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OUTLINE STUDIES

IN

ACTS, ROMANS, FIRST AND SECOND CORINTHIANS, GALATIANS AND EPHESIANS

By

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"Others have laboured, and ye are entered into their labours."



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PREFACE

These Outline Studies in the Acts and four of the Epistles are intended to serve as helps in the reading of this section of God's Word. They are not critical, although criticism occasionally is found in them because indispensable to the understanding of certain passages. Nor are these Studies strictly expository, although they are based on what is believed to be the essential meaning of each Book here dealt with. The chief aim has been to point out as clearly and briefly as possible what is conceived to be the design and the fundamental truth of these great Scriptures. Should they serve in any degree to open the Word to the reader and deepen in him the conviction that in these Books God himself speaks to us, none will so rejoice as the writer.

In the preparation of the Studies many volumes have been consulted. References to them in the text are scanty, chiefly because it seemed undesirable to burden the pages with them. Here, however, it is proper to mention those which have been of special aid, viz., Bernard's *Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*; Stifler's *Introduction to the Acts, and Commentary on the Romans*; Smith's and Hastings' Dictionaries of the Bible; the Commentaries of Meyer, Godet, Moule, Riddle, Hodge, Alexander, Graham, Findlay, etc.

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Outline Studies in the New Testament

From the Acts of the Apostles to Ephesians

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

The fifth book of the New Testament was written by Luke, the penman of the third Gospel. It begins with a distinct reference to that Gospel, and like it, it is addressed to Theophilus. The title, "The Acts of the Apostles," it is generally assumed, was not given it by Luke, but is of later date. It is, however, of high antiquity. It is found in the oldest known manuscripts, and in the most ancient versions, we are informed. It varies somewhat in the oldest copies of this Scripture, in one (the Vatican Ms.), being "Acts of Apostles," and in another (the Sinai Ms.) simply "Acts." The title describes rather feebly if not imperfectly the design of the book, for it deals mainly with but two of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, while the other Apostles are scarcely mentioned, and many of those who were not numbered with the Twelve occupy a prominent place in the history, e. g., Stephen, Philip, Barnabas, Silas. But, after all, taking the title in its earliest and broadest form there is fitness in it. For Paul and Peter were the chief instruments in the

Lord's hands of founding and developing the new society, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is mainly this history our book traces.

I. RELATION OF THE ACTS TO THE OTHER BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.—No book of Scripture is entirely isolated; none stands apart from others as an independent composition. The Bible is like an arch, and each separate book fills its own place therein, is indispensable to its permanency and symmetry. The Acts must not be viewed as an isolated writing, but rather as an integral and essential part of the whole volume. It is the tie that binds together the Gospels and the Epistles. Its relation to Matthew and Mark is very close. It is unnecessary to speak of its connection with the third Gospel, as Luke himself does so. In style and diction, in modes of thought and forms of expression the two books are unmistakably the production of one and the same author. But the relation is deeper far than mere outward resemblance; it is organic, vital. Acts rests on the facts of the Gospel history. It assumes those facts as well known. Jesus Christ is the central figure of the book, as He is of those that precede it. The mission of the Apostles is to bear witness of Him; to testify of His life, His ministry, His death, resurrection, and exaltation. Jesus, approved of God, anointed with the Holy Spirit, presented unto men as the divinely commissioned Saviour, is the august theme of all apostolic testimony in our book.

Moreover, the Acts continues the Gospel narrative. The four evangelists close with the account of the

resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. Acts takes up the amazing story where the Gospels drop it, and it tells us of His session at the right hand of the Majesty on high; of His administration of the Kingdom of God from thence; of His personal superintendence of every movement of His Church in its lofty mission to the world; and of His control of the great forces both of the visible and invisible world. We learn from it that angels, devils, men, and even inanimate things are now under the sway of Him whose purposes of grace are being accomplished in His mediatorial government of the universe.

It announces likewise the fulfillment of the Lord's promises which He made to the disciples while He was yet with them. The evangelists record His promises as to the establishment of the Church (Matt. xvi: 15-20), the gift of the Holy Spirit (Luke xxiv: 49; Jno. xiv: 16, 17) and the participation of the Gentiles in the blessings of the Gospel (Matt. xxviii: 18-20; Luke xxiv: 46, 47); and Acts reports their full accomplishment.

Consider how great our loss would be without this book; how wide would be the gulf between the Gospels and the Epistles were Acts stricken from its place in the New Testament. For it carries us straight from the one portion to the other, as the span of some great bridge continues the road between dissevered regions.

Nor is the relation of our book to the Epistles less close than to the Gospels; indeed, we may say it is even closer. Our knowledge of Paul depends in great measure on the record of the Acts. Of the twenty-one

Epistles in the New Testament thirteen bear the name of Paul. We open any one of these thirteen and read, "Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ." Who is this Paul, and in what sense is he an Apostle? He is not mentioned among the Twelve called and trained by the Saviour; he is not alluded to in the most distant way in the Gospels. The Acts alone furnishes the needed information; it tells the story of his savage persecution of the infant Church, and of his wondrous conversion by the revelation of Jesus Christ to him; of his call to the apostleship, of his gifts, zeal, devotion, and success in carrying the Gospel throughout wide sections of the Roman Empire.

Furthermore, nine of the thirteen Epistles are addressed to seven different Churches. From the Acts we learn how these Churches were gathered, and something of the people composing them. From thence likewise we learn that in their organization, principles of belief, and religious practices, they differ altogether from every other existing institution. The Epistles presuppose the formation, doctrinal basis, and worship of the Churches, and for these facts we are dependent mainly on the Acts. Besides, we discover from the Epistles that in these Churches all distinction between Jew and Gentile which had prevailed for so many centuries has now ceased altogether. But how has this great change been effected? How have the barriers been broken down?—barriers erected by the God of Israel Himself for the isolation of His chosen people from the rest of mankind? Acts answers these questions. It tells how the blessed Lord from His exalted

seat has by His Spirit guided His servants and administered His Kingdom so as to secure this supreme end, so that His saints irrespective of nationality, creed, clime or color, form one body of which He is the glorious Head. Jew and Gentile are found dwelling together in the Christian communities in holy fellowship and hallowed unity because both have been baptized into the one body by the Spirit of the Lord.

II. DESIGN OF THE ACTS.—This is ascertained from the contents. More than one line of truth is traceable in it. In this respect the book is like every other of the Holy Scriptures. There is a manifoldness, a comprehensiveness, and breadth in the Word of God that no other writing possesses. Often the Spirit combines a variety of ends and aims in a single book which would require volumes to expound.

First, the Acts may be read as a history of the establishment of the Church of God in the world through human instrumentality, particularly through the two chosen and gifted men, Peter and Paul.

Second, it is an inspired record of the course of the Gospel in the apostolic age; of the spread of Christianity from Judæa to Asia, to Africa and Europe. The risen Saviour had Himself prescribed its course, (i:8): “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” The Acts shows how faithfully and zealously His command was obeyed by His servants.

The history begins at Jerusalem and ends at Rome. It starts with the metropolis of Judaism; it closes at

the great world center, the capital of the Roman Empire. It can hardly be doubted but that a divine purpose determined this early course of the Gospel.

Between these two centers, and within the time embraced by them, the true nature of the Gospel age grows more and more distinct and clearly defined. It is made manifest that Christianity is not a modified form of Judaism; that it is not local or sectional, as that was; that it is not the religion of the few, but of the race. By the time we have reached the end of Acts we discover that the Church has cleared the Synagogue, has shattered the Jewish shell in which it was at first enclosed, that it has thrown itself out upon the vast mass of Gentile peoples as the witness of a Gospel which is intended for humanity. Between the points named questions have been settled, principles established, and divinely implanted tendencies disclosed such as stamp Christianity with a character all its own.

Third, Acts is an inspired record of the Advent, Mission, and Operations of the Holy Spirit in the world. This is an essential feature of the book, and it may be read as having for its chief if not its whole aim the history of the presence and power of the Spirit for the gathering of the Church, the Body of Christ. But the gift of the Spirit Himself is consequent upon the ascension and glorification of Christ (Jno. vii: 39; xiv: 16, 17; xvi: 7; Acts ii: 33).

Fourth, the book is the record of the personal action of the Lord Jesus Christ in the formation of His Church and the inauguration of the Christian dispen-

sation. We might appropriately name it, The Acts of the Ascended Saviour.

We are now to see how Luke unfolds this great theme.

1. The opening words fitly introduce his purpose. "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach" (i: 1). The words imply that what the Lord began to do in His personal ministry on the earth He continued to do after He was taken up. The Acts and the Epistles come to us as the continuance of the action and teaching of the Saviour Himself. The book of Acts confines itself mainly to His doing, the Epistles to His teaching. It would be a mistake, however, to affirm that action alone is found in the Acts, and doctrine alone in the Epistles. There is teaching in the former, and there is action found in the latter. What is meant is, that these features predominate—action in the Acts and doctrine in the Epistles. In both, however, it is the Lord Jesus by His Spirit through His chosen agents who performs all.

2. The Saviour's action is seen in the election of an Apostle in the room of Judas the betrayer, (i: 21-26). The disciples on this occasion appealed to the Lord Himself to make the choice, saying, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen." And that the Lord did by their lot show His choice seems to be repeatedly attested (i: 26; ii: 14; vi: 2; 1 Cor. xv: 5). It is noteworthy that this is the only instance of the Apostles and Christians of their time resorting to the lot for guidance

recorded in the New Testament, and that it occurred in the interval between the Lord's ascension and the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost.

3. His action appears in the scenes of the day of Pentecost, (ii). In Peter's testimony on this day we have a most impressive exemplification of the doing of the risen Lord. Having shown that Jesus must needs have risen from the dead, and having declared that God hath raised Him up, the Apostle says, "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (ii: 33). (For the words, "hath shed forth," the Revisers substitute the fuller and more accurate expression, "hath poured forth.") On this fundamental statement of Peter, Bernard well says: "In the view of the Apostles the dispensation of the Spirit is the agency and gift of Jesus. . . . This view of the operation of the Spirit as the medium through which the Lord Jesus wrought and taught is carried through the whole course of the history which follows. As in the promise, so in the history, 'The Comforter will come unto you—I will come unto you'—are but two sides of one and the same fact." The Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the attestation of the glorious truth that He who fulfilled the Passover by His death would begin on that day to present to His Father the harvest "first fruits" of His death (cf. Lev. xxiii: 5, 15-17).

4. It appears in the selection of the fields where the Gospel was to be carried. The Apostles were not left

to the guidance of their own wills as to the places where the Church was to be established. In all their missionary journeys they were led. That the Gospel was to follow a certain course, a well-defined path, is evident from Acts i:8: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (cf. Luke xxiv:47). Those were probably the last words spoken by the risen Lord just as He was about to ascend into heaven. The glad tidings of redemption must start from Jerusalem, thence spread through Palestine, and then be preached to the utmost limit of earth. More than once did the Spirit interpose His sovereign will in opposition to the wishes of His servants touching certain fields, (xvi:6, 7).

Moreover, the agents are as certainly chosen of the Lord as the fields. Peter, John and Stephen are the chief witnesses in Jerusalem; Philip bears the Gospel to Samaria, and to the Ethiopian treasurer, (viii); Barnabas and Saul minister with great power to the city of Antioch, and from thence they are sent forth on the first great Missionary Journey to the Gentiles of the "regions beyond" (xiii:1-3).

5. The action of the Lord is manifest in each event and advance of the Church. On critical occasions, and at each onward step throughout the history in this book, the hand of the Master is made distinctly visible. The places, the messengers, the enmity and persecution of the infant Church are all under His divine superintendence.

One of the most difficult things the young Christian

society found to do was to put aside its Jewish exclusiveness and prejudice and to start forth upon its world-mission.

At the first the disciples were Israelites with the sympathies and hopes, the intense nationalism and conservatism which have always distinguished that race. It was hard for them to believe that God could own others as His people who were not Jews; that the Kingdom of God lay wide open to men who never heard of Abraham or Moses. And so they huddled together at Jerusalem, bent, it would appear, upon confining their testimony to their own city and people. It required a sort of moral earthquake, a terrible upheaval, to dislodge them and send them forth on their world-mission. In the wise providence of the Lord a persecution is permitted to overtake the infant Church, and the disciples are scattered abroad: "And they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (viii:4). Presently they are found in Samaria, at Cæsarea, at Damascus, at Antioch, preaching the Gospel of the grace of God. Thus the Good News goes forth at length according to the course and order which the Saviour had prescribed for it (i:8). Each event, even the most untoward and hostile, is under the hand of the Lord, and He controls, restrains, guides, permits all that comes to pass for the furtherance of His purpose and the accomplishment of His blessed will.

6. The martyrdom of Stephen exhibits the same wise superintendence of the risen Lord. Stephen's death was an era in the Church's history. That de-

voted servant of Christ had grasped more firmly than any other disciple the world-embracing character of Christianity. He distinctly foresaw the abolition of Judaism, and announced it to the people of Jerusalem. His testimony he sealed with his blood. His martyrdom, however, bore rich fruit. It served to enlarge the conception of the Church as to the real nature of Christianity; it sent the servants of Christ abroad over the world to preach the Gospel of the Son of God. Until his death there does not appear to have been any earnest effort to obey the commission. The testimony was still confined to the city and the region round about. The disciples had not gone beyond the "beginning at Jerusalem" of the Lord's command (Luke xxiv: 47). But the risen Christ will act for Himself if His servants fail to act for Him. And so the persecution arose in which Stephen suffered death. Satan intended by it to crush the infant Church; the Lord meant that it should be as the wind to carry the living seed over all the regions of the East. Samson's riddle is God's riddle: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judges xiv: 14). Stephen's triumphant death had a deep and abiding influence with Saul of Tarsus. The sight of such constancy and faith and love, the forgiving spirit of the dying saint, and the light and glory streaming upon his upturned face, were never forgotten by Saul (xxii: 20; cf. xxvi: 10). It is hardly too much to say with Augustine, "Had not Stephen prayed, the Church would not have had Paul." How the enemy overreaches himself, and how the blessed Lord triumphs!

For after Stephen's martyrdom Philip goes to announce the good news in Samaria, to the Ethiopian officer, and throughout the region from Azotus to Cæsarea. Peter and John likewise visit Samaria and help on the good work there, and the first makes an evangelistic tour through the region of Lydda and Joppa, winding up at length with the introduction of the Gospel to the Gentiles in the family of Cornelius at Cæsarea (chaps. viii, ix, x).

7. Christ's action appears in His intervention for the admission of the Gentiles into His Church (chaps. x, xi). The circumstances associated with this memorable event are extraordinary. The invisible world is in movement to carry the good tidings of salvation to the Roman soldier and his household. An angel appears to the devout Cornelius and directs him to call for Simon whose surname is Peter who is to tell him "words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (x: 5, 6; xi: 14). A mighty vision appears to Peter on the housetop at Joppa by which he is most solemnly taught that henceforth he is to call no man common or unclean (x: 28). The Spirit in some supernatural but unmistakable manner informs Peter of the arrival of Cornelius's messengers, and bids him go with them (x: 19, 20). And to the ministry of Peter in the Roman's house God sets the seal of His approbation by the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished . . . for they heard them speak with tongues" (x: 44, 45). Thus the Gen-

tiles were admitted into the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ by a sort of second Pentecost. Though Paul was destined to be the Apostle of the Gentiles, and though to him it was given to teach the joint heirship of believing Gentiles with Jewish Christians in the blessings of the new covenant, yet the initiation of the work was committed to Peter. By the sovereign action of the glorified Redeemer, Peter inaugurated the Church dispensation on the day of Pentecost (ii), and by the same sovereign will, he was the chosen instrument to open the door of the Church to the uncircumcised (x). So did the blessed Lord fulfill the promise of the "keys" (Matt. xvi:18, 19). It is the only supremacy this Apostle had or exercised.

8. The Saviour's action is seen in the call and commission of Paul. His conversion, education, and induction into the apostolic office, and his guidance thereafter, the Lord Jesus undertakes Himself. He separates him to His own will from his mother's womb (Gal. i:15), and announces from the hour of his conversion the use He will make of His "chosen vessel" (Acts ix:15). The Lord takes charge of his preparatory training for the sublime mission to which he was called. It was He that led him into Arabia, putting him there into His own Theological Training-school, where he learned of Christ in the majesty of solitude. It is the Lord's way of educating His servants for some special and great work: He takes them apart from the noisy crowd and teaches them in the grandeur of silence.

So were trained Moses, John Baptist, Martin

Luther, Jerome Savonarola; so was Paul fitted for the task assigned him. It is not within compass of human power to prepare an instrument for the service of God. The hand of man could never mold "a vessel meet for the Master's use." The One who is to use the vessel can alone prepare it. Paul learned more in Arabia than he ever learned at the feet of Gamaliel. None can teach like God; and all who will learn of Him must be alone *with* Him. "In the desert God will teach thee."

Thereafter, at every step in his career which might involve the doubt whether it was of Paul or of Christ, the Lord made His own will clear by some unmistakable interposition. When his soul clave to the ministry among his own people of Israel, he was forced from it by immediate command: "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. . . . Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles" (xxii: 17-21). When with Barnabas he established himself as a settled teacher at Antioch, "the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (xiii: 2). When Paul and his companions purposed to evangelize in Bithynia, "the Spirit suffered them not" (xvi: 6, 7). When he would have confined his labors to the Eastern Continent, the Lord sent him with the precious message of salvation to Europe (xvi: 9).

In his final journey to Jerusalem, in his arrest, his trial before the governor, and in his journey to Rome to plead his cause at Nero's bar—in all the events con-

nected with those memorable experiences, the hand of the Lord is plainly visible. In spite of the warning voices of prophets (xxi: 10, 11); in spite of the tearful entreaty of brethren, he must go on to give his last witness to the turbulent and guilty city; for it is by the way of Jerusalem that he must "see Rome," and win disciples in Cæsar's household. In his addresses to the Jews (chaps. xxii, xxiii); in his defense before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa (xxiv-xxvi); in the perilous voyage and shipwreck, the delay at Malta, and the final arrival at Rome (xxvii, xxviii), the guidance and protection of an unerring Providence is manifest.

9. The Redeemer's action is seen in the movements and ministration of angels (v: 19, 20; viii: 26; xii: 7, 11, 23, etc.). During the earthly life and ministry of Christ we hear but little of the operations of angels in the affairs of the world. But at His death and resurrection, and in all the circumstances of the planting of the Christian Church their presence and activity is constant and remarkable. Again and again we read of the "angel of the Lord" appearing to one and another of God's servants, for their deliverance when some crisis is upon them, or to clear the way before them when some change in their evangelistic movements is contemplated. It is to be remembered that throughout this book the title *Lord* is uniformly the designation of the Saviour. It is He, therefore, the glorified Jesus, who sends forth these heavenly messengers on errands of mercy and blessing. The mighty forces of the unseen world, as well as the powers of this, are under His dominion and do His bidding

(Matt. xxviii: 18). When the exigencies of His Church and people demand it, when the enemy is most busy and successful in hurling hindrances in the way of the Gospel, when opposition heads itself up in formidable array, and disaster impends, our great King sets in motion the heavenly powers, and strong angels rush on swift wings to protect the beleaguered and defend the imperiled cause.

10. The Lord's action appears likewise in His own personal interposition in human affairs. In great crises in the past when His people Israel were endangered and His own cause in jeopardy God signally intervened and wrought deliverance. In the Theophanies of Old Testament times He also revealed His personal interest in all that concerned His people and His cause. But in the Acts, the Lord Jesus seems to be nearer His infant Church than in the earlier Scripture. In later Scripture likewise His relations with His people and His interest in them are seen to be most intimate and tender. In the Epistles the Holy Spirit unfolds the blessed truth of the oneness of Christ and believers. But in the Acts the Redeemer's nearness to His believing family is set forth under a somewhat different aspect. His relationship with the disciples is akin to that of the three years' ministry. Something of the same closeness of personal intimacy, of constant intercourse, and of gracious guidance is discoverable. There still lingers much of the close sympathy, the accessibleness, which marked His bodily presence with the Apostles prior to the cross. In the Acts He does not seem so far away as later on in the

Church's history. The silence of the Lord—how strange, how inexplicable it so often appears to us in these last days! As contrasted with His nearness, His speech often, His readiness always to interpose in His servants' behalf then, how mysterious His silence often now! True, we have the completed revelation of His mind in the Old and New Testaments, and the presence of the promised Spirit, that take the place of His personal action then. But while we gratefully recognize this truth, who of us does not long for the return of that conscious personal presence so profoundly impressed on the record in the Acts?

The dying martyr Stephen saw Him in the glory, and noted His posture: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God" (vii: 56). In other places where He is spoken of as to His glorified estate He is described as seated at the right hand of God, and not standing, as here. It may be that the thought of Chrysostom is as true as it is beautiful—that Jesus had risen from His throne to succor His faithful servant, and to receive him to Himself. His attitude of standing reveals His deep concern for His witness, and His nearness to him.

It may have been another and a final testimony to impenitent Israel, that the rejected and crucified Messiah still waited to be gracious, that He even stood up, not only to receive the soul of His servant, but as ready to receive likewise the people who had put Him to death, should they repent and turn to Him. So had been all along from Pentecost His attitude toward the rebellious nation (ii: 28; iii: 19; iv: 8-12; v: 29-33).

At any rate, Christ's posture as seen by Stephen reveals His profound concern in all that was then taking place.

When Saul was on the way to Damascus the vision of the glorified Redeemer, whose radiant splendor surpassed the brightness of the sun, suddenly arrested him in his mad course, and transformed him from a relentless foe into a tireless preacher of the Gospel (ix). And frequently in his subsequent history the Apostle saw the Lord and heard His voice (xviii:9; xxii:18; xxiii:11). Peter likewise, in the vision he had at Joppa, recognized the well-known voice of Him whom he had learned to call Lord, and in obedience to that voice opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (x:13-15). In these appearances of the exalted Saviour recorded in Acts He is seen to be engaged in the prosecution of the work "He began to do" in His earthly ministry. From the glory above He displays the same grace and saving power which He exhibited while here, only upon a far wider field of action. It is to the whole world that He now sends the good tidings of great joy.

And thus we might continue to show that throughout the book it is the Lord Jesus Christ who is guiding every event, ordering every movement, and controlling all things for the furtherance of His own purposes. As Bernard writes: "Thus does He who at the commencement of the history was seen to pass into the heavens continue to appear on the scene. His Apostles act not only on His first commission, but under His present direction. He is not wholly concealed by the

cloud which received Him out of their sight. Now His voice is heard; now His hand is put forth; and now through a rift in the cloud of brightness of His presence shines. And these appearances, voices, and visions are not merely incidental favors; they are apportioned to the moments when they are *wanted*, moments which determine the course that the Gospel takes, and in which a manifestation of divine guidance proves the divine guidance of the whole. The ship rushes on its way, shunning the breakers, dashing through the billows, certain of its track. The crew work it, but do not guide it. We can see the strong movements of the helm, and from time to time discern a firm hand which holds it. No chances, no winds or currents, bear it along at their will, but He who has launched it guides it, and He knows the course which it takes" (*Progress of Doctrine*, p. 107). Acts may well be entitled: The Acts of the Glorified Saviour in the Planting and Training of His Church.

But another purpose closely allied to this is traceable in the book, viz., the advent and mission of the Holy Spirit. Acts might appropriately be called the Gospel of the Spirit. For it is the record of the Spirit's presence and work in the world. It is He that inaugurates the Christian Dispensation. He is the mighty Agent by whom God's gracious will in the organization and movements of the Church is accomplished. To this very important feature of our book our attention may now be turned.

I. His prominence of place and action is very noteworthy. The term Spirit signifying the Third Person

of the Trinity occurs eleven times in the book, and Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, forty-one times, so that some fifty times or more He is mentioned by His revealed name and distinctive title, a fact that indicates how large a place He fills in this inspired record.

2. The promise of His coming given is by the Lord Jesus at the time of His ascension (i: 5, 8). Long before John the Baptist had announced that Jesus would baptize the disciples with the Holy Ghost and fire (Matt. iii: 11). After His resurrection He bade them tarry at Jerusalem until He should fulfill to them the promise of the Father, and they should be clothed with power from on high (Luke xxiv: 49). Acts i: 8 repeats the same gracious promise with added particulars, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you [mar., "the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you"]: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." These were probably the last words Christ spoke before He ascended to the right hand of God.

3. Pentecost (ii). This memorable day witnessed the fulfillment of the Lord's great promise. On it the exalted Redeemer poured forth upon His disciples the gift of the Spirit (ii: 33). It occurred on the fiftieth day after the Passover, the reckoning being by Sabbaths, and the day itself "the morrow after the Sabbath" (Lev. xxiii: 15, 16). It seems certain, therefore, that the outpouring of the Spirit took place on the first day of the week, the Lord's Day. The gift of the Spirit was accompanied by extraordinary visible mani-

festations. These were three and were supernatural. The Spirit's coming at Pentecost first appealed to the ear. The disciples heard a "sound from heaven," which rushed with irresistible force into the house and filled it, even as a storm might rush, but there was no wind. Then the eye was arrested by the appearance of fire-like tongues that rested on each of them. Finally there was the impartation to them of a new and strange power to speak in languages they had never learned, an endowment which amazed and perplexed their hearers. There is in these phenomena of Pentecost something analogous to the events which occurred at the giving of the Law at Sinai. In Heb. xii: 18, 19, we are told that "tempest," "fire," and "the voice of words" attended the inauguration of the Mosaic Dispensation. The like mighty signs introduced the Christian age. But the differences between them are even more marked than the correspondences. At Sinai there were also the blackness and darkness the quaking earth the thunderings and lightnings the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, the terror of the people, and the fear of Moses (Ex. xix: 16-18; Heb. xii: 18, 19). Nothing of this was seen at Pentecost. The phenomena characterize the two dispensations. That of Sinai was legal. Its substance was Do and live; disobey and die. Law knows no mercy, extends no grace. Exact justice is its rule, perfect righteousness its requirement, and death its penalty. No wonder terrible things accompanied its proclamation, and Moses trembled with fear. No wonder it was called "a fiery law" (Deut. xxxiii: 2).

With the advent of the Spirit came perfect grace, divine power, and complete pardon for the worst of men, even for the murderers of the Lord Jesus. At Sinai God spoke in one language. At Pentecost the Spirit through the disciples spoke in many tongues (fifteen are mentioned in chap. ii). The Law was for one people only; the Gospel is for the whole world. The Spirit filled all the house where they were sitting. He filled the disciples likewise (vs. 2, 4, language which denotes the fulness of the gift, the copiousness of the outpouring). This could be only after Christ was glorified (John vii:39). The tongues of flame signified power of speech, boldness of utterance, thus qualifying them to become the Lord's witnesses. The gift of the Spirit on Pentecost was a real baptism of Him, even as the Lord had promised. There began that day the gathering and uniting into one the whole company of the redeemed. It was the commencement of the formation of what Paul so repeatedly calls the Body of Christ (1 Cor. xii:12, 13; Eph. i:22, 23; Col. i:18, etc.). The Body could be formed only after redemption was completed in the death, resurrection, and exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. On subsequent occasions, and in special crises, the Spirit manifests His presence and guides the Lord's servants in paths which He chooses. Thus, He fits the newly-appointed Deacons for their ministry (vi:3, 5); Samaritan believers receive Him (viii:17); He directs Philip to the Ethiopian (viii:29); Cornelius and his friends are baptized with Him (x:44, 45); He separates Barnabas and Saul for the mission

to which He had called them (xiii:2-4); He guides the Council's decision at Jerusalem (xv:28); and guides the missionaries from Asia to Europe (xvi:6-10).

These are but specimens of the action of the Holy Spirit as recorded in the book, of His superintendence of the Church, of His selection of the laborers, and the fields where the Church is to be planted, and of His qualification of the instruments He employs for the accomplishment of His purposes. But the Spirit on earth and Christ on high act conjointly. The only vicar the Lord Jesus has in all the world is the Spirit. So much must be inferred from His own promise of the coming of the Comforter, and of His work when come as One who should not speak from Himself, who should glorify Christ, who should receive of Christ's and show it unto the disciples (John xiv:16, 17; xv:26, 27; xvi:13, 14). The book is the Acts of the exalted Saviour. It traces the movements of the Gospel under the hand of the Spirit whom Jesus poured out upon His servants at Pentecost. From heaven Christ surveys the whole great field, orders the missionary expeditions, controls the forces of nature and the powers of the world that His blessed purposes of grace be accomplished.

III. Analysis. Acts falls very distinctly into two parts. Part First, chaps. i-xii; Part Second, chaps. xiii-xxviii. In the first part Peter is the central figure; in the second it is Paul. The book covers a period of about thirty-three years. It must be noted, however, that the chronology, particularly in the early sections,

is exceedingly difficult. Take but one example, the date of the Feast of Pentecost (ii); three different years are named by many writers, A. D. 28, 30, 33. The death of Herod Agrippa (xii), is generally believed to have occurred A. D. 44, and from that date onward the chronology is less obscure, though not without its difficulties. Accordingly, the time embraced in Acts may vary from thirty to thirty-five years, as one fixes the date of Pentecost at A. D. 28 or A. D. 33.

In Part First (i-xii), the principal topics are the following: The Ascension of Christ, (i: 1-11); the Choice of Matthias in the Room of Judas, (i: 12-26); Outpouring of the Spirit, (ii: 1-13); the First Christian Sermon and Its Effect, (ii: 14-47); the Cure of the Lame Man, (iii: 1-11); Peter's Second Sermon, (iii: 12-26); Arrest of Peter and John, and Their Defense, (iv: 1-22); Prayer and Faith, (iv: 23-31); the Loving Christian Household, (iv: 32-37); the Sin and Punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, (v: 1-11); Apostolic Miracles, (v: 12-16); Arrest, Trial and Deliverance of the Apostles, (v: 17-42); Appointment of the First Deacons, (vi: 1-7); Charges against Stephen and His Noble Defence, (vi: 8-vii: 53); His Martyrdom, (vii: 54-60; viii: 1); The Gospel Preached in Samaria, and the Holy Spirit Given to Believers, (viii: 2-25); Conversion of the Ethiopian Officer, (viii: 26-40); Conversion of Saul, (ix: 1-30); Peter's Missionary Tour, (ix 31-43); Gentiles Admitted into the Church Through the Instrumentality of Peter, the Lord by Mighty Signs and Wonders Setting

the Seal of His Approbation Thereto, (x-xi:18); The Gospel Preached with Marvelous Results at Antioch of Syria, (xi:19-30); Persecution by Herod Agrippa, (xii).

The narrative of the First Part of Acts contains some very noteworthy things: First, the marvelous capabilities which the disciples display after Pentecost. It is common to admire their courage and zeal; to contrast their fearlessness in the presence of enemies with their former inconstancy and timidity. It is perhaps not so common to recognize in them the qualities which lie at the foundation of all effective work, which give to witness-bearing for Christ all its power and persuasiveness. These qualities are such as knowledge and wisdom, zeal and prudence, love and devotion, skill and tact. They appear in the discourses of the disciples, in their behavior when difficulties arise and dangers threaten, and in their conduct before the angry rulers of Israel. In Peter's address on the day of Pentecost there are the marks of the highest art, the most skillful logic, and the most persuasive argument. Prof. Stifler well says of it, "It is without a peer among the products of uninspired men. And yet it is the work of a Galilean fisherman, without culture or training, and his maiden effort." The like remarkable traits are found in his address recorded in chap. iii, in that of Cornelius and his friends, and his defense as related in chap. xi, when he was arraigned for having eaten with Gentiles. No less must be said of the equally wonderful reply of Stephen to the charge against him, as found in chap. vii. In their manage-

ment of the complaint raised by the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews as to the neglect of their widows in the daily ministrations (chap. vi), and in their conduct when brought before the enraged Sanhedrin, as they were once and again (chaps. iv, v, xii), they exhibited a wisdom and prudence more than common, and certainly far enough removed from mere shrewdness or cunning. The qualities they possess and display are more than human, they are the gifts of the Holy Spirit with whom they were baptized on the day of Pentecost. This is the only satisfactory explanation of the vast difference between what they were before Pentecost, and what they became immediately after that day. So Jesus had promised, (Mark xiii: 11; John xvi: 13; Acts i: 8). Thus the promise is fulfilled.

