

Vol. XXXI

September, 1952

No. 9

STUDIES
IN THE
SCRIPTURES

“Search the Scriptures” John 5:39

EDITOR: Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| The Late Editor's Last Days | 1 |
| Exposition of John's First Epistle | 4 |
| <i>33. Antichrists (2:22-23)</i> | |
| The Life and Times of Joshua..... | 10 |
| <i>85. Final Dispositions</i> | |
| The Doctrine of Human Depravity | 15 |
| <i>13. Conclusion</i> | |
| The Application of the Scriptures | 20 |
| <i>Part 4</i> | |

Arthur W. Pink was born in Nottingham, England, in 1886, and born again by God's Spirit in 1908. He studied briefly at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago before his pastoral work in Colorado, California, Kentucky, and South Carolina, USA, and in Sydney, Australia. In 1934, he returned to his native England, taking his final residence on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland, in 1940, where he remained until his death in 1952.

Studies in the Scriptures appeared without interruption from 1922 to 1953, each issue including six to eight articles addressing a different topic in a series. While virtually unknown to the Christian world when he died, his writings continue to grow in their influence upon God's people around the world, through their clarity, careful exposition, and Christ-centeredness.

Chapel Library makes issues available at our website for free download worldwide, and is currently reprinting the monthly issues in sequence, mailing quarterly to subscribers in North America as the Lord enables.

Vol. XXXI

September, 1952

No. 9

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

“Search the Scriptures” John 5:39

EDITOR: Arthur W. Pink

THE LATE EDITOR’S LAST DAYS

The writing of an account of the late Editor’s, my dear husband’s, home call devolves upon me, and I feel so unqualified for such a sacred task that I tremble to attempt it. Making the words of the prophet my own, “I am not a prophetess, neither the daughter of a prophet,” yet I feel the dear readers of **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** are friends and desire that we give them some details of his last days with us. I know their love will cover all mistakes found in this little piece. As he abominated flattery, I trust I shall give you a truthful report in my feeble way. Mr. Pink maintained a standard both in spirituality and diction which makes it difficult for one to emulate him, as it was a special gift for the work designed him. May He who once used a “little maid,” be pleased to assist me now, and He shall have all the praise.

There is one verse of Scripture which impresses itself upon my mind more than any other as I seek to bring my thoughts to the object of these lines, and which has enabled me to frame the whole in my mind as to how I should present the following. In Hebrews 13:7, we read, “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” Certainly there are not a few readers in the world who have regarded Mr. Pink as their spiritual ruler or guide into the truth, as many, many scores of letters abundantly testify, and I am sure he will be long remembered by each one of them who deeply mourn their loss. He sought to write unto you (and speak to those with whom he came into contact) the Word of God as it was given unto him, keeping back nothing he felt was profitable for our souls, whether it be exhortation, reproof or correction. We trust there are hundreds scattered here and there in the world who know the meaning of the next clause—“whose faith follow”—who do not need to be admonished by this poor scribe, but I need to turn those words into prayer that I may “do them.” **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** is a living monument of his faith in the veracity of God’s Word, Christ’s great and glorious work of redemption, and the Ho-

ly Spirit's work in applying the truth to the soul in living power, and needs no word from me to confirm where he stood on the fundamentals of the faith.

He regarded the readers of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* as friends, and was daily in prayer for all, showing that he had a real pastor's love. Up to the last three days of his life, he had a most keen interest in all letters which came to hand and would thank the Lord for the encouraging words contained therein. He was an ardent student of the Scriptures, often being so absorbed in his meditations as to lose all trace of time, or any consciousness of my being in the room. Often I have heard him exclaim, "Oh, that is wonderful. I never saw that before. I rejoice as those that find great spoil when the Lord is pleased to open His truth to me. It is inexpressibly precious to have Him lead me into His truth. The more I study God's Word the more precious I find it, and the more I marvel at the inexhaustible treasures contained therein. How surpassingly glorious to think that we shall spend eternity with Christ, and He, our Teacher, unfolding the great mysteries of His 'Word which liveth and abideth for ever.' What I have just seen is only a foretaste which causes me to desire Him to hasten the day when I shall have done with all things mundane." He was so full of thanksgiving and praise for everything, and though very weak in body, "he was strong in faith, giving glory to God" continually. He was not unmindful of the many kindnesses shown him by the many dear friends who were bringing things to the door or sending. Feeling so unworthy of the least of all His mercies, he besought the Lord's richest blessing on every one who so lavishly ministered unto his temporal needs.

"Considering the end of their conversation." This is the purpose of this piece and there is much before me, nevertheless, it is hard for me, but I trust I may be enabled to write to *His* praise, for I well know my dear husband desired none for himself. His was the spirit of the apostle, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" Several months before the end, I saw he was failing and it worried me very much. Each time I made a reference to it he would always say, "It's old age, my dear. Thank the Lord it is so. I am thankful I am so near the end, and not just beginning life. I am heartily sorry for the young men of today who are just starting out. It will be terribly hard for those who are conscientious. The times are so dark and will get much darker for them, but the Lord will keep His own." Many times he appeared so weary and exhausted as he was losing his energy, that I would press him to rest and he would be better able to do his work. To which he would ever reply, "We must work while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work. I desire to be found at my post when the call comes." He would not stop except for the short intervals he was accustomed to go out each morning, which he continued until three weeks before his death.

He never ceased to praise the Lord for bringing us to the Island of Lewis, and for placing us in the home in which it has been our happy privilege to reside for twelve years. He felt it was a mark of distinguishing favour that we should be with those who love and honour the Sabbath as we, too, have always done. He loved the Sabbath. It was a sacred and holy day to him, and he loved those who had the same reverence for it. In the peace and quietness here in Lewis, he pursued and enjoyed his studies away from the madding crowds of the cities. More than once he told me that he had no desire whatever to be anywhere else and never expected to leave till the Lord took him to glory.

One night in May, he had a seizure which lasted several minutes. After it passed, he said, "I shall soon be home in glory. I cannot go soon enough. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.' I am so happy I feel like singing through that psalm." He observed I was weeping, and asked, "My dear, why do you weep? You should be rejoicing that I shall soon be home." I told him I was weeping for myself at being left behind. I knew it was good for him, but I dreaded the separation. He gently said, "The Lord has been so wondrously good to us all these years and brought us safely through until now. He will not desert you in your hour of greatest need. Only trust Him with all your heart. He will not fail you."

After that night, he was making plans and getting all things in order for his departure, as if he was going on a long journey, and he would be telling me what to do. Among other things, he wanted me to publish in *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* all the material he was leaving with me before closing down the magazine. As he saw his time was short, he applied himself more strenuously to composing articles so as to leave as much as he could and to complete as nearly as possible some series he was working on. "The Lord is good and doeth good" was daily on his lips. He rested as few have on the sovereignty of God and seemed to be completely resigned to His will for him to such an extent that he said many times, "Let Him do with me as seemeth Him good." Once when we were speaking of the past and present dealings of the Lord in our pilgrim journey, he said, "'He hath done all things well.' *All things, my dear, not some things.*"

On the Wednesday morning before his death the following Tuesday morning, while still in bed, and I about my duties in the room, he began to speak, "The darkness is past and the true light now shineth. Yes, it shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Lifting his hand toward the ceiling he said, "All is glory before me. I cannot say with Mr. Rutherford, 'Dark, dark hath been the midnight,' for my experience has been so different from his. But I can say, 'Dayspring is at hand, and glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.' I am leaving the darkness behind to you who have still to finish your pilgrimage." I said to him, "That is all very beautiful for you." To which he quickly replied, "And it can be for you too if you will cast aside your doubts and fears and put your whole trust in Him." He sat in his chair most of the day dictating an article with great effort, for he was so desirous to finish it, but said he felt he had left it too late to get it done. We lacked only four sentences when he stopped, put down his paper and glasses, and said, "Put me to bed." I shall never know how I got him to bed, but by the Lord's mercy I did, supporting him for over an hour till he got relief and I could lay him down. After a few minutes' rest he said, "Get your glasses and paper and pencil and come to the bed, and I will give you the last four sentences and you can type them when I am gone." I took them down and when I had completed writing, he said, "My work is finished. My race is run. I am ready to go. I cannot go soon enough." He never rose after that, but still remained happy and praising the Lord.

