writers uses *peripiptein*. The word means `to fall around any one so as to embrace'; or, `to fall so as to be surrounded by anything'. How aptly this conveys the idea of a man suddenly surprised and surrounded; how fittingly also it draws the picture of the ship falling into a place where two seas met! Luke, who joined the apostle at the seaport, Troas, and who so graphically and even technically described the handling of the ship on the memorable voyage of Acts 27, he alone of all the evangelists introduces the word `to sail', in the narrative of the Gospel (No. 15).

It is strange also to note that while Matthew, Mark, and John are content to quote of John the Baptist,

`Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight',

Luke gives a full quotation of the prophet down to the reference to the 'rough places'. It occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Further studies of this character would only burden the reader, yet we deem it necessary in these days to show the 'infallible proofs' which the Scriptures contain of their authenticity and accuracy. Luke in the introduction to his Gospel makes it clear that his information was derived from two sources:

- (1) 'Eye-witnesses', and
- (2) 'From above'.

'From above' is the translation of *anothen* consistent with that of John 3:31; 19:11; James 1:17; 3:15-17. Luke claims to have received 'perfect understanding FROM ABOVE.'

Passing from his own claims as to inspiration and accuracy, we notice the peculiar feature of his Gospel is contained in the words 'in order'. The other evangelists have not undertaken to write 'in order', whereas Luke does. When, therefore, we find one order of events recorded in Matthew and another in Luke, we remember that Luke's order is *historically* accurate, and Matthew's order is so arranged to suit the special purpose of his Gospel. Whilst no such statements are repeated in the Acts, it seems quite justifiable to believe that unless we are told to the contrary, the second volume - written by the same person - shall also be (1) that of eye-witnesses, (2) from above, and (3) in order. Luke was not an eye-witness of many of the events of the Acts, particularly of the first half; nevertheless, his narrative leaves no room for error, being 'inspired' 'from above'.

Consider the pitfalls that beset either (1) an uninspired writer, or even more, (2) a forger of the second century. The scenes are laid, some in Jewish and Oriental places, some in Western European and Roman cities: some scenes are laid in the renowned capitals of the Gentiles, some in holy cities of the Jews, some in Roman colonies, and some in Greek cities, yet others in barbarous districts. Across these varied scenes pass and re-pass the excited, fanatical Jews; the lewd rabble of the Greek cities; high priests with their attendants; Roman centurions, jailors, soldiers; governors and kings; philosophers and soothsayers; image worshippers and image makers; all go to swell the throng. The ever-changing political affairs alone would be enough to trip the most careful. Judaea at one time is a Roman province under a Procurator, at another it is an independent kingdom under Herod. Geographical names, even, are not true of the same place all the time; yet Luke has never once made a mistake. If the rulers of Thessalonica were called Politarchs, he records it; and the British Museum now tells about his accuracy. If he records the title 'Politarchs' for Thessalonica, he speaks of the Asiarchs of Ephesus with equal certainty. Amid all the changes made by the fickleness of Emperors or the demands of the Senate, Luke never uses Proprietor where Proconsul should have been used; and has put some of his would-be critics to shame for their premature judgment on this point. With unerring accuracy he sketches the character of Herod, of Felix, of Gallio. Through thirty years of critical happenings, over hundreds of miles of the most varied country, from audiences with kings to women's prayer meetings by the riverside, the writer of the Acts with utmost care and perfect confidence threads his way from Pentecost to prison, from Jerusalem to Rome.

What of the personal character of this inspired writer? Little is known. Paul is not generally accused of flattery, and it is evident that when he writes the words, '*Luke the beloved physician*', he gives us the finest character that could be given from one fellow-servant to another. His constancy and faithfulness are seen in the closing record of Paul's career. Though all in Asia turned away from Paul, and though Demas forsook him, he could write, '*only Luke is with me*'.

The reference to Luke as a *physician* started Hobart upon an exhaustive study, which has proved to an extreme degree that the author of the Acts was a man to whom medical terms were a part of every-day language; and a physician's manner of description is the manner of the writer of the Acts. So important is this added testimony that we desire to give it a place in this chapter of evidences before passing on to more expository studies. Hobart's volume is of fair size, and we shall content ourselves with a few extracts, all of which are peculiar to Luke; that is, occurring nowhere else in the New Testament. Now, if the testimony of language stands for anything, then should the words alone used by Luke be medical terms, Luke being a medical man. The medical works cited by Hobart are those of Hippocrates (B.C. 460-317); Aretaus (A.D. 1st. Century); Galen (A.D. 130-200); and Dioscorides (A.D. 1st. or 2nd. Century).

**Medical terms peculiar to the Acts:**

*Tekmerion* (1:3), 'infallible proof'.- The legal or the commercial mind would have expressed itself in the other word available; the physician is betrayed by his choice.

*Hyperoon* (1:13), 'upper room'.- This word indicates in medical terminology, 'the palate'.

*Sunchuno* (2:6), 'confounded'.- Galen uses it for 'difficult respiration'. In 19:29 *sunchusis* is used for a commotion, a word indicating a 'disturbance of the system'. Again the physician is betrayed by his choice of word.

*Epidemeo* (2:10), 'strangers'.- Our word 'epidemic'.

*Apokatastasis* (3:21), 'restitution'.- The physician's term for complete convalescence, or the re-setting of a dislocated joint.

*Diacheirisasthe* (5:30), 'slew'.- This word denotes 'a surgical operation'. Luke had before him at least six other Greek words which are translated 'slay' in the New Testament, and occurring from Matthew to Revelation over 30 times. Luke the *physician* passes them all by, and uses one out of his own medical vocabulary.

*Othone* and *archais* (10:11), 'sheet' and 'corners', are both terms of the physician pure and simple. *Othone* means 'a bandage', and would not naturally enter the mind of the average person. *Archais*, which etymologists would say meant 'beginnings', technically meant 'the end of a bandage': here the physician is manifest.

*Metakalein* (10:32), 'to call'.- When Luke would tell us that Cornelius sent for Peter, he used the professional term for 'calling in a doctor'.

*Epakroaomai* (16:25), 'heard'.- The writer had a wide range of words from which to choose, yet again he uses one peculiar to himself and his profession. The word denotes 'hearing by placing the ear to the body'! How beautifully this describes the attitude of the prisoners who 'heard' through the wall of the inner prison those midnight praises!

*Epineuo* (18:20), 'consented'.- A term indicating the muscles which bend the head forward.

*Sunthruptein* (21:13), 'break'.- Luke had the choice of seven other words which are found in the New Testament; instead, he uses his own which is allied with *thruptein*, meaning 'the crushing of the calculus'.

*Asemos* (21:39), 'mean'.- A medical term for denoting the *well marked* symptoms of a disease.

*Diagnoskein* (23:15), 'diagnosis'.- Who but a physician would call a soldier's examination or a Caesar's decision a 'diagnosis'.

*Paraineo* (27:9), 'admonish'.- Paul is revealed as giving professional 'advice'.

*Boetheia* (27:17), 'helps'.

*Hupozonnumi* (27:17), 'undergirding'.- Here are two medical terms. The first is used of the natural mechanical contrivances of the human body for its support, and of artificial supports, bandages, etc. In the second, the primary meaning is the 'diaphragm', the membrane investing the thorax.

*Therme* (28:3), 'heat'.- Luke alone uses this medical term, which is in use with us today.

These are but samples. Obvious medical terms and descriptions of disease are omitted: these also betray the professional observer.

Luke, or *Loukas*, is the Greek form of the Latin Lucanus, just as Silas is the Greek form of the Latin Silvanus. Luke was a physician as his peculiar wording shows. He was a Gentile, not being included in the list of the 'circumcision' (Col. 4:11 and 14). He uses the Latin word *semicinctura* for an apron (Acts 19:12). We are perfectly satisfied, from the testimony brought together in this chapter, with regard to the following statements, all of which we shall assume as true throughout this volume.

1. Luke, the beloved physician, and faithful companion of Paul's journeys, is the writer both of the Gospel which bears his name, and of the Acts as a whole.

2. That, however he received his information, whether (a) directly as an eye-witness, or (b) indirectly through other eye-witnesses, all was recorded by inspiration received 'from above'.

3. That, like the Gospel, the record of the Acts attends to the actual historical order of events.

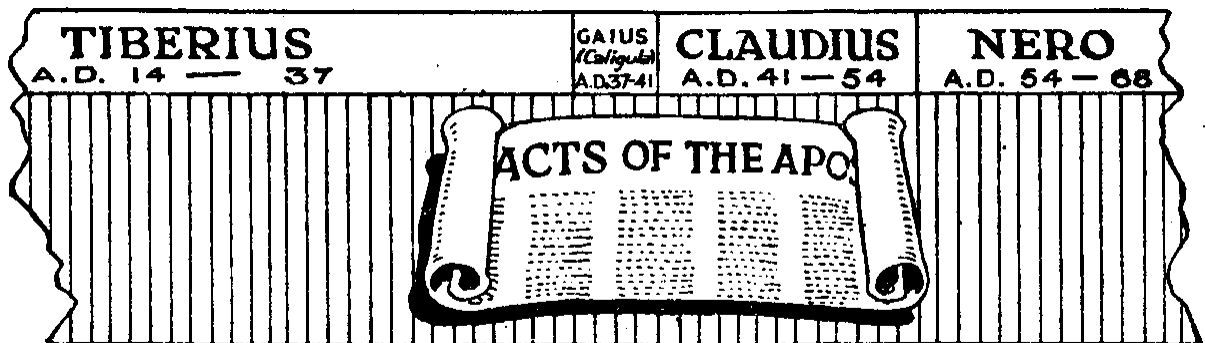
Shall we not lift up our hearts to God as we think that in these days, when belief in the veracity of the Scriptures (to say nothing of their Divine inspiration) is set aside as unthinkable and unscholarly, God has given us such scholarly proofs, such critical tests, and such complete evidence of our faith?

## CHAPTER 2

### The Chronology of Acts.

We have already alluded to the importance of remembering the historic basis of our faith. It is our intention now briefly to trace some of the points of contact between the Acts and secular history, to consider something of its internal chronology, and then to proceed to the more important question, the chronological order of the epistles. When applied to the epistles it will be seen that chronology ceases to be a mere fabrication of dates, and that it rises into the higher plane of dispensational truth, and the progress of doctrine.

Let us approach the question in its broadest outline first. The reign of four Roman Emperors covers the period of the Acts.



Just how far the scroll will extend when spread out is now the object of our enquiry.

While these four Emperors and their reigns more than cover the period of the Acts, we have no definite point of contact recorded either in sacred or secular history where, in A.D. ... , Paul, or Peter, did so-and-so. We seek some definite point of time where the scroll of the Acts can be pinned down to the calendar of the world. If the wider range of Roman Emperors fails us here, a narrower and lesser dynasty supplies this need. There is one incident recorded in the Acts, the date of which is known; that is the tragic death of Herod (Acts 12:20-23).

The history of Herod Agrippa I. is a chequered one. Josephus records (Ant. xix. 8,2) that Herod died in 'the 7<sup>TH</sup> year of his reign, and the 54<sup>TH</sup> year of his life'. Again he tells us (Bell. Jud. ii., xi. 6) that Agrippa died soon after the completion of his third year as King over *all Judaea*. Now let us see whether we can arrive at the date by these two items.

#### 1. When did Herod begin his reign?

Secular history supplies the answer: 'Not many days' after the accession of Gaius. When was that? 'March 16<sup>th</sup>, A.D. 37'. If we add A.D. 37 and 7 together, we have the date of Herod's death as A.D. 44.

**2. When did Herod begin to reign over ALL JUDAEA?**

Gaius was murdered on January 24th, A.D. 41, and on the accession of Claudius (Ant. xix. 8, 2) Herod was made King of Judaea and Samaria. Add to A.D. 41 the 3 years of Herod's reign, and again we get A.D. 44.

**3. A threefold cord is not easily broken.**

Josephus makes a casual remark to the effect that Herod died during a festival held in honour of Claudius 'for his safety'. Claudius returned to Rome from Britain in January, A.D. 44, after an absence of six months. The festival at Caesarea, the Roman Capital of Palestine, was where Herod the King died that same year. Again A.D. 44.

We can now fix the 12th chapter of Acts down upon the calendar of the world.

The Acts of the Apostles are The "Acts" of the Apostles. The epistles are a most important part of the "acts" of Paul and are woven into the book.		
<b>First Missionary Journey XIII, XIV.</b>		
<b>GALATIANS</b>		
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . I. 13	VIII. 3.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . I. 14	XXII. 3.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . II. 11, 13	XI. 25, 26.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . II. 1, 2, 3, 14	XV. 1, 2.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . V. 4	XIII. 39.
<b>Second Missionary Journey XVI-XVIII.</b>		
<b>ITHESSALONIANS</b>		
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . I. 1	XVI. 25. XVII. 1.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . III. 2	XVI. 23.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . III. 4	XVII. 5-6.
ACTS	2 THESS. III. 9.	XX. 34-45.
<b>ICORINTHIANS</b>		
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . I. 2	XVIII. 1, 17.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . I. 14	XVIII. 8.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . III. 5, 6.	XVIII. 24, 27.
ACTS	2 COR. I. 15, 16.	XIX. 21.
<b>ROMANS</b>		
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . I. 1	XIII. 1, 1.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . I. 13	XIX. 21, 1.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . XV. 18, 19	XIX. 11; XX. 12; XXI. 19
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . XV. 23, 24, 28	XIX. 21, 1.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . XV. 30, 31.	XXI. 17-30, 1.
ACTS	Chapter . . . . . XVI. 9, 21, 23	XVIII. 1, 2, 5; XIX. 22, 2.

The date of the crucifixion of the Lord is now accepted as A.D. 29-31, which is the date of the opening chapter of Acts. We have therefore the date of the first twelve chapters, A.D. 29-31 to 44.

Let us now seek evidence to place a date for the last chapter. The narrative leaves Paul a prisoner, but residing in his own hired house for two years, receiving all who came, teaching them freely and without reserve, 'no man forbidding him'. These closing words of the Acts indicate a period wherein the Roman Power was tolerant to the new sect. Indeed, throughout the Acts up to the closing chapter, the Roman Government is seen in a favourable light, the persecutions detailed in the narrative coming from the Jews.

The great fire which broke out in Rome took place on July 19th, A.D. 64. If we have any knowledge at all of the awful persecution of the Christians which immediately followed, we shall find it impossible to conceive of Paul remaining unmolested in his own hired house while his followers and converts were being burned as torches or thrown to the lions. A.D. 64, therefore, is the furthest bound of the story of the Acts. It is not necessary that the Acts reaches so far, but it is practically certain that it does not extend beyond.

Paul was brought into close touch with several Roman rulers upon the occasion of his imprisonment. Let us see whether we can find another date similar to A.D. 44. The apostle was arrested at Jerusalem, sent to Caesarea, imprisoned by Felix and detained by him for two years. Felix was succeeded by Festus, who heard Paul's defence, as did also King Agrippa. Felix was Procurator of Judaea in A.D. 52 or 53 (Jos. Ant. xx. 7, 1; Bell. Jud. ii. 12, 8). Eusebius assigns A.D. 51 as the date of his appointment (Chron. ii., p. 271). Whichever of these dates may be the true one, we know from Acts 24:10 that Felix had been 'many years' Procurator when Paul stood before him.

When Tertullus accused Paul before Felix, he introduced his charge with the compliment, 'Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness', as though this were an outstanding feature of Felix's administration. This also had some bearing upon the nature of the charge brought against Paul. When Paul was delivered from the Jewish mob by Roman soldiers, it is evident from the words of the chief captain that he had been mistaken for the false prophet, an Egyptian who had led 4,000 fanatical Jews to the Mount of Olives to see Jerusalem fall. Felix routed them, but the Egyptian had escaped. As another small link the word 'murderers' in Acts 21:38 is in the original *sikarion*. Now Josephus tells us of these *sicarii* who murdered people in broad daylight, and that they arose during the reign of Nero. Nero began his reign October 13th, A.D. 54.

The 'great quietness' referred to by Tertullus ensued upon the capture of Eleazar, and upon his being sent to Rome after twenty years' defiance and rebellion, and also upon the rout of the false prophet - the Egyptian for whom Paul was mistaken by Claudius Lysias, the chief captain. The numerous events that go to make up the administration of Felix fully account for three years. These, added to the earliest possible date of the '*sicarii*', would bring us to A.D. 57. Paul arrived some time after this date, for the Egyptian had been routed 'before these days'.

Felix was recalled to Rome to answer charges of misrule; and he was followed by accusing Jews. It was for this reason he left Paul bound, '*willing to show the Jews a pleasure*' (Acts 24:27). Josephus tells us that Felix was saved from the due punishment of his deeds by the intervention of his brother Pallas. Now Pallas died A.D. 62 (Tacit. Ann. xiv. 65); therefore Felix must have been recalled not later than A.D. 61 in order to arrive in Rome in time for his brother's influence to have been of any avail.

Another clue is given by a note of Josephus, that a dispute arose between Festus and the Jews, and that the Jewish deputation was considerably helped by the influence of Nero's wife Poppoea, who was married to him in A.D. 62.

Yet one more testimony. When Paul arrived at Rome he was delivered into the custody of the Prefect of the 'Praetorian guard', *to stratopedarche* (Acts 28:16).

The minute accuracy of Scripture enables us to fix another boundary line. One Prefect is mentioned here. In A.D. 62 *two* Prefects were appointed, Burrhus holding that office singly up to the time of his death, February, A.D. 62. We know that Paul *wintered* at Malta (Acts 28:1-11); the sea was not open to navigation until February, and consequently Burrhus would have been dead before Paul reached Rome, if we make his arrival as late as A.D. 62. We must therefore put it back to A.D. 61 as the latest date. Some time after the Fast, which was September 24th (if in A.D. 60), we find the apostle at Fairhavens. This places the embarkation of Paul (Acts 27:2) as about August of a

year not later than A.D. 60. We have already seen that somewhere between A.D. 57 and 58 must be placed the latest date of his arrest.

Many expositors of note have unhesitatingly placed the date of Paul's embarkation for Rome as A.D. 60. One later testimony, however, must be heard before we reach our conclusion. The testimony of Eusebius must not be lightly set aside; and Harnack, accepting his dates, places the embarkation of Paul at A.D. 56. C.H. Turner subjected the problem to a careful examination, and brings the date forward to A.D. 58. The solution he suggests is that Eusebius, in making out his calendar, could not be continually commencing a fresh year at the month in which each new king ascended the throne; and as he commenced his year with September, the *first regnal year* of an Emperor was dated from the September next after his actual succession. C.H. Turner reckons A.D. 58 for Paul's trial before Festus and Agrippa.

It will be seen that while there is a little uncertainty as to the precise date, there are certain limits beyond which it cannot be placed. If we accept A.D. 60 for the embarkation for Rome, this will mean that Paul was liberated in the spring of A.D. 63, and was therefore free of Rome before the fierce persecution broke out. If we accept the earlier date A.D. 58, Paul would have been liberated in A.D. 61, and would have had time to revisit the churches, and to have written the epistle to the Hebrews\* 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus; and upon the outbreak of the persecution under Nero he would have become involved, and would have been apprehended, this time to seal his testimony with his blood.

We have therefore the following approximate dates:

Acts 1,2	A.D. 29-31	The date of the Crucifixion and of Pentecost.
Acts 3 to 11		
Acts 12	A.D. 44	The date of Herod's death.
Acts 13 to 20		
Acts 21	{ A.D. 56 }	The date of Paul's arrest at Jerusalem.
	{ or }	
Acts 22 to 27	{ A.D. 58 }	
	{ A.D. 59 }	The date of Paul's arrival at Rome.
Acts 28	{ or }	
	{ A.D. 61 }	
Acts 28	{ A.D. 61 }	The date of the conclusion of the `two years'.
	{ or }	
	{ A.D. 63 }	

One or two details will suffice to fill in the spaces. Aquilla and Priscilla were banished from Rome by the edict of Claudius, who reigned A.D. 41-54, and these dates are the extreme boundaries of Aquilla's visit to Corinth. Tacitus tells us that in A.D. 52 the Jews were commanded to leave Rome. Suetonius says, '*Judæos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Româ expulit*'. Chresto is by some considered as a reading for *Christos*. If Aquilla reached Corinth at the beginning of February\* A.D. 52, Paul would have arrived a little later in the same year. Acts 18:11 tells us that the apostle remained in Corinth for one year and six months; hence his departure from Corinth would be August A.D. 53.

Luke passes on to tell us of an incident that occurred `certain days' (Acts 18:18, A.V. `a good while') before Paul left Corinth, `when Gallio was the deputy (*proconsul*) of Achaia'. Incidentally, we remark the exactness of Luke's language. Achaia had been proconsular under Augustus, but had changed to an Imperial Province under Tiberius (*Tacit.* Ann. I. 76). It was restored again by Claudius to the Senate, became proconsular after A.D. 44, and became free under Nero. Luke never makes a mistake amid all these political changes. He had indeed `perfect

\* But see p. 15 *Steps Through Scripture* by Charles H. Welch, for a later understanding about the date of Hebrews.

\* Much evidence as to this and other details has been omitted as too bulky and non essential.



understanding from above'. We have suggested that Paul left Corinth August, A.D. 53, so if we deduct the 'certain days' of verse 18, we can say that the Gallio incident was about midsummer of that year.

Claudius had appointed Marcus Annaeus Novatus to be proconsul of Achaia, this man having been adopted by the rhetorician Lucius Junius Annaeus Gallio, by which name he was known. Gallio's brother was the famous Stoic, Seneca. Now Seneca had been banished, but had been recalled in A.D. 49, and in A.D. 53 he was at the height of his popularity. Gallio was not in Achaia in A.D. 54 (Dion. ix. 35); hence A.D. 53 is the latest date in which Paul could have been brought before him, and 18 months before this would bring us to the year 52.

Upon leaving Corinth, Paul sailed to Syria, intending to arrive at Jerusalem for the feast (18:21) which would be Tabernacles, Sept. 16th, A.D. 53. After the visit to Jerusalem alluded to in verse 22, the apostle went down to Antioch and from thence 'he went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order'. This would bring us to the spring of A.D. 54. Paul now passed to Ephesus (19:1) and remained there for the space of three years (Acts 20:31). As he had promised to return after the feast, he doubtless arrived at Ephesus in the spring of A.D. 54. It will be seen that a whole series of events revolves around this approximate date, and helps us to feel that we are not very far from the truth. Another incidental note is introduced by the reference of Paul to Aretas.

### The Reign of Aretas at Damascus

In 2 Corinthians 11:32 the apostle says of his humiliating departure from Damascus:

'In Damascus the *ethnarch* under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me'.

This Aretas was the fourth of his dynasty, and reigned roughly from B.C. 9 to A.D. 40. Inscriptions are extant which speak of his 48th year, and he died somewhere between the death of Tiberius and the middle of the reign of Claudius, for his successor is found engaged in war in A.D. 48. Damascus was under Roman administration A.D. 33, 34 and A.D. 62, 63, for coins of Tiberius and Nero give no evidence of a local prince at the time. This narrows the period to somewhere after A.D. 34.

Gaius who succeeded Tiberius at this time was noted for the way in which he sought to encourage local princelings; and it is very probable that Damascus was assigned by him to Aretas. We are at any rate shut up to A.D. 34-40, and as other calculations bring us down to A.D. 37, it appears that such dates can well be accepted.

### The Famine of Acts 11:28.

Agabus, a prophet of Jerusalem, foretold a famine which came to pass in the reign of Claudius Caesar. Upon this being made known, and before the famine had actually commenced, the believers at Antioch determined to send relief to Judaea by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Now Josephus tells us that the famine began in the year of Herod's death, for it took place during the government of Cuspius Fadus and Tiberius Alexander (Ant. xx. 5, 2). Cuspius Fadus was appointed in the latter half of A.D. 44, and was succeeded by Tiberius Alexander in A.D. 46. As Tiberius Alexander was in turn succeeded by Cumanus in A.D. 50, we have a period of six years in which the famine could develop and disappear.

Premonitions of the coming dearth are evident in the care which the people of Tyre and Sidon betray to conciliate Herod. They desired peace, says Acts 12:20, 'because their country was nourished by the king's (Herod's) country'. This supplies a fairly approximate date for the journey of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem as A.D. 44.

We have now ascertained the dating of the Acts so far as its main outlines are concerned, namely A.D. 29, 44, 60, 64. We have also found indications of the probable dates of the famine predicted by Agabus, and the apostle's first arrival at Corinth. We will now endeavour to place the missionary journeys that were undertaken by the apostle.

Acts 13,14 - This journey has been located somewhere between A.D. 44-48. C.H. Turner, in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, considers that eighteen months are required for this journey. Professor Ramsay estimates

two years and three or four months. Among the items that influence a conclusion must be the character of the district, the climate, and their effect upon travelling.

The hill country lying between Perga and Antioch in Pisidia, would not usually be crossed between December and March. If we therefore imagine that Paul's itinerary would be arranged to suit the natural condition of the country, the following seems to be a possible time-table. It is the one suggested by C.H. Turner as above.

Paul arrived at Cyprus in April, then went through the isle (13:6), and left Paphos in July, reaching Antioch in Pisidia in August. Shaking off the dust of his feet against Antioch, Paul reached Iconium in November. Here the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost; and here also we read that Paul and Barnabas abode 'a long time'. As it was nearing winter when they arrived, the probability is that they remained there until the Passover. By April, therefore, they would have arrived at Lystra and Derbe, and the region round about (14:6,7). They would have begun the return journey about the beginning of July, reaching Pamphylia by October, and getting back to Antioch and Syria by November. We shall therefore be fairly safe to assign the years A.D. 45-48 for this first missionary journey.

Enough has been said to indicate the general chronology of the book. Perhaps the most important question of all, viz., the chronological order of the epistles, must remain over until the subject of the churches of Galatia has been dealt with. Until recently we thought that 1 Thessalonians was the first Pauline epistle. Recent archaeological research has illuminated more than one obscure passage, and it will be necessary to consider the findings of the archaeologist before we can arrive at any conclusion regarding the chronology of the epistles.

### CHAPTER 3

#### Sorting out Material

Some writers have remarked upon the apparent lack of design or plan in the Acts, but such writers can be dismissed as superficial students. The Acts has a literary structure comparable with any of the Epistles; an evident plan exists, and a most effective method of carrying that plan through is adopted.

Luke himself appears to have divided the Acts up into eight sections, each section being marked by a step forward *from Jerusalem to Rome*. This division of the subject must claim our attention before any other, and to this we now address ourselves.

If we analyse this division, we shall find it suggests the two-fold theme of Acts, viz., the comparison of Peter's ministry with that of Paul's (to be considered later), and the steady trend of the book Gentileward. The three outstanding geographical points are:

#### JERUSALEM ... ANTIOCH ... ROME.

These are associated, in the narrative, with

#### JEWS ... JEWS AND GREEKS ... GENTILES.

Peter's ministry really ceases at the conversion of Cornelius. He comes into the story for a little longer, but adds nothing more to the development of the theme. The Acts of the Apostles, we shall presently seek to show, is not even the Acts of Peter and Paul. It is the Acts of Paul; and Peter is brought in for a specific purpose. Of this, more in its place. Summarizing, therefore, the above eight-fold division we find :

A Peter and Associates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Jerusalem. The Twelve equipped.</li> <li>b Jerusalem. Dispensational Miracle. The Hellenists.</li> <li>c Samaria. Samaritans and Ethiopian.</li> <li>d Caesarea. Cornelius. `The word which</li> </ul>
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God sent unto the children of Israel ...' (Acts 10:36).

A Paul and Associates. (Acts 28:28).

*a* Antioch. Saul sought and brought.  
*b* Asia Minor. Dispensational miracle. The Uncircumcision.  
*c* Europe. The Gentile.  
*d* Rome. 'The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and ... they will hear it'

The geographical witness shows an arrow ever pointing on *from* Jerusalem *to* the uttermost parts of the earth. It may be seen more easily if set out as follows:

Geographical	National	Keyword	Ministerial
Jerusalem.	Jews only.	Restoration.	Peter, John, James, Philip.
Antioch.	Jews, Hellenists, Greeks.	Reconciliation.	Stephen, Barnabas, Saul.
Rome.	Gentiles only.	Rejection.	Paul.

This threefold division brings into prominence the dispensational division of the book - Restoration, Reconciliation and Rejection - to which several chapters will be devoted later in this volume. We are at present merely sorting out our material; therefore it is not the time to pause over-long on any one section.

When we are examining some of the epistles presently, the various visits of Paul to Jerusalem will form a subject for investigation. This will be the right place, therefore, to tabulate the references in the Acts to Paul's visits.

**Paul's Visits to Jerusalem**

FIRST VISIT (3 years).	Acts 9:26-30 (Gal. 1:17-21)	Compare 'Syria and Cilicia' with 'Caesarea and Tarsus'.
SECOND VISIT (14 years).	Acts 11:29,30 (see also 12:25)	Before the first missionary journey.
THIRD VISIT	Acts 15:2-4	After the first missionary journey.
FOURTH VISIT	Acts 18:21,22	To keep the Feast.
FIFTH VISIT	Acts 21:15 to 23:30	Taken prisoner.

We refrain here from attempting to affix any dates, but several items of importance arise out of these views, and reference back to this paragraph may be made later.

The Acts of the Apostles pays great attention to the speeches made upon certain critical occasions. We give a summary here, and may consider them at greater length, should space permit.

Five of Paul's speeches are preserved at length. Others are abbreviated. Such an active ministry as that of the apostle must have produced numberless addresses and epistles. There is an evident selection made in the Acts of those speeches which fit the writer's purpose.

Summarizing\* the recorded speeches, we have the following samples of how Paul preached under varying circumstances:

### 1. Missionary.

- (a) To the dispersion (13:16-41).
- (b) To the heathen
  - 1. Ignorant (14:15-17).
  - 2. Learned (17:22-31).

### 2. Christian Assembly.

Pastoral charge (20:18-35).

### 3. Apologetic.

- (a) Jews
  - 1. Crowd (22:1-21).
  - 2. Sanhedrin (23:1-6).
  - 3. Elders at Rome (28).
- (b) Roman Officials
  - 1. Felix (24:10-21).
  - 2. Festus (25:10-12).
  - 3. Agrippa (26:2-29).

### 4. Various Places.

- 1. Jerusalem (20; 23).
- 2. Antioch in Pisidia (13).
- 3. Ephesus (20).
- 4. Athens (17).
- 5. Caesarea (24 to 26).
- 6. Rome (28).

### 5. Value of these Speeches.

- 1. They indicate Paul's missionary method.
- 2. In conjunction with the personal element of the Epistles, they provide us with a full portrait of the apostle.
- 3. They demonstrate his peculiar fitness for his work.
- 4. They reveal the three great factors in the spread of the gospel:
  - (a) Judaism in Land and Dispersion.
  - (b) Hellenism.
  - (c) Roman Empire.
- 5. Also Paul's social fitness:
  - (a) Jew.
  - (b) Tarsian.
  - (c) Roman.

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\* See *Paul the Orator* (Jones) for more elaborate analysis.

As an example and, may we hope, as a stimulus to further study, we analyse Paul's first address, recorded in Acts 13.

**Acts 13:16-41**

**Paul's First Missionary Address**

**1. Its setting.**

- A 6-13. Typical Miracle. Jew Blinded.  
Gentile believes.
- B 14-41. The Address to Jews and Gentiles.
- A 42-48. Typical result. Jews filled with envy,  
Gentiles believe.

**2. Its substance.**

- A i. A Person. A Saviour, Jesus (23).  
ii. A People. To Israel.
- B i. A Proclamation. The word of this Salvation (26).  
ii. A People. To you, both Jew and Gentile.
- C i. A Preaching. Forgiveness of Sins (38).  
ii. A Peculiarly Pauline Message.  
JUSTIFICATION (39).
- D i. A Prophetic Warning.  
Beware ... lest that come upon you. Israel (40).  
ii. A Prophetic Encouragement.  
Light of the Gentiles (47).

**3. Its Structure.**

The apostle divides his message into three parts by the personal form of address:

1. Men of Israel, and ye that fear God (Jews and Gentiles) (16).  
Preparation. Christ. Seed of David (17-25).
2. Men, brethren, children of the stock of Israel, and whosoever among you feareth God (Jew and Gentiles) (26).  
Fulfilment. Christ. Seed of David (27-37).
3. Men and brethren (Jews) (38,39).

We may have occasion to return to this address, and to compare its teaching with the epistle to the Galatians; but that will the better come in its place when we have considered the claim of this first missionary journey to be the one to 'the Churches of Galatia'.

The reader will observe a certain parallel between this address and that of Stephen recorded in Acts 7. Also Peter's speech on the day of Pentecost finds some parallels of a striking nature, particularly the emphasis upon the connection of Christ's resurrection with David.

The marks of departure from Peter's teaching are also important. Peter addresses:

'Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem: Ye men of Israel ... all the House of Israel' (2:14, 22 and 36).

Peter calls upon his hearers to

'Repent, and be baptized ... for the remission of sins' (2:38).

Paul says no such thing. Peter never mentions Justification. Paul's distinctive message would be lost without it. Peter urges the believers of Israel to save themselves from this untoward generation. Paul calls upon the Gentiles to believe, seeing that Israel despise the message of salvation. Space will not allow us to analyse the remaining speeches; we trust the reader may be stirred up to pursue this important line of study.

Another theme which comes under the heading of our chapter is the evident comparison which is elaborated in the Acts between the two apostles, Peter and Paul.

### The Parallel between Peter and Paul

Peter	Paul
Peter received a new name (John 1:42).	Paul was named Saul at the first (Acts 13).
Peter was baptized by the Spirit (Acts 2).	Paul was separated by the Spirit (13).
Peter was thought to be drunk (2).	Paul was thought to be mad (26).
Peter's first sermon in Acts 2 is similar in style to	Paul's first sermon in Acts 13.
Peter heals a lame man (3).	Paul heals a lame man (14).
Peter strikes with death (5).	Paul strikes with blindness (13).
Peter's first miracle has dispensational foreshadowing (3).	Paul's first miracle has dispensational foreshadowing (13).
Peter repudiates silver and gold. (3)	Paul repudiates silver and gold (20).
Peter is arrested (4).	Paul is arrested (21).
Peter stands before the Council (4).	Paul stands before the Council (23).
Peter's action produces fear (5).	Paul's action produces fear (19).
Peter's shadow had healing virtue (5).	Paul's body gave even handkerchiefs healing virtue (19).
Peter benefits by the liberal Gamaliel (5).	Paul benefits by the liberal Gallio (18).
Peter communicates holy spirit by laying on of hands (8).	Paul communicates holy spirit by laying on of hands (19).
Peter condemns Simon Magus (8)	Paul condemns Bar-Jesus (13).
Peter raises Dorcas from the dead (9).	Paul raises Eutychus from the dead (20).
Peter's first Gentile convert had a Latin name (10).	Paul's first Gentile convert had a Latin name (13).
Peter at mid-day has a vision and hears a voice (10).	Paul at mid-day has a vision and hears a voice (9).
Peter is almost worshipped by Cornelius (10).	Paul is almost worshipped by Lycaonians (14).
Peter is delivered from prison by	Paul is delivered from prison by

<p>an angel (12).          Peter goes immediately to the house of Mary (12).          Peter said he was ready for prison and death for the Lord's sake (Luke 22:33).          Peter was not taught by flesh and blood (Matt. 16).          Peter goes to Babylon (1 Pet. 5:13).</p>	<p>an earthquake (16).          Paul goes immediately to the house of Lydia (16).          Paul said he was ready for prison and death for the Lord's sake (21:13).          Paul conferred not with flesh and blood (Gal. 1:16).          Paul goes to Rome (Acts 28:16).</p>
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We do not pretend to have exhausted this comparison; but the list is long enough to show that such a comparison exists as a fact. When we analyse the epistles on the subject, we believe the conclusion will be irresistible that Acts was written with the *one* purpose of settling the question, once and for ever, of the *absolute equality and independent apostleship of Paul*. Peter's words and deeds are not recorded by Luke for their own sake, so much as for the sake of their relation to the words and deeds of Paul.

Yet a further, deeper, and more holy comparison is evident upon investigation, and that is the comparison instituted between the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus and of His servant Paul.

**The Parallel between the Lord and His servant, Paul.**

<b>The Lord at work in person.            (Luke, or, where stated, other            Gospels)</b>	<b>The Lord at work in Paul.            (Acts)</b>
<p>The Lord `as His custom was' went into the synagogue and stood up for to read (4:16).</p>	<p>Paul `as his manner was' went into the synagogue and reasoned out of the Scripture (17:1-3; 18:4).</p>
<p>The Lord healed all that were sick (4:40).</p>	<p>Paul healed all that were sick (28:8-10).</p>
<p>The Lord enraged His hearers by referring to the blessing of Gentiles (4:20-29).</p>	<p>Paul enraged his hearers by referring to the blessing of Gentiles (22:21,22).</p>
<p>The Lord's life is plotted against by Chief Priests and Scribes (20:1,2)</p>	<p>Paul's life is plotted against by the Jews (23:12-14).</p>
<p>The Lord is charged before Pilate with perverting the nation, forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying He Himself was King (23:1,2).</p>	<p>Paul is accused before Felix and Festus of sedition, and of speaking against Caesar; and, in Thessalonica, of teaching that there is another King, one Jesus (17:7; 24:5; 25:8).</p>
<p>The Lord `thrice' prays for deliverance in Gethsemane, but was resigned to bear the will of God (Matt. 26:39,42,44).</p>	<p>Paul `thrice' prayed for a removal of the thorn in the flesh, but was resigned to suffer (2 Cor. 12:7).</p>
<p>The Lord revealed to the twelve that He must go up to Jerusalem, that the prophets foretold His delivery to the Gentiles, His</p>	<p>Paul is warned by prophecy that at Jerusalem he will be bound and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles (21:11).</p>

shameful handling, His death and resurrection (18:31-33).

The Lord is apprehended while at prayer in Gethsemane (22:47-52).

The Lord is smitten by those that held Him (22:63,64),

The Lord stands before Herod (23:7).

The multitude cry 'Away with Him' (23:18).

Pilate attests the Lord's innocence (Matt. 27:24).

The malefactor said, 'This man hath done nothing amiss' (23:41).

The Lord was forsaken by all His disciples at His trial (Matt. 26:56).

Paul is apprehended while in the Temple (21:27-30).

Paul is smitten on the mouth by order of the high priest (23:2).

Paul stands before Herod (23:34,35; 26)

The multitude cry 'Away with such a fellow' (22:22).

Agrippa attests Paul's innocence (26:31,32).

Agrippa said, 'This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds' (26:31).

Paul was forsaken by all men at his first defence (2 Tim. 4:16).

Not only is there traced out this living echo of the Saviour's sufferings and testimony; there are also clear verbal parallels in the two volumes from Luke's pen. For example, the same words occur:

LUKE	ACTS
As His custom was (4:16)	As his manner was (17:2).
Thrust 'out of the city' (4:29).	Drew him 'out of the city' (14:19).
Delivered unto the Gentiles (18:32).	Delivered into the hands of the Gentiles (21:11).
They sought to destroy Him (19:47).	They sought to kill him (21:31).
I have found no fault in this man (23:14).	We find no evil in this man (23:9).
Nothing worthy of death (23:15).	Nothing worthy of death (25:25).
'Away' with this man (23:18).	'Away' with such a fellow (22:22).

This list will speak the more plainly when we have examined the teaching of those epistles connected with the apostle's 'fellowship of his sufferings', and the 'filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ'. It will be sufficient to realize that no writer of a work could institute so many parallels without intention; and if intention be admitted both in the parallel between the two apostles and between the apostle Paul and his Lord, we are well on the way to realizing the purpose of the Acts.

Apart from Peter there is but one dominant figure in the Acts, namely the apostle Paul. Stephen gives his testimony, and seals it with his blood; and Saul of Tarsus is thereby sealed unto the Lord, to carry forward the Gentileward movement so clearly perceived and enunciated by Stephen the Hellenist. Barnabas, Philip, and Mark, all prepare the way for Paul, and then disappear. Even Peter, when his work is done, 'goes to another place' (12:17), and drops out after introducing Paul in the fifteenth chapter. Matthias is appointed but never again mentioned by



name. James appears in connection with Paul, and disappears. John soon passes off the scene. We do not know where John went, or what he did. We have no record of the doings of Barnabas after 15:39.

Saul of Tarsus enters the arena in Acts 8, and soon becomes the central figure of the book. For twenty chapters out of the twenty-eight every incident recorded has some direct relation to the equality and independence, the peculiar ministry and faithfulness, of the apostle to the Gentiles. May the obvious intention not be lost upon us, who by nature were:

'Gentiles in the flesh ... without Christ ... having no hope, and without God in the world' (Eph. 2:11,12).

## CHAPTER 4

### Restoration

Just as the three geographical names, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome, speak volumes as to the dispensational changes that are traced through the Acts, so three words sum up these phases of the progress of the purpose of God.

1. RESTORATION.- The kingdom to Israel (1 to 9).
2. RECONCILIATION.- Typified by the vision of the sheet, and the salvation of Cornelius (10 to 14).
3. REJECTION.- Foreshadowed in Paul's first miracle (13), and actually fulfilled in the setting aside of Israel in Acts 28.

The first section is limited to 'Jews only'; the second section gives a place to the Gentile, but not until Saul is converted can Peter behold the vision at Joppa, nor learn that the Gentile was no longer common or unclean. The third section turns from Israel, and the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles. It will be our concern now to trace the outworking of these three phases separately. We will therefore devote our attention in the present chapter to the first section.

We are immediately brought face to face with a somewhat controversial point by heading this section of the Acts 'Restoration', for many consider that the apostles were quite wrong to have thought about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel at all, and that they should have been occupied with the establishment of the church. It will be seen that we take up the position of believing that the question concerning the restoration of the kingdom to Israel was most relevant and right, and that the idea of Pentecost being the beginning of 'the church' is quite foreign to its meaning and position. Our enquiry will cover the ground of:

- (1) The Lord's own teaching of the apostles.
- (2) The Old Testament teaching concerning the restoration of the kingdom.
- (3) The meaning and dispensational place of Pentecost.
- (4) The character of the apostles' enduement and subsequent testimony.

#### **The Lord's own teaching concerning the restoration of the kingdom to Israel.**

*The genealogy* with which the Gospel according to Matthew opens establishes Christ as the Son of David and heir to his throne.

*The annunciation* of Gabriel to Mary is occupied mainly with the kingly aspect of the incarnation:

'He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the THRONE of His father DAVID: and He shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever (the ages); and of His kingdom there shall be no end' (Luke 1:32,33).

*The prophecy* of Zacharias, at the birth of John the Baptist, speaks of deliverance from the hand of enemies, and the fulfilment of covenant and oath sworn to Abraham and the fathers (Luke 1:68-79).

*The Birthplace*, Bethlehem, is chiefly associated with kingship:

`Where is He that is born King of the Jews? ... In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda: are not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule My People Israel' (Matt. 2:2,5,6).

*The opening words of the Lord's ministry* announce the kingdom :

`Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and saying, (1) The time is fulfilled (hence the kingdom is that of Old Testament prophecy), (2) the kingdom of God is at hand (the King being present): and (3) repent ye, and believe the gospel (good tidings)' (the condition) (Mark 1:14,15).

John the Baptist opened his ministry to Israel with the call to repent (Matt. 3). The Lord opened His ministry to Israel with the call to repent (Matt. 4:17). Peter re-opened the ministry to Israel with the call to repent (Acts 2:38; 3:19).

*The miracles which the Lord wrought* immediately following His opening words were with the confessed object of bringing Israel to repentance, and thereby instituting the kingdom:

`Then began He to upbraid the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, *because they repented not ... Tyre and Sidon ... would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes'* (Matt. 11:20,21).

*The parables which immediately follow the Lord's rejection* introduce the theme of the Restoration. Matthew 12 records the rejection of Christ by Israel; Matthew 13 records the first parables. These parables were uttered because:

`... they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias' (Isa. 6:9,10; Matt. 13:10-15).

The seed that is sown by the sower is `the word of the kingdom'; and although in its initial stages failure was prominent, yet in God's good time that seed of the kingdom shall fall into good ground, and the harvest shall be abundant.

*The Transfiguration* testified to the fulfilment of prophecy concerning the kingdom of which both Law and Prophets did speak. This is made perfectly clear by Peter's inspired testimony:

`... we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty ... We have also a more sure word of prophecy ...' (2 Pet. 1:16-19).

*The promise of the Lord* to those who had forsaken all and followed Him, is directed to the restoration of the kingdom:

`... Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Matt. 19:28).

*The final great prophecy* of Matthew 24 and 25 necessitates the restoration of the kingdom:

`When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all NATIONS ... Then shall the King say ... inherit the KINGDOM ...' (Matt. 25:31-34).

*In the last solemn verses*, of trial, suffering, and crucifixion, the KING and the KINGDOM are prominent. The High Priest said :

`I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven' (Matt. 26:63,64).

The Roman Governor said :

`Art Thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest' (Matt. 27:11).

The Roman soldiers gave evidence that the Lord's claim to *kingship* was widely known and steadily maintained:

`And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!' (Matt. 27:29).

The accusation set over the Lord's head on the cross, was:

`THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS' (Matt. 27:37)

The chief priests mocked Him with taunting words:

`... If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him' (Matt. 27:42).

The dying malefactor said unto Jesus:

`Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy KINGDOM' (Luke 23:42).

The kingdom is severally called:

The kingdom of the heavens, and  
The kingdom of God.

The Lord is spoken of as:

King of Israel, and  
King of the Jews;

and as the destined occupant of the:

Throne of His father David, and the  
Throne of His glory.

Whatever that kingdom and throne may be, it is evident that the Lord Jesus maintained His right to the title, and looked forward beyond the cross and the tomb to the establishing of that claim. We must therefore either understand the term king as is ordinarily meant by that term, and the kingdom and throne of David to be literally intended; or we must understand `king' to indicate spiritual headship over the church, and `the throne of David' to be a figure setting forth the spiritual truth of the Lord's headship. We might ask what kind of kingdom the apostles would understand it to be wherein they were going to sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel? Would the idea of the *church* ever have crossed their minds? Or when the mother of Zebedee's children desired the right and left-hand places in the kingdom, did she conjure up the vision of her children as bishops of the church? Or when the dying malefactor asked for remembrance by the Lord when he came into His kingdom, did not that dying man mean the future kingdom? If he meant by `kingdom' the present church, how could the Lord remember him then?

We have already drawn attention to the fact that the question of the apostles recorded in Acts 1:6 was the outcome of the Lord's own teaching, which He had given them over a period of forty days:

`... being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God ... When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power' (Acts 1:3-7).

What is the meaning of the Lord's answer? Is it not as much as to say, (1) You are right in anticipating the restoration of the kingdom to Israel (meaning the literal kingdom as originally governed by David, and to be ruled over by David's greater Son); (2) yet the part of your question which cannot be answered is that which asks too definitely concerning the time. The kingdom will be restored certainly, but whether immediately, or after other unrevealed events, must await God's own wise over-ruling.

By referring back to Luke 24 we find that during that forty days of marvellous instruction, the Lord opened up the whole of the Old Testament (Moses, Prophets, and Psalms), concerning Himself, and the purpose of God, which (commencing with Jerusalem) was to spread in an ever-widening circle to all nations (Luke 24:26,27,44-48). While this fact provides us with a means of answering our question as to whether the kingdom means kingdom or church, and whether David's throne means David's throne or the heart of a believer, and whether Israel means the

descendants of Jacob, the son of Isaac, or converted Gentiles, it also opens before us such a wide field of research and study, that the limitations of one chapter cannot suffice. The study under our second heading, therefore, must be somewhat tabular, analytical, and of the nature of a sample.

### **The Old Testament teaching concerning the restoration of the kingdom to Israel.**

Isaiah's prophecy divides into two great sections: the first section, chapters 1 to 39, dealing mainly with Israel's *rejection*; the second section, chapters 40 to 66, dealing mainly with Israel's *restoration*. This second section opens with the words:

‘Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her APPOINTED TIME is accomplished (see margin), that her iniquity is pardoned’ (Isa. 40:1,2).

The word rendered ‘warfare’ in the A.V. occurs in Daniel 10:1, ‘the time appointed’. This prophecy of restoration makes immediate reference to ‘the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness’. The apostles would know the close connection between John the Baptist and this prophecy, and hence their question in Acts 1:6. Chapter 43 contains the promise:

‘... I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth’ (Isa. 43:5,6).

Jeremiah, too, is a prophet of Rejection and Restoration. First the Lord declares that He will:

‘Hasten (Watch over) My word to perform it’ (1:12), (which word here was a word of judgment and wrath).

In chapter 31:28 the Lord says :

‘And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the LORD’.

These words refer to *Israel as a nation*, and not to ‘a church’, as verse 36 bears testimony :

‘... If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being A NATION before Me for ever’.

‘Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah ... David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel ... If I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I cast away the seed of JACOB, and DAVID My servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of ABRAHAM, ISAAC, and JACOB: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them’ (Jer. 33:14-26).

No wonder the apostles said ‘Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’

Jeremiah's prophecy concludes with the transference of sovereignty from Israel to Nebuchadnezzar. Of this transference and its outcome Daniel is one of the chief spokesmen:

‘In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. *And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand*’ (Dan. 1:1,2).

Nebuchadnezzar was the divinely appointed head of gold. What Israel's sovereignty covered and what the restoration of that sovereignty will involve is opened to us by the words of Daniel in describing the extent of the authority which had been transferred to Nebuchadnezzar:

‘Thou, O king, art a *king of kings*’ (Dan. 2:37).

When Israel's kingdom is restored, and great David's greater Son is king, this will be His title:

‘King of kings, and Lord of Lords, Prince of the kings of the earth’ (Rev. 19:16; 1:5).

That such vast sway and majesty was included in the covenant with David, Psalm 89:27 testifies:

‘Also I will make Him My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth’.

Daniel continued:

`... for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory' (Dan. 2:37).

The God of heaven gives this kingdom, and it can be as well called the kingdom of heaven as the kingdom of God. When the Lord taught the disciples to pray, it was for the restoration of the kingdom and its ultimate blessings:

`Thy kingdom come ... in earth ... for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory' (Matt. 6:10-13).

Compare these words with `a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory', of Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar. The words are echoed in the ascription of praise recorded in Revelation 4:11; 5:12,13. Nebuchadnezzar's dominion extended beyond mere territory or human subjects:

`And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all' (Dan. 2:38).

At the end of Gentile dominion `shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed'. Daniel saw in the night visions, and behold :

`... one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed' (Dan. 7:13,14).

`... the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High' (Dan. 7:27).

In Daniel 9 we find the prophet, having read the promise of restoration from the desolations of Jerusalem, earnestly praying for its fulfilment. He is then instructed that within a specified time the whole purpose comprising Israel's restoration shall be accomplished. We do not embark here upon a consideration of Daniel 9, but later some more pointed references must be made to that chapter. Daniel is followed in the Authorized Version by the *Minor Prophets*, and these are particularly rich in their testimony concerning Israel's restoration. Hosea takes a wife at the command of God, and the children which are born are given symbolical names.

JEZREEL (Hos. 1:4) - The word has two meanings :

- (1) May God scatter (Jer. 31:10);
- (2) May God sow (Zech. 10:9).

LO-RUHAMA (Hos. 1:6) - `Not having obtained mercy'.

LO-AMMI (Hos. 1:9) - `Not My people'.

Yet immediately following these figures of woe come the words of restoration:

`Yet the number of the children of Israel *shall be* as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel' (the day of sowing, i.e., the restoration) (Hos. 1:10,11).

`... I will sow her unto Me (*Jezreith*) in the earth; and I will have mercy (*ruhamah*) upon her that had not obtained mercy (*lo-ruhamah*); and I will say to them which were not My people (*lo-ammi*), Thou art My people (*ammi*); and they shall say, Thou art my God' (Hos. 2:23).

Joel, too, is full of the same blessed promise. First we have utter desolation:

`That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten' (1:4).

The Jews refer this to Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. Jeremiah 51:27,28 confirms this application:

`... call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as *the rough caterpillers*. Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes'.

In Joel 2:25,28, however, things are reversed:

`... I WILL RESTORE to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you ... And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh'

No wonder the apostles said, 'Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' Amos, with all his denunciations, does not finish without the promise of restoration:

`And I will bring again the captivity of My people of Israel ... And I will plant them upon their land' (Amos 9:14,15).

Micah 2:12,13 reads, 'I will surely gather the remnant of Israel', and although one more strong denunciation is made against Israel's sin, yet Micah concludes with the pardoning love of God, and says:

`He will turn again ... Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old' (Micah 7:19,20).

Zephaniah says:

`... I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD' (Zeph. 3:20).

Haggai must be read through to catch the spirit of the closing verses. Zechariah simply burns with the spirit of restoration; so complete will be the redemption of the people, so holy will that kingdom be, that he can say:

`In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD ... Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts ...' (Zech. 14:20,21).

Malachi concludes with the promise of sending Elijah before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Speaking of John the Baptist, the Lord said to His disciples, 'If ye will receive *it*, this is Elias, which was for to come' (Matt. 11:14). Do we still wonder that the apostles, remembering all the Lord's teaching, and all the teaching of the Old Testament should say, 'Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?' The whole of the Prophets and Psalms, together with much of the Law, must be read to cover all the ground; but it is impossible here to pursue this theme further. We must be satisfied to awaken the interested reader: those who already know the subject will agree as to the fulness of the Scriptures upon the theme.