A second noteworthy thing is Christ's sovereign action in the choice of the agents to accomplish His purposes of grace. He uses Peter and John, and other of the Apostles, but does not confine His selections to the twelve. He goes outside of them and calls and qualifies those who had no official relation with the disciples, e. g., Stephen, Philip, Barnabas, Ananias, Saul, and those nameless men of Cyprus and Cyrene who evangelized Antioch with such wonderful results (xi: 19-21). Thus it was at the beginning of the Jewish age. Moses and Aaron his brother were pre-eminent in founding the Theocracy. But ere long seventy elders were associated with them for the governance of the people (Num. xi: 16). Moreover, two men were endowed with the richest artistic gifts that they

might build and beautify the Lord's sanctuary in the midst of Israel (Ex. xxxi: 1-6). Two other men were anointed with the spirit of prophecy to teach the people the will of the Lord (Num. xi: 26, 27). God is never straightened for means, nor is He bound by hierarchical orders and limitations, as are men. If one set of agents, chosen by Himself, are insufficient for the accomplishment of His designs, He will inaugurate another, and another still, if need be. Hence, for the work of the ministry and for the building of the Body of Christ and the perfecting of the saints, He appointed Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers (Eph. iv: 11, 12).

A third thing is, the strictly Jewish character of the primitive church in Judæa. The first disciples were Jews, and they were zealous for the observances peculiar to Judaism. They seem to have had little or no conception of the worldwide nature of Christianity. The Gentile had no place in their plans, hardly in their thoughts. It required a violent persecution to send them forth with the word of life even into Samaria. We are told, however, that the Apostles remained in Jerusalem (viii: 1). It may be Meyer is right in the conjecture that, in the absence of more special divine revelation, they "resolved to remain at the center of the theocracy, which in their view at this time was also the center of the new theocracy." Even those scattered abroad by the persecution traveled with the word in their hands as far as Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, but they confined their preaching to Jews (xi: 19). In the meantime the great vision from

heaven came to Peter, Cornelius and his friends were baptized with the Holy Spirit, and the Apostle narrated the marvelous event to the Christian Jews in Jerusalem, who "glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (xi: 18). By such divine interpositions did the Lord open the door to the vast heathen world. The primitive Church was long in learning with Peter to say, "God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (x: 28). After all the intervening centuries it has scarcely yet learned it.

A fourth is the manifest progress of the Church in fulfillment of its great commission (Matt. xxviii: 19, 20). The track of the Gospel in these early years is clearly marked and easily followed. At first the testimony was confined to Jerusalem and Judæa. Then it was carried to Samaria mainly by the evangelist Philip. Afterward, Peter set forth on his apostolic journey "throughout all parts"—Lydda, Joppa, Cæsarea, at which point the first Gentile conversions took place. Thence the Gospel passed on to Phœnicia, Cyprus, Antioch. Antioch in due time becomes the second great center, the point of departure for all subsequent apostolic missionary movements. Jerusalem continues to be the Mother Church, but perceptibly it begins to lose its commanding influence, its overshadowing authority. The time embraced in this first division of the book (chaps. i-xii) is difficult to fix; probably it is from twelve to sixteen years.

In the second part Luke describes the missionary labors of Paul and his associates (chaps. xii-xix); his

last journey to Jerusalem (xx); his arrest and trial (xxi-xxiii); imprisonment at Cæsarea (xxiv-xxvi); and his journey to Rome (xxvii, xxviii).

1. The First Missionary Journey (chaps. xiii, xiv).

The starting-point was Antioch, the objective points were the Island of Cyprus, and the Asiatic Provinces of Pamphylia and Pisidia. The directing Agent was the Holy Spirit by whom the two fit instruments, Barnabas and Saul, were chosen (xiii:2). At the time they were selected their destination was not disclosed. But the wisdom of the choice became apparent when it was made known. Barnabas was a Cypriote (iv:36), and they were to visit Cyprus. Saul was a native of Tarsus, and they were to go into that region. Besides, they were singularly adapted to each other, counterparts and complements. Saul was ardent, intellectual, strong of will, and of profound convictions; Barnabas was genial, hopeful, gentle, a veritable "son of consolation." So, too, when the Apostles were sent forth (Mark vi:7), and the Seventy (Luke x:1), they went "by two and two," mated and matched. A similar combination of character and qualities is seen in Luther and Melancthon, and other servants of the Lord. The missionaries had with them as attendant and helper John Mark, a relative of Barnabas.

This was the first invasion of heathenism by the Gospel. The gracious message had gone out to the Gentiles in the household of Cornelius, had made converts at Antioch. But now a direct assault is made on the enemy's strongholds. Evidences of the divine presence with the missionaries and approval of their

testimony attend them everywhere. At Paphos in Cyprus a reprobate Jew, bearing the name of Bar-Jesus (son of Jesus), a false prophet and sorcerer, in Satan's service, withstood them. The swift judgment of the Lord fell on him, and he who sought to keep the Proconsul of the island, Sergius Paulus, in darkness, sat himself in darkness, "not seeing the sun for a season."

At this point in the history Saul's name is changed to Paul, which is henceforward his only name. It seems likely it was not taken because of the conversion of Sergius Paulus, but because of the new energy and power that had come into his own life, just as Abram became Abraham after the making of the covenant (Gen. xvii: 5), Jacob became Israel after the wrestling (Gen. xxxii: 28), and Simeon became Peter after the great confession (Matt. xvi: 18). The order of the missionaries' names is inverted. Instead of Barnabas and Saul as hitherto, from this point on it is uniformly Paul and Barnabas.*

They next visited Perga, where John Mark left them to return to Jerusalem, and from thence they went on to Antioch in Pisidia, where a wonderful work of grace followed the preaching of the word.

* There are two exceptions (xv: 12, 25), where the old order of the names is followed, Barnabas and Paul: it is at Jerusalem and in the Council where seniority and Jewish precedence prevail. In the scene at Lystra (xiv: 12), Barnabas is named first as Jupiter, the chief god of those idolaters, and Paul next as Mercury the Messenger. In these instances Luke's accuracy and fidelity as a historian are very noteworthy.

From this point on Paul becomes the principal speaker. His first recorded sermon was delivered here. From Antioch they passed into the province of Lycaonia, to Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, where the Gospel they announced was as signally accepted by some and rejected by others as at Antioch. Derbe was the limit of this first journey. From this place the two missionaries turned back, revisiting the cities already evangelized, and returned to Antioch in Syria. The duration of the journey was about two years.

Two things are made very prominent in this first tour of Gentile evangelization: (1) The implacable hostility of the Jews toward the Gospel of Christ. Wherever the evangelists went they invariably offered salvation first to the Jews, and while some accepted it, the mass refused, and began a satanic persecution of its heralds. Israel's cup was fast filling; the awful judgments of God would ere long break down on the guilty nation. (2) The Gentiles were much more friendly, idolaters though they were; and their friendship was turned into fury only through Jewish instigation.

Chap. xv: 1-35 is an essential part of this record. It is introduced into the history between Paul's first and second evangelistic tours because chronologically it belongs there, and because of its vital relation to Gentile Christianity. A serious controversy arose at Antioch, one which threatened the disruption of the Church into two sections—a Jewish and a Gentile church. In importance this controversy is equalled perhaps by only two others in the Church's history,

that of the fourth century touching the Person of Christ, commonly called the Arian controversy; and that of the sixteenth century concerning justification by faith. The vital question was, Shall Gentile converts be required to keep the Mosaic law as a condition of salvation? The Pharisaic party claimed they should (xv: 1, 5). Their position appeared to be sustained by Scripture. No doubt they referred to Gen. xvii: 13, 14, and argued that since God Himself had appointed circumcision as the seal of the covenant and had solemnly announced that the uncircumcised are outside the covenant and so doomed to death, therefore they concluded, "Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved." The first to make reply to this view was Peter, whose argument is conclusive. In substance it is this: The Lord's acts are as authoritative as His words. He had already decided the whole question by dealing with Gentile converts precisely as He did with Jewish believers, bestowing the same spiritual gifts on both, and with the same moral effect. Even before the ordinance of baptism had been administered to Cornelius and his household the Lord had given them the Holy Spirit and the faith that purifies the heart. Peter was followed by James, who appositely cited the words of the prophet Amos, and then offered the resolution (as we moderns express it), that was unanimously adopted (verses 19, 20). Thus the Gospel was saved from the effort by well-meaning but mistaken Hebrew Christians to engraft it upon Judaism. It was a victory for which the Church can never be too thankful.

2. The Second Missionary Journey (xv: 36-xviii: 22). Dr. Stifler, in his excellent *Introduction to the Acts*, names this section, "The Gospel in Triumphant Conflict with Heathenism."

The starting-point was again Antioch; the objective points were Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece. The history now touches classic soil, Troy, Philippi, Athens, Corinth. The places where the word is to be preached and the Church to be planted were not of human selection; they were designated by the Spirit. The Good News was now for the first time carried into Europe by Paul and his companions. Some features of this memorable tour may be noted.

(a) The separation of Paul and Barnabas (xv: 36-40). The occasion of it was John Mark. He had left the two chief missionaries at Pamphylia without sufficient reason, so Paul seems to have thought; but Barnabas was minded to ignore or condone his past conduct, and take him again with them. So the two friends parted asunder, Barnabas and Mark going to Cyprus, Paul and Silas to Asia Minor.

(b) The call of Timothy (xvi: 1-3). He was of mixed parentage, the son of a Jewess and of a Greek father. Him Paul circumcised in deference to Jewish prejudice. This he could well do without sacrificing any principle. But when the Jewish party at Jerusalem demanded that Titus should submit to the rite, not as a concession to weaker brethren, but as a condition of salvation to be imposed upon all believers, Paul interposed his imperative, "No, not for an hour" (Gal. ii: 3-5). How helpful Timothy became to the

Apostle, what wealth of love Paul poured out upon him, we know from his letters to the young evangelist. He refused Mark as co-laborer because not sure of him; he chose Timothy because he discerned in him docility, fidelity, and steadfastness; and he never repented the choice. Timothy was one of the magnificent compensations Paul enjoyed for the cruel sufferings he endured at Lystra (xiv: 19).

(c) The call to Macedonia (xvi: 6-12). The missionaries passed through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, but whether these places were evangelized at this time or not, we are not informed. Luke hurries over it all to give a detailed account of the entrance of the Gospel into Europe. It should be noted that at this point in the history Luke becomes their companion (xvi: 10).

Philippi was a Roman colony. As such it was an integral part of Rome; its citizens were Romans with the same privileges and rights as those belonging to the imperial city. Here, then, in the first European city—a part of Rome itself, as we may say—the victory of the Gospel over heathenism was a pledge of its ultimate triumph over the whole continent, over the mighty Empire.

Lydia, a seller of purple, was the first convert; the jailer and his household the next. The power and prestige of the Delphic Oracle and its chief demon, the repulsive Python, fell before the power of Christ when, through His name, Paul delivered the poor slave girl from the dominion of the evil one. Then followed the arrest of the missionaries, their scourging

and imprisonment, and their marvelous deliverance through God's miraculous interposition. This was the first European persecution, and out of it the preachers of the Gospel issued victoriously. The Jews appear to have had no hand in it, for once.

(d) The Gospel at Thessalonica and Berea (xvii: 1-15). It seems that the evangelization of Thessalonica lasted but three weeks (xvii:2), and as usual the word was preached to the Synagogue first, then to the heathen. Some Israelites believed; of the "devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." Jewish malice, however, provoked a tumult, and a mob assaulted the house of Jason, where the missionaries were lodging. It is interesting to note that the name Jason appears in Rom. xvi: 21 as one of Paul's "kinsmen." Could they have been the same person? Very likely. Significant is the description the rioters give of the preachers: "These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also"—an unconscious tribute to the revolutionary power of the Gospel. Secretly they repaired to Berea, and in spite of Jewish hatred and outrage Paul again speaks in the Synagogue. Nothing but the mighty love of God filling and thrilling him will account for Paul's matchless devotion to his malignant and incorrigible countrymen.

(e) Paul at Athens (xvii: 16-34). With a few graphic strokes Luke gives us the general character of the Athenians. Note their characteristics as seen by the Apostle; they were idolaters, their city full of idols (v. 16); speculative and rationalistic (v. 18)—

the Epicureans were in reality atheists, the Stoics pantheists, cynical, egotistic, and disdainful (v. 18). The sarcastic epithet they apply to Paul is "babbler," *seed-picker*, i. e., one who has picked up a few grains of knowledge, and "babbles them indifferently in all companies" (*Johnson's Dic.*). They were news-mongers and gossips (v. 21). Demosthenes said, in one of his speeches to the Athenians, "Tell me, is it all you care for, to go up and down the market, asking each other, Is there any news?"

They were ignorant of the true God (v. 23). "Unknown God" is, literally, the agnostic God, or, according to the language of modern skepticism, the Unknown and Unknowable. Although Paul probably remained in Athens a month, the results of his reasoning in the synagogue and in the market-place every day (v. 17) appear to have been meager indeed. A few believed, but only a few. Two are named, Dionysius and Damaris. The irony of history—how strange it is! Millions are perfectly familiar with the name of Paul, and of these two Athenians, who never heard of Diogenes, Pericles, or Aristotle, scarcely of Socrates! Those obscure two of Athens are immortalized because identified in faith with the despised Jew who spoke that day on Mars' Hill.

(f) The Gospel at Corinth (xviii: 1-18). Eighteen months (v. 11) the Apostle remained at Corinth, and a flourishing church was gathered. He abode with Aquila and Priscilla, two worthy people of whom many a favorable notice is had in the New Testament. "Being of the same craft, he wrought with them." It

is an exquisitely beautiful touch. Infinitely higher is the Apostle here making tents than the fable of Hercules at the distaff, or Mercury making speeches. Paul was fit to teach others because he knew how to repress himself.

With mighty signs and wonders (2 Cor. xii: 12) he preached Christ. The Jews, unable to confute him, had recourse to their habitual argument, violence. They "made insurrection against him with one accord." But Gallio, the brother of Seneca, was proconsul at the time, and he, not from any regard for Paul, but through contempt for the Jews and their questions, drove the accusers from his court. Thus again the Gospel proved victorious.

(g) The return to Antioch (xviii: 21, 22). The time occupied in this second tour was three or four years.

3. The Third Missionary Journey (xix, xx). Antioch is once more the starting-point: the objective points were those Churches already established. A new field, however, was occupied, Ephesus, the capital of proconsular Asia. The results here were marvelous. Miracles of the most stupendous nature were wrought by the Apostle (vs. 11, 12). Multitudes embraced the faith preached. Demetrius the silversmith testified that, "Not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people." The converts evinced the sincerity of their faith by burning the magical books they possessed, to the value, it is estimated, of more than \$9,000. The "books" no doubt were made up of the

proverbial "Ephesian Letters," or inscriptions, connected with the worship of Diana, and of the rules and formulas of incantation. "So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed" (v. 20).

It was at Ephesus that the Gospel encountered the fiercest opposition from idolaters it had hitherto met. Paul once and again refers to the extreme peril to which he was there exposed (1 Cor. xv: 32; 2 Cor. i:8-10). The time embraced in this third tour was about three years (xx: 31).

It is very noteworthy that each advance of the Gospel in the world of heathenism, each new strategic point occupied, was confronted by some Satanic antagonism: at Paphos by Elymas the sorcerer; at Lystra by an attempt to deify the missionaries; at Philippi by the Pythoness; at Ephesus by strolling Jewish exorcists. Satan resists the assault upon his ancient dominion with all his might and malice. But, on the other side, one supernatural manifestation follows another in attestation of God's presence and approval of His servants and their work as they go forward to offer Christ's salvation to lost men. In the midst of persecution and affliction, stripes and imprisonment they can sing for very joy.

Forced to leave Ephesus the Apostle passed into Macedonia and Greece (xx: 1, 2). Forced to flee from these regions through Jewish plots against him, he turned back toward Asia by way of Philippi, Troas, Assos, Mitylene to Miletus, where the elders of the church in Ephesus came to him, to whom he addressed his solemn charge and valedictory (xx: 17-38). It is

an inimitable address, full of pathos, of exhortation, and affectionate warning. In it as in so many places in his Epistles the Apostle lets us see something of the untiring activity, humility and disinterestedness of his ministry; its supreme message, the deathless love that animated him in all his work and testimony, the faith and courage that supported him.

From Miletus he hurried on to Syria, to Jerusalem (xxi). At Tyre and at Cæsarea brethren warned him not to proceed to Jerusalem. Even before he reached Miletus he had been told in every city that bonds and afflictions awaited him (xx:23). Tearful entreaty added weight to the warning. But Paul had the clear conviction, grounded in the witness and guidance of the Holy Spirit, that to Jerusalem he must go (xx:22, 23; xxi:13, 14). His chief aim in repairing thither was to carry alms and offerings to the needy saints (xxiv:17; cf. Rom. xv:26). For months, and over a wide area (viz., Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia—Ramsay) he and his fellow-laborers had been engaged in gathering this contribution. The Apostle refers to it in Rom. xv:25, 26, 31; 1 Cor. xvi:1-4; 2 Cor. viii:1-4, 19, etc. It was a matter that he greatly took to heart, and to it he attached the utmost importance. In the months of liberty just preceding his arrest and long imprisonment this "ministration," as he affectionately names it, was chief in his plans and thoughts. But why was he so deeply concerned about it?

First, because of his ardent love for Israel, the chosen people. No man in all the world had a more sincere,

unselfish affection for his nation than he. "The most ardent patriot could not enlarge with greater pride on the glories of the chosen race than he does in the Epistle to the Romans" (Lightfoot). He writes: "I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites" (Rom. ix: 1-14).

His language reminds us of Moses' impassioned prayer; "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Ex. xxxii: 32). The like spirit of profound affection for their people animated both these great servants of God. Impelled by his love, Paul was most solicitous to present this substantial aid to his needy countrymen.

Secondly, he sought to knit together into practical unity the two great sections of the Christian Brotherhood, the Jewish and the Gentile. We know from the record (Acts xi, xv) with what anxiety and even suspicion Hebrew believers looked on the ever-increasing work of grace among the nations, on the widening fields opening to the Gospel, and on the fruitful testimony of the missionaries to idolaters of the worst type. We know, too, that Paul himself was by the mass of Jews stigmatized as Moses' enemy and the destroyer of everything distinctively Jewish. To them he was the apostate, the waster of Israel, the profaner of holy things. Even Jewish Christians largely shared this feeling. A chasm thus separated between Jewish and Gentile saints, a chasm that Paul would fain bridge.

The Apostle taught everywhere that Christians form one body of which Christ is the Head; that in this body all national distinctions disappear. "There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. iii: 11; Gal. iii: 28). He sought by means of this generous contribution to illustrate and enforce this fundamental truth of Christianity. Some of the Gentile churches were themselves needy; one of them, that of Philippi in particular, had given of "their deep poverty," and "beyond their power" (2 Cor. viii: 2-4). Only the love that is born of God's Spirit could inspire such liberality. Gifts from such a source and with such a motive tended strongly to bind into one the givers and receivers. Paul accordingly was anxious to "seal this fruit to them" of Jerusalem, and secure its acceptance by the saints (Rom. xv: 28, 31). A delegation from the churches of Asia Minor and Europe accompanied him; xx: 4 gives their names. There are eight (including Luke), and they represented the Christian assemblies of Berea, Thessalonica, Derbe, and Ephesus. Whether Paul himself represented Corinth, or whether there were some of Achaia whose names do not appear in the list, cannot be determined. Some, if not all, of this delegation went with the Apostle to Jerusalem.* And the chief

* The words "into Asia," of xx: 4, (R. V. "as far as Asia,") are omitted in the texts of Wescott, Hort and Nestle, and are bracketed by Weymouth. If genuine they do not imply that these delegates went no further, for Trophemus (xxi: 29)

reason for so large a number of persons from so many sections of country going with him seems to be this: to impress upon the church of Jerusalem the great fact of the essential unity of Christians in faith and love and hope; that Gentile believers differed in no vital particular from the Jewish saints; and that the needy in the holy city had as just claims upon the sympathy and the help of believers in Asia and Europe as their own poor, and that these claims were as readily and lovingly recognized. Paul sought to relieve the saints, and also to strengthen the bonds that bound the whole Christian Brotherhood together. We can easily imagine what a profound impression the presence of these Christians from Asia and Europe with their "alms and offerings" must have made on James and the other believers with him.

Paul likewise may have cherished the hope that by this proof of his abiding love for Israel a door of testimony in Jerusalem might be opened to him. That he might the more effectively nullify the charges against him by the Jews he willingly submitted to the ceremonial purification which James and the Elders urged upon him (**xxi: 17-24**). If such were his hopes he was speedily undeceived. The people of Jerusalem would have none of him nor of the Gospel of God's grace which he preached. And so there follows the narrative of the tumult raised against him, his arrest,

and Aristarchus (**xxvii: 2**) went with Paul to Jerusalem, Luke also. Alford thinks "probably others" besides these three. The likelihood is that all eight accompanied him to Judæa.

removal to Cæsarea, the voyage and shipwreck, and his final arrival at Rome. Four times Israel rejected the mercy of God; first in the person of the Lord Jesus, then as offered by the Apostles, by the martyr Stephen, and now at length by Paul. Their cup was fast filling, was now almost full. Twelve short years must pass, and then the tremendous judgment will fall on the guilty nation—the desolation of the land, the destruction of the holy city, indescribable sufferings on the people and a dispersion which still endures.

In the closing section of the book (xxi-xxviii) there are found three addresses which Paul delivered in his own defense that seem to demand a brief notice. The first is recorded in xxii: 1-21, and is an account of his conversion and his mission as ordered by the Lord Himself. It was spoken in Hebrew, and from the castle stairs, and was addressed to an infuriated Jewish mob that stood below him with their features contorted by passion and uttering fierce execrations at the man whom they charged with blasphemy and sacrilege. No mob could be more savage, more fanatical. Even the iron-minded Romans dreaded it, we are told. None can execrate like an infuriated Jew. The man who had the most unruffled spirit and composure was Paul. Although bound with two chains and guarded by soldiers, he spoke with quiet firmness and logical power. Jesus had promised that it should be given His servants what to speak and how to speak in just such circumstances as these. We cannot doubt that Paul now enjoyed the sweetness of the promise. His address is a defense. The nature of the false accusations

against him made it a necessity to speak of himself and of the Lord's ways with him. He told the story of the heavenly light that shone about him, of the voice of the Son of God who spoke to him, and of the mission the risen Messiah had entrusted him with. The address was of more than human strength in its simplicity, its straightforward honesty and truthfulness. The response it evoked from the maddened crowd was, "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live."

The second address was made before the bar of the Procurator Felix (xxiv: 10-21), and is a triumphant vindication of himself as against the malicious charges and calumnies of the Jews, and their servile attorney, Tertullus.

The third was delivered before Festus, Agrippa, Bernice, the chief officers and principal men of Cæsarea (xxvi: 1-32). It is a magnificent recital of his conversion, that mighty change through the personal revelation to him of the glorified Jesus that had revolutionized his entire being, his habits of thought and of life, and which had made him the tireless missionary and witness of the Crucified One. It produced a profound impression on his august hearers, but failed to set him free.

Another brief address is recorded in xxviii: 23-29. It is Paul's last word to poor, blinded Israel as represented by the heads of the Jewish colony in Rome, and is the stern proclamation that the offer of the Gospel is being withdrawn from them and is going out to the nations who will receive it. In eight or nine years

thereafter the end came (A. D. 70); the judgment that had been so long and so mercifully held back, broke down upon the guilty city and people to the uttermost.

Some of the scenes described in this closing section are detailed at length, while the intervening periods are dismissed very briefly. "Thus *xxi: 17—xxiv: 23* describes the events of twelve days; *xxiv: 24-27*, of two years; *xxv: 1—xxviii: 7*, of about five months; *xxviii: 8-11*, of three months" (Ramsay). Acts is not at all like the ordinary history. In it the Spirit of God records only what suits His purpose, what is for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and the instruction of His people; all the rest He dismisses without a word.

Looking back over this marvelous history, the course of the Gospel with its precious message of salvation to the world is clearly discernible. It starts at Jerusalem, thence goes to Samaria, to Cæsarea, to Antioch, to Asia Minor, to Europe, and to the world's capital, Rome. Throughout it all two mighty facts are made most prominent, viz., the superintendence of the Lord Jesus Christ by His Spirit in His chosen instruments whereby His gracious and sovereign will touching the race is accomplished, and the disclosure of the mystery of God's free grace whereby Gentile believers become co-heirs, co-incorporate, and co-sharers with Hebrew believers in the promise (*Eph. iii: 6*).

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE ACTS.

As the book narrates the Lord's action in the establishment of His Church in the world it is marked by certain qualities that are peculiar to it. Some of these may be pointed out:

1. Most of the discourses herein recorded are addressed to non-Christians. There are eight by Peter, and five of them are to the unconverted; one by Stephen, to the same class of hearers; one by Philip, to an inquirer; two by James, to believers; nine by Paul, and all but one (that to the Elders of Ephesus, xx: 18-35) to the unsaved. Most of these sermons are probably condensed, and they are evangelistic. Their aim is to convince and persuade the unconverted and to bring them to a saving knowledge of Christ. The brief outlines which Luke has preserved for us are models for all preachers and evangelists. The skill and power with which these servants of the Lord present the Gospel to the unconverted, whether unbelieving Jews blinded by prejudice and bigotry, or Greeks sunk in the abyss of materialism and nature-worship, their manner of dealing with the awakened, the skeptical, and the openly vicious afford the very best examples for preachers of our own age. When speaking to the Jews the appeal is always from the Old Testament Scriptures; when addressing Gentiles the ground uniformly is Christ, in His mercy, grace, and love, as exhibited in His atoning death. Christ is always and everywhere the center and sum of their testimony.

2 The apostolic preachers employed the Word of God in their work. They relied on nothing else for producing the results at which they aimed. It is remarkable how uniformly Acts witnesses to their constant and unfailing use of Scripture. Twenty-five times at least we read of the preaching of the Word, the searching of the Scriptures, the effect of the Word, the growth of the Word, the prevailing of the Word, etc. (ii: 41; iv: 4, 29, 31; vi: 4, 7; viii: 14, 25; x: 26, 37, etc.). As already remarked, they constantly appealed to the Old Testament when addressing those familiar with it. But they made just as wide a use of the teaching, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Peter assures us that the first ministers preached the Gospel "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." Their preaching, therefore, was inspired, infallibly true and powerful. It was pre-eminently Biblical. Note the descriptive titles given the Word they preached in our book, e. g., "the word of the Lord," "word of salvation," "word of His grace," "ministry of the word," etc. It was this strict adherence to the revealed truth of God which imparted such strength and effect to the preaching of the Apostles. Apostolic men had no time and no wish to lecture on their travels, on Greek art or Roman militarism, on education, literature, or civilization. They would not have dared trifle with men's souls nor with the honor of their master, Jesus Christ, by taking up such matters. Christ was their one theme, the Word of God their efficient weapon. And this is the need of our time. We should return to apostolic methods, and use the Word in its

naked simplicity, in its convincing might, in its arousing energy, in its enlightening power, in its rugged strength, in its asserting knowledge, in its purifying joy, and in its Spirit-given utterances. Were this done we should hear no more of the feebleness of the pulpit and the deadness of the churches. In all the world there is nothing so attractive as the Bible, the Scriptures of Truth.

3. The gift of the Holy Spirit for special service is a truth certainly recognized in Acts. For while the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was in fulfillment of the Lord's promise, and was once for all during the present dispensation, yet we find that on repeated occasions thereafter certain disciples were "filled with the Spirit" to qualify them for some particular testimony, or for suffering (iv: 31; vi: 5; x: 44, 45; xi: 12, 28; xiii: 2, etc.). Let us distinguish between the gift of the Spirit as an abiding Comforter that all believers enjoy (Rom. viii: 9), and the gift of Him for a special condition. The former is bestowed once for all and to all, the latter as often as we need and ask. The conditions for its reception are to be found in the Scriptures.

Some things touching the gift may be noted: (a) It was generally connected with supreme emergencies and exigencies (iv: 29, 30). (b) It was commonly accompanied with miraculous power (iv: 31; xiii: 9). (c) It imparted wisdom and courage (vi: 5, 10; Lu. xxi: 14, 15). (d) By it the common graces of the Spirit were increased and intensified in those who received it, e. g., faith, love, tenderness, sympathy, hope,

and an irresistible earnestness. It is very noteworthy that this gift showed itself in the very faces of those possessing it, e. g., Peter (iii:4); Stephen (vi:15; vii:55); Paul (xiii:9). Unwavering confidence, perfect assurance, lifted into unassailable supremacy, exhibited themselves in the countenances of those thus endowed.

4. Acts is a missionary manual. It is the best because the perfect guide for missionary operations. The motives and aims, the methods and means, the persons and places are all here.

The Apostles established the Church in great radiating centers, as Jerusalem, Antioch, Cyprus, the Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome. From each of these centers the Gospel could be carried into the surrounding territories. Thus, Palestine was reached from Jerusalem, Asia Minor from Pisidian Antioch and Ephesus, Greece from Corinth, and all western Europe from Rome. The methods of the Apostles in the prosecution of their mission were simple, straightforward, and successful. They began with the Jews in every locality they visited. "To the Jew first" they carried the Good News. With them the command, "beginning at Jerusalem," meant not only the point of departure, but that Israel must first hear the Gospel and be invited to accept its blessed provisions. They depended solely on their divine Master and His mighty Agent, the Spirit, for the successful accomplishment of their great task. This did not at all interfere with their human judgment, or their "com-

mon sense"; it rather quickened and intensified all the natural gifts they possessed. But their gifts and powers were subordinated to the guidance of the Spirit, were never set up in opposition to His holy will. They were not crippled in their work by a cumbersome system nor by complicated machinery. No complex organization interfered with their free movements. With the utmost liberty and yet the most thorough loyalty to Christ they gave themselves wholly to their appointed mission, sternly refusing to be deflected from their course or to compromise themselves by efforts to reform society, reform the state, purify politics, or elevate the masses by sociological dynamics. Every one of them could say with Paul, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." "This one thing I do." They refused absolutely to enter into any alliance which had not Christ for its center and its circumference. They went forth in simple dependence on the living God with a zeal that persecution could not quench, a courage so lofty that no obstacle, however formidable, could resist.

Acts ends abruptly, even unsatisfactorily, so many think and say. Why did not Luke tell us of Paul's trial and defense at Nero's bar; of its issue, of his ministry of "two whole years in his own hired house"? It has been supposed that Luke was interrupted, that he intended to write a third book, that the original conclusion of Acts has been lost, etc. The history is not incomplete, because it does not follow Paul to the end of his career; for it is not a personal biography of the Apostle, but the record of the planting and exten-

sion of the Church in radiating centers from Jerusalem to Rome. When the last point in the series is reached the subject is exhausted and the history complete (Alexander). The view of Professor Stifler also is satisfactory, for it presents another phase of the book which certainly is found in it: "Luke's work is done. He has shown how the Jew lost the honor of being the leader of the Lord's worship in the world, and how another holy nation was formed on which that honor was conferred" (*Intro. to Acts*, p. 286).

That Paul was released from his first imprisonment at Rome, and that he spent some time in preaching the Gospel in Spain as he purposed (cf. Rom. xv: 24, 28), and elsewhere, and that he was again arrested and violently put to death at Rome, is the conviction of those who have most thoroughly investigated the subject and who are thus well qualified to speak with authority. The various arguments in support of this view can only be very briefly indicated here. (1) Certain notices and statements in the Pastoral Epistles seem to demand such a solution; indeed, no other hypothesis will serve to explain satisfactorily the allusions to events and persons in those Epistles. Their authenticity and genuineness are even bound up with the supposition that Paul was released from his first captivity. (2) The Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon), hover between hope and fear, between anticipation of release and forebodings of condemnation (Lightfoot). Nevertheless, there are some hints in two of these Letters which seem to point to the conviction, if not the assurance,

that he would be released. In Phil. i, he says: "Having this confidence I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith" (Phil. i:25). In the same Epistle (ii:25) he writes: "But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly." He directs Philemon to "prepare me a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you" (v. 22). The inference seems legitimate that Paul expected to be released from his imprisonment.