The 23rd Psalm was almost constantly on his lips both to myself and the Christian nurse, and many wonderful things he said to us, among them being, "Not one good thing hath failed of all the good things He hath promised." Another time we heard him say, "He hath not dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me according to my iniquities." Again, "Wearisome nights are appointed me, but I have nothing to say, for the Lord has so won-

drously spared me bodily pain all my life through till now.” Once we heard him ask the nurse if she knew those lovely lines, “The King of love my Shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never; I nothing lack if I am His, and He is mine for ever.” Once in great agony, he said, “O taste and see that the LORD is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him.” A dear friend came in to relieve the nurse and be with me and we beheld his face radiant many times, and we felt sure he was having visions of glory. Then we heard him say, which were his last words, “The Scriptures explain themselves,” showing us what his mind was on. So having finished his course, and completed his work, he has gone to be with Him whom he loved and served for so many years. “O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.”

I thank all the dear readers who have sent such loving letters of sympathy at this time of my sore bereavement, and earnestly covet the prayers of all in my hour of greatest need.

EXPOSITION OF JOHN’S FIRST EPISTLE

33. Antichrists (2:22-23)

What an immense amount of unedifying and worthless rubbish has been written on “the antichrist”! Yet that is hardly a thing to be wondered at, since it supplies an object that makes a strong appeal to lovers of the bizarre and sensational. Moreover, it is a subject that offers an opportunity for every conceited tyro¹ to pose as a “deep student of prophecy.” Almost endless have been the conjectures as to the identity of “the antichrist”: whether an evil system or a separate individual; and if the latter, whether he has yet appeared on the stage of human action, or whether his advent is yet future. The Reformers and almost all of the Puritans held that “the man of sin” (which they regard as another title of this infamous character) signified the Papacy. Later, some who claimed to be more enlightened were quite sure that Napoleon Bonaparte was this son of perdition. Influenced by his early teachers and associations, this writer once deemed himself qualified to write a book of three hundred pages thereon (long since out of print), but trusts he has grown wiser with the passing of the years.²

During the last three decades many others have speculated upon the personality of “the antichrist.” Not a few who were regarded as eminent “Bible teachers” insisted that the Kaiser of Germany filled this iniquitous role, but when the closing years of his career falsified their theorizings, Mussolini (as “the restorer of the old Roman empire”) became their choice; then as he began to wane in power and be eclipsed by another, Hitler was preferred. Now [that] those men of evil renown have been called to meet their God, Stalin has occupied the prophetic limelight. And so, we suppose, it will continue to the end, for human nature changes not, either in its arrogance, blindness, gullibility, or refusal to

¹ **tyro** – beginner in learning something; novice.

² Pink initially held to the doctrines of dispensationalism during his early years of writing.

acknowledge its ignorance. “Vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass’s colt” (Job 11:12). There ever have been, and doubtless will continue to be unto the close of this world’s history, men who posed as being wise above that which is written, and a flock of admirers will credit their pretensions and receive as oracles their wild and profitless theorizings.

Disregarding all speculations and controversies upon prophecies, which may or may not bear upon the subject (for example, those in Daniel and The Revelation, to which so many appeal), let us concentrate upon the term itself. The actual word “antichrist” occurs only in John’s epistles. In other connections the prefix “anti” is used in various senses: e.g. over against, contrary to, a substitute for. Thus, abstractedly considered, “antichrist” might refer either to one who pretended to be the Messiah or to one who openly opposed Him: a pseudo Christ or a rival. It is by carefully observing how the term is used by the apostle and what he predicated thereof that we must determine its sense. It is true that our Lord announced, “Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many,” which He explained as “there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders” (Mat 24:5, 24)—but that is nothing to the point of our present inquiry: we consider that history shows those predictions were fulfilled in the first century AD.

First, John had said, “ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists...They went out from us, but they were not of us” (2:18-19). There we see that the early Christians had been forewarned that the Gospel of Christ would be opposed, that there were many such opposers by the close of the first century, and that such were apostates. “And hence we learn that antichrist is not a single person, but many: antichrist in the first clause is explained by antichrists in the latter” (John Gill, 1697-1771). Second, 2:22 identifies those antichrists by describing them as liars against the truth and repudiators of the Christ of God. Third, John affirmed, “And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist” (4:3). As “the spirit of the world” (1Co 2:12) has reference to that principle of carnal reason and gratification, which regulates its subjects, so “the spirit of antichrist” signifies that evil influence which produces hostility to Christ. Finally, he informs us, “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (2Jo 1:7). “From this it is clear that John understood by the word all those who denied that Jesus is the Messiah” (Albert Barnes, 1798-1870).

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?” (verse 22).

To deny—either implicitly or explicitly—that Jesus is the Christ is to say that He is not the Messiah, the One announced and promised by the prophets of old. Second, it is to repudiate Him as the one appointed and endued by God to be the sole but sufficient Saviour of sinners. Third, it is the rejection of His person and official work, and that is a sin of the highest magnitude: “whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God” (2Jo 1:9). As Gill remarked, “The one who denied that Jesus is the Christ is not the only liar in the world, but he is the greatest of liars; this is a consummate lie, being opposed to a glaring truth.” It is the gainsaying of a fact clear and indisputable. It is opposed to the witness of the angels at His incarnation, and to that of His forerunner. It is op-

posed to the teaching of Him who is the truth itself, for He clearly manifested Himself to be the Messiah. It flies in the face of His miraculous credentials, which authenticated His claim. It is contrary to the declaration of His apostles, who were eye-witnesses of His miracles, and to the sure Word of God Himself.

The denial that Jesus is the Christ is a sin committed in many different ways and in varying degrees of culpability. Unitarians, who directly and explicitly repudiate His Godhead, are not the only liars and antichrists. There are many opposers in Christendom who indirectly and implicitly deny the Christ of God by devising a false Christ from their perverted imaginations. Thus, Pelagians,³ and in a lesser degree Arminians, are guilty of this horrible crime, for they transfer to the creature almost all the honour that rightly belongs to the Redeemer alone. And as John Calvin, (1509-1564) pertinently remarked, “So the Papists at this day, setting up free will in opposition to the grace of the Holy Spirit, ascribing a part of their righteousness and salvation to the merits of works, feigning for themselves innumerable advocates, by whom they render God propitious⁴ to them, have a sort of fictitious Christ I know not what; but the living and genuine image of God that shines forth in Christ they deform by their wicked inventions—they lessen His power, subvert and pervert His office. Christ is denied whenever those things that belong to Him are taken away from Him.”

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”

Those terrible names of opprobrium⁵ cannot but fill the renewed heart with holy horror. Yet no terms of infamy and condemnation can be too strong to designate the opposers and blasphemers of the Christ of God. To deny that Jesus is the Christ is to repudiate His virgin birth, His vicarious character, His redemptive work—for those things were predicated of the Messiah. In the preceding chapter we explained that “the Christ” means “the Anointed One” and expresses His threefold office. Thus any man who denies that Jesus is the great Prophet of the Church, the infallible Teacher, the essential Word of God, is an antichrist—an arch-heretic. Anyone who denies that Jesus is the great High Priest, the sole Mediator between God and men, by whose one perfect offering He has perfected forever the sanctified, is an antichrist—His open antagonist. Anyone who denies that Jesus is the King of the Church, the only one who has the right to command and be obeyed, is an antichrist—His avowed enemy.

Yet this is not all that is included: *“he is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.”* The Messiahship of Christ is not an isolated fact; lying behind it is the all-important truth of the Holy Trinity. The denial of Christ is, at the same time, a repudiation of the mysterious and ineffable union [that] is between the members of the Godhead. There is a most intimate and unique relation subsisting between the Father and the Son, one that is

³ **Pelagians** – those who (perhaps unknowingly) follow the teachings of the heretic Pelagius (c. 354-c. 420), a British monk who argued that people could reform themselves by free will and that they can take the first steps toward salvation without the assistance of God’s grace. His views were condemned as heresy by the Council of Ephesus (431).

⁴ **propitious** – favorably inclined.

⁵ **opprobrium** – that which brings shame or disgrace.

entirely beyond finite comprehension, expressed in such terms as “the man...my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zec 13:7), so that “all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father” (Joh 5:23), for, as He expressly declared, “I and Father are one” (Joh 10:30)—co-essential, co-eternal, co-glorious; “His own Son” (Rom 8:32) in a way that the regenerate are not: really, though incomprehensibly,

“*His own Son.*” Now unless Christ be owned in this highest relation, He is virtually denied in all. Scripture presents the Father and the Son in eternity past, as engaged in mutual council (Zec 6:13). “A great covenant is negotiated. The Father and the Son, with the Spirit, are, if one may dare say so, in solemn conference together. From the bosom of the Father, in which He is dwelling evermore, the Son receives a commission to come forth.