### **The meaning and dispensational place of Pentecost and the character of the apostles' enduement.**

We must now turn to the Acts of the Apostles, and see whether Pentecost was to them the beginning of the church, or whether this literal restoration of the kingdom to Israel was uppermost in their mind and testimony. The opening scene of the Acts is laid just outside Jerusalem, 'the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey'. They had heard the testimony of the angels:

`... this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come IN LIKE MANNER as ye have seen Him go into heaven' (Acts 1:11).

Zechariah had already prophesied:

`And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east' (Zech. 14:4).

And the apostles, whose hearts had been made to burn at the exposition of the Scriptures, and whose understanding had been opened by the Lord, would immediately connect the passage with the angels' testimony; they would catch the hint of assured fulfilment; and though still uncertain as to the *time* they knew the *fulfilment* was sure: their testimony was to be that of witnesses - 'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me'.

It was essential for the completeness of their testimony that there should be twelve, for that is Israel's number. There is no need, we trust, for a list of 'twelves' that pertain to Israel. The appointment of Matthias was essential to a complete witness as to the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. In the regeneration, when the Son of man sits on the throne of His glory, *twelve* thrones must be occupied by the apostles. Peter standing up in the midst of the disciples said:

'Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled; which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas' (Acts 1:16).

Peter does not merely say in a casual manner that the appointment of a successor to Judas seemed in harmony with the general tenor of Scripture, but takes a Psalm, which must have been expounded by the Lord Himself, and facing the profound fact that David's words are the words of the Holy Ghost, proceeds to the choice of the two men, Joseph and Matthias. Why only two? Were there not others whose knowledge and gifts and graces fitted them for the work? Possibly there were, but a witness requires something more than ability, he needs to have been *actually present*. So Peter announces the qualifications which of necessity ruled out many who had joined the band of believers at a later time:

'Wherefore of these men which have companied with us *all the time* that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, *beginning from the baptism of John*, unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection' (Acts 1:21,22).

After setting forth the two men who conformed to the requirement, Peter and the rest humbly left the choice with the Lord:

'And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two Thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he (i.e. the chosen one, Matthias) might go to his own place (i.e. his proper place as one of the twelve). And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles' (Acts 1:24-26).

All is now ready for the testimony, with the exception of one thing. The Lord had said:

'... ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost (Spirit) is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses' (Acts 1:8).

Everything was ready for the promised enduement from on high: the number was complete, the disciples were all together waiting on the Lord. At what particular moment the promise would be fulfilled they knew not; all they knew was that it would be 'not many days hence'. We know now that it was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. There was evidently some connection between the Feast of Pentecost and the enduement of the apostles that made the moment significant.

Let us seek from the Word some understanding of this Feast and its place in the divine plan. The Feast of Pentecost is best understood by turning to Leviticus 23 and noting its relation to the other Feasts of the Lord, and seeing something of its dispensational foreshadowing.

### The Feasts of the Lord (Lev. 23)

'These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons'.

A Redemption by blood	a PASSOVER (5).
	b UNLEAVENED BREAD (6-8). Seven days. Egypt.
B Reaping	c FIRST FRUITS (9-14). d PENTECOST (15-21). c HARVEST (22). d TRUMPETS (23-25).

A	Atonement by blood	<b>a</b> DAY OF ATONEMENT (27-33). <b>b</b> TABERNACLES (34-44). Seven days. Egypt.
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Four of these Feasts have received their fulfilment, either partially or fully. Without controversy:

`Christ our Passover is (hath been) sacrificed for us' (1 Cor. 5:7).

The same authority indicates that the Feast of Unleavened Bread likewise has received and is receiving its fulfilment:

`Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the *unleavened bread* of sincerity and truth' (1 Cor. 5:8).

The Feast of the Firstfruits has received its great primary fulfilment:

`And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD ... on the morrow after the sabbath' (Lev. 23:11).

This was, of course, the first day of the week, the day of the Lord's resurrection. The same epistle which points out the fulfilment of the first two Feasts, points out this also:

`But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept ... Christ the firstfruits' (1 Cor. 15:20-23).

Pentecost comes next:

`And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat (meal) offering unto the LORD' (Lev. 23:15,16).

Passover was literally fulfilled, Firstfruits was literally fulfilled: shall not Pentecost be literally fulfilled also? Look back at the order in which these Feasts come.

FIRSTFRUITS.....Resurrection of the Lord.

PENTECOST .....The new meal offering - two leavened loaves.

HARVEST .....Resurrection of those that are Christ's at His coming; `not a clear riddance of the corners'.

TRUMPETS.....The seventh month, the time of the end, the period of the book of Revelation.

Strictly speaking, `Harvest' is not a Feast, but the verse is inserted in such a place as to guide us in our interpretation of Pentecost. Pentecost is to Firstfruits what Trumpets is to Harvest. Pentecost is a remnant, foreshadowing all Israel at the time of the end. We shall expect to find upon examination that Pentecost deals with a partial fulfilment of the promises concerning Israel's restoration; the small `kind of firstfruits' coming first, the ingathering of `the fruit of the land' (Lev. 23:39), coming later. Pentecost is *seven weeks* after Passover and Firstfruits: Trumpets and Tabernacles, which round off the prophetic period, are *seven months*.

All God's dealings with Israel are in periods of sevens. The seventy years of the desolation of Jerusalem, spoken of by Jeremiah, caused Daniel to pray, because the time was drawing to a conclusion. The heavenly messenger made known to Daniel that a further period of 70 x 7 will include all the purpose of God concerning Israel. The same is foreshadowed by the two periods - seven weeks to Pentecost, and seven months to Trumpets.

So far our own investigation: Peter may explode our theories: we may find him enunciating on the day of Pentecost the truth of the One Body, where there is neither Jew nor Greek. The two Houses, Israel and Judah, may not be intended by the two leavened loaves - they may represent Jew and Gentile. Before, therefore, we go any further, it will be wise to find out really what Peter was inspired to say. If anywhere during his opening address he should say, `*This is that*', we shall be faced with *fact*, to which all theories must agree, or disappear. Peter does say `*This is that*', and the meaning of Pentecost is therefore lifted beyond the plane of conjecture or of spiritualizing into that of faith in a *written interpretation*.



`There were dwelling (*katoikeo*) at Jerusalem' (Acts 2:5). *Katoikeo*, while indicating ordinarily a permanent place of abode, is often used in the Septuagint and the New Testament for merely `sojourning for a while', so Hebrews 11:9. The idea in Acts 2:5 is that of `sojourning', the reason for the expression being that, at the feast of Pentecost, Jews from all parts of the inhabited world gathered together at Jerusalem. `Devout men out of every nation under heaven' (Acts 2:5). Deuteronomy 30:1-5 is hereby anticipated:

`The LORD ... will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the uttermost parts of heaven ...'

The nationalities of these Jews is given at length:

`Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians' (Acts 2:9-11).

Some said of the marvellous gift of tongues:

`... What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter ... said ... THIS IS THAT which was spoken by the prophet Joel' (Acts 2:12-16).

Now Joel's prophecy is entirely taken up with Israel, the Day of the Lord, and the ultimate restoration of the nation. The following outline will possibly help us to visualize the prophecy.

### Joel

- A**    **a** New wine cut off.
- b** Israel's harvest spoiled.
- B**    Israel a desolation.
- C**    The gathering of Israel.
- D**    I will restore.
- C**    The gathering of nations.
- D**    I will plead.
- A**    **b** Gentile harvest.
- a** New wine restored.
- B**    Egypt and Edom a desolation.

Israel is depicted as wasted and desolate, and the people are urged to *repentance*:

`Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments ...

Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him ...

Then will the LORD be jealous for His land, and pity His people ...

I will restore ...

AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS AFTERWARD, THAT I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS, YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS: AND ALSO UPON THE SERVANTS AND UPON THE HANDMAIDS IN THOSE DAYS WILL I POUR OUT MY SPIRIT.

AND I WILL SHEW WONDERS IN THE HEAVENS AND IN THE EARTH, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND PILLARS OF SMOKE.

THE SUN SHALL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS, AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND THE TERRIBLE DAY OF THE LORD COME.

AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, THAT WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE DELIVERED: *for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call'* (Joel 2:12-32).

The emphasized quotation from Joel, Peter introduces with the words, 'This is that'. This Pentecostal gift of tongues is the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel. Difficulties there may be, but there is no difficulty in the words of the inspired apostle. He quotes at length, and the careful observation of quotation and fulfilment will supply the key to the place of Pentecost in the dispensational plan. Fourteen definite items are prophesied by Joel and quoted by Peter; yet some of them, *e.g.*, the sun and the moon turning to darkness, etc., did not take place, and will not take place until the Book of the Revelation is in fulfilment. The words of Joel are divided by the expressions 'I will pour' and 'I will show'; the first series received fulfilment at Pentecost; the second series awaits the end, when Israel shall repent and be fully restored. We shall see this more plainly if set out thus:

**A** I will pour out My Spirit.

1	Upon all flesh.	The last days. Seven-fold beginning at Pentecost. 'The powers of the age to come'.
2	Sons.	
3	Daughters.	
4	Old men.	
5	Young men.	
6	Servants.	
7	Handmaids.	

**B** Present interval.- Israel not repentant.

**B** Future day.- Israel repent and look upon Him Whom they pierced.

**A** I will shew wonders

1	Heavens.	Seven-fold conclusion. Wonders.
2	Earth.	
3	Blood.	
4	Fire.	
5	Pillars of smoke.	
6	Sun.	
7	Moon.	

Joel's word 'afterward' (2:28) is interpreted for us by Peter as meaning 'in the last days', and therefore needs no further explanation. The occurrences of Acts 2 were in 'the last days'. John writing later says, 'Little children, it is the last time' (1 John 2:18). When the Lord Jesus came to earth nearly 2,000 years ago, it was in 'these last days' (Heb. 1:2). It was 'the fulness of the time' (Gal. 4:4). In Hebrews 9:26 we see that:

'He abrogated the sin offering by the sacrifice of Himself, when He appeared at the *sunteleia ton aionon* - the gathering point, just before the *telos*, the end of the ages' (Author's translation).

The day of Pentecost, therefore, was the introduction to the day of the Lord; the spirit was poured out, but Israel repented not. Had Israel repented, the remaining series of wonders in heaven and earth would have followed. As it was, Pentecost fell into line, dispensationally, with the place that the Feast has in the series, a *firstfruits* before the harvest, 'the remnant whom the Lord shall call' being saved. Peter, immediately upon finishing the quotation from Joel, proceeds to its application, thus, 'Ye men of Israel, hear these words'; and speaks of 'Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you, by mighty works and wonders and signs'. His death and resurrection were the fulfilment of the divine plan, according as David said of Him in Psalm 16. The point which Peter makes of this quotation is that:

'David ... being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ TO SIT ON HIS THRONE; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ ... whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost (Spirit), He hath shed forth THIS, which ye now see and hear ... Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ' (Acts 2:29-36).

We should expect an inspired speaker to have a real, definite message to give, and the most effective method of presenting it. What is Peter's object? We believe the whole of his speech is an exposition of his opening words,

*`This is that'.* This is his *`text'*; and his first reference is to Joel, where the whole atmosphere is that of the day of the Lord. He then in verse 22 appears to drop the thread; but it is not so: all lead up to the words of verse 33, *`He hath shed forth THIS'.* THIS is now seen to be connected with sitting on David's throne (30); and during the period while the risen Lord awaits the moment to arrive for taking the kingdom, He sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high (34).

Peter, therefore, very definitely links together, as part of one whole, the prophecy of Joel as concerning *the restoration of Israel and the day of the Lord*; the prophecy of David as to the Lord Jesus *sitting on his throne*; the pouring out of the spirit as the proof that *the Lord had been exalted to this end*. This is what the day of Pentecost means. While the nation did not repent, the remnant did. These were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ *for the remission of sins*, and received the promised spirit, which was given to *`as many as the Lord our God shall call'*. This remnant are exhorted to *`save themselves from this perverse generation'*: those who gladly received the word were *`added'* (41,47). There is no MSS. authority for the words *`the church'* in verse 47. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

THE FELLOWSHIP.-*`They had all things common'*.

THE BREAKING OF BREAD.-*`At home, eating their food with gladness'*.

THE PRAYERS.-*`Praising God'*.

THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE.- The teaching given by Peter concerning the restoration of the kingdom; the meaning of the signs and wonders; and the imminent return of the Lord from heaven.

There was nothing in the apostles' doctrine which severed this little company from the Temple (see Mal. 3:1). Indeed, no word could indicate a more scrupulous attention than that used in Acts 2:46 (*proskartereo*). It occurs in 1:14; 2:42,46; 6:4; 10:7; and in another form in Ephesians 6:18. It is not out of a desire to avoid conflict with the religious leaders that they still attended the Temple services. No, they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine; and equally so attended with a new-born zeal the Temple at Jerusalem. Nothing that constituted the apostles' doctrine or the dispensational position of Pentecost severed the believers in the risen Saviour from Israel, or Israel's Temple. They were the remnant, and their name is given in 2:47, *`those being saved'*, or, *`the saved ones'*-the Pentecostal first-fruits of that harvest yet to come, when *`all Israel shall be saved'*.

The divided kingdom, Israel and Judah, shall once more become one, under one Head. *`Ye men of Judah, and ye men of Israel'*, is Peter's interpretation of the *`two loaves'* which were offered to the Lord at the Feast of Pentecost. Let those who maintain that the two loaves indicate Jew and Gentile remember that no Gentile was addressed until Peter received a definite vision in Acts 10, except the Ethiopian proselyte. *`Jews only'* (11:19) indicates the state of things and the direction of the testimony up till the advent of the apostle Paul.

## CHAPTER 5

### Luke - The Gospel of the Reconciliation

It is generally acknowledged by students of the Word that the great theme of Matthew's Gospel is *`The kingdom'*. The genealogy given in the first chapter establishes Christ as the true lineal Son of David.

The message which was given to the apostle Paul for the Gentiles, and the ministry of the reconciliation committed to him, arose out of the failure of Israel (we speak, of course, after the manner of men) to repent and believe the good news of the kingdom. The great teaching of the apostle, which included the Gentile within the sphere of the promise of Abraham (Romans and Galatians), is scarcely suggested in Matthew's Gospel.

Matthew's Gospel is divided into two parts; and each part is connected with the relationship and covenants indicated in Matthew 1:1. The first part, covering Matthew 4:17 to 16:20, is associated with the kingly title, *`Son of David'*; the second portion, commencing with the announcement of suffering, death, and resurrection (Matt. 16:21), is the fulfilling of the title, *`Son of Abraham'*. The second phase of the Lord's ministry could not be made a matter of public proclamation until the great transaction of Calvary had removed the curse, and made it possible for the blessing of Abraham to flow out to the Gentiles (Gal. 3:13,14).

The Acts opens with a renewed witness concerning the kingdom of Israel and David's throne, but also links with it the wider covenant made with Abraham. Luke, who wrote the `Acts', had already written a `former treatise of all that Jesus began both to do and teach'; and in that treatise he had laid a foundation for Paul's gospel of the reconciliation. He does not stay at Abraham when he gives the genealogy of the Lord, but goes back to Adam, the father - not of all who *believe*, but of all who *live* - irrespective of the question of faith or works, law or promise.

Before drawing attention to one or two features of Luke's Gospel which indicate its peculiar testimony, we would ask the reader's consideration of the close literary association which is observable between the writings of Luke and the epistles of Paul. Words, phrases, turns of expression, which are found repeated in the Gospel, Acts, and Epistles, are found nowhere else in the New Testament. We cannot avoid the conclusion that the preparation of the third Gospel was intimately connected with the personal ministry of the apostle Paul, and had that ministry continually in mind. The phenomenon of language is so pronounced that one investigator seeks to prove that *Paul* is the writer of the Gospel according to Luke. While we do not hold that this is the case, the remarkable literary connection is too unmistakable to be ignored. H. Heber Evans, in his book *Paul, the Author of the Acts*, has brought together a mass of evidence which we do well to consider.

Luke uses 1,750 distinct words, of which 875 are found in Paul's epistles. This computation excludes `Hebrews', but we remember upon one occasion hearing a student of the Word express his belief that Luke wrote `Hebrews'; so that there is evidently a further connection with that epistle. However, we must omit this epistle for the time being, although believing that Paul was the writer of it. *Every second word in the Gospel of Luke is also used by Paul.* The following is a summary of the literary connection between Luke's writings and the epistles of Paul:

1,450 distinct words are used in Acts.  
550 of them are found in Paul's epistles.

#### **Peculiar Words.**

What is more important is to note the words which, while used by both Paul and Luke, *occur nowhere else*.

50 words in *both* Luke and Acts occur nowhere else but in Paul's epistles.  
80 other words in Luke, peculiar to Paul.  
89 other words in Acts, peculiar to Paul.  
30 Proper names which occur.  
-  
249 Total  
-

An even more decisive test is the matter of the usage of particles. Any two writers upon any given theme might use similar words, without of necessity collaborating; but intimate peculiarities of tiny particles would indicate something akin to joint authorship. The following is the case for the particles:

#### **Particles peculiar to Paul, Luke, and Acts.**

10 Luke, Acts, and Paul only.  
7 Luke and Paul only.  
11 Acts and Paul.

#### **Phrases common to Luke, Paul, and Acts.**

More than 100 common to Luke and Paul. } Not all,  
} however,  
More than 100 common to Acts and Paul. } peculiar.  
But 50 phrases in Luke, and  
60 phrases in Acts are peculiar to Paul.

Space does not allow us to go further. H. Heber Evan's work is well worth study.

The unfolding of the divine purpose is closely connected with the revelation of Christ Himself. It will be found that the circle of truth widens and deepens as the time arrives for some deeper title of Christ to come forth. The inner circle, latest in time of revelation and first to be fulfilled and exhausted, is associated with *David*. To this the first portion of Matthew is devoted (Matt. 1 to 16). The next circle, which goes back in history, and looks forward beyond the confines of the rule of David, is connected with *Abraham*. The second portion of Matthew (Matt. 17 to 28) and the Acts belong to this section of the purpose.

Luke's Gospel goes back behind both Abraham and David, and traces the genealogy of the Saviour back to *Adam*. This forms the basis for Paul's message to the Gentiles; and indeed, it is Paul alone of all the New Testament writers who makes known the wondrous and far-reaching connection that is established in the purpose of God between Adam, mankind (including Jew and Gentile), and Christ. Romans 5 associates the reconciliation with Adam. This scope is wider than that of Matthew.

Paul in his prison ministry includes not only earth, but heaven: not only Son of David, Son of Abraham, and Son of Adam, but Christ as 'The firstborn of all creation', which is parallel with the first chapter of John's Gospel, whose great object is to testify that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

In Luke's Gospel we have several features which tend to emphasize the special object with which he selected the words and works of the Son of God. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John give us some of the sayings of John the Baptist, and among them the reference to Isaiah 40, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness'; but Luke alone anticipates the reconciliation by giving the words 'and *all flesh* shall see the salvation of God' (Luke 3:6). Matthew, on the other hand, gives *his* distinctive note, *alone* recording the words of John, 'Repent ye: for the *kingdom* of heaven is at hand' (Matt. 3:2). There is evident selection here, each keeping to his theme.

Matthew makes mention of the visit of the wise men, with their question, 'Where is He that is born *King* of the Jews?' (Matt. 2:2). He also gives the prophecy of Micah, of the One Who should be born in Bethlehem to be *ruler* of the people of Israel. Luke, however, makes no reference to the wise men or their quest: he tells of the angel's words to the shepherds. The message of the angel was wider than that of the wise men. Not King of the Jews, but:

'... behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ... Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men' (Luke 2:10,14).

Here is the germ of the reconciliation. The same note is struck in the blessing of Simeon:

'... mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the GENTILES, and the glory of Thy people Israel ... this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel' (Luke 2:30-34).

Let it be observed that Simeon, speaking prophetically, placed the Gentiles first, as the kingdom would not be set up at the first advent, owing to the unrepentance of Israel.

Matthew, Mark and Luke alike record the temptation of Christ as preceding His public ministry. The opening words of Christ's ministry as recorded by Matthew are 'Repent: for the *kingdom* of heaven is at hand' (Matt. 4:17). Mark gives as His opening message, 'The time is fulfilled, and the *kingdom* of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel' (Mark 1:15). Luke commences the ministry of the Lord, however, in Nazareth, and records a remarkable statement, which indicates the Gentile tendency of that Gospel. After having read from the prophet Isaiah, the Lord closed the book at the words, '... the acceptable year of the Lord' (Luke 4:19), leaving the remainder of the prophet's utterance (which refers to the time of Israel's restoration) unquoted. He followed this reading by a remarkable allusion to Old Testament history. Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, but the only widow to whom that prophet was sent was a *Gentile*! Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha, but none were cleansed save a *Gentile*! Now observe the changed attitude of His hearers:

- A The acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18,19).
- B Wondered at the gracious words (Luke 4:22).
- A The unacceptable reference to the Gentiles (Luke 4:24-27).
- B Filled with wrath (Luke 4:28,29).

A close parallel with this is found in Acts 22. When the people of Israel heard the apostle speak in the Hebrew tongue, they gave him the more attention, and listened quietly through the narrative until he reached the word *Gentiles*, when they cried, 'Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live' (verse 22). See chapter 3, page 43 for other parallels.

Here, then, in Luke's record we have a somewhat different purpose indicated from that suggested by Matthew. These things have been selected with an object, and Luke provides from the commencement a line of teaching which shall grow on and up to the glorious climax of the epistle to the Romans. Further evidence of the special character of Luke's Gospel is found in the emphasis upon certain words.

### `Publican'

- A 3:12,13. Publicans come to be baptized.-`Exact no more than ... is appointed'.
- B 5:27. A publican, Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom. Sequel: 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance' (5:32).
- C 5:29. A great company of publicans.
- D 5:30. Why eat with publicans?
- E 7:29. Publicans justified God. Central reference.
- D 7:34. A wine bibber; a friend of publicans.
- C 15:1. All the publicans.
- B 18:11,13. This publican; the publican. Sequel: The 'sinner' justified 'rather than the other' (18:14).
- A 19:2. Zacchaeus, chief among publicans.-`The half I give ... if I have taken ... I restore' (19:8).

The central reference shows the publicans 'justifying' God; while the one parable in the group shows God 'justifying' a publican. Luke alone uses this term in line with the great doctrine committed to the apostle Paul. Matthew uses the word twice, but not in the same way. The references in Luke are, 7:29,35; 10:29; 16:15; 18:14. The word occurs in the Acts in the opening sermon recorded of Paul (Acts 13:39). Peter never uses the expression.

It is much the same line of testimony that revolves around the words 'rich' and 'riches'. We will not set out all the references, nor their structure; it will suffice to say that the central reference is Luke 16:19, the rich man of the parable. There, in accord with the object of the Gospel, the outcast Lazarus enters into the blessed rest of Abraham's bosom, whereas the rich man, who typified Israel, was tormented. Many of the parables of Luke have this same note running through them. The prodigal son, for example, is contrasted with the elder brother who had remained with the father; the good Samaritan, whose race was hated by the Jew, is brought within the sphere of blessing. Of the ten lepers who were cleansed, one only returned to give thanks, and that one a Samaritan. The parable of the Unjust Steward looks to Israel's failure and a change of dispensation (the word 'stewardship' being the word rendered in Ephesians and Colossians 'dispensation'), and indicates that one great reason why Israel failed was the service of Mammon - a bait spread before the Lord Himself in His temptation, but repudiated.

Another passage which indicates interest in the Gentile is found in Luke 21. This chapter is parallel with the great prophetic chapter of Matthew 24. There is, however, an important addition to the prophecy given in Matthew, which occupies verses 20-24. What subject will Luke bring specially into prominence which it was not the object of Matthew to record?-'The times of the *Gentiles*'. Luke speaks of the time when Jerusalem shall be compassed with armies and trodden down of the Gentiles, 'until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled'. 'The times of the Gentiles' synchronize with the down-trodden state of Jerusalem. When Jerusalem at last realizes the time of her visitation and is delivered, the times of the Gentiles will have been fulfilled, and the long deferred kingdom will have come.

By the time we reach Luke 19 the great rejection had taken place; and the parable of the Nobleman, who went into a far country *to receive* a kingdom and *to return* is given. This phase is not presented by Matthew in the parallel parable of Matthew 25.

We have already considered the connection which is observable between the closing verses of Luke 24 and the opening verses of Acts 1. Sufficient, we trust, has been indicated to show the Gentileward trend of the narrative, providing, as it does, a record of the ministry of the Lord which should allow of the transition to the ministry of Paul.

While we do not believe that the idea can be true that Paul wrote the Gospel, we do feel that the testimony of language indicates how much there is in it of his own personal influence. If, as we believe, Galatians be the first of his epistles to be written, it is suggestive that there we read of his visit to Peter, and to James the Lord's brother. James would supply him with the history of the Lord from infancy until manhood, and Peter would be able to continue from the opening of His ministry until the Ascension. Luke apparently first joined the apostle in Acts 16:10-17, and the necessity was felt that a declaration of things most surely believed should be prepared. This, together with the sequel given in the Acts, would prevent those, whose only conception was according to that of Matthew, from saying that Paul's gospel and ministry to the Gentiles was an innovation, or contrary to the words and works of the Lord.

How grateful Paul must have been for the inspired inclusion of the 'Prodigal Son' in Luke's Gospel, when opposed by 'the circumcision'. How wonderfully the 'Good Samaritan', or the record of Zacchaeus, would help him when dealing with Jewish pride.

Let us be guided by the facts brought forward in this chapter and use Luke's Gospel more consistently than we may have done hitherto.

## CHAPTER 6

### Two Dispensational Miracles

(Acts 3, 4, and 13).

The writer of the Acts evidences most clearly that he pursues a purpose in its compilation, by the fact that Peter and Paul so definitely echo each other in word and deed. Very markedly indeed is this the case with the miracle with which each apostle commences his ministry. Peter's miracle is one of *healing*; Paul's miracle is one of *blinding*. Peter's miracle represented the nation's *restoration*; Paul's miracle foreshadowed the nation's *rejection*. If this proves to be the case, then we have established another most important fact which clearly indicates the dispensational character of the book of the Acts.

#### Peter's Miracle of Healing (Acts 3 to 4:22).

##### *The Miracle of restoration*

- A 3:1-11. The Miracle. Its performance.
- B a 3:12-16. Explanation. 'The Name'.
- b 3:17-24. Prophetic application.
- B a 3:25 to 4:10. Explanation. 'The Name'.
- b 4:11,12. Prophetic application.
- A 4:13-22. The Miracle. Its acknowledgment.

The parts of this miracle which demand a closer attention are those dealing with the explanation and prophetic application. The actual narrative of the healing of the lame man is too well known to need repetition here. The lame man is a type of Israel, unable to enter into the temple of God with prayer or praise. The name of Jesus of Nazareth is the name whereby the lame man was healed. There is a peculiar emphasis upon this title of our Lord. Never does this title find a place in the epistles of the Church. It emphasizes that name which Israel had hated, and which He bore written upon the cross:

‘And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS’ (John 19:19).

This title offended the chief priests, and they said to Pilate:

‘Write not, The King of the Jews; but that *He said*, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written’ (John 19:21,22).

Vacillating Pilate becomes adamant when the purpose of God so demands. Jesus of Nazareth *is* the King of the Jews, and in that despised name the miracle was accomplished, and by that despised Saviour all Israel must be saved.

The title, Jesus (or Jesus Christ) of Nazareth, occurs *seven times* in the Acts. In the two passages where the name occurs in the record of the healing of the lame man, the title is Jesus Messiah the One of Nazareth. The title conveys the thought, ‘Whom ye crucified, Whom God raised and exalted’: the One ‘of Nazareth’ was nevertheless ‘The Christ’.

#### **The seven occurrences of the title.**

Peter's opening message to Israel: ‘Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles ... crucified ... raised ...’ (2:22-24).

Peter's words to the lame man: ‘... In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk’ (3:6).

Peter's words to all the people of Israel: ‘... that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth ... crucified ... raised ... doth this man stand here before you whole’ (4:10).

False witnesses say that Stephen taught that ‘... this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us’ (6:14).

Peter's opening message to a Gentile, Cornelius: ‘God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost (holy spirit) and with power ... slew ... raised’ (10:38-40).

Paul's vision, told to Jews at Jerusalem: ‘Jesus of Nazareth, Whom Thou persecutest’ (22:8).

Paul's statement before king Agrippa: ‘I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth’ (26:9).

The lame man is healed by the power of this name, and enters the temple ‘walking and leaping and praising God’, typically fulfilling the characteristic of Israel's restoration, ‘then shall the lame man leap as an hart’. The miracle attracted a great deal of attention, and Peter took the opportunity to enforce its typical teaching. The inspired narrative is so simply, yet beautifully arranged, that we will set out its structure in detail, hoping that the very perfectness of the material will be used to impress all with the greater importance of the subject matter.

#### **The Miracle.- Its performance (Acts 3:1-11).**

A | A 1 Peter and John go up to the temple.



- B** 2 Beautiful gate. Lame man lying.
- C** 3-9 The miracle, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.
- B** 10 Beautiful gate. Lame man healed.
- A** 11 Peter and John. Solomon's porch.

We now turn our attention to the explanation and prophetic application that is twice given.

**B 3:12-24.**

(see Structure on page 76)

- a** **D** 13-The God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, of our fathers.
- E** -13. Glorified His Son Jesus.
- F** 14,15- Denial, detention, and death of Christ.
- G** -15. Witnesses to resurrection.
- H** 16- The power of the name.
- I** -16. Perfect soundness before all.
- b** **J** 17,18. Fulfilment of things shown by mouth of prophets - suffering.
- K** 19-21- Re-pent, re-freshing, re-stitution.
- J** -21. Fulfilment of things spoken by mouth of prophets - glory.
- K** 22-24. Hear ... if not - destroyed.

**B 3:25 to 4:12**

(see Structure on page 76)

- a** **D** 25. The God of our fathers - Abraham.
- E** 26. Raised up His Son Jesus.
- F** 4:3-7. Detention and opposition to apostles.
- G** 2. Glorified; and witness to resurrection.
- H** 8-10- The power of the name.
- I** -10. Whole before all.
- b** **J** 11. The rejected stone become Head.
- K** 12- Neither is there THE HEALING in any other.
- J** -12- For there is no other name under heaven.
- K** -12. Whereby we must be saved. (The healing of the nation).

It will be seen that Peter, in both instances, is dealing with God as the *God of Abraham*, the God of his fathers. What had the healing of the lame man to do with the covenant of God with Abraham? And in what way did that miracle typify Israel? Let Peter himself tell us. `These days' (3:24), these `last days' (2:17), the days during which the apostles testified, had been the subject of prophecy since the world began:

`Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of THESE DAYS' (Acts 3:24).

The time, therefore, was one of prophetic importance.

`Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you FIRST God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities' (3:25,26).

The covenant of Abraham included the blessing of all kindreds of the earth. Israel was the appointed channel through which that blessing must come. Israel therefore must first be restored before the times of refreshing can come and blessing flow out to the uttermost parts. Unto Israel therefore *first* the Lord came. A saved and restored Israel would soon lead on to a saved and restored world.

The lame man stood by the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, in 'perfect soundness'. The word is used by the Septuagint in Isaiah 1:6, 'from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no *soundness* in it'. The whole body of the nation was corrupt. Here, by a miracle, the lame man stands in perfect soundness; here was the faint exhibition of 'the powers of the age to come'.

This healing is definitely brought forward as a type by Peter in chapter 4. In verse 9 the word 'whole' is in the original *sesostai*, from *sozo*, to save. This is the word which supplies the word 'salvation' in verse 12. When we supply the article as well, the point of Peter's words is the more keenly appreciated. The impotent man stands *saved* (healed) by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, 'Whom ye crucified, Whom God raised from the dead ... neither is there (*the*) *salvation* (*healing*) in any other'.

So the testimony was confirmed. Here is the 'so great salvation' which was 'confirmed'-'God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders ...' (Heb. 2:4). Israel's healing still waits; the nation did not repent and believe. As in Isaiah's day, 'the saved' (*tous sozomenous*) (Acts 2:47) were a remnant only:

'Except the LORD of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah' (Isa. 1:9).

Summarizing, we have seen:

1. The uppermost question. The restoration of the kingdom to Israel.
2. The preparation. The completion of 'the twelve'.
3. The promise of the Father. 'This is that' spoken by Joel - The Day of the Lord.
4. The germinant fulfilment. The pouring out of holy spirit.
5. Jesus of Nazareth, David's greater Son, raised to sit on his throne.
6. The lame man healed. A type of Israel's healing.

The whole case is crystallized and focused in the apostle's words:

'RE-pent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of RE-freshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, Which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of RE-stitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began (an age)' (Acts 3:19-21).

The restoration of the kingdom is linked with the seasons of refreshing, which will take place at the times of restitution, and not until Israel repents.

Paul's introductory and typical miracle answers the question, Did Israel repent? It also foreshadows the purpose of God during the long interval of Israel's rejection and blindness, and the favour that goes out to the far off Gentiles.

**Paul's Miracle of Blinding**

*Acts 13, 14 compared with Acts 28.*

<b>A</b>	<b>a</b>	13:11. Judicial blindness of Israel foreshadowed.	Antioch, not
	<b>b</b>	13:12. Typical Gentile (Paulus) blessed.	connected
	<b>c</b>	13:13 to 14:28. Paul's independent ministry.	with the Twelve.

\* \* \*

<b>A</b>	<b>a</b>	28:25-27. Judicial blindness falls.	Rome, not
	<b>b</b>	28:28. Gentiles blessed.	connected

c	28:30,31.	Paul's independent ministry.	with the Twelve.
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Acts 13 opens in a manner which indicates a new section. The scene is transferred from Jerusalem - indeed, from the land of Israel altogether - and is laid in Syria:

‘Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas ... and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost (Spirit) said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them’ (verses 1 & 2).

Their journey led through Seleucia and Cyprus; and having gone through the isle to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus. Up till this time the preaching of the Word in Cyprus had been confined to the Jews living there (Acts 11:19). Some of those who were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, when they were come to Antioch, spoke with the Grecians\* (the Greek-speaking Jews, not Gentiles, if we follow the Received Text). Then comes the ministry of Barnabas and Saul, culminating at Paphos in the definite testimony to a Gentile. We shall have to consider all this in greater fulness when reviewing the case of the Gentile in the history of the Acts: we are here concerned with the typical character of Paul's first miracle.

This Jew was with the deputy of the island. The word ‘deputy’ (*anthupatos*) is properly ‘proconsul’. In B.C. 27 the provinces of the Roman Empire were divided between the Emperor and the Senate; those which were troublesome and needed the presence of an army were allotted to the Emperor, while those of a peaceful character were assigned to the Senate. As may be supposed, there were changes from time to time, and such changes would prove veritable pitfalls for the historian who wrote his history at a period remote from the time. Cyprus was at first an Imperial Province, but before the time of the Acts, Cyprus had passed over to the Senate and was proconsular. A coin struck in the reign of Claudius bears the inscription on the reverse, ‘Of the Cyprians, under Proctus, Proconsul’.

The name of Bar-Jesus, the sorcerer, is given as Elymas (13:8). The word in Arabic is Alimos, or Elim, and means ‘a magician’. The Proconsul is said to have been ‘a prudent man’. Pliny the elder cites Sergius Paulus several times as an authority in connection with natural history (Plin. Nat. His. Lib. i, ii and xviii). The Proconsul called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the Word of God. With what glad hearts these devoted servants must have received the request! The first Gentile convert under Peter's ministry *sent for him*; so the first Gentile convert under Paul's ministry does likewise, emphasizing to the last detail the perfect and peculiar mould into which the Acts was cast. The Jew, typical of the nation, withstood them, seeking to turn away the Proconsul from the faith. This was the climax sin of the nation, as may be seen from 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 :

‘... the Jews ... forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost’.

Up until this time the order had always been Barnabas and Saul. From this time forward Saul becomes Paul, and the order is reversed. Moved apparently by the sense of his divine mission, Paul steps forward here in the full blaze of day as the apostle to the Gentiles. His anathema descends upon one of his own kin; his Hebrew name vanishes from the page of Scripture. The Gentile is converted, and by one of those marvellous details of instruction and providence the firstfruit of the apostle to the Gentiles has the same name as that assigned to Saul of Tarsus. Paul's action and words were inspired of God:

‘Then Saul (who also is called Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost (holy spirit), set his eyes on him’ (Acts 13:9).

Again another detail, wherein the intentional parallel between Peter and Paul is brought to light, is given. Peter in his first miracle ‘fastening his eyes’ (*atenisas*, Acts 3:4) upon the lame man, pronounced words of blessing; Paul in his first miracle ‘set his eyes’ (*atenisas*, Acts 13:9) upon the sorcerer, and pronounced his doom. Compare the words of Paul as recorded in this miracle with his teaching concerning Israel in his Epistles:

‘And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season ... then the deputy (Proconsul) ... believed’ (Acts 13:11,12).

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\* Greek-speaking Jews, *Hellenists* ;(Acts 6:1; 9:29).  
Greeks ð Gentiles, *Hellen* ;(Acts 14:1, etc.).

`... God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear ... blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in' (Rom. 11:8-25).

The typical teaching of Peter's first miracle is the *restoration* of Israel: the typical teaching of Paul's first miracle is the *rejection* of Israel, and the *reconciliation* of the Gentile.

We have drawn attention in the opening of this section to the close parallel that exists between the miracle at the beginning of Paul's ministry during the Acts, and the event that closes it in Acts 28. This subject has been dealt with in '*Dispensational Truth*' under the chapter headed '*The Cumulative Fulfilment of Isaiah 6*', to which the reader is referred. We will not again traverse the ground covered there, but deal more definitely with the closing verses of Acts 28 as the complement of Acts 13. In both cases Paul is acting independently of the leaders at Jerusalem; in both cases he is on Gentile soil. Paul, upon being placed under the custody of a soldier, and after the first three days had passed, called for the elders of the Jews at Rome, in order to lay before them the truth. They appointed him a day, and came to his lodging:

`... to whom he expounded, testifying of the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening' (Acts 28:23 Author's translation).

And yet there are men who say that Acts moves on with no apparent design.

Luke 24, which is summarized in Acts 1, records that the Lord also opened up these very same Scriptures concerning Himself. Further, the next verse but one (28:25) introduces the last Old Testament quotation in the Acts. It balances the first. The first quotation is made by Peter, not concerning the Lord, but concerning the apostate Judas, the son of perdition. A gap in the apostolate is felt, and the number is made up by the choice of Matthias. The last quotation is made by Paul, concerning, not the Lord, but the apostate nation. Again a gap is felt, this time to be filled by the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles, and the calling out of the members of One Body. If Judas was the son of perdition, Elymas - the type of the apostate nation - was the child of the devil: thus perfect harmony is seen everywhere.

The Authorised Version rather tamely reads, 'And when they agreed not among themselves, *they departed*' (Acts 28:25). The words are far more emphatic and far-reaching, 'THEY WERE DISMISSED'. The words mark a crisis. In Acts 1 the burning question is concerning the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. Peter pursues the theme, and Paul, even when a prisoner in Rome, still says, 'for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain' (Acts 28:20). The tragic words, 'They were dismissed', close for that season the Pentecostal foreshadowing. The Firstfruits have been gathered, but the Harvest is not yet; there must be a national repentance, a great day of Atonement before the Ingathering and the Tabernacles. The apostle's words, 'Be it known therefore unto you (*Gnoston oun esto humin*), that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it' (Acts 28:28), are a far-off echo of his opening words, when in Acts 13:38-41 he concluded his first sermon with the words, 'Be it known unto you therefore' (*Gnoston oun esto humin*), which led up to the warning, 'Beware therefore, *lest that come upon you*, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish'.

Here, in Acts 28, that which had been spoken of in the prophets *had come*. The end is foreshadowed in Acts 13:45,46 (verse 42 needs serious emendations as it stands in A.V.):

'The Jews ... were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things spoken by Paul, and blasphemed: and Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly and said, It was necessary that the Word of God should be first spoken to you' (this is in line with Peter's words of Acts 3:26); 'seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of *aionion* life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles, for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to *aionion* life believed' (Acts 13:45-48 Author's translation).

It will be seen, therefore, that Acts 28 is foreshadowed, not only in the apostle's *first* miracle, but in the effects of his *first* sermon. Peter's first sermon, preached on the day of Pentecost, results in about 3,000 souls believing - a remnant saved from the perverse generation. There, 'the Lord added saved ones' (Acts 2:47). Here it is not so much believing Jews, but Gentiles, who are said to be 'ordained' to *aionion* life. Both chapters record the gladness and joy

of the new converts, both tell us that they received the gift of holy spirit, but there is a notable emphasis upon baptism in water in Peter's ministry, which is just as noticeably absent in Paul's (Acts 2:38-47; 13:48-52).

We must now turn our attention to the second sub-division of Acts proposed at the head of chapter 4, viz., *Reconciliation*, and to this we will devote a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER 7

### The Dispensation of the Reconciliation

It is impossible to read Acts 10 and 11:1-18 without realizing that all the stir and agitation and questioning that arose over the conversion of Cornelius indicate that the church at Jerusalem was facing a new phase of God's purpose - the *salvation of a Gentile*:

‘... when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning ... When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life*’ (Acts 11:2-4,18).

‘*To the Gentiles!*’- Imagine these words being uttered in all solemnity, if the tradition were truth that ‘the church began at Pentecost!’ Peter's attitude in Acts 10 and that of the circumcision in Acts 11 show that up till that point the inclusion of the Gentiles in the company of ‘the saved ones’ was entirely absent from their thoughts. Peter goes to Cornelius in response to a vision. The visions of the Acts mark important steps onward. What did Peter's vision indicate? He saw a great sheet let down from heaven:

‘Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common’ (Acts 10:12-15).

While it is most certainly true that the animals indicated by God as clean and proper for Israel's diet are classified according to most hygienic principles, nevertheless a deeper meaning than that connected with physical fitness is intended. It is explained for us in Leviticus 20:24,25,26 :

‘I am the LORD your God, which have SEPARATED YOU FROM OTHER PEOPLE. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have SEPARATED FROM YOU as unclean ... I ... have SEVERED YOU FROM OTHER PEOPLE ... ’.

The vision of Joppa intimated to Peter that Israel's exclusive position was waning, and that a new era was approaching. The words of Peter's reply ‘common or unclean’ are expressive. The word translated ‘common’ occurs in Mark 7:2 :

‘And when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with *defiled* (margin common), that is to say, with unwashed, hands, they found fault’.

‘I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing *unclean* (margin common) of itself’ (Rom. 14:14).

so Acts 21:28 :

‘... and further brought GREEKS also into the temple, and hath *polluted* (made common) this holy place’.

When Peter therefore approached Cornelius, he said (and one can feel the diffidence of his manner, so strange was this), ‘*Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing* (that is, Peter had been up till this time under the law of Leviticus 20:24, and *all* who had continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine had been the same) *for a man that is a Jew* (Peter the apostle, the one to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven had been entrusted, Peter, endued with

power from on high, still regards himself as a man that is a Jew - and yet the tradition is still held that the church began at Pentecost!) *to keep company, or come unto one of another nation (or to come near to a foreigner); but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean'* (Acts 10:28).

By his own confession, Peter's doctrine and fellowship placed the pious, praying, devout, almsgiving Cornelius with the dogs, and the swine, and the creeping things. What the effect upon Peter would have been had he been told that not only such, but Barbarians, Scythians, and idolaters were to be made 'all one in Christ Jesus' is beyond the limits of our imagination. The church which began at Pentecost barred the door against the Gentile. 'The saved ones' of Acts 2 is the name of the believing remnant of Israel, anticipating, as Joel indicated, the great and terrible day of the Lord. What has come in to make the difference? One word, and one alone, viz., *reconciliation*, fully answers the question, and one event of necessity preceded the vision of Joppa, and that was the *vision on the road to Damascus*. In other words, Paul is converted and commissioned *before Peter is sent for by Cornelius*. Paul's conversion is a dispensational mark of supreme importance.

We must now make a digression in order that we may realize the character and purpose of the reconciliation. Strange as the expression may seem at first, the writer is more and more under the conviction that to know what God has *said* is even more important, in the first place, than to endeavour to find out what He *means*. If we simply reason over the meaning of 'reconciliation', we may still be off the track of truth: but if we know the actual word that God has said, we build upon an impregnable rock. We first of all take note of the actual words that come into this question; and then, by considering their usage, we shall hope to arrive at their meaning. *Katallasso*, *apokatallasso*, *katallage*, *allasso*,\* and *allos* are all the words which we must know in order to have a clear view of the subject before us. The root idea goes back to the word *allos*, which simply means 'other'. It indicates a change from one state to another. This is clearly seen in the passages where *allasso* is found.

- `Change the customs' (Acts 6:14).
- `Changed the glory' (Rom. 1:23).
- `We shall ... be *changed*' (1 Cor. 15:51,52).
- `Change my voice' (Gal. 4:20).
- `They shall be *changed*' (Heb. 1:12).

It is evident, therefore, that the reconciliation involves a very definite change; and such is indicated in Acts 10. *Diallassomai* occurs in Matthew 5:24, 'Be reconciled to thy brother'.

*Katallasso* occurs as follows:

- `Enemies ... reconciled'; 'being reconciled' (Rom. 5:10).
- `Reconciled to her husband' (1 Cor. 7:11).
- `God, ... hath reconciled us' (2 Cor. 5:18).
- `God was in Christ, reconciling' (2 Cor. 5:19).
- `Be ye reconciled to God' (2 Cor. 5:20).

*Katallage*, 'the atonement' (Rom. 5:11). This rendering was introduced in the days when the Authorized Version was prepared. Shakespeare uses it in a similar way, 'He seeks to make atonement between the Duke of Gloster and your brother'.

- `The reconciling of the world' (Rom. 11:15).
- `The ministry of reconciliation' (2 Cor. 5:18).
- `The word of reconciliation' (2 Cor. 5:19).

*Apokatallasso*

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\* To prevent any misunderstanding we point out that some texts and Lexicons read 'tt' instead of 'ss', i.e., *allatto*, etc.; it is all one and the same word.

`Reconcile (the) both' (Eph. 2:16).

`Reconcile all things' (Col. 1:20).

`You ... hath He reconciled' (Col. 1:21).

If the reader will now cast his eyes over the references given, he will find that words *katallasso*, *katallage* and *apokatallasso* are used exclusively by Paul. The ministry given to Peter, James, and John prevented them from using such words. Although their ministry and commission excluded the very idea, yet one may say, Did not Peter's hearers, when they repented and believed, become reconciled to God? If we use the words widely in the sense as indicating the change brought about by redeeming grace (Rom. 5) - Yes; but if we are using it in the strictly Scriptural dispensational sense - No; for in *that* sense the people of Israel never needed the reconciliation, while at the same time they did need salvation as much as the darkest heathen.

It becomes necessary, therefore, to pursue the subject further, and notice how the `reconciliation' is used. Let us turn to 2 Corinthians 5:19, `The reconciliation of the world' is prefaced by the words of the apostle:

`Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more' (2 Cor. 5:16).

Here it will be seen how emphatically the flesh is repudiated in this connection. Verse 19 tells us that `God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself', and that the apostle Paul and his associates received the ministry of the reconciliation. The phrase, `reconciling the world', is used by Paul himself in the epistle to the Romans, and as it is explained there, it will be wise to turn to that epistle. After the introduction of the theme `justification by faith' is given in Romans 1:16,17, the apostle turns aside to consider the condition of the Gentile nations. If we grasp this, and the reason of it, we grasp the meaning of the ministry of reconciliation, and what had happened to make the vision at Joppa possible. Reconciliation changes the position of the Gentiles in which they were found as connected with two events of the past: (1) Adam's fall; (2) The rebellion of Babel. It is the latter that comes with new force in Romans.

*The estrangement of the nations.*- There were no Gentiles until there were Jews, just as there could be no uncircumcision until there was circumcision. Gentiles, or nations, are not mentioned in Scripture until Genesis 10. There we read of the division of the earth, and the bounds of the nations are indicated:

`These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood' (Gen. 10:32).

`When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel' (Deut. 32:8).

As the call of Abraham drew near, so the setting aside of the nations took shape: and conversely, when the reconciling of the nations drew near, the peculiar distinctions of Israel passed away. *There* is the central thought in Peter's vision of the sheet. God was now announcing that for the Jew to call another common or unclean was undispensational. Genesis 10 records the division of the earth and the nations, Genesis 11 the confusion of tongues at Babel, and Genesis 12 the call of Abraham and the inception of the *one nation*. So long as that one nation, Israel, remained in its peculiar position, so long must the remaining nations be kept at a distance: not until Christ had come could anything else be done. Again and again the Scriptures emphasize the peculiar privilege of being `the circumcision', *e.g.* :

`You only have I known of all the families of the earth' (Amos 3:2).

`... the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth' (Deut. 7:6).

`He sheweth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation' (Psa. 147:19,20).

What the nations did, and how they were treated by God, the apostle Paul tells us:

`God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands ... hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth,

and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation ... the times of this ignorance God winked at (looked over); BUT NOW commandeth *all men everywhere* to repent' (Acts 17:24-30).

The words 'but now' are only possible because the reconciliation has been brought in. Peter tells of Christ exalted to give repentance unto *Israel*. After the conversion of Paul, the circumcision learn with astonishment that God had granted to the *Gentiles* repentance unto life. '*All men everywhere*' are words foreign to the spirit of Acts 1 to 9. In Romans 1:18 to 2:1, the apostle describes the condition of the Gentile world from the confusion of Babel until the reconciliation.

**The *paredoken*\* of the nations (Rom. 1:18 to 2:1).**

A 1:18-20.	<p><b>a</b> The wrath of God.  <b>b</b> Those who hold the truth in unrighteousness.  <b>c</b> Without excuse.</p>
B 1:21-25.	<p>The nations gave up God.          Result: 'change glory'; 'change truth'.</p>
B 1:26-31.	<p>God gave up the nations.          Result: 'change nature'; 'reprobate mind'.</p>
A 1:32 to 2:1.	<p><b>a</b> The judgment of God.  <b>b</b> Those who have pleasure in sin.  <b>c</b> Inexcusable.</p>

In spite of the testimony of conscience and nature, the Gentiles became idolaters, 'becoming vain in their imaginations, their foolish heart was darkened'. Ephesians 4 dwells upon this 'far off' condition of the Gentiles:

'... Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated (antithetical to reconciliation) from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness (hardness) of their heart: who being past feeling *have given themselves over* (*paredokan*, same as Rom. 1) unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness' (Eph. 4:17-19).

Under what circumstances were the nations reconciled? Romans 11 supplies the answer. Just as the giving up of the Gentiles was connected with special favour to the one nation Israel, so the withdrawal of that position of favour and privilege to Israel made the reconciliation possible. This is the testimony of Romans 11. For a fuller treatment of Romans 9 to 11 the reader is referred to chapter 14, which deals with the epistle; we must here concentrate our attention on the one point.

While Israel's national privileges were gradually passing, a faithful remnant still remained, retaining continuance of the root and fatness of the olive tree, and those Gentiles who had been saved had been grafted in:

'Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? ... For if the casting away of them be the RECONCILING OF THE WORLD, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?' (Rom. 11:12-15).

Here the apostle, by using identical terms, explains the ministry of the reconciliation as introduced in 2 Corinthians 5. The Gentile world has been reconciled, and this synchronizes with the estrangement of Israel. There has been a reversal, thus:

- A The estrangement of the Gentiles (Gen. 10,11).
- B The favour shown to Israel (Gen. 12; Acts 9).
- A The estrangement of Israel (Rom. 11).
- B The reconciliation of the Gentiles (Rom. 11; 2 Cor. 5).

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\* 'To give up' (verses 24,26,28).



The aspect of reconciliation which deals with man as connected with Adam (Rom. 5), will be dealt with when treating of Romans as a whole.

We must now observe the effect that is indicated in the Acts by the introduction of the new feature. As we have said before, not until Paul is converted and commissioned can Peter receive the vision at Joppa. Paul's conversion is so peculiarly connected with the working out of the purpose of God, that it will be well to acquaint ourselves with its essential features. The first item of dispensational note is, that Paul was converted and commissioned *outside the land*. He came near Damascus, 'and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven' (Acts 9:3). The next item is, that he was commissioned by *the risen and ascended Christ*. Thirdly, Paul is definitely given a commission to the *Gentiles*:

'... he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel' (Acts 9:15).

To this the apostle referred when he made his speech at Jerusalem, and again when before king Agrippa:

'... he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles' (Acts 22:21).

'Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee' (Acts 26:17).

Paul was the only apostle commissioned to the Gentiles by the ascended Christ; he alone of all the apostles received the ministry of the reconciliation. His conversation was typical:

'Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting (aionion)' (1 Tim. 1:16).

After Paul's conversion we find him witnessing for Christ at Damascus, and a plot being made to take his life; he is let down the wall in a basket, and so makes his escape to Jerusalem. Here Barnabas secures his recognition, and we find Paul disputing with the *Grecians*; but they go about to slay him. This leads to his return to Tarsus, where the record for the time leaves him. The *Grecians*, however, are to be instrumental in bringing Paul back into active service:

'And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the *Grecians* ... and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch ... Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch' (Acts 11:20-26).