The Apostle, however, in his farewell address to the Ephesian Elders on the eve of the first captivity uses language which appears contradictory to the above conclusion. He says: "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more" (Acts xx:25). This is supposed to be inconsistent with a later visit to Ephesus. But in 1 Tim. i:3, Paul intimates that he had been there some years after his interview with the Elders at Miletus, i. e., on the assumption that 1 Timothy was written about A. D. 66 or 67.* If the statement of Paul at Miletus was prophetic and therefore infallible knowledge as to his own future, then he was not delivered from his first imprisonment, and the diffi-

* Does 1 Tim. i:3 necessarily imply that Paul was himself at Ephesus when he exhorted Timothy to remain there still? "There is nothing in the phrase that implies that St. Paul was at Ephesus himself when he made the request to Timothy," (Hervey). Reynolds holds the same view, and suggests that perhaps it was when Paul was at Miletus that he asked Timothy to tarry still where he was. This would confirm Paul's announcement to the Ephesian Elders that they would "see his face no more." Probably he never again visited Ephesus.

culties of the Pastoral Epistles become insoluble. Not only so, but his language in Philippians and Philemon is inexplicable. For, as Lightfoot well argues, if it were already revealed to him that he should not escape death, why does he waver between hope and fear? Why does he entreat the prayers of his converts for his release, if he knew that release to be absolutely impossible? To the Elders he says, "I know." But he uses the same term in his Epistle to the Philippians—"I know that I shall abide and continue with you all." Why is this knowledge decisive in the one case, and disregarded in the other? Surely "I know" is as strong in the one as in the other; and if in the latter we attach to it no more than a conviction or presentiment, we should attach no more to it in the former.

3. Tradition, even from very early times, asserts that he was delivered, and visited Spain as well as the East (Clement of Rome, A. D. 96; *Muratorii Fragment*, A. D. 170-180; Eusebius, who gives it as the current report, that the Apostle was released, resumed his ministry, and finally suffered martyrdom at Rome.

PAUL'S VISITS TO JERUSALEM

Acts records five such visits. The first is found in ix: 26-30, and is certainly identical with that mentioned in Gal. i: 18, 19. It occurred after his journey to Arabia, and therefore three years after his conversion. In Galatians, Paul informs us that he saw on this occasion only Peter and James, the Lord's brother. He spent but a fortnight in the holy city at the time.

His second visit had for its object the carrying of alms to those suffering from famine in Jerusalem. He was accompanied by Barnabas, and the contribution was made by believers of the church in Antioch (xi:28-30). The third related to the serious difficulty which had arisen at Antioch, and which required definite settlement by the mother church (xv:1 ff.). With this visit that mentioned in Gal. ii most easily and naturally accords. The fourteen years of Gal. ii:1 must be dated either from his first visit (Gal. i:18; cf. Acts ix:26), or from his conversion. The fourth is briefly referred to in Acts xviii:21, 22, and was for the purpose of keeping a certain feast, according to the King James' Version. The fifth and last is found in Acts xxi:15, and is followed by the account of the riot caused by his presence in the city, his arrest, and his journey to Rome. Below the results in tabulated form are given of three chronologists whose studies in this intricate and difficult subject of chronology entitle them to great respect.

	Lightfoot.	Ramsay.	Purves.
	A.D.		
Crucifixion	[30]	30	30
Paul's conversion	34	33	35
Paul's first visit to Jerusalem	37	35, 36	37
Death of Herod Agrippa	44	44	44
Paul's second visit to Jerusalem	45	46	44, 45
First missionary journey	48	47-49	47, 48
Council at Jerusalem	51	50	50
Second missionary journey	51-54	50-53	51-53
Third missionary journey	54-58	53-57	54-57
Paul's arrest at Jerusalem	58	57	58
Paul's arrival in Rome	61	60	61
Close of Acts	63	62	63
Paul's death	68?	65	67 (68)

THE EPISTLES

INTRODUCTORY

The arrangement of the Epistles as found in our English Bible is followed in these studies. As is well known, the chronological order is different. The Epistles to the Thessalonians were the first written by Paul, and in the order of time take the precedence over all the others by his pen. But in fulness of contents, doctrinal statement, and the fundamental principles of Christianity, the Pauline Epistles seem naturally to arrange themselves as in the English New Testament. The Epistle to the Romans is well placed at the head, because it exhibits God's mighty scheme of salvation as no other single portion does. There follow the other eight letters to churches, and these are succeeded by the Pastoral Epistles, and the Catholic-Hebrews occupying a place of its own both because of its contents and its anonymous character.

There is essential harmony between the Epistles and the historical books of the New Testament. In the former there is nothing radically different from the latter. The germs of what we find in the Epistles are already in the Gospels and the Acts. In the recorded utterances and activities of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His ministry, death, resurrection and glory, are hid the seed-truths which the Holy Spirit develops into mature

fruit in the Apostolic Letters. One mind, divine and infinite, is the Author of the New Testament.

The radical distinction between the Acts and the Epistles lies mainly in this: with few exceptions the discourses recorded in Acts are addressed to non-Christians; whereas, the Epistles are written to believers either as organized into churches, or as ministers of the Word. Momentous is the question, How is Christ to be preached to the unsaved? The Acts measurably answers it. Equally momentous this other: How are Christians to be gathered into worshiping assemblies, instructed in the truth, kept from error, restored when estranged from the right way, and corrected when walking disorderly? The answer to this and the like questions is found in the Epistles.

Certain characteristic features belong to this class of inspired writings, some of which may be briefly mentioned.

1. The form or method of the teaching is significant. "The epistolary form is a pre-eminence of the New Testament Scripture as compared with the Old" (Bengel). "The prophets delivered oracles to the people, the Apostles wrote letters to the brethren." And this form of teaching was eminently fitted to become an efficient means of edifying the people of God. In writing letters they could pour out the fulness of unreserved explanation, and give play to all those various feelings which are proper to this form of intercourse. Moreover, it was peculiarly adapted to meet the exigencies which might arise in the church. More formal and systematic treatises, such as rhetoricians

and philosophers were accustomed to compose, could not so well serve the purpose of the Spirit nor deal so effectively with the varied wants of Christians of such wide diversity of thought and of life as could the familiar, flexible letter. A formal treatise would have had to imagine cases of doctrinal error, of misunderstanding of fundamental principles or of their application, of laxity in practice and discipline, in short, of the whole life and relations of the Church. And this would have led almost inevitably to metaphysical casuistry. And we well know what evil Christian casuistry has wrought in the professing body. By their letters the Apostles dealt not with imaginary but actual cases, exigencies, and tendencies as these arose in the churches. They wrote on misapprehensions of the truth, perversions of the truth, on difficulties that sprang out of heathen relations and Jewish teachings, on abuses of worship and practice—on cases and questions and tendencies of the human mind which would ever recur in the Church of God, touching which it was so requisite that the Word of God should authoritatively pronounce. It did pronounce in the most effective way in the letters addressed to churches and individuals by the holy men of God who were moved by the Holy Ghost to write.

2. The Epistles are didactic. They contain an inspired exposition of that glorious work of grace which God accomplished through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. They open to us the blessed effect of Christ's atoning death and triumphant resurrection. They disclose a divine righteousness on the ground of which

God justifies and saves the sinner who believes on Christ. They exhibit the utter ruin wrought by sin, the redemption purchased by Christ, together with all the correlative and cognate truths.

The Epistles embrace much more than this. They announce God's gracious purposes with respect to Christ, the Church, and the world. There is a profound and far-reaching element of predictive prophecy in them. They make known the mighty plan of God and its final execution as to the full redemption of all believers, the judgment of the impenitent and incorrigible, the complete overthrow of Satan, the establishment in victorious power of the Kingdom of God, and the restoration of the earth to the favor and allegiance of Heaven. The atonement of Christ, the calling and standing of believers, the restoration of Israel from their age-long rejection and dispersion, the resurrection of the body, and the deliverance of suffering creation are some of the great themes of these letters. In their vast sweep they embrace both this life and that which is to come, both time and eternity. The predominant subject in them, however, is the Church of God, the Body of Christ. These Scriptures describe its origin, its unity, its relations, condition, duties, and destiny. It is in them mainly that we have unfolded what Paul calls the "mystery," which he declares was hid to the ages gone by but is now revealed, viz., that the Gentiles "should be co-heirs, and co-incorporate, and co-partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel" (Eph. iii:6). It is in them the marvelous truth is made known that believers even as to their bodies shall

be fashioned anew that they may be conformed to the body of His glory (Phil. iii: 20, 21); and that in union with Christ they shall judge angels and the world (1 Cor. vi: 2, 3). In short, these letters exhibit the astounding fact that believers are supernatural beings in their calling and standing before God, and in the stupendous destiny that awaits them when this world and life are done.

3. The Epistles are Scriptural. That is, they correlate themselves with the Old Testament and with the words and example of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are not independent revelations. They stand in closest relations with the inspired communications which in point of time take the precedence. This appears from the numerous quotations made from the earlier Scriptures. More than one hundred and fifty are found in them, and the allusions to the Old Testament are perhaps equally as many. The quotations and allusions cover almost the entire field of the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi. It is not too much to say that the Epistles are saturated with the spirit and modes of thought and sometimes with the words of the Old Testament.

Consider the argument for Justification by Faith in Romans and Galatians; chapter after chapter is founded upon the express words of Moses, of the Prophets, or the Psalms, or upon their general teaching and on the legitimate and necessary deductions therefrom. The proof text of the great thesis of Romans (i: 17) is from the prophet Habakkuk, "The just shall live by faith (ii: 4). It is likewise the basis of the

main argument for gratuitous justification in Galatians (iii: 11). The Epistle to the Hebrews is a magnificent demonstration of Christ's infinite superiority as Priest and Sacrifice as compared and contrasted with the priesthood and offerings of Judaism. Indeed, Hebrews is but an inspired commentary on Exodus and Leviticus. The Epistle of James reads almost like an echo of the Sermon on the Mount, while the teaching of Peter touching the behavior of Christians under trial and amid persecution is grounded mainly on the example of Christ (1 Pet. ii: 19-25; iii: 14-22; iv: 1-16). While the Epistles contain a fresh revelation of the mind of God, they are also a development of and they find a deeper meaning in the older Scriptures.

4. The Epistles are augmentative. This feature is prominent in those of Paul. He is pre-eminently logical. "He reasoned with them out of the scriptures," we are told, "as his manner was" (Acts xvii: 2). The words accurately describe his discourses to Jews and Gentiles, as we find them in the Acts; and the like feature predominates in his Epistles. His reasoning sometimes takes the form of an argument within an argument. He pauses by the way to expand some allusion, or to touch on some important matter suggested by the train of thought, and he does not always return to complete in grammatical form the sentence from which he has turned aside, so that his style is somewhat involved and complex. But these *asides* always advance the truth he is unfolding, and they often pour a flood of light on what otherwise would be obscure. His method of reasoning is condensed and

cogent. He delights in paradoxes and contrasts. With one smiting blow he demolishes a sophistry or a vain conceit, and in few words sets the truth in the clearest light. James' style is most picturesque, full of striking imagery, and swift in its movement and its transitions. His Epistle closely resembles an Old Testament book. And Peter is peculiar for this chiefly, that the last word of a sentence or a thought is made the starting-point for the next.

John differs from all in some prominent respects. He is the seer. His insight into truth is piercing. He does not reach conclusions by trains of reasoning; no labored processes are encountered in him; he does not arrive at his goal by constructive proof. His mental vision pierces to the very heart of his subject and floods it with light. In a pre-eminent degree John possesses the intuitions of the rarest genius. His writings in some aspects of them are the most profound and difficult of all Scripture, and to understand and interpret them requires the like grace and gift of the Spirit which he so richly enjoyed.

The doctrine of the Epistles is a unit. The great themes of Paul are likewise those of James, Peter, and John. Salvation through Christ is the basis of all the teaching. Yet it has pleased the Holy Spirit who is the Author of Scripture to give us the doctrine under a variety of forms which correspond in some degree with the mental constitution of the men through whom the inspired communications were made. Unity in variety is God's method in nature. It is no less so in revelation. Neither in the one nor in the other is there

absolute uniformity or sameness. The highest type of unity consists in a large variety which combines all the diversified parts into one harmonious and beautiful whole, in the Epistles such unity prevails. There is diversity of form and contents, as well as of style, but the doctrine of all is the same. The fundamental conception of the Gospel in Peter or John agrees with that of Paul. To advocate a Pauline theology as distinct from that of James, or Peter, or John would be contrary to the facts as well as destructive of the unity that prevails in the New Testament. While this is quite true, yet there is a variety or type of truth somewhat peculiar to each of the Epistles, which gives it a character of its own. It is most fortunate that it is so. A dead-level uniformity in Scripture would be a calamity. How tame and wearisome in that case would the Bible be! Instead, with its rich variety of form, style, and general characteristics of individual writers, it is one of the most harmonious and interesting books of the world.

Some phases of the doctrine of the Epistles may be briefly noticed:

1. Paul. It was given to this Apostle to reveal more definitely and fully than any other, God's plan of redemption; to proclaim a Gospel that contemplates all men without distinction as to national character; to set forth the calling, standing, and blessedness of believers, and the true nature of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The other Apostles undoubtedly treat of the same high themes, but Paul's teaching is more comprehensive, systematic, and exhaustive. We may sum-

marize his teachings as follows: (a) The lost condition. No New Testament writer more fully or graphically describes the wretched state into which sin has plunged our race than the Apostle to the Gentiles. He traces the ruin of mankind to its source; he finds in the first man, Adam, the cause and origin of all our miseries and woes—in his sin and fall (Rom. v: 12-21). With Paul sin is threefold in its nature, an act, a principle, and a state. As an act, it is the violation of law, God's law; as a principle, it is hostility against God; as a state, it is the absence of all true righteousness. There is a suggestive richness, a portentous wealth, in his vocabulary on this dark subject. He employs the terms sin, sins, trespass, transgression, disobedience, offence, unbelief, disbelief, unrighteousness, iniquity, lawlessness, ungodliness, enmity, etc. These and the like epithets which he so freely uses are descriptive of the nature, extent, deep-seatedness, and malignity of sin.

(b) The sovereignty of God. He dwells much on the divine purposes, the foreknowledge, electing grace, and infinite love of Him who will in due time subdue all things to Himself through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(c) Christ's person and work. Paul speaks but little of the Saviour's words, less of His miracles. He is occupied almost exclusively with His death and resurrection. In these two mighty events he sees God's all-sufficient remedy for human sin. He turns all eyes to the Cross, he points all to the empty sepulchre, bids them see the filled throne. The Atonement of the

Lord Jesus Christ is the infinite remedy which God in His gracious love has provided for sinful men, and it is Paul's supreme subject, the unfailing source of all true peace, joy, holiness, and bliss for all who believe. By His life, death, and resurrection Christ has secured for us a perfect righteousness, even the righteousness of God, on the ground of which God justifies every one that believes, adopts him into His family, names and anoints him for eternal glory.

(d) Eschatology. Of the second coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the body, deliverance of suffering creation, the final and complete subjection of all things to Christ, and everlasting bliss, Paul's Epistles are full and explicit.

2. Hebrews. This Epistle in its contents and aim stands apart from those of Paul, as also from those called Catholic. (The question of its authorship is not here raised. It is viewed only in its relation to the other books belonging to the same class.) Hebrews deals almost exclusively with the deep significance of ancient Judaism. All the prominent features of that system are graphically reviewed by the writer, and at his touch each of them becomes instinct with life, and glows with a profound meaning. The thoughts spring from the heart of the Old Testament. The language is largely drawn from the books of Moses. The imagery is taken bodily from the tabernacle, the priesthood, the altar, and sacrifices of Israel. The writer is constantly finding the germs of the New Testament dispensation in the institutions established by Moses. Under his handling, "shell and husk, in which the precious kernel

is hidden, fall away one after another until at length the kernel itself, the Christ, appears personally" (Herder).

The marvelous correspondence between Judaism and Christianity, as it is developed in Hebrews, is neither accidental nor fortuitous. God is the Author of both, therefore the close connection between them. The one is the shadow, the other the reality; the one is the picture, the other the original; the one is the type, the other the antitype. But Judaism was fashioned to prefigure Christianity, not the latter the former. The antitype is not constructed to resemble the type, but the type is constructed to resemble the antitype. It is because of the antitype that the type is instituted; the latter could not exist without the former.

The great object of the Hebrews is to show that Judaism was not an end in itself, that it was a prophetic system that held in it the germs of future and more glorious revelations of the grace of God. An ancient Greek writer expresses the exact truth which Hebrews establishes: "For what is the law? It is the Gospel proclaimed beforehand. And what is the Gospel? It is the law fulfilled." Christianity is more the heir of Judaism than its debtor. This splendid Epistle puts us into possession of the magnificent legacy bequeathed us by the past.

3. The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude may be classed together, for they deal with the same general topics. The phase of doctrine contained in them is the Christian life. It is the application of redemption to the relations and duties which Christians sustain to

God, to one another, and to the world. Christian Strangership and Hope form the principal subjects. The Gospel is both a glorious fulfillment and the richest promise. It announces the finished redemption we have in Christ our acceptance with God and our sonship. Hence these Epistles rest on the same sure basis as those of Paul. The doctrine of all is identical; there is no divergence, much less antagonism. But the Gospel holds out a gracious promise of final deliverance for believers. Until their redemption is complete they are strangers and pilgrims on earth, a separated company whose backs are to the world and faces towards Heaven. Let them take their place as such. This is the supreme teaching of these Epistles.

(a) The Christian calling and standing. It is that of reconciliation, pardon, sonship; therefore holiness of life and walk, obedience to the Divine Will, and separation from all that is evil should distinguish believers from all others. This is the foundation of the teaching.

(b) Conduct of Christians towards one another. It is to be that of love, patience, kindness, forgiveness, and helpfulness.

(c) Relation of Christians to the world. It is to be that of separation from its ways, repudiation of its maxims, opposition to its spirit, apprehension of its doom, and earnest endeavor to snatch as many as possible from its embrace.

(d) Christian behavior under trial and persecution. The teaching on this point is very remarkable; it correlates itself with that of Christ, particularly with the

Sermon on the Mount. No other system ever inculcated principles such as does Christianity, of submission, patience, meekness, non-resistance, fidelity and blamelessness when suffering wrongfully and causelessly even unto death. Yet this is the path marked out for the people of God in all the New Testament, and nowhere so urgently and potently as in these letters.

(e) Light for the last times. In all these Epistles there is the clearest recognition of the perils that then beset the church—the heresies, false doctrines, corrupt manners, incipient apostasy. They deplore the evils then insidiously working in the professing body; they announce greater evils to come. They warn, entreat, denounce. They turn with intense longing, with a yearning at once filled with pathos and hope, as does Paul likewise, to the coming of the Lord as the only and the all-sufficient remedy, as the one blessed hope.

4. The Epistles of John. Like the preceding, John's letters have their individual characteristics. The dominant thought in them is, the life of God imparted to the children of God. In his Gospel John tells how this divine life is exhibited in the person of Christ. In his Epistles he shows how it is imparted and how it manifests itself.

(a) Eternal life is brought to men by the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is imparted to them by Him alone.

(b) Union with Christ insures the possession of this life on the part of all believers. The bond of the union is faith and the abiding presence of the Spirit.

(c) Union with Christ introduces us into the posi-

tion of Children of God and into fellowship with both the Father and the Son.

(d) Eternal life reveals itself by our walking in the light, and by love.

(e) Abiding in the light and love of God is the source of sanctification. It also enables us to discriminate the false from the true, the Spirit of God from the spirit of evil. And it gives efficacy to our prayers.

The distinctive mark of Paul's teaching (and that of Hebrews) is *faith*; that of James, Peter, and Jude is *hope*; that of John is *love*;—the three supreme Christian graces.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE EPISTLES

As is well known, much of Biblical chronology is involved in difficulty and obscurity. Of much of it only approximate accuracy can be claimed. Of some of the dates of the Epistles certainty may be affirmed; of others only conjecture more or less plausible and trustworthy can be advanced. The following dates have the support of such cautious students of this difficult question as Lightfoot (*Paul's Epistles*), Alford, Cook, Conybeare and Howson, Plummer, Plumtre, and others:

Romans, A. D. 58, written at Corinth.

1 Corinthians, A. D. 57-58, written at Ephesus.

2 Corinthians, A. D. 57-58, written in Macedonia.

Galatians, A. D. 57-58, written at Ephesus or Corinth.

Ephesians, A. D. 62-63, written at Rome.

Philippians, A. D. 62-63, written at Rome.

Colossians, A. D. 62-63, written at Rome.

1 and 2 Thessalonians, A. D. 52-53, written at Corinth.

1 Timothy, A. D. 65-66, written at —?.

2 Timothy, A. D. 67-68, written at Rome.

Titus, A. D. 65-66, written at —?.

Philemon, A. D. 62-63, written at Rome.

Hebrews, A. D. 63-69, written in Italy (?)

James, A. D. 44-49, written at Jerusalem. (The earliest writing, probably, of the New Testament.)

1 Peter, A. D. 63-64, written at Babylon (1 Pet. v: 13).

2 Peter, A. D. 63-64, written at Babylon (?).

1 John, A. D. 90-96, written at Ephesus (?).

2 and 3 John, A. D. 90-96, written at Ephesus (?).*

* Turner (*Hast. Bib. Dic.*) assigns an earlier date, e.g. Rom., 55-56; 1 and 2 Cor., 55; Gal., 53-55; Captivity Epis., 59-61. But McClymont (same work) nearly as above.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

Romans stands at the head of all Paul's Epistles, not because it is the first in the order of time, for five were written before it, viz., 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians; but because of the nature of its contents. It is an inspired exposition of the Plan of Redemption. It treats in a systematic and doctrinal way of man's relations with God. It proves that Judaism with its legal observances cannot meet the deepest wants of the human heart, it cannot secure right relations with God or a right character; much less can heathenism with its gross, materialistic nature worship; that deliverance from the guilt and power of sin is obtained alone through the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ. Accordingly, it deals with the fundamental principles of Christianity, with its essence. Therefore it is universal in its scope. While written to the Roman Christians of the Apostle's day, it does not belong to them in any narrow or exclusive sense any more than the Gospel of Luke or the Acts can be limited to Theophilus, to whom these books were specially addressed. It belongs to all Christians and to all time.

1. The origin of the Church at Rome is involved in obscurity. The Romanish tradition that it was founded

by Peter during the reign of Claudius, A. D. 41-42, is destitute of any historical basis and is contradicted by Acts xv, Gal. ii: 11. It is clear from internal evidence that when Paul addressed this Epistle to the Romans no Apostle had visited the imperial city, and this was more than fifteen years subsequent to the alleged date. One thing is certain, the church at Rome was not planted by an Apostle. When this Epistle was written the church had become widely known, its faith was spoken of throughout the whole world (i: 8); hence it must have been in existence for some time. "The sentiment that guided Paul in choosing his fields of labor (Rom. xv: 20) precludes the belief that Peter had been at Rome before him" (Stiffler). "It is equally clear that no other Apostle was the founder" (Lightfoot). Among those who heard the Word on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii) were "strangers of Rome." It has been conjectured that these "sojourners" returned to the capital and preached the Gospel to their countrymen, and that God owned their testimony to the conversion of souls, and so the organization of the church ensued. But the door was opened to the Gentiles at the time of Peter's memorable visit to Cornelius (Acts x) some years after Pentecost; yet the majority of Roman Christians were of Gentile extraction. The guess that some from the household of Cornelius (Acts x), first carried the Gospel to Rome may be as near the mark as any other where all is conjecture. Paul had long cherished the purpose to visit these believers, but something prevented him (i: 13). The hindrance was providential. God foresaw the

arrogant pretensions this church would one day put forward in the name of the Apostles, particularly of Peter. He foreknew the supremacy over all the churches it would assert, and the blasphemous claims and names its head, the Pope, would arrogate to himself, and to smite its ungodly ambition and forestall its proud claims God took care that at the very outset no Apostle should be employed in gathering and founding it. Humble instruments He used for this purpose; men whose names are utterly unknown.

2. The author, Paul. In no other Epistle, save perhaps Galatians (i: 1), does he place his Apostleship on more positive and formal ground than in this. He describes himself (i: 1) as a servant of Jesus Christ, a term that sometimes in the Old Testament denotes men who received direct commands from God; as a called Apostle, i. e., an Apostle by His call (Acts xxvi: 16-18); as separated unto the Gospel of God. The word for "separate" occurs ten times in the New Testament, and in seven it designates a divine act (comp. Gal. i: 15). He thus speaks of his Apostolic authority because he had no claim on the Romans in virtue of his labors. He had never seen Rome. He was none the less their Apostle, for he was the Apostle of the Gentiles. The Epistle was probably written from Corinth, A. D. 58.

As the office of Apostle was extraordinary, we would naturally expect to find a description of its powers and functions, and of the qualifications required of those who filled it. These are detailed in the Scriptures, and may be briefly mentioned: An Apostle was one who—

- (a) Had seen the Lord (1 Cor. ix: 1).
- (b) Was a witness of His resurrection (Acts i: 22; 1 Cor. xv: 15).
- (c) Received his commission from the lips of Christ (Gal. i: 1).
- (d) Enjoyed a special inspiration (John xiv: 26; xvi: 13; Gal. i: 13, 14; 1 Thess. xi: xiii).
- (e) Was endowed with miraculous powers (2 Cor. xii: 12).
- (f) Under Christ founded the Church (1 Cor. iii: 10, 11; Eph. ii: 20).
- (g) Exercised supreme authority (John xx: 22, 23; 1 Cor. v: 4, 5; 2 Pet. iii: 2).

3. Analysis. Romans lends itself more readily to analysis than is always the case with Paul's Epistles. There are four main divisions and many subordinate sections.

Main divisions:

- I. The Introduction (i: 1-15).
- II. The Doctrinal (i: 16—xi: 36).
- III. The Practical (xii—xv: 13).
- IV. Personal matters and salutations (xv: 14—xvi).

It will be observed that Parts I and IV are similar. Both have to do with personal explanations and greetings. It is quite otherwise with Part II. This section, which embraces the great body of the Epistle, contains an elaborate and profound discussion of the Gospel of the grace of God. It is a systematic and inspired exposition of the plan of redemption. It presents with unparalleled clearness and power the central

doctrine of gratuitous justification through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; its necessity, nature, application, and effects. It deals with the question of human sin, law, condemnation, reconciliation, sanctification; with Israel's fall and future restoration to God. It discusses God's sovereignty and man's responsibility, and the ultimate issue of Christ's work of redemption. Because of its vast sweep, its immense range, the Epistle has been described as "the chief part of the New Testament, and the perfect Gospel" (Luther); "the most profound work in existence" (Coleridge); "the cathedral of the Christian faith" (Godet).

I. The Introduction (i: 1-15).

1. The address (vs. 1-7).
2. Thanksgiving and prayer (vs. 8-12).
3. Desire to proclaim the Gospel at Rome (vs. 13-15).

II. The Doctrinal (i: 16-xi).

1. The theme or proposition (i: 16, 17).
2. Development of the theme (i: 18-iv).
 - a. Negative argument (i: 18-iii: 20) *NEED of Justice*
 - (1) The Gentile without righteousness (i: 18-32).
 - (2) The Jew devoid of righteousness (ii-iii: 18).
 - (3) The conclusion (iii: 19, 20).
 - b. The positive argument (iii: 21-iv).
 - (1) Righteousness of God revealed (iii: 21-23).
 - (2) Justification by faith through God's righteousness (iii: 24-26).

- (3) Works no part of justification (iii: 27-31).
- (4) Free justification illustrated and proved by the case of Abraham (iv).
3. Blessed results of justification by faith (v).
 - a. Its gracious fruits (v: 1-5).
 - b. Its well-grounded assurance (v: 6-11).
 - c. Contrast and comparison between standing in Adam and standing in Christ (v: 12-21).
4. The moral consequences of justification by faith (vi).
 - a. Free justification no license to sin (vi: 1-11).
 - b. Free justification a mighty incentive to holiness (vi: 12-23).
5. The believer and law as touching sanctification (vii).
 - a. Deliverance from law as a condition of life (vii: 1-6).
 - b. Character and action of law (vii: 7-13).
 - c. Struggle for sanctification through law-keeping (vii: 14-25).
6. Blessed condition and assured hope of those in Christ (viii).
 - a. Victory over the condemnation and power of sin (viii: 1-4).
 - b. The old life and the new—flesh and spirit (viii: 5-13).
 - c. Sonship and heirship (viii: 14-25).

- d. Efficient help of the Spirit (viii: 26-28).
 - e. Divine ground for assured hope (viii: 29, 30).
 - f. Defiant challenge (viii: 31-37).
 - ✓ g. No separation (viii: 38, 39).
7. Reconciliation of the universal offer of salvation with the distinctive promises made to Israel (ix—xi).
- a. Paul's profound sorrow for Israel (ix: 1-5).
 - b. God's promise has not failed (ix: 6-18).
 - c. His justice and mercy vindicated (ix: 19-29).
 - (1) It is presumptuous to arraign God (vs. 19-21).
 - (2) His sovereignty is righteous (vs. 22-24).
 - (3) A remnant to be saved (vs. 25-29).
 - d. The paradox explained (ix: 30-33).
 - e. The cause of Israel's fall, unbelief (x).
 - (1) Moses taught the doctrine of faith (x: 1-5).
 - (2) Faith the opposite of works, or creature merit (x: 6-10).
 - (3) Promise holds good for both Jew and Gentile (ix: 33; x: 11-15).
 - (4) Israel's rejection announced by Moses and Isaiah (x: 16-21)
 - f. The chosen people are not totally nor finally cast off (xi).

(1) Their rejection not total (xi: 1-10).

(2) Their rejection not final (xi: 11-36).

III. The practical Application (xii—xv: 13).

1. Various duties illustrated and enforced (xii, xiii).

2. Forbearance and love among Christians enjoined (xiv—xv: 13).

IV. The Valedictory (xv: 14—xvi).

a. Personal matters (xv: 14-33).

b. Greetings and doxology (xvi).

In the Introduction the Apostle conforms to the usage of his times, and begins his message with his own name. We append ours to our letters; the writers of the Epistles insert theirs at the opening. Noteworthy is everything in this Introduction, but particularly some of the statements. For example, Christ was made (or born) of the seed of David. He was the lineal descendant of Israel's greatest king, to whom the Lord promised a Son who should reign as no mere human sovereign ever reigns, who should be at once David's Lord and David's Son (Ps. cx: 1; Matt. xxii: 42-45). But our Lord Jesus was not made (or born) the Son of God—that He could never be in the same sense in which He was David's Son; He was declared (or defined) to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. It is concerning this glorious One Paul writes.

Another is, the title which he gives those whom he addresses: "God's beloved ones," near to Him, dear

to Him, saved and kept by Him, and to be brought at length into His glory to dwell with Him forever; "Saints," separated unto God as His very own, and sanctified by His Spirit and grace, and so made fit for His holy presence.

The greatest of the Apostles confesses himself to be a "debtor." Nothing is more free than the message of the Gospel. But nothing lays so commanding a grasp on our life and our devotion as does the Gospel. "I am a debtor;" "I am ready;" "I am not ashamed." What wealth of significance, of responsibility, of conviction, and of courage are in these three little phrases!

But we now turn to the doctrinal portion of this marvelous Scripture.

II. DOCTRINAL (i: 16-xi)

I. The theme or proposition (chap. i: 16, 17): "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." These verses state the subject of the doctrinal section, which, briefly, is this: God's method of saving sinners. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to both divisions of the human race because it reveals a righteousness on the ground of which God justifies the believer in Christ, be he Jew or Gentile. Inasmuch as the Gospel reveals a divine righteousness adapted alike to the need of the Jewish and heathen world, Paul was

not ashamed of it. In its contents and message there is a grandeur, a power, to lift the herald of it above all fear and all shame. It was his supreme joy to proclaim it in the world's great centers of influence. Even in the imperial city, the world capital, he would gladly preach it.