“He is appointed Heir of all things. Creation is assigned to Him as His proper work. All providence is to be His care; and, above all, the providence of this spot of earth. Here on this earth, from among a fallen race, He is to purchase for Himself, and for His Father, at a great price, a seed given Him by the Father, and to share with Him the blessedness of His being the Son. So it is announced between the Father and the Son from everlasting; the Holy Spirit being a party to the arrangement, as He is to have a large share in carrying it out. And so, accordingly, in the fullness of time, the Son appears among men. He appears as the Son: on the Father’s behalf, entrusted with His Father’s commission, to be about His Father’s business. He is the Son not merely in respect of His being the Holy Jesus, receiving proofs and pledges of God’s fatherly presence and approval, as any holy being might. He is the Son also, and chiefly, in respect of the work or office with a view to which He is the Christ. He is the Son consenting to be the Father’s Servant, and as such anointed for the accomplishment of the Father’s purpose. Only, therefore, in so far as you acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, do you really receive Him as the Son.

“And denial, whether practical or doctrinal, of the proposition that Jesus is the Christ, is tantamount to a disowning of His personality as the Son. It is only when you recognize Him as anointed to do His Father’s will in the sacrifice of Himself, that you really own Him as the Son. Such, then, is the importance and significancy of the proposition that Jesus is the Christ, considered in itself; and such it’s bearing on the owning of His person as the Saviour and as the Son. It is a proposition that so vitally affects the essential character of Him to whom it relates, that the denial of it is virtually a denial of Himself...For, in a word, the completeness of this illustrious personage depends on a full and adequate recognition of His double relation: to us as sinners, as our Jesus, and to God the Father as His Son. Set aside His being Christ—the anointed Sacrificer and anointed Sacrifice, the anointed Priest and anointed Victim, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world...and we have neither any Jesus fit to be our Saviour, nor any Son of God worth the owning...Hence he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ is not only a liar, he is antichrist. And being antichrist—setting himself against the Christ—he, as antichrist, denies the Father and the Son” (Robert S. Candlish, 1806-1873).

Let none aspire to more “liberality and charity” than the one who was favoured to lean on the Master’s bosom; those who are opposed to the person, doctrine, gospel, and kingdom of Christ are liars and antichrists. Those who array themselves against Him and hold doctrines that are hostile to His Godhead, His official character, His redemptive work, are

His adversaries. Yet there is no truth so sacred and well attested, but there have ever been those who controverted it. Some have denied the Saviour's deity, some have explained away the reality and uniqueness of His humanity, and so the reality of His sufferings; while others set themselves against His headship and kingly authority—yet professing themselves to be and retaining the name of Christians, imposing their falsehoods on their deluded followers. In their bitter antagonism to the Lord Jesus, we may discover something more than an ebullition⁶ of human depravity, namely the agency of Satan. It is the enmity of that old serpent the devil against the woman's Seed. It demonstrates his age-long hatred of Christ and His gospel.

“He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.” How little is this realized today! Scriptural views of the Father cannot be ours if we err concerning the Son. “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him” (Mat 11:27). The Father cannot be known apart from the Son, for He is the One who has “declared him” (Joh 1:18), or made Him known. There is such an ineffable union between Them that He could aver, “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father...I am in the Father, and the Father in me” (Joh 14:9, 11). Where Christ be denied, the whole revelation of God in and through Him (Heb 1:1-2; 2Co 5:19) is set aside.

“As God has given Himself to us to be enjoyed only in Christ, He is elsewhere sought for in vain; or (if anyone prefers what is clearer) as in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Deity, there is no God apart from Him. It hence follows that Turks, Jews, and such as are like them, have a mere idol and not the true God. For by whatever titles they may honour the God that they worship, still, as they reject Him without whom they cannot come to God, and in whom God has really manifested Himself to us, they have but some creature or fiction of their own” (Calvin).

“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father” (verse 23).

How wide and sweeping is this solemn statement! No matter what his profession and pretensions, if he in any way denies the Son, he cuts himself off from the Father. The Father can only be known (Joh 17:3), approached (Joh 14:6), worshipped (1Pe 2:5), and glorified (Col 3:17) in and through His incarnate Son. Despite their boasted orthodoxy, Jesus Christ said to the Jews, “Ye neither know me, nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also” (Joh 8:19). To be without the One is to be without the Other. That is abundantly demonstrated in heathendom: their religions are godless because they are Christless! In like manner, all who acknowledge “the Supreme Being,” “the Architect of the universe,” or even “the Almighty,” and at the same time refuse the Mediator, believe in one who has no existence. Moreover, if wrong views be entertained of the Son, erroneous conceptions of the Father are necessarily entertained. If Christ be the Son only by adoption, God is not His Father. If He be Son merely by office, equally so is the Father. If He be Son only by incarnation or resurrection, the Father is denied.

“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father” as his “Father.” This at once gives the lie to one of the most popular and widely accepted errors of the last century,

⁶ **ebullition** – sudden outburst.

namely “the universal fatherhood of God.” In the spiritual and highest sense God is the Father of none save of Christ and His redeemed: “For ye [namely the saints] are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:26). Where there be no faith in Christ Jesus, there is no spiritual sonship; and where that be absent, God cannot rightfully be regarded as our Father. Christ made that very plain when He exposed the empty boast of the unbelieving Jews, who claimed, “we have one Father, God,” and to whom He replied, “If God were your Father, ye would love me” (Joh 8:41-42). How can one who despises and rejects the Son have God for his Father—have a filial relation to Him—when there is no bond of union between them? The Father thinks far too highly of His Son to love any who hate Him. He will not set a premium upon those who so grievously insult Him by disdain His Beloved, for “him hath God the Father sealed” (Joh 6:27).

“But he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also” (verse 23). We have placed that sentence in italics, for so it is found in the Authorized Version. As most of our readers are aware, that is to indicate that such words are not found in the Greek, but have been supplied by the translators. This instance serves to manifest the scrupulous fairness of those who produced that edition of the Bible: because it was found in some of the ancient manuscripts, they gave it a place; as it was omitted by others, they marked it as doubtful. The Revised Version includes it in the text without any question, and, we believe, warrantably so. The editorial note in Calvin’s commentary says, “The words are found in most of the manuscripts, and in most of the versions, and in many of the Fathers. Besides, they wholly comport with the usual style of the apostle, whose common practice it was to state things positively and negatively, and vice versa. See 5:12.” A. Barnes tells us that this passage “is found in the Vulgate, the Syriac, the Ethiopian, the Armenian, and Arabic versions; and in the critical editions of Griesbach, Tittman, and Hahn. It is probable, therefore, that it should be regarded as a genuine portion of the sacred text.”

Gill pointed out that the second half of verse 23 “confirms and illustrates what is before said; for as he who denies the sonship of Christ cannot hold the paternity of God, so he who owns the sonship of Christ, the second person, maintains the paternity of the first—for those two are correlates and mutually put or take away each other. No mention is made of the Spirit, because, as yet, no controversy had arisen concerning Him.” To which we would add, in Scripture, repetition is always for the purpose of emphasis, and often the same thing is stated both negatively and positively (as in 1:6-7) in order to impress us more deeply with that which is of first importance—as many of our Lord’s weightiest utterances were prefaced with a double “verily.” The fundamental truth of our present verse cannot be too clearly and emphatically stated or too frequently inculcated: that only by faith’s acceptance of Christ can we obtain any saving knowledge of God; and that all who believingly receive the Lord Jesus have in fact become the sons and daughters of the Almighty, and are made heirs of eternal life.

“But he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.” “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1Pe 3:18). By Christ all that believe are united to the Father, so that He could say, “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father” (Joh 20:17). As there is a most intimate relation between the Father and the Son, so there is in the doctrine and knowledge of Them. And as we cannot have the One without the Other, so on Christ’s becoming our Saviour we are received into the Fa-

ther's favour. The Father gives Himself to us in His Son, and by receiving the Latter we receive the Former. "He hath the Father" for his everlasting portion: to commune with, to enjoy, to supply all his need. Thus, not only is the honour of Christ involved in our apprehensions of Him, but our blessings and privileges are bound up therein.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOSHUA

85. Final Dispositions

In our last, we dwelt upon the rebuke by Israel's leader unto those seven tribes which were slack in going up to possess that land which the Lord God of their fathers had given them. How that he bade them appoint three men of each tribe to go and make a thorough survey of those sections of Canaan which had not yet been distributed. They were required to furnish something after the order of a map, supplying a detailed description of the country, fully sectionalized, and return unto the commander with their report. They duly performed their task, "The men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh." And we are told, "And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions" (18:9-10). The order of their allotments accorded neither with their seniority nor with their numerical strength.