### Called Christians first in Antioch

Much has been written regarding this new name. The name by which the Jews used to designate believers in the Lord Jesus Christ was 'the heresy of the Nazarenes' (Acts 24:5,14). The Greek word 'Christ', being equivalent to the Hebrew word 'Messiah', would never have been used of the church by the Jews. The proverbial wit of the people of Antioch has been mentioned by most writers, and whether this was the origin of the name matters little; the fact that the inspired narrative draws our attention to it is of the chief importance. Till now, both from the Jewish and the Gentile viewpoint, the disciples were one of the many sects of the Jewish faith (Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, Essenes, Nazarenes, etc.) at Antioch. Under the distinctive teaching of the apostle Paul, the disciples could be considered such no longer. The risen Christ, not the lowly name of Jesus, is associated with their testimony; and here in this Gentile city, the geographical link between kingdom (Jerusalem) and mystery (Rome), the disciples are named Christians.

While the title 'Christian' would be applicable to every one who believed that 'Jesus was the Christ', it does not occur in Scripture more than three times. Believers do not address one another as 'fellow-Christians'; they speak to one another as 'believers', 'brethren', 'saints'. Agrippa uses the word 'Christian' when he terminates the apostle's earnest defence (Acts 26:28). And Peter uses it with reference to suffering 'as a Christian' at the hand of the powers that be. The way in which the term was used by the Romans indicated that they attached some political sense to it, inasmuch as to declare oneself a Christian was tantamount to treason against the Empire. That Paul, some nine years after, taught such disturbing doctrines can be gathered from Acts 17:7 :

`... these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus'.

Twice a new name is associated with Paul's ministry; first, at Antioch, the company of believers emerge as something distinct, and secondly, Saul of Tarsus is called Paul for the first time in the Scriptures in association with the Gentile Paulus on the island of Cyprus, when fulfilling the ministry to which he had been called at Antioch.

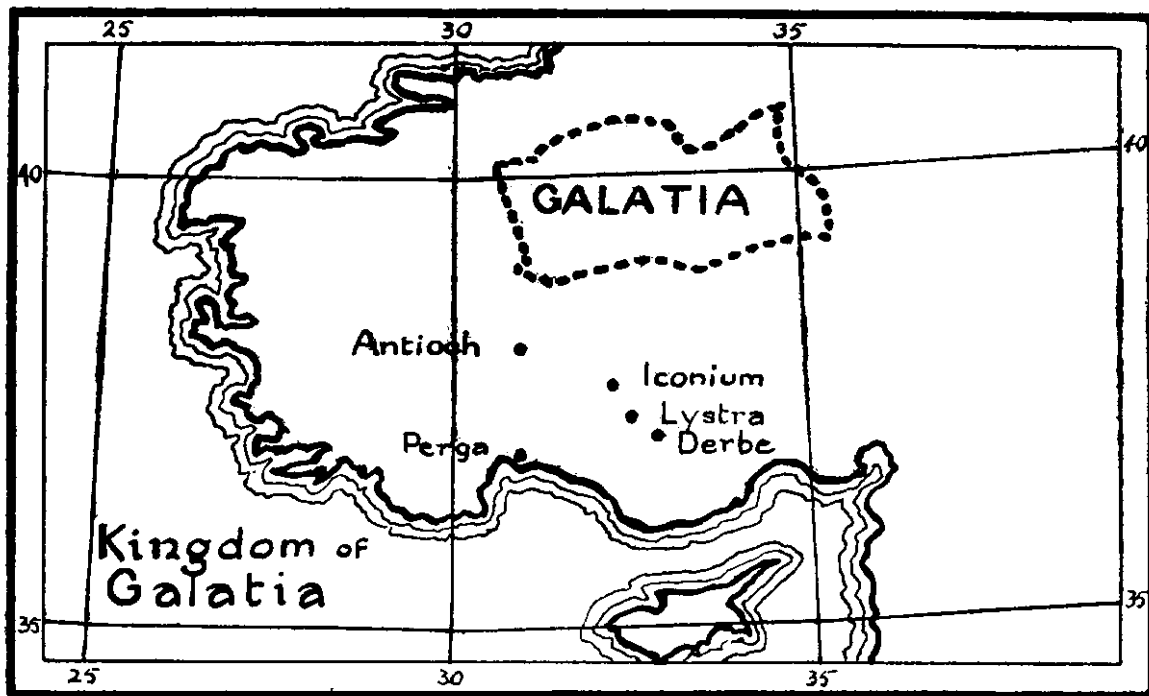
The chapters which follow deal with the teaching of the epistles of the period, namely, the dispensation ushered in under the title `The reconciliation'. When these have been considered, the final phase - `The rejection'- must be touched upon before this present volume is brought to a close.

## CHAPTER 8

### Galatia, and the Epistle to the Galatians.

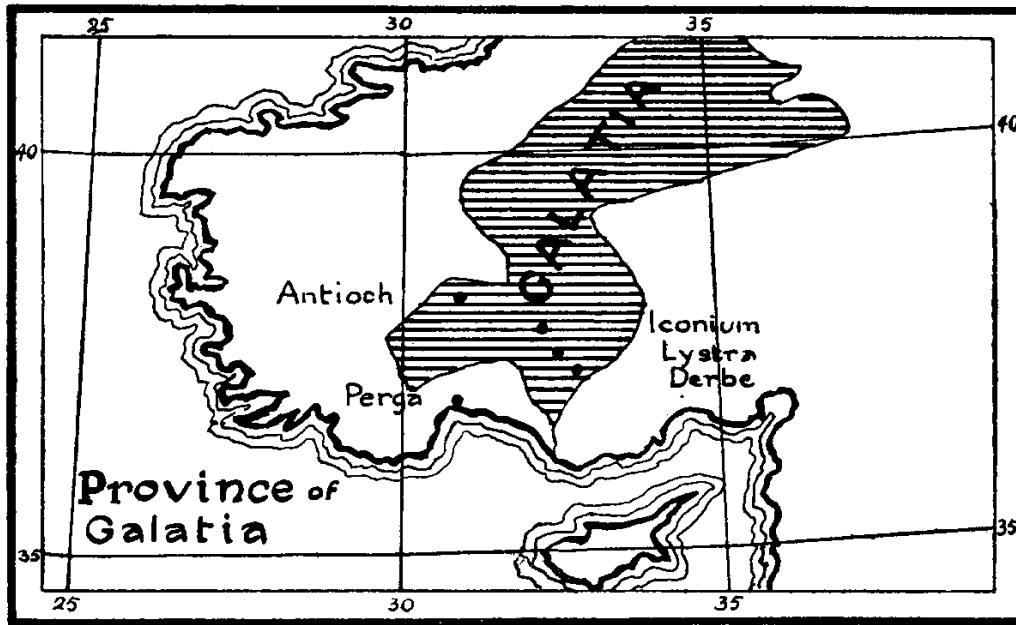
Where is Galatia? Was the epistle to the Galatians Paul's first epistle? These two questions are linked together, and the second one arises out of the answer we give to the first question.

Where is Galatia? - The answer to the question depends upon the date at which the map consulted was published. If the map be that of Dr. Kitto's Cyclopaedia, 1847, or T.R. Birks, editor of Paley, 1849, or any other publication before them, Galatia will be as shown in the following map:



If we look at Lewin's *Life and Epistles of Paul* (1875), we shall find two maps, one showing the *Province of Galatia* with indications that *national* boundaries had given place to *political* necessities; the other showing *Asia Minor* mapped according to its nationalities. A comparison of the two maps will reveal a marked difference. While the *national* boundaries coincide with Kitto's map, the *political* map reveals a state of affairs which must materially influence the answer to the question, `Where is Galatia?'

Upon this map are parts labelled `Part of Phrygia included in the Province of Asia; Part of Phrygia in the Province of Galatia'. In Ramsay's `Historical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians' is a map showing the political divisions of *Asia Minor*, A.D. 40-63. We give here a sketch of this, indicating the province of Galatia by shading the drawing.



It will be seen that a letter addressed to churches situated in the Phrygian portion of the Galatian Province, would have to be addressed to the Churches of Galatia, in harmony with the ruling of the powers that be. A pedant may be imagined, though hardly probable, who would ignore the growth of London, and address those living outside the original city walls as residents of Surrey, Middlesex, or Essex. We cannot for a moment believe the writer of the inspired narrative to be so absurd. Whatever Galatia was to the mind of the rulers of the day would settle the question for him, notwithstanding that a great many nationalities were included in the one Province. Paul himself is a case in point. He was a Hebrew, a Tarsean, and a Roman. Would anyone set out to debate as to whether Tarsus was in Italy, or Rome in Cilicia?

Young's *Analytical Concordance* (New Edition) no longer shows Galatia according to its national limitations, but shows the larger Province of Galatia extending southward to include Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, which had hitherto been contained in Lycaonia: so with an Atlas illustrating the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles (S. Philip and Sons, 1914).

It will be seen from this transition and change that the simple question, 'Where is Galatia?' does not admit of a simple answer. It will be also evident that the question is removed from purely Scriptural exposition, to that of Archaeology and History. Quoting from 'The Times':

'Professor W.M. Ramsay is the greatest living authority on the geography of Asia Minor, and the historical and archaeological questions associated with its study'.

Whatever theological opinions the Professor may hold, it is surely right to hear him in this province so peculiarly his own. And as to the theological side, the Professor approached the study believing that the Acts of the Apostles was written some 200 years later than Paul's lifetime: he concluded it by believing that Luke was the writer during the lifetime of the apostle. In other words, his investigations disproved Higher Criticism, and proved the Bible. This is decidedly encouraging.

It will be superfluous to use quotation marks in this chapter, for where Professor Ramsay or his critics are not quoted, some of the expressions are bound to be reminiscent of the writings of others. Those who wish to pursue the theme more fully than can be undertaken here are recommended to the various bulky volumes from Professor Ramsay's pen, the able book by Mr. Askwith, the Commentary of Kirslop Lake, and others.

Returning to the question, 'Where is Galatia?' and what is the meaning of the differing maps, we reply, The small district marked on the old maps as Galatia is the *kingdom* of Galatia. The larger area including the cities

visited in Acts 13 and 14 is the *Roman Province* of that name. To understand the subject before us, we must bear in mind that there were three classes of States in Asia Minor:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Countries incorporated in the Empire in which law was administered by a Roman Governor.  | } |   |
| 2. Countries connected with Rome by an agreement or alliance, the terms of which were expressed by treaty, i.e., Client States according to the usual and convenient expression, among which the chief were Galatia and Cappadocia. | } | Included in the<br>} conception of<br>the   Roman<br>World. |
| 3. States in no formal and recognised relations with Rome, especially Pontus and Isaurian Pirates.  | } | } Enemies   |

The Roman range of authority and action in any foreign land constituted a *Provincia*. Strabo shows the policy of the Romans regarding the question of small kings and Roman governors. Where the character of the people was unruly, and the nature of the country made rebellion and lawlessness easy, kings with their own standing army were placed in authority, but step by step, and district by district, these countries were incorporated in the adjacent Roman Provinces, as a certain degree of discipline and civilisation were imparted to the population by these kings, who built cities and introduced the Graeco-Roman customs and education.

As the above paragraph is appreciated, the changing of the map, and the enlarging of the borders of Galatia the Kingdom to Galatia the Province, will be understood. For convenience of reference, we divide the existing teaching on the subject into two views:

1. The North Galatia view.
2. The South Galatia view.

The North Galatia view maintains that only that part of the map which was originally Galatia is the Galatia of the Scriptures. It recognizes that it is somewhat awkward to have to acknowledge that of all the cities of North Galatia, which the apostle is *supposed* to have visited, and where he is *supposed* to have founded the churches, and to which he addressed his epistle, Tavium, Ancyra, Pessinus, *not one* is even mentioned in the Acts, and has to fall back upon the convenient 'gap' as an explanation.

The South Galatia view maintains that by Galatia is intended the Galatia of the day, the large Roman Province which had embraced Lycaonia and part of Phrygia on the South. According to this view, *every city is named*, and Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe are seen as the churches of Galatia. No 'gaps' are necessary, and the strange omission of such an important church does not trouble us, for it ceases to be.

The North Galatia view necessitates that the epistle to the Galatians was written *after* Acts 18:23, for Galatians 4:13 indicates a second visit. This places 'Galatians' with 'Corinthians'. The South Galatia view sees no necessity for a late date.

While Acts 16:6 is looked upon by the North Galatia view as the first mention and founding of the church of Galatia, giving no names or incidents of the journey, the South Galatia view looks upon Acts 16:6 as a re-visiting of the churches already founded in Acts 13 and 14; and the brief summary is most fitting and understandable. Full details had already been given in Acts 13 to 15.

Before passing on in our study, we will give historic proofs that Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and Antioch are rightly addressed as 'Galatia':

1. Asterius, Bishop of Amaseia in Pontus, A.D. 401, in dealing with Acts 18:23 explains it in direct contradiction of what was true in his own day. Lycaonia was not included in Galatia in A.D. 401.

'No conceivable interpretation could get Lycaonia out of *Galatiken chorān* except deliberate adhesion to the South Galatian view'.

2. Dr. Schurer retracted his criticism of Professor Ramsay's position after consulting Pliny and Ptolemy. Ptolemy arranged his chapters according to the Roman Proconsular divisions:

- v. 1. *Pontou kai Bithunias Thesis.*
- v. 2. *Tes idias Asias Thesis.*
- v. 3. *Lukias Thesis.*
- v. 4. *Galatias Thesis.*

He states that Galatia is bounded on the South by Pamphylia, and on the North by the Euxine Sea, including in it Pisidia in the South, and Paphlagonia in the North. He enumerates parts of which it consisted, and mentions Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra as cities of *Galatia*. This one reference lifts the South Galatia view from the plane of a theory to one of established historical fact. We will, however, have the testimony of more than one witness. As evidence that Galatia was correctly used as the name of a Roman Province, we cite:

- 3. *Tacitus Hist. ii. 9 Galatiam et Pamphyliam, provincias.*
- 4. In Paul's time the people of Iconium called their country *Galatike eparcheia* (C.I.G. 3991).
- 5. In a Greek dedicatory inscription dated A.D. 56 (and so in the very period under discussion) the writer describes his *patriis*, Apollonia, to be in the *land of the Galatians*. Apollonia is about 40 miles west of Antioch in Pisidia. See map.

To the Roman mind, Provincial division outweighed all other considerations of blood or descent. An utter disregard for racial frontiers is evidenced in the making up of these Provinces.

6. Strabo, p. 629, complains of the difficulty caused to the geographer by the Roman disregard for national distinctions. For example, the Phoenicians of Carthage despised the Africans; yet they were all called *Afri*. The Greeks of Sicily pointedly distinguished themselves from the *Siculi*; yet the Romans classed them all as *Siculi*.

When Paul therefore addressed the converts at Iconium as *Galatae*, he addressed them as a Roman citizen speaking to other members of the Roman Empire. The status of each non-Roman person in the Empire was that of a 'provincial', and he was designated as a member of the Roman Empire not by his *nation*, but by his *province*. So long as a person is described as a Phrygian or a Lycaonian, he is thereby described as outside of the Empire. A slave would be called a Phrygian; but a free man would seek to drop the title of bondage, and assume the more honourable one of Galatian.

The Empire was popular in the highest degree as a giver of peace and prosperity. People were glad to belong to it, and they belonged to it only by virtue of being members of a Province, and entitled to be addressed by a Roman official under the name of 'Galatae'. To be a Phrygian was to be rude, ignorant, unintelligent, slavish. To say that the Antiochians would be addressed by Paul as 'Phrygians' rather than as 'Men of the Province of Galatia' is to betray fundamental ignorance. Imagine a politician wishing to secure the sympathy of a Scottish audience continually saying 'English' when he should say 'British'. The comparison suffers in that the modern example is not so keen.

Further, the apostle when thinking and speaking of places and people, always thought of them and spoke of them as viewed from the stand-point of the Roman Empire. Thus, when speaking of Achaia, Asia, Macedonia, Galatia, Illyricum, he uses in each case the *Roman* name of the *Province*, not the *Greek* name of the *Country*. Illyricum is a particularly good example. The Greeks used the name *Illuris* to correspond to the Roman *Illyricum*, and employed *Illyrikos* only as an adjective. None but a person absolutely Roman in his point of view could have employed the term *Illyrikon*, and he could mean by it nothing but '*Provincia Illyricum*'.

In Acts 16:1, when Paul was in Lystra, he stood upon Lycaonian soil, and was properly in Lycaonian Galatia. We will just briefly notice the two occasions where the word Galatia occurs in the Acts:

‘Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia ...’ (Acts 16:6).

The Textus Receptus reads *Dielthontes*; the revised Texts read *Dielthon*, and omit the article from before Galatia.

*Dielthon de ten Phrugian kai Galatiken choran.*

‘And they went through the Phrygio-Galactic region forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the Word in Asia’.

Here the participial clause is even more important than the verbal predicate. The emphasis is that they went through that region FORBIDDEN. *Koluthentes* is passive, and indicates the state of the travellers in regard to the imposition. Luke 18:14 is an example of the importance of the participial clause. ‘This man went down to his house’, is a sentence grammatically complete, but tame; ‘This man went down to his house *justified rather than the other*’, is a sentence vivid with revelation.

Further, the exact language of the inspired narrative must be observed when dealing with the possible route of the apostle. He was forbidden to *speak* in Asia, and to *enter* Bithynia. Antioch and Iconium belonged to Phrygian Galatia; Lystra and Derbe belonged to Lycaonian Galatia; another part of Phrygia belonged to Asia. Hence the record differentiates between Asian Phrygia, where the speaking was forbidden, and Galatian Phrygia, where the speaking was blessed. In Acts 18:23 there is a slight change of expression.

Acts 16:6 reads *Ten Phrugian kai Galatiken Choran.*

Acts 18:23 reads *Ten Galatiken Choran kai Phrugian.*

In the second passage the translation is ‘The Galatian region and Phrygia’, and may indicate two distinct places. This second passage resembles the record of Acts 14:22 and 15:36 :

‘... Antioch ... he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia IN ORDER, *strengthening* all the disciples’ (Acts 18:22,23).

Antioch was Paul's Jerusalem. At Antioch he received his first commission by the Holy Ghost; from Antioch he set forth on his first missionary journey; and to Antioch he returned.

Reading Acts 13 we see the Phrygio-Galatian region traversed; Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, all of them cities of the Province of Galatia. The cities are revisited in the reverse order (14:20,21); thence through Pamphylia to the coast, and so to Antioch in Syria, ‘from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God’. This was an epoch in the experience of Paul, and in the development of the purpose of God for the church.

‘And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had OPENED THE DOOR OF FAITH UNTO THE GENTILES’ (Acts 14:27).

To the end of his days he remembered this momentous period. The keeping of this door wide open and free of stipulations involved the apostle in constant warfare. Writing on the eve of martyrdom in his old age, he reminds Timothy of the persecutions and afflictions which came unto him at *Antioch*, at *Iconium*, at *Lystra* (2 Tim. 3:11).

‘... some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord, and see how they do ... Barnabas ... sailed unto Cyprus ... Paul chose Silas ... Then came he to Derbe and Lystra ... and ... they went through the cities’ (Acts 15:36 to 16:4).

This revisit of these churches is summed up in Acts 16:6, as their having gone through the Phrygio-Galatic region; not a new departure to North Galatia and cities unknown and unnamed, but a summary of this journey and its immediate development. The passages in chapters 13, 14, 15, 16:1-6 and 18:23 speak with one voice of one district. First the churches are founded (chapters 13, 14) then, secondly, they are revisited to see how they do (16:6); and, finally, they are strengthened (18:23).

If we observe Paul's method with the Corinthians and apply it to the Galatians, we shall expect that upon hearing of their defection from the truth, his method would be, first, an epistle; second, a visit. The effect of the epistle was to strengthen their faith. In Acts 18:23 the word 'strengthen' is *epi-sterizon*. We quote Bishop Wordsworth here:

'The epistle represents the Galatians in an *unsettled* state, but the epistle was designed to settle them. When this previous work of reparation and recovery had been performed by an *epistle*, then it was prosecuted (as might have been expected) by a *visit*, which the epistle had pre-announced as probable (4:20). The visit completed the work happily commenced by the epistle. Paul went through the region of Galatia *episterizon* - giving *additional* strength and stedfastness to all *the disciples*'.

The Bishop argues that if Scripture tells us that the apostle's visit here had a steadying and settling effect, it is too much to ask us to believe that soon after that such a state of affairs arose as to warrant the epistle to the Galatians. For two years Paul was near at hand, at Ephesus. Although Bishop Wordsworth did not know of the facts brought to light concerning South Galatia, he evidently felt that the epistle was written much earlier than some did. He places it immediately after Thessalonians.

It is an open question whether the words *to proteron* of Galatians 4:13 should be rendered 'the former of two visits', or, 'then', as compared with 'now'. We see no strong reason for binding ourselves to allow two visits to the Galatians before writing the epistle: and when we take into consideration all the factors, we cannot but conclude that Galatians is the apostle's opening challenge to the world. Of this we shall see more when dealing with the epistle.

The way in which the apostle speaks of Barnabas in the epistle shows that he was personally known among them. 'Even Barnabas' speaks volumes. Paul explains to them that Titus was a Greek, and that Peter, James and John seemed to be pillars, but Barnabas they knew. Barnabas is implied in the 'we', 'the gospel "we" preached unto you'. Barnabas was separated with Paul for the evangelizing of South Galatia. At the close of Acts 15 Barnabas leaves Paul and goes to Cyprus. We have no record that Barnabas ever again accompanied Paul upon a missionary journey. Now observe, if the North Galatia view be adopted, Paul visited that region *after* Barnabas had left him. The churches of North Galatia would have no personal knowledge of him, and his example would be robbed of its weight. All is clear if South Galatia be intended.

The statements in Acts regarding Timothy, and the statement in Galatians 2 regarding Titus, may be taken as a reflection of the charge made against the apostle, and its refutation.

<b>Acts 16.</b>	<b>Galatians 2.</b>
<i>Timothy.</i>	<i>Titus.</i>
With him.	With me.
Greek (mother a Jewess).	Greek.
Took and circumcised.	Not circumcised.
Because of Jews ( <i>dia</i> ).	Because of false brethren ( <i>dia</i> ).
Decrees from Jerusalem.	Nothing added at Jerusalem.
Ministry to the Gentiles.	Ministry to the Gentiles.
Macedonia (Europe).	

There are many other links with this early section of the Acts which will be touched upon in the course of the exposition of the epistles themselves. Moreover, we cannot hope to compress into one chapter the argument which has been put forward for looking upon the South Galatian cities visited in Acts 13 and 14 as the churches of Galatia. The reader who desires to search the subject through is referred to the several publications of Professor Ramsay: 'The Church in the Roman Empire before A.D. 170'; 'St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen'; and 'Historical Commentary on the Galatians'; besides all the publications, large and small, which have come into being as a result of the controversy.

So far as the date of the epistle is concerned, it has been assigned by different critics to the close, and to every intermediate stage, of its author's epistolary activity. Marcion places 'Galatians' first. Accepting as we do the teaching that Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe are the churches of Galatia, the necessity for placing the writing of

the epistle to a period subsequent to Acts 18:23 is entirely removed. Both Ramsay and Weber believe that 'Galatians' was written from Antioch. Ramsay views Acts 13 and Acts 16 as the two visits; Weber considers the outward and homeward journeys of 13 and 14 suffice.

It is strange that Paul makes no reference to the 'Decrees', and this silence is taken as an indication that the epistle was written before Acts 15. Further, it has been said, the Judaisers could hardly 'compel' circumcision (6:12), after the decision at Jerusalem (Acts 15). Peter's action in Galatians 2 is also much more difficult to understand if after Acts 15. Altogether, everything is favourable to an early date for the epistle, and we believe we shall not be wrong in placing it first in chronological order.

Since writing this Chapter, the author has come across a small book (*The Date of Galatians* by Douglas Round), dealing with the date of the epistle, in which the writer, while accepting the South Galatian view of Professor Ramsay, does not accept the late date suggested by him, but argues very strongly for the position which we have felt to be the true one, namely, the earliest of all the epistles. We quote his own opening words:

'Before the appearance of his (Prof. Ramsay's) books setting out the South Galatian theory, the epistle to the Galatians seemed to be in the air, and to have no relation to the Acts of the Apostles or to any other writing. His brilliant work illuminated what had been before a dark corner. The interest so aroused led me to study the subject more closely, and eventually to form the opinion expressed in these pages, as to the earlier date of the epistle. The later date was the burden laid by necessity upon the holders of the North Galatian theory. Prof. Ramsay might have cast off the burden so inherited. Instead of so doing, he gratuitously (as it seems to me) tied the burden round his neck to the great injury of the South Galatian theory'.

Without going through all the controversy raised in this book, we give the following summary of the essential points:

- (1) Was the epistle written before or after Acts 15?
- (2) The private conference of Galatians 2 took place upon the second visit of the apostle to Jerusalem, which was that of Acts 11:30. The reference to 'the poor', and Paul's expressed readiness, coincide with the errand of mercy mentioned in Acts 11:30.
- (3) After the private conference at Jerusalem, Peter dissembles at Antioch. The question at issue at Antioch was not, 'Should the Gentiles be circumcised?' that had been settled; but, 'Should the circumcised eat with the uncircumcised?' On this point Peter wavered. Peter felt the force of the rebuke, and acted accordingly at the public Council (Acts 15).
- (4) Paul paid the Galatian churches two visits (Acts 13). The return visit was important. The faith which the apostle had preached (13:39), they were exhorted to 'continue in' (14:22), and the persecution which they knew the apostle suffered (13:50) was a part of their expectation also - 'we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God'.
- (5) While the apostle abode at Antioch for 'a long time', some of the emissaries from Jerusalem went on to Galatia. The result of their visit is recorded in Galatians 1:6. Paul at once, from Antioch, and just before the conference of Acts 15, wrote the epistle.
- (6) The contention which necessitated the conference necessitated the epistle.
- (7) The decrees, formulated by the Council, are never mentioned in the epistle. If the apostle had received them, he would be obliged in all honesty, to have said so. Further, the fact that these decrees practically endorsed the exemption of the Gentiles from the Law was a strong argument for the apostle. If the epistle had been written after Acts 15, would not the apostle have settled the question at once by reference to the decrees?

In the epistle we can have no doubt the apostle uses the strongest arguments that at the time of writing were possible. The close connection between Acts 13 and the epistle is also an argument for nearness in point of time. He argues in the epistle as though his teaching would be still clearly remembered.

Galatians 4:20 suggests a desire to revisit them. Why did he not go? The simple reason was that he was obliged to go up to Jerusalem for the conference instead.



The author's own summary is as follows:

- (1) By this view no visit of Paul to Jerusalem is suppressed.
- (2) The most forcible arguments that could be used at the time are used.
- (3) No inconsistency is intruded into the Acts.
- (4) Every phrase which bears upon the date is simply and naturally explained.
- (5) The authority of the Council at Jerusalem, and the decree made, remain unimpaired.
- (6) The epistle was written from Antioch or the neighbourhood.
- (7) The churches of Galatia were those of Pisidia, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe.
- (8) The epistle is probably the earliest book in the New Testament.

## CHAPTER 9

### The Apostle of the Reconciliation.

The attitude of Peter and the circumcision with regard to Cornelius is sufficient to make us realize that the opening of the door to the Gentiles would be accompanied by much opposition. Something had come which wounded the pride of the Jew, believer though he may have been; and soon the history of the Acts and the testimony of the epistles show us a strong party, jealous for the Law of Moses, for the rite of circumcision, and for the peculiar privileges of the chosen people. Every epistle of the period contains some reference to this: and the very opposition to the reconciliation was, humanly speaking, one of the causes which produced the epistles of Paul during the Acts.

The epistle to the Galatians cannot be even superficially read without perceiving that the whole state of affairs is one of conflict for the truth of the gospel as connected with the Gentiles. This conflict is fiercest where the question of the apostleship of Paul is in question, and much that is written in these early epistles is in the nature of a vindication of Paul's claim. The epistles to the Corinthians contain many strongly worded passages in what the apostle calls 'foolish boasting', where he again has to fight for the truth of his peculiar ministry. The epistle to the Romans is calmer, and the controversy there passes from the messenger to the message. But even there the apostle 'magnifies' his office, and draws attention to the special relationship of his ministry to the Gentiles. Our first enquiry, therefore, will be along these lines.

Assuming that the epistle to the Galatians is the first inspired epistle of the apostle Paul, let us observe his manner of entrance into the great arena. His opening words ring out a challenge - a threefold challenge, and all his teaching must stand for naught if these three items cannot be maintained. What are they? With what words does he enter the conflict?

1. He asserts his absolute apostleship, in entire independence of man or men.
2. He testifies to the unique character of his gospel; he was not taught it by men, but he received it by revelation.
3. He appeals to fourteen years' independent ministry as proof of his authority.

### Paul's Apostleship, Gospel and Authority (Gal. 1:1-24)

(Key words: `Not'; `Neither'; `But')

**A<sub>1</sub>** 1:1-5. Paul's APOSTLESHIP.     { *Not* from men,  
  { *Neither* through man.  
  { *But* through Jesus Christ.

**B<sub>1</sub>** 1:6-10. No change in gospel.-`Ye received'.

**A<sub>2</sub>** 1:11,12. Paul's GOSPEL.         { *Not* according to man,  
  { *Neither* from man,  
  { *But* by revelation of Jesus Christ.

**B<sub>2</sub>** 1:13,14 His past attitude.-`Ye heard'.

**A<sub>3</sub>** 1:15-17. Paul's AUTHORITY.     { *Not* flesh and blood,  
  { *Neither* apostle,  
  { *But* he went into Arabia.

**B<sub>3</sub>** 1:18-24. His present attitude.-`They had heard'.

Contrary to what we might have expected, the opening chapter deals with matters personal to Paul rather than with doctrinal problems. This is no egotism, it is fundamental; for throughout the inspired record of the apostle to the Gentiles the undermining of his doctrine was always preceded by the undermining of his authority. This is plainly seen in the epistle to the Corinthians, and comes out prominently in the apostle's last message (2 Timothy). There in chapter 1 we read `all in Asia be turned away from ME', which inevitably leads on to the statement in chapter 4, `they shall turn away their ears from THE TRUTH'. Thus it is that Galatians 1 and 2 are devoted to the apostle's authority, personal integrity, and unconditional responsibility to God alone. Out of the babel the Lord has brought His truth. The challenge has made Paul do that which personal reticence and spiritual humility would have for ever prevented; he has made himself (as he says in 2 Corinthians) `a fool in his boasting', but he has proved up to the last letter that he was `not one whit behind the chiefest of the apostles', and by inspired command he `magnified his office'.

There have been occasions in the history of the fight of faith when conciliatory methods, gentleness, and forbearance, even concessions to weakness and ignorance, have been the noblest actions of the good soldiers of Jesus Christ: there have been times, however, when a Luther must nail his thesis to the cathedral door, when - to change the figure - the tactics of the enemy, or the nature of the battle, demand short, sharp work. The truth must be upheld at all cost; then highly respected leaders of Christian thought sink by comparison with the truth at stake into the contemptible position of `somebodies' and `somewhats', even though they `seemed to be pillars'; then Peter himself must be withstood to the face, and even angels from heaven could not escape a reiterated anathema.

The apostle, led by the spirit of truth, saw the leavening process of a carnal religion spoiling the labour of devoted service; enslaving those who had been made Christ's free men; jeopardizing `the truth of the gospel'; sully for ever the grace of God, and the cross of Christ; putting in its place `a fair show in the flesh'; a slavish, undispensational, and traditional adherence to an obsolete law; the voice of Hagar and Ishmael for the voice of Sarah and Isaac; the rite of circumcision for the perfect emancipation of sonship: in fact, a blasting and withering of leaf, flower, and fruit, and - but for sovereign grace - of the root itself.

To the apostle, 'circumcision was nothing, nor uncircumcision', but it had become the quintessence of the 'other gospel' that gendered to bondage. Consequently, around this one strange Jewish rite, the battle rages; not for any intrinsic value in the ordinance itself, but because it presented both the most formidable as well as the most vulnerable front of the enemy.

Paul's epistles, looked at from their polemical or combative character, fall into two groups: 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians and Romans are anti-Judaistic and gospel epistles; Ephesians and Colossians are anti-Gnostic and mystery epistles: the first deal with the weak and beggarly elements of mere religion, the second with a deceitful and vain philosophy. Both reveal an underlying unity of evil, that of imposing something (carnal ordinances or philosophical humilities) between the believer and the risen Christ. Those who so glibly emphasized the necessity of 'the Law' seem to have forgotten or purposely hidden such a word as Ezekiel 20:25 :

'... statutes that were *not good*, and judgments (ordinances) whereby they *should not live*'.

These believers at Galatia had thought themselves happy and blessed if they could but bring forth the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace); now they were being moved away from their simplicity, and were going back to bondage - and what a bondage! Paul knew, as few knew better, the awful bondage of the traditions of the fathers (Gal. 1:14). With what bewildered fear must these simple Galatians have heard of the wearing of phylacteries; of the necessity for the Mezuzahs on their door-posts; of the *kosher* meat; and of the conscience-searing pettiness of Rabbinical tyranny substituted for God's sabbath day! Against all the array of authority, tradition, superstition, and the flesh, God raised one man, and enabled him to stand, and to yield, 'no, not for an hour'. Praise God for the Davids who have thus single-handed laid these Goliaths low: may grace be given us to stand, alone if need be, in our day.

The opening chapter, as we have seen, is taken up with a three-fold claim - Paul's independent apostleship, gospel, and authority. Let us examine this three-fold claim more closely.

### First, Paul's Apostleship

'PAUL, AN APOSTLE, (NOT OF MEN, NEITHER BY MAN, BUT BY JESUS CHRIST, AND GOD THE FATHER, WHO RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD;)' - The epistle to the Romans opens with the words, 'Paul a bondsman of Jesus Christ'; but the necessities of the case prevented such a statement coming at the commencement of this epistle. It is reserved till verse 10, and more emphatically till the end of the epistle, where we hear him speaking of the landmarks of the Lord Jesus. Different occasions demand different aspects of truth. As in the four Gospels we behold the same blessed Person, but under different aspects, so as the demands of truth dictate, Paul must say that he is the chief of sinners; less than the least of all saints; or not one whit behind the chiefest of the apostles. Here, to the Galatians, the continuance of the truth of the gospel demanded that Paul should magnify his office.

One cannot read Galatians, 1 Thessalonians, and 2 Corinthians without perceiving that the apostleship of Paul had been questioned, his gospel contemned, his authority repudiated, and his equality with the twelve denied. If Simon received the name Cephas or Peter (John 1:42; Matt. 16:18), and if of him it could be said, 'flesh and blood' had not revealed the truth concerning the Messiah unto him; so also Saul of Tarsus was called Paul, and his message was equally a revelation.

The challenged apostleship, moreover, could not conform to the requirements of the twelve as given in Acts 1:21,22, 'beginning from the baptism of John', it had an undeniable difference; *it was the first apostleship conferred from heaven*. His unique apostleship comes forward in many of his epistles; Romans 1:5, 'By Whom we have received grace and apostleship' (or apostolic grace); Romans 11:13, 'I am an apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office'. The challenge rings out in 1 Corinthians 9:1, 'Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?' In 1 Corinthians 15:5-8 Paul makes a distinction between the twelve and himself. In 1 Timothy 2:7 he says, '... I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity (truth)'.

The Greek word *apostolos* answers to the Latin *legatus*, and means 'one sent by and in the name of another', as the result of which it is said, 'He that receiveth you receiveth Me'. This reception had been given Paul by the Galatians, for they 'received' him as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Before the apostle proceeds to pray for grace and peace, the strange words 'not of men, neither by man' occur.

`NOT OF MEN, NEITHER BY MAN'.- This expression needs careful examination. The word `of' is a translation of the preposition *apo*, meaning `away from'; and the word `by', of the preposition *dia*, meaning `through'. Further, there is a reason for the change from `men' to `man'. Humanly speaking, no writer is less likely to multiply words without meaning than Paul; his manner makes some passages in his writings liable to obscurity from their conciseness rather than from their prolixity. The false teachers at Galatia, as may be gathered from the epistle itself (for the most part of the circumcision and Pharisees), circulated reports which undermined the authority of Paul. They could say, with a certain colouring of truth, that Paul had never seen the Lord Jesus as had the twelve. They said that he had not received his commission from the Lord personally, and that what position he did hold was given by others; his doctrine also was at so many points at variance with that of *the* apostles. The Galatians would be wise if they would see in this the proof that he had merely invented much of his novel doctrine himself, and was after all a self-styled apostle, and not to be mentioned in the same breath with the `Pillars at Jerusalem'. Unhesitatingly and unequivocally the apostle exposes the complete falsity of these rumours; his apostleship was not a commission received *from men*, neither was its origin *through man* (that is, flesh and blood) at all, `but by Jesus Christ and God the Father'.

`BUT BY JESUS CHRIST'.- This took place on the road to Damascus, as recorded in Acts 9.

`AND GOD THE FATHER'.- This is further explained in Galatians 1:15,16. Following this statement, we have the added clause:

`WHO RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD'.- However the Lord may have qualified His apostles by the outpouring of holy spirit after resurrection, He did not *appoint* them by this means: they were *appointed* beforehand in the days of His flesh. Paul, however, was commissioned by the risen One, as he declares in Romans 1:4,5. The clause `Who raised Him out (*ek*) from the dead', is balanced by the words `Who gave Himself for our sins, in order that He might deliver us out of (*ek*) this present evil world', and the structure of the opening verses hinges on these passages, as may be seen by the following:

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| B 1:1-5. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a The Father, Who raised Him from (<i>ek</i>) the dead.</li> <li>b Grace and peace from God the Father.</li> <li>a The Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself ... to deliver from (<i>ek</i>) this present evil world.</li> <li>b Will of the Father ... glory.</li> </ul> |
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`WHO GAVE HIMSELF'.- In what capacity will Paul introduce the Lord to these Galatians? He brings prominently before them the central fact, that Christ has come and settled once for all the question which agitated them in their weakness. `The Son of God Who loved me, and gave Himself for me' is Paul's personal answer to those who were going back to bondage. `O foolish Galatians!' he exclaims as he points out the folly of their retrograde move, `before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you'.

`THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER US'.- *Exaireo* means `to take out as an eye'; first occurrence, Matthew 5:29. The emphasis on the word *out* is very strong, *exaireo* ... *ek*.

`FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE'.- *Present* - This word often refers to an age (Rom. 8:38; Heb. 9:9; 2 Thess. 2:2, `at hand'; 2 Tim. 3:1, `shall come'). *Evil age* - the word translated `world' is *aion*. What is the special connection with the theme of the epistle? The apostle, even apart from inspiration, would hardly have introduced this unusual topic unless it bore upon his subsequent argument. The word *aion*, meaning `age', carries with it not only the idea of a period of time, but also the principles which were in force during that time. 2 Timothy 4:10 speaks of `this present world', the original being *ton nun aiona*, `the now age'; Ephesians 2:2 speaks of `the course of this world', the original being *ton aiona tou kosmou toutou*, `the age of this world'. `This age' is often spoken of in contrast with `the age to come'.

It must be remembered that Paul's personal answer to all attempts to lead him or others back to the bondage of the Law was that he had been crucified with Christ. The Law, which from one aspect he said was `holy, just, and good', from another he saw was `weak through the flesh' (Rom. 8:3). It was even to be blamed (Heb. 8:8), and in the epistle to the Galatians he does not hesitate to use such terms as `weak and beggarly elements' (4:9). When we remember that `evil' (*poneros*) sometimes means `defective', and not morally evil (cf. Matt. 6:23, `if thine eye be evil'), and further, that God Himself declares `I gave them statutes, which *were not good*' (Ezek. 20:25), while other Scriptures speak of them as a yoke and a bondage, deliverance from which was only possible through the offering of

Christ, we can see how the apostle would be referring to the dispensation of the Law under the term 'this present evil age'. The deliverance thus accomplished the apostle declares to be:

'ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD AND OUR FATHER'. - The will of God as the cause of mercy is referred to some eight or nine times in the New Testament, but this is the only occasion where the words 'and our Father' are added. Why? Galatians 4 supplies the answer:

'... when we were *children*, we were in bondage under the elements of the world (this evil age): but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of *sons*. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father' (verses 3-6).

The false teachers were endeavouring to bring God's free men back again to bondage, and God's sons back again to the elements of babyhood. Verse 6 introduces us to the more aggressive section of the epistle.

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| <b>B1</b> 1:6-10. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>c</b> The defection-'moved away' (<i>metatithemi</i>).</li> <li><b>d</b> The grace of Christ.</li> <li><b>e</b> The 'other' gospel.</li> <li><b>c</b> The perversion (<i>metastrepho</i>).</li> <li><b>d</b> The gospel of Christ.</li> <li><b>e</b> The 'different' gospel.</li> </ul> |
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The member 'e', the 'different' gospel, is expanded as follows:

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| <b>B1 e</b> 1:8,9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>f</b> We, or angel from heaven.</li> <li><b>g</b> Preached contrary (past).</li> <li><b>h</b> To what we preached (we).</li> <li><b>i</b> Let him be accursed.</li> <li><b>f</b> If anyone.</li> <li><b>g</b> Preaches contrary (present).</li> <li><b>h</b> To what ye have received (ye).</li> <li><b>i</b> Let him be accursed.</li> </ul> |
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Defection from the gospel on the one hand, and the steadfast continuance of the apostle in spite of all misrepresentation on the other, is the leading theme of this section.

'WHICH IS NOT ANOTHER, BUT THERE BE SOME THAT TROUBLE YOU'.- This sentence has been rendered in a variety of ways, but in the majority of cases the simple rendering of two little words is exchanged for questionable and unscriptural meanings, *ho ouk estin allo ei me*. *Ho*, 'which', must have an antecedent, must refer back to something. Some take the expression 'another gospel' as the antecedent; some, the word 'gospel' only: and most render the words *ei me* as though they were synonymous with *allo*, 'but'. If, however, we take the whole sentence in verse 6 as the antecedent, and read as follows, we have a grammatical rendering, a due recognition of *heteros* and *allos*, and no violence to *ei me*.

'Which thing (viz., that ye are so quickly changing from Him that called you, etc., etc.) *is nothing else, save that there are some who trouble you*'.

This was the cause of the defection of the Galatians. The words, 'This persuasion cometh not of Him that calleth you ... A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump ... he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be' (Gal. 5:8-10), are a manifest allusion to Galatians 1:6,7. The apostle so realizes that he is just here at the very core and centre of the defection, that he goes on to expand the question of the 'other gospel', using a case, the most extreme, in order to impress the seriousness of the position on the believers in Galatia.

'BUT THOUGH WE, OR AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN ...'.- As the epistle proceeds, the wisdom of this strange allusion becomes more apparent. If God would not make any difference in favour even of an angel from heaven, then those who 'seemed to be pillars' at Jerusalem must stand or fall with the truth of the gospel, for 'God accepteth no man's person' (Gal. 2:6). Peter himself must be withstood to the face if his walk and witness are contrary to truth (Gal.

2:2-14), and the one, or ones, who were responsible for the trouble at Galatia, should bear their own judgment. If the *anathema* could descend upon an angel from heaven should such preach any other gospel, then the expression, 'I would they were even *cut off* which trouble you' (Gal. 5:12), is not too severe.

'THAN THAT WHICH WE HAVE PREACHED UNTO YOU'.- Much difference of opinion has been expressed as to the precise meaning of the words *par ho*, 'than that'; some take it to mean 'things *contrary* to'; others, 'things *in addition* to'. Strictly speaking, the words include either or both as the case may be, for the meaning, *beside* the one, indicates something not absolutely identical, and this lack of identity may arise from addition, subtraction, or controversion.\* Paul himself draws attention to the consistency of his utterances since the day he received the truth by revelation. However much he may have expanded or expounded it, he never added to nor subtracted from its fulness or its simplicity, as he says later, 'lest I should be now running, or had been running, in vain'. This consistency he impresses on Peter in chapter 2: 'For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor': so in this statement before us, the apostle links the present with the past:

'... should preach ... unto you other than we *preached* unto you ... if anyone *preaches* ... unto you other than ye *received* ...'

What 'we preached' and what 'ye received' was to be the criterion. The apostle first uses a hypothetical case; 'we, or an angel from heaven': he now comes nearer and is more personal; 'if any man is *preaching*'. The woes of Christ, like the curse of the apostle, are directed not to the sinner in his need, but to the false teacher in his hypocrisy and evil work. The fact that the apostle could assert that 'what we preached' is identical with 'what ye received' would dispose of any plausible pretension on the part of the Judaizers to the effect that the Galatians had not understood the apostle aright, and that his words needed 'interpreting'.

'FOR DO I NOW PERSUADE MEN, OR GOD?'.- *Arti* properly denotes a moment of time; if *gar* be understood, not argumentatively, but interrogatively, as *pos gar*, 'how then?'; *ti gar*, 'what then?'- the meaning of the apostle is plain, and much to the point. 'Now then', these things being so, can there be any foundation for the gross libel that I am a man-pleaser and a time server?

'PERSUADE'.- Sometimes this word *peitho* carries with it the thought of conciliating, as in Matthew 28:14, and Acts 12:20. The word usually suggests subordination, as *peitho* is rendered in some places, 'obey'. Chapter 2 tells us that the apostle yielded subjection 'no, not for an hour', when the truth was at stake. He was the bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and the answer to his question is clear. No, he did not seek to ingratiate himself with men, however high they stood in the church: God was the One from Whom he sought commendation. Paul follows this up by a similar question:

'OR AM I SEEKING TO PLEASE MEN?'- He disposes of the idea that he framed his gospel to please his hearers as he had disposed of the other imputations. This passage brings us to the completion of the first section of the chapter, and gives substantial proof that the apostle Paul was an apostle not from men, neither through man. Just as he opens with the statement that his apostleship was from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, so he closes it with the assertion that, far from being a pleaser of men, he was a servant of Christ.

The limitations of space will not allow us to go through the epistle in this manner, much as we would delight in the task. We only trust that the reader will be sufficiently stimulated to continue the investigations for himself, while for the remainder of this chapter we shall have to be content with broader outlines.

How are we to reckon the various intervals of time indicated in this opening chapter? Some add the fourteen years to the three, making seventeen in all. Professor Ramsay draws attention to the fact that to the apostle the great outstanding period of his life was the day of his conversion. The following facts are recorded:

1. This is the starting point, and is therefore introduced by *hote* (1:15).
2. *Eutheos*, the retiring into Arabia; *kai palin*, the return to Damascus (1:16,17).
3. *Epeita meta tria ete* ('then after three years'), the first visit to Jerusalem, and the stay of fifteen days there (1:18,19).

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\* A matter in dispute, a controversy.

4. *Epeita* ('afterwards'), the retiring to Syria and Cilicia, and continuance there (1:21-24).
5. *Epeita dia dekatessaron eton*, the second visit to Jerusalem (2:1).

Chapter 2:11 does not start with *epeita*, but *hote*, and implies a fresh start, parallel to 1:15.

'Here the numbers derive their effect on his readers' minds from their greatness; and, if he had been able to use the number 17, he would inevitably (according to my conception of his nature) have taken the expression which enabled him to use the larger number'.

We believe that fourteen years after the apostle's conversion he went up to Jerusalem by revelation: this view is taken by Macknight in his commentary. One suggested rendering of 2 Corinthians 12:2 is, 'a man who had been fourteen years in Christ' (cf. Rom. 16:7). If this should prove acceptable then the 'revelation' of Galatians 2:1 and the visions and revelations of 2 Corinthians 12 synchronize. Other writers of good standing take the opposite view, that the fourteen years are to be added to the three, but this does not seem to fit in with the one great theme before the apostle, his great object being, not to specify any particular number of visits to Jerusalem, but to clear away the remotest suspicion that he received his commission or his message from the twelve.

The apostle's visit to Jerusalem which took place three years after his conversion was *historesai Kephana*, 'to make the acquaintance of Cephas'. It was a thing most natural that the apostle Paul should desire to make the acquaintance of Peter, and to learn from him all that he could reveal concerning the earthly life and ministry of the Lord Jesus. The visit was short, lasting but fifteen days, and Paul's own reference to it in later days indicates that in a trance he received the command, 'Make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me' (Acts 22:18). 'They went about to slay him' is the statement of Acts 9:29. The one other man of all men that Paul would wish to meet would be 'James the Lord's brother', for while Peter's story would begin at the baptism of John, James' story would begin with the birth and early life. James, the brother of John, was killed with the sword (Acts 12:2), and the distinction between the two would not be necessary after that point.

Paul follows this statement with words, which - unless we realise the importance attaching to his narrative - will seem unnecessarily solemn. 'Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not'. It is for a similar purpose that the apostle traces the history of the visit made after fourteen years. 'They who seemed to be somewhat in conference *added nothing* to me'. Let us see the passage as a whole, before considering it in detail.

#### Galatians 2:1-14.

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| A | 1,2   | a | Paul goes to Jerusalem for the faith.                  |
|   |       | b | Barnabas stands fast.                                  |
| B | 3-5   | c | Titus not <i>compelled</i> to be circumcised.          |
|   |       | d | Paul's stand for <i>the truth of the gospel</i> .      |
| C | 6-10  | e | Seemed to be somewhat.                                 |
|   |       | f | Added nothing to me.                                   |
|   |       | g | Gospel of Circumcision. PETER.                         |
|   |       | g | Gospel of Uncircumcision. PAUL.                        |
|   |       | e | Seemed to be pillars.                                  |
|   |       | f | Remember the poor.                                     |
| A | 11-13 | a | Peter comes to Antioch; overthrows faith.              |
|   |       | b | Even <i>Barnabas</i> carried away.                     |
| B | 14    | d | Peter's walk, against <i>the truth of the gospel</i> . |
|   |       | c | <i>Compelled</i> Gentiles to Judaize.                  |

The perfection of the structure can be felt, even with our faulty presentation: point answers point, and insists upon the one grand theme - Paul's absolute equality with Peter and the twelve. We are not so concerned as to whether this visit in Galatians 2 is the same as that of Acts 12, or an earlier or a later one; this controversy fills many a page in ancient and modern commentary: we are concerned that the reader shall not miss this critical lesson. Here, in this first epistle, one subject is uppermost; not, as we might have supposed, the glory of Christ and the blessedness of the gospel - that we know well was more to the heart of Paul than all this apparent 'foolish boasting' - but the

message is ever linked with the messenger, and the apostle Paul was inspired to perceive that, in magnifying his office, he magnified the gospel and the Lord. It was a question that had to be settled once, and at once; hence the burden of these two chapters - Paul an apostle, not of men, but of God; Paul's gospel, not of men, but by revelation; Paul's authority, not from Peter, James, or the 'somewhats' or 'somebodies' at Jerusalem, but from the risen Christ.

Notice how the Structure brings out into severe contrast the two chief actors. Paul's name is associated with a supreme fight for freedom, and for the truth of the gospel; Peter's name is associated with blame, with dissimulation, and with a walk contrary to the truth of the gospel. With the champion of the reconciliation Barnabas stands firm, but with the vacillating minister of the circumcision Barnabas wavers and falls. Titus, a Greek, is brought forward as Paul's great object lesson. There, in the very citadel and shrine of the circumcision, Titus, the Greek, was *not compelled* to be circumcised. Peter on the other hand, by his withdrawal from the table of the Gentiles, by the re-erection of the barrier broken down by God in Acts 10, by the denial of the reconciliation which was the very life blood of the apostle's ministry; Peter, at Antioch, the city midway between Jerusalem and Rome, *compelled* these Gentiles to Judaize. So completely did the apostle feel the need to break the bondage forged by the Judaizing party that he departs from his usual courtesy, and almost rudely refers to the twelve apostles and the elders at Jerusalem as 'they who seemed to be somewhat', and 'they who seemed to be pillars'. He declares that at the most critical conference, when the whole subject of his ministry to the Gentiles was discussed, they '*added nothing*' to him, 'only that he should remember the poor'!

Oh marvellous anti-climax! Listen, ye traducers of the apostle of the reconciliation and grace to the Gentiles, you who would use great Peter as a weapon to beat Paul! That epoch-making conference at Jerusalem, where Titus was allowed to remain uncircumcised; where, in spite of all the 'somebodies' and 'somewhats', one single-hearted man, by the grace of God, maintained the truth of the gospel in face of all odds, with all their powers, with all their authority; in spite of false brethren, in spite of all that had been falsely circulated about it; that solemn assembly, instead of adding or subtracting one iota to or from the apostle's mission or gospel, could find nothing to say, simply nothing other than *remember the poor*! That is the measure of the interference that the apostle suffered by that great and solemn gathering. 'Remember the poor'; how does that touch his apostleship? 'Remember the poor'; how does that question his gospel? 'Remember the poor'; in what way does this touch his authority? The whole structure so carefully elaborated crumbles at the touch of truth.

There is, however, a positive result as well as this negative one. Not only could the apostle say that they added *nothing*, but he could positively continue, 'but contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter'- 'as unto Peter'- Paul's commission placed on equality with that of Cephas! This was in face of the undeniable witness from above; 'for He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles; and when James, Cephas, and John, *who seemed to be pillars*', (surely words used by the traducers and turned against them, as in the case of *The Merchant of Venice*, 'I thank thee Jew for giving me that word'); when these very pillars 'perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen (Gentiles), and they unto the circumcision'.

Nothing could be more decisive, yet the apostle is led to make one final statement before concluding this wondrous apology. Peter - yes, even Peter - had to be openly withstood to the face, because of his failure to walk according to the truth of the gospel which Paul had preached; even Barnabas had gone over. The inference comes therefore, 'O Galatians, take heed to your ways; beware of the little leaven and the yoke of bondage'. We must leave the remaining chapters of Galatians for a while, in order that we may consider the complete testimony of these epistles of the reconciliation to the apostleship of Paul.