2. Development of the theme (i: 18—iv). It is unfolded by a course of argumentation of the most conclusive kind, and in both a negative and positive form.

a. Negative argument—(1) the Gentile (i: 18-32). The Apostle proves beyond doubt or cavil that the heathen are destitute of righteousness. The picture he draws of the moral condition of the Gentile world is frightful. Without a written revelation it was unbridled sin; with philosophy, it was recognizing evil, but committing it, and powerless even to restrain it. Greek and Roman literature fully corroborate this tremendous indictment of the pre-Christian nations. The remains of Pompeii (buried by an eruption of Vesuvius, A. D. 79) confirm Paul's charges with horrible accuracy. Heathen countries bear witness to the truth of the charges to-day. Observe the progress in sin of these apostates, and the corresponding infliction of punishment (vs. 21-32). The gradation and degradation are marked by three stages: *low, lower, lowest*. The first stage in their departure from God is idolatry (v. 23), which begins with the image of man and descends to the lowest form of bestial life, e.g., the frog, the beetle, and the snake. Serpent worship prevailed once almost universally. They ex-

changed the truth of God for a lie (v. 25), a deeper apostasy than that of v. 23; refused to retain God in their knowledge, as if He were unworthy of their notice (v. 28). This is the lowest stage reached; below it is not a lower save perdition, its inevitable doom. The punishment is likewise marked by three stages: "God gave them up" (v. 24); "God gave them up" (26); "God gave them up" (28). Sin is punished by sin. "The deep shame of the heathen is a divinely ordained result of their idolatry" (Beet).

(2) The Jew (chaps. ii—iii: 18). Paul next proves that the Jew, with all his privileges and pretensions, is destitute of the righteousness which avails for justification before God. Under law it was breaking the law, while boasting of its possession, and dishonoring Him who gave it. The arraignment of the Jew is no less terrible than the Gentile. Both are alike guilty, for both are under the power of sin. A just sentence dooms them both to suffer the penalty the law demands.

(3) The conclusion (iii: 19, 20). It is twofold: first, the whole world brought under the judgment of God; second, impossibility of the sinner's securing justification by law-observance; for "by the law is the knowledge of sin."

b. Positive argument (iii: 21—iv). The Apostle returns to his thesis, and with so much the more evidence of its urgent necessity, affirms that now the righteousness of God meets the deep need of Jew and Gentile—the righteousness which the Gospel reveals and which is unto every one that believeth, no matter who he is, or what he has done.

(1) "The righteousness of God." What is it? Obviously, it is most important to understand what the Spirit of God intends by His use of this phrase, for it is the key to the power and blessedness of the Gospel. It was because it revealed this divine righteousness that Paul was not ashamed of it; for it is precisely this God requires, and sinful men need.

(a) It is not the divine attribute of Justice. Sometimes the phrase "righteousness of God" has this meaning, as in iii: 5, 25, 26; but iii: 21, 22; iv: 6, 11; 2 Cor. v: 21; Phil. iii: 9, show beyond all question that it is distinct from Justice, must not be confounded with Justice, while it is nowise contrary thereto, but in harmony with it. Besides, if the phrase mean the divine attribute, how could Paul long to preach the revelation of it contained in the Gospel? Why should he say he is not ashamed of the Gospel because it reveals this Justice? Justice can only condemn the guilty, proclaim wrath against the sinner, consign him to punishment. That surely is no glad tidings and good news.

(b) It is not inherent. The righteousness of God is never represented in Scripture as something wrought in the sinner by the grace and Spirit of God—the implantation of the principle of grace in the heart, nor even the new nature. If the righteousness of God means, partly a work of grace by the Spirit in the soul, partly a work of the sinner co-operating with grace, then the Reformation was a mistake and a blunder, and we ought to return to Romanism, for this is the one supreme point of difference touching the ground and nature of justification between Romanism and

Protestantism. Rather, righteousness of God is set forth as something objective to us, reckoned to us, set to our account, therefore not an internal work. Simultaneously with justification is regeneration and initial sanctification, and this is imparted righteousness. But the righteousness of God is reckoned to him who believes and receives Christ as his Saviour, just as he is, a sinner. Note the far-reaching words of iii:22—"unto and upon" (I believe the preponderance of evidence is in favor of retaining both prepositions)—it is *unto* us in the offer of the Gospel, it is *upon* us when we believe and accept.

(c) It is called "the righteousness of God" because it is of His procuring and providing. The phrase literally means (I have no doubt) "righteousness from God." He devised it, wrought it out in the person of His Son, and now offers it to us on the simple ground of faith, acceptance, without money and without price.

(d) It is the all-sufficient ground of our justification (iii: 21-26; iv: 1-8; x: 1-10).

(e) Definition: It is the sum-total of all that God commands, demands, approves, and provides (iii: 21, 22; 2 Cor. v: 21). William Cunningham's definition of the phrase is very suggestive: "The righteousness of God is that righteousness which God's righteousness requires Him to require."

(f) It is found in Jesus Christ (x: 4; Phil. iii: 9).

(g) It is received by faith alone (iii: 22; iv: 23-25; Phil. iii: 9).

This divine righteousness provided by God in His Son Jesus our Lord and revealed and offered in the

Gospel to every one that believeth, meets all God's requirements on us, and all our deep needs. It satisfies the law and justice of God; it secures the justification of the believing sinner, and his reconciliation with God, and it entitles the justified man to all the rights and privileges of a child of God. No wonder Paul was not ashamed of such a Gospel!

(4) Faith in this divine righteousness as the ground of our justification is illustrated and proved by an appeal to the case of Abraham (iv). The father of the faithful was righteous before God. But how? Not by his works, nor by the rite of circumcision which he received, for his justification occurred before his circumcision. It was by his faith in the word and promise of God. This is shown by the fact that righteousness was *reckoned, counted, imputed* to him without (apart from) works. Eleven times this term occurs in the chapter, and it proves that the righteousness on the ground of which Abraham was justified was not wrought nor earned by him, but freely given him of God and received by faith. The expression, "to reckon," "to put to one's account," is technical, the equivalent of God's act of justification. Cremer's definition is, "that is transferred to the person and imputed to him which in and for itself does not belong to him" (*Bib. Lex.*). It was not Abraham's faith considered as a work that justified him, for Paul's argument is levelled against works of every sort as a ground of justification. It was his heart-belief in the Lord's word of promise of a son and seed, so comprehensive as to embrace the Redeemer Himself (Gal. iii: 6, 16).

There is no merit in believing God. Had God's promise been suspended on legal obedience of any kind, faith would have been invalidated, and the promise itself forever forfeited. But it is of faith that it may be by grace; therefore the promise is secure to all who, like Abraham, believe God. Paul's great exposition reaches its climax with a ringing word of triumphant assurance,—righteousness shall be imputed unto all who believe on the Raiser-up of Jesus our Lord from the dead. The phrase "shall be imputed" is not the simple future; it expresses both purpose and certainty, e. g., "sure to be reckoned." And the certainty lies in the transcendent fact that Christ was delivered up, and raised up; delivered up to atone for our sins and secure our pardon; raised up for our justification. Without His resurrection Christ's grave would be the grave of our hopes.

3. The precious fruits of justification (v: I-II). The first of these mentioned by the Apostle is, peace with God (v. I). This is not so much a subjective experience, a comfortable frame of mind, as a state into which justification introduces the believer. It is the relation of peace between the believing sinner and God that is meant. Nor is it a mere truce, a sort of armistice, but a permanent and abiding relation, "we have peace with God."* It includes peace on the part

* We prefer the King James' reading to the Revision, "let us have peace," although the latter is supported strongly by the ancient authorities. The *Amer. Comm.* follow the A.V., "we have peace." The difference between the two is only that of the long and short o. That the exchange of the one letter for the other by transcribers often happened is well

of God towards us, peace on our part towards God, and hence peace in the conscience. "The effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever" (Isa. xxxii: 17).

The second is, introduction into and establishment in this grace wherein we stand (v. 2). So the term access denotes. It is the place of justification that is meant—the place where rich, free grace meets us up to the full measure of all our need. Through the completed work of the Redeemer we have liberty of approach into God's presence, and are made welcome there. Nay, more, we are even established there, made to stand before Him as those who are reconciled and saved.

The third, joy in hope of the coming glory (v. 2). The joy springs from the assured hope of a glorious future, and is distinctly the Christian's heritage. It is rarely found in any other, if indeed ever. "No hope" is the characteristic description of the Christless (Eph. ii: 12; 1 Thess. iv: 13). Of all men the believer known (Scrivener's Intro.). The objections to the hortatory form, "let us have peace" are (1) its inappropriateness. This is not the place for exhortation, for the Apostle's argument is not concluded. (2) The form, "let us have peace," if once occurring, would be retained because the doctrine of justification was early obscured, and this form is not so confident as the other (Riddle). (3) It seems to imply that the justified do not necessarily have peace with God; i.e. it seems to confound the state with the subjective experience, or rather substitutes the latter for the former, and so misses the very point Paul is pressing, viz., that the justified are now in the relation of peace with God. (4) It seems to imply that there may be some other way of peace with God than through our Lord Jesus Christ.

should be the most happy and joyful. He is at peace with God now, he shall enjoy Him forever.

The fourth, joy in tribulation (vs. 3-5). Paul is careful not to confound the pain of affliction with its results. In suffering itself there is no joy nor strength. It lies only in what it leads to, its sanctified results. Hence the verb he uses literally is *works out* (Phil. ii: 12); tribulation works out patient endurance. This now becomes a cause and works out approval, i. e., the sweet proof of the soundness of our faith, and hence the consciousness that we are the children of God, and that He deals with us as sons (Heb. xii: 7; 1 Pet. i: 7). And now experimental proof becomes a cause and works out hope. Thus we swing round to hope once more (v. 2), but with this marvelous addition, that we now know by actual test and trial that we belong to God; and so this hope begotten out of a process of experimentation can never shame us by proving false, for the love that God bears to us is attested by the Holy Spirit who has been poured into our hearts. The process issues in the conscious knowledge and assurance of our sonship.

Fifth, assurance of God's love made doubly sure (vs. 6-9). When we were helpless, godless sinners, unworthy His favor, God gave His Son for our redemption. If, therefore, He then loved us, how much surer of His love must we be now that we believe in Christ, and have been justified by His blood?

Sixth, assurance of salvation by the death and life of Christ (v. 10). There are four descriptive epithets in this section (vs. 6-10), viz., "without strength,"

“ungodly,” “sinners,” “enemies.” The argument is, if when we were not strong but powerless, not pious but ungodly, not righteous but wicked, not friends but enemies—if when in this pitiable, lost condition, Christ’s death saved us, we may be perfectly sure that being reconciled and friends with God our salvation is absolutely certain.

Seventh, joy in God (v. 11). We rejoice not alone in His grace, but in Himself. Such are the seven magnificent results of justification by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which the Spirit writes down for our comfort and hope.

c. The comparison and contrast between Adam and Christ (v: 12-21). This is one of the profoundest portions of the Epistle. It is one also about the meaning of which controversy has raged for centuries. Every clause, almost every word, represents a theological battlefield. Nothing short of a careful exegesis of its phrases and terms would suffice to set forth its depth. Only the briefest outline of what is conceived to be its teaching is here attempted.

Paul treats of two representative men, Adam the first man and Christ the second Man. Each sustains a vital relation to those who are united with him. The destinies of mankind are bound up with these two men. Say what we will about it, deny and scoff at it as we may, our dislike and denunciation do not alter the fact. Humanity constitutes an organic unity. We are a race; we are not separate entities, each independent of the other, each disconnected from the other. That may be true of angels, it is not true of mankind. We

are lineal descendants of the first human pair, the inheritors of the sin and death which their disobedience brought into the world. God in His infinite goodness and mercy has given us a second Adam with whom we may become united, and in whom we recover all we lost in the first Adam, and far more. Two tremendous statements are in this section: first, universal sin and death in humanity are the direct result of Adam's trespass (vs. 12-14); second, the gracious gift of God in Jesus Christ more than offsets the disaster of Adam's sin (vs. 15-21). The parallel and contrast between the two may be traced as follows: (a) Sin and death came by the first man; righteousness and life came by the second Man. (b) By the trespass of the one the many died; the grace and gift of God by the Other abounds to the many. (c) By the one offence of the one condemnation came to all; by the one act of righteousness of the Other the free gift of justification from many offences came to all. (d) Through the disobedience of the one the many were constituted sinners; through the obedience of the Other the many shall be constituted righteous. (e) Through the one sin abounded; through the Other grace superabounded. (f) By the trespass of the one sin reigns like a relentless despot unto death; by the Other grace shall reign like a gracious sovereign unto eternal life. (g) It is in accordance with righteousness that sin receive its merited punishment; it is in accordance with righteousness that the perfect obedience of Christ receive its due reward.

The two covenant heads of humanity, Adam and

Christ, stand related most intimately to their respective groups or companies, and may be represented thus:

ADAM	CHRIST
One trespass and condemnation.	One act of righteousness and justification.
One trespass and many made sinners.	One act of righteousness and many made righteous.
One trespass and death.	One act of righteousness and life.
Solidarity of Adam and all who are in him.	Solidarity of Christ and all who are in Him.

Paul builds his argument on the record of Gen. iii. He binds up his inspired reasoning with the historical trustworthiness and accuracy of that narrative. He accepts the Genesis record as infallible truth. He teaches expressly or by necessary implication, man's original innocency and holiness, the fall, introduction of sin into our race by the fall, death the penal consequence of sin, ruin of the entire race by sin, and redemption wrought and brought to us by the Lord Jesus Christ. It has been said that "this paragraph deals only incidentally with Adam; its main theme is Christ. Adam is the illustration; Christ is the subject" (Moule). There is truth in the statement, but not all the truth. Paul clearly recognizes the headship both of Adam and Christ. He sees just as clearly the union on the part of each with those for whom he stands. A *nexus* binds mankind to Adam; a *nexus* likewise binds the saved to Christ. In each case there is unity. He does not explain what the *nexus* is; he sees it, and it underlies the teaching of this marvelous paragraph.

One other thing in the chapter must be mentioned, viz., the five times repeated phrase, "much more."

(V. 9) "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." The argument is, if for sinners His precious blood was shed, *much more* shall the justified and reconciled through His atonement be saved from the wrath of God. For them there is no wrath; only peace and grace.

(V. 10) "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled unto God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." We were ransomed when enemies of God, and by the ransom reconciled. Now we are at peace with God, and His friends, for reconciliation is second friendship. If Christ's death saved us, *much more* shall we be saved in His life; God's friends shall live in Christ's life.

(V. 15) "For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many" (R. V.). If Adam's one sin sufficed to bring death to the many, God's grace and gift *much more* than suffices to save—it abounds; the blessing is more certain and more abundant.

(V. 17) "For, if by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ" (R. V.). Our loss through Adam's disobedience is more than repaired by the perfect obedience

of the Lord Jesus. We are not only emancipated from death's power, we reign in life through Christ. The phrase "abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness," justifies the "much more." To those who receive this abundance is fulfilled the Good Shepherd's promise of more abundant life (John x: 10).

(V. 20) "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The "much more" here is a different word from that occurring in the other verses above, and a stronger one—"did abound more exceedingly" (R. V.); "did beyond measure abound" (Alford). This last "much more" embraces and goes beyond all the rest. God's wealth of grace exceeds all our thoughts and all our sins. Grace has won the victory, and is seated on the throne. God's lofty seat is now the throne of grace. Grace reigns through Jesus Christ our Lord.

4. Moral consequences of Justification by Faith (vi). Two most important and practical doctrines the Apostle in this chapter urges upon his readers. The first is, that gratuitous justification is no license to sin (vi: 1-11). A plausible but in reality vicious inference might be drawn from Paul's doctrine of free justification, viz., that since abounding sin is the occasion of abounding grace, shall we not continue in sin in order that grace may still more abound? (With v. 1 cf. iii: 7, 8; v: 20). "God forbid." The thought is not to be entertained for a moment. A Christian is one who has died with Christ, as his baptism clearly symbolizes. His whole past life of sin has been brought to an end by virtue of his union with Christ. "Likewise

reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive under God in Christ Jesus." Our reckoning about ourselves is to agree with God's testimony that we died in the death and are alive in the life of the Lord Jesus. The term "reckon" is not to be taken in the sense of suppose, fancy, but count, account, as in iv: 3; viii: 36, etc. We are to look on ourselves as having died with Christ, and are now to walk in newness of life. "For he that hath died is justified [released, freed] from sin." The believer is a dead and risen man; he and his old life have parted company forever. How can he dare to live any longer in sin? The inference of v. 1 is a deadly error.

The second great doctrine springing out of Paul's teaching on justification is, that it is a powerful incentive to holiness (vi: 12-23). All men have one of two masters, sin or God. If the life is one of habitual service to sin, if sin is loved, practiced, obeyed in all its lusts, then the man is sin's slave, and if he continue the service to the end he will receive its reward—death. But if the life is one of habitual service of righteousness, if this is loved, practiced, and obeyed in all its holy requirements, then the man is God's servant, His child and heir. And continuing faithful in His service to the end, as by God's grace he will, he shall receive the gracious gift, eternal life.

In other words, the natural man is sin's slave, and he loves his master, submits to his imperious will, obeys his dictates. He lives in that sphere because it is congenial. The Christian is the bond-servant of righteousness, its holy behests he loves, and in its prac-

tice he delights and lives. For the justified man is likewise the regenerate man. New principles and motives dictate his conduct, new hopes and desires prompt his action. Justification and initial sanctification are synchronous. All who are freed from the guilt and condemnation of sin must seek deliverance from its power and practice. The spiritual man loves holiness, hates evil, and longs with unquenchable yearning to be forever set free from it. The new nature within him, the Holy Spirit who abides with him, the grace that is given him, combine to make for righteousness. Paul expresses it thus: "But God be thanked, that, whereas ye were the servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered" (R. V., v. 17). "Form" is equivalent to type, mould, or pattern. To the doctrines of grace as revealed by the Gospel believers heartily yield themselves. And the truth received and believed stamps the form or likeness of itself on the soul; it moulds the soul after its own image. Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, is the supreme revelation of saving truth; He is the truth and the life. By His Spirit saving truth is expressed in the Word, the Scriptures of God. Through the Word and by the same divine Spirit, the saving truth is impressed upon the heart of the believer. Accordingly we read, "But we all, with open (unveiled) face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii: 18; cf. iv: 6). This is Paul's "mystery"—

“Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. i:27; Gal. ii:20).

With Christ dwelling in them by His Spirit, with all needed grace abundantly communicated to them, believers are separated from sin and to God that they may live righteously and godly in the world. It is to such teaching they are delivered, and the truth thus received and believed moulds their characters and transforms their lives. They obey it from the heart, and their obedience takes the form of submission to Christ. He is their loving Master, they are His joyful bond-servants; His will is their law, His commands their delight. And so the Apostle adds: “Being made free from sin, ye became the servants [lit. slaves] of righteousness.” It is a blessed transference of servitude, from sin’s tyranny to Christ’s liberty. The Gospel is delivered up to us for obedience, we are delivered up to the power of the Gospel in obedience. It is not simply something we hold, like a creed or a tenet; it is masterful truth, God’s truth, that holds us, controls us, and sanctifies us. Justification infallibly leads to the service of righteousness, it establishes the sway of holiness in the soul.

5. The believer and law as touching sanctification (vii). On this most variously treated and most stubbornly controverted section of Romans one ventures with hesitancy and diffidence. Not because one may not have settled convictions as to its general purport and its fundamental meaning, but because of the confusion and the contradictions which one encounters in the books, and because of the depths and the difficulties

that abound in it. About all the present writer here attempts is, with Elihu of old, to show "mine opinion."

The chapter is interpreted as (1) detailing the experiences of an unregenerate person, depicting the unsuccessful strivings of his better moral nature; (2) as the experience of an awakened, self-converted person (as we may say); (3) as the common experience of regenerate persons; (4) as the experience of truly regenerate persons who seek for deliverance from the power of sin in themselves on the grounds and terms of law-keeping. It is this last we believe and receive as the teaching of the chapter. Be it noted, however, that while the experience herein detailed is that of a true Christian, as we believe, yet it is not his normal nor necessary experience. He is not meant in the purpose and grace of God to be habitually agonizing in the fierce struggle described in vs. 14-25 of the chapter, and therein always to be defeated. Chap. viii: 1-17 proves that he may be and ought to be victor over the power of sin within him. What is meant is, that any Christian who undertakes by law-keeping to secure his personal sanctification will most emphatically feel the power of indwelling sin, will have this mortal combat with it, i. e., with himself, and will be vanquished in it. Let us turn to the chapter.

a. Deliverance from the law as a condition of life (vs. 1-6). On one who by virtue of his union with the Lord Jesus Christ is dead and risen with Him the law has lost all its commanding power as a covenant. The old marriage bond is effectually sundered. Death has dissolved it. In the illustration the husband dies, the

wife lives and may be lawfully married to another. In its application, God's law does not die, it never can; believers are made to die (slain, or crucified—Gal. ii: 20) as being united to Christ. Hence the law has no more hold on them as a condition of life, for they have fulfilled its requirements and borne its penalty in the Lord Jesus Christ. By it they are no longer held in bondage. They are married to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead.

b. Description of the general character and action of the law (vs. 7-13). It reveals sin, it slays the sinner, yet it is holy and just and good. The fatal defect is in the sinner, not in the law. We believe that in this section it is the law dealing with the unregenerate particularly which is before the mind of the Apostle who takes himself as an example, first, in his ignorant, self-satisfied state as one actually alive; next, in the discovery of his inability to keep the law and so secure its reward, viz., life; finally, in his condemnation by the law as its guilty transgressor. He saw himself at length, in the eye of a law not kept and never to be kept, a dead man.

c. The believer's struggle for sanctification on the grounds and terms of law, and the result (vs. 14-25). This is no ideal conflict. It is no artificial embodiment of a universal fact. "It is the cry of a human soul, if ever there was a personal cry." It is, at least it reads like, the experience of one who knows well the blessedness of doing God's will, of obeying His righteous commandments, and yet who groans under his wretched inability to obey. We cannot but feel that

one who reads thoughtfully these mysterious verses will be led to regard the speaker as Paul himself, and the description as that of one who has far more light and deeper convictions and a more sensitive conscience than the merely natural man ever displays. There would be little trouble to assign it to the unregenerate if the conflict were only that of "I ought," and "I will not." But it goes immensely deeper. It is a battle between "I will" and "I will not"; "what I would, that I do not: but what I hate, that do I"; "for the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Are there two men in this one man's personality? It reads like it. It reads much after the fashion of the Puritan Trapp's profound note: "Every new man is two men." But deeper yet does the speaker here penetrate. He discloses a wonderful sympathy with the law of God—"I consent unto the law, that it is good." This consent is more than the intellectual recognition of the law's beauty and worth; it is an assent of the mysterious "I" within him to its character and claims. The word he uses literally is, "I speak together with the law"—I say *yes* to it. But far deeper still than consent does he go—"for I delight in the law of God after the inward man." "Delight" is very strong—I rejoice with the law. In only two other places in the New Testament is found the expression "the inward man" (2 Cor. iv: 16; Eph. iii: 16). In both it designates the new, the spiritual man which a regenerate person alone has. The reasons given by some expositors why it means something else and something different from this in Rom. vii: 22 are

not satisfactory. A man dead in trespasses and sins has no such combat with a double nature, a twofold self, old and new, as is here described. Paul's words sink far deeper than those of Ovid's, "Desire counsels me in one direction, reason in another"—"I see and approve the better, but I follow the worse."

Four laws are here brought to view, and in full operation:

The Law of God (vs. 22, 25).

The Law of the Mind (vs. 22, 23, 25).

The Law of Sin (vs. 23, 25).

The Law in the Members (vs. 18, 20, 23).

The first pair of these four laws are in harmony with each other, viz., the law of God and the law of the mind. The renewed mind loves God's holy law and endeavors to keep it. The second pair likewise are in harmony with each other, viz., the law of sin and the law in the members. The latter pair hate the law of God, rebel against it, and are essentially lawless. Now this is the reason of the conflict here so graphically described. A renewed man undertakes to overcome the principle of evil of which he is only too conscious by legal obedience. He takes stiff hold of himself, and resolves that he will keep God's righteous law, that he will order his thoughts and ways according to its holy precepts, and immediately the fight begins. Nor is the law of sin in the members a feeble antagonist. The very resistance to it seems to vitalize its energies and intensify its malignity.

Let it be noted that throughout this whole struggle the Apostle does not invoke the power of Christ nor the

grace of the Holy Spirit till the end of the chapter is reached. Obviously, the struggle is carried on by the man himself and within himself. One part of him desires, wills, consents, delights; another part opposes, resists, refuses, imperiously demands its own way and will. Let any Christian try to become holy by law-keeping in his own might, and he will soon understand experimentally and full well the significance of Rom. vii: 14-25. Our sanctification like our justification is in the Lord Jesus Christ and by His Holy Spirit. It was to this Paul came at length—"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (cf. viii: 1-4). It is by Him we get deliverance from law as a covenant; and by Him we are set free from the power and pollution of sin no less certainly than from its guilt and condemnation. But let it be further observed, even after he has found victory through the Lord Jesus, he still says, "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." "Germanicus reigned in the hearts of the Romans, but Tiberius in the provinces."

Inability and responsibility are prominent throughout the chapter, nor is there inconsistency between them. The remains of sin in believers form no proof that they are not genuinely God's children; rather, it is a luminous proof that they are. A saint strives and struggles for holiness; an unbeliever is content with his state.

6. The state and standing of believers (chap. viii). In the eighth chapter the Apostle sings the glad song of deliverance and victory. It is the climax of the

Epistle, it is the essence of Christianity we here find. Higher in assured hope and exultant joy it seems impossible to go. All students of Scripture recognize the beauty, the depth and the power of this chapter. "The happy condition of a man in Christ," one entitles it (Meyer). "The security of the believer," another names it (Hodge). "Liberation and liberty" (Bengel). "The glorious completeness of them that are in Christ Jesus" (Brown).

It has been demonstrated that by works of law sinners can never be justified before God (iii—v). No more on such principle can believers be sanctified (vi, vii). The profoundly significant struggle described in chap. vii ends in defeat. It always must, when one seeks for deliverance from the power of sin by law-observance. How is deliverance to be obtained? How can the galling fetters be broken? No more intensely personal and practical inquiry can be made. It is the supreme question of every child of God—to be free from sin's despotism, to have as an actual experience the conscious liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free—no more blessed boon can be imagined. Romans viii introduces us to grace, rich, superabounding, sovereign grace that meets our deepest and direst need. The state and standing of the believer as here described is wonderful, glorious.

a. The Christian is redeemed from the condemnation and power of sin (vs. 1-13). Two vital truths are made prominent in this section. The first is, the union of the believer with Christ; he is "in Christ Jesus." As being in Him he died with Christ, was quickened

together with Christ, and is regarded as seated with Him in the heavenly places (Eph. ii: 4-6). Since he is in Christ the judicial sentence against him as a sinner is removed—for him there is now not one condemnation (v. 1). The cross of Christ has met and satisfied every claim of justice and of law. He is justified, accepted, saved.

The second is, the power of the Spirit is enlisted on his behalf. The Holy Spirit is the new conspicuous feature of the chapter. He is directly mentioned but once in all the preceding sections (v: 5). In the record of the losing battle of vii never once is He introduced or appealed to, nor is Christ until the close is reached. Now He becomes most prominent, is the prime factor in our deliverance from the thralldom of sin and in our growth in holiness. The Christian is not in the flesh, though the flesh is in him. The evil thing, "the flesh," lives in him, and it is just as evil and deadly in the holiest as in the most abandoned of men. But the child of God has in himself a new force, called "the law of the Spirit of life," which sets him free from the law of sin and death. This new inward principle of action, this energy of life, operates with the fixedness of law, and is the gracious product of the Spirit. This new life governs and guides, controls and moulds, subdues and conquers, so that the believer can indeed mortify the deeds of the body; he can yield his members servants to righteousness unto holiness (vi: 19).

(2) The Christian is a child and an heir of God (viii: 14-30). Paul knows only one class as being entitled to the distinguishing name of children, or

sons, of God, viz., believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the doctrine likewise of the whole New Testament (John i: 12, 13). One distinctive aim of the First Epistle of John is to furnish evidences and marks of sonship (I John i: 5-7; ii: 1-3, 9, 10, 27, 28; iii: 1-6, 14, 19, 24; iv: 1-4, 7, 8, 15, 20, 21; v: 1-4, 10-12, 13). In our chapter the Apostle gives certain distinguishing features of God's children. They have the Spirit of Christ, they cannot be children otherwise (v. 9). They are led by the Spirit (v. 14). They have the Spirit of adoption, i. e., full sonship, and are able to call God by a most tender appellation, Abba, Father, "dear Father" (v. 15). They have the witness of the Spirit with their own spirits that they are in very truth God's children (v. 16). They are to be unveiled one day when creation itself shall share the glory of that mighty apocalypse (v. 19). The revelation of God's children includes also the redemption of their body (v. 23). Christ saves the entire person of His people, body and soul, with all the faculties and powers of each intact and beautified with His own comeliness. God's sons enjoy the intercession of the Spirit as an efficient almighty Helper in their ignorance and need (vs. 26, 27). Most significant and beautiful is the rich word for "helpeth"; it is, in its fulness, this: "taketh hold together with us"—His almightiness linked with our feebleness! They are to be conformed to the image of God's own Son (v. 29).

Now all this wealth of present possession and promised good discloses something of the Christian's heritage. But this, majestic as it is, is not all nor nearly

all that shall be his. He is God's heir, Christ's co-heir (v. 17). What is it to be the heir of God? Who knows? Who can explain? We know what it is to be heir to a vast estate and a great title. We can conceive the dignity and honor, the prospects and hopes of an heir to a crown. But this furnishes no adequate picture of God's heirs. Only one in all the royal family can be heir to the throne, whereas all God's children, without exception of distinction, are His heirs. And since they are Christ's co-heirs, they are to reign with Him, and be glorified together with him. What will it be to inherit with Him who is the Lord of the worlds and the ages? It has sometimes been the whim or the affection of a great king to make a peasant girl his queenly consort and sharer of his throne. But such an elevation, from obscurity to dazzling splendor, shrivels into nothing when compared with the amazing grace of Jesus our Lord who deigns to associate with Himself even in His own glory earthborn sons and daughters. It is like our Lord so to do. What a crowning day that will be when the sons shall be conformed to the likeness of the Son of God, shall sparkle in the radiance of His effulgent glory. And they shall "sit with me in my throne" (Rev. iii:21). "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (v. 29). Such is the destiny in store for the children and heirs of God. The perfect archetype according to which they are to be fashioned is the glorified Christ (Phil. iii:20, 21). In the grace and

love of their Lord they are already sons, and kings, and priests. While they are in the world there is no hint of such indescribable destiny. Here they are pilgrims and strangers; are surrounded by a suffering creation, are compassed with infirmities and weaknesses, are hedged in by countless limitations, bemoan their failure and confess their sins. How little they look like God's heirs, God's kings and priests! "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting." It is a wondrous picture, and of course perfectly true. Nature groans. All her cries and sounds are in the minor key. The voices of most of the animals are keyed to minor strains. The winds and the waves sigh and moan. Striking are the words of Jeremiah, "There is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet" (xlix: 23). Our groans are in unison and sympathy with a groaning creation. "An absent King, a present usurper, a cursed soil, overflowing evil, disease, sorrow, death"—surely there is enough to make us groan.

But creation waits, as do all who believe. "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God." Her eagerness is expressed by vivid terms, the head bent forward, and the neck outstretched. "Her out-looking face is an off-looking face, turned from every direction but one." Her waiting is watching, and her watching is waiting, and both are in hope of deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the chil-

dren of God. The heirs travel *incognito*, as many a prince has done. By and by the disguise shall drop off, and they shall be like Christ Himself, for they shall see Him as He is. When that blessed day comes, as come it must, the planet itself shall share in the glory, and "Paradise Lost" shall be succeeded by "Paradise Regained." In view of this matchless future awaiting the children of God and creation also, Paul's word should ever be in our hearts if not on our lips, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." The saint's everlasting inheritance—who can compute its value, or measure its greatness?

f. The Christian's unanswerable challenge (viii: 31-39). It is boldly made, and it is without limit in its immense range. Heaven, earth, angels, demons, persecutions, martyrdoms, famines, perils; in short, it is a challenge to the universe. None can lodge a charge against the elect of God, nothing can sunder them from the love of Christ.

Three glorious truths are in this eighth chapter of Romans: no condemnation, no separation, and between the two, and nearly in the middle, all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose. It reminds one of the beautiful words of Psalm lxxxiv: 11—"For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Grace here, glory hereafter, and between the two no good or needful thing wanting.

It is with the faithful God (1 Cor. x:13), and the giving God (Jas. i:5, Greek), and the comforting God (2 Cor. i:3, 4), we have to do.