It is to be borne in mind that two and a half of the tribes, namely the Reubenites, the Gaddites, and half of Manasseh, had been assigned their places and portions by Moses on the eastern side of the Jordan (Num 32:33), and in Joshua 13, the boundaries of the same had been carefully defined and stated. After Caleb had put in his lawful claim to mount Hebron, and had been granted the same, the tribes of Judah, Joseph, and the second half of Manasseh were given their allotments, a full enumeration of the places which they were to occupy being furnished in Joshua 15, 16, and 17; at which we have already glanced. What was done for them by Eleazar and Joshua at Gilgal was now done for their fellows at Shiloh. We shall not attempt any detailed examination of their respective territories, for there is little in the geographical description which lends itself to the making of edifying comments thereon. On the other hand, it would be improper for us to ignore the same entirely. We shall therefore content ourselves with an occasional remark thereon.

First, "And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph" (18:11). Two striking predictions had been made concerning this tribe, which, though the one almost appears to clash with the other, were manifestly fulfilled, as the verses now before us, and the subsequent history of this tribe, demonstrate. The earlier one was made by dying Jacob, "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil" (Gen 49:27). It is evident from this language that the patriarch followed not his natural inclinations on this occasion, for Benjamin was his youngest and most dearly beloved son. No, it was under divine impulse that

he uttered this remarkable prophecy. Yet, it is to be observed that while the wolf is characterized mainly by its ferociousness, it is also marked in its fortitude and courage. Benjamin was indeed the fiercest and most warlike of the tribes. The reference to what he should do “in the morning” and “at night” intimates that there is a distinct reference here to both the earlier and later history of the tribe.

The fierceness and cruelty of the men belonging to this tribe appeared conspicuously in the horrid treatment which they meted out to the Levite’s concubine. Their warlike character and ability and tenacity in fighting were seen in their singly withstanding the combined forces of all the other tribes in two pitched battles, in one of which 20,000 of them defeated the opposing army of 400,000, and later refused to yield until they were almost completely destroyed (Jdg 19:14-30; 20:12-14). King Saul, who so fiercely persecuted David, was of this tribe. Other examples of their fierceness and valour are found in 1 Samuel 2:15-16; 1 Chronicles 8:40; 10:2; 11 Chronicles 17:17. In their later history, Benjamin allied himself to Judah, and thus “divided the spoil,” sharing in their privileges. Esther and Mordecai were also of this tribe, and through them the enemies of Israel were destroyed (Est 7-10). But the most renowned and honourable of them all was Saul of Tarsus (Phi 3:5), and, most remarkably, were the terms of Jacob’s prophecy made good in him. For in the morning of his career, when persecuting the early Christians, he ravened as a wolf, but at the close, by his evangelistic labours, he delivered the devil’s prey.

The later prediction concerning this tribe was made through Moses, “Of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him; and the LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders” (Deu 33:12), which had reference chiefly to the favoured and honoured position or portion which that tribe would occupy. As others before have pointed out, it was here intimated that the temple, in which JEHOVAH would dwell, would be situated within the territory of this tribe. And such was indeed the case, for Jerusalem, the holy city, was in the lot of Benjamin (Jos 18:28). “Though Sion, the city of David, is supposed to belong to Judah, yet mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, was in Benjamin’s lot. God is Himself said to dwell ‘between his shoulders’ because the temple stood on that mount as the head of a man upon his shoulders” (Matthew Henry, 1662-1714). Thus, Benjamin was under the protection of the divine sanctuary, adumbrating the grand truth that “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever” (Psa 125:2).

“The coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph” (Jos 18:11). Herein we behold the gracious ruling of divine providence in arranging for “little Benjamin” (Psa 68:27) to be located between two of the most powerful of the tribes. It is to be observed that in the prophetic benedictions of Moses, that of Benjamin came right after that of Judah and immediately before Joseph’s (Deu 33:7-17)—Levi having no separate portion or lot in Canaan—so that there may be (as frequently in Scripture) a *double* meaning in the words, “He shall dwell between his shoulders” (Deu 33:12)—the place of strength (Isa 9:6) and of security (Luk 15:5). There was also a peculiar propriety in this appointment, for Benjamin was Joseph’s own brother, and later was the tribe which united with Judah in adhering to the throne of David and the temple at Jerusalem. Finally, we see in this arrangement the wisdom of God in the lot, for nothing was more likely to secure a *united Israel* than to make Benjamin the link between the two most powerful and

naturally rival tribes—it was through the mutual affection of Judah and Joseph for Benjamin, as their father’s youngest and dearest son, that the brethren were reconciled in Genesis 44:18-45:24.

“And the second lot came forth to Simeon, for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: and their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah” (Jos 19:1). The portion which had been given to Judah was more extensive than was required by that tribe. “It seems that, without murmuring, Judah renounced his claim, at the instance of Joshua and those who had been nominated to the work of dividing the land” (Thomas Scott, 1747-1821). This is borne out by what is stated in verse 9, “Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of Simeon: for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.” There were more cities than they could fill, more land than they could cultivate. It is worthy of note that this is the only recorded instance of their portion being too large for any of them. And it is surely significant that it was *Judah’s* which proved to be the exception, for it was the tribe from which, according to the flesh, our Lord sprang. Thus, we have here adumbrated that grand truth of the *fullness* of Christ, that in Him there is an abundance of grace, inexhaustible riches available for the saints to draw upon!

It is striking to note that this second lot fulfilled the prophecy of Jacob. He had linked together Simeon and Levi in judgment, who earlier had been united in wickedness (Gen 34:25), saying, as God’s mouthpiece, “I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel” (Gen 49:5-7). Because of his noble conduct subsequently, the curse upon Levi was revoked and displaced by the blessing of the Lord, and he, who was originally joined to his brother in sin and cruelty, was eventually joined to the Lord in grace and honour, so that there was made with his seed “The covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel” (Num 25:6-13). Nevertheless, the terms of the patriarch’s prediction were accomplished, for the Levites had as their portion in Canaan forty-eight cities, which were scattered throughout the inheritance of the other tribes (Num 35:8; Jos 14:4; 21:3). So, too, in the case of Simeon, his descendants received not a separate territory in the promised land, but had their portion within the allotment of Judah, and, as Joshua 19:2-8 shows, the tribe of Simeon was widely “scattered,” being dispersed among many different cities.

“And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun according to their families” (19:10). The part played by Zebulun in the history of the nation was not a prominent one, but though referred to rarely as a tribe, each time that mention *is* made of them, it is of a highly creditable nature. First, we read of them in Judges 5, where Deborah celebrates in song the notable victory over Jabin and Sisera, and recounts the parts played therein by the different tribes. In verse 18, we read, “Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.” In 1 Chronicles 12, where we have enumerated those who “came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him,” we are told, “Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double heart” (1Ch 12:23, 33). So, too, they were among those who brought a rich supply of provisions for the feast on that occasion (1Ch 12:40).

But that which mainly characterized it was the *maritime* nature of this tribe, for Jacob foretold, "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon" (Gen 49:13). Moses also, "And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and Issachar, in thy tents. They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand" (Deu 33:18-19). And so it came to pass, for Joshua 19:11 goes on to say of the lot of Zebulun, "and their border went up toward the sea"—a statement of seemingly little importance and easily overlooked by the casual reader, yet one which announced the literal fulfilment of prophecies made centuries before. The expressions "thy going out" and "they shall suck of the abundance of the seas" received their accomplishment in their ocean life and trading in foreign parts.

But that which is of interest to the Christian in connection with Zebulun's portion is the honourable place which it receives in the New Testament, for if the character of the people was praiseworthy, even more notable was the *position* they occupied in Palestine. Matthew 4:15-16 informs us that "the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali" (which adjoined it) was none other than "Galilee of the Gentiles," concerning which it is said, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." Nazareth, where the Saviour spent so much of His time when He tabernacled here among men, was in its borders, and it was also on the shores of its sea that He did so much of His preaching and wrought so many miracles. Well might the voice of prophecy bid Zebulun "Rejoice" (Deu 33:18). Therein also we may perceive the deeper and spiritual allusion in the words, "Rejoice in thy going out....They shall call the people unto the mountain" (Deu 33:19), i.e., the kingdom of the Messiah (Isa 2:2), which was done by the preaching of Christ and His *apostles*—which means those who *go out*. It is remarkable that, with the lone exception of Judas, all of the twelve apostles were men of Galilee! Zebulun was also "for a haven" (Gen 49:13), and it was in its borders that Joseph and Mary, with the Christ child, found a haven after their return from Egypt (Mat 2:22), and it afforded Him shelter when the Jews sought to kill Him in Judea (Joh 7:1).