There is a very marked parallel between the epistle to the Galatians and 2 Corinthians regarding the subject at issue, namely, the apostleship, gospel, and authority of Paul, and related subjects.

#### Galatians

'... seemed to be somewhat' (2:6).

#### 2 Corinthians

'... the very chiefest (extra super) apostles' (11:5).



`... another Gospel' (1:6-9).

`... false brethren' (2:4).

`He that wrought effectually in Peter ... the same was mighty in me' (2:8).

`I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain ... I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you' (4:11-20).

`I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded' (5:10).

`From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus' (6:17).

`... behold, before God, I lie not' (1:20).

`... if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another' (5:15).

`As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach' (1:9).

`... having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?' (3:3).

`For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature' (6:15).

`... if he that cometh preacheth *another* Jesus ... *another* spirit ... or *another* gospel' (11:4).

`... false brethren' (11:26).

`For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles' (11:5).

`But I fear' (11:3).

`For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would' (12:20; see also 11:3).

`I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things' (7:16).

`five times ... forty stripes save one. Thrice ... beaten with rods, once ... stoned, thrice ... shipwrecked' (11:24,25).

`The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not' (11:31).

`... if a man devour you'`  
 `... backbitings,`  
 whisperings, swellings,`  
 tumults' (11:20; 12:20).

`I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time' (13:2).

`... that as He had begun, so He would also finish (perfect) in you the same grace also' (8:6).

`Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature' (5:17).

The departure from the truth both doctrinally and practically in both churches is closely connected with doubting and denying the apostleship of Paul and the truth of his gospel. The self-same departure can be unhesitatingly deduced from the same cause to-day.

While a more complete list of parallels would be helpful, our immediate concern is with the revived controversy regarding the apostle Paul. In 1 Corinthians we realise that the elements of division are present; parties rally round the names of Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and even Christ. It is evident that the apostleship of Paul had been seriously questioned at Corinth, as chapter 9 makes most manifest:

`Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? ... If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you, for the SEAL OF MINE APOSTLESHIP are ye in the Lord. *Mine answer to them that do examine me is this*; Have we not a right to eat and to drink? Have we not a right to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we the right to forbear working? ... If others are partakers of this right over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this right, but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ ... when I preach the gospel I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I do not use to the full my right in the gospel. For though I be free from all, yet have I made myself enslaved to all, that I might gain the more. And to the Jews I became as a Jew that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law ... to them that are without law, as without law ... To the weak became I as weak ... I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some' (1 Cor. 9:1-22 Author's translation).

This utter abandonment of self for the good of others was used against the apostle by the Judaizing party. In 2 Corinthians 12:12 he tells them that all the signs of an apostle were wrought among them, except this one thing, that the apostle abstained from his right of being supported by them. `Forgive me this wrong', he says, `I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved'. There a heavy heart is manifested, for all the brave exterior. Quoting from the slanders in circulation about him, he repeats, `But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile' (verse 16). Hardly are the words penned than the apostle's whole being revolts against the charge. Away with the thought! `Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you?' (verses 17 and 18).

2 Corinthians 11 and 12 are occupied much in the same way as Galatians 1 and 2. The apostle, with much diffidence, calling his defence `folly' and `foolish boasting', is again plunged into the defence of his ministry, and the unchivalrous contention with Peter and others.

The literary structure will again simplify the subject and keep us to the chief point:

## **2 Corinthians 11 and 12.**

- A 11:1-4. The real deceiver. The serpent; `subtilty' (*panourgia*).
- B 11:5,6. KNOWLEDGE. `Not one whit behind the chiefest (extra super) apostles'.
- C 11:7-21. SELF-ABASEMENT. Ministers of Satan.
  - D 11:22. EQUALITY. As to advantages of birth and religion.
  - D 11:23-33. SUPERIORITY. As to labours and sufferings.
- C 12:1-10. VISIONS AND REVELATIONS. A messenger of Satan.
- B 12:11,12. SIGNS. `Not one whit behind the chiefest (extra super) apostles'.
- A 12:13-18. The false charge. `Being crafty' (*panourgos*).

While, therefore, the false teachers were saying of Paul that being crafty he caught them with guile, Paul exposes the real deceiver in the Serpent. And his servants - ministers of Satan, false apostles - on the one hand, and a stake in the flesh - a messenger of Satan - on the other hand, intensified the sufferings both mental and physical of the apostle to the Gentiles. The necessity of saving the Corinthians from the bondage of the Judaizers was urgent. Once more the apostle lays bare that which modesty would for ever have covered.

### **1. His equality with the apostles of the circumcision.**

- `Are they Hebrews?..... So am I.
- Are they Israelites?..... So am I.

Are they the seed of Abraham? ..... So am I'.

## 2. His superiority as to labours and sufferings.

`Are they ministers of Christ?..... I am MORE.

In labours MORE abundant.

In stripes ABOVE measure.

In prisons MORE frequent.

In deaths OFT.

Of the Jews FIVE times received I forty stripes save one.

THRICE was I beaten with rods.

ONCE was I stoned.

THRICE I suffered shipwreck.

A DAY AND A NIGHT have I been in the deep.

In journeys OFTEN.

In perils of waters, robbers, mine own countrymen, heathen, city, wilderness, sea, and false brethren;

in weariness and painfulness, in watchings OFTEN:

in hunger and thirst, in faintings OFTEN,

in cold and nakedness;

besides those things which are without,

that which cometh upon me daily.

### THE ANXIETY OF ALL THE CHURCHES.

Who is weak and I am not weak?

Who is offended and I burn not?

Twice does the apostle use a term that is reminiscent of Galatians 2, 'the very chiefest apostles'-'extra super', as one has well rendered it - and he follows the line of Galatians 2 where he not only establishes *equality* with Peter, James, and John, but in the case of Peter, shows that he had to withstand him to the face. But in 2 Corinthians the apostle not only says 'so am I', but also 'I more'.

When we turn to the epistles to the Thessalonians, we discover the enemy adopting different tactics, but having the same goal in view, viz., the spoiling of the apostle's witness. The gospel had been received in Thessalonica with great readiness, and the fruitful results were a cause for thanksgiving. Chapter 1 of the first epistle is practically occupied with the grateful recognition of the grace of God to the Thessalonian church. The second chapter, however, introduces statements which reveal the attack of the enemy:

`For our exhortation was NOT of deceit, not of uncleanness, nor in guile' (1 Thess. 2:3).

Why should any one suddenly deny such things, in such a letter, if those shameful charges had not been made against him! Here sounds the charge which finds its echo in 2 Corinthians 12:16. In the capital cities of both Macedonia and Achaia the false brethren were unscrupulous in their attacks upon the apostle. If the direct attack upon his independent apostleship appeared to fail, then they would make insinuations as to his morals, attacking apparently upon the principle that when mud is thrown some is sure to stick. Imagine the feelings of such a nature as Paul's being charged with uncleanness! The charge of verse 3 is repudiated by the affirmation of the apostle's sacred trust:

`But as we have been *approved by God (dokimazo)* to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men (the echo of Gal. 1) but God, Who proves (*dokimazo*) our hearts' (1 Thess. 2:4 Author's translation).

Paul *had been* approved of God; *he still was* approved of God. Throughout his ministry he maintained a conscience void of offence:

`For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of (from) you, nor yet of (from) others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ' (1 Thess. 2:5,6).

Following this second repudiation, the apostle uses two figures to describe his ministry:

`We were gentle among you, even as a nursing MOTHER cherisheth her own children ... and charged every one of you as a FATHER doth his own children' (1 Thess. 2:7-11 Author's translation).

The apostle reveals the reason for all this untrue hatred and misrepresentation in 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 :

`... the Jews ... have persecuted us (margin, chased us out); and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: FORBIDDING US TO SPEAK TO THE GENTILES that they might be saved, to fill up their sins away'.

Here was the trouble; this Paul preached to the *Gentiles!* and to the day of his death he suffered for his glorious commission (2 Tim. 1:11,12). In 2 Thessalonians we catch a glimpse of the protracted struggle; in chapter 3:1-7 :

`Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified ... and that we may be delivered from unreasonable (margin, absurd) and wicked men ... For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you'.

It was for the establishing for all time of the personal integrity and the absolute apostleship of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, that the Acts of the Apostles was written: and in humbler form, and in faulty fashion, but with the same end in view, this present volume is largely penned. To rehabilitate Paul as the minister of the risen and ascended Christ to the Gentiles would of itself revolutionize Christianity today. We entertain no vain hopes, however. A little company has always guarded the sacred deposit, and will do so until the dispensation closes, but the generality of Christians care for none of these things.

## CHAPTER 10

### Abraham and the Gentile

We leave the question of the apostleship of Paul, and go over the ground already covered to observe the teaching of the epistles regarding the peculiar objects of his apostleship: and first among them we will trace the teaching of these epistles of the reconciliation regarding the status of the Gentile.

We have already noticed the stir that was made at the conversion of Cornelius. Peter, however, was not allowed to do more than open the door; Paul it was who was commissioned to enter. We return to our first epistle - Galatians. In the opening chapter the apostle links the Gentiles with his commission:

`But when it pleased God ... to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen (*Gentiles*) ... ' (Gal. 1:15,16).

Syria and Cilicia, not Judaea, were the spheres of his early ministry (Gal. 1:21,22). In course of time the apostle went up to Jerusalem to communicate `that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles' (Gal. 2:2), Titus, a Greek, not being compelled to be circumcised. The conference saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul, and gave the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that Paul and Barnabas should go to the Gentiles.

So vital is the place of the Gentile, and so interwoven does it become with the theme of the epistle, that we shall find the references in Galatians supply a key to the whole epistle. The references to Gentiles in Galatians are as follows:

#### Gentiles in Galatians (*Ethnos*)

##### *The Gospel*

Paul separated to preach Christ among the Gentiles (1:16).

Paul communicates to the twelve that gospel he preached among the Gentiles (2:2).

The divine witness to Paul's apostleship among the Gentiles (2:8).

*The Apostle*

The pillars at Jerusalem agree that Paul should go to the Gentiles (2:9).

Peter recognized the fact of the reconciliation, and did eat with the Gentiles (2:12).

*The Reconciliation accepted and denied*

Peter is reminded that though a Jew he had felt free to live as a Gentile (*Ethnikos*) (2:14).

Peter is asked why he now changes and compels the Gentiles to Judaize (2:14).

Gentiles distinguished from Jews by the title 'sinners', indicating their outside position (2:15).

`... the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through (Gentiles by) faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying' (3:8).

*The Reconciliation connected with Abraham*

'In thee shall all the Gentiles be blessed' (3:8).

Israel's redemption from the curse of the law is essentially connected with the outflowing of the blessing of Abraham to the Gentiles (3:13,14).

It will be found upon examination that *the* circumcision is used as a term very often to describe that company who are not Gentiles, showing that Gentiles viewed in their religious light are intended:

Paul - The gospel of the uncircumcision (2:7).

Peter - The gospel of the circumcision (2:7).

Peter - Mighty signs of apostleship of the circumcision. (2:8).

Paul - Equally so, of the apostleship of the uncircumcision (2:8).

Paul and Barnabas - To go to the Gentiles (2:9).

Peter and the others, to go to the circumcision (2:9).

Peter - Withdraws from Gentiles, fearing them which were of the circumcision (2:12).

Let us briefly notice the line of teaching which develops as we trace these words 'Gentile' and 'Circumcision' through Galatians. The first two speak of the special gospel to which the apostle was separated. The verses which precede the quotation are of importance, because they imply the necessity of a revelation. In Galatians 1:13,14 the apostle brings forward his manner of life and religious activities up to the moment he was met by the Lord on the road to Damascus. He had '*beyond measure* persecuted the church of God, and wasted it'; and he had 'profited in the Jews' religion' above many his equal in years, his special excellence consisting of being '*more exceedingly* a zealot for the traditions' of his fathers. Any one of these items, if acknowledged as a fact, renders it highly improbable that Paul should have ever invented or imagined the gospel which held such grace to the church he had *persecuted*; which overthrew the founder's conceit of his *religion*, and destroyed for ever the *traditions* of his fathers. *Revelation* is the only adequate and reasonable answer to the question, How did Saul of Tarsus, the persecuting traditionalist, come to know the gospel of God?

The second reference shows Paul, after fourteen years' independent testimony, going up to Jerusalem by *revelation*, this time to 'communicate' that gospel which he preached among the Gentiles. The only other occurrence of the word rendered 'communicate' is found in Acts 25:14, where Festus states Paul's case to king Agrippa. The fact that he went up by revelation, and the subsequent acknowledgment of his position, precludes the idea that Paul went up to ask the opinion of the twelve concerning his gospel, but rather it was to open their minds as to its character.

The reference in 2:7 supplies one further item, and that is a name or title to this gospel of Paul - 'when they saw that the *gospel of the uncircumcision* was committed to me'. Here is a title which indicates that the gospel which Paul was commissioned to preach was different from that which Peter had received, and to preach the gospel of the circumcision to the Gentiles simply brought about confusion. This definition of 2:7 is to be understood in those passages where the apostle uses that peculiar expression 'my gospel'.

Galatians 2:8,9 leads us on from the gospel to the accredited apostle. If in Peter God had wrought effectually (*energeo*) to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same God wrought effectually (*energeo*) in Paul to the apostleship of the uncircumcision or Gentiles. The Authorized Version veils the close parallel, translating the same word once 'wrought effectually', and once 'was mighty' in the same verse. The very 'pillars' of Jerusalem perceived the 'grace' (often used in connection with apostleship, as Romans 1:5) that was given to Paul and Barnabas, and gave them the right hand of fellowship, that they should go to the Gentiles. Here therefore is apostolic recognition of Paul's gospel and apostleship. Peter acted on this recognition: and throwing off the exclusivism of the circumcision testified that the *reconciliation* had come in, by eating with the Gentiles. It was fear, not truth, that made him change upon the advent of 'certain from James ... which were of the circumcision'.

This leads us to the positive teaching of the reconciliation as connected with the Gentiles, and introduces for the first time, Abraham. The very promise made to Abraham when God called him out of Ur of the Chaldees, and promised to make of him a great nation, had the reconciliation of the Gentiles in view. Israel, the appointed channel, was to be delivered from the curse of the law, in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. The reconciliation is given definite form in the closing verses of Galatians 3:27-29 :

'For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise'.

A person and a doctrine are essentially linked with the ministry of the reconciliation - the person, ABRAHAM; the doctrine, JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH. Let us observe the way in which Abraham is introduced by the apostle in this epistle. Before doing so, however, our minds must be prepared to notice the distinction of Paul's message, by first of all seeing how Abraham's name is used in the period preceding the reconciliation. It was the proud boast of the Jew that Abraham was his father (for this, see Matthew 3:9; John 8:33-37). Abraham was held in special veneration by them (John 8:53). Peter testifies that 'the God of Abraham ... the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son' (Acts 3:13). Peter's use of the covenant made with Abraham was to put Israel first (*See* Acts 3:25,26).

When we come to Galatians, and the gospel of the reconciliation, we view the promise made to Abraham from another angle. We still understand that the Jew is 'first' (Romans 1:16, written later, still testifies that), but we no longer imagine that the Jew is first and last and altogether. Paul makes the pre-eminence of the Jew a part of the purposed blessing of the Gentile (Gal. 3:13,14). Let us, however, tabulate the references in Galatians:

'Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness' (3:6).

'Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham' (3:7).

'... the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through (Gentiles by) faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations (Gentiles) be blessed' (3:8).

'So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham' (3:9).

'That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith' (3:14).

'Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made ... which is Christ' (3:16).

'God gave it (the inheritance) to Abraham by promise' (3:18).

'... if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise' (3:29).

'... it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman' (4:22).

The outstanding characteristic of Abraham here is that of faith in contrast to works, and of promise in contrast to law. To be 'of faith' constituted one a child of Abraham, and blessed with faithful Abraham; to be of faith made such children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; and confessedly, if the lesser is included in the greater, then 'if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise'. The promises and the inheritance all come the same way, the law being set aside as having no bearing on the subject:

'... the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect' (Gal. 3:17).

The last reference to Abraham in this epistle cuts the deepest into the national pride and fleshly advantage of the circumcision. `Abraham had two sons'. Which are you? The one is related to the *bondage* of law, the other to the *freedom* of gospel; the one is connected with the *flesh*, the other with *spirit*; the one is the Jerusalem which *now* is, the other is the Jerusalem which is *above*. The persecutors are the Ishmaels, the persecuted are the Isaacs. Abraham certainly had *two* sons, and the Galatians were exhorted to discriminate. By observing the structure of the epistle at this point, it will be seen that flesh versus spirit, and bondage versus liberty, are the key words of the two great sections.

**Galatians as a whole**

- A 1:1 to 2:14. Apostolic authority and gospel.- Salvation.
- B 2:15 to 4:12. Doctrine. | Faith v Works.  
Liberty v Bondage.
- B 4:13 to 6:16. Practice. | Spirit v Flesh.  
Liberty v Bondage.
- A 6:17,18. The marks of the Lord Jesus.- Benediction.

The relation between liberty of doctrine and faith, and liberty of practice and spirit, is strongly marked in John 8 where the *two* sons of Abraham are indicated; see verses 32,33,37,39,40,41,44,59. When we come to Romans 4 we shall find the apostle adding the one item which completely broke the fleshly pride of the circumcision. Abraham was blessed by God *before circumcision*:

`And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of ALL THEM THAT BELIEVE, THOUGH THEY BE NOT CIRCUMCISED' (Rom. 4:11).

Not only so, Abraham is the father of the Jew who is not merely of the circumcision:

`... but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had BEING YET UNCIRCUMCISED' (Rom. 4:12).

It will not be possible, in our allotted space, to give a lengthy exposition of each epistle. We propose supplying the reader with such outlines as will, *if used*, lead on to the understanding of the epistle. The large outline has already been given. Apart from the great question of the apostolic authority of Paul, the argument revolves around circumcision, and its relation to faith and works; flesh and spirit; liberty and bondage. The Structure also of Galatians 2:14 has been given. The essential point of the remainder of the chapters can be discovered along the lines suggested as follows:

- A 15,16. Statement of doctrine.
- B 17,18. Argument. Absurdity.
- A 19,20. Explanation of doctrine.
- B 21. Argument. Illogical.

This can be traced out by noticing the sequence of thought, thus:

- A 16. | a Knowing ... a man not *justified*.  
| b By works of *law*.  
| c But by *faith* of Jesus Christ.  
| c Even we ... by *faith* of Christ.  
| b Not by works of *law*.  
| a No flesh *justified*.
- B 17,18. | d | f *If*, while we seek to be justified.  
| | g We ourselves found sinners.  
| | h Then *Christ* is the minister of sin!

		<b>e</b>	Let it not be so.
	<b>d</b>	<b>f</b>	If the things I destroyed.
		<b>g</b>	I again build.
		<b>h</b>	I constitute <i>myself</i> a transgressor.
<b>A</b>	19,20.	<b>f</b> <sub>1</sub>	<b>i</b> Death. I died to law.
			<b>j</b> Life. Live unto God.
		<b>f</b> <sub>2</sub>	<b>i</b> Death. I have been crucified.
			<b>j</b> Life. Yet I live, yet not I.
		<b>f</b> <sub>3</sub>	<b>j</b> Life. Live by faith of Son of God.
			<b>i</b> Death. Who loved and gave Himself.
<b>B</b>	21.	<b>g</b>	<b>k</b> I do not set aside.
			<b>l</b> Grace of God.
			<b>l</b> Righteousness by law.
			<b>k</b> Christ died in vain.

The argument of chapter 4:1-11 is important to the teaching of the epistle:

**Sonship versus Infancy.**

<b>A</b>	1,2.	<b>a</b>	As long as.	<b>d</b>	The heir.
				<b>e</b>	Is an infant ( <i>nepios</i> ).
				<b>e</b>	Differs nothing from a slave.
				<b>d</b>	Though lord of all.
				<b>b</b>	<b>f</b> Is under guardians.
					<b>g</b> Until time predetermined.
<b>B</b>	3.	<b>c</b>	<b>h</b> When ( <i>hote</i> ) infant.	<b>i</b>	Enslaved to rudiments.
<b>A</b>	4-7.			<b>b</b>	<b>g</b> Fulness of time come, sent forth Son.
					<b>f</b> Redeem from under ( <i>hupo</i> ) law, sent forth Spirit.
		<b>a</b>	No longer	<b>d</b>	A slave.
				<b>e</b>	But a son ( <i>huios</i> ).
				<b>e</b>	If a son.
				<b>d</b>	Then heir of God.
<b>B</b>	8-11.	<b>c</b>	<b>h</b> <sub>1</sub>	Then ( <i>tote</i> ) knew not God.	
			<b>i</b> <sub>1</sub>	Enslaved to idols.	
			<b>h</b> <sub>2</sub>	Now ( <i>nun</i> ) known to God.	
			<b>i</b> <sub>2</sub>	Again enslaved to rudiments.	

It will be seen by the above that infancy and adulthood may be predicted of *dispensations* as well as of *individuals*. This is an important point to observe in the unfolding of God's purpose. The failure of the members of the one body to manifest 'the perfect man' is no excuse for such to follow the standard 'Back to Pentecost'.

Galatians 4:12 to 6:17 is divided into two sections by three personal appeals of the apostle.



## Galatians 4:13 to 6:17

**A<sub>1</sub>** 4:13-20. Personal appeal. `Temptation in my flesh'.

<b>B<sub>1</sub></b> 4:21 to 6:10	4:21 to 5:6.	Two Covenants.	}	
	5:7-12.	Circumcision.	}	<i>Flesh</i>
	5:13 to 6:2.	Walk in Spirit.	}	v
	6:3-10.	Sowing and Reaping.	}	<i>Spirit.</i>

**A<sub>2</sub>** 6:11. Personal appeal. `Own hand'.

<b>B<sub>2</sub></b> 6:12-16.	6:12,13.	Boast in flesh.	}	
	6:14.	Boast in cross.	}	<i>Flesh</i>
	6:15.	New creation.	}	v
	6:16.	Walk of the new creation.	}	<i>Spirit.</i>

**A<sub>3</sub>** 6:17. Personal appeal. `Stigma in body'.

A word or two may be necessary on the `large letter' of 6:11 (*pelikois grammasin*). Does the apostle refer to the epistle as a large letter, or does he refer to the alphabetic characters with which he wrote? *Grammata* can mean epistles, for it is so used in Acts 28:21, but Paul himself has referred no less than seventeen times to `letters', and never uses this word. *Pelikois* is a word of geometrical magnitude (see Ellicott), and to confound it with *posos* or *poios* is distinctly uncritical. It was the habit of Paul to employ an amanuensis, dictating his epistles, and simply writing with his own hand the apostolic benediction (2 Thess. 3:17). Here, however, the apostle takes the pen, and writes, `Look you, in what large letters I wrote with my own hand'. Verses 12-18 of the sixth chapter are written by Paul in much larger characters. He sums up the situation and expresses the motives of the circumcision party as being two-fold:

- (1) The avoidance of persecution for the CROSS of Christ.
- (2) The opportunity of BOASTING in the flesh of their converts.

In direct antithesis, he places his own position:

- (1) He will not BOAST.
- (2) Save in the CROSS.

Then, with that magnificent breadth of vision, he sweeps aside not only his opponents' circumcision, but his own official uncircumcision, printing in large letters the wondrous conclusion:

´FOR IN CHRIST JESUS NEITHER CIRCUMCISION AVAILETH ANY THING, NOR UNCIRCUMCISION, BUT A NEW CREATURE (NATURE)' (Gal. 6:15).

The new creature is directly connected with the reconciliation, as we shall see when considering 2 Corinthians 5. The conflict had raged around `rudiments' (Gal. 4:3-9), which word is the rendering of *stoicheia*. The closing words of the apostle include a reference to these *stoicheia* in the words, `as many as walk according to this rule', `walk' being *stoicheo*. This is seen to be the `walk' in the spirit (Gal. 5:25), thereby linking the spirit with the new creature, and the flesh with the old.

´The marks (*stigmata*) of the Lord Jesus' allude to the marks branded upon the persons of slaves. The disfigurement occasioned by the stoning at Lystra would come vividly to the minds of the Galatians (*see* Chapter 8 on `Where is Galatia?'). They were inflicted *not* by heathen, but at the instigation of Jews. Paul suffered persecution for his attitude towards circumcision. It will be seen that the touchstone of faith in this epistle is the cross of Christ. It is this that the apostle prints in large letters. It was to avoid persecution for this that the Judaizers sought to impose circumcision. So essentially connected was this charge of preaching circumcision with the apostle's attitude to the cross, that he could say:

‘And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? *then is the offence of the cross ceased*’ (Gal. 5:11).

There lies unveiled the secret of all the hostility and hatred of religious flesh against the apostle Paul, and the cross of Christ: no glorying there in the flesh is possible.

Before leaving this subject, we would point out the way in which this blessed teaching of the believer's identification with his Lord is introduced in connection with crucifixion. What is it that clinched the apostle's argument with Peter? What is it that silenced all claims of the flesh and its *stoicheia*? The cross! ‘I have been crucified with Christ’ (Gal. 2:20). All subsequent activities, then, must be on resurrection ground, even that of ‘the life I now live in the flesh’.

Crucifixion *with* Christ is a different doctrine from Christ crucified *for* me; the identification with the cross is possible only for one already a believer. It does not touch the question of sins and justification - that was settled by the Lord alone. Identification with the cross touches the two great enemies of the believer after salvation - the flesh and the world:

‘... they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts (desires)’ (Gal. 5:24).

‘... the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (whereby) the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world’ (Gal. 6:14).

Both the internal and external enemy is quietened and subdued here.

So far we have not touched, except most casually, upon the second item we put forward, viz., justification through faith. This we propose to hold over until reviewing the teaching of the epistle to the Romans. We shall, therefore, conclude this chapter by drawing attention to the first recorded sermon of Paul preached in Galatia, together with the doctrines first enunciated in the epistle to the Galatians.

Acts 13	Galatians
<p>‘Men of Israel, <i>and ye that fear God</i>’ (16).  ‘Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, <i>and whosoever among you feareth God</i>’ (26).</p>	<p>Here the inclusion of Gentile hearers, or at least proselytes, is parallel with the contention of Galatians 3 that they of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.</p>
<p>‘... they took Him down from the tree’ (<i>xulon</i>) (29).</p>	<p>‘Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree’ (<i>xulon</i>) (3:13).  <i>(These are Paul's only references to the cross by such a name).</i></p>
<p>‘... by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses’ (39).</p>	<p>The echo of these words runs throughout the epistle to the Galatians.</p>

The epistle needs close and prayerful study. We can only hint at its line of teaching and pass on, but we trust sufficient has been discovered to show the status of the Gentile under the terms of the reconciliation; that without the law or the rites of circumcision and ceremonial observances, the believing Gentile is a son of Abraham and heir according to the promise. If only we could transfer ourselves back to the days when this astounding doctrine was first uttered, we should then realize, as it is impossible to realize now, the spiritual courage and dauntless loyalty of the apostle Paul, when giving place by subjection, no, not for an hour, he kept the open door, that the truth of the gospel might continue right through (*diameno*) to us Gentiles.

## CHAPTER 11

### The Epistles of the Reconciliation

We have already considered the position of the epistle to the Galatians. All references to time and place in Galatians 1 are comprehended in Acts 9:1 to 11:26. There we find the apostle's zeal; his persecution of the church; his entire independence of Jerusalem and the twelve; his conversion; his visit to Jerusalem; and his journey to Syria and Cilicia. We may summarise thus:

Galatians 1.	Included in Acts 9:1 to 11:26.
Galatians 2:1-10.	Second visit Jerusalem, either Acts 12 or 15.
Galatians 1:21-24.	Acts 15:3,12,13.
Galatians 2:11.	Acts 15:30-35.
Galatians 1:10; 2:3; 5:11.	Acts 16.
Galatians 6:17; 4:12-14.	Acts 14:19. ( <i>See W.S. Wood on Galatians</i> ).

If we follow the apostle's method of dealing with a church that had departed from the truth, we shall see that he tries the effect of an *epistle* before he appears in *person* (2 Cor. 2:1; and 1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor. 1:23). This would appear to place the writing of the epistle *after* Acts 16:6, and *before* Acts 18:23. The epistle having had its desired effect, the apostle could visit them and 'strengthen all the disciples'.

The date A.D. 53,54 needed for the reference to the sabbatic year (for the apostle cannot be thought of charging the Galatians with observing the year if it had not come) fits the suggestion that the epistle was written between Acts 16:6 and 18:23. Even though we cannot decide as to whether the epistle was written before or after the Council of Acts 15 or not, everything favours a much earlier date than has hitherto been reckoned possible.

### The Epistles to the Thessalonians

The first epistle to the Thessalonians cannot possibly have been written *before* Acts 17, for it is there we first read of the city: or *after* Acts 20, for the apostle was evidently at liberty when the epistles were written. Paul associates with himself Silas and Timothy, who are found together with him in Acts 15:40; 16:1; 17:14. The apostle had evidently not been away from the church long before he wrote the epistle, for in 2:17 he says:

'But we, brethren, being taken from you *for a short time* in presence, not in heart'.

It was while the apostle remained at Athens alone that he sent Timothy to comfort them concerning their faith. Acts 17:16 tells of the apostle's visit to Athens: from Athens he departed for Corinth (Acts 18:1). The Authorized Version tells us that the first epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens. Paul, we learn from 1 Thessalonians 3, felt it good to be left at Athens alone, in order that Timothy might revisit Thessalonica. Upon Timothy's return the apostle is comforted by the report, and longing earnestly to see these believers again ('praying exceedingly that we might see your face' - 1 Thess. 3:10), he writes the epistle.

We learn, however, from the record of the Acts, that Timothy did not return to Athens. The apostle 'departed from Athens, and came to Corinth' (Acts 18:1); and it was there at Corinth that Timothy and Silas joined him. This brings the three names together, 'Paul and Silvanus and Timotheus' (1 and 2 Thess. 1:1). In Acts 19:22 Timothy sets out for Macedonia again, and is followed in due course by the apostle himself (Acts 20:1,2). The epistle, therefore, must have been written *before* Acts 20:1,2, and *after* Acts 18:5. The time which elapsed between these two boundaries is 'a year and six months' (Acts 18:11); 'yet a good while' (Acts 18:18) (which may be included in the year and six months), and the time occupied in visiting Syria, Ephesus, Jerusalem, Antioch; after spending 'some time there' (Acts 18:23) he revisited all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order. It is not easy to say how long these journeyings occupied, but about three years seems reasonable. Somewhere, therefore, about A.D. 54 the apostle wrote the two epistles to the Thessalonians.

### The Epistles to the Corinthians

It appears that the first epistle was written at Ephesus, as may be seen by the following quotation, 'The churches of Asia salute you' (1 Cor. 16:19). Ephesus was the capital, 'I will tarry at EPHESUS until Pentecost' (1 Cor. 16:8). 'Aquila and Priscilla salute you much' (1 Cor. 16:19). Paul had first met Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth (Acts 18:1,2). They had been instrumental in the illumination of Apollos, hence would be intimately connected with the church at Corinth. They salute that church 'much in the Lord'. When Paul left Corinth, Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him (Acts 18:18), and they remained at Ephesus (Acts 18:19,24,26).

Notes of time in these epistles are somewhat vague, yet when pieced together they form a fairly comprehensive statement. The first epistle was necessarily written after the apostle's visit to Corinth (cf. 1 Cor. 2:1,2, which fixes the earliest boundary at Acts 18:18). It is also evident that he intended to make a second visit soon after writing the epistle:

'... I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will'; '... I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia'; '... the rest will I set in order when I come' (1 Cor. 4:19; 16:5; 11:34).

The growth of such factions and errors as are indicated in the first epistle presuppose that the apostle had been absent from them for some time. Upon examining the second epistle we still find the second visit to Corinth spoken of as future. Chapter 1 indicates a modification of his plans. In 1:15 he speaks of a 'second benefit'; in 13:2 he says, 'as if I were present, the second time'. Chapter 13:1, 'This is the *third time* I am coming to you', is explained by 12:14, 'Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you'. The apostle had put off his second visit until he saw what the effect of the epistle would be. Both epistles are to be dated, therefore, after the first visit and before the second visit to Corinth.

The Acts of the Apostles describes two visits of the apostle to the city. The first is found in Acts 18:1-11, where he stayed at least a year and six months. After a brief visit to Jerusalem and Galatia, he spent three years at Ephesus: from Ephesus he journeyed through Macedonia to Corinth, where he stayed for three months (Acts 20:3); from thence he sailed for Jerusalem.

The fact that the apostle was at liberty to say, 'I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost', indicates that the visit of Acts 19 had not yet taken place. His reference to being delivered from so great a death, and the overwhelming character of his sufferings, which are found in the opening chapter of 2 Corinthians, suggest that the trouble had by then broken out. The riot broke out after Paul had purposed in spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 19:21). Just before the riot Timothy was sent by the apostle to Macedonia together with Erastus, who was a Corinthian. He wrote the first epistle to the Corinthians after Timothy had left him, for he says, 'Now if Timotheus come' (1 Cor. 16:10); and, 'I sent unto you Timotheus' (1 Cor. 4:17). The first epistle, therefore, was written between Acts 19:22 and 23; the second soon afterwards.

### The Epistle to the Romans

It had been the intention of the apostle, after having delivered to the elders and apostles at Jerusalem the offering made by the Gentile churches, 'to see Rome' (Acts 19:21). In Romans 15:19-26 he writes that his gospel preaching had extended as far as Illyricum. Now Illyricum lies next to Macedonia, and Acts 20:1,2 says that he 'departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts ... he came into Greece'. The apostle had desired to visit Rome for 'many years' (Rom. 15:23), and contemplated visiting Rome as soon after his mission to Jerusalem as possible:

'But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem ... When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain' (Rom. 15:25-28).

In Romans 16:21-23 the following are mentioned as being with Paul at the time of writing: *Timothy*, Lucius, Jason, *Sosipater*, Tertius, *Gaius*, Erastus, and Quartus. Acts 20:4 gives the following as accompanying the apostle: *Sopater*, Aristarchus, Secundus, *Gaius*, *Timothy*, Tychicus, and Trophimus. In Romans 16:23 Erastus is styled 'the chamberlain of the city'. The city is not named, but 2 Timothy 4:20 makes it possible that Erastus was a native of Corinth. Note the names that occur in the two lists.

In Romans 15:31 the apostle evidences two apprehensions: (1) He evidently expected great difficulty with the unbelievers of Judaea; and (2) He had an uneasy suspicion that his offering from the Gentile churches would not prove very acceptable. As to the first apprehension, Acts 20:22-24 testifies to the reality of his fears, while Acts 21:16-25 finds the apostle lodged with an old disciple. *Not one word* about the burden of the apostle's heart - the gift of love for the Jewish believers from their Gentile fellow-believers.

In Romans 16:1 Phebe is commended, 'a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea'. Cenchrea was the eastern harbour of Corinth, and it appears most probable that before leaving the city and harbour, the apostle penned this marvellous epistle, and entrusted it to the faithful care of Phebe of that church.

The chronological place of the epistle to the Romans is the last of the series, and the bounds are set between Acts 19:21 and 21:14. Acts 20:2,3 seems to be the only place where the apostle could have written it, while near Corinth and Cenchrea, and we therefore consider that the epistle was written during the period of three months there indicated.

We will now set out in tabular form the relation of the epistles with the narrative of the Acts; the *dates* are not important; the chronological *order* and connection with the narrative of the Acts are.

**Chronological order, and when written**

	<i>Epistle</i>	<i>Where written</i>	<i>Place and Period</i>
1.	Galatians	Antioch	Acts 15 to 16:1.
2.	1 Thessalonians	Corinth	Acts 18:5 to 20:1.
3.	2 Thessalonians	Corinth	Acts 18:5 to 20:1.
4.	1 Corinthians	Ephesus	Acts 19:22,23.
5.	2 Corinthians	Ephesus	Acts 19:23.
6.	Romans	Cenchrea	Acts 20:2,3.

The peculiar fitness and relationship of these epistles of the reconciliation will appear as we seek to understand their distinctive messages. Sufficient for the moment will be the following simple arrangement:

- A Galatians. Paul, an apostle.
- B a 1 Thessalonians. Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy.
- b 2 Thessalonians. Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy.
- a 1 Corinthians. Paul, and Sosthenes.
- b 2 Corinthians. Paul, and Timothy.
- A Romans. Paul, a servant.

**The Epistles of Faith, Love, and Hope**

**1 and 2 Thessalonians**

While we trace the traducer in the first epistle to the Thessalonians, we are nevertheless in a much quieter atmosphere than that of the epistle to the Galatians. The first two chapters introduce the theme:

'Remembering without ceasing your work of *faith*, and labour of *love*, and patience of *hope*,

and illustrate each item in the words:

'... how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven' (1 Thess. 1:3,9,10).

The outline for studying the two opening chapters is simple:

**1 Thessalonians 1 and 2.**

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| A 1:2-10.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Remembrance without ceasing.</li> <li>b The gospel came not in word only.</li> <li>c Result. Ye became followers.</li> <li>d End. Deliverance from wrath.</li> </ul>  |
| B 2:1-12.  | How the gospel came to Thessalonica.   |
| A 2:13-16. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Thanks without ceasing.</li> <li>b The Word received - not as word of men.</li> <li>c Result. Ye became followers.</li> <li>d End. Wrath to the uttermost.</li> </ul> |

It will be seen at once that `B 2:1-12' is a parenthesis, its burden being the self-defence of the apostle against the insinuations regarding his morals, wrung out of him, as it were, by the necessities of the case.

The way in which he returns to the subject after this digression is clearly marked in both sections with a reference to wrath; the one a deliverance from it, the other the inevitable endurance of it. To elucidate chapter 1 more clearly, and avoid bulky notes, the reader may observe the completeness of the treatment of the chapter by the following outline:

**1 Thessalonians 1:2-10**

- |             |   |                 |   |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
|-------------|---|-----------------|---|-----------|---|--|----------|--|-------------|---|-------|-----------|--|-----------------|--|
| A 2,3.      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Work of faith.</li> <li>b Labour of love.</li> <li>c Patience of hope.</li> </ul>  |                 |   |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| B 5.        | <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">`For'. -The</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">d</td> <td style="width: 30%;">Not only.</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">}</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">gospel's</td> <td></td> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">e But also.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">}</td> <td rowspan="2">How.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">coming.</td> <td></td> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">f What manner.]</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | `For'. -The     | d | Not only. | } |  | gospel's |  | e But also. | } | How.  | coming.   |  | f What manner.] |  |
| `For'. -The | d   | Not only.       | } |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| gospel's    |   | e But also.     | } | How.      |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| coming.     |   | f What manner.] |   |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| C 6-.       | Followers.  |                 |   |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| D -6.       | The Word and much affliction.   |                 |   |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| C 7.        | Ensamples.  |                 |   |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| B 8.        | <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">`For'. -The</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">d</td> <td style="width: 30%;">Not only.</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">}</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Word's</td> <td></td> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">e But also</td> <td style="text-align: center;">}</td> <td rowspan="2">Where</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">sounding.</td> <td></td> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">f What manner.]</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | `For'. -The     | d | Not only. | } |  | Word's   |  | e But also  | } | Where | sounding. |  | f What manner.] |  |
| `For'. -The | d   | Not only.       | } |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| Word's      |   | e But also      | } | Where     |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| sounding.   |   | f What manner.] |   |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |
| A 9,10.     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a Turned to God.</li> <li>b Serve the living God.</li> <li>c Wait for His Son from heaven.</li> </ul>  |                 |   |           |   |  |          |  |             |   |       |           |  |                 |  |

The parenthesis 2:1-12, while it looks on the surface to be mainly occupied with a defence of the apostle's character, upon closer study resolves itself into the deeper question of the apostle's gospel ministry. This is exactly the position which we have already seen in the epistle to the Galatians. This will be the more clearly seen when set out as follows:

**1 Thessalonians 2:1-12**

*How the gospel of God came*

- |                 |   |                                 |   |                                 |  |  |  |                             |  |  |  |        |  |
|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--------|--|
| A 1-6.          | <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">God is witness.</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">a</td> <td style="width: 30%;">Gospel of God. Boldness. `Not'.</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">b Gospel of God. Entrusted.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="padding-left: 40px;">`Not'.</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | God is witness.                 | a | Gospel of God. Boldness. `Not'. |  |  |  | b Gospel of God. Entrusted. |  |  |  | `Not'. |  |
| God is witness. | a   | Gospel of God. Boldness. `Not'. |   |                                 |  |  |  |                             |  |  |  |        |  |
|                 |   | b Gospel of God. Entrusted.     |   |                                 |  |  |  |                             |  |  |  |        |  |
|                 |   | `Not'.                          |   |                                 |  |  |  |                             |  |  |  |        |  |

- B 7. As a nursing mother her own children.
- A 8-10. Ye are witnesses.
  - a Gospel of God. Imparted. `Not'.
  - b Gospel of God. Preached.
  - `Not'.
- B 11,12. As a father his own children.

Two witnesses are brought forward by the apostle. `God is witness'; `Ye are witnesses'. Two figures of infinite tenderness are used to express the apostle's attitude toward the Thessalonians. He had been gentle `like a nursing mother cherisheth her own children', and `as a father exhorts and comforts and charges his own children'. Four times he speaks of the gospel. First, the boldness with which they spoke even after the shameful treatment at Philippi; secondly, the consciousness of being entrusted with the gospel which precluded all idea of pleasing themselves or of pleasing men; thirdly, their willingness to have imparted not the gospel of God only, but also their own souls; and finally, the preaching of this gospel without charge, for the apostle and his companions laboured night and day to avoid being a burden to the church.

The real theme of the epistle, as it is in the epistle to the Galatians, is reached in the third chapter. Nothing can be simpler than the following outline:

**1 Thessalonians 3 to 5**

- 3:1-10. Faith.
- 3:11 to 4:12. Love.
- 4:13 to 5:11. Hope.

Here we have the key words of 1:3 expanded, and in the order there given. What is the burden of 3:1-10? It is the *faith* of the Thessalonians. So concerned was the apostle with regard to the faith of these saints, that much as he had longed for Timothy to come to him at Athens (Acts 17:15,16) the apostle thought it good to be left at Athens alone, and sent Timothy to comfort them concerning their faith.

The tribulations through which they were passing, he feared, might tempt them to give up the *faith* (verses 3-5). When Timothy returned, Paul was comforted by the good tidings of their *faith* and love (verses 6,7), and prays night and day that he may see their face and perfect that which is lacking in their *faith*. The structure will throw this more vividly into relief:

**1 Thessalonians 3:1-10**

*Expansion of `The work of Faith'*

- A 1,2.
  - a Timothy sent to comfort Thessalonians.
  - b Concerning their FAITH.
- B 3-5.
  - c Not moved by afflictions.
  - d Temptation and FAITH.
- C 6.
  - e Timothy comes to Paul.
  - f Good tidings of FAITH.
- A 7.
  - a Paul comforted.
  - b By their FAITH.
- B 8-10.
  - c Stand fast.
  - d Perfecting of FAITH.

It is quite evident that faith is the great concern of this section, and we trust further comment will be unnecessary.

The next subject in the order given in 1:3 will be `the labour of love', and accordingly *love* is the topic that immediately follows.

**1 Thessalonians 3:12 to 4:12***Expansion of 'The labour of Love'*

A 3:12,13.	<b>a</b> Abound in LOVE. <b>b</b> One to another.
B 4:1.	<b>c</b> Walk and please God. <b>d</b> Abound ( <i>perisseuein</i> ) more and more.
C 4:2-8.	<b>e</b> Commands of the Lord Jesus. <b>f</b> Sanctification - not lust. <b>g</b> The brother defrauded. <b>g</b> The Lord the Avenger. <b>f</b> Not uncleanness, but holiness. <b>e</b> Rejecting God.
Love contrasted with lust.	
A 4:9.	<b>a</b> Brotherly LOVE. <b>b</b> LOVE one another.
B 4:10-12.	<b>d</b> Abound ( <i>perisseuein</i> ) more and more. <b>c</b> Walk honestly to those without.

This in its turn is followed by the apostle's exposition of 'the patience of hope', which is perhaps the most distinctive feature of the epistle.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:11***Expansion of 'The patience of Hope'*

- A 4:13. I would not have you ignorant concerning them that sleep.  
 B 4:14. First reason. Resurrection and sleep.  
 C 4:15. Second reason. Living shall not go before them that sleep.  
 D 4:16,17. Ever with the Lord.  
 E 4:18. Wherefore comfort one another.  
 A 5:1-3. You know perfectly concerning the day of the Lord.  
 B 5:4-6. First reason. Let us not sleep.  
 C 5:7,8. Second reason. Those that sleep in the night.  
 D 5:9,10. Live together with Him.  
 E 5:11. Wherefore comfort yourselves.

It is a remarkable thing that not only does the threefold theme spread over the bulk of the epistle, but at the close every word is repeated, so that the emphasis shall not be lost. To make this quite clear, we will reproduce these closing words, emphasising the special words by printing in capital letters:

'But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of FAITH and LOVE; and for an helmet, the HOPE of salvation' (1 Thess. 5:8).

Here we find the principal words together, but the auxiliary words 'work', 'labour', 'patience', all follow, as we shall see.

'And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which LABOUR among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their WORK'S sake ... be PATIENT toward all men' (1 Thess. 5:12-14).



Prominent in the epistle is the hope of the Lord's return. Those who were saved were to be found waiting 'for His Son from heaven', and this waiting and this coming is closely connected with deliverance from wrath to come (1 Thess. 1:10). The apostolic reward and recognition in that day is closely linked with the Lord's return.

'For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His *coming*?' (1 Thess. 2:19).

The end which the apostle had in view was that the Lord may:

'... stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints (holy ones)' (1 Thess. 3:13).

The apostle's comfort to the perplexed and sorrowing ones concerning their loved ones who had fallen asleep is that of the Lord's *coming*:

'For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the *coming* of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God' (1 Thess. 4:15,16).

This coming is directly connected with the day of the Lord:

'For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night' (1 Thess. 5:2).

The final reference is very beautifully complete:

'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Thess. 5:23).

The coming in each case is the *parousia* enunciated, dated, and explained by the Lord in Matthew 24. The archangel of Scripture is Michael, and he stands for the people of Israel. When he stands up, there takes place an unprecedented time of trouble, a deliverance for all found written in the book, and a resurrection of many that sleep in the dust of the earth (Dan. 12:1,2). The 'saints' of 3:13 are the 'holy ones' or angels - not the redeemed. If the 'saints' of this verse should mean the believers, then those whose hearts are unblameable in holiness are evidently left behind, otherwise no 'saints' could come with the Lord. The Lord continually spoke of being accompanied on His second advent by holy angels, or as Jude puts it (14), 'holy myriads'.

For further notes on the *parousia* the reader is referred to chapter 11 of *Dispensational Truth*.

The second epistle is largely corrective in character. The *faith* is said to have grown 'exceedingly'. The *love* of every one toward each other 'abounded'. *Patience* is referred to, but *hope* is missing (2 Thess. 1:3,4).

The problem of the 'hope', partly dealt with in the first epistle, is continued here. Difficulty is added because the subject had not only been misunderstood, but because the minds of the believers regarding the coming of the day of the Lord had been shaken and troubled by some speaking under the influence of a *spirit*, and by the circulation of a spurious epistle purporting to come from the apostle (2 Thess. 2:1,2). For the protection of the churches the apostle draws attention to his handwriting:

'The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I WRITE' (2 Thess. 3:17).

After dealing with the coming (*parousia*) of the man of sin the apostle again returns to the theme of the first epistle:

'... the Lord direct your hearts into the LOVE of God, and into the PATIENT WAITING for Christ' (2 Thess. 3:5).

The unsettled state of the church consequent upon the idea of the imminence of the Lord's return had ended in many ceasing their legitimate work, leading them to become busybodies. The apostle draws attention to his own example, and enjoins upon all the necessity of quietly working, eating their own bread, even though watching and waiting for 'His Son from heaven'. How intensely practical, and how far removed from the excited fanatic is this apostle of the Gentiles!

We can do no more than give the Structure of the epistle as yet deeper studies await us.

**2 Thessalonians**

- A** 1:1,2. Grace and peace.
- B** **a** 1:3-10. Bound to thank. Counted worthy.  
**b** 1:11,12. Prayer for you. Work of faith.  
**c** 2:1-12. We beseech. Lawlessness.
- B** **a** 2:13-15. Bound to thank. Obtaining the glory.  
**b** 2:16 to 3:5. Pray for us. Good work.  
**c** 3:6-15. We command. Disorderliness.
- A** 3:16-18. Peace and grace.

**CHAPTER 12****First Epistle to the Corinthians****Reconciliation prepared for**

In the epistle to the Romans the great theme of the reconciliation finds its fullest exposition, and the earlier epistles of the period must be looked upon as clearing the way for its declaration and application. We noticed, for example, in the epistle to the Galatians, that the first two chapters are devoted, practically, to the defence and establishing of Paul's apostleship and gospel, and the recognition by those in authority at Jerusalem that the same power which wrought in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision was equally mighty in Paul towards the Gentiles. The remainder of the epistle reveals that the law with its curse must be removed before the blessing of Abraham could flow out to the Gentiles, and shows that the Gentiles who were called during this period were but a firstfruit, a remnant, a foreshadowing, but not the real fulfilment of the covenant to Abraham. This blessing of ALL NATIONS is as future as is the kingdom associated with the name and throne of David.

When first we read the epistles to the Corinthians we find such an abundance of material, such a variety of subjects, that as the saying goes, 'we cannot see the wood for the trees', but after we have seen the epistle as a whole, we begin to perceive that the apostle has by no means lost sight of the dominant theme of the central Acts period, and that although the reconciliation as such is not mentioned, it is everywhere present as the guiding and animating feature of the whole epistle. This is confirmed to us upon reading the second epistle. There, when the troubles and divisions of the first epistle have been dealt with, the apostle can then bring forward the ministry of reconciliation, as he does in 2 Corinthians 5.

Before dealing with the epistle in any measure of detail, let us trace the unseen, yet ever present, doctrine of the reconciliation of the world of Jew and Gentile which so animated the apostle's early ministry.

(1) *The mention of Sosthenes* (1 Cor. 1:1). - The apostle associates with himself in the writing of this epistle, 'Sosthenes our brother'. Upon turning to the Gentiles, in Corinth, the apostle entered the house of one named Justus, whose house joined hard by the synagogue. Crispus the chief ruler of the synagogue believed on the Lord with all his house. After Paul had been dismissed from the judgment seat of Gallio, 'Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him'. It would appear from this that Sosthenes had been appointed to the office which Crispus had vacated upon his conversion.

Nothing is said in Acts 18 about the conversion of the succeeding chief ruler, but we feel sure that Paul, courteous and sympathetic as he was, would visit Sosthenes, and express his sorrow that he had been caused to suffer for a faith which he did not profess, and the meeting of the two may have been used by the Lord to sow the good seed in the heart of Sosthenes, who in turn believed and associated himself with the apostle Paul. The very mention of Sosthenes to the Corinthians would be a witness of the reconciliation.

(2) *The greeting* (1 Cor. 1:2). - The greeting of the apostle is addressed (a) to the church at Corinth, (b) to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints; (c) with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord *both theirs and ours*. Some see in this a reference to the outlying churches of Achaia (*see* 2 Cor. 1:1); others

see in the words 'that call upon the name' a reference to believers like Crispus and Sosthenes who were of Israel. In either case, the last four words emphasize reconciliation once more.

(3) *The divisions* (1 Cor. 1:12). - The divisions at Corinth were not something similar to those sectarian and denominational differences which we find in the professing church today. They had a dispensational rather than an ecclesiastical or doctrinal character.

'Now this I say, because each one of you is saying, I am indeed of Paul, but I indeed of Apollos, but I indeed of Cephas, but I indeed of Christ' (1 Cor. 1:12 Author's translation).

Paul is utterly impartial. He will not descend to faction. However much one may be right and another wrong, the spirit of the whole contention was contrary to the truth. Apollos and Cephas are left out of the question by Paul. His first concern is expressed in the words:

'Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?' (1 Cor. 1:13).

Paul strikes hard at one of the false accusations made against him that he was setting himself up in opposition to Christ. Everywhere and always he was the slave and apostle of Christ, preaching certainly a doctrine which the twelve apostles could not have held during the earthly life of the Lord, but arising out of His title Son of Abraham, and out of His death and resurrection. He had refrained from personally baptizing, lest any should say he had baptized in his own name.

The 'Cephas' party threw doubt upon Paul's apostleship (*see* 1 Cor. 9:1-5); the 'Apollos' party preferred the Alexandrian eloquence of Apollos to the lack of 'excellent speech and enticing' words of Paul, whose speech this church of the city of orators declared to be 'contemptible' and 'rude' (2 Cor. 10:10; 11:5,6). What shall we say, however, of the 'Christ' party? In what way were they blameable? They divided Christ, where Christ had united, in effect *they denied the reconciliation*. We can trace references to this party through the two epistles. For example, 1 Cor. 9:1 :

'Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?'

We can be certain that the apostle would never have introduced such personalities into his epistles, had he not been 'compelled to be a fool in his boasting' by reason of the opposition to his office and ministry.

In 2 Corinthians 10:7 we have another reference to those who said 'I am of Christ':

'If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's'.