7. Reconciliation of the doctrine of the universal offer of salvation with the distinctive promises made to Israel (ix—xi). These chapters contain a genuine theodicy; they vindicate God's ways with both Jew and Gentile.

This is a remarkably full section, and the merest outline of the teaching contained in it is here attempted. Paul has drawn out at length his great thesis of i:16, 17. He has shown how Gentiles and Jews are alike destitute of a righteousness that avails before God; has demonstrated the divine method of justifying the believer in Christ on the ground of a perfect righteousness provided by Himself in His Son and imputed to faith; has traced the fruits and the moral consequences of the doctrine, and shown the full acceptance and safety of those whom God hath justified. But now there confronts him this question: How is this doctrine of free justification for all who receive God's testimony about His Son to be reconciled with the special promises made to Israel? What is to become of the chosen people who rejected the Redeemer, and of the predictions and the covenants relating to them? And what of their unbelief? Is it permanent? And is their national repudiation final and definitive? This is the problem discussed in ix—xi.

a. Paul's profound sorrow for his people Israel (ix:1-5). Many of his kinsmen according to the flesh

are not sharers in the redemption of Christ, are not among the present people of God; hence his grief. The pathos of these verses is very striking: he could even wish himself anathema from Christ on their behalf, if that would avail anything for them, if it were right or possible to do so. The wish is held in suspense, as if the impossibility were recognized, while the intensity of feeling prompts its utterance (Ex. xxxii:32). The glorious distinctions which he ascribes to Israel are very notable (vs. 4, 5). They are *Israelites*, they bear the theocratic name and are the sons of the "Prince with God" (Gen. xxxii:28); theirs is the *adoption*, called to be the filial race and named by Jehovah in their corporate capacity "My Son," "My First-born" (Ex. iv:22; Hos. xi:1), theirs is the *glory*, as witnessed by the Shekinah, the mysterious and supernatural Symbol of the Divine Presence in the Tabernacle and the Temple (Ex. xxix:43; xl:34); and the same "glory of the Lord" will return to restored Israel (Ezek. xliii:4); theirs are the *covenants*, e. g., with Abraham, with Moses, with David; theirs the giving of the *law*, the marvelous moral and civil code which stands to this day without a peer; theirs is the *service*, that marvelous system of typical forms and patterns, the vast Parable of Christ, as Heb. ix:9 calls it; theirs the *promises*, as touching Palestine, themselves, the Messiah and the world; theirs the *fathers*, patriarchs, prophets, priests and kings; and as the crowning distinction, of them is the Christ who is over all God blessed forever. It is a magnificent "roll of honor" that is here recited. One

feels like excusing if not applauding the Hebrew's national pride in the presence of this splendid list of glories. One of the most serious blemishes which deface the Revised Version of the New Testament appears in the margin of verse 5, where interpretation and not translation is thrust into the word.*

b. God's promise has not failed: it has been made good in the election of some and in the passing by of others (vs. 6-18). The Apostle proves that from the beginning this has been God's uniform method.

The children of the promise form a distinct and separate company. Two Old Testament illustrations are cited: the case of Isaac (vs. 7-9), and that of Jacob (vs. 10-13). In thus choosing God is not unrighteous: He is Sovereign, and acts according to righteousness and truth.

c. His justice and mercy vindicated (vs. 19-29). First, it is irreverent and presumptuous to arraign the Infinite God (vs. 19-21). Second, there is nothing

*Dean Burgon stigmatizes it as a "Socinian gloss," and cites no less than sixty Fathers from Irenæus to Chrysostom who understand the clause as referring to Christ alone. Dr. Riddle writes, "In all the authorities which can give evidence on a matter of punctuation (manuscripts, versions and Fathers), the unanimity is very remarkable," in support of the punctuation of our King James' Version. He adds, "All the early writers accepted this view with the single exception of Diodorus of Tarsus." That Paul gives the supreme name of God to Christ is witnessed by Acts xx:28: "Feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood"; (Tit. ii:13), where the Revisers themselves render . . . "the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ," (cf. John xx:28). The fatal objection to the Revisers' marginal note lies in the words "who is," for they forbid the notion of a doxology in this place.

unjust in His sovereignty (22-24). We may not understand His ways, nor apprehend His reasons for doing as He does, but we may be perfectly persuaded by faith in His absolute goodness and love and justice that what He does is right, eternally right. Third, the prophets have foretold that only a remnant of Israel shall be saved until God shall cut the work short in righteousness (vs. 25-29).

d. The paradox explained (vs. 30-33). Gentile believers seek righteousness by *faith*, i. e., through the divinely-appointed way, and they find it. The Jews by *works*, i. e., by attempting to establish their own righteousness, an impossible feat—and they miss it.

e. Cause of Israel's fall, viz., *unbelief* (chap x). Paul shows that Moses taught the doctrine of faith (v. 5); that faith is the direct opposite of works, or creature merit (6-10); that the promise already quoted in ix: 33 holds good as to the Jews as certainly as to the Gentiles (vs. 11-13); that it is by the preaching of the Gospel that any and all are to be brought to a saving knowledge of God (vs. 14, 15); that both Isaiah and Moses had announced God's turning away from the chosen people to the Gentiles (vs. 16-21).

What, then, is to become of the chosen people? Are they finally cast off? These nineteen centuries of desolation and woe, of persecution and hate and misery—how tragic the story! But are these years of exile and national dismemberment to go on forever? "The bush" has been burning through all these lurid centuries, but it is unconsumed, is as living and vigorous now as ever before since the fall of Jerusalem. Jewish

history is unparalleled, astonishing; nothing like it and nothing next to it is to be found in the annals of the nations. Truly, Israel is the "indestructible nation." What does it all mean? What is the secret of this marvelous preservation amid the most untoward conditions, the most adverse circumstances which any people have encountered?

To answer these and the like inquiries Paul addresses himself in chap. xi. Two things concerning Israel's present state and future destiny he settles beyond all peradventure, viz., (1) Israel's rejection is not total; (2) it is not final. We follow the splendid demonstration, keeping these two cardinal facts in the place of pre-eminence where the Apostle has set them.

(1) Israel's rejection is not total (vs. 1-10). The tenth chapter closes with an ominous quotation: "All the day long did I spread out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people" (R. V., Isa. lxxv: 2). From these solemn words the inference might be drawn that Israel's doom is sealed. Paul hastens to ask: "I say then, Hath God cast away His people?" Was the national election only temporary? Has the nation's disobedience led to a change in the divine plan? "God forbid." God's repudiation of the nation for its rejection of the Messiah and of His offer of mercy and pardon has not imperilled individual salvation. Individual Jews are being saved through all this Gospel age. Paul himself is one of them, and he is a Jew of pure extraction. Absolute repudiation must have included himself. Besides, as in the time of Elijah when idolatry all but supplanted the worship of Jeho-

vah and national apostasy was at the flood, God then had a band of true and faithful servants—seven thousand—who had not bowed the knee to Baal, so is it in this present time. Not one generation has there been since Jerusalem's destruction by Titus down to this day but has seen some Jews who knew and loved and worshiped the Lord Jesus as God's Messiah. Paul's conclusion is, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." It is demonstrated, therefore, by incontrovertible facts that the rejection of Israel is not total.

(2) Israel's rejection is not final (vs. 11-36). Thus far the Apostle has been dealing with individual Israelites. Now he treats of national Israel, its present state and its destiny. He asks, "Have they stumbled that they should fall?" The word for "fall" is strong and emphatic. Have they fallen to their destruction—beyond recovery? No, not at all, he earnestly replies. Israel's day of restoration to the allegiance and favor of God is assuredly coming. In the meantime, God is overruling the sin of the chosen people for good. (a) Israel's fall is made the occasion of blessing to the Gentiles. The stream of salvation flows to the nations now as never before. The mighty work of grace in the world at large proves the divine mission of Jesus, manifests the Jews' trespass in rejecting Him to their own tremendous hurt, and is meant to be an incentive to their acceptance of Him; "to provoke them to jealousy." Moreover, if their "fall" (trespass) has been made the occasion for the world's enrichment, if their loss is our infinite gain, what shall their full recovery

be but "life from the dead" for the whole race? When at length over that awful Hebrew graveyard Ezekiel saw (xxxvii) with its numberless skeletons bleaching in the sun and rain the quickening voice of the Lord shall be heard, and the Spirit of God shall breathe, Israel shall live, and through saved Israel, life shall stream forth in its fulness and power such as the world has never before known nor experienced. That is his inspired conclusion. Granted his premise, the conclusion is inevitable. The argument is twofold in its majestic sweep: (1) the chosen nation is not finally cast off; (2) the conversion of the world awaits the conversion of Israel. Never will the world be brought back to God until Israel is brought back to God.

It was under the profound conviction of Israel's mighty place in the plan of God for world-wide blessing that Paul labored with untiring zeal that he might provoke the Jews to emulation and so bring them into line with God's purpose. Happy would it have been had the Gentile church followed his example. But instead we look in vain for any extensive and loving evangelization of the Jews for more than a thousand years. The darkest and saddest page of the church's history, almost from the death of the last of the Apostles, John, down to this twentieth century, is this not only obstinate neglect of the Jew, but contempt for him, and hatred, and oppression, and spoliation, and expulsion, and attempted extermination by the so-called Christian nations—persistent and unexampled antagonism and brutal persecution! From the time when the Fourth Lateran Council under Pope Innocent III (A.

D. 1215) decreed that no Jew should appear in public without a conspicuous badge on his garments, thus making him the target for malice and outrage by a brutal Gentile populace down to the anti-Semitism of continental Europe, and the dreadful Pale of Settlement of Russia, of our own day, the story is one of rapine, tyranny, and blood for the covenanted people of God. The solemn prohibition of Paul has been unheeded; nay, Christendom has actually done the contrary. "Boast not against the branches; be not high-minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He spare not thee." We have gloried over fallen Israel; we have become high-minded; we do not fear lest God spare not us, as He spared not them. The Gentile church has taken every promise specifically made to Israel, and appropriated it to itself. It has uniformly flung every curse at the Jew. It sees an awful illustration of fulfilled prophecy in poor, blinded Israel, but in too many instances, alas, it refuses to see the unfulfilled predictions which announce unparalleled mercy and blessing both for Israel and for the whole world. What is this but "boasting against the branches," and being "high-minded?"

(b) In the olive tree is Israel's natural and rightful place (v. 24). "How much more shall these which be the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?" The words "much more" seem to denote more easy, natural, and probable. There is a sort of affinity, a predetermined harmony between Israel and the Kingdom of God. To the end that God's gracious

purposes respecting our race might be realized, God chose and called Abraham the founder of the Hebrew people, and with him made His gracious covenant; for the same end the people of Israel were brought near Him, and constituted a theocratic nation. By their unbelief, their rejection of the Messiah, they have lost their proper place in the Kingdom, are fallen from the high dignity and noble privileges that belonged to them. But their place is in the olive. "God is able to graft them in again;" and He will. Their excision, therefore, is not perpetual. Their home-coming is sure.

(c) Israel's hardening in part is temporary (v. 25). It lasts "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." "Until" implies continuance and cessation—continuance during a certain period, and cessation at its close. But what is meant by "the fulness of the Gentiles?" It certainly does not mean "the totality of the nations passing into the church," as some say, nor "the whole body of the Gentiles professing Christianity," as others, nor "the conversion of the nations," as others still. For Paul has already shown that Israel's national conversion will be the means of life from the dead for the whole world. But if the Gentile world as such is to be brought to God before Israel's blindness is removed, then their national recovery is not the instrumental cause of the world's conversion, as the Apostle teaches. Surely Paul does not stultify himself with such gross contradictions. We hold with Dr. David Brown that the phrase in question does not mean "the general conversion of the world to Christ." We hold with Augustine, Chalmers, Haldane, that it means "the

full complement of the Gentile elect." In His Olivet prophecy Jesus announced that Jerusalem should be "trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke xxi: 24). There is a set time during which God is visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name (Acts xv: 14). That time is now running on, and Israel is left in the national blindness which she has brought on herself by unbelief. But the period is to terminate; Gentile times shall end, and with their end comes Israel's restoration to God.

(d) The conclusion, "and so all Israel shall be saved" (v. 26). National Israel is certainly meant, the whole body of the Jewish people. To understand this great statement to denote the gradual inbringing of individual Jews till all are converted is to do violence both to it and to the whole context. Three proofs are adduced in support of the statement: (1) God's unfailing promise (vs. 26, 27). The Deliverer, the Kinsman Redeemer is Himself to save Israel. Note the term *Jacob* which stands in the sharpest contrast with Gentiles, with the Church, with all others, and defines and confines the promise; the descendants of the patriarch Jacob, the Jews, and none others, are the objects of the saving power of the Deliverer. The guarantee of their conversion is bound up with God's covenant (cf. Jer. xxxi: 33, 34; Heb. x: 16, 17). (2) God's love for them holds fast notwithstanding their unbelief (v. 28). The word "election" is used in two ways in the chapter; the elect remnant (v. 5), i. e., an election within an election; and as designating the whole

body of the Jewish people. It is in this latter sense it is employed in verse 28. God chose them in Abraham, and reaffirmed His choice to Isaac, to Jacob, to Moses. He has never finally repudiated them, for He has never repealed His own covenant with the fathers of Israel whereby He made them His own. It still stands firm. Therefore God says, in Lev. xxvi: 44, 45, "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God: but I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought out of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the Lord" (cf. Deut. iv: 37; x: 15; Ezk. xxxvi, etc.). "Beloved for the fathers' sakes." This is the reason and the only reason for the marvelous preservation of the Hebrew people. No other can be assigned. Any other people under the like disabilities, hardships, spoliations, and slaughter would succumb. But this strange, enigmatic people endure through the centuries, witness the rise, development and decay of nation after nation, yet remain intact, unconsumed, the "indestructible nation."

(3) God's irrevocable gifts and calling (v. 29). God has not repented, has not changed His mind respecting the gift to Palestine to the chosen seed, nor respecting the call of Abraham and his seed to be a blessing to the world. His purpose holds, and will hold until every word He has spoken touching this Hebrew people, His Church, and the planet itself shall have had ample, complete, and everlasting accomplishment.

What a revelation, what a mighty argument, these three chapters of Romans contain! Sin and grace, sovereignty and human responsibility, free will and the electing love of God, the Gospel offered to the nations of the world and yet the covenant people passed by until the gathering out of a people to His name has been completed and the "Times of the Gentiles" shall terminate—what a stupendous disclosure! It is in truth "the outlines of the philosophy of history." Well does Godet write: "A more far-reaching glance was never cast over the divine plan of the history of the world." To God be all the glory; "for of him," as the efficient cause, "and through him," as the administering cause, "and to him," as the final cause, are all things."

III-IV. Practical and Personal (xii-xvi). The practical application of the Epistle, greetings and doxology form these sections. The doctrinal and dispensational teaching of the Apostle is succeeded by his application of the truth expounded to his readers. Teaching lays the foundation, exhortation builds upon it. The acceptance of Christianity involves solemn duties and obligations. Those who are in Christ Jesus must live and walk as seeing Him who is invisible, must behave toward each other and the world as having Him for their supreme Example. Various duties are enjoined on Christians in these chapters, some of which are here mentioned.

1. Official duties, i. e., duties flowing out of the possession of spiritual gifts (xii: 1-8). There is, first of all, the presentation of ourselves as a willing and living

offering to God, repudiating the world's spirit, ways, and maxims, seeking the transfiguration of character and life which genuine consecration to God must inspire. There is, next, the right employment of gifts, a matter of real importance. The church is an organism; it is the body of Christ. Its members are set in the body according to God's pleasure (1 Cor. xii:18). These are interdependent, complementary, and designed to be mutually helpful. Whatever the gift may be, it is to be used for the growth, comfort, and efficiency of the body. With humility, zeal, and energy each is to fill the mission and do the work assigned him.

Individual duties (xii:9—xiii). These relate to brethren of the like precious faith with ourselves, to those who may dislike us, and even persecute us, to that which belongs to the sphere of citizenship, and monetary obligations. The great principle by which Christians are to be animated and prompted to discharge all these weighty duties is love. The only sure way to disarm hostility, and conquer an enemy is to let love have full sway and unhindered action; and the only way to keep love bright and warm is to remember evermore that the "night is far spent, the day is at hand; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

Duties touching the relations between weak and more enlightened brethren (xiv—xv:13). There were those who had conscientious scruples about eating flesh. They may have been Jewish Christians who regarded the Mosaic system of dietetics (Lev. xi;

Deut. xiv) as binding, and distressed lest by eating meat sold in the public market they might be defiled they refused animal food altogether. Or they may have been of those who feared such flesh had been exposed to an idol, and lest they should be contaminated with idolatrous practices they became vegetarians. (This topic is treated at length in 1 Cor. viii—x.) Others ate whatever was set before them, having no such scruples. Some observed certain days as peculiarly holy, such as feast and fast days. Perhaps they even kept as sacred the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday). Others made no such distinction, kept all days alike, just as multitudes of Christians now see nothing sacred whatever in Christmas, Good Friday, etc., and refuse to observe them. (The Lord's Day does not appear to have been included in this distinction of days. It has other claims and rests on other grounds than that of Hebrew festivals, or ecclesiastical calendars.) Out of these differences in matters morally indifferent serious difficulties among brethren might arise. The great principle that the Apostle applies to them is love, fraternal tenderness and tolerance. Two things are made prominent in the discussion, viz., neither the one party nor the other is to sit in judgment upon his brother (xiv:3): "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth." The other is, the sacredness and power of example (xiv:13): "Let . . . no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." "Peace" is too precious in the Christian brotherhood, and, as a

testimony to them that are without, too important to be ruptured by trifles.

2. The supremacy of love and forbearance among Christians is enforced by a variety of arguments, some of which are here indicated:

(a) All shall stand before the tribunal of God (xiv: 10-12): "Do not judge thy brother, since God will judge *him*; judge thou thyself, since God will judge *thee*" (Godet). (b) The danger that may result from asserting one's liberty (xiv: 15): "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." If Christ gave up His life for the weak brother, canst not thou give up a kind of food for him? Let not your noble creed of holy liberty be railed at, as if it were only a thinly veiled self-indulgence. (c) What is not of faith is sin (xiv: 23). All actions not resulting from faith in the Lord and in His Word are sinful. To violate one's own conscience, to set at naught the conscience of another, is perilous. (d) Christ's example (xv: 3): He "pleased not himself." In the garden He yielded Himself to the holy will of the Father, and went thence to the house of Caiaphas and Annas, to be "reproached"; to the cross bearing that "reproach." "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification," and "not to please ourselves." (e) Christ's ministry was to bring all Christians into a holy unity (xv: 8-13). To enforce his teaching Paul in this passage quotes from the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, as if he would wheel all Scripture into line to confirm his teaching as to Christian unity and reciprocal love,

The remainder of the Epistle is taken up with personal explanations, greetings to various persons at Rome, and greetings to them from those who were with him at the time (xv: 14—xvi). Twenty-six persons of the Roman Church are mentioned by name, some of whom were Paul's kindred, and all of them his friends. Most of them were doubtless plain, obscure people, for they are not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible; some of them probably were slaves. But how touching, how affectionate are the epithets he applies to them! Two of them had submitted their own throats to the knife for Paul's sake, others (men) are addressed as "my beloved"; perhaps they were his own converts. But note the "faultless delicacy" he observes when he comes to greet the woman Persis, whom he describes as "the beloved." And then, when all has been said, he seems to take the pen in his own hand, and crowns this matchless Scripture with the most wonderful of all the Doxologies (xvi: 25-27).

FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

On the Isthmus of Corinth, pictorially called by a Greek poet "the bridge of the seas," the city of Corinth was situated. Its population was a mixed one. Being the chief commercial center of Greece, its trade advantages attracted men from Europe and Asia. Men from all quarters met in its streets and on the quays of its two harbors. Its commerce brought together Italians, Jews, and Orientals. It was a hotbed of evil in which every noxious plant, indigenous or foreign, rankly grew and flourished. The term "Corinthianize" was coined to express the deepest immorality. Hither Paul came a little after the middle of the first century (A. D. 51-52), and preached salvation to the Jew first, and then to the Greek, as was his custom. The account of the planting of the Christian Church in Corinth is found in Acts xviii.

On reaching the city he associated himself with Aquila and Priscilla, two noble Hebrews whom the decree of the emperor Claudius had with other Jews exiled from Rome but a short time before. Whether these persons were Christians when Paul met them at Corinth, or whether they became such through his ministry cannot be determined, as the Acts is silent on the point, as well as Paul. Aquila and his wife became efficient helpers in the great cause to which Paul's life was devoted. A business tie as well as a national one united them. They were of the same craft, tent-makers. By Rabbinical law all Jewish youths were

taught some useful trade. One Rabbi said that he who did not teach his son a trade instructed him to steal. Another said that the study of theology along with a trade was good for the soul; without it a temptation of the devil. No higher example of combining honest toil with the utmost spirituality of mind can be found than this of Paul at Corinth. It was this working with his own hands that gave him the honorable independence of which he so often boasts. While always maintaining his right to live of the Gospel, he nevertheless waived the right and supported himself, thus preserving a larger freedom and the unselfishness of his motives (1 Cor. ix: 14-15). So highly did he prize the vantage which self-support secured, that he told the Corinthians "it were better for me to die than that any man should make my glorying void." And well he needed to guard his conduct in this regard, for notwithstanding all his care his disinterestedness was assailed; his enemies insinuated that his zeal was selfish, his aim personal aggrandizement (2 Cor. xi: 6-12; xii: 16-18). Paul's labor, however, was no hindrance to that communion with God which was his chief joy, and the source of his peace and power; for while working with his own hands he was continually giving thanks on behalf of the Thessalonians whose work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. i: 3) evoked his profoundest gratitude, as we learn from the two Epistles to these saints which he wrote from this city.

The Apostle's success at Corinth was remarkable. Stephanas and his household, among the firstfruits of

Achaia, became early and efficient helpers (1 Cor. xvi: 15). The conversion of Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue, and his house (Acts xviii: 18), we may well suppose, marked an era in the founding of the church, as also that of Gaius (Rom. xvi: 23). That these were notable cases of conversion is evident from the fact that they were baptized by the Apostle (1 Cor. i: 14, 16), and they seem to have been the only persons to whom he administered the ordinance while at Corinth.

A vision of the Lord foretelling a great ingathering of souls at Corinth moves the Apostle to remain for a year and a half (Acts xviii: 11-18). During the latter part of his sojourn an uprising of the Jews took place; Paul was arrested and taken before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, the brother of the philosopher Seneca (Acts xviii: 12, 13). But the effort to crush the Lord's work turned out disastrously to the Jews who organized and promoted the riot. When Paul finally departed from Corinth it was without external pressure, it was in peace.

The Epistles to the Corinthians were called forth by the serious state of affairs prevailing in the church. The Christian assembly in the city was torn by the rivalry of contending factions, was criminally remiss in the administration of discipline, its members were submitting their differences and contentions before the law-courts of the heathen for adjudication, and they exhibited a sinful indifference if not of tolerance toward the gross immoralities for which Corinth was notorious and which seem to have invaded the assembly

itself. Moreover, these Christians had addressed to the Apostle certain questions upon which they sought light, e. g., marriage and divorce, food connected with heathen sacrifices and festivals, and spiritual gifts. They were disorderly in their meetings for worship, particularly in the observance of the Lord's Supper, and some of them entertained grave doubts if not direct denial of the doctrine of the resurrection of the saints. Surely there was ample reason that Paul should write to them with all authority and tenderness, that he should reprove, rebuke, correct, and instruct them with the patience and the firmness which their conduct necessitated.

These Epistles differ very materially from Romans and Galatians. Romans contains an exhaustive exposition of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Galatians deals with serious doctrinal error—the effort to graft Christianity upon the stock of Judaism, and so judaize the Gospel of the grace of God. Corinthians were written to meet and check certain grave exigencies that had arisen in the church, and that threatened its peace, its usefulness, and its very existence. But it should be borne in mind that while the Apostle here deals with questions and abuses which concerned most intimately this local congregation, yet the principles and the teaching called forth in these letters by its condition are of universal application and belong to all time. While dealing mainly with the serious state of this church the Apostle, as his custom is, intermingles some of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity with his instructions and his censures. Christian doctrine is

intensely practical. It touches all the relations of life, the conduct and disposition as well as the faith and hope of the believer. This is true of all Scripture. The revelation of God's mind is not exhausted by the historical situation which calls it forth; nor is it to be tied up to such conditions.

The Spirit of God, who is the real author of the Bible, often combines a variety of ends and aims in what He is pleased to communicate to men. This feature appears in the Corinthian Epistles no less than in other portions of the Word, as we shall have occasion to see.

ANALYSIS OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

A. Main Divisions.

- I. Factions (i—iv).
- II. Church Discipline (v—vi).
- III. Answer to Inquiries (vii—xiv).
- IV. The Resurrection (xv).
- V. Conclusion (xvi).

B. Particular Analysis.

- I. Introduction (i: 1-9).
- II. Factions (i: 10—iv).
 1. The case stated (i: 11-12).
 2. The line of argument (i: 13—iv).
 - a. Paul's conduct was free from party spirit (i: 13-17).
 - b. Party spirit opposes the Gospel message (i: 18-25).
 - c. Character of Christ forbids party spirit (i: 26-31).

- d. Paul's preaching was against party spirit (ii: 1-5).
 - e. The Gospel message of divine wisdom (ii: 6-9).
 - f. Is revealed by the Spirit (ii: 10-13).
 - g. Is understood by the Spirit and not by natural man (ii: 14—iii: 4).
 - h. Party spirit misapprehends the nature of the ministry (iii: 5-23).
 - i. Paul's example (iv: 1-13).
 - j. Conclusion of argument (iv: 14-21).
- III. Church Discipline (v—vi).
1. The great scandal (v).
 2. Lawsuits before the unrighteous (vi: 1-11).
 3. Uncleanness (vi: 12-20).
- IV. Concerning Marriage and Celibacy (vii).
1. The lawfulness of marriage and its duties (vs. 1-11).
 2. Directions about mixed marriages (vs. 12-17).
 3. Christian duty in the relations of life (vs. 18-24).
 4. Apostolic advice to the unmarried (vs. 25-40).
- V. Concerning Food Offered to Idols (viii—x: 1).
1. Knowledge and love contrasted (viii: 1-4).
 2. Christian liberty ruled by love (viii: 5-13).
 3. The principle illustrated and enforced by Paul's example (ix).
 4. The principle the only safe course (x: 1-13).
 5. Participation with idolatry contaminating and dangerous (ix—x: 14-22).
 6. Practical summing up of the teaching (x: 23—xi: 1).

VI. Christian Worship (xi: 2-34).

1. Woman's place in the assemblies of Christians (xi: 2-16).
2. The proper observance of the Lord's Supper (xi: 17-34).

VII. Concerning Spiritual Gifts (xii—xiv).

1. Source and diversity of the gifts (xii: 1-11).
2. Functions of gifts in the church, which is an organic unity (xii: 12-31).
3. Superiority of love over the extraordinary gifts (xiii).
4. Prophecy superior to tongues (xiv: 1-25).
5. Right use of ministries in the church (xiv: 26-39).

VIII. The Resurrection (xv).

1. Christ's resurrection an essential article of apostolic testimony (xv: 1-11).
2. Christ's resurrection the pledge of ours (xv: 12-34).
3. Answer to objections and nature of the resurrection body (xv: 35-49).
4. Final victory over death (xv: 50-58).

IX. Conclusion (xvi).

I. DEALING WITH EVILS IN THE CHURCH

I. The Factions (xi: 10—iv). Four parties (i: 12) contended for the leadership in the church at Corinth, and threatened its disruption. Actual division had not yet taken place, but impended. Discord existed as it always must in the like case, and disturbed its peace, marred its testimony and hindered its growth. The

first of these parties called itself after the name of Paul himself. They were, no doubt, for the most part those who had been brought to Christ through his ministry, and who were disposed to push his doctrine of Christian liberty to a dangerous extreme. The second called itself after the name of Apollos, "an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures" (Acts xviii: 24). While he was faithful to the mighty deposit of truth committed to the servants of Christ, it is likely his teaching was more ornate and rhetorical than Paul's, and hence would be more attractive to a section of the church who loved brilliancy of style and philosophical subtleties in public discourse. The third was the faction of Peter. It was doubtless composed of Jewish converts who took the name of the Apostle of the circumcision. There is no evidence that Peter ever visited Corinth. His name, however, was a synonym for the predominance of the Jewish aspect of Christianity. They held that to some degree Judaism is obligatory upon all who believe, that the Gentile churches should conform to the pattern of that in Jerusalem. The fourth faction called itself by the name of Christ. We are not distinctly informed of its nature, but may not be far astray if we say that it repudiated all the others, cast off all human authority, refusing to recognize Paul or Apollos or Cephas or any other teacher, however eminent, and claimed for itself the exclusive right to the name Christian. But it was none the less a faction than the others. Its sectarian shibboleth betrayed its spirit, just as certain bodies in our day display the same sectarianism under the specious name of Christian.

In combatting this evil, the Apostle deals mainly with those who call themselves by his name and by that of Apollos. He shows that party spirit is wholly inconsistent with the sovereign authority of Christ (i: 12-16). There is but one Head of the body, the Lord Jesus. For the redemption of the body He was crucified; into His name alone believers are baptized. To set up a human leader, no matter how gifted or faithful, is disloyalty to Christ. He next attacks it by pointing out its root, viz., a false conception of the Gospel (i: 17—ii). The Gospel is not a human system at all. It is from God and, through the Spirit, leads to Him. It is salvation. It is God's power. To make it of no effect by perverting or disguising it is a crime. Philosophic speculations, brilliant rhetoric, subtlety of thought and splendor of diction—such as the parties sought in their leaders—are foreign to the real nature and object of the Gospel, and subversive of it. Paul had not so preached it. He would not strip it of its power by arraying it in the garb of worldly wisdom, that their "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Therefore he "combined spiritual things with spiritual words" (ii: 13), as this clause seems to mean. He matched the divine message with fitting language. His one transcendent theme was, Christ and Him crucified. He next points out the disastrous consequence of such preaching as the factions sought and enjoyed (iii). Their divisions led to strife and jealousy, and proved them to be carnal, walking as the world walks. Men may build bad material on the true foundation,

and they may even destroy while they imagine they are building. A day of trial is coming which shall test the character of every man's work. Some men's work will disappear in flames and smoke. Some will barely be saved, their whole life-work utterly vanish. How important to build right material on the right foundation! He proves that to range themselves under the names of their teachers indicates false notions as to the powers and functions of ministers of the Gospel.

1. Ministers are servants (*diaconoi*), instruments in the Lord's hands for the accomplishment of His will (iii: 5, 6). They bring a message of which they are not the authors.
2. Ministers are one; teach the same truth, have the same Spirit, and stand in the same relation to God (iii: 8, 9).
3. Every one must answer to God for his work. Woe to them who build good material on a false foundation, or bad material on the true, or who injure or deface God's spiritual house (iii: 10-17).
4. Human wisdom and worldly devices have no place in the solemn work of building the church of God (iii: 18-21).
5. Ministers are the property of the Church (iii: 22, 23). The building does not belong to the builders, but the builders to the building. Paul, Apollos, Cephas,—every servant, whatever his gifts and station, is the Church's property.
6. Ministers are stewards of the grace of God (iv: 1-5).
7. Paul's personal example of self-denial, lowliness, meekness, privation, and suffering for the name and cause of Christ exempted him from any complicity in this evil, and was enough to shame forever the factional spirit. The argument against

schism and strife in the church of Corinth is of universal application. As drawn out by Paul in this section, it is conclusive and unanswerable. Party spirit among Christians is as much and as pointedly rebuked now as then.

II. Criminal Neglect of a Faithful Discipline (v). The sin here mentioned was most gross and shameful, one which even the licentious inhabitants of Corinth would not tolerate. Yet the Christian church of that city permitted one of the guilty parties to retain his standing among them. A moral sense of evil and their responsibility touching it should have led them to humble themselves before God: instead they were puffed up. Asserting his apostolic authority, Paul dealt with the case as it deserved. The world is the theater of Satan's power. The Church, delivered from his power, is the habitation of God by His Spirit. No evil leaven must be permitted within the holy temple. The guilty one was to be put outside, delivered up to Satan for the destruction of the wicked flesh that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. It was a tremendous sentence, but the stern discipline wrought the good end for which it was exercised (2 Cor. ii: 5-8).