"And the fourth lot came out to Issachar" (19:17). Since this tribe was united with Zebulun in blessing (Deu 33:18-19), there is the less need for us to offer separate remarks thereon. The "in their tents" was in apposition to the "ships." They would be a pastoral people rather than a sea-going one, cultivating the land. Their inheritance was the fertile plain of Jezreel, with its surrounding hills and valleys, afterwards known as lower Galilee—it extended from Carmel to the Jordan and in breadth to mount Tabor. Shunem (2Ki 4:8, etc.) was one of its cities, and Naboth's vineyard was within its lot. Matthew Henry pointed out how that we may see both the sovereignty and the wisdom of divine providence in appointing not only the bounds of men's habitations, "but their several employments for the good of the public; as each member of the body is situated and qualified for the service of the whole. Some are disposed to live in cities, some in the countryside, others in sea-ports. The genius of some leads them to the pen, some to trading, others to mechanics. 'If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?'" (1Co 12:17).

"And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher" (19:24). It was pointed out in the opening paragraph that the order in which the tribes are here mentioned is not that of seniority. Rather is it a spiritual one, according to the meaning of their names as

given in Genesis. Benjamin signifies “the son of the right hand” (35:18), Simeon “hearing” (29:33), Zebulun “dwelling” (30:20), Issachar “hire” or “reward” (30:18), Asher “happy” (30:13), Naphtali “wrestling” (30:8), Dan “judging” (30:6). Combined we get: The son of the right hand (the place of honour and power) is the hearing one (the new birth precedes believing!), dwelling (no longer tossed about like the restless sea) in Christ; great is his reward, for he is happy or blessed. Such a one is marked by wrestling against (instead of submitting to) the powers of evil, and by unsparingly judging himself. And of what does the happiness of the spiritual Asher consist? The meanings (taken from Young’s concordance) of the towns mentioned in 19:25-26 (omitting the second, “Hali,” which is unknown), are: portion, height, dedicated, the king’s oak (strength and durability), a station, depression (mourning for sin), fruitful place, glass river (Rev 22:1).

“And the sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali” (19:32). This is also of most interest to us because of its New Testament connections. Its territory adjoined that of Zebulun (Mat 4:13), yet each had its own distinct interest. Jacob likened Naphtali to “a hind let loose” and foretold, “He giveth goodly words” (Gen 49:21). While Moses spoke of him as “full with the blessing of the LORD” (Deu 33:23). In the title to Psalm 22, our Lord is likened to “The hind of the morning,” because of His swiftness to do His Father’s will and work. The cities of Capernaum and Bethsaida were in the borders of Naphtali, which were indeed filled with the blessing of the Lord, for it was there that Christ and His apostles did most of their preaching and gave forth “goodly words.”

“And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan” (19:40). Genesis 30:1-6 records his lowly origin. As this tribe brought up the rear of the congregation when they were on the march, so they were the last to receive their inheritance. Jacob likened Dan to a serpent. Moses to a “lion’s whelp.” Samson was of this tribe, and in him both characters were combined. Dan was the first tribe to fall into idolatry (Jdg 18:30), and apparently remained in that awful condition for centuries, for we find the apostate king Jeroboam setting up his golden calves in Bethel and Dan (1Ki 12:28-29, cf. 2Ki 10:29).

“When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them: according to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked, Timnath-serah in mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein” (19:49-50). Blessed is it to see that, though the greatest and boldest among them, the one who had led Israel to the conquest of Canaan, instead of seeking first his own portion, he waited till all had received theirs. Thus did he put the public good before his private interests, seeking theirs and not his own. “Our Lord Jesus thus came and dwelt among us, not in pomp, but in poverty, providing rest for us, yet Himself not having where to lay His head” (Matthew Henry). Nor did Joshua seize his portion as a right, but, like his grand Antitype, “asked” for it (Psa 2:8). And as Christ built the Church and indwells it, so Joshua built his city.

THE DOCTRINE OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY

13. Conclusion

The entrance of evil into the domain of God is admittedly a deep mystery, nevertheless, sufficient is revealed in the Scriptures to prevent our forming erroneous views thereon. For instance, it is flatly contrary to the Word of truth to entertain the notion that either the fall of Satan and his angels or that of our first parents took God by surprise, or wrecked His plans. From all eternity, God designed that this earth should be the stage on which He would display His perfections in creation, in providence, and in redemption (1Co 4:9). Accordingly, He foreordained everything which comes to pass in this scene (Act 15:18; Rom 11:36; Eph 1:11). God is no idle spectator, looking on from a far-distant world at the happenings of this earth, but is Himself ordering and shaping everything to the ultimate promotion of His glory—not only in spite of the opposition of men and Satan, but by means of them, everything being made to serve His purpose. Nor did the introduction of evil into the universe take place simply by the bare permission of the Most High, for nothing can come to pass that is contrary to His decretive will. Rather must we believe that, for wise and holy reasons, God foreordained to suffer His mutable creatures to fall, and thereby afford an occasion for Him to make a further and fuller exhibition of His attributes.

From *God's* standpoint, the result of Adam's probation was left in no uncertainty. Before He formed him out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, He knew exactly how the appointed testing of him would eventuate. But more—He had *decreed* that he should eat of the forbidden fruit. That is certain from 1 Peter 1:19-20, which tells us that the shedding of Christ's blood was verily "foreordained before the foundation of the world" (cf. Rev 13:8). As Herman Witsius (1636-1708) rightly affirmed of Adam's sin, "If foreknown, it was also predestinated. Thus Peter joins together 'the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God'" (Act 2:23). In full harmony with that fact, it is to be remembered that it was God Himself who placed in Eden the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! Moreover, as the celebrated Moderator of the Westminster Assembly asked, "Did not the devil provoke Eve and Adam to sin against God in paradise? Could not God have kept the devil off? Why did He not? Doth it not manifestly appear that it was God's will to have them tempted, to have them provoked unto sin? And why not?" (W. Twisse, 1653). God overruled it unto a higher manifestation of His glory. Just as without night, we could not admire the beauty of day, sin was necessary as a dark background on which the divine grace and mercy should shine forth the more resplendently (Rom 5:20).

It has been asserted, most dogmatically, by Romanists and Arminians, that God would not have prevented the fall of our first parents without reducing them to mere machines. It is argued that since the Creator endowed man with a free will, he must be left entirely to his own volitions—that he cannot be coerced, still less compelled, without destroying his moral agency. That may sound to be good reasoning, yet it is refuted by Holy Writ! God declared unto Abimelech concerning Abraham's wife, "I also withheld thee from sinning against me, therefore suffered I thee not to touch her" (Gen 20:6). Thus it is very plain that it is *not impossible* for God to exert His power upon man without destroying his responsibility, for *there* is a case in point where He restricted man's freedom to do evil and pre-

vented him from committing sin. In like manner, He *prevented Balaam* from carrying out the wicked desires of his heart (Num 22:38; 23:2, 20); yea, He prevented kingdoms from making war upon Jehoshaphat (2Ch 17:10). Why, then, did not God exert His power and prevent Adam and Eve from sinning? Because their fall the better served His own wise and blessed designs.

But does that make God the Author of sin? The culpable Author, no, for as Johannes Piscator (1546-1625) long ago pointed out, "Culpability is a failing to do what ought to be done." Clearly, it was the divine will that sin should enter this world, or it had not done so, for not only had God the power to prevent the same, but nothing ever comes to pass save what He has decreed. "Though God's decree made Adam's fall infallibly necessary *as to the event*, yet not by way of efficiency, or by force and compulsion on the will" (J. Gill). Nor did God's decree in any wise excuse the wickedness of our first parents, or exempt them from punishment. They were left entirely free to the exercise of their nature, and therefore, fully accountable and blameworthy for their actions. While the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the solicitations of the serpent to eat thereof were *the occasions* of their sinning, yet they were *not the cause* thereof—that lay in their voluntarily ceasing to be in subjection to the will of their Maker and rightful Lord. God is not the efficient Author of the sins of men as He is of whatever works of holiness they perform.