So also 2 Corinthians 11:23 - 'Are they ministers of Christ? ... I am more'. 2 Corinthians 5, however, boldly sets aside this party once and for good, and the reason is thus made clear. The *reconciliation* could not be preached at the same time *as Christ after the flesh*:

'Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more' (2 Cor. 5:16).

Then comes the ministry of the reconciliation. Those who said 'I am of Christ', and those who knew Christ after the flesh are still with us, and these are the ones who most antagonize the teaching of the apostle Paul. Out of a mistaken zeal and an undispensational position they cry, 'Back to Christ': they say, 'We are satisfied with the words of Christ', meaning the four Gospels, failing to see that Paul was a minister of the self-same Christ raised from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God.

(4) *The cross* (1 Cor. 1:23,24). - The Greeks accounted the preaching of the cross foolishness, and to the Jews it was a stumbling block. But unto them which are called, *both Jews and Greeks*, Christ was the wisdom of God and the power of God. Here again the reconciliation is in view.

(5) *The wisdom of God in a mystery* (1 Cor. 2:7). - This wisdom of God associated with the cross (1 Cor. 1:23,24) was ordained before the ages, and the reconciliation of the world was the first great step towards its realization. It could not be spoken to the Corinthians in their carnal state, so that the apostle determined to go no



## A 16. Maranatha. The Lord cometh.

The first member of the structure, `A 1:1-9', may be summed up in three words: *calling, confirmation, coming*. These words epitomize the position. The *calling* and fellowship among themselves and with all who acknowledge Christ as Lord `both theirs and ours', the *confirmation* of the apostle's testimony to them by the spiritual gifts were to prepare them for the great climax of their position, the *coming* of the Lord. For this, like the Thessalonians, they had been saved, `to wait for His Son from heaven'. To show that these three words are not arbitrarily chosen we give the structure of this opening member `A 1:1-9', as follows:

**A 1:1-9. Waiting for the coming**

A 1:1-3. Called. Fellowship in every place. Theirs and ours.

B 1:4-6. Confirmation. Gifts (as 12).

C 1:7. Coming. Waiting for the coming.

B 1:8. Confirmation. Graces (as 13).

A 1:9. Called unto the fellowship of His Son.

*The Gifts.* - `All utterance and all knowledge' were given for the *confirmation of the testimony of Christ*. These words define the purpose and place of the gifts given to the church during the Acts period. Mark 16:17-20 says:

`... these signs shall follow them that believe ... they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and CONFIRMING the word with signs following'.

`... which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was CONFIRMED unto us by them that heard, God *also bearing witness*, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and distributions of holy spirit according to His own will' (Heb. 2:3,4 Author's translation).

Romans 15:8,9, speaking of the ministry of the Lord while on earth, says that He came:

`... to CONFIRM the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy'.

This twofold ministry had a twofold confirmation. The miracles wrought by Christ on earth were the confirmation of His Messiahship (Matt. 11:1-5; John 5:32-38). The miracles wrought by the risen Christ (Mark 16) through the apostles were a confirmation of the extended testimony to the Gentiles (1 Cor. 14:21; Gal. 3:5-14). Writing to the Corinthians in the second Epistle, Paul says:

`For all the PROMISES of God in Him are yea, and in Him the Amen, unto the glory of God through US. Now He which CONFIRMETH (*bebaio*) US with you in Christ, and hath anointed US, is God' (2 Cor. 1:20,21 Author's translation).

`Us with you' is a strange expression until we realize its setting. The gifts were not for the confirmation of the individual merely, they were evidences that the apostles were continuing that which Jesus *began* to do and teach (Acts 1:1). A further consideration of these gifts will naturally be given when we come to chapter 12, but the character and purpose of the gifts are already fixed by these few words.

*The Coming.* - The coming for which the Corinthian church waited was the *apocalypse*, the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Peter joined Pentecost to the day of the Lord (Acts 2:16-21), and Paul does the same here. The hope of Israel is before all believers until Acts 28 (*see* verse 20, and 1 Pet. 1:13; Rom. 15:12,13). The other name for the Lord's coming given in Corinthians is the *parousia* (15:23). This will be dealt with in its place. We would only mention here that `coming' is not a good rendering of *parousia*. Instead of suggesting the process of coming it indicates the fact of arrival. The *apocalypse* and the *parousia* were two phases of the hope of the church during the Acts. The hope is expressed at the end of the epistle in the words *Maran-atha* `The Lord cometh', which further associate the hope with Israel by the use of Aramaic instead of Greek.

Before leaving this section we would observe for our own sakes that the apostle looked beyond the spiritual gifts to that other more individual and lasting `confirmation', which should show them `blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ'. The transition here from gifts to graces is repeated in 12 and 13, where the more excellent way, and

the abiding graces (faith, hope and love), are given their true place, while the gifts were seen to be transient in character.

### Things that prevented the teaching of the reconciliation

#### 1 Corinthians 1:10 to 4:16

- A** 1:10-12. Divisions. Paul, Apollos, Cephas, Christ.  
**B** 1:13-17. Was Paul crucified for you?  
**C** 1:18 to 2:5. Christ, the power and wisdom of God.  
**D** 2:6 to 3:2. The spiritual and carnal; 'judgeth'.  
**A** 3:3,4. Divisions. Paul, Apollos.  
**B** 3:5. Who then is Paul?  
**C** 3:6-23. Christ, the foundation, Christ is God's.  
**D** 4:1-16. Man's judgment and the Lord's.

Spiritual gifts do not necessarily imply spiritual persons. No church mentioned in the New Testament was so enriched with spiritual gifts as was the church at Corinth, yet no church equals it for lowness of spirituality. To them the apostle had to say:

'And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ' (3:1).

This condition rendered it impossible to advance in teaching:

'I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, *neither yet now are ye able*' (3:2).

Their carnal condition was manifested by their divisions, and the exalting of the names of men as a foundation rather than realizing that Christ is the one foundation upon which God's building stands:

'For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?' (3:3,4).

We have already touched upon these divisions and the serious menace they were to the apostle's ministry.

So long as Christ was in the flesh, He limited His ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. To know Christ after the flesh was to deny the reconciliation. To such persons the apostle limited his preaching to that of the cross. For a full understanding of the reconciliation resurrection must be acknowledged. This was denied by some, and this, together with the low spiritual state of the church, caused the apostle to say that he determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The apostle was willing to be misunderstood and to limit his teaching, rather than by a selfish glorifying of the flesh, vindicate himself, show his superiority over other self-styled apostles, or even over the twelve, by regardlessly preaching all the truth whatever the condition of his hearers may have been.

While the Corinthians were puffing themselves up in their fleshly and worldly wisdom, they were missing the fact that only in Christ can the wisdom and power of God be realized, and rendering themselves incapable of receiving the true wisdom of God, a term closely connected with the reconciliation.

In Romans 11 the apostle, having spoken of 'the reconciling of the world' (verse 15), and the mystery of Israel's blindness (verse 25), concludes with praise to God, particularly for His wisdom (verse 33).

In Romans 16:25,26, when he refers to the inner teaching of Romans which commences with 5:12, he again concludes (verse 27) with an ascription of praise to the only 'Wise God'. In another sphere the same note is sounded, for after speaking in Ephesians 3 of the marvellous revelation of the dispensation of the mystery, the apostle again refers to the element of wisdom, saying that the principalities and powers are learning by the church the manifold *wisdom* of God (Eph. 3:1-12). It is important when studying these opening chapters to ignore chapter divisions. This is so with regard to chapters 1 and 2.

**1 Corinthians 1:18 to 2:5****The wisdom and power of God**

- A** 1:18.           The power of God.  
**B** 1:19-22.       The wisdom of the world.  
**C** 1:23.           We preach Christ crucified.  
**D** 1:24-31.       Object. That no flesh should glory.  
**C** 2:1,2.          Jesus Christ and Him crucified.  
**B** 2:3,4.          Not with ... man's wisdom.  
**A** 2:5.            Your faith ... the power of God.

By observing that 2:1,2 is an outcome of 1:27-31 we are enabled to appreciate the apostle's conscientious faithfulness. Had he been a man-pleaser, and desired to tickle the ears of the worldlings, he would have discoursed eloquently upon the great themes of his ministry to his own shame and the ruin of the Corinthians. Instead, he allowed his traducers the opportunity of criticizing his lack of eloquence, and preserved his faithfulness as a steward of the mysteries of God. Failure to connect chapter 2:1,2 with the spirit of the quotations with which chapter 1 ends has led some into that perilous position of becoming critics of the apostle's motives. First of all they utterly fail to appreciate the fulness of his message on Mars Hill, and then they imagine that the apostle was full of remorse for speaking as he had done, and so, when he reached Corinth (Acts 18:1) from Athens, he determined upon another course, and adhered to the preaching of Christ crucified. This, however, is not the case. The preaching of the cross, and that only, was necessitated by the spiritual condition of his hearers in Corinth, and not by the apostle's estimation of his (so-called) failure at Athens. We speak more fully upon Acts 17 in another place, so leave the matter here with these few words.

The words 'in demonstration of the spirit and of power' are sometimes used of meetings to-day. 'The *display* of spirit and power' refers to the confirmation of the apostle's teaching, 'through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God' (Rom. 15:19).

Chapters 2:6 to 3:2 bring into strong contrast

The natural..... and ..... the spiritual.

The babe..... and ..... the full-grown or perfect.

The milk..... and ..... the meat.

The teaching of man..... and ..... the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

After telling of the reasons why he limited his preaching to that of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and that his manner of speech likewise was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, the apostle goes on to say that he did speak of deeper things, wisdom indeed, but only to such as were spiritually ready to receive them:

'Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect ... we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world (ages) unto our glory' (2:6,7).

It is wisdom that was spoken, that was hidden, that was ordained before the ages. The mystery was the way in which the apostle spoke it. We speak, what? the wisdom of God; how? in a mystery. It is not the mystery, but the wisdom which was hidden. This is rendered certain by consulting the original: 'mystery' is neuter, 'wisdom' is feminine, the relative pronoun 'which' is *ten*, feminine, and refers to wisdom. Christ crucified is the wisdom of God (1:23,24). But the hidden wisdom necessitated Christ risen as the firstfruits, and this opened up teaching that went back to Adam and before the ages for which the Corinthians were not ready.

The reason for speaking this hidden wisdom in a mystery is parallel to a large extent with the reason for speaking to the people in parables (Matt. 13:10-17). None but spiritual persons could understand spiritual things. To the natural man they are foolishness. Rotherham renders the words 'comparing spiritual things with spiritual' as follows: 'by spiritual words spiritual things explaining'. J.N. Darby reads 'communicating spiritual (things) by spiritual (means)'. Another rendering is 'explaining spiritual things to spiritual persons'. Whichever rendering be

adopted, the carnal and the natural are set aside. Man's wisdom and the wisdom of this world are brought to nought, that no flesh should boast in God's presence.

### 1 Corinthians 2:6 to 3:2

**A** 2:6,7. What Paul spoke. Wisdom among perfect.

**B** 2:8. Knowledge. None knew. Had they known.

**C** 2:9,10-. Revelation. Eye, ear, heart. But God revealed.

**D** 2:-10-13. The Spirit.

**a** Things of God revealed by

Spirit of God.

**b** NOT spirit of the world.

**c** BUT of God.

**b** NOT man's wisdom.

**c** BUT Holy Spirit.

**a** Things of Spirit explained

by spiritual means.

**C** 2:14,15. Discernment. Spiritually discerned.

**B** 2:16. Knowledge. Known mind of Lord. We have mind of

Christ.

**A** 3:1,2. Why Paul could not speak. Carnal, babes, milk.

The apostle now returns to the question of the divisions that were so harmful, and the subject that has occupied the interval reveals the inner springs of these contentions. These inner springs are found to be a lack of spiritual growth, worldly wisdom, and a failure to understand the power and wisdom of God in the cross. The failure to realize that no flesh can glory in the presence of the Lord, and that not only has Christ been made righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, but wisdom too (1:30), will ever be a fruitful cause for dissension. Only by seeing our all is in Christ, may we say 'He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord'. The fact that these believers had sought to magnify Paul as against Apollos, or Apollos as against Paul, indicated the superficial character of their judgment:

'Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers ... I have planted, Apollos watered; BUT GOD gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; BUT GOD that giveth the increase ... we are labourers together with God (God's fellow-workmen): ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building' (3:5-9).

While, therefore, there is this levelling of all distinctions before God - 'Now he that planteth and he that watereth are *one*' - nevertheless 'every man shall receive his *own* reward, according to his *own* labour!' This line of thought introduces the great teaching of the *foundation* and the *superstructure*. The foundation is common to all believers, and does not come within the sphere of reward or loss. Not so the building that is erected thereon. The Corinthians must see that their factions and divisions were rearing upon the one foundation that which could only involve them in loss in the day of Christ. Their divisions were deeper than the human side indicated. They divided *Christ*, they destroyed the temple of *God*. Any increase given was of *God*, the fellow-workers were *God's*, the husbandry, the building, the temple, yea the Christ Himself, were *God's* (3:23), hence the seriousness of their position.

The work of the believer erected upon the one foundation had to stand the test of 'the day' and 'the fire'. The words of the apostle in 3:12-15 would be very clearly understood by the Corinthians. Corinth had suffered at the hands of the conqueror, and part of the city had been given to the flames. When the conflagration had ceased, the poorer dwellings of thatch and wood had vanished, the great stone pillars of the larger buildings remained, while the metals that had been run together by the intense heat became an article of commerce known as 'Corinthian brass', 'saved yet so as by fire'; 'of the flesh shall they reap corruption'; 'Him shall God destroy'.

Sectarian divisions are sometimes spoken of as though they were really blessings in disguise. They are said to sharpen our activities, provoke to emulation, and provide for differing temperaments congenial spheres of service and worship. God may graciously overrule these things, but potentially they are wrecking the temple of God. Instead of listening to those whose fleshly wisdom would justify their divisions, let us hear the conclusion of the



apostle, 'Let no man deceive himself'. Then the utter folly of human wisdom is revealed, 'Let no man glory in men, *for all things are yours!*' The men whose names you have used as party leaders:

'Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; ALL ARE YOURS; and ye are CHRIST'S; and Christ is GOD'S' (3:22,23).

Here is the true treasure which these poor babes in Christ had thrown aside for very trifles and cyphers. In chapter 4 the apostle brings this section to a close. In the light of what he has said with regard to the testing of one's life work, which day should act upon us, man's day or God's day? He had placed himself superficially at a disadvantage by limiting his testimony among them, but it was the conscience of stewardship that moved him, and the desire to be approved when the Lord comes.

'Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found FAITHFUL' (4:1,2).

The effect upon the apostle of Luke 15 is very evident, and the intimate connection between Paul and Luke's Gospel has been already set forth, so that we merely refer to the subject here in passing. Paul's day of judgment was future, and the judge was the Lord.

'But with me it is the very smallest matter that I should be examined of you, or of man's day, nor do I even examine myself (for I am conscious of nothing in myself; but I am not justified by this), but He that judgeth me is THE LORD. Therefore do not judge anything before the proper season, till the Lord shall come ... and then shall each have his praise from God' (4:3-5 Author's translation).

The apostle had in mind those who had made great pretences to wisdom and authority. He names them not, but 'transfers the application' (*metaschematizo*, only other occurrence 2 Cor. 11:13-15) to Apollos and himself, for the principle is true of all:

'That ye may learn in us the lesson of not thinking above what is written, that ye may not be puffed up FOR ONE AGAINST THE OTHER. For who DISTINGUISHETH thee? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?' (4:6,7 Author's translation).

In contrast with the fulness, the riches, the reigning as kings, that expressed the self-aggrandisement of those who were 'puffed up' with pride of place, the apostle shows the actual position and treatment of the true. He likens their position to that of the criminals who were condemned to death, and who were driven into the arena last of all, when the interest of the spectators began to flag.

'... a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men ... We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ' (4:9,10).

Weak and despised were the apostles. The *atimoi* (despised) were outlaws unprotected by any laws:

'Till the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and buffeted, and wander homeless, and labour working with our own hands' (4:11,12 Author's translation).

What a reproach to the self-satisfied church to think that while they were 'full and reigned as kings', the apostle to whose faithfulness they owed their salvation and peace was suffering not merely inconvenience, but positive destitution, and the menace of death:

'Railed at, (our answer is) we bless; Persecuted, (our attitude is) we suffer it; Insulted, (our reply is) we entreat; we are become as the filth of the world, the off-scouring of all things until now' (4:12,13 Author's translation).

Words cannot convey a deeper sense of degradation. They echo Lamentations 3:45, 'Thou hast made us as the *offscouring and refuse* in the midst of the people'. The word *perikatharmata* and *peripsema* refer also to human sacrifices who were offered to the infernal deities, and who were taken from the very dregs of society and loaded with insults and curses as they were led along to the place of sacrifice. These things the apostle said he had not written to shame them, but as his beloved sons he warned them. Though they had ten thousand instructors, they had not many fathers, he had begotten them through the gospel. Then comes the most wonderful conclusion that such a list of abject misery and suffering could have:

Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers (become imitators) of me! (4:16).

The apostle's faith is a triumph and a challenge. So small is man's day, so great is God's, so little is man's estimate, so superior is Christ's, the light affliction is but for a moment, and works out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at things that are seen. He could call them in their 'fulness' to follow him in his poverty, from their reigning as kings to standing with himself in the arena, exposed and condemned. Their estimate of greatness was nothing worth. He envied not the ease and security of those who were leading the Corinthians on into the morass of contentions and divisions. Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord, all else is nothing, and less than nothing, and over and above it all is the consciousness, 'ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's' (3:23).

### The Body - Physically, Spiritually and Ecclesiastically

Chapters 5 to 8 of this epistle deal with some signal departure from the position which all believers have 'in Christ'. It will be observed that before the apostle speaks to the Corinthians concerning the sinfulness of 'divisions', before he treats them as 'babes' or says they 'walk as men', he addresses them as 'the church of God ... sanctified in Christ, called saints'.

The epistle does not deal with the one foundation which had been laid, but with the faulty building which was being erected upon it. While each believer at Corinth was a saint, his walk and witness might be anything but saintly. So when we turn to chapter 5, the apostle speaks of a sin which was notorious, reported commonly and not merely by the household of Chloe. A sin so gross and so vile that the very heathen around them repudiated it, steeped as they were to the lips in abominations.

'*And ye are puffed up*'. - Six times does the apostle use this term, the very opposite to lowliness and meekness. In 2 Corinthians 12:20 it occurs again in a very similar context. The apostle has now to do that which must have cost him many tears and anxious hours:

'For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have already judged, as though I were present, him that hath so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord' (5:3-5 Author's translation).

While details differ, we are back again, in principle, to chapter 3, where the believer may suffer loss, yet he himself be saved, so as by fire. When Job was delivered to Satan, he immediately suffered loss after loss, till nothing save his very life was left. The apostle Paul had the power to deliver a believer over to Satan similarly. The primary result would be bodily disease, and in case of rebellious impenitence, possibly death. Sickness and death are alluded to in 1 Corinthians 11:30-32 in connection with abuses to do with the Lord's table. This delivery was not unto condemnation, but 'that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord'. It is parallel with 1 Timothy 1:20, where Hymenaeus and Alexander are delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

'*Your glorying is not good*'. - *To kauchema* means not your 'glorying', but the subject of your glorying. 'Not good' is expressed in the figure *meiosis*, and means that it was emphatically evil. Farrar renders the sentence, 'The subject of your self-glorification is hideous'. How will the apostle seek to bring these wanderers back to the purity of Christ. Will he take them to Sinai or to Calvary? He takes them once more to the cross of Christ. 'Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even *as ye are unleavened*'. In Christ they were saints, they were unleavened, but their lives did not express this truth. 'For even Christ our passover hath been sacrificed'. The leaven is typical of 'malice and wickedness'. The sin condoned was already working in the assembly. Just as leaven 'puffed up' the dough, so this leaven of wickedness was leavening the whole lump.

There is a marked difference in the Scriptures as to the attitude of one believer to another and of the believer's attitude to the outside world. 1 Corinthians 5:9 has been taken to refer to a letter written some time previously, but which has not come down to us. Of course it is absurd to think that the only letters Paul wrote to the churches are the ones that form part of the New Testament, but we do not believe that any part of 'Scripture' has been lost. We do not believe, however, that there is any necessity to imagine that the apostle refers to a previous letter. 'I wrote' in 5:9 is *egrapsa*, 'I have written' in verse 11 is the same. 'In an epistle' is not exact; 'In the epistle' is what is written.

While *he epistole* may refer to a former epistle as it does in 2 Corinthians 7:8, yet here, standing by itself, it means 'this epistle' as it does in 1 Thessalonians 5:27; 2 Thessalonians 3:14; Romans 16:22.

The idea of the passage seems to be somewhat as follows:

In this epistle, by expressly speaking of the 'taking away' and 'delivery to Satan' of the incestuous man, and also under the figure of the purging out of the leaven, I have written to you not to mix yourselves up with fornicators. (This word which the A.V. renders 'to company' occurs in Hosea 7:8, 'Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned'. The same figure, that of a cake, is employed, and the same action, mixing with the unsanctified, is in view). I do not, however, mean that you are to have no association with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous or extortioners, or with idolaters, for seeing that every Corinthian was involved in the obscene worship of Venus, such a line of action would necessitate leaving this world altogether. What I have now written is not to do with the outside world, but with the brethren. If any man that is called *a brother* be guilty of these things, then shun him, but do not think that I pass judgment on the world at large. For what business have I to judge those that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth (5:9-13). Having made it clear that his words apply only to those within the church, the apostle concludes with a quotation from the Greek version of Deuteronomy 17:7, 'Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person' (1 Cor. 5:13).

Before passing on to chapter 6, we will show the general setting of these chapters. In the structure given on page 169, chapters 5 to 14 come under one heading. Here we can sub-divide a little.

### 1 Corinthians 5 to 14:40

#### The Body. Physically, Spiritually and Ecclesiastically

- A 5:1 to 6:13. What Paul had heard.
- B 6:13-20. The BODY. Physically.
- A 7:1-40. What Paul was asked.
  - C 8:1-13. Idols, food, an idol nothing. Offend not.
  - D 9:1-27. Paul's example. 'Not used power'.
  - E 10:1-17. The BODY. Spiritually.
  - C 10:18-32. Idols, food, an idol nothing. Offend not.
  - D 10:33 to 11:1. Paul's example. 'Not seek own'.
- B 11:2 to 14:40. The BODY. Ecclesiastically.

*Fuller details later.*

While speaking on the matter of judging, the apostle draws attention to the ridiculous and utterly unbecoming position of those who were destined to judge the world, and to judge the angels, in going to law about the trifles of this life, and that too before heathen men. Why did they not set one of the humble members of the church to act as umpire between them? Their true line of action should have been to suffer wrong and suffer themselves to be defrauded rather than take a believing brother before a heathen judge.

#### The Body. Physically.

There is a marked difference between the troubles that vexed the churches of Galatia and those at Corinth. In the epistle to the Galatians the apostle had to fight for liberty, and to speak strongly against the tendency to re-impose shackles of any kind. Here in the Corinthian epistle it is the other way. The tendency is for Christ's liberty to be interpreted as licence. There is probably a quotation or an allusion to their own letter to Paul in the words, 'All things are lawful'. True, says the apostle, but all things do not profit, or bring together. All things are lawful, nevertheless, as Christ's freeman I will not be brought under the dominion of any. The Corinthians evidently still retained much of the pagan philosophy in which they had been reared, and believed that 'the very existence of an instinct or a faculty was enough to justify its satisfaction'.

When we know the awful depths of immorality into which some of the wisest and greatest men of the times were sunk, we can understand that the Corinthian actually believed that 'the body was for fornication'. This the apostle denies, and in its place says the body is for the Lord. The believer, though not yet in possession of the resurrection body, is to walk in the power of that blessed hope. The body of the believer is not only for the Lord, but 'the Lord for the body'; 'and God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power' (6:13,14). The risen Lord stands pledged to grant the grace necessary for this completely new life and ideal. The main line of this intense passage is as follows:

### 1 Corinthians 6:13-20

#### The Body. Physically.

A The Body 'for the Lord'.

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| B <sub>1</sub> | Know ye not? The body a member of Christ.                    |
| B <sub>2</sub> | Know ye not? He who is joined to an harlot becomes one body. |
| B <sub>3</sub> | Know ye not? The body, the temple of the Holy Spirit.        |

A Glorify God in your body.

However indelicate this subject may appear in the eyes of some, we believe that those who have had a fairly wide experience of internal church affairs will sorrowfully admit that this subject is by no means a matter of past history, but is sadly up to date.

A careful study of the words 'one body' and 'one spirit' will help us to understand their reference in more spiritual contexts. The believer has no liberty to sin 'against his own body' for the simple reason that even though redemption brings one out of bondage into liberty, we have nevertheless to remember that:

'Ye are not your own, for ye are BOUGHT with a PRICE'.

the reasonable service being as in Romans 12:1 to 'glorify God in your body'. The words 'and in your spirit, which are God's' are to be omitted. The great question is to do with these bodies of ours. The Corinthians may not have needed to be informed that they were to glorify God in their spirits - what they did not appreciate was the teaching more fully developed in Romans 6 to 8, and 12. Deliverance from sin sets the believer free from the dominion of sin *which is in his members*. He may now yield those same members which once served sin to the service of God. His very body may be yielded 'a living sacrifice' acceptable unto God.

There is a great difference between 'the flesh' and 'the body', but this difference is not always clearly discerned by believers. When one is reminded that 'the flesh' should have no place with the believer, the rejoinder often is somewhat like this, 'Well, we eat and drink'. This reveals the confusion that is in the mind as to the difference between 'the flesh' and 'the body'. This very epistle tells us we may glorify God in eating and drinking, but 'the flesh' can never please God at all. The flesh is the 'old man', but the body has come under the power of redemption.

The Philippians were exhorted to strive together in 'one spirit', but it was the apostle himself who could go to the length of saying, 'Christ shall be magnified in my *body*'. Oh that believers could feel the call to glorify God in their bodies; to realize that they are bought with a price! The feet that once walked in darkness and in the ways of death may become beautiful by using them in the service of the Lord. The hands that engaged in works that were evil or selfish may be used for the highest of service.

This introduces the apostle's answer to the series of questions that had been sent to him by the church at Corinth. They had asked questions concerning marriage. One side had taken the view that the body did not matter, and its deeds were not to be thought about. The others went to the other extreme, advocating celibacy as the most spiritual condition. He has answered the dangerous teaching of the former, and now turns to the equally disastrous asceticism of the latter. The whole passage must be viewed in the light of the words of 7:26, 'on account of the present necessity'.

The coming of the Lord was the present expectancy. The end of the age was upon them, and it was good to make no change regarding their mundane affairs, but prepare for the great change that might come at any time 'in the twinkling of an eye':

'I think then that it is good on account of the present necessity that it is good for a man to remain so as he is. Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed; art thou free from a wife? do not seek a wife' (7:26,27 Author's translation).

It is not a question of 'sin' (7:28-36), but of 'tribulation in the flesh' from which the apostle would spare them. The principle upon which the apostle framed his advice, and which comes to us forcefully in our day and for our guidance as it did then, is given in 7:29-31 :

'But this I say brethren, the time having been straightened (or the opportunity having been contracted), it remains that both those who have wives may be as though they had none; and they who weep, as though they wept not; and they who rejoiced, as though they rejoiced not; and they who buy, as though they possessed not; and they who use the world, as though they used it not to the full, for the FASHION OF THIS WORLD PASSETH AWAY' (Author's translation).

The fact that much that is here said was particularly connected with the time is evidenced by the change of teaching that is given after the dispensation had passed away. In 1 Corinthians 7:39,40 the apostle considers a widow well advised to remain unmarried, but in later times the apostle wrote:

'I will therefore that the younger women (widows, verse 11) marry, bear children' (1 Tim. 5:14).

Another question of great and present bearing upon their daily life was the one dealing with the eating of things sacrificed to idols. In their letter to the apostle they had evidently expressed some opinion of their own as follows:

We have all knowledge, and feel that since we know that an idol is nothing in the world, we are not called upon to forego our liberties because of the ignorance and scruples of some among us.

To this the apostle replies, quoting much of their own letter. We, to-day, are not perplexed with the literal problem of eating things sacrificed to idols, but there are everyday equivalents, and the spirit wherewith the Corinthians were enjoined to walk in this particular affair is the spirit wherein we also must solve all our problems. A similar problem is raised and met in Romans 14. There the weak brother was a converted Jew, here he is a converted idolater. There the scruple was connected with Mosaic distinctions between clean and unclean, here it is the question of food offered to idols.

If the apostle had to insist upon the glory of the wisdom of God, and the failure of the wisdom of this world in the opening section, he has occasion to speak strongly concerning a loveless knowledge that ministered to pride in this one, 'We know that we have all knowledge'. This is evidently a quotation from the letter received from Corinth. The apostle adds as a parenthesis:

'Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up. If anyone thinketh he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know it, but if any man love God, the same is known of Him' (8:1-3 Author's translation).

He then returns to the subject, 'As concerning therefore the eating of those things which are sacrificed unto idols' (8:4 Author's translation). While we may 'know' that an idol is nothing, and have learned the truth concerning one God and one Lord, such knowledge must never lead us to override the weaker conscience of another. How many members of the one body in their new-found liberty would do well to heed the words of 1 Corinthians 8:9 :

'But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak'.

One of the key words of this chapter is the word 'edify'. It has a most significant and unusual application in verses 10 and 11:

'For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened (EDIFIED) to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?'

The word 'perish' both here and in Romans 14:15 is *apolluo*. The manuscript called the *Codex Claromontanus*, which Dr. Tregelles said was 'one of the most valuable extant', reads *apoluo*, 'put away', instead of *apolluo*, 'destroy'. The reading 'put away' in Romans 14:15 is supported by several MSS. For fuller evidence the reader is referred to *How to enjoy the Bible* by Dr. E.W. Bullinger.

There is evidently a parallel intended here between this passage and that of 1 Corinthians 3. By building anything other than 'God's building' upon the one foundation, the 'temple of God is destroyed'. The temple of God is destroyed if some of its members are 'put away', or are induced to build (see *edify* above) that which is not in line with His truth. The apostle concludes the chapter with the noble words:

'Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend' (8:13).

We can imagine that some would object to this attitude, and say that this was a weak yielding of liberties to the scruples of ignorant and faltering believers. The apostle would now follow precept by practice. He gives his own example to teach the Corinthians the spirit of Christ, who 'pleased not Himself'. The sudden change, the vehement questions concerning his apostleship with which chapter 9 opens would at first lead one to think that a new phase of the epistle had been reached, but we shall find that his claim of equality with the other apostles, and his unquestioned rights as an apostle, his right, for example, of being supported by the Corinthians, was only brought forward to enforce the truth of chapter 8. If others could lay claim to temporal support from the Corinthians, then most surely Paul could. Yet what does he say:

'Nevertheless, we have not used this right; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ ... the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things ... I do not use to the full (A.V. abuse) my rights in the gospel' (9:12-18 Author's translation).

He was 'free', yet for the sake of others he made himself the 'slave' of all. He became a Jew to gain the Jews: that meant the curtailing of many liberties. To those who were without law he became as without law. Here, however, he has necessity to curb the tendency to licence that freedom always brings to the flesh, 'being not without law to God, but under law to Christ' (9:21). To the weak he became as weak. If they had scruples concerning the sabbath, he would immediately give up the liberty which he possessed. If they had scruples concerning meats or drinks, gladly would he forego them, 'I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some' (9:22). The theme appears again to change, for the chapter concludes with the reference to prize and crown. This is, however, but another facet of the beautiful jewel of Christ's humility, for from 10:23 to 11:1 the theme reappears.

The connection between the highminded, yet loveless, abuse of 'liberty' and the subject of the race and the crown may not at first be seen. It is, however, very closely connected, as will appear when we examine the passage:

'Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain' (9:24).

It is evident that there is a real connection between the prize and that spirit which ever places others first, for not only is it prominent here, but it is most evident in Philippians. The great theme of the prize of Philippians is introduced by the words:

'Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves ... Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus ... Yea, and if I (Paul's example) be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all ... all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him' (Timothy's example) (Phil. 2:3-22).

The subject is concluded by the words, 'Let your moderation (yieldingness) be known to all men' (Phil. 4:5). The selfish spirit manifested by the Corinthians would surely rob them of their crown. They would be 'saved so as through fire'. Another item which had a bearing upon the Corinthian church is indicated in 1 Corinthians 9:27 :

'But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have heralded to others, I myself should be disqualified' (Author's translation).

### **The Body. Spiritually.**

The Corinthians were grossly ignorant concerning the truth as to the body. The excesses which they allowed in their midst showed clearly that the body was master and not servant. If the reader has been used to the practice of reading a daily chapter, he will probably have failed to realize the close connection which chapter 10 has with the theme. The word 'moreover' in 10:1 is the simple *gar*, meaning 'for', and indicates the continuation of an argument.

What is the argument? It is suggested to the mind in verse 24, 'all' and 'one'. It is developed in 10:1-5, where the words to notice are 'all' and 'many'. Some might have said, But Paul, surely *you* do not think it possible that you might fail of the prize? For answer Paul turns us back to the Old Testament parallel. He practically answers the question by answering another. Was Moses a saved man? *Yes*, if ever there was one; Did Moses enter into the promised land? *No!* Such is the argument here:

'All the fathers were under the cloud, were *all* baptized, did *all* eat the same spiritual meat, and did *all* drink the same spiritual drink, but with MANY of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness' (10:1-5 Author's translation).

These things are examples. The apostle applies the wilderness experiences of Israel to the disorders of the Corinthian assembly, and sums them up under four headings, idolatry, fornication, tempting Christ, and murmuring. The oft-quoted passage, 'Wherefore, let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall', is luminous in the light of the context. A gracious word is now introduced before the apostle takes up the four parallels indicated in 10:7-10, and applies them to the existing evils at Corinth:

'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above your ability; but will with the temptation also make the issue, that you may be able to bear it' (10:13 Author's translation).

The Authorized Version reads here 'a way of escape', but how a way of escape can be associated with being able to bear the trial does not appear. The word in question occurs once more in Scripture, this time in Hebrews 13:7, 'whose faith follow, considering the *end* of their conversation'. When Asaph entered into the sanctuary of God, and saw the end, his envyings ceased, his murmurings gave place to holy joy, and the Lord alone became his portion. There was a temptation which closely beset the Corinthians, and that was idolatry. 'Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry' (1 Cor. 10:14). The apostle then calls upon them to judge what he has to say on that point. Idolatry was creeping into the observance of the Lord's table. Though idols be nothing (verse 19), idolatry was very real, for it was demon worship (verses 20,21). This provokes the Lord to jealousy, even as it did of old. It appears from the closely related subjects of idolatry, temptation, self-seeking, and abuse of Christian liberty, that the Corinthians were hiding behind their freedom and their knowledge, and in order to avoid trouble with unbelievers were associating with them in their sinful practices. If this be not the case, what connection is there between verses 22 and 23:

'Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? ... All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not'.

The apostle would not urge a pharisaic scrupulosity which might be just as evil as their abuse of liberty. 'Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, *asking no question for conscience sake*' (10:25). At the table of an unbeliever, likewise:

'... whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. BUT, if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, EAT NOT for his sake that shewed it, *and for conscience sake* ... Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other' (10:27-29).

The Corinthian may object, why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience? I give thanks for these things, why then should I be evil spoken of? The answer is enshrined in the words '*not thine own*', and gives its fullest expression in the wonderful conclusion:

'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: even as I please all men in all things, *not seeking mine own profit*, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. BE YE FOLLOWERS (BECOME YE IMITATORS) OF ME, EVEN AS I ALSO AM OF CHRIST' (10:31 to 11:1).

We close this section with a brief structure for the guidance of students:

### 1 Corinthians 8:1 to 11:1

A 8:1-13. Things offered to idols. 'Lords many' (Gentile

conception of demons). No offence.

**B** 9:1-27. Paul's example. He had not used his right to the full. Keep under the body.

**C** 10:1-17. The body spiritual. `All'; `Many'.

**A** 10:18-32. Things offered to idols. `Demons' (Mediators of Gentile idolatry). No offence.

**B** 10:33 to 11:1. Paul's example. He had not sought his own profit.

### **The body. Ecclesiastically.**

We now consider the third division of this great member, passing from the body *physical*, and the body *spiritual*, to the body *ecclesiastical*. A simple outline of the section before us is as follows:

### **1 Corinthians 11:2 to 14:40**

The Body. Ecclesiastically.

**A** 11:2-34. Order. Women's ministry (Genesis).

**B** 12:1-11. Gifts.

**C** 12:12-27. The body one, but many members.

**B** 12:28 to 14:26. Gifts.

**A** 14:27-40. Order. Women's ministry (Genesis).

Where the apostle could find occasion for praise, he was never slow to give it, and he opens the section, which is to contain censure and blame, with a word of praise:

`Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances (traditions), as I delivered them to you' (11:2).

A tradition may be right or wrong. The traditions of men are not after Christ, but the general rules left behind at Corinth by the apostle were in harmony with the truths he taught. A contentious spirit sought to invalidate some of these things, and the apostle now seeks to give an answer to some of their difficulties. Chapter 11 divides into three parts.

### **1 Corinthians 11:2-34**

**A<sub>1</sub>** 2-. I praise you.

**B<sub>1</sub>** -2. Ye keep traditions *delivered*.

**C<sub>1</sub>** 3-16. Headships.

**A<sub>2</sub>** 17. I praise you not.

**B<sub>2</sub>** 18,19. Divisions.

**C<sub>2</sub>** 20,21. Abuse of the Lord's supper.

**A<sub>3</sub>** 22. I praise you not.

**B<sub>3</sub>** 23-. Teaching *delivered*.

**C<sub>3</sub>** -23-34. Lord's supper.

Not only were the members of the early church surrounded with circumstances that led into idolatry and immorality, but the very composition of the assembly would lead to all manner of differences which would not be for the general good. During the time of worship those who had been Jews would cover their heads, and those who had been Jewesses would veil themselves. Greeks on the other hand would worship bareheaded, and this difference of external expression, while of itself perhaps a matter of indifference, was not likely to make for unity, nor give expression to the reality of the reconciliation.



The apostle settles the question here. A threefold headship is revealed in the Word; let that, and not local custom decide for us.

The head of every man is Christ.	The order of creation.
The head of every woman is the man.	Exhibited in the church.
The head of Christ is God.	Of the reconciliation.

Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head, namely, Christ. In like manner, every woman who prays or prophesies with uncovered head, dishonoureth her head, which is man. Man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. Man originally was not of the woman, nor for the woman. The order enjoined upon the assembly is the order implied by creation as given in the book Genesis. This application of the relation of the race with Adam and Christ comes out again in chapter 15, where the subject is vitally connected with reconciliation. A difficult passage meets us in 11:10:

‘For this cause ought the woman to have power (authority) on her head because of the angels’.

Without occupying space to set forth all the various interpretations that have been put forward, we would give what we believe to be the true meaning, and pass on. Genesis 6, when read together with Jude 6,7, indicates that the sons of God are the angels that sinned, and their connection with the daughters of men reveals some of the awful possibilities of unguarded womanhood. It was for the protection of woman that the apostle refers to this subject, indicating that while woman remains within the bounds of the law of creation she is safe, but that the tendency to throw over the divinely appointed bounds must lead to danger and confusion. When one reads the state of things at the time of the end, and observes the modern trend of thought and teaching in connection with the relationship of the sexes, one cannot but behold with horror and alarm the undue prominence, and the lack of that womanly virtue of modesty, which is everywhere abroad.

The apostle now turns to the state of affairs that had developed around the gathering of the church for the Lord's supper. There is every reason to believe that the early church met in the houses of those who were the bishops, and possibly the deacons. The salutation to the church in the house suggests this, as also the homely and domestic qualifications of the elders. At times, however, the church ‘came together into one place’ with the evident intention of partaking of the Lord's supper. This is suggested by the words of 11:17-22. The apostle could praise them in 11:2, but here (verse 17) he has to say, ‘I praise you not’:

‘For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it’ (11:18).

A blessed overruling of the divisions that were among them is indicated in verse 19:

‘For there must be also heresies (divisions) among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest’.

There is no justification for the divisions among believers, but they are overruled to make manifest those who are well pleasing unto the Lord. The apostle repeats his instructions concerning the Lord's supper which he had previously given to the church, and which are almost entirely parallel with those given in Luke. The observance of the Lord's supper was to be continued ‘Till He come’. This would at first sight go to prove that the observance of the ordinance was binding upon the church of the mystery. We have already considered this point in *Dispensational Truth*, and therefore will not repeat ourselves here. The exceedingly serious nature of the Corinthian offences is indicated in the closing verses (27-34) of the chapter, and are a reference back to the example in the wilderness, where those who tempted Christ were destroyed of serpents.

Chapters 12 to 14 now take up the great question of the spiritual gifts with which the church was endued. The first great division of the subject is indicated by a comparison between verses 3 and 4 of chapter 12. Some spiritual gifts are Satanic, some are Divine, in their origin. Those which are Divine are one in essence, though varied in their manifestation. Their unity is seen from the fact that all the gifts of the Spirit of God tend to the magnifying of Christ, while all the enduements of Satan lead to the denial and rejection of Christ. Once again the subject of idolatry plays a part:

`Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that when ye were Gentiles, ye were carried away unto these dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed, and that no one can say, Lord Jesus, but by holy spirit' (12:1-3 Author's translation).

It was not a question as to whether any man anywhere had the physical ability to frame the sounds, `Lord Jesus'; but it teaches us that no man speaking under the influence of a demon was able so to say, and that anyone speaking under the influence of a spirit, who therein confesses that Jesus is Lord, was speaking by the spirit of God. The parallel to this is found in 1 John 4:1 :

`Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God'.

the reason for this being:

`... because many false prophets are gone out into the world'.

The test which the apostle John supplies is:

`Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God' (1 John 4:2,3).

The supreme test again is the person of Christ. It is very clear therefore that there could be no confusion allowed in the assembly at Corinth so far as these two essentially different orders of inspiration were concerned.

Having disposed of the idolatrous demon possession which evidently had entered the Church, the apostle now turns to unfold the unity and yet the diversity of the gifts of the Spirit. We shall appreciate the relation of the one part of the chapter to the other if we see the passage as a whole first:

### 1 Corinthians 12 to 14

- A 12. Gifts.
- B 13. Love.
- A 14. Gifts.

It is evident that the great theme before the apostle is that of the gifts. Love is introduced as a corrective against abuse in 1 Corinthians 13, but the main theme is again resumed and pursued throughout chapter 14. The same distribution of subject is seen in chapter 12, which opens with `gifts' and closes with them, while between the two sets of teaching comes the illustration of the body.

### 1 Corinthians 12:4-30

- A 12:4-11. Gifts. Diversity in unity.
- B 12:12-27. Illustration. The body.
- A 12:28-30. Gifts. Diversity in unity.

While all the true gifts possessed by the church were of God, it did not follow that all were alike either in degree, manifestation, or usefulness. With this thought the section opens, `Now there are *diversities* of gifts, but the *same* Spirit' (12:4).

- A<sub>1</sub> There are diversities of gifts.
- B<sub>1</sub> But the SAME Spirit.
- A<sub>2</sub> There are diversities of service.
- B<sub>2</sub> But the SAME Lord.
- A<sub>3</sub> There are diversities of inworkings.
- B<sub>3</sub> But the SAME God.

The verses that follow give nine diverse manifestations of these gifts. The word of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues. Verse 11 brings us back to our starting point:

‘But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will’.

Verse 12 opens the section which introduces the illustration of the body. Not only is the word ‘for’ there, which links the subject of the gifts to the illustration of the body, but the word *kathaper*, ‘just as’, which is a fitting introduction to an illustration, ‘For just as the body is one’. What body? Many say and teach ‘the church’. If this passage does speak of ‘the church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all’, how were the Corinthians to know this? The ‘for just as’ supposes some acquaintance with the subject, and as the apostle had deliberately held back some phases of truth as being too advanced for them, how then did they know this climax of all revelation? Again, at the end of the verse we have the words, ‘So also is the Christ’. If these words mean ‘the church’, what kind of argument have we here if the body means the church also? We have only to substitute the word ‘church’ in place of ‘body’ and of ‘Christ’ to see how absurd the idea is:

‘For as the church is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that church, being many, are one church, so also is the church!’

Not very illuminating certainly. If the body here be the human body, with all its different members working harmoniously, and all directed and regulated by one control, then all is clear. ‘The Christ’ is the title of the church which had been ‘anointed’. The very epistle which gives us the parallel regarding the trying of the spirits, also gives us the fact that the church was anointed. ‘Ye have an unction (anointing)’ (1 John 2:20).

Further, referring to the confirming nature of the gifts to the church, the apostle wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:21 :

‘Now He that confirmeth us with you in the *anointed*, and *hath anointed us*, is God’ (*Christon kai chrisas*) (Author’s translation).

The close association of the baptism in the spirit and the anointing is seen in Luke 4:18 :

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me ...’.

Therefore the apostle immediately follows his reference to the anointing in 1 Corinthians 12:13 by the baptism of the Spirit:

‘For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink one spirit’ (12:13 Author’s translation).

To be baptized into a special company was no new truth. 1 Corinthians 10 itself takes us back to the Red Sea for this. There the redeemed from Egypt were baptized into Moses, and drank the spiritual drink. Here the Corinthians are the spiritual counterpart. Christ is their passover (1 Cor. 5:7), yet carnality, idolatry and uncleanness characterized them. Though all were baptized into Moses, all were not approved so far as entry into the land of promise was concerned, and the same held good of the Corinthians as we have seen. The church of the one body of Ephesians was the subject of a mystery hidden since the ages, and revealed after Israel was set aside. The church of which the Corinthians formed a part was not the subject of such a mystery. If 1 Corinthians 12:13 proves that the Corinthians were members of ‘the church which is His body’, it also proves that the redeemed nation of Israel were too, and therefore refutes itself. We are therefore here dealing with the one theme, that of spiritual gifts.

- |          |   |   |                      |
|----------|---|---|----------------------|
| <b>A</b> | The Body. One, yet many members.                      |   |                      |
| <b>B</b> | The anointed  | } | The Spiritual Gifts. |
| <b>B</b> | The baptism   | } |                      |
| <b>A</b> | The Body. Not one, but many members; foot, hand, eye. |   |                      |

Echoing verse 11 we read in verse 18:

‘But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him’.

These members, which illustrate the several gifts of the Spirit, are further explained in verse 28:

‘And God hath set some in the church (not in the body, be it observed), first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues’.

Verse 11 speaks of gifts, verse 18 illustrates their distribution by the figure of the body, and verse 28 shows the gifts set in the church just as the various members are set in the body. The church of the one body of Ephesians is distinguished from Christ. The church of Corinth is called the Christ. The church of the one body is distinguished from the head. The illustration of 1 Corinthians 12 speaks of eyes, ears, and nose, all members of the head. Every member of the church of the one body is accepted in the Beloved, but the body of 1 Corinthians 12 has ‘uncomely parts’ (‘unseemly’, Rom. 1:27; ‘shame’, Rev. 16:15), which, while true of the physical body, is not true of the church of the mystery.

The figure is carried on to the application of the truth, just as it is in 1 Corinthians 6. There the truth is stated thus, ‘Your bodies are the members of Christ’. Here it is, ‘Now ye are body of Christ, and members in particular’. If we press the idea of the one body unduly in 1 Corinthians 12, how shall we escape the parallel in 1 Corinthians 6:16, ‘He who is joined to an harlot is one body’? Here it is physical. In 1 Corinthians 12 it is spiritual, but the same idea is there. Again, the fact that all believers ate the one loaf at the Lord’s supper constituted them one body:

‘Because there is one loaf, we, the many, are one body’ (1 Cor. 10:17 Author’s translation).

If the church of Ephesians is so constituted, we ought to find greater emphasis upon the Lord’s supper in the prison epistles than anywhere else. The exact opposite of course is the truth. The fact is that the ecclesiastical position of the Corinthians was not perfect, it was tentative and transitional. They were body of Christ and members only in part.

We note one more feature concerning the gifts set by God in this Corinthian assembly. They are not only indicated in a general way, but are definitely numbered in their order of precedence:

‘God hath set some in the church (not the body - we have left the figure now),

<i>First,</i>	apostles,
<i>Secondarily,</i>	prophets
<i>Thirdly,</i>	teachers
<i>Then,</i>	gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues’ (12:28).

In contrast with this order we must notice that of Ephesians 4:11 :

‘He gave some, apostles;  
and some, prophets;  
and some, evangelists;  
and some, pastors and teachers;

for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ’.

There are four items of importance here:

1. The One who gave these gifts to men is the *ascended* Lord. The ‘twelve’ were appointed by Christ on earth long before His ascension (See Matt. 10).
2. There is an addition here, which constitutes a different order from that of 1 Corinthians 12. The evangelist is here inserted between prophet, pastor, and teacher.
3. The purpose of this special ministry is defined. It had to do with the inception of the church of the one body. The gifts of the church at Corinth were for other purposes as we shall see.
4. There is also a very noticeable omission. In the Corinthian church, miracles, healings, and tongues were as much a part of the ecclesiastical organisation as were the apostles, but in the church of the one body, the miracles, healings and tongues are entirely absent.

Chapter 13 shows the transitory nature of these gifts as opposed to the graces of faith, hope and love. The apostle would bring all boasting and pride down before the one great crowning grace of love. Without love the gift of tongues was comparable to a booming gong. Without love the gift of prophecy, understanding, knowledge, and faith left a man empty. Without love, 'charity' and martyrdom profited nothing. Then follows that description of love, which should be written in letters of gold on every believer's heart (13:4-8):

'Its patience; its kindness; its freedom from envy, vaunting, self-assertion (*ou perperenetai perperus*, 'a braggart'), inflated arrogance, vulgar indecorum; its superiority to self-seeking; its calm control of temper; its oblivion of wrong; its absence of joy at the wrongs of others; its sympathy with the truth; its gracious tolerance; its trustfulness; its hope; its endurance' (Farrar).

After having thus beautifully spoken of love, the apostle returns to the theme of the section, 'the gifts'. The great and essential difference between the gifts and love is that love will never cease, whereas the gifts did. The great emphasis which is found in the original upon the transitory character of the gifts is somewhat veiled in the Authorized Version. In verses 8 to 11, we read:

'Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall FAIL; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall VANISH AWAY. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be DONE AWAY. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I PUT AWAY childish things'.

The words we have printed in capitals are translations of the one word in the original, viz., *katargeo*. The following citations will provide a full account of its meaning:

- Luke 13:7. '... why *cumbereth* it the ground?'  
Note context, '... cut it down'.
- Romans 3:31. '... make *void* the law through faith'.  
Note context, '... establish'.
- Romans 4:14. '... the promise made of *none effect*'.  
Note verse 16, '... the promise might be sure'.
- Romans 6:6. '... the body of sin might be *destroyed*'.

Without quoting further from other parts of Scripture we just notice the usage of the word in 1 Corinthians itself:

- 'Bring to nought' the things that are (1:28).  
'Come to nought' princes of this world (2:6).  
'Shall destroy' both belly and meats (6:13).  
The passage under notice (13:8-11).  
'Put down' all rule (15:24).  
'Destroyed' death (15:26).

There can be no doubt but that these words indicate a complete cessation. The teaching that the early church 'lost' the gifts through lack of faithfulness is a fable, invented in the attempt to explain their non-existence to-day. The Corinthian church was surely carnal and childish, yet they possessed a plethora of gifts. The gifts did not slowly cease. They cease *abruptly* at Acts 28. In that chapter Paul by two acts shows that the miracles of Mark 16 were still in force. The key to the question is found in that chapter too. The hope of Israel still held good. Israel as a nation was set aside, however, in that chapter, and with their setting aside *miraculous gifts ceased*.

We would not be understood to say that 'miracles' ceased. God has often interfered with the course of nature and of man since, but not in the way of 'spiritual gifts'. To understand miracles aright we must remember that they are divided into two sections:-

- (1) Evidential miracles.
- (2) Miracles of compassion.

The miracles of the Acts period were largely the former. 1 Corinthians 14:21,22 says:

‘In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that they will not hear Me, saith the Lord. *Wherefore tongues are for a sign*’.

‘Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law’, and the *evidential miracles* were primarily for Israel. They were possessed by Gentile believers to provoke Israel to emulation. It is a remarkable fact, and one that bears upon this question of miraculous gifts, that the two occasions mentioned in the Acts where miracles were performed before Gentiles, as such, are characterized by the same thing, *they led to idolatry*. The two references are Acts 14 and 28. At Iconium the people said, ‘The *gods* are come down to us in the likeness of men’, and the apostles could scarcely restrain the people from offering sacrifice to them (Acts 14:8-18). At Melita the natives observing that the bite of a viper had no harmful effect upon Paul said that ‘he was a *god*’ (Acts 28:1-6). To Israel that had the Scriptures the miracles were a sign (see Matt. 11:2-6), but to the unilluminated and idolatrous Gentiles they were merely ‘wonders’, without meaning. The key note to the true use of the gifts is struck in 14:12:

‘... seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church’.

While the Corinthian saints were to desire spiritual gifts, they were especially to desire the gift of prophecy, for ‘he that prophesieth speaketh ... to edification’ (14:3). This comes out again in verses 4,5,6,17, and 26:

‘Let all things be done unto edifying’ (26).

‘Let all things be done decently and in order’ (40).

Much more might be said on this theme, but space will not permit.

### Resurrection. Gospel and Reconciliation

We must first view chapter 15 as a whole, and then give attention to details when we have realized the scope of the passage.