I. Legal wrongs (vi: 1-11). Suits at law appear to have been common among the members of the church, and instead of bringing their causes before their brethren they had them tried before the heathen tribunals. The Apostle brings to bear upon their conduct the advent of Christ, and the amazing scenes that shall then take place. He shames them with the utter incongruity of Christians, the future judges of the

world, seeking that world's judgment on their petty affairs. It is an unanswerable argument, a most cogent appeal. Then with fine irony he directs them to set those least esteemed among them to be the judges of such affairs. If the coming of the Lord and its attendant scenes, so solemn and so searching, held the place in the faith and hope of Christians that Scripture warrants and demands, litigation, and the greed and the spirit of resentment and revenge which prompt it, would not be so common as now.

2. Impurity (vi:12-20). We know that the sin warned so urgently against in this section was shamefully flagrant among the people of Corinth. That members of the church were guilty of it seems evident from v:1-3; 2 Cor. xii:21. It is the common vice of the heathen world still, and in Christendom ranks with intemperance, its twin sister in debauchery. The three most weighty arguments which he adduces to banish impurity of every sort from the professing body are these: first, believers are members of Christ; they form the mystical body of which Christ is the glorious Head. What a sin, what a crime, against Christ, to take a member of Him and join it to a harlot! Second, the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. To defile this sanctuary by fornication is to be guilty of the most awful sacrilege. Third, believers are redeemed. God has bought them; with the infinite price of His son's precious blood He has bought them. They are His property. Therefore, in body and soul they are to glorify Him, to live for Him, and to abstain from all that is contrary to His gracious will. Therefore, they

have no right to abuse their bodies by sinful indulgence, by overwork, gluttony, or sensuality of any sort.

III. Answers to Questions That Had Been Pounded to the Apostle (vii—xiv). There were several inquiries addressed to him by the church of Corinth, as we learn from this portion of the Epistle. Three are very distinctly marked in the letter itself, e. g., vii: 1; viii: 1; xii: 1. The phrases of these verses are aptly translated by Beet thus: "About the things ye wrote me"; "About idol sacrifices," etc.

IV. About Marriage. The Corinthians wished to know whether marriage was obligatory, or lawful, or expedient; whether divorce was allowable; whether a Christian could consistently remain in the conjugal relation with a heathen. The answer of the Apostle to these inquiries is explicit and final. He teaches monogamy, (vii: 2); each man should have his own wife, each woman her own husband. As to the expediency of marriage, he teaches that in view of the immoralities so common in Corinth, Christian men and women should marry (vii: 2). Those, however, who have self-control he advises to remain as himself, unmarried (vii: 7). Yet the marriage relation is God's institution and holy. No sin is committed by those who enter it. There is no ground in the Apostle's language for the unnatural practice of Romish celibacy. In nothing of what Paul says of abstinence from matrimony is there a hint of compulsion. The reason for the advice is stated in v. 26 ff., viz., the ever-increasing difficulties of the Christian position. Persecution was already begun; troubles of the heaviest sort

were coming on the Church. Those who had families would be exposed to greater dangers and anxieties than those who were independent. Owing to the present distress it was better to remain unmarried. As to separation the teaching is quite full and definite (vs. 10-17). Final separation is forbidden by the Lord Jesus Himself, save for one cause (Matt. v: 32; xix: 6-9). The Gospel does not interfere with the marriage bond. If an unbelieving partner is contented to remain, the union is not to be disturbed. If he depart, there is nothing to prevent him. But the Christian thus abandoned is to remain unmarried (v. 11). Abandonment suspends the relation, but does not sunder it. The Christian so abandoned cannot contract another union.

Paul's inspiration, as brought to view in this chapter, merits attention. He says: "I speak by permission, not of commandment" (v. 6); "I command, yet not I, but the Lord" (v. 10); "To the rest speak I, not the Lord" (v. 12); "I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment" (v. 25); "I suppose therefore" (v. 26). What does he mean by such language? That a part of his communication is from the Lord and a part from his own uninspired mind? So some think. But a little attention to the matter will serve to correct such a notion. What he means is this: On some things touching marriage Christ has spoken, and the Apostle accordingly quotes Him. But phases of the marriage relation had developed at Corinth on which the Lord Jesus had given no direct revelation in His teaching. It was needful that these difficulties

should be authoritatively settled. And Paul does so, using the strongest terms: "I speak," "I command," etc. A stronger proof of his inspiration could hardly be adduced. Who is this man Paul that he should set his authority alongside of that of Jesus Christ? Could anything be more arrogant or presumptuous than for a mere man to lift his speech up to a level with the teaching of the Son of God? If he did not speak by the Spirit of God, his language is that of a madman. But this he claims: "And I think that I also have the Spirit of God" (v. 40, R. V.). Augustine long ago noted that Paul's "I think" in this verse is ironical, and he is followed by Meyer and De Wette. As if he said, Do others claim divine authority? Even so do I. The chapter discloses Paul's knowledge of the words of Christ. In it he manifests an intimate acquaintance with the very words of the Saviour. He knows just what the Lord had said on certain subjects; and he knows this to the same extent and with the same understanding as to the import of the Lord's teaching as do the Gospels. How did he know it? It is a valuable fact that he does, for it helps to settle the question of the age and accuracy of the Gospel record. It was probably through the faithful transmission of Jesus' teachings to which Luke refers (Luke i: 1-4) that he received the knowledge. It is not beyond the bounds of belief at all that Matthew's Gospel was already in circulation among Christians; and the view is strengthened by the fact that in this chapter under review the Apostle seems to refer to that Scripture.

V. Christian Liberty (viii—x). Should Christians

attend heathen festivals and partake of the meat which possibly had been presented to an idol? Should they at all eat of such food? Some seriously scrupled to do so. They regarded it as sinful thus to come into contact, if not to commune, with the impure spirit of idolatry. Others who were stronger did not hesitate to eat whatever was set before them. Paul's answer contains an exposition and application of the principles and responsibilities of Christian liberty. This section contains the fullest revelation of the nature, extent, and responsibilities of Christian liberty.

1. He shows that an idol is nothing; there is but one God, the Lord of Heaven and earth (viii: 1-6). It is very possible for a Christian to come to such knowledge as to be totally indifferent to idols and all that pertains thereto.

2. Not all Christians attain to such maturity of discernment (viii: 7, 8). Some are led into sin by the example of the stronger; their conscience is defiled by eating what to the stronger is a matter of complete indifference; for they cannot regard the idol as nothing.

3. Paul's remedy for such cases, viz., the law of love (viii: 9-13). The stronger brother ought to abridge his liberty for the sake of the weaker. For it is a matter of indifference whether he eat or not; there is no compulsion; he is neither better nor worse for having eaten or for having not eaten. Since then no moral duty is involved, but much is involved for the weaker brother, the strong believer ought, out of love for his brother in the faith, to let the law of charity have full sway. In Rom. xiv, where this question is

discussed, the duties of the weaker brother are pointed out: "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth; for God has received him (v. 3). The Apostle's principle is, Christian liberty, precious as it is, is regulated and determined by the law of love.

4. He enforces his teaching by reciting his own example (ix). He is an Apostle, is free, is their spiritual father. No one can deny that he has the right to have a wife (ix: 5), to cease from working (v. 6), to require his support from the Gospel (vs. 7-14); but he has waived all these rights, nor asserted his liberty, that his work might not be hindered, that weak brethren might not be made to stumble. He had become all things to all men that by all means he might save some (v. 22). That is, with him the law of love reigned pre-eminent, controlling his liberty and personal rights. The principle is the secret of his matchless devotion and self-sacrifice: love exulting over every thought of ease and personal indulgence.

5. The principle upon which he insists is the only safe one (x: 1-13). He illustrates the danger which may arise from self-indulgence and the assertion of our preference and will by Israel's history in the wilderness. They gave the reins to their lusts and murmured at the privations which God designed for their discipline, and divine chastisement fell upon them. The Christian who does the like will share the same awful judgments. It is a deep law he here touches. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," etc. For the principles of the divine government as

seen in the history of Israel are eternal in their application. They belong to Christian times no less than to Jewish. Conduct like theirs now or in any age will be followed by the like consequences. Therefore, practice self-control.

6. What is really meant by taking part in a heathen festival (x:14-22)? Paul decides the question. He draws the line with a firm hand. A Christian who sits at the Lord's Table places himself by that act under the authority and control of Christ, whose feast it is, and who presides unseen thereat. The Jew also who partakes of the sacrifice puts himself under the authority of the altar and in communion with it; identifies himself with the worship of Jehovah. The heathen who eats at the idol temple becomes by the act a partaker of the worship of the god that there presides; identifies himself with the idol temple. Moreover, in all such cases, the worshipers commune together, share in the same acts of worship, acknowledge the same object of worship, and are identified with one another as communicants at the same feast. While the idols are nothing, yet back of all idolatry are demons with whom the worshipers have communion. Let the Corinthians consider whether they can drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; whether they can be partakers of the Lord's Table and the table of demons. It is a most cogent and irresistible argument, and must have set at rest once for all the question of a Christian's attending a heathen feast and taking part therein.

7. Practical application of the teaching (x:23-33;

xi:1). The whole teaching of this section may be summed up in the sublime rule with which the Apostle closes his discussion: "Whether therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"—a rule well calculated to regulate the conduct of the Christian in every doubtful or difficult relation.

VI. Christian Worship (xi). The Apostle's teaching on this point breaks up into two parts, viz., a woman's place in the assemblies of Christians, and the right observance of the Lord's Supper. The first part extends through vs. 2-16, the second occupies the remainder of the chapter.

It would seem that Christian women were assuming a quasi-official position in the church, that they were asserting a sort of equality with men in the services of the Lord's house, and an independence, or rather an impatience, under the restraints their place of subordination imposed, which boded ill to the family and the Church. (See chapter xiv: 34, 35; 1 Tim. ii: 11-15.) To arrest the danger that threatened and to give authoritative instruction on the important matter, Paul appeals to the divine order of being in the redemptive scheme. Christ is the supreme center, "the middle between God and man: from Him the line of gradation descends to man and ascends to God." The head of the man is Christ; the head of the woman is the man; the head of Christ is God. This is the order of power ascending to Him who is supreme. No doubt it is the order of redemption that is brought to view. For the man to attempt to thrust himself into the place of Christ would be sheer blasphemy. For the woman

to leave the sphere assigned to her in the constitution of creation, would be the subversion of the divinely appointed order. In worship and service, the man should be unveiled because he is the image and glory of God. The woman is to be veiled, i. e., recognize in dress and demeanor her place of modest subordination, because she is the glory of the man. This is a noteworthy statement. "The woman is the glory of the man." Among the inferior animals almost universally the beauty of form and of dress belongs to the male. It is the male bird that has the gorgeous plumage. How magnificent the features and colors of the peacock, the pheasant, and the bird of paradise, while his mate wears the modest brown—almost dingy. How majestic is the mane and the form of the lion, while his lioness, strong and lithe as she is, wears a much humbler coat. But in the human family this order is reversed. The beauty of face and form is displayed by the woman. The man may have a beauty of his own, but it is not so fine nor refined nor graceful as the woman's. So in art of almost every sort woman is the glory of our race. If she persist in leaving the place where her glory shines, if she will persist in pushing out into the glare of public life and thrust herself into the struggle and the grinding competition that wears out men's lives and tenderer instincts, let her not be astonished if she lose her distinctive grace—the delicate sheen that cannot bear the world's rough, unhallowed ways. Paul does not forbid woman's active labors in the church, but he guards against ill consequences that would follow the abuse of Christian

liberty. He requires of the woman who prophesies or prays in the social meeting to observe becoming modesty in dress and demeanor.

Shameful abuse of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper had crept into the church (vs. 17-34): it was degraded to the level of a common meal. It seems probable that a fraternal repast immediately preceded the observance of the Supper. This early received the name of Agape, or Love-feast. In Corinth, it seems, some of the richer members brought abundance of viands for the Agape, while the poorer had little or nothing. Instead of uniting the food and all partaking of it in common, each ate what he had, and those who had little were hungry, and those who had much were drunken. In immediate connection with the Agape the Supper was observed; and naturally enough the latter was profaned by the members who had just partaken of the Love-feast; indeed, it seems the one glided into the other in such a way as to make the two a single feast. Paul condemns their conduct in unsparing terms, and proceeds to state whence he had his knowledge of the institution, the nature, object and perpetuity of the Lord's Supper. He received it from the Lord Himself; it was instituted by Christ Himself; it is designed to be the memorial of the sacrificial death of the Lord; it consists of eating the bread and drinking of the cup by the communicants; it is to continue until He comes. Self-examination should precede its observance; and ignorant or willful perversion or abuse of it exposes the guilty party to the judgment of the Lord. It is the most solemn and import-

ant ordinance of the Gospel, for it is the Lord's Table we approach, it is with the Lord Himself that we commune, and with one another; in it we proclaim His death till He come; therefore, with all reverence and preparedness of heart ought we to approach it.

VII. Concerning Spiritual Gifts (xii—xiv). The teaching of the chapter may be summarized thus: The wealth of spiritual gifts with which the Church of God is endowed (vs. 1-11), and the design of such gifts (12-31). The gifts bestowed on the church of Corinth, and, we may add, on all the apostolic churches, for this is but a sample of the others, are extraordinary. The basis of them, no doubt, is found in the natural capabilities of men, but no man ever displays them until he becomes a member of Christ, for they belong exclusively to the realm of the spiritual, the body of Christ.

Nine gifts are mentioned. They may be grouped under three main divisions: 1. Intellectual power (v. 8); 2. Supernatural Energy of Faith (vs. 9, 10); 3. Speaking with Tongues (v. 10). They may be classified as follows:

1. Intellectual Power:

“Word of wisdom.”

“Word of knowledge.”

2. Uncommon Energy of Faith:

“Faith itself.”

“Gifts of Healing.”

“Working of Miracles.”

3. Power of Teaching:

“Prophecy.”

4. Power of Spiritual Discernment:

“Discerning of Spirits.”

5. Speaking with Tongues:

“Divers kinds of tongues.”

“Interpretation of tongues.”

In the enumeration of the gifts the Apostle begins with the highest of all, “the word of wisdom,” and “the word of knowledge,” the power to understand and to declare the deep things of God—apprehension of divine truth and its utterance. He closes the list with the lowest and least, “tongues,” a gift neither essential nor permanent, as chapter xiv shows. Still, there is a sort of order traceable; wisdom is followed by knowledge, which suggests its opposite, faith; and this is succeeded by its miraculous results; and these by doctrine and prediction; and these by judgment, tongues and their interpretation.

Note that Paul ascribes all to the Holy Spirit; He is the author of all gifts and bestowments Christians enjoy. Whatever may be the believer's natural capacity, with whatever talents he may be enriched, he cannot of himself command one of the mighty energies of the Spirit. Much less can the natural unrenewed man; he is altogether destitute of them. Moreover, the Spirit acts as Sovereign in communicating them. He distributes to each one severally as He will. No one can command them at his will, much less can he select for himself, and still less can he monopolize. He can cultivate and develop what he has received, so that it increases and grows more efficient with him by faithful use, but he can do no more.

Furthermore, the wealth of these spiritual endowments is most remarkable. It is like God thus to give, superabundantly, infinitely. So does He in nature; not less, but more in grace. Unity with amazing variety is His way. He is no servile copyist. A dead uniformity is man's way. Finally, the aim and end is that His people may be thoroughly furnished to every good work—that each may perform his appropriate ministry to his own advantage and to the profit of the whole body, the Church.

The teaching concerning gifts leads necessarily to the subject of the organic nature of the Church. It is the body of Christ. Believers' union with Him is represented in scripture as the vine and the branches (John xv); as the foundation and the superstructure (Eph. i); as the bridegroom and his bride (2 Cor. xi: 2). Perhaps the most striking figure is this of the body. Christians are not separate, unrelated units; they are not like grains of sand or isolated trees. They are compacted together and form one whole, a body organized, articulate, instinct with life. Of this body Christ is the Head—the central controlling power—and each believer is some member of the body. Each has his own place and his own functions. Each has his importance, but not equal importance. Yet to the symmetry and completeness of the body each member is indispensable. Great are the functions of the eye, the ear, the hand; but of how little real use would these be without the feet, the heart, the lungs, the head! The Lord needs all the members, uses all, puts more abundant grace and beauty on those that seem

least comely and attractive. But great and marvelous as is the mystic body, with its interdependencies, and great as are the gifts with which the Head enriches it, yet there is one grace all may enjoy—that is common to all and that transcends all the extraordinary gifts, viz., *love*. And so we turn to chapter xiii, the supremacy of love.

The word which Paul here exalts, about which he weaves the most majestic sentences, is never used by the Greek heathen classical writers. The utmost they attained here lies in the cold word philanthropy, and in *philadelphia*, which was restricted to blood relations. It occurs in the Septuagint and is found in the apocryphal Book of Wisdom. It was “born in the bosom of revealed religion” (Trench). One hundred and sixteen times it is found in the New Testament and is forever consecrated to the purest and holiest affection of which we can have any conceivable knowledge. The common word for love in the Greek language could never serve to designate the love of God, the love of Christ, the love of the Spirit (Rom. xv:30), and Christian love. It was dyed too deeply in pagan associations to be capable of redemption into holier usage. The Holy Spirit has chosen this term, altogether removed from human passion of every form and degree, and lifted it up into a sphere where evermore it shines with undivided splendor. Paul’s description of love falls into three parts:

1. Love’s Prominence (vs. 1-3). It is indispensable. Its absence renders every other gift and faculty useless and profitless. Eloquence of the loftiest sort

without it is worthless, is no more than booming brass. The ability to teach, to open the mysteries, the profound secrets of nature, and even of revelation, without it, is valueless. A masterful intellect, a poetic imagination, a remorseless logic, a brilliant diction, without the divine, all-helpful grace of love, are absolutely worthless. "The mightiest philosophers have never changed the morals of the street in which they lived." A heroic devotion which leads even to martyrdom without love may be only wild fanaticism. Love colors, transfuses and transfigures all.

2. The Attributes of Love (vs. 4-7). What a marvelous description of the characteristics and activities of love this is. Love is positive and negative, active and passive: it vitalizes every grace, subdues every passion, transfuses every emotion, sweetens every bitterness, disarms evil and fills the good with energy and power. It is patient, kind, humble, unselfish, decorous, gentle, yielding, firm, trustful, hopeful.

3. Love's Permanence (vs. 8-13). Prophecies shall cease, as prediction, in its accomplishment, as teaching, in the age when man will not teach his brother to know the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least even to the greatest (Jer. xxxi: 34; Heb. viii: 11). "Tongues shall cease." Of the sixteen languages represented at Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts ii) nearly every one of them is no longer spoken. "The tongues of earth are many; the language of Heaven is one." "Knowledge shall be done away," by a wider and truer intelligence, a higher and nobler comprehension. But

love will abide, for it is of all graces the most God-like, for "God is love."

The Apostle next discusses the comparative value of prophecy and the gift of tongues. He sets prophecy in the highest place, and recognizes its possession as most desirable. To prophesy is to declare God's message to men. The message may relate to the past, the present or the future; but it is not to be confined to prediction. Prophecy in its biblical meaning is more than teaching or preaching; it is essentially to declare God's mind with an authoritative, unmistakable assurance. The prophet gave forth communications from God; he spoke in the power of the Holy Spirit and the heathen auditor was overwhelmed by his words. The gift of prophecy is superior to "tongues" (vs. 4-11). The aim of it is the edification, comfort and strengthening of believers (vs. 12-20). The purpose of "tongues" is to evince the supernatural presence of God with His people. The gift was a *sign* (vs. 21-23). The blessed effects of prophecies are to instruct the Church, to convert sinners and to lead them to Christ (vs. 24-33).

The gift of tongues so highly prized by the Corinthians was certainly a miraculous endowment of the Spirit. It is difficult to understand just what it was, much more to define it. It seems evident from the chapter that it was not identical with speaking foreign languages, for often neither the hearer nor the speaker himself understood the utterance. The utterance, to be of profit, had to be interpreted (vs. 27, 28). In this respect the gift as it prevailed among the Corinthians

differed from that bestowed on the disciples on the day of Pentecost, for the hearers then recognized each his own form of speech in the words spoken by the Spirit-filled disciples. At Corinth it was a wrapt, ecstatic state into which the Spirit brought the speaker, and in which he poured forth utterances unintelligible often to himself and to those about him save as it was given some one sitting by at the moment to make intelligible. It appears, therefore, that, in some cases, the speaker alone understood and no others besides; sometimes another understood what was said, the speaker not; and sometimes both speaker and hearer understood. Paul says this gift was a "sign," not of edification for believers, but only for the unbelieving; and he justifies the designation by his quotation from Isaiah xxviii: 11, 12. The Spirit had His own reasons for bestowing the gift which He has not been pleased fully to disclose to us. Speculation concerning it is useless.

VIII. The Resurrection of the Body (xv). It was the denial by some of the resurrection that called forth this magnificent defense (v. 12). Some Christians questioned the doctrine (2 Tim. ii: 17, 18), in the apostolic age, but it appears no one doubted that of Christ. Paul's argument in support of this fundamental hope rests upon the undisputed fact of Christ's resurrection—an argument the most conclusive ever framed on the subject. Every reader must feel the intensity, the vehemence with which the Apostle writes. His language is impassioned, his words fairly burn. At times he seems to be indignant, or sarcastic,

or impatient, but always eloquent and earnest to the last degree. For the truth involved is vital. If the resurrection is given up, the Gospel is stripped of all its power, faith is emptied of all its worth, and hope becomes bankrupt. The discussion is limited to the resurrection of the saints. Silence reigns over the destiny of the wicked.

The chapter falls into three parts: 1. The central facts of the Gospel message (vs. 1-11). 2. Christ's resurrection renders forever secure the resurrection of the saints (vs. 12-34). 3. Objections answered—the glory of the resurrection body (vs. 35-58).

1. The facts upon which Paul's preaching turned—the core of all he proclaimed to lost men—are these: that Christ died for our sins according to Scripture; that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures. The facts are accredited by competent and trustworthy witnesses. Six sets of witnesses are mentioned, three being individuals, Peter, James, and Paul himself; three are groups of individuals, the Apostles twice, and a company of more than five hundred, of whom the major part were still living. Nor are these all the witnesses. He passes over in silence the women, the two with whom Jesus conversed on the way to Emmaus (Luke xxiv), the seven on the lake shore (John xxi). Some of them saw the Lord repeatedly after He was risen. These are facts, true even as God is true. On them Christianity rests. On them likewise Paul builds his unanswerable conclusions and his triumphant hope.

2. Disastrous results of the denial of the resurrec-

tion (vs. 12-20). The form of argument is called *reductio ad absurdum*, i. e., the position of the opponent is shown to be absurd, monstrous, and incredible. Our Lord repeatedly predicted that He would rise from the grave on the third day (Matt. xvi: 21; Luke xviii:33). If He did not rise, He is not the Prophet who should come into the world. Is the denier of the resurrection prepared to assert that? Besides, to deny the possibility of a resurrection is to deny Christ's. What is true of the whole is true of all the parts. If the dead rise not, then Christ is not risen, and hence Christianity is wiped out as a divine plan for man's redemption.

Moreover, in such case apostolic preaching is void of all power, and faith is emptied of its content, is destitute of reality. For the central fact of the preaching is Christ's resurrection, and faith rests on that fact, the living person of the Son of God. Worse still, the Apostles are deceivers; for if Christ is not risen, they are convicted of lying: they are "found" out to be, not mistaken, but *false* witnesses of God; for God sent them to testify to what they had seen. But, if Christ is not risen from the dead, then they abuse their high commission and utter in God's name what they know to be false. Is that credible? Is it conceivable? There is no pardon of sin, if Christ is not risen. He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification (Rom. iv: 25). Is it all a delusion? Yes, if He is not risen; our faith is fruitless, is without the promised results. (The word in v. 17 rendered "vain" is different from that of v. 14). To deny the resurrection is to impeach both the

wisdom and the power of God. His wisdom—because in His infinite love He gave His Son for our salvation (Jno. iii: 16; Rom. v: 8); and His power, for He hath declared by His Spirit that the Gospel is His power unto salvation to every one that believeth (Rom. i: 16, 17). And so God is powerless to retrieve the ruin of the Fall! Such is the monstrous conclusion to which the opponent is inevitably driven by his denial of the resurrection.

But not only believers who are alive are still unjustified and unsaved, but those who have died have perished. The best and purest men and women of the world whose last words of earth were words of triumph and praise have perished. Stephen with the light of Heaven streaming down on his upturned face, with his vision of the Son of Man standing at God's right hand ready to welcome him into bliss; John's brother James slain by Herod's savage sword; perhaps James of Jerusalem also, the Lord's brother, beaten to death by a fuller's club, and others of like faith who were in Christ while they lived, and who fell asleep in union with Him—is it conceivable that they are lost? Have they perished in their sins? "The sounds of glory were ringing in their ears" while they lived, and they died with visions of bliss filling and thrilling their spirits—was it all delusion? Yes, they have been basely cheated, if there is no resurrection of the dead. And we, Apostles and Christians now alive, are the most pitiable of men; for we expose ourselves to hardships and dangers; suffer persecution and privation; are hunted down as ferocious beasts that must be

destroyed. How pitiable, how silly it all is, if there be no resurrection. "Better eat, drink, die: what can the rest avail us?" "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." This is the triumphant conclusion. There is marked suggestiveness in the term *firstfruits*. It is taken from the ancient ceremony of Israel of waving the sheaf of firstfruits of the ripening grain before the Lord (Lev. xxiii:9-11). The sheaf was at once the pledge and the sample of the entire harvest; it was a part of the harvest to be gathered. Christ is the firstfruits of all the sleeping saints in His resurrection. As certainly as He is risen, so certainly shall they rise, for His is the pledge and the assured part of their resurrection. Our faith in the resurrection rests on the proved fact of Christ's.

3. Corroborative proofs of the resurrection (vs. 21-34). There is organic union subsisting between Christ and His people, just as surely as that existing between Adam and his race. By reason of the natural and federal union with Adam the first man, all die (are dying). Death has passed upon the whole race because of the first man's sin (Rom. v:12). By reason of the federal and vital union with Christ, the Second Man, all in Him shall be made alive. If the first statement is true, viz., that all in Adam die—and who can deny it?—the second is likewise, viz., that all in Christ shall share His victory over sin and death. Else redemption has proved a failure, and Christ's work abortive. But there is an order or rank in which the redeemed come forth from the gates of death;

Christ the Captain and Conqueror marches first in the glorious procession, and His people, His redeemed bands afterward. Then ensues the subjugation of all things by the Saviour, and He finally delivers up the perfected Kingdom to God even the Father.

It is to be noted that a series of events are clearly indicated in vs. 20-27. If we conceive of the end-time as a single event, a final consummation which terminates at once both our race and time likewise, we shall fail to grasp the full significance of these great predictions. "The day of the Lord" and "the last day" in prophetic Scripture does not mean a day of four and twenty hours, but a period during which a variety of events transpires. Paul distinctly marks off some of the events in this passage: (1) the Lord's resurrection; (2) His advent; (3) the resurrection of those that are His; (4) the overthrow of all enemies, the abolition of all rule and authority, and His Kingdom established in victorious power; (5) the delivering up of the Kingdom to God. These and other like events do not take place simultaneously nor contemporaneously. They are successive; they are stages in the accomplishment of the divine purposes. Paul separates them by two adverbs of temporal sequence, viz., "then," "then" (vs. 23-24). The two words might just as well be rendered "afterward," for this is their exact meaning, as vs. 5-7 show, where each successive appearance of Christ after His resurrection is designated by the same terms. In the series of subjugations here mentioned the last is that of death. On any fair principle of interpretation the meaning seems certainly

to be this, that death is not destroyed at the advent of the Lord; it seems to linger still, while other enemies are being triumphantly dealt with. So Van Oosterzee understands it: "Christ the firstfruits; after that yet a last conflict, only later followed by the entire destruction of the last enemy, death." So also Prince Edwards: "Death has not, it appears from this, been destroyed at the second coming and at the resurrection of those that are Christ's." Precisely the same order of events is observed in Rev. xix: 11—xx: 14. There is first the coming of the mighty Conqueror, the judgment of His enemies, the binding of Satan, the "first resurrection," and the judgment before the Throne. The last act in the mighty drama is, death and Hades are cast in to the lake of fire (Rev. xx: 14). This is Paul's "last enemy." Christ's victory is absolutely complete when He has abolished death, and delivered up the perfected Kingdom to God the Father. This is the final "end."

The words, "then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (v. 28), present a revelation so mysterious and profound as to be beyond human grasp. The cessation of His human mode of existence or its absorption into Deity it cannot mean, for that could not be called a subjection to God. Enough now to say that when Christ's mediatorial reign has accomplished the mighty end for which it was established, when He has cleared the Kingdom of the last vestige of sin and misery and has brought all things into complete and everlasting subjection to God, the Kingdom

is surrendered to the Father. This economic change, vast and all-comprehensive as it must be, will not affect the divine dominion of the Son, in the unity of the Godhead; it may be that then and only then will be re-established the harmony and blissfulness and peace and glory that existed before sin was, and God, the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, shall be all in all. Christ will ever be the medium of communion, the Word, and the glorious Redeemer of the saved from among men.

4. The nature and the glory of the resurrection body (vs. 35-58). A difficulty is started by the inquiry, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" The question involves the possibility of bodily resurrection and the kind of body those raised up shall have. A dozen difficulties may be urged against its possibility. Here is one: if physiology speaks true, a man who has lived fifty years has already had seven bodies. With what body shall he come? Our Lord's reply to the Sadducean objection is complete and final, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God" (Matt. xxii: 29; cf. Mark xii: 24, 27). Admit God's power, and every difficulty vanishes. If man by his genius and skill can so transform dead matter as to etherealize it until it is brilliantly transparent, what will God not do when He raises up the bodies of His people and robes them with majestic immortality? Paul's reply is based on the continuity of identity. In all the changes which our bodies undergo even before death, personal identity is never lost. Analogy as to seeds, animal life, and

material bodies shows the variety that marks creation. God is not straitened for archetypes. He has filled the universe with myriad forms, and there are gradations in these forms. So will it be in the resurrection. The body dies, and melts into kindred dust, a thing of corruption and weakness, an object of repulsiveness: it rises a body of beauty, power, and glory, and is exquisitely adapted to the condition of the glorified human spirit. Great as the change in resurrection will be, nevertheless the identity of the body will be preserved. So much is pledged by the Apostle in this chapter. God's unfailing promise and power are involved; the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the living) shall be changed (vs. 51-57).

The teaching of the chapter may be summarized thus:

1. The resurrection of the body is assured by the resurrection of Christ.
2. It will be the resurrection of the same body.
3. It will be a resurrection in a different body, but its identity preserved.
4. It will be only when Christ shall come again.
5. Living saints shall receive the incorruptible and glorious body.

The closing chapter of the Epistle treats of the collection for the church in Jerusalem, personal matters, and salutations. In v. 17 we learn the number and names of those who brought to Paul the letter addressed him by the Corinthians, to which this Epistle is in part an answer.

Looking back over this great Epistle, some things in it stand out with remarkable distinctness:

1. Apostolic preaching gathers about one central and transcendent theme, viz., the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The Holy Spirit as the Supreme Revealer of truth, the Sanctifier of God's people, whose sanctuary is now the bodies of believers, is likewise made most prominent.

3. The organization of the Church, the marvelous gifts enjoyed by it, and the power with which it bore its witness for God amid the darkness and moral misery of a heathen city are also distinguishing features of the Epistle.

4. We are here presented with a vivid picture of a church composed of men and women whose infirmities and defects are like our own. Saints indeed the Corinthians were, but imperfect, sinful, and blameworthy in many things. The letter entirely dissipates the notion that the Apostolic Church was in an exceptional condition of holiness of life and purity of doctrine.

SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

From Ephesus Paul wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians. It was inferred from 1 Cor. v:7 and xvi:8 that it was in the spring and near Passover that it was written. He purposed to remain at Ephesus till Pentecost, and then visit Corinth. But the tumult precipitated by Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen (Acts xix—xx:1) forced him to flee from Ephesus. He crossed over most probably by ship to Troas. In the meantime Titus had been sent to Corinth from Ephesus on a most important and delicate mission, viz., to learn the precise state of things, and to adjust if possible the difficulties which disturbed the peace of the church and even threatened its existence, and to further the collection for the saints of Jerusalem. Whether Titus was one of those who carried Paul's first letter to the Corinthian church, or whether he with the unnamed brother (2 Cor. viii:18; xii:18) went a little later, cannot be positively determined. Certainly no great length of time intervened, if any at all. Perhaps contemporaneously* with the dispatch of the letter this trusted messenger was on his way to the scene of strife and confusion with authority to compose the troubles, deal with offenders, and to bring the church back into loyal obedience to Christ, the supreme Head of all. Amid great anxiety and restless

*Lightfoot, Conybeare, Howson and Lias, etc., hold that Titus was one of the bearers of 1 Corinthians.

apprehension (2 Cor. vii: 5,6) Paul awaited at Troas Titus' return and the tidings he should bring. There seems to be no evidence that the two had arranged to meet at this point. The expulsion of the Apostle from Ephesus forbids this notion. His devotion to the cause and testimony of Christ would not suffer him to remain idle. He preached the Gospel at Troas, and a "door was opened unto me of the Lord" (2 Cor. ii: 12). It is likely that at this time the Church was planted there, for on the final journey to Jerusalem Paul spent seven days at Troas teaching the disciples and breaking bread with them (Acts xx:6, 7). How long he remained at Troas we know not, but obviously for some length of time. Week after week passed, but Titus came not, and the Apostle suffered all the pangs of hope deferred (2 Cor. ii: 13). It might be thought that the joy incident to the establishment of a church at Troas as a blessed light-center in that dark region would have consoled the Apostle and have kept him there. But no; to settle the troubles at Corinth, to vindicate his own apostolic authority, and to purge out the old leaven which threatened to permeate and ruin the whole body, was more vitally important than the founding of a new Christian society. Accordingly, he passed on to Macedonia, and no doubt stopped to wait at Philippi. But even in Macedonia the deep depression felt at Troas continued; his flesh had no rest; in his own graphic words, "Without were fightings, within were fears" (2 Cor. vii: 5). The final arrival at Titus served in great measure to lift the burden and calm his perturbed spirit. Paul then wrote

the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which was carried back to the beloved church by the same faithful messenger, Titus. No long time, therefore, could have elapsed between the writing of the two Epistles, perhaps less than six months.

The occasion of its composition was the reception of the tidings from Corinth by Titus. Paul was extremely solicitous touching the reception that had been accorded a former letter which he addressed to these Christians (2 Cor. ii: 3, 4, 9; vii: 8). From these passages it has been argued with much plausibility that he had written them a very severe letter (now lost), which was dispatched by the hand of Titus.* This view assumes that Titus was sent to Corinth after the First Epistle had gone, perhaps some time thereafter—a theory which cannot be proved. The weight of the evidence, rather, is on the side of those who hold that Titus went with the deputation that carried to Corinth the first letter, viz., our canonical First Corinthians. There is quite enough of severity in First Corinthians to justify his language in the places cited above. Let anyone thoughtfully ponder the stern force with which he writes in 1 Cor. iv: 18-21; v: 1-8; vi: 5-8; xi: 17-22; xv: 35, 36, and he will have little difficulty in accounting for the Apostle's uneasiness and dejection. His emphatic rebuke of the factional spirit prevailing in the church was enough in itself to excite his deep solicitude for the issue. For aught he knew, the effect of his First Epistle might serve to intensify party feeling instead of allaying it.

* Wait, in *Speaker's Commentary*.

He was well aware, as 2 Cor. proves, that his apostolic authority was denied, that his motives were impugned, and that his character for candor and honesty was assailed by a section of the church. What if his First Epistle should only embitter the feeling of hostility against him? Is it any wonder he awaited the outcome with the utmost apprehension, almost with dread? There appears, therefore, to be no necessity to interject between 1 and 2 Corinthians a letter by Paul of great severity—a letter that has totally disappeared.* This theory of a lost Epistle only seems to complicate matters, and to make 2 Corinthians well-nigh unintelligible in some of its references.

The report brought by Titus was in the main favorable. The majority of the church had bowed submissively to the exhortations and admonitions of the Apostle, and had earnestly set about correcting the excesses

* Dr. Robertson in Hasting's *Dictionary of the Bible* finds four Epistles certainly, probably five, written by Paul to the Corinthians, two of which only survive. One of these, a pre-canonical, is supposed to be referred to in 1 Cor. v:9. A second is the "severe letter" written between 1 and 2 Cor. Lightfoot has proved that the epistolary aorist of 1 Cor. v:9 may refer to the sentence Paul was then writing, as the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* shows. There is no valid objection against the view of lost apostolic epistles on the score of the true doctrine of inspiration. Calvin himself seems to have thought that some have not been preserved. (Quoted by Wait in *Speaker's Commentary*.) But to the present writer there appears little ground for teaching that two to Corinth are lost. There is no hint in early Christian literature of such a thing: and the Greek commentators, we are assured, who certainly understood their own language, had no difficulty in applying 2 Cor. ii:3, 4, 9; vii:8, to the strong words of censure which occur in 1 Corinthians.

and abuses he had so faithfully exposed (i: 13, 14; vii: 9, 15, 16). There was a considerable faction, however, whose animosity was sharpened to a keener edge by the solemn rebuke Paul had administered (x: 1, 10). This fact accounts for the mixed character of the Epistle.

I. Characteristics of Second Corinthians. It is the most personal, the least doctrinal, of all Paul's Epistles except Philemon. Nevertheless, fundamental doctrine is plainly discernible in it. Here, as elsewhere, he contrasts the old and the new covenants, giving the highest preference to the new to the same extent and with like emphasis as in Galatians. The grace of God is as certainly magnified here as in Romans. The earthly and the future life, the ministry of reconciliation, the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the duty of separation on the part of Christians from the evil world and its wicked ways are taught with the like certainty of conviction as in his other writings. And yet that which predominates is the personal element—the deepest feelings of his being. The varying moods which the circumstances in which this letter was written naturally produced, anxiety and hope, trust and resentment, indignation and love follow each other in rapid succession. Naturally so, for the apostle had been deeply wounded by the imputations with which he was assailed, by the slanders uttered against him, and refreshed by the tidings of repentance and a return to a better state of mind among the majority of these Christians. George Herbert expresses the truth when he writes: "What an

admirable Epistle is the second to the Corinthians! How full of affections! He joys and is sorry; he grieves and he glories; never was there such care of a flock expressed save by the great Shepherd of the fold, who first shed tears over Jerusalem and afterward blood." "Consolation and rebuke, gentleness and severity, earnestness and irony succeed one another at very short intervals and without notice" (Alford).

2. There is a marked difference between the two Epistles to the Corinthians. They are alike in this, that both reveal Paul's profound and disinterested love for these Christians, and for their peace and well-being. No sacrifice is felt to be too great, from no self-abasement, however humiliating, will he shrink, if only this beloved church can be cured of its evils and its excesses, if only the beauty of holiness and the charm of grace and the power of Christ may have unhindered sway with them.

But while they have this in common, there is the widest distance between the two Epistles both in character and contents. First Corinthians is one of the most systematic in structure, and yet the most diversified of all that he has written. A variety of questions are discussed; some on doctrine, others relating to discipline, to ordinances, to spiritual gifts, etc. Second Corinthians is the most unsystematic of Paul's writings; and this because of its nature, the circumstances which necessitated its composition, and the variety of the topics introduced into it. It is an impassioned self-defence against unjust charges and calumnies and insinuations made against him; it contains personal

explanations, requests, exhortations, and encouragements. It has been well called, "The Apostle's *Apolo-gia pro vita sua*." In it he is constrained to exalt his own courage, manliness, self-sacrificing zeal, and his sincerity, as an all-sufficient answer to the wanton aspersions of his character by his adversaries. Though nothing was more repugnant to his genuine humility and modesty than egotism and braggadocio, nevertheless he was "compelled" to boast (xii: 11). Thirty-one times this term *boast*, in its various forms, is used in the Epistle—more frequently, indeed, than in all his other letters beside; and its very frequency proves how deeply the apostle felt the necessity to vindicate himself and to establish the disinterestedness of his motives and ministry. At all costs he must clear himself of the unworthy imputations heaped upon him. Nowhere does Paul appear more noble and true; nowhere does he more thoroughly vindicate his right to the exalted titles of Apostle and Servant of Jesus Christ than in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

We may be thankful for the occasion that led the Apostle to speak so freely of himself. Some things he tells us of his personal history which otherwise we should not have known, e. g., his escape from Damascus (xi: 32, 33); his remarkable revelations, or visions (xii: 1-4); the thorn in his flesh (xii: 7). Then, too, the enumeration of his sufferings from men and from the elements, the hardships and privations he endured, are very remarkable (xi: 23-27). The five times he was beaten with stripes were Jewish scourgings, of which no mention is made in Acts. The three

times he was beaten with rods were Roman scourgings, one only of which is narrated in Acts, that by command of the magistrates at Philippi (Acts xvi: 22, 23). Both these forms of punishment, the Jewish and the Roman, were so severe that sometimes the victim died. "Thrice I suffered shipwreck." Not one of these shipwrecks is recorded in the Acts. The shipwreck of Acts xxvii took place some years after. In one of them, perhaps, a night and a day, he was in the deep with nothing between him and death but a plank or a spar. And then he tells something of his various and tremendous "perils"; perils of rivers, particularly in Asia Minor and parts of Greece, where swollen streams were unbridged and dangerous; of robbers, thieves and brigands who still haunt the mountains of Greece and Asia, and from pirates who infested the Mediterranean. What a life of toil, privation, risk, exposure, "deaths oft," was that of Paul! And yet he who endured and dared all this was a man constantly suffering from ill health, at least infirm health (2 Cor. iv: 7-12; xii: 7-10; Gal. iv: 13, 14). His heroic self-devotion seems almost superhuman. All this and much more is brought out in 2 Corinthians not elsewhere related, or even referred to. In fact, this Epistle is almost an autobiography.

One wonders as he reads whether Luke in the long confidential talks he must have had with Paul at Cæsarea and at Rome was told anything of the Apostle's personal history, such as is recorded in this Epistle. Probably not. It is significant that Paul seems never to have mentioned the marvelous revelations he

had (xii: 1-4) till fourteen years had passed; and it is likely none of the other particulars were ever told to any, even to his most intimate friends. For like all really great men, like Moses, and Daniel, and John, Paul was reticent to speak of himself, was modest, retiring, courteous—the farthest possible from vanity and conceit, the sure marks of littleness and pusillanimity. It was in sheer self-defence, because “compelled,” that in this Epistle he *must boast*.

3. Analysis. The contents are quite varied, and it is next to impossible to reach a satisfactory analysis of the Epistle. We may divide it, however, roughly, into three parts: (1) Review of recent events—Paul’s principles of action (i—vii). (2) Directions about the collection for the Judæan saints (viii, ix). (3) The great invective—vindication of his apostolic authority (x—xiii).

The first section (i—vii) embraces something of Paul’s experience during the period of time immediately preceding the writing of the Epistle. It begins with an outburst of praise and thanksgiving for the tidings received from Corinth, and it ends with the expression of joyful confidence in these saints. Several things claim more particular mention.

(1) Thanksgiving for encouragement, and for deliverance from impending danger (i: 1-11). The peril he refers to was the affliction that came upon him in Asia, and it was so great that he despaired of life. He “had the sentence of death in himself.” It is thought by many able expositors that this overwhelming danger could not be connected with the

tumult at Ephesus (Acts xix), as in Luke's account of it Paul does not appear to be exposed to any imminent personal risk. We read, "And when the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia" (Acts xx: 1). From this statement it seems clear that though compelled to quit Ephesus prematurely he did not flee for his life as he was forced to do from Thessalonica (Acts xvii: 10). Accordingly, it is believed that he refers to a dangerous attack of sickness; perhaps an uncommonly severe assault of Satan's messenger, "the thorn in the flesh"—a disease which continually impeded his efforts and shackled his energy. The view is reasonable and pertinent. The trouble at Ephesus and the disasters that might befall the Lord's work there, and the anxiety and worry arising from the news of Corinth, might well induce a grave sickness of a body already enfeebled by incessant toil and exposure. But, on the other hand, it seems probable that Luke in Acts does not record all the facts of the mob at Ephesus. The significant expression in 1 Cor. xv: 32, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus," denotes that Paul had been brought face to face with ferocious men whose savagery was like that of wild beasts, and it may be that before or after, or during the riot, Demetrius and his fellow artisans may have plotted against his life and may have attempted to execute the plot. But whatever the cause, it was a very imminent peril, one in which he almost lost his life, and one that made a lasting impression on his mind (cf. iv: 10-12; v: 1-4; xi: 29).

His hold on life appears never to have been so strong after this experience as it was before.

(2) Explanation of his delay in visiting Corinth (i: 12—ii: 4). One of the accusations brought against him was that of fickleness, vacillation. To this charge he replies that he cannot justly be taxed with levity either in speech or action; his “yea” always expressed his intention, as his “nay” his purpose, and as he said he did. It had been his settled purpose to visit Corinth on his way to Macedonia, and again to see these saints on his return from that region. He had not done so, not from fickleness, but “to spare” them. His visit would have been painful to both parties, and so he renounced his original plan. A refined delicacy prevented him from executing his immediate design. The report of Titus was not entirely favorable. The state of the church was not altogether satisfactory. To go to them under such circumstances would have intensified the feelings and sharpened the sorrow both of them and himself, hence he renounced his purpose. It is an example of Christian courtesy worthy of all imitation.

It is very noteworthy that Paul in defending himself against the unworthy accusation appeals to the unchangeable character of the Gospel and to the unwavering promise of God. The Son of God, who is the central theme of all true preaching, is no uncertain conception; He is the faithful and true witness, the “same yesterday, to-day and forever”; and His Gospel, like Himself, is God’s everlasting Yes. Paul, the tireless herald of the Gospel, resembles it, for it has

moulded his character, settled his convictions, tempered his motives, and ruled his activities. He, with all believers, has become established, anointed, sealed by the Holy Spirit of God, hence he was not the slave of varying moods, nor could be.

(3) Request for the restoration of the excommunicated person (ii: 5-11). The discipline to which the guilty party had been subjected had accomplished its purpose. His repentance was thorough and sincere; hence the awful sentence that the majority of the church had inflicted (1 Cor. v: 3-5) should be removed, and the penitent restored to the fellowship of the church.

(4) The glory of the Gospel, and the zeal, devotion, and reward of the Gospel ministry (ii: 12—vi: 13). Prominent features of this section will be considered farther on in this study.

(5) Separation from defilement (vi: 14—vii: 1). This very earnest and forcible section has been called "the interjected exhortation." Some regard it as a dislocation of the Apostle's argument. Some go so far as to say that it is an interpolation—that a part of one of the "lost letters" has here crept into 2 Corinthians! The break in the argument is no more abrupt than in x: 1, ff. Writing under great stress of conflicting emotions it is not surprising that the Apostle should interject solemn warnings and powerful appeals. His style not infrequently takes the like form. He is rather fond of *asides*, as Romans, Galatians and Colossians attest. The readers would no doubt instantly perceive the sequence of thought and recog-

nize the need of this fiery appeal in their own circumstances. The things here denounced were notorious there and then, and the readers would see no "dislocation" whatever, but rather tremendous appositeness. Because we in these last days do not perceive the pertinence and connection of an inspired utterance is no reason for calling its integrity in question.

Paul opens his exhortation with a strong prohibition: "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." The allusion is clearly to Deut. xxii: 10. "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together" (cf. Lev. xix: 19). Believers and unbelievers united together are as ill-matched as the ox and ass under the same yoke. The relation is incongruous and contradictory. Trouble must arise. Righteousness and iniquity, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, can have no affinity. They are moral opposites, irreconcilable enemies. No less is the antagonism between the people of God and the people of the world. The principles, motives, desires, and destiny of the Christian are not shared by an enemy of God, nor can be.

Paul asks five argumentative questions which are designed to avert alliances of believers with the ungodly. These questions cover a wide field; they touch every relation of life and of association. They include the intimacies that grow out of business, social ties, friendships, secret orders, and marriage. They forbid union with the wicked in everything that tends to dwarf the spiritual life, to weaken loyalty to God, to secularize the soul, to compromise with evil, and to annul the saint's testimony to truth. Remember the

significant word of the seer to the king of Judah—"Shouldest thou help the wicked and love them that hate the Lord?" (2 Chron. xix: 2). Such alliances are incompatible with the Christian profession and standing, are sacrilegious, and perilous. In the olden time God dwelt in the midst of Israel in the Tabernacle and the Temple; and because of His presence among them, purity, holiness, and separation from all defilement became the supreme duty of the chosen people. No less is it now, and no different. The sanctuary of God possesses inviolable sanctity. Believers are now His temple, His body—the dwelling place of the living God. What profanation they commit when they join themselves with the wicked, and yoke themselves with those who hate the Lord! Let the solemn words of the Spirit sink deep into the heart: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

The blessedness of true separation is of the very highest and most precious kind. It is nothing less than the glorious companionship of the great God Himself. They shall be no losers who part company with the world and its wicked ways to walk in fellowship with the Lord. They shall enjoy a society of which the world knows nothing. "God imparteth His sweetest comforts to His in the wilderness (Hos. ii: 14)" (Trapp).

The second section (viii, ix) relates to the collections for the poor saints at Jerusalem. About this contribution the Apostle was quite anxious. He refers to it again and again; e. g., Acts xxiv: 17; Rom. xv. 25-27;

I Cor. xvi: 1-4. For months he was engaged in raising it among the churches of Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia. For his love for his nations, his kinsmen according to the flesh, never abated. He wished to prove to the Jews once for all that the slanders against him as an enemy of the chosen people and an apostate from Moses were groundless. Besides, it was his aim to prove to Jewish believers in the holy city that the same faith and love animated Gentile converts who had been idolaters, that burned in Jewish breasts, and that the Christian brotherhood is bound together by the strongest ties, the most enduring bonds, union, viz., in the Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Head of all the saints.

These two chapters (viii, ix) have to do primarily with the collection for the Judæan saints, yet the principles, motives, and standard of Christian giving herein illustrated apply to all times and peoples. Some of these may be mentioned: (1) Giving is a grace, ranked by the Apostle with faith, utterance, knowledge, zeal, and love. Prompted by the right motive and spirit giving is as much a part of God's worship as any other in which we engage. The gifts of the people of Israel for the construction of the Tabernacle were as necessary and as acceptable as the sacrificial rites at the altar or the prime functions in the Holy Place. God's worship is one, though consisting of many parts. Failure in one act of worship vitiates all the rest. (2) Christ is the supreme example of giving (viii: 9). Consider how rich He was in possessions, in power, in homage, in fellowships, in the purest and most ineffable hap-

piness. Consider how poor He became in station, in circumstances, in His relations with men. Consider the magnitude of the love that prompted His transcendent gift, "for your sakes"; for us, when we are not strong but powerless, not righteous but ungodly, not good but bad, not friends but enemies (Rom. v: 6-10). We are urged to give a little money, clothing, food. *He gave Himself*. (3) Standard and temper of giving: voluntary (viii: 12); bounteous (ix: 6); cheerful (ix: 7); joyful (viii: 2). (4) There is contagion in true giving (ix: 2). We are imitative even in our generosities. Example is often potent when appeal falls powerless. A friend's beneficence is a spur to our own. What a stimulus to giving has been the Saviour's commendation of the widow and her two mites (Mark xii: 42). She had but two almost valueless coins; she might have given but one and it would have been for her a great gift—the half of her living; but she gave both—all her living, and in her wondrous generosity lies the contagion of her example. The thirteen pounds, two shillings and sixpence laid on God's altar in the Widow Wallis' house in Kettering, that William Carey might carry the Gospel to India, made but a small sum, and yet it was seed sown, out of which a mighty harvest has sprung.

The third section (x—xiii) contains Paul's defence of his apostolic authority. It is his "great invective" against his detractors and slanderers who sought by all means, whether fair or foul, to undermine his authority and destroy his influence, and thus the more certainly capture the churches he had been instru-

mental in founding, and impose upon them the Judaistic and legal principles and practices they advocated.

There is a marked change in the tone of the Epistle at the beginning of chapter x. So prominent it is that some have conjectured that two distinct letters of the Apostle have somehow become combined in 2 Corinthians, that in some way chapters x—xiii, which originally belonged to another, became attached to this Epistle. There is no ground for the conjecture other than the abruptness with which the Apostle breaks off his theme at the end of chapter ix, and writes with the utmost intensity of feeling and indignation the remainder of the letter. Nor is the change in style difficult to account for. There are hints in chapters i-vii of the disaffection and partial alienation of a considerable section of the church, and he sharply rebukes the factional spirit. But what is there found is but the rumbling of the coming storm. With these opposers he deals in chapters x—xiii. There is nothing to indicate in this section that he addresses only the embittered, hostile element at Corinth, and the fact is used in support of the composite theory of 2 Corinthians. A satisfactory explanation of the fact, we believe, lies in this: The Epistle is addressed indeed to the church at Corinth, but also to "all the saints which are in all Achaia." Groups of Christians were found in all the province, perhaps organized churches, particularly at Cenchrea. "The false apostles," "the ministers of Satan," had no doubt invaded all these assemblies, and filled them with their pernicious teachings. Paul,

accordingly, deals with the agitation that troubled the whole region, and that threatened the total destruction of his work. Hence he does not attack a minority in the Corinthian church; he assails the Judaizers as a whole, wherever found, and denounces them as the enemies of the Gospel and his personal foes likewise.

The charges which these adversaries brought against Paul were serious indeed. They insinuated that his bodily presence was weak, his speech of no account (x: 1, 10); that he was controlled by fleshly motives (x: 2); they accused him of practicing deceit and guile even in refusing aid from his converts (xii: 16, 17); of boldness at a distance and cowardice when present (x: 10, 11); they impeached his standing as a minister of Christ (xi: 23; xiii: 3); they disparaged his Apostleship (xi: 5; xii: 11, 12). This is a most serious indictment. The situation was certainly very grave. A crisis confronted him and the church also. If he remained silent under these attacks on his character, these heinous charges, his influence was at an end, his work likewise. Answer them he must. With burning words, indignant, reproachful, sorrowful, firm and assured, he defends and vindicates himself. Zeal, self-sacrifice sincerity, loyalty, unceasing toil, unparalleled devotion, have always marked his course. Self-aggrandizement, ease, comfort, desire for power and glory, he has never cherished and never sought. In his character these passions of the flesh have no place. Besides, in him are found all the marks of a genuine Apostle of Christ, none can deny it. No more splendid apology was ever written than this.

Who were the parties that thus so fiercely assailed him? They were those implacable foes who dogged his footsteps everywhere, who clandestinely intruded themselves into most of the churches which he had been instrumental in establishing, and who sought by most unworthy methods to impose upon the Gentile Christians the yoke of Moses—the Judaizers. It was they who originated the trouble at Antioch, who led the Galatians into incipient apostasy, whose evil presence at Corinth our Epistle so clearly reveals—the pests of the apostolic age!

These unscrupulous opposers of Paul seem to have had a leader who came from Jerusalem (x:7, 10, 11, 12, 18; xi). And those associated with this emissary were Palestinian Jews (xi:22). They were active, arrogant, unscrupulous. They claimed to be ministers of the highest rank, to derive their authority from the fountain of all authority, the mother church at Jerusalem. They claimed to represent a purer Christianity, a more genuine Gospel than Paul; they were the orthodox teachers, the legitimate expounders of the faith, the peerless champions of the Gospel. They haughtily assumed superiority over Paul and his associates. They scrupled not to deride his apostolic authority, to traduce his character, and to impeach his teaching. It is with these men in view that Paul asserts his equality with the “very chiefest Apostles” (xi:5; xii:11). The Twelve are not at all meant; it is the conceited disdainful Judaizers. The sarcastic phrase, “very chiefest Apostles,” is difficult to render into English; “pre-eminent Apostles,” “super-eminent

Apostles," "super-apostolic Apostles," convey a clear idea of Paul's strong word. He does not flinch from branding them as "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ," and as doing the devil's work (xi: 13-15).

The main points in his defence against his detractors may be summed up thus: he is not actuated by carnal motives in his ministry; his authority is derived directly from Christ Himself, and will be exercised by him whether by letter or by personal presence; he does not challenge comparison by intruding into the sphere of others' labors nor build on other men's foundations; a just estimate of himself and his work must be formed on other methods, very different from those of his adversaries (x). He next speaks of his anxiety and alarm for the peril and the deception into which his converts have been led, but he will not recede from his practice of teaching gratuitously, he will hold steadily on his way in spite of the calumnies heaped upon him; and he then shows that in the purity of his Hebrew extraction and patriotism, in self-sacrificing toil, in sufferings and privations, in zeal and devotion, he has abundant ground for describing himself as the minister of Christ, the peer of even "the very chiefest Apostles" (xi). Then with a brief account of his marvelous visions and revelations and the counteracting "thorn in the flesh," with one more apology for glorying, with the assertion of the miraculous power vouchsafed him, with an indignant refutation of the charge that he had made gain of them through the agency of subordinates, with cautions, warnings, exhortations and entreaties,

he closes this splendid, this unparalleled vindication of the purity, disinterestedness, and Christlike devotion of his ministry (xii, xiii).

His defence and his appeal are addressed to his converts, not primarily to the Judaizers. These latter were beyond reach. Nothing he could say would move them; no evidence, however cogent or convincing, would persuade them. It is with the saints of Corinth and all Achaia he deals, and his aim is to deliver them from the intolerable yoke these crafty men were seeking to impose upon them.

This powerful Epistle appears to have effected the Apostle's object. It quelled the turbulent spirit of the Corinthians, exposed and arrested the subtle machinations of the Judaizers. For Paul carried out his intention to spend the winter there before setting forth on his journey to Jerusalem (Acts xx:2, 3; 2 Cor. 1). Romans was written from Corinth while Paul was tarrying there, and its calm and hopeful tone reflects the peaceful mood which had supervened.

Such a man as Paul could not write of his co-laborer, Titus, of the collection for the poor, or of his own apostolic authority without speaking of the blessed work of the Lord Jesus and of the hopes that are bound up with Him. Amid all his agitation and anxiety, amid his indignation and anguish, he nevertheless introduces much fundamental truth into the Epistle. Interspersed with personal matters, with the reproofs and rebukes that abound, are some of the weightiest doctrines of the Gospel. To some of these we now turn.

First, the old covenant and the new contrasted (iii: 6-18), or the Ministry of Law under Moses, and the Ministry of the Spirit under the Gospel. The contrast is drawn between Law and Grace. It appears (I) in the terms applied to each covenant, that of Moses, this of the Spirit. The names given are descriptive both of the nature and work or outcome of each. They are:

OLD COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
Letter.	Spirit (v. 6).
Ministration of death.	Ministration of life (vs. 7, 8).
Ministration of condemnation.	Ministration of righteousness (v. 9).
Vanishing glory.	Abiding glory (vs. 10, 11).
Veiled glory.	Unveiled glory (vs. 13, 14, 18).

The "letter" stands for the Law (or covenant) given at Sinai, a written code—for the whole body of legal enactments through Moses. This "letter," the Apostle declares, *kills*; its ministry is one of condemnation and death. It cannot give life, nor was it intended to give life (Rom. iii: 20; v: 20; viii: 3; Gal. iii: 19, etc.). The law as a condition of life can only *curse*, as it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii: 10). The vast difference between the two "ministrations" may be thus stated (following Lias), the old covenant *prescribed*, the new *inspired*; the former gave written precepts, the latter the power to fulfill them; the former laid down the rules, the latter brings man's heart into the condition in which such rules become a part of his nature. The law stones the adulteress (Lev. xx: 10); the Gospel

says to the repentent one, "Go, and sin no more" (John viii: 11).

Serious mistakes have arisen from the misinterpretation of the terms "letter" and "the letter killeth." The notion is gathered from them by not a few that Paul means thereby the written Word of God, the Scriptures; that we are not to take the Bible for what it says, or just as it says. Origen built his system of allegorical interpretation of Scripture largely on this text. But nothing could be more erroneous. Paul does not mean the Bible as a written book; nothing could be further from his mind than this wild notion. He means solely the Law. His contrast is not between the outward and literal words of Scripture and the inner spiritual sense thereof, but between the covenant of Sinai and the Gospel of the grace of God. The Law says, Obey and live; disobey and die. The Gospel says, Live and obey. It offers life as a free and gracious gift, first of all, and then with it comes the power to obey, to do the will of God.

(2) The veil on Moses' face (v. 7, 13). Paul finds in the history of Ex. xxxiv: 29-35, a pre-intimation of the passing away of the old covenant, and infers therefrom its inferiority to the new covenant. The narrative in Exodus assigns as the reason for the veil on Moses' face the awe of the congregation because of the resplendent light which shown in it. The Law-giver himself was not conscious that "his face shone," or, as the margin of R. V. renders, "sent forth beams." The Vulgate translates "horns" instead of "beams," and this rendering has given rise to the pictorial rep-

resentation of Moses as having horns issuing from his head, as in the magnificent statue of him by Michael Angelo in Rome. But the people saw it, "and were afraid to come nigh him." From Ex. xxxiv: 34, 35, we infer he first delivered the message with his face unveiled: then "when Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face" (Ex. xxxiv: 33 R. V.). Paul's statement by no means contradicts this account. Indeed, both agree very well. The point the Apostle presses is, the fading glory of the old covenant as illustrated by this incident of Moses' veiled face. Whether Moses knew the deep significance of the gradual fading of the luster from his face or not, we are not informed, though Paul seems to intimate that he did: "and not as Moses, who put a veil upon his face, that the children of Israel should not look steadfastly on the end of that which was passing away" (v: 13). The screen on the face was in exact accord with the veiled character of that economy. It was one of symbols and types. It revealed great and ennobling truths, but in dim and shadowy outlines, prophetic of better things to come; a system of "broken lights." The new covenant is far more glorious because unclouded in its splendor. "The darkness is passing away, and the true light already shineth" (1 John ii: 8). The veil meant more. Gradually the flashing brightness of his face, caught from the dazzling glory of the Divine Presence, faded away. Paul finds in the fact an illustration of the transitoriness of that economy. It was finally to cease and give place to one that shall endure. The waning light of Moses'

face and its concealment were in harmony with the temporary nature and partial revelation of the old. But there is unveiled glory now shining from the face of Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, and we believers now look with unveiled faces into that glory and are changed into the same image from glory to glory, "even as from the Lord the Spirit" (R. V.).

(3) The veil on the heart (vs. 14-16). The moral condition of unbelieving Israel is analogous to Moses' veiled face. Blindness and hardness have come to them through unbelief. The screen on their hearts conceals the glory of the old covenant, and it hides Christ. The trouble is not with the revelation of God contained either in the Old or the New Testament. It is with unbelief exclusively. Faith is clear-sighted and far-sighted. Unbelief blinds and hardens; nay, unbelief is itself blind. "But when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away" (v. 16). The heart, of course, is what is meant. Israel's national repentance is affirmed here. It is likewise Paul's teaching in Rom. xi. When the unbelieving Jews turn to the Lord in penitent faith, the veil will be removed from their hearts, and not from theirs only but from the face of the world, "the veil that is spread over all nations" (Isa. xxv:7). Their conversion means "life from the dead" for the rest of mankind.

Second, the glory of the apostolic ministry (iv—v: 11-20). These sections of the Epistle describe a marvelous ministry indeed. Nothing next to or like it is to be found in the annals of the race. For disinterestedness, self-sacrifice, zeal, and devotion, we seek in

vain for a parallel with it. Its main features, in outline, are the following:

(a) Its august names and titles: "ministry of reconciliation," "ambassadors for Christ," "entreating for God" (v: 18, 20).

(b) Its one exalted theme, Christ Jesus the Lord (iv: 5, 6).

(c) Its supreme object and aim, "manifestation of the truth" (iv: 2-4).

(d) Its mighty motive, the constraining love of Christ (v: 14).

(e) Its impelling principle, unwavering faith (iv:13).

(f) Its unfaltering steadfastness (iv: 1, 2).

(g) Its weakness and its power (iv: 7).

(h) Its manly straightforwardness (iv: 2-4).

(i) Its sufferings and triumphs, its defeats and victories (iv: 8-12).

(j) Its glorious rewards (iv: 17, 18).