That God decreed sin should enter this world was a secret hid in Himself. Of it, our first parents knew nothing, and that made all the difference so far as their responsibility was concerned, for had they been informed of the divine purpose and the certainty of its fulfilment by their actions, the case had been radically altered. They were quite unacquainted with the Creator's secret counsels. What concerned them was God's *revealed* will, and *that* was quite plain. He had forbidden them to eat of a certain tree, and that was enough. But He went farther. The Lord even warned Adam of the dire consequences which should follow his disobedience—death would be the penalty. Thus, transgression on his part was entirely excuseless. God created him morally "upright," without any bias toward evil. Nor did He inject any evil thought or desire into Eve. No, "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (Jam 1:13). Instead, when the serpent came and tempted Eve, God caused her to remember His prohibition! Admire, then, the wonderful wisdom of God, for though He had predestinated the fall of our first parents, yet in no sense was He the Instigator or Approver of their sins, and their accountability was left entirely unimpaired.

These two things we must believe if the truth is not to be repudiated—that God has foreordained everything that comes to pass, and that He is in no way blameable for any of man's wickedness—the criminality thereof being wholly his. The decree of God in no wise infringes upon man's moral agency, for it neither forces nor hinders man's will, though it orders and bounds its actions. Both the existence and operations of sin are subservient to the counsels of God's will, yet that lessens not the evil of its nature or the guilt of its committers. "Though He esteemeth not evil to be good, yet He accounteth it good that evil should be" (W. Perkins, 1587). Nevertheless, sin is "that abominable thing" (Jer 44:4) which the Holy One ever hates. In connection with the crucifixion of Christ, there was the agency of God (Joh 19:11; Act 4:27-28), the agency of Satan (Gen 3:13; Luk 22:53), and the agency of men. Yet God neither concurred nor co-operated with the internal actions of

their wills, and God charged the latter with the wickedness of their deed (Act 2:23). God overrules evil unto good (Gen 45:8; Psa 76:10), and therefore, He is as truly sovereign over sin and hell as He is over holiness and heaven.

God cannot will or do anything that is wrong. "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Psa 145:17). He therefore stands in no need whatsoever of vindication by any of His puny creatures. Yet even the finite mind, when illumined by the Spirit of truth, can perceive how that God's admittance of evil into this world provided an occasion for Him to display His ineffable perfections in a manner and to a degree which otherwise He had not, to magnify Himself by bringing a clean thing out of an unclean, and by securing to Himself a revenue of praise from redeemed sinners such as He receives not from the unfallen angels. Horrible and terrible beyond words was the revolt of man against his Maker, and fearful and total the ruin which it brought upon him and all his posterity. Nevertheless, the wisdom of God contrived a way to save a part of the human race in such a manner that He is more glorified therein than in and by all His works of creation and providence, and so that the misery of sinners is made the occasion of their greater happiness. Such is a never-ending wonder.

That way of salvation was determined and defined in the terms of the everlasting covenant of grace. It was one by which each of the divine persons is exceedingly honoured. As the renowned Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) long ago pointed out, "Herein the work of redemption is distinguished from all the other works of God. The attributes of God are glorious in His other works, but the three persons of the Trinity are *distinctly glorified* in no other work as in this of redemption. In this work, every distinct person has His distinct parts and offices assigned Him. Each one has His particular concernment in it agreeably to Their distinct personal properties, relations, and economical offices. The redeemed have an equal concern with and dependence upon each person in this affair, and owe equal honour and praise to each of Them. The Father appoints and provides the Redeemer, and accepts the price of redemption. The Son is the Redeemer and the price—He redeems by offering up Himself. The Holy Spirit immediately communicates to us the thing purchased. Yea, and He is the good purchased. The sum of what Christ purchased for us is holiness and happiness. Christ was 'made a curse for us...that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith' (Gal 3:13-14). The blessedness of the redeemed consists in partaking of Christ's fullness, which consists in partaking of that Spirit which is not given by measure unto Him. This is the oil that was poured upon the Head of the Church, which ran down to the members of His body (Psa 133:2)."

It is a serious mistake to regard the Lord Jesus as our Saviour to *the excluding of* the saving operations of both the Father and the Spirit. Had not the Father eternally purposed the salvation of His people, chosen them in Christ and bestowed them upon Him, had He not entered into an everlasting compact with Him, commissioned Him to become incarnate, and redeem them, His Beloved had never left heaven in order that He might die, the Just for the unjust. Accordingly, we find that He who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (Joh 3:16) has ascribed unto Him the salvation of the Church, "Who hath saved us, and called us...according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2Ti 1:9). Equally necessary are the operation of the Holy Spirit to actually apply to the hearts of God's elect the good of what Christ did for

them. He it is who convicts of sin and imparts faith to them. Therefore is their salvation also ascribed to Him, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2Th 2:13). A careful reading of Titus 3:4-6 shows the three Persons acting together in this connection. "God our Saviour" in verse 4 is plainly the Father, and "He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (verse 5), "which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (verse 6)—compare the doxology of 11 Corinthians 13:14!

It is very blessed to ponder the many *promises* which the Father made unto and respecting Christ. Upon the Son's acceptance of the exacting terms of the covenant of grace, the Father agreed to invest Him with a threefold office, thereby authenticating His mission with the broad seal of heaven—to the prophetic (Deu 18:15, 18 and see Act 3:22), to the priestly (Heb 5:5; 6:20), and to the kingly (Jer 23:5; Psa 89:27). Thus Christ did not run without being sent. He promised to furnish and equip the Mediator with a plentiful effusion of the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isa 42:1-2 and see Act 10:38; Mat 12:28). He promised to strengthen Christ, supporting and protecting Him in His execution of the tremendous work of redemption (Isa 42:1, 6; Psa 89:21). His undertaking would be attended with such difficulties that creature power, though unimpaired by sin, would have been quite inadequate for it. Therefore did the Father assure Him of all needed help and succour to carry Him through the opposition and trials He would encounter. Precious it is to mark how the incarnate Son rested upon those promises—Psa 22:10; Isa 49:4-7; Psa 16:1; Isa 50:6-8.

The Father promised to *raise* the Messiah from the dead (Psa 21:8; 102:23-24; Isa 53:10), and most blessed is it to observe how Christ laid hold of the same (Psa 16:8-11). Promise of His *ascension* was also made to Him (Psa 24:3, 7; 68:18; 89:27; Isa 52:13): that too was appropriated by the Saviour while still on earth (Luk 24:26). Having faithfully fulfilled the terms of the covenant, Christ was highly exalted by God, and made to be Lord and Christ (Act 2:36), God seating Him at His own right hand (Heb 10:12). That is an economical lordship, a dispensation committed to Him as the God-man. The One whom men crowned with thorns, God has crowned with glory and honour. The "government" is upon His shoulder (Isa 9:6).

Christ was assured of a "*seed*" (Isa 53:10)—His crucifixion must not be regarded as an infamy unto Him, since it was the very means ordained by God whereby He should propagate a numerous spiritual progeny. Unto this He referred in John 12:24. The "seed" promised Christ occupies a prominent place in Psalm 89, see verses 3, 4, 31-36 and cf. 22:30. Thus, from the outset, Christ was assured of the success of His undertaking. As there were two parts to the covenant, so the elect were given to Christ in a twofold manner. As He was to fulfil its terms, they were entrusted to Him as a *charge*; but in fulfilment thereof the Father promised to bestow them upon Him as a *reward*. In the former sense, they are regarded as fallen, and Christ was held responsible for their salvation. They were committed to Him as strayed and lost sheep (Isa 53:6), whom He must seek out and bring into the fold (Joh 10:16). In the latter sense, they are viewed as the fruit of His travail, the trophies of His victory over sin, Satan, and death, as His crown of rejoicing in the day to come (when He shall be "glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe"—2Th 1:10), as the beloved wife of the Lamb.

Finally, God made promise of *the Holy Spirit to Christ*. He rested upon Him during the days of His flesh, anointing Him to preach the Gospel (Isa 61:1) and work miracles (Mat 12:28). But He received the Spirit after another manner (Psa 45:7; Act 2:33) and for a different purpose after His ascension, namely, that the God-man Mediator has been given *the administration* of the Spirit's activities and operations both worldward in providence and Churchward in grace. John 7:39 and 16:7 make it clear that the Spirit's advent was dependent upon Christ's exaltation. That assurance was also appropriated by Christ ere He left this scene. On the point of His departure, He said unto His disciples, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you" (Luk 24:49), which was duly accomplished ten days later. In full accord with what has just been pointed out, we hear the Saviour saying from heaven, "These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God" (Rev 3:1)—"hath" to communicate unto His redeemed individually, and to His churches corporately.