#### The structure of 1 Corinthians 15 as a whole

**A<sub>1</sub>** 15:1-11. The evidence and evangelistic importance of the resurrection of Christ.

**A<sub>2</sub>** 15:12-34. The fact of the resurrection of Christ and of man.

**A<sub>3</sub>** 15:35-58. The manner of the resurrection.

Resurrection dominates the chapter, some phase of it being present throughout the whole discourse. The opening section is concerned with the gospel and its connection with the resurrection of Christ. Let us therefore consider ‘**A<sub>1</sub>** 1 Cor. 15:1-11’ a little in detail.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

##### The evidence and the evangel.

**A** 15:1,2. The gospel. - ‘I preached’. ‘Ye received’.

**B** 15:3-. The gospel no human invention. - ‘I delivered unto you that which I received’.

<b>C</b> 15:-3,4.	Evidence of Scripture.		<b>a<sub>1</sub></b> Christ died. <b>b<sub>1</sub></b> He was buried. <b>c<sub>1</sub></b> He rose again.
<b>C</b> 15:5-8.	Evidence of eye-witnesses.		<b>a<sub>2</sub></b> Seen of Cephas. <b>b<sub>2</sub></b> Then of the twelve. <b>c<sub>2</sub></b> Seen of 500 brethren. <b>a<sub>3</sub></b> Seen of James. <b>b<sub>3</sub></b> Then of all the apostles.

|                    c<sub>3</sub> Seen of me also.

**B** 15:9,10. Paul's apostleship no self appointment. - `Yet not I,  
but the grace of God'.

**A** 15:11. I or they. - `So we preach'. `So ye believed'.

Several words in this chapter bear the meaning `in vain'. In the first section, as concerning the faith of the Corinthians, we have *ei me eike*, `to no purpose' (see Matt. 5:22; Rom. 13:4; Gal. 4:11). In verse 10, in connection with the grace bestowed upon the apostle, he says it was not `in vain' (*ou kene*). This expression is used again in verse 14 of a vain preaching and faith without the risen Christ, and verse 58 declares on the contrary that by reason of the risen One our labour is not `in vain' in the Lord. In verse 17 we have yet another word - *mataios*, meaning that which is purposeless and failing. Without the fact of resurrection we must echo Ecclesiastes, `Vanity of vanities, all is vanity'.

In opening the subject of the resurrection the apostle reminds the Corinthians of the gospel that he had preached and which they had believed, and says, in effect, straight away, that to deny the fact of the resurrection was to deny their own salvation and standing. To emphasise this the apostle multiplies his sentences:

`The gospel.                    Which I preached,  
                                      Which ye received,  
                                      Wherein ye stand,  
                                      By which also ye are saved,  
if ye hold fast what I preached to you, unless ye believed to no purpose' (15:1,2 Author's translation).

The words `ye are saved' are more correctly rendered `ye are being saved', meaning to say that the fact and doctrine of the resurrection permeates the whole scheme of salvation, the past from sin, the present from its power, and the future from its presence. The words in verse 3, `first of all', are better rendered, `among the principal things', and these he had received himself - not imagined or invented. The gospel had these three great facts for its basis:

`... that Christ *died for our sins* according to the Scriptures; and that He *was buried*, and that He rose (*was raised*) *again* the third day according to the Scriptures' (15:3,4).

The resurrection of Christ has the testimony of Scripture as to its necessity. The apostle now proceeds to bring forward his witnesses that what Scripture had foretold, and what the gospel declared, was a literal fact. These witnesses are eye-witnesses, they had all *seen*. He speaks of himself as having seen the risen Christ `last of all', which remark in itself proves he was not one of `the twelve' who had previously seen the Lord (verse 5). He refers to himself as one prematurely born, and in deep humility explains his meaning:

`For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God' (15:9 Author's translation).

If we strictly adhere to the translation of *ektroma*, `an abortion', the difficulty presented is that a child thus brought forth is dead. This objection is not insuperable, for even so the apostle's emphasis is upon resurrection life and would indicate to his readers that his very apostleship was a practical manifestation of life from the dead. The literal historic fact of the resurrection, as apart from any secondary, spiritual and derived meaning however, seems too plainly in the foreground to allow of the apostle using it in this secondary sense here, and `one born out of due time' meets the case best. Whatever differences Paul may have admitted in his sensitive modesty, he concludes by saying:

`But what I am, I am by the grace of God ... Whether I, or they, so we preach, and so ye believed' (15:10,11 Author's translation).

This clears the ground for the great controversy. All the apostles preached Christ risen. The Corinthians believed it as a vital part of the gospel of their salvation, and many eye-witnesses were still living who attested the fact; this the apostle now brings to bear upon the doubts of the Corinthians regarding the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

We are now ready for the fuller structure of 1 Corinthians 15:12-34. First of all it is important to realize that after the introductory words of verses 1-11 which we have briefly considered, the remainder of the chapter is one whole. Let us see this first:

### 1 Corinthians 15:12-58

- A** 15:12. The fact of resurrection. `How?'
- B** 15:13-33. Adam and Christ. Death destroyed. `When?'
- C** 15:34. Exhortation. `Awake'.
- A** 15:35. The manner of resurrection. `How?' `With what?'
- B** 15:36-57. The first and last Adam. Death swallowed up.  
`When?'
- C** 15:58. Exhortation. `Be steadfast'.

It will be recognized that the pair of members denominated **B, B** contains the great theme of the passage, and the doctrine is crystallized in the name Adam. We shall see this the more clearly as we proceed, but it is important to realize the unity of the theme at the beginning of the study. We can now go back to the first half of this section and give it closer attention.

### 1 Corinthians 15:13-33

- A** 15:13-18. The fact of resurrection and its relation to doctrine.
- B** 15:19. The fact of resurrection and the present life.
- C** 15:20-23. The fact of resurrection and the purpose of the ages from Adam to the parousia.
- C** 15:24-28. The fact of resurrection and the purpose of the ages from the second coming to the end of the mediatorial kingdom.
- B** 15:29-32-. The fact of resurrection and the present life.
- A** 15:-32,33. The fact of resurrection and its relation to practice.

It will be seen that, just as in the preceding section, the apostle's first emphasis is upon the historic fact, and not upon the doctrine that is based upon it. As a wise master builder indeed he lays the foundation. If Christ indeed rose from the dead, then, whatever varieties of opinion may be held, that fact remains and necessitates the fulfilment of the great plan of redemption. By comparing the corresponding members of the structure set out above, it will be seen that the apostle brings the fact of resurrection to bear upon doctrine and practice, the trials and experiences of this present life, and the great reconciliation toward which the purpose of the ages slowly but surely moves. Let us examine each section. First we have the bearing of the resurrection upon doctrine.

### 1 Corinthians 15:13-18

- a** 15:13-. If no resurrection.
- b** 15:-13. Christ not raised.
- c** 15:14-. If Christ not raised.
- d** 15:-14,15. Preaching and faith vain. False witness.
- a** 15:16-. If no resurrection.
- b** 15:-16. Christ not raised.
- c** 15:17-. If Christ not raised.
- d** 15:-17,18. Faith vain, yet in sins. Sleepers in Christ perished.

The section 13-34 is introduced by the question of verse 12:



'Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?'

We have here an *argumentum ex absurdo*. The apostle had established upon indubitable evidence and the testimony of Scripture that 'Christ rose again the third day'. How therefore could anyone say, 'There is no resurrection of the dead', for if resurrection is proved to have taken place once it may take place again.

'If the *species* be conceded, how is it that some among you deny the *genus*?' (Alford *in loco*).

Verse 13 takes up the other position and shows its disastrous results:

'But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen'.

If it be absurd, and unphilosophical to give credence to the idea that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, it renders also faith in the resurrection of Christ absurd and vain too. Pursuing this aspect, the apostle with relentless logic shows that they who deny the doctrine of the resurrection deny the whole scheme of salvation. The apostle's preaching would be vain. The word literally means 'empty'. Their proclamation would be like sounding brass or tinkling cymbals. So also the faith of those who had put their trust in the Christ they had preached. Then for a moment the apostle pauses to consider the position in which this denial placed the apostles themselves - men who had hazarded their lives for the truth they believed; men who had all to lose and nothing to gain in this life by their testimony - these must be branded as false witnesses of God, if Christ rose not from the dead, for they declared that God had raised Him from the dead as the very basis of their evangel.

Notice further the way in which the impersonal *doctrine* of the resurrection is used interchangeably with the *historic fact* of the resurrection of Christ. He does not say, 'Whom He raised not up, if so be that Christ rose not', but 'Whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not', and that this is the thought verses 16 and 17 show:

'For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain; ye are yet in your sins'.

Surely the apostle perceives and would have us see that Christ took no empty title when He called Himself, 'The Son of man'. His resurrection is the pledge, not merely of the resurrection of some, but of 'the dead'. We shall see that this thought lies here when we come to the central passages which speak of Adam. The apostle's final exposure is given in verse 18:

'Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished'.

Words could not more strongly plead for the absolute necessity of the resurrection. The apostle had no place in his teaching for 'a never dying soul'; immortality was a part of his gospel, but it did not pertain to the human soul by nature, it was found only in Christ. This gift of immortality, however, has not yet been given to any believer. Further on in this chapter he shows that this *mortal* puts on *immortality* at the time of the resurrection. With one sweep the apostle disposes of the idea of a conscious intermediate state, and that at death the believer passes straight away to heaven or to paradise. If there be no resurrection, and if Christ be not raised, there is not even a state of hopeless despair or unclothed waiting, but all will have perished. John 3:16, so often quoted and so little studied, places *perishing* as an alternative to *everlasting life*. In 1 Thessalonians 4, when the apostle would comfort the mourners; he does not adopt the language of our hymn books or of poets, and say to the sorrowing ones that their departed friends were then with the Lord, therefore rejoice; what he does say is, that when the Lord comes all will be raised and reunited, 'Wherefore comfort one another with *these* words'. If we do not feel that our *all* hinges upon the fact of Christ's resurrection and our own, then we have not the same faith as the apostle who penned 1 Corinthians 15:18.

One verse only now intervenes between this long argument and the triumphant assertion of positive truth. That verse just pauses to reflect upon the hopeless state of the Christian in this life:

'If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable' (15:19).

Comment upon such a statement is unnecessary. All who have sought to live godly in Christ Jesus have realized that it involves in some degree the loss of this life and its advantages.

The apostle now opens up the next great spiritual fulfilment of Israel's feasts. We have seen how the cross, Christ crucified, Christ our passover, dominates the opening section with its divisions and its immorality. The next great type which supplies the theme of this chapter is that of Israel's Feast of the Firstfruits. Let us see its setting:

**1 Corinthians 15:20-23**

- |  |   |             |
|--|---|-------------|
| <b>a</b> 15:20-. Now is Christ risen.      | } |             |
|  | } | 1st Coming. |
| <b>b</b> 15:-20. Type. Firstfruits.        | } |             |
| <b>c</b> 15:21-. By man came death.        | } |             |
| <b>d</b> 15:-21. By man came resurrection. | } | Racial.     |
| <b>c</b> 15:22-. In Adam all die.          | } |             |
| <b>d</b> 15:-22. In Christ all made alive. | } |             |
| <b>b</b> 15:23-. Christ the firstfruits.   | } |             |
|  | } | 2nd Coming. |
| <b>a</b> 15:-23. They that are Christ's.   | } |             |

The risen Christ is the firstfruits. This fact begins and ends the section. One theme occupies the central portion, and that is *death* and *life* as they are related to the race and the respective heads of the race, Adam or Christ. To view the title of Christ as firstfruits in the light of Leviticus 23, and ignore the great fact of 1 Corinthians 15:21,22 is to miss the truth. 'The head of every man is Christ', even as the head of every woman is man, without regard to the question of their salvation. In the opening argument, the apostle limited himself to the vital connection which the resurrection had with the gospel. From that he shewed that the hope of the believer, the forgiveness of sins, and the present stay of the suffering saint was also most vitally bound up with the fact that Christ rose from the dead.

He now takes another stride. From gospel and faith he goes further back to the connection which Christ's resurrection has with the whole race as in Adam, shewing that Christ must be raised from the dead for the accomplishment of the wider purposes of God. This is indicated by the firstfruits. There are eight occurrences of the word *aparche*, 'firstfruits' in the New Testament. Eight is the dominical number, the octave, the new start, the resurrection. The eight references are as follows:

- 'Because creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption ... ourselves also (groan) which have the firstfruits of the spirit' (Rom. 8:20-23 Author's translation).
- '... what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy' (Rom. 11:15,16).
- 'Salute my beloved Epenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ' (Rom. 16:5 Author's translation).
- 'But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept' ... 'Christ the firstfruits' (1 Cor. 15:20,23).
- '... ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia' (1 Cor. 16:15).
- '... that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures' (Jas. 1:18).
- '... the firstfruits unto God and to the lamb' (Rev. 14:4).

It will be seen that the reference in Romans 8 links the type to the deliverance of creation from the bondage into which it was subjected by Adam's sin. James too speaks of a firstfruits, not of saved ones, church, or synagogues, but of 'His creatures'. Romans 11 uses the word of the remnant of Israel. Now what common bond is there that will bring these passages together? There is one word, the key word of the period under review, *reconciliation*. This is implied in Romans 8, and expressed in Romans 11:15. Immediately following the word reconciliation (A.V. atonement) in Romans 5, we read, 'Wherefore as by *one man* sin entered into the world, and death by sin'. This is implied in 1 Corinthians 15 by the connection which we have noticed between firstfruits, Adam, and reconciliation in the other passages.

There is no reference to this type in the epistles of the mystery. The resurrection of Christ in the sphere of the mystery goes back further still and places the title 'Firstborn from the dead' in line with 'Firstborn of all creation'. 1 Corinthians 15 deals with 'all in Adam'. Leviticus 23:10,11 must be considered in order to see the type in its original setting:

'Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it'.

There is undoubted prophecy in this type of the resurrection of Christ. The first day after the passover sabbath was the actual day upon which Christ rose from the dead.\* The apostle does not detail the outworking of this great type beyond that which immediately applies to the believers of the period, whose hope was the *parousia* of the Lord. The resurrection and the hope of the one body as revealed in the Prison Epistles, written after Acts 28, find no mention here. Neither is there anything said of 'the rest of the dead' that 'lived not again till the thousand years were finished'. Paul is not teaching the reconciliation or expounding the great purpose of the ages; he is correcting rather the error of the Corinthians on the one subject of the resurrection, and brings to bear this great theme in order to reveal the tremendous issues that hang upon the doctrine.

The 'coming' of Christ here is the *parousia*. This word means His personal presence, and is found in the Papyri in reference to the coming of a king (Teblunis Papyri, No. 116,57).

'We now may say that the best interpretation of the primitive Christian hope of the *parousia* is the old advent text, Behold *thy king* cometh unto thee' (Deissmann, *Light from Ancient East*, page 372).

Its first occurrence is Matthew 24:3. It comes again in Matthew 24:27,37,39. Again in 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:1,8; James 5:7,8; 2 Peter 1:16; 3:4; 1 John 2:28. It is associated with the time when the earth will be like it was in the days of Noah, with great signs in the heavens, with the man of sin and the temple, with the period immediately after the great tribulation. The word *parousia* is never used by Paul in his later epistles for the hope of the church of the one body. It is limited to the period covered by the Gospels and the Acts and is associated with the people of Israel, and the day of the Lord.

The death brought in by Adam is removed by Christ in the case of some believers at His Coming, in the case of others after the Millenium, but there is also to be a resurrection of the just and the unjust, and none can live again apart from Christ. He is the Firstfruits.

The Corinthians are now taken one step further in the endeavour to impress upon them the fundamental importance of the resurrection. The very goal of the ages is impossible without it. This is shown in the verses that follow.

### 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

A 15:24-. The end.

- B | a 15:-24-. WHEN He delivers up the kingdom.  
 | b 15:-24. WHEN He abolishes all rule.  
 | c 15:25-. FOR He must reign.  
 | d 15:-25. Till all enemies under foot.  
 | d 15:26-. The last enemy; death abolished.  
 | c 15:-26. FOR He hath put all things under His feet.  
 | b 15:27. WHEN. The one exception.  
 | a 15:28-. WHEN. The Son Himself subjected.

A 15:-28. That God may be all in all.

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\* See chapter 15 of *Life Through His Name* by C.H. Welch, for a detailed study of the day and time of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord.

There is no word for 'cometh' in the original of verse 24. It simply reads 'Then the end'. Some understand the words to mean 'Then the end rank', but we can find no justification for such a rendering. Cremer, in his note on *to telos*, says that this word does not primarily denote the *end, termination*, with reference to time, but the *goal reached, the completion or conclusion* at which anything arrives, either as *issue* or *ending*; or as a result, acme, consummation, e.g., *polemon telos*, 'victory' (literally 'the end of war', end, not measuring time but object); *telos andros*, 'the full age of man' (not the end of man - death), also of the 'ripening of seed'. In Luke 1:33 and Mark 3:26 the idea of termination seems uppermost. The idea of *issue, end, conclusion*, is seen in Matthew 26:58, 'To see the end'; James 5:11, 'Ye have seen the end of the Lord'; 1 Peter 4:17, 'What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?'

The idea of a *goal reached* is seen in Romans 6:21, 'The end of those things is death'; Philippians 3:19, 'Whose end is destruction'. So also 2 Corinthians 11:15; Hebrews 6:8. When the apostle wrote the words of 1 Corinthians 15:24, 'Then the end', what goal had he in view? What is the object of resurrection? Does it not take man back into the place intended for him in the Divine purpose, for which sin and death had for a while rendered him unfit? The goal, this end in view, is contained in the words of 1 Corinthians 15:28, 'That God may be all in all'. Although 'the end' is mentioned immediately after the resurrection of those that are Christ's at His *parousia*, it is not attained without a reign of righteousness and a rule of iron. The uninterrupted statement of the end is as follows:

'Then the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ... with the object that God may be all in all' (Author's translation).

The reader is aware, however, that the end is not attained in this unbroken sequence. The first 'When' is conditional upon the second, 'When He shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power'. This will not be effected by one grand miraculous stroke, but by the reign of Christ as king, 'For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet'. He reigns 'till', His reign has one supreme 'end', and that end cannot be reached while one unsubdued enemy exists.

In this category comes death, the last enemy of mortal man. 'Even death, the last enemy, shall be abolished'. This is included in the Divine purpose, 'For He hath put all things under His feet'. The resurrection therefore is absolutely essential to the fulfilment of the great purpose of God.

But it may be asked, can such an expression as 'destroyed' or 'abolished' speak of resurrection? Take the statement of 2 Timothy 1:10 :

'But now is made manifest by the manifestation of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who abolished (*katargeo*) death, and illuminated life and incorruptibility through the gospel' (Author's translation).

This refers to the Lord Himself, in the first instance. He abolished death when He arose from the dead. Not only did He abolish death, but He commenced that destruction of all rule and power which He will carry through when He sits upon the throne of His glory:

'... that through death He might destroy (*katargeo*) him that had the power of death, that is, the devil' (Heb. 2:14).

Other passages illustrating the meaning of *katargeo* ('put down', 'destroyed' 1 Cor. 15:24-26) are Romans 6:6; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 13:11; 2 Corinthians 3:7; Ephesians 2:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

When we read 'all rule and all authority and power', we may be inclined to make too wide a sweep, but the corrective of verse 26 enables us to see that we are dealing with *enemies*. There are two distinct actions, and two distinct classes in view in these verses. The enemies are 'abolished', but others are 'subdued'. This word 'subdued' (*hupotasso*) is a cognate of *tagma*, 'order', 'rank' of verse 23, and looks to the perfect order and alignment that will characterize the kingdom of Christ. It is used of Christ Himself in the words, 'Then shall the Son also Himself be *subject* unto Him ... that God may be all in all'.

The first occurrence of the word is beautiful in its suggestiveness. That One of Whom it was prophesied that 'all things should be subjected beneath His feet' did not presume to act out of harmony with the Father's will for Him during His boyhood, for:

'He ... came to Nazareth (with His parents), and was *subject* unto them' (Luke 2:51).

In Romans 8:7 the two words 'enmity' and 'subjection' are seen to be irreconcilable:

'... the carnal mind is *enmity* against God: for it is not *subject* to the law of God, neither indeed *can be*'.

The word 'subject' involves the idea of a 'willing surrender'. All must come down in that day. Some by being 'abolished' or 'destroyed', others by a willing surrender like unto that of the Son of God Himself. In Romans 8:20 it is revealed that the creation has become involuntarily subjected to vanity, and this cries aloud for that willing submission of all things to the true goal of all creation - Christ. The word is used in Philippians 3:21, where the transforming of the body of humiliation is said to be according to the self-same energy whereby He is able to *subject* all things to Himself. Surely this cannot include the power that destroys - it is foreign to the thought. Destruction or subjection is the idea of 1 Corinthians 15.

While 1 Corinthians 15 is mainly concerned with the human phase of the great purpose of God, as expressed in the words 'in Adam', nevertheless the reference to 'all rule and all authority and power' goes beyond the sphere of Adam. Before the Son delivers up the kingdom, all rule, authority and power will be abolished (*arche, exousia, dunamis*). These are the principalities and powers of Colossians 1:16 and Ephesians 1:21. They are linked with death in the closing verses of Romans 8, over which the believer is more than conqueror. Ephesians 6 reveals that the church of the one body has principalities and powers among its spiritual enemies, and Colossians 1:16-20 shows that principalities and powers will be reconciled. Once again we are forced to see that the reign of Christ before 'the end' is reached will be a process of discrimination. Some will be 'destroyed', others will be 'reconciled', and when all enemies will have been abolished and all the redeemed and unfallen brought into perfect line (subjection carries with it the idea of perfect order and harmony) with the great Archetype of all, then 'the end' is reached and God will be all in all.

There is a tendency on the part of some expositors to wander outside the passage and introduce subjects which are quite foreign to the intention of the apostle. This is so with regard to the word 'death'. What 'death' is intended in verse 26? The subject is introduced in verse 21 definitely and exclusively. There can be no doubt as to what is intended:

'... by man came death ... as in Adam all die' (15:21,22).

'... Death is swallowed up in victory' (15:54).

Its sting is removed (verse 55), which sting is sin (verse 56).

By comparing the two balancing portions of this chapter together we shall get further and fuller light upon the whole subject. The two portions are balanced in the structure (p. 212):

15:13-33. Adam and Christ. Death destroyed. 'When?'

15:36-57. The first and last Adam. Death swallowed up. 'When?'

- (1) The differences of every one's 'order' are amplified (15:23 with 15:37-44).
- (2) The nature and relation of Adam is explained (15:21,22 with 15:45,47,49).
- (3) The nature and relation of Christ is explained (15:20-22,28 with 15:45,47,49).
- (4) The meaning of the destruction of death is given (15:26 with 15:54).
- (5) The time periods are illuminated (15:24 with 15:54).

These amplifications by the apostle of his own words are worth more than libraries of other men's thoughts, and give us inspired explanations which to see is to come under an obligation to accept and hold against all theories. Let us briefly notice these Divine amplifications in the order in which they occur.

### (1) Every man in his own order (15:23; amplification 15:37-44)

In the first passage only one order of the redeemed is indicated, viz., 'Those that are Christ's at His coming'. The amplifying verses 37-44 keep within these bounds, and do not add other orders, but rather show the variety of ranks

that will be found among the redeemed at that time. This explanation arises out of the answer to the question of verse 35, 'But some will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?' The apostle's answer is short and pointed. 'Thou fool!' The question 'How?' is not always a question of faith or unto edifying. The Lord has nowhere revealed 'how' the resurrection will take place; He has revealed the fact for our hope and our faith. The apostle, for answer, calls the questioner's attention to a phenomenon of the physical world:

'That which thou sowest is not made alive (verse 22) except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare (naked) grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed its own body' (15:36-38 Author's translation).

There is much food for thought here. Many Christians wonder how it is possible for the individual dead body to be raised, and ask many questions which need never arise. One might put them a question in this form. A certain man 3,000 years ago died, and was buried. Five hundred years later, the elements that composed the first man's body became the body of another man. He also died, and each 500 years the same elements became the body of another man. At the resurrection whose body would it be, for all these men had it? The answer would be, 'Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God'. First of all, Scripture does not speak of the resurrection of the *body*, but of the resurrection of the *dead*. The body is given by God at the resurrection and will be in accord with the believer's rank. 'There are heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies'. These words do not refer to the 'heavenly bodies' of astronomy, but to the resurrection bodies of believers. In the resurrection there will be some raised to sit at the right hand of God far above all; some will walk the streets of the New Jerusalem; some will inherit the earth, and for each sphere of blessing an appropriate body will be given. 'How' God preserves the identity and individuality of each soul is not emphasised, possibly the explanation would not have been intelligible to us even if it had been revealed. Then as to the differing 'ranks':

'There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differeth from star in glory, SO IS THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD ALSO' (15:41,42 Author's translation).

that is, it too is raised with a different body, and the glory of one raised believer will differ from that of another, 'every man in his own rank'. The contrasts between the body which we have 'in Adam' and that which God will give 'in Christ' are given:

Corruption..... contrasted with incorruption.  
 Dishonour ..... contrasted with glory.  
 Weakness ..... contrasted with power.  
 A natural body..... contrasted with a spiritual body.

The 'sowing' here in each of the four instances must not be translated as of the death and burial of a believer. When seed is sown it must be *alive*, or nothing will come of it. If living seed be sown, it dies, and lives again. That is the teaching here. The 'sowing' is our birth into the life of the Adamic race, the 'raising' is our *new* birth into the life of Christ.

Following this statement the apostle says, 'There is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body'. *This is a revelation*. The conception which is formed of the life after death by the religions of men is that of disembodied spirits, or souls, but the resurrection necessitates a body. The word 'natural' is *psuchikos* and occurs in 1 Corinthians 2:14; James 3:15 translates it 'sensual'. The word 'spiritual' (*pneumatikos*) is contrasted with the natural in 1 Corinthians 2:13-15; and with 'carnal' (*sarkikos*) in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3. The English language does not contain a word that allows us to see the contrast clearly. If we could use the expression 'soul-ical' we should the better see the intention. 'There is a soul-ical body, there is also a spirit-ual body'. Now the soul-ical body is 'flesh and blood'. Such cannot inherit the kingdom of God (see verse 50); and the fact that the verse continues 'neither does corruption inherit incorruption' is confirmatory of the interpretation of verse 42 given above.

This reference to the soul-ical body which we *now possess* and the spiritual body which we *shall possess* in that day introduces the next amplification, viz.

**(2) The nature and relation of Adam to the race (15:21,22; amplification 15:45,47 and 49)**

‘And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul (*psuche*, see *psuchikos*); the last Adam was made a quickening (life-giving) Spirit’ (*pneuma*, see *pneumatikos*) (15:45).

Here it is clear that the two bodies, the natural flesh and blood body (with its corruption, dishonour and weakness), and the spiritual body (with its incorruption, glory and power), are directly associated with Adam and Christ. Adam was made a living soul. Many theologians have sought to show from Genesis 2:7 that by this statement man is differentiated from all else in creation, and is possessed of an immortal soul, which is often further confounded with the spiritual part of man. When we know that the word translated ‘soul’ comes in Genesis as follows, ‘Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath soul’ (1:20), and ‘creature’ (1:21,24); and ‘life’ (1:30), we see that the word ‘soul’ does not confer upon man any special dignity. Leviticus 17:11 says, ‘the life (soul) of the flesh is in the blood’. Here we have the three words of 1 Corinthians 15:45-50 together. If this Scriptural fact does not seem sufficient we shall find further teaching in the nature of Adam by reading 1 Corinthians 15:46,47 :

‘Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven’.

Adam therefore when created was not ‘spiritual’; he was a natural man quite apart from sin. Christ is the spiritual head of mankind, not Adam. Adam’s nature is closely connected with his relation to the race:

‘As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy ... we have borne the image of the earthy’ (15:48,49).

**(3) The nature and relation of Christ (15:20-22,28; amplification 15:45,47,49)**

This is not fully revealed in the chapter, but only so far as the subject necessitates. The revelation is, however, wonderful and basic. It has already been put in those pregnant words, ‘For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive’. Here these words are rounded out a little more. Christ is a life-giving spirit in contrast with Adam who was of the earth, earthy. Then as to His relationship, Christ is the last Adam, and the second man. Here are the two great heads of mankind. The earthy passes on the earthy image; the heavenly the heavenly image. This image refers to the body; the earthy image being the natural body, the heavenly image the spiritual body.

All this necessitates the statement ‘flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God’. If we collect together all that is said of Adam and Christ in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5, we shall realize somewhat the fulness of this theme. We should also realize that although the word reconciliation is not mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15, it is latent in the subject.

**(4) The abolition or destruction of death receives its interpretation here (15:26; amplification 15:54)**

If verse 26 stood alone it would not be easy to decide whether resurrection was intended or whether the casting of death into the lake of fire was in view. We are left without doubt by verses 54-57:

‘So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ’.

Death, the last enemy, is abolished by being *swallowed up in victory*. That victory is given to the believer through the Lord Jesus Christ. It can be nothing else than the resurrection of the redeemed. The lake of fire cannot be intended here. The second death is not the result of Adam’s sin. It is foreign to the subject of 1 Corinthians 15.

**(5) The time periods also receive explanation (15:24; amplification 15:54)**

The end is attained ‘when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father’, and this is not done until all enemies are abolished, and all the redeemed are placed in their proper rank under Christ. The abolishing of death is timed for us in 1 Corinthians 15:54 by the words, ‘When ... then’. Isaiah 25:8 contains the verse quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:54. It is in a context of Millennial administration:

‘Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously’ (Isa. 24:23).

‘And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it’ (Isa. 25:6-8). (See also Isa. 26:1 and 27:1).

A further note of time is given in 1 Corinthians 15:52, ‘At the last trump’. In Revelation 11, at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, ‘the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ’. Immediately there follows reference to the ‘great power’ and the ‘reign’ and the ‘time of the dead’, and the ‘destruction of them that destroy the earth’. These Scriptures therefore place the period in view as being before the second death.

Perhaps a word will be expected upon that difficult verse 1 Corinthians 15:29 :

‘Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?’

We do not for one moment believe that the passage teaches baptism for the dead, by proxy, although this strange rite is practiced by ‘The Church of the Latter Day Saints’, commonly known as the ‘Mormons’. We quote from a report in the Arizona Republican Phoenix, November 23rd 1921:

‘Up to and including the year 1920 there have been 3,220,196 baptisms performed by proxy in the temples ... and since the world has so wonderfully helped us out in genealogical research, placing in our hands so munificently the records of our fathers, the year 1921 bids fair to double the number of 1920. Genealogy, and its handmaid, temple service, contemplates tracing the family line back to Adam, and administrating the ordinance of baptism ...’

The strange idea contained in these words, and the enormous energy and patience expended upon the ‘5,500 volumes of genealogy’ in the Library at Utah, are swept aside by the one majestic statement, ‘As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive’.

The meaning of verse 29 appears to be this. It reads on from verse 19, ‘If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable’. For what is the good of being baptized? It is merely a baptism into death if the dead rise not. Baptism, however, is not only ‘into His death’ but:

‘... we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection’ (Rom. 6:4-5).

The apostle follows the question, ‘Why are they then baptized for the dead?’ by another which illuminates his meaning, ‘And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? ... I die daily’ (1 Cor. 15:30,31).

The grand conclusion with its spiritual exhortation must not be omitted in this summary:

‘Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord’ (15:58).

The connection between the resurrection and reconciliation is shown to be vital. It takes us out of the sphere of Adam to place us into the sphere of Christ. While we are all alike included in each category, different ranks are to be found in the resurrection. Further, some will be abolished as enemies before the kingdom is delivered up to the Father. These we see at the great white throne, whose names are not in the book of life, and who are cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, and from that Scripture nowhere speaks of a resurrection. Fire is throughout Scripture and in nature a great destroyer; and as death and hades are to be cast in too, it looks as though this represents the final riddance from that kingdom of all things that offend before the time arrives when God shall be all in all.

The way is now clear for more direct teaching concerning the reconciliation, and immediately the news reaches the apostle that the Corinthians had taken to heart the warnings and censures of the first epistle, he dispatches a



second message full of heart revelations and personal touches, but above all, a real systematic unfolding of the ministry of the reconciliation.

## CHAPTER 13

### Second Epistle to the Corinthians

#### Reconciliation Proclaimed

The space at our disposal will not allow us to review the whole of this epistle, nor to enter into the questions that have been raised with regard to its composition. We must leave untouched the revelations of the apostle's own heart and sympathetic nature, and focus our attention upon the two great features contained in the words, 'The *ministry* of the *reconciliation*'.

Ministry (*diakonia*) runs through this epistle as part of its structure. Speaking of the new covenant as contrasted with the old he speaks of one as 'the *ministration* of death' (3:7), and 'the *ministration* of condemnation' (3:9); and of the other in strong contrast as 'the *ministration* of the spirit' (3:8) and 'the *ministration* of righteousness' (3:9). God had made the apostle and his associates 'able *ministers* of the new testament (covenant)' (3:6).

Closely connected with the ministry of the new covenant is that of the reconciliation, which is referred to in chapter 5. We observed in 1 Corinthians 1:6 that the collection for the saints at Jerusalem had the reconciliation as its basis, and here in this second epistle the word *diakonia* is used of this service (8:4; 9:1,12,13). The last reference (9:12,13) contains a statement which is luminous in the light of the reconciliation:

'For the ministry of this service *not only* supplieth the wants of the saints, *but also* aboundeth through the many thanksgivings to God, for they, through the proof of this ministry, are glorifying God for your *avowed* subjection to the gospel of Christ' (Author's translation).

At the end of this chapter we give the structure of the epistle as a whole for the benefit of any who desire to carry these studies further. Here we consider one member only.

#### 2 Corinthians 2:17 to 7:4

##### The apostle's ministry

- A 2:17 to 4:7. The ministry of the new covenant. 'No need of commendation'.
- B 4:8 to 5:11. Resurrection power in great tribulation.
- A 5:12 to 7:3. The ministry of the reconciliation. 'Commendation of sufferings'.
- B 7:4. Exceeding joyful in tribulation.

It is not accidental that the subject of ministry is alternated with the apostle's experiences, for these experiences emphasize the utter failure of the flesh and the necessity for the resurrection, and so complement the doctrine. In the first chapter this experience meets us:

'For we do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, as to our tribulation which happened to us in Asia, that exceedingly beyond power were we weighed down, so that we despaired even of life. But we ourselves have the *sentence of death* within ourselves, that we might rest our confidence not upon ourselves, but upon *God who raiseth the dead*' (1:8,9 Author's translation).

This same twofold experience is found expressed in connection with the apostle's ministry:

'But we have this treasure in *earthen* vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us ... Always bearing about in the body the *dying* of the Lord Jesus, that the *life also* of Jesus might be made manifest in our body ... in our mortal flesh' (4:7,10,11).

'... approving (commending) ourselves as the ministers of God ... as *dying*, and, behold, *we live*' (6:4-9).

To the last chapter this twofold experience follows us, for there we read:

'Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me (who unto you is not weak, but is mighty in you. For even He was crucified through weakness, yet He lives by the power of God; and though we also are weak in Him, yet we shall live with Him, through the power of God unto you), examine yourselves' (13:3-5 Author's translation).

Paul had ceased to know Christ after the flesh. In *Galatians* Paul had left it crucified with its 'affections and desires' (Gal. 5:24); in 2 Corinthians it is repudiated in all its forms, 'fleshly wisdom' (1:12), and 'fleshly weapons' (10:4). He set aside a knowledge of Christ after the flesh as entirely incompatible with his ministry. The Corinthians were urged to cleanse themselves 'from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit' (7:1). Paul repudiated the charge that he 'walked according to the flesh' (10:2), or 'warred according to it' (10:3). As a 'fool' he makes his boast in the flesh (11:18), and lest he should be exalted above measure he received a 'stake in the flesh' (12:7).

We must now turn our attention to the section of the epistle that deals with the ministry of the reconciliation wherein fleshly distinctions are set aside. The references to the old covenant in chapter 3 left Israel with the veil over their hearts, parallel to the blindness that is spoken of in Romans 11. The law was used by Satan to blind the eyes to the fulness of grace in the reconciliation:

'If our gospel be veiled, it is veiled by those (things) which are destroyed (i.e. chapter 3), by which (things) the god of this age blinded, etc.' (2 Cor. 4:3,4 Author's translation).

This is the background for the reconciliation of the Gentile. Let us see the setting of the subject before going further.

### The Ministry of Reconciliation

#### 2 Corinthians 5:12 to 7:4

- A 5:12. Not commending ourselves.
- B 5:13,14. Love of Christ constrains.
- C 5:15. Life to self, contrary to resurrection.
- D 5:16-18-. Reconciliation. Effect upon fleshly distinctions.
- E 5:-18 to 6:3. The ministry of the reconciliation. Received. Exercised. Not received in vain; no offence. Not blamed.
- A 6:4-10. Commending ourselves.
- B 6:11. Our heart enlarged.
- C 6:12. Straightened in selves, contrary to reconciliation.
- D 6:14 to 7:1. The promises. Effect upon fleshly connections.
- E 7:2-4. The ministries. Receive us. Unblamable.

It is interesting to note that the 'promises' (D 6:14 to 7:1) correspond with the reconciliation. These promises, 'I will dwell among them, and walk among them, and I will be their God', look forward to Revelation 21:1-7. There, when all things are made new, the tabernacle of God will be with *men* (no longer with *Israel*), and He will dwell with *them*, and *they* shall be His people. The 'old things' and the 'new', and the 'new creation' of 2 Corinthians 5 are therefore quite in line with this thought. Israel were blind to this truth. The god of this age had blinded the minds of them that believed not, 'lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, *Who is the image of God*, should shine unto them' (2 Cor. 4:4).

Here, once again, as in 1 Corinthians 15 and Colossians 1, Christ as the image of God is connected with the reconciliation. We found in 1 Corinthians 15 the statement, 'In Adam all die'. In 2 Corinthians 5:14 the other side of the truth is presented. 'We thus judge, that if one died for all, then the all died'. Scripture makes it abundantly clear that there is 'a justification of life' for all in the death of Christ. The act of Christ in Romans 5, 1 Corinthians 15, and 2 Corinthians 5 is viewed as that of the representative and head of the race. If it can be said, 'He died for all', it will follow that 'all died'. A further statement is made in 5:19 which shows the vast consequences of this great work of reconciliation:

'God was by Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting to them their trespasses' (Author's translation).

We find the apostle as an ambassador in 5:20 :

'As if God were beseeching through us, we entreat on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God' (Author's translation).

This is the other phase of the truth that makes a complete presentation. Adam's one offence involving all is taken away. No longer is there a barrier between man and God, but, as Romans 5 shows, the reconciliation made by Christ must be 'received' (Rom. 5:11-17), and further, salvation is spoken of as being 'much more', and connected with 'His life'. There is but one company that will fail of the fruits of the reconciliation; they are those whose names are not found written in the book of life. Who, and how many there will be is not for us to know, but the question is illuminated by the study of the two seeds, the one the seed of God, the other the seed of Satan. This is too vast a theme for present consideration; we mention it here, however, for the benefit of any who would profit by its investigation.

Christ stands at the head of a new creation. 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature'. The world is reconciled, but the world is not a new creation. Those who receive the reconciliation become such, and are a kind of firstfruits of the harvest yet to be. For this the apostle laboured and suffered, suffered as few ever have suffered. His 'commendation' (margin) is given in 6:4-10. The great defence of his apostleship which occupies chapters 11 and 12 was forced upon him by those who traduced the minister in order to belittle the ministry. The narrow limits of Judaistic Christianity could not hold the glorious message which ignored national distinctions and went back to the common father of all, Adam. Christ is seen also, not merely as David's greater Son, or Israel's Messiah, but the Son of Abraham in blessing for the Gentiles, and the Image of God as the Head of the race.

We conclude this very brief account of a wondrous passage with the structure of the epistle as a whole in order that, if brief, our survey may not be without some approach to completeness.

## 2 Corinthians

### The epistle as a whole

- A 1:1,2. Introduction. Salutation.
- B a 1:3-11. Thanksgiving for comfort in affliction.
  - b 1:12. The apostle's manner of life.
- C 1:13 to 2:13. Subject of writing. Visit. Vindication. No rest in spirit. Macedonia.
- B a 2:14-16. Thanksgiving for triumph in affliction.
  - b 2:17 to 7:4. The apostle's ministry.
- C 7:5 to 13:10. Subject of writing. Visit. Vindication. No rest in spirit. Macedonia.
- A 13:11-14. Conclusion. Benediction.

## CHAPTER 14

### The Epistle to the Romans

#### SECTION I

#### Reconciliation and Failure of the law.

In our studies so far we have traced the themes of the earlier epistles in broad outline only. We have observed how large a bulk is occupied with the apostle's fight for the recognition of his apostleship and gospel. The ministry of the reconciliation found many foes, for it struck deeply into the national pride of the circumcision. The epistles to the Galatians, Thessalonians and Corinthians were addressed to churches which had been founded and visited by the apostle. These epistles necessarily abound in matters either personal to the apostle, or to the churches. While the principles contained in the apostle's answers remain for our guidance, many of the portions to the Corinthians, for example, have ceased to be our immediate concern.

The epistle to the Romans differs in this respect from all that had been written before it. The apostle had never been to Rome, neither had he founded the church there. By the time the epistle was written the controversy concerning his apostleship had subsided. Rome also was a fitting place to which the apostle to the Gentiles might direct a clear definite exposition of the gospel which he called 'my gospel', and the ministry which was linked with it, namely, that of the reconciliation. In this epistle justification by faith, which is treated in a personal fashion in Galatians, is more carefully explained and elaborated. The nations and the nation are passed in orderly review, and the whole position doctrinally, dispensationally and practically set out.

We shall attempt to demonstrate the teaching of the epistle to the Romans by pursuing the following lines of study:

1. Reconciliation, as viewed in relation to (a) doctrine, (b) dispensation, and (c) practice.
2. Reconciliation, as viewed from (a) the outer, and (b) the inner revelation of the epistle.

First a word or two regarding this subdivision, (a) the outer, and (b) the inner teaching of Romans. We believe J.N. Darby was among the first of modern writers to point out that sin in Romans 5:12 to 8:39 is in the singular, and means inherited depravity; but we are indebted to a note from Mr. George Parker of China for the clearer reference to Babel. The outer portion of Romans occupies 1:1 to 5:11, and 9:1 to 16:27. The inner portion occupies 5:12 to 8:39, and may be viewed as a parenthesis connected with the epistle as a whole, but preserving its distinctions throughout. The outer portion is connected with *Babel and its rebellion*. The inner portion is connected with *Adam and his fall*. In the former case the Babylonian rebellion brought in idolatry, uncleanness and reprobation, 'God gave them up'. In the latter case the fall of Adam brought in sin and death and their dominion. In the former portion Abraham figures as the type of the believer who is drawn out of the existing confusion 'not for his sake alone' (4:23). In the latter case Christ stands as the last Adam, 'the figure of Him who was to come' (5:14). In both spheres it is written 'all sinned', but the contexts of the two references vary considerably. The effect of Adam's sin upon his descendants is summed up in the word 'condemnation'; the effect of Babel's rebellion will be seen in 'the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God'.

#### **Diagram showing the relation of the two sections of Romans**

Romans 1:1 to 5:11.    Romans 9:1 to 16:27.

(Romans 5:12 to 8:39).

This outer and inner line of teaching is witnessed by the opening and closing words of the epistle. Romans 1:1-6 speaks of the gospel as preached by Paul, which had been promised by the prophets in the Holy Scriptures, and which concerned the Lord Jesus Christ, raised from the dead and preached among all nations for the obedience of faith for His name. This represents the outer portion. In Romans 16:25-27 the preaching of the gospel is further expanded to include the revelation of the secret which had been silenced since the age times, but now is made manifest, and by prophetic writings, according to the commandment of the *aionion* God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. This summarizes the inner portion.

- A 1:1 to 5:11
- B 5:12 to 8:39
- A 9:1 to 16:24
- B 16:25-27

We will now consider more closely that section of the outer portion of Romans which commences with chapter 1:18 and closes with chapter 3:20. This section, particularly chapter 2, has presented many difficulties to expositors, and we believe the only solution of the problem of the chapter is found in seeing its connection with the defection of the nations at Babel, the reconciliation effected by Christ and preached by Paul, and the judgment of the nations and Babylon in the day of wrath yet to come, as foretold in the book of the Revelation.

We leave the subject of justification by faith for a time, with the observation that its mention ushers in the passage which deals with the rebellion of the nations. The reason for this connection will be seen, we trust, later:

'For there is being revealed wrath of God from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who are holding down the truth in unrighteousness' (1:18 Author's translation).

*Ungodliness.* - The words *asebeia* and *asebes* are confined to the outer portion of Romans. Ungodliness does not come into the scope of Romans 5:12 to 8:39 - there the deeper depravity of Adamic sin is brought to light. The passages are as follows:

*Asebeia* (1:18; 11:26).

*Asebes* (4:5; 5:6).

Wrath from heaven is revealed against ungodliness, but, as far as Israel is concerned, ungodliness shall finally be turned away from them. The plan of justification by faith is directly concerned with these ungodly ones, for Abraham's justification is brought forward as a pattern of the justification of the ungodly. Christ has died for the ungodly. The connection between Romans 1 and 5 will be the more readily seen as we proceed, but here one link can be realized. Romans 1:18 speaks of wrath revealed from heaven against ungodliness. Romans 5:6 reveals that Christ died for the ungodly, and 5:9 adds:

'Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him'.

This revelation of wrath and deliverance from wrath must now be investigated in order that its place in the outer portion of Romans and the introductory epistles may be clearly seen. Once again we must record the fact that 'wrath' (*orge*) is confined to the outer portion of Romans. Wrath is not revealed against Adamic sin, neither is deliverance from wrath predicated of the work of Christ as the last Adam. Whatever we may think of this, we trust all will see the wisdom of bowing to the limitations set by God in His word, and of continually 'trying the things that differ'.

#### Occurrences of 'Wrath' (*orge*) in Romans

'... wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness' (1:18).

'... impenitence treasures up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of righteous judgement' (2:5 Author's translation).

'... to the contentious and those also who do not obey the truth, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish' (2:8 Author's translation).

'... Is God unrighteous who visits with wrath?' (3:5 Author's translation).

'... the law worketh wrath' (4:15).

'... we shall be saved from wrath' (5:9).

'What if God, willing to exhibit His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction' (9:22 Author's translation).

'... not avenging yourselves, but give place to wrath' (12:19 Author's translation).

The ruler is a 'minister of God ... a revenger to execute wrath ... be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake' (13:4,5).

Galatians and Corinthians do not speak of this revealed wrath, the only other epistle of this period which does so being 1 Thessalonians.

'Wait for His Son from heaven ... which delivered us from the wrath that is coming' (1 Thess. 1:10 Author's translation).

'For the wrath is come upon them unto the end (*eis telos*)' (1 Thess. 2:16 Author's translation).

'God did not appoint us unto wrath' (1 Thess. 5:9 Author's translation).

Let us look at the earlier utterances in 1 Thessalonians first. Those to be delivered from the wrath that is coming (1:10) (1) were turned from idols, (2) served the living and true God, and (3) waited for His Son from heaven. Both the 'turning' and the 'serving' refer to idolatry. Those upon whom the wrath is coming 'for an end' (2:16) are the Jews, who opposing the revelation of the reconciliation hindered the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, thereby

filling up the measure of their sins. The third reference (5:9) links the deliverance from wrath with the second coming in correspondence with 1:10.

While the 2nd epistle does not use the word wrath, yet seeing that it amplifies the teaching of the earlier epistle it must not be omitted from the list.

‘The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with the mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that refuse to know God, (Rotherham) and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with *aionion* destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, whensoever He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be wondered at in all that have believed in that day, because our testimony to you was believed’ (2 Thess. 1:7-10 Author's translation).

The epistle proceeds to give fuller particulars of that awful day. It is a day of *apostasy*, ‘the falling away’; it will be the day of the revelation of the *man of sin, the son of perdition*; in other words, the world reverts to Babel, and on Babylon the wrath of God falls. The student of the book of the Revelation will realize this very fully. The connection between the day of wrath of Romans and Thessalonians and the Apocalypse is further strengthened by the revised reading of 2 Thessalonians 2:2, ‘The day of the Lord is at hand’. The echo of Romans 1 is heard in that day, as indicated in 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 :

‘... they received not the *love of the truth*, that they might be saved ... who believed not *the truth*, but had pleasure in unrighteousness’.

Romans 1:18,21,25,28, speaking of the original apostasy of the nations, is parallel:

‘Those who held down (*katecho*) the truth in unrighteousness’ (Author's translation).

‘... when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful’.

‘Who changed the truth of God into the lie’ (Author's translation).

‘... even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge’.

The quotations make it abundantly clear that those spoken of *did know God and His truth*. The great outward sign of the apostasy indicated in Romans 1 is idolatry:

They ‘changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things’.

‘Who changed the truth of God into a (the) lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen’ (1:23,25).

That idolatry is yet to find a central place in the religious apostasy of the last days the book of the Revelation makes clear. The awful accompaniment of this idolatry is a fact both in the past and in the future:

‘Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves’ (Rom. 1:24).

This is again spoken of as ‘vile affections’ and ‘leaving the natural use’. Here is a parallel with ‘the strong delusion to believe the lie’ of 2 Thessalonians 2:11, and the uncleanness which everywhere accompanies the idolatrous apostasy spoken of in the book of the Revelation. The moral effects are tabulated in the closing verses of Romans 1, and so parallel are they with Paul's own prediction of the last days, that we must set them out together.

#### **Romans 1:29-31.**

‘Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil disposition, whisperers, detractors, haters of God,

#### **2 Timothy 3:1-8.**

‘This know that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, evil speakers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of vices, disobedient to parents, without discernment, regardless of covenants, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful' (Author's translation).

without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, of unbridled passions, savage, unfriendly to good, traitors, reckless, vain, pretentious, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it; from such turn away. For these are they also who are getting into houses, leading captive silly women laden with sins, led on by various inordinate desires, always learning and never able to come to an acknowledgment of the truth. Now in the same manner in which Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, thus these also withstand the truth, men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith' (Author's translation).

Thus far the awful list. The reference to Jannes and Jambres makes one think of the miracles performed by the false prophet, which are also alluded to in 2 Thessalonians 2:9. The apostasy at Babel with its idolatry and corruption, etc., gathers in increased intensity for the final act.

We now return to Romans 1 for further teaching. The nations at the beginning *knew the truth*. This is evident from the fact that they are charged with holding it in unrighteousness, with changing it for the lie, and with not approving to retain God in their knowledge. It is upon such that the vengeance of 2 Thessalonians 1 falls. To interpret the passage to mean that this awful punishment falls upon those who *never knew the truth*, or who never heard the gospel, is monstrous. The charge is against those who would not receive the love of the truth, and who preferred the lie (*see also Revelation*).

The question of the knowledge of these early days, however, is lifted beyond controversy by the testimony of Romans 1:19-21. 'What may be known of God is manifest among them', for one all powerful reason, '*for God manifested it to them*' (Englishman's Greek N.T.). How He did so we may not fully know, but that He did is simply a matter of fact according to the Scriptures. Such men as Melchisedec, Job, Jethro, and others, to say nothing of Abel, Enoch, and Noah, are abundant witnesses to this fact. Long before the *written* revelation was given, God revealed Himself to men. Romans 1 proceeds to point out to us the text-book used by God at that time.

'For the unseen things of Him are clearly seen, from the creation of the world, being apprehended by the mind through the things that are made, even His eternal power and divinity, so as to render them inexcusable' (1:20 Author's translation).

The nations therefore were taught by God, and were under the dispensation of conscience and creation.

In the recorded speeches of Paul we find him, at least upon two occasions, referring to this same dispensation, speaking of its object and revealing that it had at the time of his ministry been superseded by the reconciliation. At Lystra the people were so impressed by the miracle performed by Paul that they said:

'The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men' (Acts 14:11).

The priest of Jupiter would have offered sacrifices to these servants of God, indicating one of the ways in which idolatry originally sprang into being. Paul and Barnabas stayed them from their deed, saying:

`Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God (note similar words of 1 Thess. 1:9,10), which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein' (Acts 14:15).

Then comes the statement concerning the period covering the setting aside of the nations until the reconciliation:

`Who in *times past* suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness' (Acts 14:16,17).

This line of teaching is carried further in the apostle's words on Mars' Hill. Again he commences with a reference to idolatry:

`Athenians, in every way I perceive that you are extremely devoted to the worship of demons (*deisidaimonesterous*), for passing through, and carefully beholding your shrines, I found also an altar on which was inscribed, Unto an Unknown God. Whom therefore ye reverence not knowing, Him I declare unto you. The God that made the world and all things that are therein, the same being Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is served by men's hands as needing something, Himself giving unto all life, and breath, and all things: and has made of one blood every nation of men to dwell upon the whole face of the earth, having determined ordained seasons, and the boundaries of their habitation; that they might seek God, if perhaps they might feel after Him, although He is not far from any one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and are; as also some of the poets among you have said, For we are His offspring. Being therefore the offspring of God, we ought not to think the Deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, the graven form of man's art and imagination' (Acts 17:22-29 Author's translation).

The apostle, as previously in Acts 14, proceeds from the repudiation of idolatry to the attitude of God, (a) during the time of the nations' apostasy, and (b) now, at the introduction of the reconciliation.