The grand design in the Spirit's descent to this earth is to glorify Christ (Joh 16:14). He is here to witness unto the Saviour's exaltation, Pentecost being God's seal upon the Messiahship of Jesus. The Spirit is here to take Christ's place. That is clear from His own words to the apostles, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (Joh 14:16). Until then the Lord Jesus had been their Comforter, but He was on the eve of returning to heaven. Nevertheless, He graciously assured them, "I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you" (Joh 14:18, marginal rendering)—fulfilled spiritually in the advent of His Deputy. The Spirit is here to further Christ's cause. The word *Paraclete* (translated "Comforter" in John's Gospel) is rendered "advocate" at the beginning of the second chapter of his epistle, and an advocate is one who appears as the *representative* of another. The Spirit is here to interpret and vindicate Christ, to administer for Christ in His kingdom and Church. He is here to make good His redeeming purpose, by applying the benefits of His sacrifice unto those in whose behalf it was offered. He is here to endue Christ's servants (Luk 24:49).

It is of first importance to recognize and realize that the Lord Jesus not only obtained for God's people redemption from the *penal* consequences of sin, but has also secured their *personal sanctification*. Alas, how little is this emphasized today! In far too many instances, those who think and speak of the "salvation" which Christ has purchased, attach no further idea thereto than that of deliverance from condemnation, *omitting* deliverance from the love, dominion, and power of sin. But the latter is no less essential, and is as definite a blessing as the former. It is just as necessary for fallen creatures to be delivered from the pollution and moral impotency which they have contracted as it is to be exempted from the penalties which they have incurred. So that when reinstated in the favour of God, they may at the same time be capacitated to love, serve, and enjoy Him for ever. And in this respect also, the divine remedy meets all the requirements of our sinful malady (see 2Co 5:15; Eph 5:25-27; Ti 2:14; Heb 9:14). This is accomplished by the gracious operations of Christ's Spirit—begun in regeneration, continued throughout their earthly lives, consummated in heaven.

Not only is the triune God more honoured by redemption than He was dishonoured by the defection of His creatures, but His people also are *greatly the gainers*. How that too magnifies the divine wisdom! It had been wonderful indeed had they been merely restored to their original estate, but it is far more wonderful that they should be brought to a much

higher state of blessedness—that the fall should be the occasion of their exaltation! Their sin deserved eternal woe, yet everlasting bliss is their portion. They are now favoured with a greater manifestation of the glory of God and a fuller discovery of His love than otherwise they would have had, and in those two things their happiness principally consists. They are brought into a much closer and endearing relation to God. They are now not merely holy creatures, but heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. The Son having taken their nature upon Him, they have become His “brethren,” members of His body, yea, His spouse. They are thereby provided with more powerful motives and inducements to love and serve Him than they had in their unfallen condition. The more we apprehend of God’s love, the more we love Him in return. Throughout eternity the knowledge of God’s love in giving His dear Son to and for us, and Christ’s dying in our stead, will fix our hearts upon Him in a manner which His favours to Adam had never done.

Now, it is in *the Gospel* that the wondrous remedy for all our ills is made known. That glorious Gospel proclaims that Christ is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. It tells us that the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. It announces that *sinner*s, even the chief of sinners, are the ones that are freely invited to come. It publishes liberty to Satan’s captives and the opening of doors to sin’s prisoners. It reveals that God has chosen the greatest of sinners to be the everlasting monuments of His mercy. It declares that the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanses believers from all sin. It furnishes hope to the most hopeless cases. The prodigies which Christ performed on the bodies of men were types of His miracles of grace on sinners’ souls. No case was beyond His healing. He not only gave sight to the blind and cleansed the leper, but delivered the demon-possessed and bestowed life on the dead. He never refused a single appeal made to His compassion. Whatever be the reader’s record, if he will trust in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, he will be saved, now and for ever.

THE APPLICATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

Part 4

As it is particularly the Old Testament promises of which dispensationalists would deprive the Christian, a more definite and detailed refutation of this error is now required—coming, as it obviously does, within the compass of our present subject. We will here transcribe what we wrote thereon almost twenty years ago.

1. Since the fall alienated the creature from the Creator, there could be no intercourse between God and men but by some promise on His part. None can challenge anything from the Majesty on high without a warrant from Himself, nor could the conscience be satisfied unless it had a divine grant for any good that we hope for from Him.

2. God will in all ages have His people regulated by His promises, so that they may exercise faith, hope, prayer, dependence upon Himself. He gives them promises so as to test them, whether or not they really trust in and count upon Him.

3. The Medium of the promises is the God-man Mediator, Jesus Christ, for there can be no intercourse between God and us except through the appointed Daysman. In other words, Christ must receive all good for us, and we must have it at second hand from Him.

4. Let the Christian ever be on his guard against contemplating any promise of God apart from Christ. Whether the thing promised, the blessing desired, be temporal or spiritual, we cannot legitimately or truly enjoy it except in and by Christ. Therefore did the apostle remind the Galatians, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal 3:16). In quoting Genesis 12:3, Paul was not proving, but *affirming*, that God's promises to Abraham respected not all his natural posterity, but only those of his spiritual children—those united to Christ. All the promises of God to believers are made to Christ, the Surety of the everlasting covenant, and are conveyed from Him to us—both the promises themselves and the things promised. "This is *the* [all-inclusive] promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (1Jo 2:25), and, as 1 John 5:11 tells us, "This life is in his Son"—so grace, and all other benefits. "If I read any of the promises, I found that all and every one contained Christ in their bosom, He Himself being the one great Promise of the Bible. *To Him* they were all first given; *from Him* they derive all their efficacy, sweetness, value, and importance; *by Him* they are brought home to the heart; and *in Him* they are all yea, and amen" (Robert Hawker, 1753-1827).

5. Since all the promises of God are made in Christ, it clearly follows that none of them are available to any who are out of Christ, for to be out of Him is to be out of the favour of God. God cannot look on such a person but as an object of His wrath, as fuel for His vengeance. There is no hope for any man until he be in Christ. But it may be asked, "Does not God bestow any good things on them who are out of Christ, sending His rain upon the unjust, and filling the bellies of the wicked with good things" (Psa 17:14)? Yes, He does indeed. Then, are not those temporal mercies *blessings*? Certainly not! Far from it! As He says in Malachi 2:2, "I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart" (cf. Deu 28:15-20). Unto the wicked, the temporal mercies of God are like food given to bullocks—it does but "prepare them for the day of slaughter" (Jer 12:3, and cf. Jam 5:5).

Having presented above a brief outline on the subject of the divine promises, let us now examine a striking, yet little-noticed, expression, namely, "the children of the promise" (Rom 9:8). In the context, the apostle discusses God's casting of the Jews and calling of the Gentiles, which was a particularly sore point with the former. After describing the unique privileges enjoyed by Israel as a nation (verses 4 and 5), he points out (verses 6-9) *the difference* there is between them and the antitypical "Israel of God" (Gal 6:16), which he illustrates by the cases of Isaac and Jacob. Though the Jews had rejected the Gospel and had been cast off by God, it must not be supposed that His word had failed of accomplishment (verse 6), for not only had the prophecies concerning the Messiah been fulfilled, but the promise respecting Abraham's seed was being made good. But it was most important to apprehend aright what or *whom* that "seed" comprised. "For they are not all Israel [spiritually speaking], who are of Israel [naturally]: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (verses 6 and 7).

The Jews erroneously imagined (as modern dispensationalists do) that the promises made to Abraham concerning his seed respected all of his descendants. Their boast was, "We be Abraham's seed" (Joh 8:33), to which Christ replied, "If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham" (verse 39 and see Rom 4:12). God's rejection of Ishmael and Esau was decisive proof that the promises were not made to the natural descendants as such. The selection of Isaac and Jacob showed that the promise was restricted to an elect line. "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted [regarded] as the seed. For this is the word of promise. At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son" (Rom 9:8-9). The "children of God" and the "children of the promise" are one and the same, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. As Isaac was born supernaturally, so are all of God's elect (Joh 1:13). As Isaac, on that account, was heir of the promised blessing, so are Christians (Gal 4:29; 3:29). "Children of the promise" are identical with "the heirs of promise" (Heb 6:17 and cf. Rom 8:17).