`God therefore overlooking the times of ignorance NOW commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has set a day in which He is going to judge the habitable earth (the sphere of Babylonian activity and of the beginning of the Messianic kingdom, Heb. 2) in righteousness, by a man whom He hath appointed, giving the proof of it to all in having raised Him from among the dead' (Acts 17:30,31 Author's translation).

Now this constituted an important part of that which the apostle called `my gospel' (*see* Rom. 2:16) which was for the same `obedience of faith among all nations'. The testimony on Mars' Hill throws light upon Romans 2. It was evidently possible for the nations, apart from the law of Moses and the prophets, to seek after, feel for (grope as the blind, Isa. 59:10), and find God. Romans 2:14,15 says:

`For when those of the nations which have no law practice by nature the things of the law, these, having no law, are a law to themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between one another their thoughts accusing, or even excusing themselves' (Author's translation).

The apostle also speaks of that day of judgment, the coming of which he told the Athenians:

`For as many as have sinned without law shall perish also without law, and as many as have sinned under law shall be judged by law ... in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men's hearts according to MY GOSPEL, by Jesus Christ' (Rom. 2:12-16 Author's translation).

Perhaps the most astounding part of this remarkable chapter is the fact that God will judge in that day according to Paul's gospel! What can this mean? When defining the ministry of the reconciliation the apostle makes a most suggestive statement:

`God was in Christ reconciling a world unto Himself, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES unto them' (2 Cor. 5:19 Author's translation).

This is somewhat similar to the following:

`And the times of their ignorance God condoned' (Acts 17:30 Author's translation).



`To declare His righteousness for the *passing by of the sins of the past* through the forbearance of God' (Rom. 3:25 Author's translation).

This forbearance was likely to be abused, as we know, for the apostle says:

`Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?' (Rom. 2:4).

When Peter, enlightened by the vision as to the reconciliation, stood before Cornelius, he said:

`Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons (cf. Rom. 2:11): but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him' (Acts 10:34,35).

Jonah was taught something of this by God's dealings with Nineveh; and Daniel's words to Nebuchadnezzar were:

`... break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor' (Dan. 4:27).

So of Cornelius it was said:

`Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God' (Acts 10:4).

The relation between demon worship and Gentile idolatry has already come before us when considering the teaching of 1 Corinthians. So we return to Romans 2. In the day of wrath God will render to every man according to his deeds. Then follows a record either of fact or of fiction. Those expositors who, seeing nothing in Romans except that which they choose to term evangelical doctrine, do not hesitate to tell us that the apostle was wrong in what he told the Athenians, and that the verses in Romans 2 now under consideration (i.e., 7-10) are to be taken as purely hypothetical, being stated only to be refuted: that while those verses reveal the righteous principles of God's throne, as a matter of fact they will never come into operation, because there will be none to whom the award can be made, `for there is none righteous, no not one'. Now while this simplifies issues tremendously, and removes all the strain of holding, unmixed, several lines of truth together, it discounts several passages of Scripture (Acts 10, Dan. 4, and Acts 17, among others) and seems to indicate that the apostle was inspired to write a lengthy statement, and then, when he had finished it, to put his pen through it.

Under the view we have been led to take, the reconciliation is seen to be far-reaching. It deals with sins of the past, and we are taught in this same connection that God was not imputing their trespasses unto them. It looks forward to the future, and Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, claims that his message not only has a provision for the limited number of those who both heard and believed, but that it indicates something of the way in which the redemption of Christ will apply to those, who like Nineveh and Tyre, `would have repented' had they had equal opportunity. If under the gospel of Romans the Lord is pleased to accept the obedience of faith, He is also revealed as willing to accept the obedience of conscience from those to whom neither law nor gospel had been given. We must remember that the present gospel, while preached to all, brings salvation only to the elect. It is confusing things that differ to apply church truth to the outside world. That God recognizes the limitation of responsibility is clearly set forth in Romans 10:14,15 :

`How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?'

We need not torture ourselves nor attribute to God the most awful negation of discriminative righteousness, when we think of the untold millions who have lived and died without one ray of light from Moses' law or Christ's gospel. They are provided for. Faith in Christ they cannot exercise, for they never heard of him, but conscience and creation have ever been with them:

`... if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?' (Rom. 2:26).

The same grace that counted Abraham's faith `for righteousness' will `count' the uncircumcision of the heathen who observe the righteous requirement of the law `for circumcision'. If we are not prepared to admit the latter, we

must also renounce the former, for God uses the same word for each. 'The obedience of faith' is in no wise superior to an obedience of conscience, when the different conditions of the two classes are considered. And so God tells us as to the day of judgment, and how it stands related to those who have not the law by nature, the heathen:

'To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal (*aionion*) life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth (observe, the nations had the truth apart from Scripture, chapter 1:18-25), but obey unrighteousness (such as those who "held down the truth in unrighteousness"), indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; ... for there is no respect of persons with God' (2:7-11).

That there will be a judgment according to the works of the individual Revelation 20:12 testifies, which is to be carefully distinguished from the judgment that follows it, relating to the book of life. Or again, the Lord Himself declared:

'... the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have *done good*, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have *done evil*, unto the resurrection of damnation (judgment)' (John 5:28,29).

Would any one have the temerity to apply to the Lord's words here the same system of so-called interpretation adopted in Romans 2, and reply to the Lord, *There will be no resurrection of life, for none have ever done good!* Yet if mere texts of Scripture are a sufficient argument they can soon be found.

A feature of God's dealing with men that has not received sufficient attention is this: during the period covered by the law of Moses, and the gospel of Christ, God is dealing with man along the line of *election* and *predestination*. Not one is saved by 'works of law' or by 'doing good'. His very faith is a part of the gift of God. This principle of election deals only with the few. It does not follow that the *many* are forgotten, or that they are lost. The day is yet to come when '*whosoever will*' shall sound out. It is the Spirit and the *bride* that say 'come', and '*whosoever will*', an elect church being used to invite the non-elect in that day. It is the attempt to tie the Lord down to one course of action only - and that in quite an undispensational manner - that is at the bottom of the problem. While we maintain all the truth of the utter inability of man to save himself, we do not infer or imply that the gospel as at present proclaimed is the limit of God's dealings. The Scriptures already cited speak otherwise, and having long ago abandoned all '*Creeds*', we earnestly desire a faith that can accept *all Scripture* without confusing things that *differ*.

Take another instance, viz: Matthew 25:32-46. There the nations are dealt with, and the ground of judgment is their attitude to the Lord's brethren. They knew not Christ, and even in their kindness did not consciously do their acts of benevolence unto him. Nevertheless, He who judges more by the heart than the action accepts the kindness to His brethren as done unto Himself. Without ever knowing the Lord Jesus, and therefore never having 'believed', these nations pass on into *aionion* life and the kingdom prepared for them. In Matthew 25 Christ the future judge indicates the lines upon which He will judge. He is clearly not judging the actions merely, but the motives, in other words 'the secrets of men'.

The apostle now brings to bear his teaching upon the Jew. If such be the case with the Gentiles, how much more shall it be with those who possess the oracles of God, have been taught by type and symbol, and who make a boast that they are guides to the blind and instructors of the foolish? Shall not God demand the more from those the more enlightened? and shall He not credit the lesser acts of the unenlightened Gentiles who 'by patient continuance' put to shame their more favoured brethren? The awful list of Romans 1:29-31 can give the Jew no feeling of superiority, for the apostle extracts from their own Scriptures sufficient to close every mouth:

'... There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, IT SAITH TO THEM WHO ARE UNDER THE LAW' (Rom. 3:10-19).

While the apostle could say *we know* this, we ourselves must confess that many do not. This quotation (Rom. 3:10-19) is made to those *under the law*, and not to those who are confessedly without the law. Much confusion would have been avoided had this distinction been maintained.

It is not sufficiently recognized that the law is the occasion of sin, owing to the nature of the human heart. Every mouth, truly, is stopped, and all the world found guilty before God, so that the Jew can find no ground for boasting over the less favoured Gentile. Indeed, the Scriptures indicate that the Jew as a whole, with the greater light of revealed truth, could not produce one 'righteous' nor one 'good' nor one 'seeker after God'. Yet Job was a 'perfect man'. Melchisedec was a priest of the most high God, confessedly greater than Abraham, and Enoch so walked with God and testified concerning prevailing ungodliness that 'God took him'. If we push the words 'none righteous' beyond their context, we shall simply be found contradicting such passages as Hebrews 11:4, which tells us that God bore testimony that Abel was *righteous*. None of these, however, were ever 'under the law' in the sense that Romans 3 intends. So far as man being able to fulfil the righteous requirements of the law is concerned, Romans 8:3 declares it to be an impossibility.

But why read the extraordinary requirements of the law into the requirements of conscience and creation? Do we not recognise that many sins are of purely legal making? Before the outbreak of the awful war of 1914, many acts were perfectly honest, just and good, which under the Defence of the Realm Act (known as D.O.R.A.) suddenly became crimes. If we can only keep this simple illustration in mind, we shall the better perceive the different lines of teaching that must exist when dealing with the Jew under the law, and the Gentile apart from the law. One act performed by a Jew would be a sin, yet the same act performed by a Gentile would be perfectly innocent. What is the object of the apostle's argument? *To demonstrate for ever the utter futility of the Judaizing party who endeavoured to fasten upon the necks of the Gentiles the grievous yoke of the law.* We can understand, with this illumination, why the apostle so strenuously opposed the slightest attempt to put the Gentiles into such a system of bondage, and why in 'Galatians' he attacks the attempt with all the force of his being. Here in Romans, if with less fire, yet with more logic, he cuts away all idea of substituting the law for the blessed gospel, bringing this section to a close with the words:

'Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight: FOR BY THE LAW IS THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN' (Rom. 3:20; 4:15; 5:20; 7:7; 1 Cor. 15:56; Gal. 3:19).

The law was spiritual, but man was carnal; the adding of the law aggravated sin, and as the apostle puts it, 'sin revived, and I died'. It may be of service to show how clearly parallel were the sins of Israel, though under the law, with the rebellion of the nations without the law:

'They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their (My) glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass! ... They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor (cf. Num. 25:1-3), and ate the sacrifices of the dead. Thus they provoked Him to anger with their inventions ... Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions' (Psalm 106:19,20,28,29,39).

Not only is there this parallel between the nations and the nation as to idolatry, uncleanness and wicked inventions, but both are described as 'changing' the glory of God into the likeness of some creature. The 'giving up' of the nations, three times spoken of in Romans 1 (verses 24,26, and 28), is echoed in Psalm 81:9-12 :

'There shall no strange god be in thee ... My people would not hearken ... so I *gave them up* unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels'.

There is certainly no saving power in the law. Nothing but the death and resurrection of Christ, the gospel of God concerning His Son, can be of any avail to Jew or Gentile.

#### **Structure of Romans 1:18 to 3:20.**

**A** 1:18-32. The nations, although taught by nature and conscience, sinned and came short.

**B** 2:1-16. Whosoever sins, whether Jew or Gentile, incurs judgment. Deliverance only through righteousness.

**A** 2:17 to 3:8. The Jews, although possessing the law, sinned and came short.

**B** 3:9-20. Whole world, guilty. `Not one' righteous. Deliverance only through the redemption in Christ Jesus.

## SECTION 2

**Reconciliation and Justification by Faith**

The epistle opens with a statement concerning the apostleship of Paul, and the gospel he preached. The atmosphere of conflict in which we read the challenge of Galatians 1 is now absent. Paul can with deeper delight and loving humility call himself `the bondsman of Jesus Christ', before he styles himself an apostle. That which he could not say till last in the Galatian epistle, `I bear in my body the brand-marks of the Lord Jesus', can be said first here. `Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God'. That the gospel was not something entirely new he immediately indicates by the parenthesis of 1:2, `Which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures'. The true definition of the gospel of God is found, however, by omitting verse 2 for the moment and reading straight on:

`The gospel of God ... CONCERNING HIS SON' (1:1-3).

Too often our definition of the gospel turns upon one or more of the blessings that flow from it. *We* would define the gospel as God's good news concerning *our* redemption, *our* justification, *our* forgiveness etc. It is nothing of the kind. Those are the effects and the results; the gospel is not concerning us at all; it is *concerning His Son*. The definition is twofold. The gospel concerns the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, (1) according to the flesh, and (2) according to the spirit. Peter's message had much to do with Christ as the Seed of David, and occupant of David's throne (*see* Acts 2). Paul's message has more to do with that same One raised from the dead as the minister of the promise to Abraham. We can spare no time to linger over the opening verses, other than to give the general outline.

**Romans 1:1-17**

**A** **a** 1:1. Paul separated unto the gospel of God.  
**b** **c** 1:2. Promised in Scripture.  
**d** 1:3-5-. The gospel as it concerns Christ.

**B** 1:-5,6. Its sphere. All nations.

**C** 1:7-13-. Paul's salutation. Paul's prayer. Paul's journey. Paul's ministry.

**B** 1:-13-15. Paul's sphere. Greek and Barbarian, etc.

**A** **a** 1:16-. Paul unashamed of the gospel.  
**b** **d** 1:-16. The gospel as it concerns believers.  
**c** 1:17. Scripture reference to believers.

By noting the recurring word `for' in verses 16,17 and 18 we shall have the subject divided for us accurately, and see the connection that one part bears to the other.

*FOR I am not ashamed of the gospel.* - This first *for* is only understood when we know the statement made in 1:13-15. The apostle had not stayed away from Rome because he was ashamed of the gospel - no, he was debtor alike to Greek and Barbarian; as much as was in him, he was ready to preach the gospel at Rome also.

*FOR it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* - This second passage reveals the good reason the apostle had for glorying in the gospel - `It is the power of God'. The apostle needed none of the accessories that many modern preachers seem to deem necessary. It was the power of God unto salvation and it was such to every one that believeth. The dispensational character is indicated in the closing words of 1:16, `To the Jew first'. This, repeated in 2:9,10, shows that the expression does not merely mean that the Jew received the gospel before the Gentile (a statement too obvious to be intruded into either 1:16 or 2:9,10), but it is *an integral part of that gospel*, and without it that gospel could not have been proclaimed. This is the underlying basis upon which Paul builds when he proves the right of the Gentile believer to the promises of Abraham. He had no need to prove the right of the Jew. This same principle is manifest in the figure of the olive tree. The tree itself is Israel, but the wild olive branches (the Gentiles) are grafted in.

*FOR therein is revealed the righteousness of God, from faith to faith.* - Here is the grand reason why the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. It meets the sinner's deepest need. Not only forgiveness and peace, but righteousness - something the sinner himself can never produce. This is revealed in the gospel.

What do we understand by the expression 'from faith to faith?' (*ek pisteos eis pistin*) (Rom. 1:17). Out of faith as to its origin, and unto faith as to its goal. It is evident from the whole tenor of the epistle that righteousness can never originate in the faith of man. If the faith of man cannot be the genesis (*ek*) of justification, we must search the Scripture to learn whose faith it must be. Let us pay attention to the following passages:

- `... shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?' (Rom. 3:3 Author's translation).
- `... righteousness of God through faith of Jesus Christ' (Rom. 3:22 Author's translation).
- `... the faith of Abraham' (Rom. 4:16).
- `... not of works of law, but through faith of Jesus Christ' (Gal. 2:16 Author's translation).
- `... justified out of faith of Christ, and not out of works of law' (Gal. 2:16 Author's translation).
- `... I live by the faith of the Son of God' (Gal. 2:20).
- `... the promise out of the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe' (Gal. 3:22 Author's translation).
- `... that (righteousness) which is through faith of Christ' (Phil. 3:9 Author's translation).

The faith of God is *God's faith or faithfulness*, not my faith in him. The faith of Abraham was Abraham's faith or faithfulness, not my faith in him. The faith of Christ also means His own faithfulness even unto death. That faith is the originating cause; that is the righteousness (*ek pisteos*). This righteousness revealed in the gospel is 'unto faith'. No place is found for the law in it. It was a part of the faithfulness of Christ that He rendered perfect obedience to the law of Moses, but no spiritual follower of that wondrous life can fail to see that while He fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law, *He did more*. His faithfulness and obedience embraced the wider claim of that law of conscience and testimony of creation, which not only included all the law of Moses, but embraced 'the whole duty of man' wherever and whenever found.

The final 'for' introduces the urgent reason for this revelation of righteousness.

*FOR the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness.* - There is only one way to escape the wrath of God, and that is to be justified; and as no one either under the law of conscience or of Moses ever rendered perfect obedience, justification, if it ever should come, must come some other way. That other way is the marvel of God's grace.

Passing over the great parenthesis of 1:18 to 3:20, it will be seen that the apostle takes up the subject at this very point. Let us read the passages together:

- `For therein is the righteousness of God revealed, out of faith unto faith ... But now the righteousness of God apart from law has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets: even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all who believe' (1:17; 3:21,22 Author's translation).

The gospel of God concerning His Son was according to the promises found in the prophets of Holy Scripture. The gospel of God found its saving power in that it presented a righteousness quite apart from law-keeping, which was received simply by faith. Such is the testimony of these verses.

If the nations lapsed early into idolatry and uncleanness, so did Israel. Was not the first commandment ever given them, 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image'? Yet in spite of the law they did. Does not the law of Moses enter into such details concerning uncleanness as to make the passages unsuitable for ordinary public reading? Yet Israel easily fell a prey to this also. The effects of the Babylonian rebellion could not be altered by the imposition of law, however holy, just and good that law may be. Nothing but the gospel, the good news concerning Christ, the righteousness revealed to faith, nothing but this could avail.

The words 'But now' are dispensational; they mark the change in God's dealings with men. Here the law passes off the scene, and we are left alone with Christ. There is no difference here; all have sinned, whether Jew or Gentile, and the remedy is the same for each:

'Being justified freely (*dorean*) ('without a cause', John 15:25) by His grace, through the redemption that is by Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a mercy seat (the witness of the law and prophets) through faith in His blood' (3:24,25 Author's translation).

While we are rightly much concerned in the revelation of the righteousness of God in the gospel as God's provision for us, we must not neglect the equally important aspect of the revelation of righteousness that is given in 3:25,26. There the revelation twice given of God's righteousness is not that we might be justified thereby, but that:

'HE MIGHT BE JUST, and the JUSTIFIER of him which believeth in Jesus' (3:26).

All this teaching leads up to the question of the Gentiles' place in the reconciliation. If there be 'no difference'; if the boasted law and the exclusive circumcision availed the Jew nothing; if both Jew and Gentile are saved on common ground, then asks the apostle:

'Is He the God of the Jews only? is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith' (3:29,30).

The reader will realize that we have not attempted an exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith. That subject alone could well occupy the whole of the present volume. Our object is rather to lead the reader to see how this precious doctrine is used by the apostle to enforce the presence and the claim of the ministry of reconciliation, which constituted the chief element in his apostleship to the Gentiles.

We would not pass from this passage without giving a word that may be of assistance to any reader desiring fuller acquaintance with this fundamental of faith.

### **Romans 3:21-30**

#### **How the righteousness of God is provided.**

3:21-23. CONDITIONS OF ITS MANIFESTATION.

1. Without law.
2. Witnessed by law and prophets.
3. By faith of Jesus Christ.
4. Unto all that believe.

Reasons for this. - (a) No difference, (b) All sinned and come short.

3:24-25-. CAUSES OF COMMUNICATION OF THIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

1. Original Cause. - 'Freely'; 'By his grace'.
2. Meritorious cause. - Redemption. - (a) By Christ. (b) By faith. (c) As propitiatory.
3. Receptive cause. - 'Faith in His blood'.

3:-25-30. CONSEQUENCES OF THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

1. Passing over sins of the past.
2. Just while justifying.
3. No boasting.
4. God of all.

Romans 4:1 to 5:11 brings this phase of the teaching to a conclusion. Romans 4 brings forward Abraham and David as evidence from the law and the prophets that this justification by faith without works of law is the attested truth. The apostle further clinches his argument by that which must have been 'a bolt from the blue' among the Judaizing party. Abraham, the object of their boast, the name whereby they excluded the uncircumcision - ABRAHAM WAS A GENTILE! Circumcision was but a seal of the righteousness which he had 430 years before the law was given, and while he was yet uncircumcised!!

Further, Abraham's call by God, and his response by faith, are the greatest silencer to any objector that may cavil at the teaching of Romans 2. Do you doubt that God has ever spoken to the heathen? Then read Genesis 12. Abraham was an idolater, a citizen of Ur of the Chaldees. Do you doubt that, apart from the teaching of the written

Word, an unsaved heathen would believe or act upon the voice of God suddenly breaking into his consciousness? *Then read Genesis 12.* The complete answer is there. Scripture records the one instance of Abraham because of the purpose of God; but how many another has God spoken to, and who in the midst of heathen darkness have walked by faith and been justified by faith, none of us know. The one outstanding instance, however, is enough to silence for ever all objection as to the possibilities of the case; while Romans 2 in this light makes it clear that the call of Abraham was by no means an isolated case.

What is the goal to which all this leads? Once again the one great theme comes uppermost, viz: *Reconciliation.* Romans 5:11, like true harmony that it is, ends on the keyword, the word 'atonement' of the Authorized Version being the word elsewhere rendered 'reconciliation'. While the true atonement made by Christ is more than reconciliation, it is the procuring cause of it, and the reason for the use of the word 'atonement' here is easier understood. The English of the days when the Authorized Version was written differs from our current forms of speech. Atonement carried the idea of reconciliation as we have already seen in Shakespeare's use of it:

'He makes atonement between the Duke of Gloucester and your brother'.

'Atonement between' must mean 'at-one-ment', or as the word should be - 'reconciliation'. Is it not clear, so far, that all the wonderful doctrine and reasoning introduced in these chapters are introduced to prove and to uphold, to impress and to fix the privilege and responsibility devolving upon all, whether Jew or Gentile, to live in accordance with this dispensation of the reconciliation, wherein the present superiority of the circumcision and of the law is set aside, and the common ground of being a sinner saved by faith through grace alone remains?

We summarize this section, as before, leaving the reader the happy task of filling in the wondrous details. Chapter 4 is taken up with the righteousness of God and the Old Testament.

3:31. General statement.

4:1-3. The question of advantage resumed.

The answer is an exposition of Genesis 15:6. This answer is divided into two parts, (1) Negative, and (2) Positive.

#### **Negative import of Genesis 15:6 as seen in Romans 4:4-16.**

1. WITHOUT WORKS (Rom. 4:4-8).
2. WITHOUT CIRCUMCISION (Rom. 4:9-12).
3. WITHOUT LAW (Rom. 4:13-16).

#### **Positive import of Genesis 15:6 as seen in Romans 4:17-25.**

1. QUALITIES OF JUSTIFYING FAITH (Rom. 4:17-22).
  - (a) Related to the resurrection power of God.
  - (b) Related to natural inability.
  - (c) Related to the Divine promise.
2. THE BEARING OF THE NARRATIVE (Rom. 4:23-25).
  - (a) Not for his sake.
  - (b) Faith connected with resurrection.
  - (c) Justification connected with resurrection.

### **Romans 5:1-11**

#### **The relation between justification by faith and the reconciliation**

**A<sub>1</sub>** 5:1,2. Boasting in hope.

**B<sub>1</sub>** 5:3-. Not only so.

**A<sub>2</sub>** 5:-3-10. | **a** Boasting in tribulation.  
| **b** Reconciliation effected.

- B**<sub>2</sub> 5:11-. Not only so.  
**A**<sub>3</sub> 5:-11. | **a** Boasting in God.  
                   | **b** Reconciliation received.

The procuring and the receiving of reconciliation is the climax of the doctrinal part of the outer portions of Romans. It figures prominently in the dispensational and practical sections too, as we shall see. Meanwhile for the sake of clearness and fuller light we give `A<sub>2</sub> b' above in detail:

### Romans 5:6-10

#### Reconciliation effected

- A** 5:6. | **a** When we were yet without strength.  
           | **b** Christ died for the ungodly.  
**B** 5:7. | Death of man for man. `Scarcely'. `Peradventure'.  
**A** 5:8. | **a** While yet sinners.  
           | **b** Christ died for us.  
**B** 5:9,10. | **c** Justified by blood.  
               | **d** Saved from wrath.  
               | **c** Reconciled by death.  
               | **d** Saved by His life.

It is essential to the successful realization of the purpose of the present volume that the reader, while considering the details of the epistles, shall firmly retain the great theme that runs through them. In the case of the epistle to the Romans we feel it necessary to make this realization sure by separating the details from the main theme, and presenting it in barest outline to the reader's eye, that our object may not be lost or our efforts rendered void. We have seen that the real object of chapters 1 to 3, which revolved around the question of justification by faith and the impossibility of works of law to justify, was not the teaching for its own sake, but that by reason of the *equality established* by equal sinnership and by similar justification the reconciliation of the Gentile may be admitted. Thus chapters 1 to 3 reduced to its minimum stands as follows:

1. The gospel reveals a righteousness by faith.
2. The nations, though taught by conscience and creation, utterly failed of attaining to righteousness.
3. The judgment of God has no place for privilege; Jew and Gentile alike will be treated with perfect equity.
4. The Jew who boasts in the law and circumcision is proved to be as much a failure, if not even more so taking into account the advantages of revelation, than the despised Gentile.
5. The utter failure of the Jew under the law is sufficient answer to all who would impose this yoke upon the Gentiles; `By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified'.
6. There is *no difference* between Jew and Gentile in the matter of failure, *for all sinned* and come short of the glory of God.
7. The fancied superiority of the Jew being removed, the apostle leads up to his great point, *reconciliation*, by asking the question, `Is He the God of the Jews only?'

In the second section the subject is approached along a different path. This time the supposed superiority of law and circumcision is disposed of by the fact that Abraham was justified by faith without works; that he was justified before circumcision; and that he was justified apart from law. The great central object of the section is Christ risen. The climax once again is the *reconciliation*. The Gentile, strengthless, ungodly, sinner and enemy though he be, is placed on equality with the saved of Israel, inasmuch as his justification and his reconciliation are entirely apart from personal merit altogether.

Romans 5:12 commences the inner portion of Romans - a portion to which we must return when the remaining outer portion has been traversed. We therefore take up the theme at Romans 9, there again to be led on to the question of justification treated *dispensationally* to the same end - the recognition of the Gentile's place under the *reconciliation*. To this we must devote another Section.



## SECTION 3

**Reconciliation and Dispensational teaching.**

Chapters 9, 10, and 11 are recognized by all students as being peculiarly dispensational in character. They commence with the privileges of Israel, trace their election according to the purpose of God, their failure, and the inclusion of the Gentiles upon the same principle of elective grace. So chapter 9.

Chapter 10 reverts to the question of justification; the fact of there being 'no difference' between Jew and Gentile in this matter; the responsibility of Israel by reason of the preaching of the gospel to them. For the first time the veil is drawn, and the intention of the Lord by the inclusion of the Gentiles is revealed, but of this more in its place. Chapters 9 and 10 speak either of a mere remnant of Israel, or of Israel being disobedient and gainsaying. Chapter 11 takes up the question from another point of view. Even though but a remnant believe; even though the inclusion of the Gentiles seems to indicate a failure on the part of Israel, God hath not cast away His people. They have not stumbled with the object that they should fall. No, all this but leads to the one great climax of the apostle's pre-prison ministry, *the reconciliation*:

'I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify mine office ... for if the casting away of them be THE RECONCILING OF A WORLD ... !' (11:13-15 Author's translation).

After this climax is reached the apostle can return to the status of Israel and their future glory, ending in a saved Israel and an exultant doxology. Having thus briefly summarized the whole, let us return to consider something of its parts. Again we must economise space and time, and use the structure to assist us. We will first give the structure of the entire passage, and then draw attention to such parts as bear upon the theme.

**Romans 9 to 11**

**A** 9:1-3. Paul's sorrow.

- |          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| <b>B</b> |  | <b>a</b> 9:4-13. Israel's dispensational privileges. Not all Israel. The purpose of election.   |
|          |  | <b>b</b> 9:14-29. Elective purposes. Vessels of wrath, and mercy on some. Exclusive first. Remnant only. Firstfruits.   |
| <b>C</b> |  | <b>c<sub>1</sub></b> 9:30-33. Gentiles attain who follow NOT after. PROPHETS. Israel who follow after attain NOT.   |
|          |  | <b>c<sub>2</sub></b> 10:1-13. Ignorance of Christ as end of law for righteousness. LAW. Righteousness of law says (do). Righteousness of faith says (believe).                |
|          |  | <b>c<sub>3</sub></b> 10:14-21. Israel did not obey the gospel. Gentiles GOSPEL. saved to provoke to jealousy. Gentiles seek not, yet find. Israel disobedient and gainsaying. |
| <b>B</b> |  | <b>b</b> 11:1-10. A remnant according to election of grace. The election obtain, the rest blinded.  |
|          |  | <b>a</b> 11:11-32. If firstfruits holy, so is the lump. All Israel shall be saved. Spiritual gifts. Calling still theirs. Inclusive finally. Mercy on all.                    |

**A** 11:33-36. Paul's Doxology.

- d** Riches.
- e** Wisdom.
- f** Knowledge.
- g** Unsearchable.
- g** Past finding out.
- f** Knowledge.
- e** Counsel.
- d** Given.

This section opens with sorrow, but ends with joy. It traces the past, present and future of Israel through the valley of the shadow until the glory of restoration is reached. It commences with a mere remnant, but it ends with all Israel. The defection of Israel and their sad failure once more provide the apostle with the opportunity (for the

third time) to lead up to the *reconciliation*. Let us trace the path a little more carefully. Let us not imagine that the apostle made such a profane statement as the Authorized Version puts into his mouth at 9:3. The truer rendering is:

‘I have continual sorrow in my heart for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh. For I myself *used to wish myself* accursed from Christ’ (9:2,3).

The apostle could deeply sympathize with the Jews, for he himself had despised and hated Him who is the true Messiah. He then gives in fuller detail than he could in chapter 3 the advantages of the circumcision.

### Romans 9:3-5

#### Israel's Dispensational Privileges

- A According to the flesh. *Brethren*.
- B Who are Israelites.
- C To whom the adoption.
- D The glory.
- E The covenants.
- E The giving of the law.
- D The service.
- C The promises.
- B Whose are the fathers.
- A According to the flesh. *The Messiah*.

The first position taken up is that of a remnant:

‘... For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel’ (9:6).

The closing portion is the other extreme:

‘... all Israel shall be saved’ (11:26).

but this cannot take place until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, that being the conclusion of the reconciliation. The argument leads on to the question of ‘the purpose of God according to election’ and speaks of Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and Pharaoh, demonstrating the apostle’s point - ‘not of works’ (9:11). The vessels of mercy are not found exclusively among Israel, for the apostle says:

‘Even us, whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?’ (9:24).

Here, and also in 3:29 and 4:16, the Gentileward tendency is manifested. Up till Acts 11:19 we have the words, ‘preaching the Word to none but Jews only’. Now, in view of the coming rejection, the apostle three times uses the negative, ‘not Jews only’. The remnant is very specially emphasized in the succeeding verses:

‘Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved (*sothesetai*) (9:27).

The whole nation is emphasized at the close:

‘... all Israel shall be saved’ (*sothesetai*) (11:26).

The apostle now brings in the subject of justification; the Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained to the righteousness of faith, whereas Israel who did seek it failed, because they sought it, as it were, by works of law. That was their stumbling stone. Once more the great goal of the apostle comes into view. *That stumbling stone shall never be placed in the path of the Gentiles*. Israel had a zeal, it is true, but they were ignorant of the righteousness of God, ‘For Christ is the end of the law ... to every one that believeth’ (9:30 to 10:4). Paul’s gospel could allow no difference between Jew and Gentile, for both were justified alike apart from the law (10:12). Moses describes the righteousness of the law by using the word ‘Do’ (10:5). Paul describes the righteousness of faith by the word ‘Believe’ - ‘Believeth unto righteousness’ (10:10).

While it is blessedly true (and the revelation is a great comfort) that God does not hold one who has never heard the gospel responsible for rejecting it (10:14,15), this is no refuge for Israel, for the apostle asks, 'Have they not heard?' and answers his own question by, 'Yea, verily' (10:18). One of the reasons for the blessing of the Gentile during this time is now revealed:

'... I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people (see the Gentile included by application in Hosea's prophecy, Rom. 9:25,26), and by a foolish nation I will anger you' (Rom. 10:19).

Isaiah goes further and says:

'... I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me' (Rom. 10:20 *see also 9:30*).

The Lord's attitude to Israel, and Israel's attitude to the Lord, throughout this period are described in Romans 10:21:

'... All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people'.

'Do I say then that God hath cast away His people?' asks Paul (11:1); 'Let not my reasoning come to this' (*me genoito*). Take my case as a blessed type. I am an Israelite; I withstood the gospel; I sought my own righteousness by works of law: yet here I stand saved by grace. Saved in spite of my enmity; saved 'because He had set His love upon me'; saved as all Israel must be, because 'the gifts and calling of God are without repentance' (11:29). In the darkest days of the nation's history God has always reserved a company unto Himself:

'Even so at the time then present (i.e. before Acts 28. - not, this present time) also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace' (11:5 Author's translation).

We have here resumed the theme of 9:11. This remnant of grace is a standing witness against salvation by works (11:6):

'Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the *election* hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded' (11:7).

Do we then argue that election means salvation for the few and damnation for the many? No! Election is God's method of preparation. The elect remnant, instead of being a barrier to the whole, is a pledge of its future blessedness, as surely as 'first fruits' do not prevent but pledge the coming harvest. Here we get the key to the mystery of the ages! Election purposes first; the remnant before the nation; the first fruit before the harvest; the church before the world; those 'ordained' to eternal life before the 'whosoever will':

'For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches' (11:16).

Following upon this simile of root and branches comes the Gentile relationship to the stock of Israel, but before going on to that subject we must notice the verses just before the one quoted above:

'Do I say then, Did they not stumble so that they might fall? Let not my reasoning come to this (*me genoito*); but by their fall, salvation (has come) to the Gentiles, in order to provoke them to jealousy. But if their fall be the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak unto you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office; if by any means I may provoke to jealousy them which are my flesh and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be THE RECONCILING OF A WORLD, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?' (11:11-15 Author's translation).

Here the apostle links the setting aside of Israel with the reconciliation. Just as the nations were given up (Rom. 1 and Gen. 11) at the time when Israel was chosen as the one nation, so, as that one nation's privileges wane, the Gentile nations are brought back again.

The apostle now proceeds to an illustration which further explains the provoking effect that the inclusion of the Gentiles should have had upon Israel. Israel is likened to an olive tree, of which some of the branches had been broken off. Into their place had been grafted, contrary to nature, scions cut out of a wild olive tree. It is the usual practice in grafting fruit trees to graft the choice variety on to the wild stock, just as the special rose is grafted on to

the brier. This simile of the apostle has provoked not a little scorn from those who set up as critics of the Word. We have it, however, upon the word of one of the greatest of living authorities on olive culture, that the practice is still followed in some parts of Palestine. A modern application of the same principle has just come to the writer's notice. The pear known as the *Doyen du Comice* is often what is termed a shy bearer. It has been discovered that by inserting a slip of the variety known as *Glou Morceau* into the tree, it has the effect of making the whole tree fruitful. This was precisely the reason why the wild olive was grafted into the failing olive tree; *this was why the Gentiles were saved during the tentative period of the Acts* - 'to provoke Israel to emulation'. Israel, however, only grew harder in their opposition, until the day came when the husbandman said of the barren tree 'Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?' That took place at Acts 28. God, however, is able to graft the natural branches back into their own olive tree:

'... blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved' (11:25,26).

No wonder the apostle who opened this section with sorrow, closes it with song:

'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out ... For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things. To Him be the glory unto the ages. Amen' (11:33-36 Author's translation).

#### SECTION 4

#### **Reconciliation and practical teaching.**

Yet one more avenue is to be traversed that leads to this central theme of the reconciliation, and that is the practical one. This section occupies chapters 12 to 15. The subject matter is distributed as follows:

- A** 12:1,2. Acceptable to God. Your bodies a living sacrifice. Ministry.
- B** 12:3-8. The measure of faith.
  - C** 12:9-21. To fellow-labourers and outside world.
  - C** 13:1-14. To the civil powers and our neighbours.
- B** 14:1 to 15:7. The weak and the strong in the faith.
- A** 15:8-33. Offering up of Gentiles acceptable contribution. May it be accepted. Ministry.

It is not our intention to enter minutely into all the details of this section. We will allude to the first, 'A 12:1,2', when dealing with the last, 'A 15:8-33'. The second, 'B 12:3-8', deals with the gifts, and uses the simile of the human body much as does 1 Corinthians 12. As we have already dealt with this when treating with 1 Corinthians we pass on. As 1 Corinthians 12 is followed by 1 Corinthians 13, so the references to gifts here lead on to graces, 'C 12:9-21'.

We observe in 1 Corinthians a tendency to go to the extreme regarding the liberty with which a believer is endowed, and, while the same extreme is not observable in the church of the Romans, the apostle includes in the practical section their relation to the powers that be 'C 13:1-7', and to the fulfilling of the real spirit of the law, even though liberated from its works as a means of salvation. The structure of these two chapters we give, so that the reader may be helped in his private study.

**Romans 12 and 13**

- A<sub>1</sub>** 12:1,2. Love to God.  
**a** Your bodies.  
**b** Acceptable service.  
**a** Your mind.  
**b** Acceptable will.
- B<sub>1</sub>** 12:3-8. Relation to fellow believers. - 'Gifts'.  
**c** Grace given me.  
**d** Measure of faith.  
**e** Diverse operations and gifts.  
**c** Grace given us.  
**d** Analogy of faith.  
**e** Seven different operations.
- A<sub>2</sub>** 12:9-21. Love to brethren and to enemies.  
**f** Evil and good.  
**g** Good.  
**g** Evil.  
**f** Evil and good.
- B<sub>2</sub>** 13:1-7. Relation to Government. - 'Conscience'.  
**h** Be subject to powers.  
**i** Ordained of God.  
**h** Render to all their dues.
- A<sub>3</sub>** 13:8-14. Love to neighbour.  
**j** Positive. Love one another.  
**k** Put off works of darkness.  
**l** Put on armour of light.  
**k** Six-fold works of darkness.  
**l** Put on the Lord.  
**j** Negative. Lust of the flesh.

Our attention must be given a little more closely to the section occupying 14:1 to 15:7. The whole question here discussed so patiently and calmly was more vehemently and dramatically dealt with at Antioch when the apostle withstood Peter to the face concerning his withdrawal from the table of the Gentiles. This section is occupied with the question of 'Receiving'. To catch the spirit of the passage let us omit all detail and notice the opening and closing verses:

'Him that is weak in the faith RECEIVE YE ... wherefore RECEIVE YE one another ... ' (14:1, 15:7).

Here the theme is evident. The next points raised are how not to receive, and how to receive:

'Not (negative) for contentions of reasonings ... but (positive) as Christ also received us to the glory of God' (14:1, 15:7 Author's translation).

Dr. MacKnight's commentary on 14:1,2 is:

'The Jewish Christian, who is weak in the faith concerning meats and days, receive ye into your company, but not in order to passionate disputations concerning his opinions. The Gentile Christian, indeed, believeth that he may eat every kind of meat; but the Jewish Christian, who is weak in the faith, eats vegetables only in heathen countries, because he cannot find meats which he thinketh clean'.

The two great difficulties that are here presented as possible grounds of contention, and of refusal to receive, are the question of eating meats, and observing days. These things trouble the weak only, but though they thereby give evidence that they have not fully entered into the liberty of the gospel, that must be no ground for refusing such the fullest reception into the church. The apostle seeks to set aside the spirit that judgeth another man's servant, and

which judges a brother (14:4-10), by the unifying effect of our connection with the death and resurrection of the Lord (14:7-9), and by the fact that all will have to give an account to God (14:10-12).

Chapter 15 opens with the other side of the question. Instead of the strong despising the scruples of the weak, they ought rather to bear their infirmities; and avoid all tendency to please themselves by a false emphasis upon Christian liberty (15:1). Each must think of his neighbour's edification. Paul's own example could be given of his condescension (e.g., 1 Cor. 9:9-23), but he can bring to bear a greater - 'even Christ pleased not Himself'. The apostle brings them back along this line, and returns to the practical outcome of recognizing the *reconciliation*, by saying:

'That ye may with ONE mind and ONE mouth (i.e. the Jews and the Gentiles, the weak and the strong) glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore RECEIVE YE ONE ANOTHER, as Christ also received us to the glory of God' (15:6,7).

The glory of God is the supreme test of all doctrine and practice, even as it is the goal of every dispensation and age. This we can trace throughout the epistle. The giving up of the nations, and their awful degeneration hinged upon their attitude to this great goal:

'... when they knew God, they GLORIFIED Him not as God ... but ... changed the GLORY of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man' (Rom. 1:21-23).

The Jew also became chargeable with regard to this, and so it is written,

'... all have sinned, and come short of the GLORY of God' (Rom. 3:23).

The other side of the question is connected with Abraham, the great contrast to the Babylonian rebellion. Called out of the apostasy by the 'God of (the) *glory*' (Acts 7:2), he was 'strong in faith, giving *glory* to God' (Rom. 4:20). Those who are justified by like precious faith, though once they were numbered with those who sinned and came short of the glory of God, now boast 'in hope of the *glory* of God' (5:2). To Israel, as a nation, once pertained '*the glory*' (9:4), but now both Jews and Gentiles were seen to be 'vessels of mercy ... afore prepared unto *glory*' (9:23). The reconciliation *glorified* (same word as 'magnify') the office of the apostle Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. The reconciled Jew and Gentile had been received by Christ unto the *glory* of God (15:7), and therefore they should with one mind and one mouth *glorify* God (15:6). This leads on to 15:9, 'that the Gentiles might *glorify* God for His mercy', which we must consider in a moment. The final word comes in 16:27, where the obedience of the faith among all nations issues in the *glory* of God unto the ages.

Before leaving this section we will supply the structure of the passage in order to stimulate closer acquaintance.

### **Romans 14:1 to 15:7**

#### **Reconciliation and the question of reception.**

- A** 14:1-. Command to RECEIVE the weak.
- B** 14:-1 to 15:6. How to RECEIVE. Negatively.
- A** 15:7-. Command to RECEIVE one another.
- B** 15:-7. How to RECEIVE. Positively.

The expansion of one sub-division may inspire the reader to search out further for himself.

### **Romans 14:13-21**

#### **The walk in love.**

- a** 13. Do not put a stumbling block in the way.
- b** 14. There is nothing 'common' of itself - unless so esteemed.
- c** 15,16. Destroy not with meat, for whom Christ died.
- d** 17. Peace.
- e** 18. Acceptable to God, and approved of men.

- d* 19. Peace.
- c* 20-. For meat, destroy not the work of God.
- b* -20. All things pure - but evil if eat with offence.
- a* 21. Do nothing to cause a brother to stumble.

The exhortation to unity in view of the reconciliation leads the apostle on to the question of his peculiar ministry. First he makes a definite statement as to the exclusively Jewish character of the Lord's ministry on earth:

'Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers' (15:8).

This is an important utterance. The ministry of Jesus Christ was to the *circumcision*. We have no need to go over the ground already traversed to prove this. The Lord's own words are enough:

'I am NOT SENT but unto the lost sheep of the house of ISRAEL' (Matt. 15:24).

This ministry was not with the object of accomplishing anything new. It was in order to confirm. That which was confirmed was entirely Jewish in its original scope, 'the promises made unto the *fathers*'. Now while the ministry of Christ was entirely linked with Israel, the apostle would have the conflicting parties at Rome remember that it had, nevertheless, the *reconciliation* in view, for he immediately proceeds to say, 'and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy'. This is the echo of the closing injunction, 'with one mind and one mouth glorify God'. The apostle had found no necessity to quote even one Scripture to substantiate his statement as to the exclusively Jewish character of the Lord's personal ministry, but he finds it necessary to give *four quotations* to defend its extension to the Gentiles:

1. '... For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy name' (15:9).
2. 'And again He saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles with His people' (15:10).
3. 'And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud Him, all ye people' (15:11).
4. 'And again ... There shall come a root out of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles hope' (15:12 Author's translation).

By giving the true rendering of this last word of the quotation 'hope', the connection intended by the apostle with the verse following is clearly seen:

'... Gentiles HOPE. Now the God of THE HOPE fill you with all joy and peace in believing' (15:12,13 Author's translation).

The God of Israel was now also the God of the Gentiles. The same hope now was in front of both; that the faith in such a blessed purpose may fill their united hearts with joy and peace is now the apostle's prayer. While the apostle, with true courtesy and excellent tact, admitted the graces of the church at Rome, he, nevertheless, felt it necessary to make absolutely certain that the special ministry which he held should be understood, bearing as it did upon the position of the Gentiles:

'I have written therefore the more boldly unto you in parts of this epistle (this we understand to be the meaning of *apo merous*), as putting you in mind, because of the grace which is given to me of God. That I should be a public servant of Christ Jesus (Codex Vaticanus MS., Christ Jesus has special reference to His exalted position in resurrection) to the Gentiles (Codex Vaticanus MS., Omits "to the Gentiles") ministering as a priest the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be ACCEPTABLE, having been sanctified by holy spirit' (i.e., the gifts of the Spirit, as upon the remnant at Pentecost) (15:15,16 Author's translation).

Here, it will be observed, the apostle reverts to the theme of 12:1,2. Not only could the circumcision present their bodies as living *sacrifices*, holy, well-pleasing to God, which was their reasonable priestly service, but, as these interesting arguments have shown, so can the Gentiles. The apostle Paul stood, as it were, a Priest for the Gentiles much in the same way that the nation of Israel will stand to the Gentiles 'in that day'. The apostle concludes by speaking of the extent of his labours:

`From Jerusalem in a circuit as far as Illyricum I have brought to a completion the gospel of Christ' (15:19 Author's translation).

One further allusion to the desire on his part to cement the unity brought about by the reconciliation, and to the coldness, if not open hostility, still entertained at Jerusalem with regard to the acceptance of the Gentiles, is found in 15:25-33. There the apostle refers to the contribution which the Gentile churches had made for the poor saints at Jerusalem. He asks their earnest prayers that he might be delivered from those who believe not in Judaea, and that the ministry which he had for Jerusalem may be *acceptable* to the saints. We know from the record of the Acts, that while he was delivered from the unbelieving Jews at Jerusalem, it was only to find himself a prisoner of Rome. The absolute silence of the Acts as to the reception which the elders gave to the apostle regarding the contribution for which he had so zealously and earnestly laboured, makes one feel that his worst fears were realized. The structure of the passage, it will be seen, turns on ministry and acceptableness.

### Romans 15:8-33

#### The acceptableness of the Gentiles

- A<sub>1</sub> a<sub>1</sub>** 8-. Christ a minister of the circumcision.  
**b<sub>1</sub>** -8. Truth of God.  
**c<sub>1</sub>** 9. That the Gentiles might glorify God.  
**B<sub>1</sub>** 13,14. The God of the hope.
- A<sub>2</sub> a<sub>2</sub>** 15,16-. Paul, a minister of Christ Jesus to Gentiles.  
**b<sub>2</sub>** -16-. Gospel of God.  
**c<sub>2</sub>** -16. Offering of Gentiles (Godward).
- A<sub>3</sub> a<sub>3</sub>** 18,19-. Paul's ministry among the Gentiles.  
**b<sub>3</sub>** -19-24. Gospel of Christ.  
**c<sub>3</sub>** 25-32. The offering of the Gentiles (manward).  
**B<sub>2</sub>** 33. The God of the peace.

The two titles of God - the God of the hope, and the God of the peace - are both allied to the reconciliation. Unity is closely related to peace, and those united necessarily have one hope.

Here we get an echo of the words, 'Is He the God of the Jews only?' We feel that a critical discussion of the state of the MSS. of Romans relative to the various positions of the final doxology, and all the controversy arising out of the same, is a subject outside the scope of this volume. Those who are advanced enough in their studies to appreciate the investigation can do so without any help that the author can give. Lest the general reader should feel a little mystified by these remarks, we just notice that some MSS. conclude the epistle at 15:33 with the words, 'Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen'. Some end at 16:20 with the words, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen'. Some at 16:24, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen'. Some at 16:25-27. In some MSS. the doxology of 16:25-27 follows 14:23. There have been many theories put forward to account for this state of things in the MSS. Westcott writes on the problem:

'Whether the epistle proceeded in two forms from the apostle's hands; the one closing with chapter 14 and the doxology, the other extended by the addition of the two last chapters; or whether any other more satisfactory explanation can be offered of the phenomenon of omission, repetition, transposition: authenticity, must be left for further investigation'.

We have already intimated that we believe the epistle to the Romans has an inner and an outer line of teaching. If this be admitted, all mystery vanishes. The outer portion is introduced by the words of Romans 1:1-5. There the gospel of God is that which had been promised before by the prophets of the Holy Scriptures. It concerns the Son of God in His relationship to David according to the flesh, and to the higher throne of power in resurrection. This gospel is for the obedience of faith among all nations. The inner message of Romans is the subject of the closing doxology. There it speaks of mystery kept silent, instead of being promised in the Scriptures. This mystery has been made known by 'prophetic writings', and is connected with 'the only wise God' and the *aionion* God. Let us read it in full:



`Now unto Him that is able to establish you according to my gospel, even the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of a secret, as to which silence has been kept in age-times, but which has now been manifest, even through the prophetic writings, according to the commandment of the aionion God, made known for the obedience of faith to all the nations - to the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory unto the ages. Amen' (16:25-27 Author's translation).

What is this secret which has been kept silent? The inner portion of Romans will answer - Adam. The Scriptures apart from Romans 5 to 8 and 1 Corinthians 15 contain no doctrine of Adam's guilt and Christ's redemptive work connected therewith. The nations were treated for their *own* apostasy and were accounted inexcusable. Israel were held accountable for their *personal* doings under the law. The gospel had been preached during the Acts and men of all nations had been urged to repentance, but no word had been breathed concerning the mystery of Adam and Christ. When we know *that*, we are at the very centre of things. Then we face not merely national issues, but the destiny of the race. Then Christ becomes even more than 'Son of David' or 'Son of Abraham' (Matt. 1:1); He becomes the last Adam and the second Man.

## SECTION 5

**Reconciliation, and the Secret that had been silenced.**

We will now consider Romans 5:12 to 8:39. Adam's fall brought in sin and death (chapter 5). It enslaved men in a dominion from which nothing but the death and resurrection of Christ could ever set them free (chapter 6). This dominion was strengthened by a law - not the law of Moses, but something deeper and more awful - 'the law of sin and death' (chapters 7 and 8). The effects of sin when viewed from this inner standpoint extend through the whole realm of nature. 'The whole creation groans, waiting' (chapter 8). We also read of 'sin that dwelleth in me' (chapter 7), and of the 'spirit that dwelleth in us' (chapter 8).

Turning then to Romans 5:12 we observe that the inner revelation commences with the words *dia touto*, 'on account of this'. We rightly ask, 'on account of what?' The closing verses of the preceding section have been emphasizing the reconciliation, and the 'much more' of salvation. The inner section is entirely in line with this. Here we shall see the first great sin, from which all other sins flow; and here we shall see the great reconciliation which forms the basis for the national and ecclesiastical reconciliations that follow (the latter includes the mystery of Ephesians which cannot be dealt with in this volume). The 'much more' of the outer section is an echo of the greater 'much more' of the inner.

The reconciliation of the world, which was connected with Israel's fall echoes the deeper reconciliation of the world that is connected with the fall of man himself. Romans 5:12-21 is involved, and the sense of the passage is most easily followed by realizing that verses 15-17 are an explanatory parenthesis. Instead of giving the structural outline we will set out the whole passage in its corresponding parts.

**Romans 5:12-21**

- |                   |          |  |
|-------------------|----------|--|
| <b>A</b> 5:12-14. | <b>a</b> | <p>'Wherefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death; and so death passed through unto all men, seeing that all sinned.</p> <p><b>b</b> For until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not put to account when there is no law.</p> <p><b>c</b> Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression who is a type of Him that was to come.</p> |
| <b>B</b> 5:15.    | <b>d</b> | <p>But not as the offence, so also is the grace gift.</p> <p><b>e</b> For if by the offence of the one the many have died,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>f</b> Much more the grace of God, and the free gift in grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.</p>  |
| <b>B</b> 5:16,17. | <b>d</b> | <p>And not as by one that sinned is the gift. For the judgment was of one unto condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.</p> <p><b>e</b> For if by the offence of one death reigned through that one,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>f</b> Much more they that receive the abundance of the grace, and of the free gift of righteousness, shall reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.</p>                            |
| <b>A</b> 5:18-21. | <b>a</b> | <p>Therefore, as through one offence judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so through one righteousness the grace gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many have been constituted sinners; so through the obedience of the one shall the many be constituted righteous.</p>   |

- b* Moreover, law entered alongside, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did superabound.
- c* That as sin has reigned by death, so also might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord' (Author's translation).

Origen, Augustine, Melancthon, Beza, Pres. Edwards and others have taken 5:14, 'Those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression', as referring to *infants* only. We feel this is quite beside the object of the apostle. Already we have had brought before us in chapter 2 the two classes indicated in 5:14. Those who sinned under the law sinned like Adam did, against definite command. Those who sinned without the law did not sin after the similitude of Adam. 'The law' means the law of Moses. Men sinned before the law was given from Mount Sinai, and the apostle had already written to the effect that sin is not reckoned where there is no law. Before 'the law' men were under a law of conscience. Their sin must be reckoned by their light (Rom. 2). When we realize that we are still dealing with the same sets of people, this time going back beyond the Babel rebellion to the root of all sin, the fall of Adam himself, the unity of the teaching of the epistle is evident. In Romans 11:32 we read:

'For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all'.

This is an echo, dispensationally, of the same principle that underlies Adam's sin. Adam was allowed to involve all in condemnation, that all may become involved in the work of Christ. The section concerning Adam is introduced by the words 'on account of this' (*dia touto*), which links it on to the subject of the reconciliation. So far as the outside question of sins is concerned, men are dealt with as individuals. They are justified by faith. So far as the inside question of sin is concerned, they are dealt with as a whole, as seen related to Adam and Adam's guilt, and Christ and Christ's obedience.

This section introduces us to a reign and a dominion. Sin reigns, death reigns, grace reigns, and some are to reign in life (chapter 5). In chapter 6 the word 'reign' is interchanged with 'dominion'. There we read of the dominion of death and the dominion of sin (6:9,14), and the reign of sin in our mortal bodies (6:12). In chapter 7 law is seen to have a dominion (verse 1), which is only removed by death (verse 4). The presence of evil and its workings is because of the law of sin which is in our members (verses 23-25). Then chapter 8 introduces the 'law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus' in place of 'the law of sin and death'.

In all this there is something deeper than the external sins of the individual. There is a reign, a dominion, a law, and deep and awful as the subject is, it places all doctrine, dispensation, and practice under one of two heads - *Adam* or *Christ*. No one can read the opening section (Rom. 5:12-21) without being struck by the close parallel instituted throughout. Where the parallel departs from strict comparison the Scripture uses either the words 'but not as', 'so is', or 'much more'. The offence of one involved many in death, but the gift of grace deals with many offences. One offence brought condemnation, but justification deals with many offences. If death reigned in consequence of one man's offence, much more shall they which receive abundance of grace reign in life. All men are involved in the condemnation, and all men are included in the justification of life. Grace superabounds. As sin reigned, so will grace reign. The apostle at one time uses 'all', and at another time uses 'many' (5:18,19). These two terms indicate the two classes already alluded to in 5:14 and 2:12, The one offence, or the fall (*paraptoma*) of Adam, involved *all* in condemnation; the one disobedience (*parakoe*) of Adam constituted many sinners. The one righteousness of Christ involves *all* in a justification of life; the one obedience of Christ constitutes *many* righteous.

In 3:30 the apostle indicates a distinction. The circumcision are justified out of faith (*ek pisteos*) as its origin, and the uncircumcision through the faith (*dia tes pisteos*) as the instrument. In the first case the term is a contrast to 'out of works of law'; in the other no contrast is intended, but simply the means which God has used, because the question of the works of law did not touch the Gentiles. The Jew needed to be redeemed from under the law (Gal. 4:5,6) in such a way that the *obedience* to the law which he had failed to render should be made. The Jew needed also to be redeemed from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), for he had not continued in all things written in the law to do them (Gal. 3:10). The 'many' who were 'constituted sinners' seem to refer to those who sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression - a disobedience to a revealed command. These need therefore the 'obedience of Christ' superadded to His great work as the second Man and last Adam.

While all the nations were reconciled when God committed the ministry of the reconciliation to Paul, all the nations did not receive it, and consequently were not justified or saved. Salvation, it will be observed, is 'much

more' than reconciliation (5:10). Those only who received the reconciliation had reason to boast 'in God' (5:11). So here, while the one great righteousness of Christ, as the last Adam, procured a justification of life for all, 'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive', nevertheless, there is something more than this:

'... much more *they which receive* abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall *reign in life* by one, Jesus Christ' (5:17).

The resurrection of the dead is only possible because Christ has taken away the imposition of death brought in by Adam. What the final state of all those thus raised will be is a question concerning which Scripture teaches little. We see sufficiently clearly that it is entirely wrong to suppose that all who miss the first resurrection, and who stand before the great white throne, are of necessity damned. The Scripture differentiates between the judgment according to works out of the *books* (plural), and the final judgment according to the *book* (singular) of life.

'If any one was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire' (Rev. 20:15 Author's translation).

The great white throne judgment has been already indicated in Romans 2. The justification of life removes the imputation of Adam's fall and its consequences. An outside tempter will no longer prove too much for them, for Satan will then be in the lake of fire. The days spoken of by Ezekiel and Jeremiah will have come, and the present condition of things, namely, the dominion of sin by virtue of one man, will have passed away:

'In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge (that is the present condition). But every one shall die for his own iniquity' (which is not true today, e.g., the death of infants) (Jer. 31:29,30; Ezek. 18:2-4).

This time sin will be entirely an individual matter. Never again will Christ be made an offering for sin; the soul that sinneth, it shall die. For such there is nothing but the second death. Those who receive the gift of grace will reign - blessed contrast to the present occupants (sin and death) of the throne.

The apostle does not leave his theme without taking the opportunity of again speaking about the law and its place in the scheme:

'Moreover the law came in alongside, or supervened' (Rom. 5:20 Author's translation).

The law given at Mount Sinai was an additional revelation; it supervened upon the state of things which obtained from Adam to Moses. Up to this point the apostle had said nothing about the law, and the peculiar privileges of Israel. When he does speak of them it is only to set them aside as worthless so far as providing righteousness and life is concerned. This position of the law is found in the apostle's earlier epistle, Galatians, and his earliest recorded utterance, Acts 13:39. In Galatians 3:19 we read:

'Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come'.

So in Romans 5:20, it 'supervened'. And why? 'The law supervened so that the offence abounded', 'the law worketh wrath' (Rom. 4:15). This is fully expanded in Romans 7, which we shall consider later. The apostle makes this one reference here in order to dispose of the idea that the law could have any place in the scheme of man's deliverance from his fallen and corrupted state. 'But where sin abounded', that is, under the aggravated conditions of law, 'grace did superabound', as we have seen when comparing 5:18,19, 'the all' and 'the many'. The Jew is here shown the full provision made for his case under the gospel.

We now approach the teaching of Romans 6. Here questions are raised which are vigorously dealt with. The questions are not new, however, for Romans 3:1-8 contains both the dispensational issues elaborated in Romans 9 to 11, and the specious questions set out in Romans 6 and 7. The Jew objects to the argument concerning the faithfulness of God by suggesting that such will be an encouragement to sin, because God will be the more glorified by pardoning the sin:

'For (But) if the truth of God hath *more abounded* through my lie unto His glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?' (3:7).

The positive teaching concerning justification is first dealt with; and then at the conclusion of Romans 5, where the theme of superabounding grace is introduced, the question is revived, and receives its answer:

‘What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?’ (6:1).

There are four questions raised and disposed of in chapters 6 and 7, and we shall appreciate the argument the better if we first see them as a whole.

### Romans 6 and 7

**A<sub>1</sub>** 6:1. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

**B<sub>1</sub>** 6:2-. Let it not be so.

**C<sub>1</sub>** 6:-2-14. Answer. Death and resurrection.

**A<sub>2</sub>** 6:15-. Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?

**B<sub>2</sub>** 6:-15. Let it not be so.

**C<sub>2</sub>** 6:16 to 7:6. Answer. Death and resurrection.

**A<sub>3</sub>** 7:7-. Is the law sin?

**B<sub>3</sub>** 7:-7-. Let it not be so.

**C<sub>3</sub>** 7:-7-12. Answer. The law and death.

**A<sub>4</sub>** 7:13-. Was then that which is good made death unto me?

**B<sub>4</sub>** 7:-13-. Let it not be so.

**C<sub>4</sub>** 7:-13-25. Answer. The law and evil.

The first question is disposed of not by reasoning, but by the one great statement of the believer's death to sin. The identification of the believer with the death and resurrection of Christ, typically set forth by baptism in water during the period of the Acts, leads on to the position of walking ‘in newness of life’. The inner teaching of this section, as compared with the doctrine of the outer portion, is manifested by the words of Romans 6:6-11. Here our individual sins are not in view, but the ‘old man’, the name of that nature which we receive from fallen Adam. This ‘old man’ is crucified with Christ. Again the depths are sounded in the next statement. Not that the forgiveness of sins or justification flows out of this identification with Christ, but that ‘the body of sin might be destroyed’. The ‘body of sin’ is linked with ‘the body of this death’ in Romans 7:24, and is spoken of as being dead, under certain conditions, in Romans 8:10.

The body of sin is destroyed with this object, ‘that henceforth we should not serve sin’. Here we touch the question of dominion. All men have come under the dominion of sin and death (Rom. 5:12,14,21). Here is introduced the deliverance from this dominion:

‘Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more DOMINION over Him’ (Rom. 6:9).

The believer is to ‘reckon himself also to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord’ (Rom. 6:11), and is exhorted to ‘let not sin reign in your mortal body’ (Rom. 6:12), which truth is expanded in Romans 8:11 :

‘... He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by (through) His Spirit that dwelleth in you’.

In all this we have ‘the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the mystery which had been silenced’. The reign of sin is exhibited in the obedience to the lusts of the mortal body, and the yielding of the members as instruments of unrighteousness. Here for the first time in any mortal's experience can it be urged upon him to ‘yield himself to God’. Such a statement is without power until the dominion of sin has been broken, as Romans 7:15-25 testifies. The first answer, therefore, concludes with the wondrous words:

‘For sin shall not have DOMINION over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace’ (Rom. 6:14).

Plainly therefore to be still under law is to be still under the dominion of sin and death. The law of Sinai merely echoed and manifested the bondage of the race.

The original question is now modified, and is presented in Romans 6:15 :

'What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?'

The answer to the question is twofold. Here again the two parties, the Jew and the Gentile, must be kept in mind. We must remember that the Gentile was never under the law, and consequently could never be delivered from it. The Jew, however, was not only under the dominion of sin, but, added to that, was under the law as well, and needed the twofold deliverance of which this section speaks. The answer of the apostle is divided into two parts, in order that the peculiar position of Israel might be considered. All are involved in sin, as we have seen in the 'all' and the 'many' of chapter 5, therefore the one deliverance, 'dying with Christ', will be true of both Jew and Gentile.

The first part of the answer to the question of Romans 6:15 is addressed to the Gentile. The figure used is that of master and servant. The second part (Rom. 7:1-6) is addressed to the Jew, 'I speak to them that know the law', and the figure used is that of husband and wife. The question of sin, after salvation, is a question of service:

'... whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?' (Rom. 6:16).

'... ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that mould (*tupos*) of doctrine into which ye were delivered' (Rom. 6:17 Author's translation).

'Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness' (Rom. 6:18).

The apostle repeats with further detail these sentiments, and concludes with the words which are so often quoted as a gospel message to the unsaved:

'For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal (*aionion*) life through Jesus Christ our Lord' (Rom. 6:23).

These words are addressed to the believer:

'What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the END of those things is death' (Rom. 6:21).

This is placed in contrast with:

'But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the END everlasting (*aionion*) life' (Rom. 6:22).

It is evident that *aionion* life is here connected with Christian service. It is not 'wages', for that word is contrasted with 'gracious gift', nevertheless, it is something to be distinguished from the faith which believes unto salvation. The germ of Romans is found in Galatians, and in this particular Galatians 6:7,8 has much in common with the present passage:

'Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting (*aionion*)'.

Here we observe that 'sin' and 'righteousness' give place to the parallel terms 'flesh' and 'spirit'. This is exactly the situation in Romans 6 to 8. There we have under the heading of the flesh, 'the old man', 'the body of sin'.

In the second part of the reply the apostle turns to the Jew, and explains the position of the believer and the law. Here we deal not with the dominion of sin, or death - this has been dealt with in Romans 6 - but with the dominion of law. All men figure in Romans 6; Israel, 'the many', figure in Romans 7, 'the law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth'. There is but one way in which the dominion of the law can be rightly removed, and that is, by death. If a woman marries another man while her husband lives, she is constituted an adulteress; and, says the apostle, I do not wish you to believe that the Christian faith can be likened to such immorality. The conscientious scruples of the Jew with regard to the law are met by the death of Christ. Just as we 'reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin', so, like the apostle, every believing Jew could say:

'... I through the law am dead to the LAW' (Gal. 2:19).

`Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become *dead to the law* by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him Who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God' (Rom. 7:4).

This reference to `fruit unto God' reminds the apostle of the former state:

`For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins WHICH WERE BY THE LAW, did work in our members that we should bring forth fruit unto death' (Rom. 7:5 Author's translation).

We have, therefore, in relation to the dominion of, and freedom from, sin, `fruit of which we are now ashamed', and `fruit unto holiness' (Romans 6:21,22). In connection with the dominion of, and freedom from, the law we have `fruit unto God' and `fruit unto death' (Rom. 7:4,5). The two classes - those under sin and death, and those under sin and death and law, are ever before us, and a clear recognition of this is essential to a true understanding of the epistle. The conclusion is given in Romans 7:6 :

`But now we are delivered from the law, *having died to that wherein we were held*; that we should serve in NEWNESS of spirit, and not in OLDNESS of letter' (Author's translation).

Here we are brought to a parallel with Romans 6:4, but with this essential difference: the walk in *newness* of life was something entirely new; none had ever entered such a state before. The service in newness of spirit is a change certainly, but a change from the service of the letter of the law to that of the gospel. One of the features of Israel's privilege was that the `service' (Rom. 9:4) pertained to them. The saved Israelite had already served God in connection with the law; here he comes under the new covenant, and is introduced to a new manner of service.

We now face a deeper question than ever. The law is placed upon the same level as sin. Freedom from the bondage and dominion of each is only obtained by death. The fruit of each is shame and death. This leads the apostle to deal with the question that might arise, `Is the law sin?' In answer to the question, the apostle tells of the office of the law in revealing the nature of sin and of the character of the law itself. Already he had excluded the law as a means of justification.

`For by the law is a knowledge of sin' (Rom. 3:20 Author's translation).

`... for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not lust (covet)' (Rom. 7:7).

The intensely evil nature of the heart of man, and the way in which the supervening of the law only stirred up disobedience and wickedness, are next revealed. From all complicity with sin the law stands perfectly clear; it condemns sin entirely. The law itself is `holy, and just, and good' (Rom. 7:12). This brings us to the final question:

`Was then that which is good made death unto me?' (Rom. 7:13).

In other words the statement is, What then, do you teach that the holy and just and good law of God is the *cause* of sin? The apostle again repudiates the thought. Rather, says he, the *abuse* of the law is the *cause* of sin. To prove this he divides his answer so as to speak, first, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin; secondly, of the great and essential contrast between the law and the sinner; and thirdly, of the acknowledged fact that conscience is always on the side of the law and against the law breaker. In spite of this monitor the power of the flesh prevails. First of all the apostle shows that the law manifests the essential character of sin:

`... that it might appear sin ... that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful' (Rom. 7:13).

Secondly, the apostle reveals the utter impossibility of attempting to keep the law while in the flesh.

`For we know that the law is SPIRITUAL: but I am CARNAL, having been sold unto sin' (Rom. 7:14 Author's translation).

Here we are introduced to the two spheres which dominate the teaching of Romans 8, viz., flesh and spirit. And here is revealed the *secret* of man's failure, `The first man was of the earth, earthy'. The outer portion of Romans reveals the failure of Jew and Gentile. The inner portion reveals the failure of the *creature*. Look at the wretched state of the man under the law:

`For that which I work out (same word as "work", verse 13) I do not own, for not what I will, I do; but what I hate, I practice' (Rom. 7:15 Author's translation).

The conscience bears its testimony to the excellence of the law:

'If what I do not will I practice, I consent to the law that it is excellent' (*kalos*) (Rom. 7:16 Author's translation).

Professor Tholuck has given several illustrations of the conflict between the conscience and the passions in a man. We quote two:

Eupirides, Medea, 1077: 'I know indeed, that such things as I am about to do are evil: But my mind is better than my inclinations'.

Plautus: 'I knew that it was becoming, *but me miserable!* I could not do it'.

The apostle arrives at a very striking conclusion in Romans 7:17 :

'Now, therefore, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me' (Author's translation).

We tread dangerous ground here and must walk carefully. The apostle does not mean us to infer that he disallows all personal responsibility for sin; far from it. He is introducing a topic concerning which most believers are profoundly ignorant. By carefully observing the parallels in the verses that follow, the 'I' that is differentiated from 'sin that dwelleth in me', is seen to be the 'mind' or the 'inward man' - the seat of the conscience. It is set in opposition to the 'members' - the seat of the law of sin.

'I see another law in my *members*, warring against the law of my *mind*' (Rom. 7:23).

The law of sin was not resident in the mind, but 'the law of sin is in my members'. The contrast is again made in Romans 7:25 :

'So then with the *mind* I myself am subject to the law of God; but with the *flesh* the law of sin' (Author's translation).

The difference between Jew and Gentile in the matter of the mind is striking. The Jew had a law which was a lamp and a light:

'The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul' (Psa. 19:7).

How little they understand the gospel who speak of the conversion of the soul as equivalent to justification. It is striking that Paul's gospel has no place for the saving of the soul!

'... the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes' (Psa. 19:7,8).

The mind of a person brought up under such a law would be enlightened and clear as to right and wrong. The trouble was that greater knowledge of right and wrong did not bring power to perform it - it only added condemnation. The Jew boasted in his light and knowledge (Rom. 2:17-24), and is warned that mere assent to the law with the mind was not sufficient:

'For circumcision verily profiteth, IF THOU KEEP THE LAW' (Rom. 2:25).

The Gentile nations, on the other hand, had not this enlightenment of mind, 'God gave them up to a reprobate *mind*' (Rom. 1:28). They walked in the 'vanity of their *mind*, having the *understanding* darkened' (Eph. 4:17,18). The 'members', the 'fleshly mind', the 'body of sin', the law of sin in 'the flesh' *show* that the seat of corruption, the weapons of the 'old man', are found in the mortal bodies of men. The mind of the Jew might be more enlightened, the mind of the Gentile might be utterly darkened and reprobate, but in neither case was there any hope in self or the law. The law of sin continually mastered the law of the mind until the wretchedness of the man became unbearable. He cries for deliverance from this body of death. Note that the old man, the flesh, is to be reckoned dead, crucified, incorrigible. The mind, however, is said to be 'renewed' (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23). The person may have had a 'fleshly mind', and then after conversion have a 'spiritual mind', but that mind has been 'renewed' - not destroyed.

Here is the key to the differences of Romans 7:17-25. The more the law is seen, the more awful the dominion of sin appears that can so successfully resist it. The mind is symbolized by the same woman who, set free from one husband by death, is quite within her rights in marrying another. So the mind, once linked with a sinful nature and



dominated by it, is the same mind which now associates itself with the spirit of sonship given to the believer. The summary is thus given in Romans 7:25 :

‘Wherefore, I, the same person, with the mind am indeed subject (*douleuo*) to the law of God, but with the flesh to the law of sin’ (Author’s translation).

The apostle rejoices in his deliverance from such a thralldom. Can we believe, after having endured such agonies of mind when a Pharisee of the Pharisees, that he could ever allow the yoke of the law to be fixed upon the neck of the Gentiles? Is not this experience the reason (humanly speaking) for his glorious fight for freedom? Surely no Jewish believer, having once read Romans 7 with understanding, could ever dream of the law of God taking the place which God has for ever given to the gospel of grace. Dead and buried lies the old man to the law, and nothing but death and resurrection with Christ can bring a man from under the threefold dominion of sin, death and law.

We have now before us chapter 8, which commences with the words ‘No condemnation’. Does this opening verse read straight on from Romans 7:25? or does it take up the thread of Romans 5:12-21? In chapter 5 condemnation passed upon all men by reason of the one man’s act. That has been entirely reversed by the one act of the Son of God. Chapters 6 and 7 pause in the prosecution of this enquiry to make clear several important items, among them dealing with the dominion of sin and death, and the law of sin in the members of the individual, and showing that nothing but the offering of Christ can deliver any from this threefold power. Having disposed of the idea that the law can be of any service in accomplishing this deliverance, the apostle, now possessed of further evidence and fuller matter, returns to the original theme and declares that:

‘There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus’ (Rom. 8:1).

He can also continue, and speak of the law of the spirit of life making him free from the law of sin and death, for the latter law has been already under view. While the law of conscience, or the law of Moses could never liberate us, a law nevertheless does, but it is ‘the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus’ (Rom. 8:2). This is essentially connected with reconciliation. The flesh is seen as fit only for crucifixion, death, and burial. The spirit that can alone help is essentially, ‘the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead’ (Rom. 8:11). We find that Dr. Bullinger in his *Figures of Speech* links Romans 8:1 with Romans 5, and as ours is independent testimony, we feel that some may be confirmed by the double witness. Dr. Bullinger sets out the structure thus:

### **Romans 5:12 to 8:39. - Sin**

#### **The old nature itself and its conflict with the new nature**

- i** 5:12-21. Condemnation to death through a single sin of one man; but justification of life through a single righteous act of one man.
- k** 6:1 to 7:6. We are not in sin, having died in Christ.
- k** 7:7-25. Sin in us, though we are alive in Christ.
- i** 8:1-39. Condemnation of sin in the flesh, but now NO condemnation to us who are alive unto God in Christ Jesus, and in whom is Christ.

Romans 8 is in measure an explanation of Romans 6:6 and 7:6. In these two passages we read:

‘Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not SERVE sin’.

‘But now we are delivered from the law, having died to that wherein we were held, that we should SERVE in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter’ (Author’s translation).

Without the teaching of Romans 8 we should be left with the impression that in spite of the great importance which is attached to the law of Moses in the Old Testament Scriptures; in spite of the attitude which the Lord Jesus Christ took with regard to it; in spite of the fact that therein is reflected the moral glory of God, and the Divine guidance for man, nevertheless, the only thing the law did was to work wrath, stir up sin, and show man his utter failure. That law, however, is in itself holy, just, good, and spiritual, and Romans 8 brings forward the idea that while it has never yet been obeyed by man, this is not because of any defect in the law, but by reason of the fact that

a *spiritual* law cannot be fulfilled by *carnal* persons. Romans 8:3 tells us that the law could not do something, and why:

‘For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the FLESH’.

The law could not save, justify or sanctify, as it was utterly beyond the power of the flesh to comply with its demands. The flesh rendered the law weak:

‘God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (did accomplish) (Rom. 8:3).

A verb of some sort is necessary at the end of this statement. What the law could not do Christ has done. Galatians 4:4-6 supplies the remote ellipsis:

‘He was born under the law, that He might redeem those who were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons, God has sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba father’ (Author’s translation).

How closely parallel this is with Romans 8, verses 3 and 15 of that chapter will show. Let us note the evident parallel intended between verses 1 and 3. For the believer there is *no condemnation* (*katakrima*), but sin in the flesh has been *condemned* (*katakrine*). Looking back to the Person and work of the Son of God he sees One, Who though personally without sin (‘Who knew no sin’), yet by taking upon Him the likeness of the flesh of sin (*homoiomati sarkos hamartias*), and (by an offering) for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be *fulfilled in us*, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit (8:3,4).

Here we arrive at the illuminating fact that those whose ‘old man’ has been crucified, whose ‘body of sin’ has been rendered inoperative (*katargeo*); who are no longer compelled to do what they hate; who indeed walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit - these *being spiritual* can at long last fulfil a *spiritual* law. ‘The righteous requirement of the law may be fulfilled’ (8:4) in such. What are the righteous requirements of the law? The Saviour while on earth answered that question by the one word, *love*. His servant Paul, since, has said the same:

‘... he that LOVETH another hath FULFILLED the law’ (Rom. 13:8).

So in Galatians we shall again find Romans in germ:

‘For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this ... LOVE ... This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh ... if ye are led by the Spirit ye are not under the law ... The fruit of the Spirit is LOVE ... they that are Christ’s CRUCIFIED the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit’ (Gal. 5:14-25 Author’s translation).

Romans 1 to 5 teaches us that we ‘live by the Spirit’; Romans 6 to 8 teaches us that we should ‘walk by the Spirit’ also, and ‘against such there is no law’, in other words ‘there is no condemnation’.

Moses Stuart’s paraphrase of Romans 8:3 is worth quoting:

‘God sent His own Son in the likeness of men, and on account of their sins, and destroyed the power of sin in their carnal nature (which the law could not possibly effect because it was bereaved of its energy through the strength of the carnal affections) in order that the precepts of the law, which demand holiness of life, might be obeyed by those who walk according to the dictates of His spirit’

The mind now comes prominently forward. If Romans 8:1-4 treats of the theme of Romans 6:1 to 7-6, the verses that follow develop the teaching that lies within Romans 7:13-25, where the ‘mind’ is prominent. Here we perceive that the mind may be allied to the flesh, and so to death; or to the Spirit, and so to life and peace. Those who are ‘minding the flesh’ are also ‘in the flesh’ (Romans 8:7,8). Those, however, who have died with Christ are renewed and transformed to another sphere, ‘But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you’ (Rom. 8:9). Their ‘mind’ is set on things above. Two essentially distinct statements appear to be intended in verses 9 and 10. The word ‘And’ in verse 10 should be ‘But’, making a distinction:

(1) ‘... if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His’ (Rom. 8:9).

This is the new nature, without which none can be called the Lord’s.

(2) BUT if Christ be in you, the body indeed is dead with respect to sin; but the spirit is life with respect to righteousness' (Rom. 8:10 Author's translation).

Here is another subject. It is one thing to have the new nature (Christ's spirit) and thus be His, but it is quite another for Christ to be in us. If He is, in the sense intended here and more fully explained in the verses following, then `the body is dead with respect to sin' - a statement which cannot be made with truth of every believer - and `the spirit is life with respect to righteousness'.

Another problem now presents itself. While it may be true that the body is dead, and the spirit is life, yet, while we are here in this life on earth, the only means and instrument of service that we possess are the members of that body in which dwells no good thing. Romans 6 has already urged the believer to use these same members, which once were yielded as instruments of unrighteousness, in the service of righteousness unto God. The lesson Romans 8 teaches is that the old energy, supplied by the old man under the law of sin and death, is now replaced by a new energy, the new man, under the law of the Spirit of life:

`But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, because of the indwelling of His Spirit in you' (Rom. 8:11 Author's translation).

The change of government indicated by these words is better seen when the passages which contain the words `dwell in' are brought together:

`Now then it is no more I that work it out, but sin that DWELLETH IN ME' (Rom. 7:17 Author's translation).

`For I know that IN ME (that is, in my flesh) DWELLETH no good thing' (Rom. 7:18).

`Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that DWELLETH IN ME' (Rom. 7:20).

`... ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be spirit of God DWELLS in you' (Rom. 8:9 Author's translation).

`But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead DWELL in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, because of the INDWELLING of His Spirit in you' (Rom. 8:11 Author's translation).

Again, this deeply important subject is epitomized for us in Galatians:

`For I through law am dead to law, that I might live unto God' (Gal. 2:19; Rom. 7:4 Author's translation).

`I have been crucified with Christ' (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:6 Author's translation).

`... nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I NOW LIVE IN THE FLESH I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me' (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:11).

Here we have all the parallels with Romans 8:11. The quickening of the mortal body because of the indwelling Spirit of resurrection is *now*, as Galatians 2:20 and 2 Corinthians 4:10,11 testify. We are not debtors to the flesh, to live after the flesh, for just as Galatians 6 warns us that to sow to the flesh is to reap corruption, so here to live after the flesh is to die (Rom. 8:13). For `if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live' (Rom. 8:13). The mortification of the *deeds* of the body is the echo of the crucifixion of the *old man*, that the body of sin might be rendered inoperative. It is the mark of sonship to be led by the Spirit of God:

`For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear' (Rom. 8:15).

This was the condition which the Jew had *under law*:

`... who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage' (Heb. 2:15).

`But ye have received the spirit of full-grown sons, whereby we cry, Abba, Father' (Gal. 4:6 Author's translation).

This present `adoption', a word meaning much more than is conveyed by the term to English ears (*see* Galatians for meaning of the term), is an earnest and a pledge of a future `adoption'. Here, in this life, we receive the *spirit* of adoption, but it is evident from Romans 6 and 7, and the verses of 8 already considered, that the *body*, which has played so prominent a part in the tragedy of sin, shall have a place in the triumph of grace:

`The whole creation groans waiting, and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the FIRSTFRUITS of the Spirit (for such the indwelling Spirit of resurrection is), even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the ADOPTION, to wit, the redemption of our BODY' (8:23 Author's translation).

There intervenes between these two references to adoption in Romans 8:15 and 8:23 another reference to Adam, though he is not named. First, the apostle says, `And if children, then heirs' (8:17). This is a plain fact respecting every child of God. `And joint heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together (Rom. 8:17). This is not a fact concerning every child of God. We return in this verse to the advance we found suggested in Romans 8:9,10. After speaking of the present sufferings in view of future glory, the apostle says:

`For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, that this same creature will be set free from the bondage of corruption with the freedom of the glory of the children of God' (Rom. 8:20,21 Author's translation).

In *Figures of Speech* Dr. Bullinger has set out the passage thus:

**Romans 8:19-21**

**Ellipsis of repetition. Verb from preceding clause.**

- A 8:19. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. - *Expectation.*
- B 8:20-. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same. - *Reason.*
- A 8:-20. Waiteth, I say (from verse 19) in hope. - *Expectation.*
- B 8:21. Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. - *Reason.*

Here we seem to have another reference to Adam, and the hope which was given at the fall, of the redemption yet to come. Whether the whole creation, animate and inanimate, is to be understood here, or whether *pasa he ktisis* means every created being, limiting its scope to man, is a vexed question. There is abundant testimony in Scripture that creation in its wider sense became involved in the fall, and shall become involved in the restoration. Isaiah 11:6-9; 25:6-8; 35:1-10 are but samples of the testimony of Scripture on this head.

`The hope', which is indicated in Romans 8:20, was set forth by the cherubim that were caused to tabernacle at the gate of the garden of Eden. Ezekiel's description of the cherubim - the lion, the ox, the man, and the eagle - indicate that man, the beast of the field, the cattle, and the fowl of the air, representatives of Adam's lost dominion, shall yet be restored. It is to this that the four living creatures of the book of the Revelation bear witness. When these mis-called `beasts' are described (Rev. 4:6-8), creation and its purpose come into view (Rev. 4:11):

`And every created thing which is in heaven, and upon the earth, and under the earth, and those that are upon the sea, and all things in them, heard I saying to Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, Blessing, and honour, and glory and might, for the ages of the ages' (Rev. 5:13 Author's translation).

Here then in Romans 8:19-23 we reach by yet one more pathway the *reconciliation*, this time not the reconciliation of the outer portion, which was the reconciliation of the Gentiles upon the failure of Israel, but the reconciliation of creation, which is essentially connected with the teaching of Romans 6 to 8 as to the deliverance from the dominion of sin and death. Here is the mystery which had been silenced. The church, thus already partly delivered, is a *firstfruits*; the harvest is yet to come. As in the dispensational portion, so here, the firstfruits pledge the harvest (Rom. 11:16).

The chapter from this point tells us that believers during this period were saved by hope, just as in Galatians 5:5 the believer waited for the `hope of righteousness', and 1 Thessalonians 5:8 speaks of the `hope of salvation'. The hope of the restoration of the kingdom, and all the blessings which were held back for that event, were still, humanly speaking, possible of realization.

Two passages that follow are helpful when seen together:

`... *we know not* what we should pray for as we ought but ... *we know* that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose' (Rom. 8:26-28).

That purpose, and the links in the chain that stretched from before the ages unto their end, are then set out. The purpose, which is twofold, is that those who were foreknown, the elect, the firstfruits, the church, or whatever other name by which this elect company is known, have been

- (1) predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, and
- (2) that He (the Son) might be the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29).

Here we have in part the reconciliation of Colossians 1. We shall find upon examining the teaching of the epistles of the mystery that the foundation for their teaching and the transition from the one dispensation to the other is given in Romans 5-8. The links in the purpose are predestination, which goes back before time; calling and justification, which take place during time; and glorification, which takes place at the close.

The concluding verses are a glorious song of triumph. Starting as it did with `*no condemnation*', the chapter concludes with the question, `Who is he that condemneth?' The believers are seen triumphant over the dominion of sin, death, law, and flesh; not merely victors, but `more than conquerors through Him that loved us'.

`For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord' (8:38,39).

Thus ends the inner section of the epistle to the Romans. What a wondrous sweep, from the condemnation of all in the sin of Adam, to the super-conquest of the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ! Truly where sin abounded, grace has superabounded.

We have now seen from various standpoints the great theme of the apostle's ministry. Doctrine, dispensation, practice, ministry, and the inner portion likewise, all lead up to the *reconciliation*. As this is so vitally connected with the hope and blessing of the Gentiles, no time can be called wasted that is spent upon gaining an understanding of its witness and fulness. Some have found difficulty in the repeated doxologies of the closing chapters, but doxologies in some form occur throughout this epistle. The apostle is constrained to give his personal contrast with idolatry in Romans 1:25 :

`The Creator, Who is blessed unto the ages. Amen' (Author's translation).

The first section ends with the words `we also joy (boast) in God' (Rom. 5:11). The second section ends with a tribute to the triumphant love of God (Rom. 8:32-39). The third not only ends with that magnificent psalm of praise (Rom. 11:33-36), but finds room for a lesser note of praise (Rom. 9:5) after the recapitulation of Israel's covenant blessings. The fourth includes the exhortation to glorify God, and concludes with a benediction (Rom. 15:7 and 33). Another benediction follows in Romans 16:20; and yet another in 16:24. The whole is rounded off by the doxology of Romans 16:25-27. There is something suggestive of each other in the two great doxologies of Romans 11:33-36, and 16:25-27, which we leave with the reader as a suggestion for study.

The instructed reader will be conscious that much has been omitted in these pages that is profitable, but we cannot hope, in the limited space at our disposal, to do more than point the way. Our object has been to show the purpose of God as exhibited in the Acts, and as reflected in the epistles of the period, and with this in measure accomplished we must abide.

## CHAPTER 15

### Acts 28.

#### The Dispensational Crisis

If it were not that God is over all, and is sovereignly working out His purposes of grace, using the very master stroke of the enemy as a means of revealing yet greater grace, this chapter would be a sad one. The Acts opens with the burning question:

`... wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?' (Acts 1:6).

It closes with Israel and its hope set aside. The story is contained in the last fifteen verses of the Acts. These verses record the two critical meetings which the apostle had with the elders of the Jews in Rome.

The first meeting, with its results, occupies Acts 28:17-22. The second, with its results, occupies Acts 28:23-31. It is important to notice that the Acts is not constructed like an epistle, which ordinarily has three members, (1) Introduction and Greeting; (2) Epistle; and (3) Conclusion and Benediction. Acts has no conclusion in any sense parallel with that of an epistle. Indeed many commentators have speculated upon the *abruptness* of its close. Therefore Acts 28:30,31 must not be severed from the remainder and called 'Conclusion'; it forms an integral part of the closing portion and is the Holy Spirit's corresponding feature to the all-day conference among the Jews (Acts 28:23).

Before we turn to this final section of the Acts we must notice how it is introduced. When Paul reached Rome, 'the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard' (Acts 28:16). A difference was made in Paul's case apparently. 'But Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with a soldier that guarded him' (Acts 28:16 Author's translation). It is highly probable that the good report which would be made of Paul's conduct on the voyage and during the storm and wreck, together with the findings of Festus, Felix and Agrippa, influenced those in authority. After three days the apostle called together the chief of the Jews and expressly told them that he had called them together to speak to them:

`... because that for the HOPE OF ISRAEL I am bound with this chain' (Acts 28:20).

The hope of Israel is voiced in Acts 1:6; it is pledged in Acts 2:1-21; it is conditional upon Israel's repentance (Acts 3:19-26); it is only possible in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth (Acts 4:10-12); and it is attested by miracle and signs (Acts 2 to 28). Will that hope of Israel be attained? Yes, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

'Blindness in part hath happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved' (Rom. 11:25 Author's translation).

Was it attained by Israel at the end of the Acts? No, the representatives of Israel among the dispersion manifested the same spirit as had been shown by the rulers of Israel in the land. They fulfilled Isaiah 6:10, of which more presently. A day was appointed when the chief of the Jews were to assemble and hear what the apostle had to say.

### Acts 28:23-31

#### The Dispensational Crisis

- A a 28:23-. Chief of Jews come to Paul's lodging.
- b 28:-23-. Paul expounds the kingdom of God.
- c 28:-23. Concerning 'Jesus', out of Moses and Prophets.
- B 28:24-27. Israel. They heard not.

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### Isaiah 6:10

#### Dispensational boundary

- B 28:28. Gentiles. They will hear.
- A a 28:30. All come to Paul's hired house.
- b 28:31-. Paul preaches the kingdom of God.
- c 28:-31. Concerning 'The Lord Jesus Christ'.

Perhaps the dominant feature of this present Volume may be said to be the black line in the above structure which divides it into two distinct halves. It is the dispensational landmark or boundary. Till this point is reached Israel are looked upon as a nation, and the hope of Israel was the hope of the church and of the apostle to the Gentiles. Notice how every item is enforced by the parallelism. Do the chief of the Jews meet Paul in his *lodging*? then those who come afterwards to hear the word meet Paul in his own *hired house*. Does Paul *expound* and *testify* the kingdom of God to the Jews? then he *preaches* it to the Gentiles. Is *Jesus* the great object of his persuasion to the Jews? Then *The Lord Jesus Christ* is the theme of his teaching among the Gentiles.

There are however some great contrasts, and these contrasts express the character of the dispensational crisis more than do the parallels. When Paul seeks to persuade the chief of the Jews, he speaks of 'Jesus'. To the student of the New Testament the usage of the names of the Lord will be no new theme. Throughout the Gospels the name 'Jesus' is frequent, but in the Epistles the name occurs but rarely; the fuller title 'Jesus Christ', 'Christ Jesus', or 'The Lord Jesus Christ' is used. This marks one important distinction in the teaching of Paul to the Jews and to the Gentiles. He still had the one grand theme, the kingdom of God, to unfold, but that kingdom is all-embracing, including within its mighty sovereignty Jew, Gentile, church and creation, heaven, earth and the super-heavens, past, present and future. That section which was associated with the hope of Israel was associated with *Jesus*, but that section which was connected with the Gentile dispensation was associated with *The Lord Jesus Christ*.

A further contrast is seen in that when Paul is speaking to the chief of the Jews he finds his argument upon the Old Testament Scriptures, but when he ministers the salvation of God which was sent to the Gentiles, the old Testament Scriptures do not contain the revelation of the section of the kingdom of God which he then opens up. This section is spoken of as a 'mystery' that had been hidden by God since the ages, and therefore is not revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures. The absence of quotation from Old Testament in the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and 2 Timothy is both explained and reflected here.

The crisis is reached and culminates in the 'one word' of Isaiah 6:10 quoted by the apostle before Israel as a nation were 'dismissed' (departed, verse 25). This passage from Isaiah had been quoted by the Lord in Matthew 13 when the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were for the first time revealed. These parables of the mysteries were not uttered until it became evident that Israel would not repent (*see* Matt. 13:20-27), and that Christ would be rejected (*see* Matt. 12:6,41,42). It is here, too, that the wider ministry of Christ among the Gentiles is spoken of (*see* Matt. 12:16-21). Now, in Acts 28, Israel of the *dispersion* adopt the same attitude. When this is manifest, the words quoted by the Lord in Matthew 13 are again quoted by Paul and for the same reason. The mysteries that follow this quotation in Acts 28 are not the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but the added revelation of the mystery of Christ, and the altogether unknown mystery of the favour of God to the Gentiles under the terms of the one body and heavenly places.

The first thing said of Israel is to do with 'hearing'. In contrast the apostle places the Gentiles:

'Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they WILL HEAR IT' (Acts 28:28).

When Peter spoke to Cornelius, the Gentile, he said:

'The word which God SENT unto the children of ISRAEL ... was published throughout all Judaea ... the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem ... commanded us to preach unto the people' (Acts 10:36-42).

Paul, however, does not tell the Gentiles that word which God *sent* to Israel, but he declares that the salvation of God *is sent unto the Gentiles*, and thereby indicates a new development in the purpose of the ages.

The prison ministry of the apostle Paul is a blessed one. The epistles written from prison form a distinct group by themselves. In them is revealed grace beyond thought to those who by nature were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. These epistles, however, are outside the scope of the present Volume.

We have sought to show the general trend of the Acts, and the basic theme of the reconciliation that covers the greater part of it and the epistles of the period. These epistles of the reconciliation must be understood before the teaching relative to the dispensation of the mystery, the church of the one body, the blessings in the super-heavens, can be appreciated. The closing words of the epistle to the Romans, the last words of the dispensation which ended with Acts 28:28, lead us to the higher ground reached by that revelation given to the apostle Paul before the prison ministry began. They will form a fitting close to the present Volume:

'Now to Him Who is able to establish you according to MY GOSPEL, and the proclamation of Jesus Christ ACCORDING TO the revelation of the mystery, which has been hushed in *aionion* times, but now has been made manifest; and through prophetic writings, according to the appointment of the *aionion* God, has been made known to all nations, in order to the obedience of faith; to God only wise, through Jesus Christ, to Him be glory for the ages (*aion*). Amen' (Rom. 16:25-27 Author's translation).

## APPENDIX

**The Structure of Acts.****A few suggestions bearing upon dispensational points**

It is not our intention to present an elaborate literary structure, but we feel that one or two notes may help the reader, especially if he be already in possession of *The Companion Bible*.

It will be seen from the following suggestions that we are compelled to differ from the structures of that valuable work in one or two points, and as they are vital to the true understanding of its dispensational teaching, we give our reasons. We do not feel that it is right to sever the closing verses of Acts 28 from the great passage dealing with Paul's testimony to Israel, seeing that there is such evident parallel both in word and idea. This we have demonstrated on page 307 where the structure of Acts 28:23-31 is given.

Turning to the structure as a whole we find it divides the book up into two, the former treatise, and the Acts proper. To assist readers who, having *The Companion Bible* structure, may feel at a loss to make the necessary re-arrangement, we show the harmonious way in which Acts 1:1-14 is arranged, ending as it does at the turning point of the narrative, the ascension.

Then for the same reason we give the structure of the Acts as set out in *The Companion Bible*, but modified to these new conditions. One or two alterations are suggested in the member covering 15:1 to 19:20. The structure as it stands in *The Companion Bible* fails to emphasize that great event, the crossing over from Asia into Europe, surely a movement only surpassed by Acts 28 itself! The vision of the Macedonian is lost under a general heading, 'Decree of the Spirit' (Acts 16:6-9). By the simple re-adjustment suggested of this member, the entry of Silas and Timothy is noted, and the confirmatory work in already established churches is brought into sharp contrast with the new sphere of ministry opened up by the entry into Europe for the first time.

With these few remarks we offer the following outlines, and trust that they may be of service in tracing the purpose of the book and illuminating its teaching.

**Structure of Acts as a whole**

**A<sub>1</sub>** 1:1-14. The former Treatise. All that Jesus began to do and to teach.

**A<sub>2</sub>** 1:15 to 28:31. The Acts proper. The continued witness of the risen Christ.

**A<sub>1</sub> 1:1-14****The former Treatise**

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>A<sub>1</sub></b> | <p><b>B</b> 1:1. What the Lord began to do and to teach.</p> <p><b>C</b> 1:2-. Until the day.</p> <p><b>D</b> 1:-2-. Command to apostles.</p> <p><b>E</b> 1:-2. Taken up.</p> <p><b>B</b> 1:3-. What the Lord continued to do and teach.</p> <p><b>C</b> 1:-3. During forty days.</p> <p><b>D</b> 1:4-9-. Command to apostles.</p> <p><b>E</b> 1:-9-14. Taken up.</p> |
|----------------------|---|

**A<sub>2</sub> 1:15 to 28:31****The Acts proper**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>A<sub>2</sub></b> | <p><b>B</b> 1:15 to 2:13. Jerusalem. Holy Spirit. Enduement of the twelve.</p> <p><b>C</b> 2:14 to 8:1-. Ministry of Peter and others to nation in Jerusalem and land.</p> <p><b>D</b> 8:-1 to 11:30. Ministry of Peter and others in the land. Gentile included.</p> <p><b>E</b> 12:1-23. Jerusalem. Peter's imprisonment. Close of ministry. Caesarea.</p> |
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<b>C</b>	<p><b>B</b> 12:24 to 13:3. Antioch. Holy Spirit. Enduement of Paul and Barnabas.</p> <p>13:4 to 14:28. Ministry of Paul and others to the dispersion, apart from Jerusalem and the twelve.</p> <p><b>D</b> 15:1 to 19:20. Paul's ministry in association with the twelve.</p> <p><b>E</b> 19:21 to 28:31. Ephesus, Jerusalem, Caesarea, Rome. Paul's imprisonment. Commencement of new ministry.</p>
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**15:1 to 19:20****Paul's ministry in association with the twelve**

<b>D</b>	<p><b>Q</b> 15:1-39. Dissension within.</p> <p><b>R</b> 15:40 to 16:11. Syria, Cilicia, Asia, Europe.</p> <p><b>S</b> 16:12-40. Philippi.</p> <p><b>T</b> 17:1-14. Thessalonica and Berea.</p> <p><b>S</b> 17:15 to 18:18-. Athens and Corinth.</p> <p><b>R</b> 18:-18 to 19:12. Ephesus and Asia.</p> <p><b>Q</b> 19:13-20. Opposition without.</p>
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**Expansion of R 15:40 to 16:11****Syria, Cilicia, Asia, Europe**

<b>R</b>	<p><b>W</b> 15:40 to 16:5. <i>Visit of Churches.</i></p> <p><b>W</b> 16:1-11. <i>Vision of Macedonia.</i></p>	<p><b>a</b> 15:40. Paul chooses Silas.</p> <p><b>b</b> 15:41-. Went through cities.</p> <p><b>c</b> 15:-41. Confirming churches.</p> <p><b>a</b> 16:1-3. Paul chooses Timothy.</p> <p><b>b</b> 16:4. Went through cities.</p> <p><b>c</b> 16:5. Churches established.</p> <p><b>d</b> 16:6,7. Forbidden to preach in Asia.</p> <p><b>e</b> 16:8,9. Troas. Vision. Invitation.</p> <p><b>d</b> 16:10. Call to preach in Macedonia.</p> <p><b>e</b> 16:11. Troas. Loosing from. Response.</p>
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Geographical	Theme	Ministry	Summary	Subject	
JERUSALEM Jews only	Acts 1:1 to 2:46 Commission of the Twelve. Pentecost.	Peter and the Twelve.	missionary Defends gospel of uncircumcision. 2:46,47 Acts (See Darby). 16:19. `And the Lord added daily those that were to be saved'.	Paul, Timothy and Silas, Aquilla, Priscilla and Apollos. `So mi; prevail	
JERUSALEM	Acts 3:1 to 6:6 Dispensational miracle. Hellenists come forward.	Peter and John. The seven Deacons.	Europe. Paul enters Europe; founds churches. 2nd and 3rd missionary journeys. `And the word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied IN JERUSALEM greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith'.	Paul. `Preach teachin Lord Je man fo	
Samaria Damascus	Acts 6:8 to 9:30 Stephen's witness and martyrdom. Philip's witness to Samaritans and Ethiopians. Saul's persecution and conversion.	Stephen, Philip, Peter and John. Saul.	ROME. Gentiles only. `I must see Rome', and Paul. `Spain'. Paul a prisoner. First ministry finished. `Then had the churches of JUDAEA and GALILEE and SAMARIA, and were edified; and taken to Rome for the Lord, and in the confidence of the Holy		
Caesarea	Acts 9:32 to 11:20 Cornelius and Hellenists evangelized.	Peter and those scattered at persecution.	Looking forward to all the new ministry, and taken to Rome for the confidence of the Holy Ghost, Acts, Speaker		
END OF ACTS OF PETER					
BEGINNING OF ACTS OF PAUL					
ANTIOCH. Jews, Hellenists and Gentiles.	Acts 11:22 to 12:23. Development in Antioch suggests that Saul be sought. Herod kills James and is himself smitten.	Barnabas and Saul.	1 1 Peter. The 120 disciples. 2 2 Peter. Men of Judah. Men of Covenant Israel. House of Israel.	11:1 Appointment of successor to Judas. Pentecost and Joel 2:30,31; Psa. 16:8-10; 132:11; 110:1.	Matthia added t the elev 3,000 souls added.
Asia Minor.	Acts 12:25 to 16:4. Saul separated, called Paul. Dispensational miracle. 1st.	Paul, Barnabas, Silas and Timothy.	3 3 Peter. Men of Israel. 4 4 Peter. Sanhedrin. Ye Rulers of the people and Elders of Israel.	Summary Restitution of all things spoken by the prophets. Acts 12:24. The spiritual import of the healing of the lame man. Acts 16:5.	`By the mouth of all His prophets'. Psa. 118:22. Threat and let All me; glorifie God. None quoted. They w cut to tl heart, a
			5 5 Peter. Sanhedrin. `And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.		

Prince and Saviour to Israel.

took counsel to slay the apostles.

from sacred to apostles.

No.	Acts	Speaker	To whom addressed	Subject	Scriptures quoted	Results
6	10	Peter.	Cornelius.	The inclusion of the Gentiles.	None quoted. Cornelius and all with him converted and baptized.	Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.
7	15	Peter.	Council at Jerusalem.	The inclusion of the Gentiles and circumcision.	None quoted. Audience given to Barnabas and Paul.	Christ must needs have suffered, and risen, and that Jesus is the Christ.

*Thus Peter's last address prepares an audience for Paul.*

No.	Acts	Speaker	To whom addressed	Subject
8	15	James.	Council at Jerusalem.	The inclusion of the Gentiles and Circumcision.
9	7	Stephen.	Men, brethren and fathers.	Israel's history emphasized the 'second time', e.g. Joseph and Moses.

*Stephen's witness is closely linked with Paul's conversion and ministry.*

No.	Acts	Speaker	To whom addressed	Subject	Scriptures quoted	Results
10	13	Paul.	Synagogue in Antioch. Men, brethren and ye that fear God.	The death and resurrection of Christ.	Summary of O.T. history. Psa. 2; 16:10; Hab.	The Gentiles besought for repetition. The Jews envious.
11	14	Paul.	Lystra, to the people.	The living God as contrasted with idols.	None quoted. The Paul. Gentiles scarcely restrained	Jerusalem. Men brethren and fathers. In Hebrew tongue. The conversion and commission

of Paul.  
Sent to the  
Gentiles.

`Away  
with him'.

| | | | | | |

No.	Acts	Speaker	To whom addressed	Subject	Scriptures quoted	Deacons	Results	
17	23	Paul.	Chief priests and council.	The hope and resurrection of the dead.	Exod. 22:28. The Sanhedrin divided. Samaria Damascus	Acts 6:8-9:30 Stephen's witness and martyrdom. Philip's witness to Samaritans and Ethiopians. Saul's persecution and conversion.	Stephen, Philip, Peter and John. Saul.	JERUSALEM greatly; a great company of the Jews were obedient to the faith. Acts 9:31
18	24	Paul.	Caesarea. Felix.	The resurrection.	Dan. 12:2. Paul left bound for two years.	Philip's witness to Samaritans and Ethiopians. Saul's persecution and conversion.		Then had the churches throughout all Judaea, Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and all the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.
19	25	Paul.	Caesarea. Festus.	Paul's refutation of three charges made against him.	None quoted.	Acts 9:32-11:20		
20	26	Paul.	Caesarea. Agrippa.	Conversion and connection with Gentiles. The resurrection.	The prophets and Moses referred to. Paul pronounced innocent.	Cornelius and Hellenists evangelized.	Peter and those scattered at persecution.	And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and added to the Lord's church. Acts 11:2
END OF ACTS OF PETER								
BEGINNING OF ACTS OF PAUL								
21	27	Paul.	Shipwrecked.	'Be of good cheer, I believe God'.	None quoted.	Acts 11:22 to 12:23.		Acts 12:24.
22	28	Paul.	Rome. Elders and Jews.	Out of Law and Prophets. The Lord Jesus.	Isa. 6. ANTIOCH Jews, Hellenists and Gentiles.	Development in Antioch suggests that Saul be sought. Herod kills James and is himself smitten.	Barnabas and Saul.	'But the Word of God grew and multiplied. Acts 16:5.
Geographical								
Theme								
Ministry								
Summary								
Acts 1 to 2:46								
JERUSALEM Jews only	Commission of the Twelve. Pentecost.	Peter and the Twelve.	'And the Lord added daily those that were to be saved'.	Asia Minor.	Saul separated called Paul. Dispensational Miracle. 1st. Missionary journey. Defends gospel of	Paul, Barnabas, Silas and Timothy.	'And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily'.	
Acts 1 to 4:6								
JERUSALEM	Dispensational Miracle. Hellenists	Peter and John. The seven	'And the word of God increased, and the number of disciples multiplied IN					

	uncircumcision.		Asebes	237
	<i>Acts</i>		Atenisas	84
	16:6		Bebaio	171
	to		Christon kai chrisas	200
	19:19.		Deisidaimonesterous	243
Europe.	Paul enters Europe; finds churches. 2nd and 3rd Missionary journeys.	Paul, Timothy and Silas, Aquilla, Priscilla and Apollos.	`So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed.	119
	<i>Acts</i>		Dia touto	280, 282
	19:21		Diakonia	229
	to		Diallassomai	91
	28:30..		Diameno	149
ROME. Gentiles only.	`I must see Rome', and `Spain'. Paul a prisoner. First ministry finished. Looking forward to the new ministry. Taken to Rome. Israel set aside.	Paul.	Dielthon	106
			Dielthontes	106
			Diokimazo	135
			Dorean	257
			Douleuo	295
			Dunamis	220
			Eireasa	182
			Enne	123
			Evinatike	207
			Ek	120
			Ektroma	208
			Energieo	140
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