God's promises are made to the *spiritual children* of Abraham (Rom 4:16; Gal 3:7), and none of them can possibly fail of accomplishment. "For all the promises of God in him [namely Christ] are yea, and in him amen" (2Co 1:20). They are deposited in Christ, and in Him they find their affirmation and certification, for He is the sum and substance of them. Inexpressibly blessed is that declaration to the humble-minded child of God—yet a mystery hid from those who are wise in their own conceits. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom 8:32). The promises of God are numerous: relating to this life and also that which is to come. They concern our temporal well-being, as well as our spiritual, covering the needs of the body as well as those of the soul. Whatever be their character, not one of them can be made good unto us except in and through and by Him who lived and died for us. The promises which God has given to His people are absolutely sure and trustworthy, for they were made to them in Christ; they are infallibly certain of fulfilment, for they are accomplished through and by Him.

A blessed illustration, yea, exemplification, of what has just been pointed out above is found in Hebrews 8:8-13 and 10:15-17, where the apostle quotes the promises given in Jeremiah 31:31-34. The dispensationalist would object and say that those promises belong to the natural descendants of Abraham, and are not to us. But Hebrews 10:15 prefaces the citation of those promises by expressly affirming, "Whereof the Holy Spirit is [not "was"] a witness to us." Those promises extend to Gentile believers also, for they are the assurance of grace founded in Christ, and in Him believing Jews and Gentiles *are one* (Gal 3:26). Before the middle wall of partition was broken down, Gentiles were indeed "strangers unto the covenants of promise" (Eph 2:12), but when that wall was removed, Gentile believers became "fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph 3:6)! As Romans 11 expresses it, they partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree (verse 17)! Those promises in Jeremiah 31 are made not to the Jewish nation as such, but to "the Israel of God" (Gal 6:16), that is to the entire election of grace, and they are made infallibly good unto all of them at the moment of their regeneration by the Spirit.

In the clear light of other New Testament passages, it appears passing strange that anyone who is familiar with the same should deny that God has made this "new covenant"

with those who are members of the mystical body of Christ. That Christians *are* partakers of its blessings is plain from 1 Corinthians 11:25, where quotation is made of the Saviour's words at the institution of His supper, saying, "This cup is the new testament [or "new covenant"] in my blood." And again by 11 Corinthians 3:6, where the apostle states that God "hath also made us able ministers of the new testament," or "covenant," for the same Greek word is used in those passages as in Hebrews 8:8 and 10:16, where it is translated "covenant." In the very first sermon preached after the new covenant was established, Peter said, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off," i.e., the Gentiles (Act 2:39). Ephesians 2:13 qualified by "as many as the Lord our God shall call." Furthermore, the terms of Jeremiah 31:33-34 *are* most certainly made good unto all believers *today*—God is their covenant God (Heb 13:20), His law is enshrined in their affections (Rom 7:22), they know Him as their God, their iniquities are forgiven.

The Holy Spirit's statement in 11 Corinthians 7:1, must, for all who bow to the authority of Holy Writ, settle the matter once and for all of the Christian's right to the Old Testament promises. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." *Which* promises? Why, those mentioned at the close of the preceding chapter. There we read, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2Co 6:16). And where had God said this? Why, as far back as Leviticus 26:12, "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." That promise was made to the nation of Israel in the days of Moses! And again we read, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2Co 6:17-18), which words are a manifest reference to Jeremiah 31:9 and Hosea 1:9-10.

Now observe very particularly what the Holy Spirit says through Paul concerning those Old Testament promises. First, he says to the New Testament saints, "Having these promises." He declared that those ancient promises are *theirs*. That they have a personal interest in them and title to them. That they were theirs, not merely in hope, but in hand. Theirs not by mere "accommodation," but their own actual possession. Theirs to make full use of, to feed upon and enjoy, to delight in and give God thanks for the same. Since Christ Himself be ours, *all things* are ours (1Co 3:22-23). Oh, Christian reader, suffer no man, under pretence of "rightly dividing the word," to cut you off from, to rob you of, any of "the exceeding great and precious promises" of your Father (2Pe 1:4). If *he* is content to confine himself unto a few of the New Testament epistles, let him to do so—that is his loss. But allow him not to confine *you* to so narrow a compass. Second, we are hereby taught to use those promises as motives and incentives to the cultivation of personal piety, in the private work of mortification and the positive duty of practical sanctification.

A striking conclusive proof that the Old Testament promises belong unto present-day saints is found in Hebrews 13:5, where practical use is again made of the same. There Christians are exhorted, "Let your conversation be without covetousness: be content with such things as ye have." That exhortation is enforced by this gracious consideration: "for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Since the living God be your por-

tion, your heart should rejoice in Him, and all anxiety about the supply of your every need be for ever removed. But what we are now more especially concerned with is the promise here cited, "For he hath said, I will never leave thee," etc. And to whom was that promise first given? Why, to the one who was about to lead Israel into the land of Canaan—as a reference to Joshua 1:5 shows. Thus, it was made to a particular person on a special occasion, to a general who was to prosecute a great war under the immediate command of God. Facing that demanding ordeal, Joshua received assurance from God that His presence should ever be with him.

But if the believer gives way to unbelief, the devil is very apt to tell him, "That promise belongs not unto you. *You* are not the captain of armies, commissioned by God to overthrow the forces of an enemy. The virtue of that promise ceased when Canaan was conquered and died with him to whom it was made." Instead, as John Owen (1616-1683) pointed out in his comments on Hebrews 13:5, "To manifest *the sameness* of love that is in all the promises, with their establishment in the one Mediator, and the general concern of believers in every one of them, howsoever and on what occasion given to any, this promise to Joshua is here applied to the condition of the weakest, meanest, and poorest of the saints—to all and every one of them, be their case and condition what it will. And doubtless, believers are not a little wanting in themselves and their own consolation, that they do no more particularly close with those words of truth, grace, and faithfulness, which upon sundry occasions and at divers times have been given out unto the saints of old, even Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and the residue of them, who walked with God in their generation. These things in an especial manner are recorded for *our* consolation."

Let us now observe closely *the use* which the apostle made of that ancient but ever-living promise. First, he here availed himself of it in order to enforce his exhortation unto Christians to the duties of mortification and sanctification. Second, he draws a logical and practical inference from the same, declaring, "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb 13:6). Thus, a double conclusion is reached. Such a promise is to inspire all believers with confidence in God's succour and assistance, and with boldness and courage before men—showing us to what purpose *we* should put the divine pledges. Those conclusions are based upon the character of the Promiser. Because God is infinitely good, faithful, and powerful, and because He changes not, I may trustfully declare with Abraham, "God will provide" (Gen 22:8); with Jonathan, "There is no restraint to the LORD" (1Sa 14:6); with Jehoshaphat, "None is able to withstand him" (2Ch 20:6); with Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31). The abiding presence of the all-sufficient Lord ensures help, and, therefore, any alarm at man's enmity should be removed from our hearts. My worst enemy can do nothing against me without my Saviour's permission.

"So that we may boldly say [freely, without hesitating through unbelief], The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb 13:6). Note attentively the change in number from the plural to the singular, and learn, therefore, that general principles are to be appropriated by us in particular, as general precepts are to be taken by us personally—the Lord Jesus individualized the "Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God" of Deuteronomy 6:16, when assailed by Satan, saying, "It is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Mat 4:7). It is only by taking the divine promises and precepts

unto ourselves personally that we can “mix faith” with the same, or make a proper and profitable use of them. It is also to be carefully noted that once more the apostle confirmed his argument by a divine testimony, for the words, “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” are not his own, but a quotation of those used by David in Psalm 118:6. Thus again, we are shown that the language of the Old Testament is exactly suited to the cases and circumstances of Christians today, and that it is their right and privilege freely to appropriate the same.

“We may boldly say” just what the Psalmist did when he was sorely pressed. It was during a season of acute distress that David expressed his confidence in the living God, at a time when it looked as though his enemies were on the point of swallowing him up. But viewing the omnipotence of JEHOVAH and contrasting His might with the feebleness of the creature, his heart was strengthened and emboldened. But let the reader clearly perceive what that implied. It means that David turned his mind away from the seen to the unseen. It means that he was regulated by faith, rather than by sight—feelings or reasonings. It means that his heart was occupied with the Almighty. But it means much more. He was occupied with *the relationship* of that omnipotent One unto himself. It means that he recognized and realized the spiritual bond there was between them, so that he could truly and rightly aver, “The LORD is my helper” (Psa 118:7). If He be my God, my Redeemer, my Father, than He may be counted upon to undertake for me when I am sorely oppressed, when my foes threaten to devour me, when my barrel of meal is almost empty. That “my” is the language of faith, and is the conclusion which faith’s assurance draws from the infallible promise of Him that cannot lie.