There is passionate intensity, a kind of extravagance in the words of iv: 17, 18. Antithesis, comparison, and pleonasm, as grammarians name it, are pressed into service to express fitly something of the surpassing glory awaiting the faithful servants of God." "Affliction" is set over against "glory," "light" against "weight" "for a moment" against "eternal." And then the glory is described by four remarkable terms, "a far more exceeding." It is next to impossible to turn into adequate English these strange, pregnant terms of the Apostle. Here are some attempts: "Over measure an everlasting burthen into highness of glory"

(Wiclif); "above measure exceedingly" (Douay Bible); "beyond measure excellent" (Diodati); "in a surpassing and still more surpassing manner" (Alford); "in excess unto excess" (Farrar); in excess unto superfluity and eternal weight of glory." Paul heard when caught up into Paradise "unspeakable words," or "wordless words." Here he strives and struggles to utter some of those matchless words. We honor the sublimity most by our thoughtful silence. A little joy enters into us while we are here in the world; we shall enter into joy when there. A few drops here; a whole ocean there.

Third, the earthly and the heavenly house (v: 1-9).

The body is an "earthly house," a tent, frail, feeble, diseased, burdensome, mortal; in the quaint language of the Puritan Trapp, "In the wonderful frame of man's body the bones are the timber-work, the head the upper-lodging, the eyes as windows, the eyelids as casements, the brows as penthouses" (Scott employs the same metaphor), "the ears as watch-towers, the mouth as a door to take in that which shall uphold the building and keep it in reparations, the stomach as a kitchen to dress that which is conveyed into it." The heavenly house is eternal, is from God, built and beautified by Him, and adapted to the requirements of the glorified spirit. Paul entertained no doubt whatever as to the resurrection of the body; "we know" and "we have" is his very positive language, as if it were already an accomplished fact, a present possession. So the prophets and inspired men generally speak of the purposes of God; they seize them by faith as already

their very own, not as if lying in the distant and uncertain future (cf. Heb. xi:1). The assurance of apostolic men is very remarkable. They never questioned for a moment the majestic revelations of God to them. Real as life, more real even than death (for they did not know but that the Lord Jesus might come again during their lifetime, and then they should not die at all) was the certainty of the resurrection and glorification of their bodies.

It is noteworthy that in these verses the Apostle repudiates what is popularly called "soul-sleeping," i. e., an unconscious state in the interval between death and the resurrection. He most distinctly affirms that to be at home in the body is to be absent from the Lord, and to be at home with the Lord is to be absent from the body. It is of his spirit, his deepest and truest self, he is speaking. Body and spirit he sharply distinguishes. When he, the spiritual man Paul, quits the body he goes home to the Lord. The spirit neither sleeps nor dies when it departs from the body; it lives with Christ, and waits to be "clothed upon with the heavenly house."

Fourth, counter-imputation (v:21): "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (R. V.). This is one of the profoundest statements in the Book of God. It is both elliptical and antithetical. We may venture to fill out the ellipsis thus:

Him who knew no sin He made to be sin for us; that we (who know no righteousness) might become the righteousness of God in Him.

The antithesis is threefold, and may be represented thus:

1. The sinless One made sin.
2. The unrighteous become righteous.
3. The sinless One made sin on our behalf, and we in Him become the righteousness of God.

The sinlessness of Jesus is most emphatically asserted. Not only was He without sin as to His life, but even as to His personal consciousness He was sinless (Luke i:35; John viii:46; Heb. vii:26; 1 Pet. ii:22; 1 John iii:5). In Himself He was both undefiled and undefilable. Though descended from an impure race of ancestors, He brought no taint of sin into the world with Him; and though He long conversed with sinful men and grappled with fierce temptations, yet He contracted no stain. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled [immaculate], and separate from sinners."

"He made Him." Who made Him? God, acting as Sovereign and righteous Judge. At the cross this amazing, mysterious transaction took place. In Isa. liii:4 we read: "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God;" that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," that "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." We utterly reject the notion that the great Sufferer of Isa. liii is Israel, whether the whole nation or the godly remnant; we hold fast to the view that has prevailed in the great body of the church from time immemorial, that it is Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah of God, who is the Man of Sorrows of this chapter. In Rom. viii:3 we read: "For what the law could not do in that it

was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." "God sent him . . . for sin," stands in closest connection with, "He made him to be sin;" in fact, the two expressions are equivalent. In Gal. iii: 13 we read: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." Yet Christ voluntarily came, and acted most voluntarily, as Heb. x: 5-10 abundantly proves. "Lo, I come," is His joyful response to the divine sending and appointment.

He was "made sin for us," not *sins* (John i: 29). "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." The world's sin is one; its manifestations are countless. Christ was made sin, certainly not personally sinful; that He could not be made. It would contradict the verse itself. Nor yet is it sufficient to say with Augustine and others, that He was made a sin-offering. That may be true of Rom. viii: 3, which Moule renders ("for sin") "sin-offering," though we prefer the common reading, or with Stifler, "concerning sin," "about sin," i. e., to expiate sin, to atone for it and put it away; but here the phrase "made sin" must stand. No other interpretation than the old one meets the requirements of this mysterious language, viz., He was made the sinner's Substitute, He took the sinner's place, and bore the penalty due his sin. Peter thus conceives of it, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness" (R. V.).

Here, then, seems to be taught the doctrine of *exchange of places*. It is the twofold exchange of

places in respect of sin and of righteousness, and the counter-imputation thereof. Christ was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him; our sin set to His account and by Him expiated and blotted out; His righteousness set to our account, whereby we are justified and saved. "It goes utterly to enervate this profound theological proposition, and to empty it of the specific truth which it so clearly couches and conveys if we fail to read simply as it stands" (Martin).

A few words respecting "the thorn in the flesh" (xii: 7), may not be out of place. This statement is beset with difficulties, some of which cannot satisfactorily be cleared away. The figure the Apostle employs is very strong, and full of suggestiveness. The word rendered "thorn" may just as accurately be represented by "stake," in which case the infliction was like the horrible torture of impaling or crucifying, while "thorn" denotes some other distressing and painful form of suffering. That the affliction was bodily seems evident from the words "in the flesh"—an expression that does not indicate the principle of evil still in him, as some think, nor yet his mind or spirit, as others, but his physical being alone. It was something personal, affecting him individually, and not as an Apostle; causing him acute pain and shame. This being so, it follows that such explanations as that the "thorn" was carnal incitements, blasphemous thoughts, black doubts, temptation to apostasy or to suicide, are ruled out. That the affliction was humiliating and loathsome is evident if the language of Gal. iv: 13, 14 refers

to this "thorn": "But ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you the first time: and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected" (R. V.). The term for "rejected" is very strong, literally "spat out." Its effect was to excite the scorn and aversion of beholders, "so that it supplied a severe test of the candor and generosity of the Galatians who had witnessed Paul's abject condition under its infliction." So also the word "buffet" (lit., to smite with the fist, Mark xiv:65) seems to convey the idea that it was outward and visible, such as might be seen by onlookers. All this removes the affliction, whatever it was, from the sphere of the mind or soul where some interpreters would place it, and locates it in the body of the Apostle.

Furthermore, it was by Satanic agency, "a messenger of Satan," i. e., in God's strange government of His people and of the world, Satan is sometimes permitted to inflict bodily suffering upon men (Job ii:7; Luke xiii:16). The incestuous person of I Cor. v was by apostolic authority delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (v. 5): An obscure passage unquestionably, but one that implies more than exclusion from the Christian brotherhood; one that seems to teach that the offender was cast back into the heathen world whence he had been brought by the Gospel—a world dominated by Satan (cf. Acts xxvi:13-16; 2 Cor. iv:4; Eph. ii:2), where he would

undergo the destruction of the flesh, perhaps in the form of physical pain and suffering.

His thorn in the flesh Paul connects with his visions and revelations: "And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, wherefore that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given me a thorn in the flesh," etc. From the general tenor of the whole passage it appears probable that the mysterious malady came upon him in pursuance of the unique and supreme experience he had "fourteen years ago," and was designed of God for a merciful end. Hence the Lord, though thrice besought, did not remove it, but promised grace sufficient for its endurance—a better answer certainly than had Paul's prayer been answered as he asked. Thus, "out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

Conjectures and speculations as to the nature of the "thorn" are curious and endless. Every ailment both physical and mental has been seized on and proof sought to verify the opinion. Here are some of them: evil suggestions, impure thoughts, blasphemous words, persecutors, a dangerous adversary, headache, earache, defective speech, a hasty temper, and one even mentions a termagant wife! Three, however, are more prominent than all the others; viz., ophthalmia (Brown, Farrar); epilepsy (Lightfoot, Findlay); malarial fever (Professor Ramsay). The precise nature of it has been concealed perhaps that all afflicted ones may be encouraged and helped by Paul's unnamed yet painful experience.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

The Epistle to the Galatians was probably the third apostolic letter written by Paul, the others being 1 and 2 Thessalonians. It is likely that it was written at Ephesus during the Apostle's third missionary journey, and at an early period of his sojourn in that city, perhaps about the year A. D. 57.

What the Emancipation Act was to the slaves of our Southern States, what the Czar's edict was for the freedom of the serfs of Russia, the Epistle to the Galatians was to the primitive Church. It was the manifesto of the enfranchisement which Christ had won for all believers. It was by the study and the appropriation of the mighty truths of Galatians and Romans that Luther, the hero of the modern era, was enabled to strike off the fetters by which the Church of God had been so long bound. "In this Epistle he found the secret of his own deliverance; hence he declares himself wedded to this letter and calls it his Catherine Bora. Taking this as his weapon, he plunged into the fearful conflict with the papistry and religious materialism of his time. This was the pebble from the brook with which, like another David, he went forth to meet the papal giant, and smote him in the forehead" (Godet).

The Epistle is addressed to the "churches of Galatia. But what Galatia is meant? Two places are con-

tended for, viz., North Galatia, with its important cities, Pessinus, Ancyra, and Tavium; and South Galatia, or the Roman province of Galatia, which embraced Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, which were evangelized by Paul and Barnabas during the second Missionary Journey. Professor Ramsay strongly advocates the latter view; Lightfoot the former. The discussion of this difficult question forms no part of the present study. It is sufficient to say that notwithstanding the arguments adduced by Professor Ramsay in support of his theory of South Galatia being the geographical region to which the Epistle was written, the reasons brought against it and in favor of the old North Galatia view by the lamented Professor Purves and others more than counterbalance the former. Assuming that Galatians was addressed to the churches in the north of Asia Minor, we are somewhat surprised that Acts contains no account of the preaching of the Gospel in that section. Acts xvi:6 mentions somewhat incidentally that Paul and his companions "passed through the region of Phrygia and Galatia," but says nothing of their evangelizing that portion of Asia. It is not an arbitrary assumption, however, to suppose that at that time the church was established in Galatia. In Acts xvi the goal is Europe, and accordingly Luke hurries on in his narrative to describe in detail the events connected with the founding of the church at Philippi (Stifler).

The occasion which called forth this intense, indignant letter was the somewhat sudden lapse of the Galatian churches into doctrinal error of the most

serious kind. After a brief introduction the Apostle says, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (v. 6). It is unknown when the defection took place, but the words just recorded make it evident that it was but shortly after either their conversion to God or after Paul's visit to them. We are inclined to think it was soon after their conversion, as the Revised rendering indicates, "so quickly removing from him that called you." The serious character of the defection is marked by the expression, "another gospel," i. e., a different gospel from that preached to them and that they had received at the first. It was a strange, a perverted gospel they were removing to, which means desertion of the truth of Christ. The north Galatians were Asiatic Gauls, or Celts. Inconstancy is their national characteristic. Impulsive and fickle they are to this day. It is striking to observe that when Paul first preached the Gospel of God's grace and saving power to them, he was enthusiastically welcomed. They received him "as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus" (iv: 14); they would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him if it had been possible (iv: 15). But now "how quickly are they removing to a different gospel." Eagerly as they embraced the Gospel, so quickly were they prepared to abandon it for something else and something immeasurably inferior. The pithy words of a Puritan on this verse are historically accurate, and they fit not an insignificant number in our own day, "giddy-headed hearers have *religionem ephemeram*, are

whirled about by every wind of doctrine, being constant only in their inconstancy" (Trapp).

The tone of Galatians is one of extreme coldness. The reserve with which the Apostle speaks is unexampled. And the reason seems to be this: the bad state of these churches had come about not so much from ignorance as from unfaithfulness. God is patient with those who have but little light, who are but babes in His household, but He is intolerant of the perversion of the truth and the darkening of the light by His people. The contrast between Galatians and Corinthians is very marked. In the church at Corinth serious evils prevailed. It was torn by factions, lax in discipline, proud of its gifts, and degraded the Lord's Supper. And yet while the Apostle solemnly condemns their guilty practices and censures severely their party spirit, he addresses them in the tenderest terms, speaks of them as enjoying the highest distinctions as saints and sanctified in Christ Jesus. But in opening his Epistle to the Galatians, how different the style! Not a word of their being in Christ, or in God the Father, or saints, or faithful brethren. He appears to wish to say as little as possible touching their standing in God's sight. He speaks of them merely as "the churches of Galatia," as though putting them by themselves. He quarantines them, so to speak, as an infected district and dangerous. Severity and solicitude intermingle.

Nothing can be more stern and impassioned than i: 6-10; iii: 1-5; iv: 8-11; nothing more tenderly affectionate and pathetic than the appeal in iv: 19, 20.

The whole Epistle, like 2 Cor., reveals Paul's indignation and apprehensions as to the Judaizing movement going on among these churches. It discloses likewise his profound insight into the disastrous peril that lurked in it. If the movement succeeded in attaching to the Gospel the principle of law-keeping as an essential element to our salvation, then Paul's mission as the preacher of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the sole condition of acceptance with God is at an end, and his commission must be revoked. Christianity in such case loses its distinctive character, ceases to be of universal application, and the Church of God sinks into a mere Jewish sect.

The gravity of the situation appears from the fact that Paul wrote the Epistle throughout with his own hand; "See with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand" (vi: 11, R. V.). It is possible, of course, that these words refer only to the words which follow to the end of the Epistle, as some think. But many others are of the opinion that the reference is to the whole letter. This view is strongly supported, (1) by the emphatic expression he here uses, such as is not found in any other Epistle; (2) by the fact that in every other instance his autograph is attached only to the closing words, (e. g., 1 Cor. xvi: 21 ff.; Col. iv: 18; 2 Thess. iii: 17, 18). Ordinarily he employed an amanuensis to whom he dictated his messages. But in this instance he wrote the entire Epistle with his own hand, whence we infer the immense importance of the subjects in dispute, the progress which the false teaching was making, and the danger to which the faith of

the people of God was exposed; for the error was contagious, and would, if not arrested, infect with its deadly virus all the churches of Christ. As viewed by the Apostle and by the Spirit who spoke through him, the questions which agitated the Galatians were by no means trivial or non-essential, but radical and vital, reaching down to the very foundations of Christianity itself. Hence Paul felt himself under the necessity of writing it throughout. With his own hand, no matter how laborious the work, he indited the unanswerable arguments and solemn warnings and passionate appeals of this remarkable Epistle.

The trouble at Galatia was *legalism* and *ritualism*. Strictly speaking, the two are one; for the attempt to secure the divine favor through law observance leads inevitably to ritualism in its worst form. That the Galatians were going over to the ground of law for acceptance with God is evident from the whole tenor of the Epistle (cf. v. 4, "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace"); and that they were establishing the Mosaic institutions among themselves, institutions which the cross had abolished, is equally clear (cf. iv: 10; v: 3, etc.). The defection was the work of false teachers who sought to combine Christianity with Judaism. They are rightly named Judaizers, for their chief aim was to make Gentile converts practically Jews. To this end they bent all their energies, and with tireless zeal and by methods not always worthy and often quite inexcusable and unscrupulous they invaded the churches which Paul had been instru-

mental in establishing and sowed among them the seeds of disaffection, of faction and hostility. It was the same party that brought on the trouble at Antioch, at Corinth, and elsewhere. Their main tenet was, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved"; "it is needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses" (Acts xv:1, 5). That is, in the view of these men something else and something more than faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is required in order to complete the Lord's work of redemption and make justification valid and sure. Circumcision is one thing. Gentiles must receive this ancient sign and seal of the covenant (Gen. xvii) if they would enjoy the full benefits of the covenant. Observance of Moses' law is another thing. They argued no doubt that the law was a divine institution. It was given to Moses, and was the object of the deepest devotion of all true Israelites. The Messiah was to come of the Jews. Jesus Himself was circumcised and kept the whole law. The original Twelve did the same. The church at Jerusalem was the mother church, and its members were all zealous of the law. Who was this Paul who taught that Christians of Gentile extraction should not keep the holy law? They had a great deal to say for themselves, the Judaizers.

It was a subtle, deadly form of error, which Paul brands as another kind of gospel, very different from that he had preached to them, and he anathematizes it in the strongest terms (i:6-10).

I. Analysis. Broadly Galatians is divided into three

sections: A. Apologetic (i—ii: 10)—Defense of his Apostleship. B. Doctrinal and Controversial (ii: 11—iv)—Divine Grace *versus* Human Merit. C. Hortatory and Practical (v—vi)—the positions and demonstrations of A and B are applied with consummate skill and power and persuasiveness to the consciences of the Galatians.

A. Apologetic (i—ii: 10):

1. Introduction (i: 1-5).
2. Occasion of his writing (i: 6-10).
3. His divine commission (i: 11-17).
4. Visits to Jerusalem, and his apostolic authority (i: 18; ii: 10).

B. Justification by Faith discussed and illustrated (ii: 11—iv):

1. Contention with Peter as to law and faith (ii: 11-21).
2. Gift of the Spirit is by faith (iii: 1-5).
3. Abraham justified by faith (iii: 6-9).
4. Deliverance from law's curse only by faith (iii: 10-14).
5. Covenant of grace and law contrasted (iii: 15-18).
6. Purpose of the law (iii: 19-25).
7. Sonship and heirship by grace through faith (iii: 26-29).
8. Wards and sons, minors and manhood (iv: 1-7).
9. Peril of legalism, and appeal (iv: 8-20).
10. Allegory of the two covenants (iv: 21-31).

C. Practical and Hortatory (v—vi):

1. Stand fast in Christ's liberty (v: 1-12).
2. Liberty not license but obedience (v: 13-18).
3. Works of the flesh described (v: 19-21).
4. Fruits of the Spirit described (v: 22-26).
5. Treatment of erring and weak (vi: 1-5).
6. Sowing and reaping (vi: 6-10).
7. Summary and benediction (vi: 11-18).

From this analysis we discover two most weighty subjects emerging from the masterly discussion: First, the divine origin and authority of Paul's Apostleship: second, the unchangeable doctrine of justification through the free and sovereign grace of God by faith in Christ apart from the deeds of the law. These two subjects are inseparably intertwined in the Epistle. For, in order to establish the second it was indispensable that Paul should vindicate once for all his apostolic call and commission. If the Gospel which he preached is the very truth of God, then he himself is the accredited messenger of God to men.

Mere personal abuse and defamation Paul could overlook, and often did, no doubt. But when the object of his detractors was to discredit his ministry and undermine his authority as an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and this to the end that they might the more effectively accomplish their purposes, he defends himself with an intensity and vehemence that surpasses even his Second Epistle to the Corinthians. He saw that it was either the law or Christ; that a man could not be justified by both. "He saw, as apparently no other man of influence saw, that to represent anything else than the cross of Christ as *essential* to

salvation, was really to affirm that the cross alone was not sufficient." A momentous crisis confronted him; his life-work as the Apostle of the Gentiles hung in the balance. Therefore he girded himself for this mortal combat, and here in Galatians smites such blows as are unexampled in his writings.

A. Defense of his Apostleship (i—ii: 10):

(1) Its origin, (i: 1). He attacks the stronghold of the enemy at the very outset. The Judaizers had impeached his Apostleship. He was not one of the original Twelve. Accordingly, his authority could not be the equal of theirs. Such, probably, was their charge against him. If the legalists were to succeed in their efforts to graft Christianity on Judaism, it was essential that they should undermine Paul's apostolic authority; for he was the acknowledged champion of the doctrines of grace and Christian liberty.

On the highest possible ground he sets his Apostleship. He received the great office, not from man, nor through man, either as to its source or its medium. He was neither self-appointed, nor ecclesiastically appointed. He is an Apostle through Jesus Christ, and more, if possible, through God the Father who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. His Apostleship, therefore, was altogether different from that of Matthias (Acts i: 24-26). It originated from the source of all authority, from the glorified Son of God.

(2) Origin of his Gospel (i: 11, 12). The Gospel he preached was not after man as to its character, nor from man as to its origin, nor was Paul taught it by any man or set of men. He received it by direct

revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ. By this majestic honor conferred upon him, Paul's Apostleship and preaching were no whit inferior to the Twelve, for the Lord Jesus had taught him no less certainly than He had taught them. Besides, even in the conference he had with the apostolic "pillars" at Jerusalem, Peter, James and John, he gained no fresh information, no additional light; they imparted nothing to him (ii: 6, 7). His knowledge of the Gospel was the equal of theirs.

(3) Titus and his standing (ii: 1-5). We learn here incidentally that it was by "revelation" that the difficulty at Antioch was carried up to Jerusalem for settlement.* In Acts xv it seems as if it were the church that determined to send the deputation. The one account is additional to the other. So vital was

* Paul's visits to Jerusalem are involved in some obscurity. The number of them and the order in which they occur, it is not easy to determine. The first, probably, is that mentioned in Gal. i: 18; with this, that referred to in Acts ix: 23-28 and xxii: 17-21 must, it is thought, be identified. There are differences in the accounts of this visit but no real contradiction. Gal. i: 18 briefly states the object of his visit, and it accords strictly with the argument the Apostle is pressing, while in Acts ix: 23; xxii: 17 various details of the visit are related which confirm and strengthen his position as an independent Apostle of Christ. Another is mentioned in Acts xi: 30, xii: 25. A third is recorded in Gal. ii: 1, which almost certainly is the same as that of Acts xv. The "question" carried up from Antioch and adjudicated by the Council at Jerusalem was identical with the error combatted in this Epistle. The "fourteen years" are to be dated probably from his first visit. Two other visits are mentioned in Acts xviii: 22; xxi: 17. In Gal. Paul refers to the first and third visits, and omits the others as having no bearing on the point he is discussing.

the principle involved that there was a positive communication from God about it. Titus was taken along with Paul and Barnabas. And although he was a pure Gentile, he was not compelled to be circumcised. The context implies that there was an effort made to bring it about; but the pressure was put upon Titus, not upon Paul; his apostolic authority was not questioned at Jerusalem. Moreover, the Apostle successfully resisted this Judaizing party. He habitually practised the law of love. If to eat meat would cause his weak brother to offend, he would eat no flesh while the world stands (I Cor. viii:13). But when the aim was to turn the free Gospel into legal slavery, he instantly interposed his "everlasting No"—not for an hour!

(4) The "pillars," Peter, James and John, recognized Paul's apostolic authority as identical with their own (ii:6-10). The recognition embraced—1, his equality with Peter; 2, his independent mission, viz., to the Gentiles; 3, his official status and prerogative—they gave him the right hand of fellowship (v. 9). The handclasp signified, not friendship, or love, or mutual good-will, but that these Apostles regarded Paul as a partner with them in the common cause and common work. The right hand given and received proved that there was no disagreement between Paul and the other Apostles. "Only they would that we should remember the poor" (v. 10). This was a request or exhortation, certainly not an injunction. The three did not, as ecclesiastical superiors, charge Paul and Barnabas to do so.

B. Controversial and Argumentative (ii:—iv).

This section embraces the body of the Epistle, and is an overwhelming arraignment of legalism, and an unanswerable defence of the Gospel of the free grace of God. It contains the essence of Christianity. It exhibits the perfection of Christ's atoning work. It shows that the attempt to supplement that glorious work by law observance is criminal, most criminal; for it dishonors Christ, frustrates grace, limits the action of the Spirit, and clouds the believer's assurance. The question here discussed is fundamental—Is Christianity only a defined form of Judaism? Having been justified by faith in Christ, are believers perfected by the observance of Moses' law? Let us see how the Apostle deals with this most vital matter.

(1) He opens his defence of the doctrines of grace with a reference to his reprimand of Peter at Antioch (ii: 11-21). (It is difficult if not impossible to determine how far his words of reproof are here reported. Probably his exact language is given in v: 14-16, and the remaining verses contain the substance of his rebuke). Peter's "dissimulation" was his eating with the converts at Antioch, then breaking fellowship with them, that his standing with the strictly Jewish brethren might not be imperiled. His act was a surrender of the principle of Christian liberty, a denial of the equality between Gentile and Jewish believers, an impeachment of the truth of the Gospel, and a baleful example, for even Barnabas was carried away by the hypocrisy (Greek). Paul's rebuke, public as was the fault, proves his parity with Peter in apostolic authority. No hint is there here of Peter's so-called *primacy*,

but the exact contrary. The proposition which Paul defends with consummate ability is this: Justification is wholly of grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, altogether apart from the deeds of the law. By doing the works prescribed by the law no flesh can be justified. Even faith is no part of the ground of justification; for it is not on *account of faith*, but *through* or *by* it, as the means or the instrument, that we are brought into possession of the righteousness of God (ii: 16, 17). Jewish believers had given up all law-keeping in order to be saved, and were justified by faith in the Lord Jesus precisely as the Gentiles (vs. 17, 18). If they were right *then* they are wrong *now* in returning to the law to be saved; if right now they were wrong then. Both positions cannot be held right, for they are antagonistic and mutually exclusive. The true relation of a believer to law is that of a dead and risen man (vs. 19, 20). What has one who has died to law in Christ longer to do with it as a condition of life? He is no more bound by it than is the woman bound to her husband when the husband is dead (Rom. vii: 1-4). If it were otherwise, if, being justified by simple faith in Christ, we are perfect by law observance, then Christ died for nothing.

(2) Paul next appeals to the experience of the Galatians themselves (iii: 1-5). In common with all Christians they enjoyed the presence and the graces of the Holy Spirit. How had they received the Spirit? By the works of the law? To ask the question is to answer it. All that the Spirit does with the law and with one who seeks to justify himself through law is

to convict him as a sinner. Not thus did the Galatians have the Spirit; but as the Comforter and Teacher they enjoyed His presence, and this by faith exclusively. The Apostle pushes the argument further by two most pointed inquiries (v. 3). Their conduct implies that while the Spirit is needed to start with, the flesh being started can go on of itself to perfection, that God may begin the good work, but we are able to carry it to completion. It is folly to begin on one principle and to end on another. To begin with God and end with self is supreme folly. Moreover, their conduct stultified their past sufferings, for if we are saved by the works of the law there should be no antagonism between law and faith, between legalists and believers. In their present legal attitude their entire path was a mistake, their sufferings useless and a stupendous blunder. There should be no quarrel between them and the unbelieving Jews, for the Galatians are now essentially on the same ground.

(3) The argument from the case of Abraham (iii: 6-18). Scripture furnishes one illustrious model of God's method of justifying a sinner, Abraham. There could be no question regarding the high authority of this example. The rank of the patriarch, his place in the divine purposes, his significant title of Father of the Faithful, and the reverence paid him by Christian and Jew alike, invest the manner of his justification with extraordinary interest. It is to this same example the Apostle appeals so triumphantly in his unrivalled exposition of the nature and method of justification in Rom. iv: 1-17. But how was Abraham justified?

Scripture answers: "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted (reckoned) to him for righteousness." The *act* of his faith cannot be the cause or ground for the reckoning of righteousness to him, for it is against *works* in any form and in all forms that Paul is here so earnestly contending. If Abraham's faith, in itself considered, were the reason for his being declared righteous, then this argument fails and legalism triumphs. It was because Abraham *believed God*, because he rested his faith in the divine promise, which was to find its ample fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 16), that he was justified. This is a specimen case. All who are saved are justified in the same way: "In thee shall all the nations be blessed," consequently, in the same manner. The way of salvation is identical in all dispensations, viz., by faith in the word and promise of the living God. If the gift of righteousness were conditioned on keeping the law, justification is impossible: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The sweep of the statement is tremendous: "Every one"—Gentile and Jew, white and black, civilized and savage, cultivated and ignorant, gilded with refinement and hideous in sin, *every one*; "Continueth not"—every minute in the hour, every hour in the day, every day in the year, all through life, waking and sleeping, ceaselessly and exactly: "All things which are written in the book of the law"—the small and the great things, minutia and mass, single and sum, omitting neither jot

nor tittle till all be fulfilled: "To do them"—fully and precisely, in letter and spirit, according to the mind of God. Who can be saved on such terms? Under the awful curse of the broken law all men would forever lie had not Christ in infinite pity and love become a curse for us, thereby redeeming us. The blessing promised to Abraham comes to us exactly as it came to him, by faith.

(4) Moreover, the glorious provisions of the Abrahamic covenant become ours by faith, and not on the principle of law. For, the covenant consists mainly of unconditional promises made to Abraham and to his seed. But the seed is Christ to whom and in whom the promises are fulfilled. The argument turns on the difference between the singular and the plural of the word *seen*. Many silly things are said of this apostolic exegesis, said by men who would not have dared to open their lips in criticism, or if once it would have been the only time, in the presence of Paul. It may be safely said that the man who studied Hebrew under Gamaliel, and who once addressed his countrymen at Jerusalem in the Hebrew tongue (Acts xxii:2), knew as much of the original language of the Old Testament as his critics! Perhaps, also, the term *seed* retains its force as a collective noun, and includes both Christ and Abraham's spiritual seed, a thought which is very common with Paul. This view is supported by the official name *Christ*, the Second Adam and Head of the redeemed race (1 Cor. xv:22), and by v. 29: "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Besides, the covenant antedates the law by 430 years; therefore, no subsequent legislation could by any possibility invalidate its provisions or nullify its promises. For, to speak after the manner of men, God bound Himself by the terms of the covenant, which are all of grace, apart from any sort of human merit, and confirmed it by repeated ratifications with the three covenant heads, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, sealing it with his own great oath (Gen. xxii: 16, 17). The law which came along after the final confirmation to Jacob when he was on the way to Egypt (Gen. xlv: 1-5), can neither change the terms of the covenant, nor invalidate them. The blessings pledged in the covenant are secured by faith, and by faith alone.

(5) What, then, is the import of the law, if its observance is not a condition of salvation? The answer is found in iii: 19-29. As the law was as certainly ordained of God as was the promise of divine origin, it must have been revealed for a definite end, and designed to fulfill a preordained mission. Paul defines its nature and its use. The legislation of Sinai was intended to incline the people of Israel to accept and embrace by faith the gracious promise, not at all to merit it. The law "was added because of transgressions." The Apostle must be his own interpreter of this somewhat difficult phrase (Rom. iii: 20): "By the law is the knowledge of sin"; (Rom. v: 20), "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound." The plain inference is, that it was not given primarily to extirpate sin, nor to repress and suppress it, much less to produce it, but solely to reveal it, that sin by

the commandment might become "exceeding sinful," (Rom. vii:13). The law tends to display sin's turpitude and malignity. *Lex lux*, a Puritan says of it—the law is light.

Furthermore, the law was a temporary addition, "till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made." It was an after institution, and was not intended to last. It was likewise a parenthetical institution, "it came in by the by" (Rom. v:20), hence was not designed to be of permanent duration. It was to serve until Christ, the promised Seed, should appear, when its service should terminate.

Moreover, the law came from God through the ministration of angels, not immediately from Him; whereas the promise came from Him directly, without the intervention of a mediator, such as was Moses in the giving of the law. A mediator presupposes two parties; he is never "of one"; "but God is one." The interpretations of this phrase mount into the hundreds (430, one says), a fact that proves its difficulty if nothing more. Let us hold fast the main thought, the contrast between the law and the promise, and we shall not go far amiss. In the promise God was alone, mediatorless, as we may say; no one intervened between Him and Abraham to whom it was first made. But it was otherwise as to the law. There were the two contracting parties, God and Israel, with Moses as mediator. God's part stood firm and safe; man's broke down utterly. There is no hope of salvation, therefore, on this ground—nothing but fearful looking for of judgment. What then? "Is the law against

the promises of God? God forbid." It cannot give life, it can only condemn. It is an officer that arrests men, puts them in ward, and so shuts them up to the faith of Christ as their sole means of escape. It is a schoolmaster, a slave-tutor, whose office ceases when Christ is reached. The law is subservient to the promise, not antagonistic. It imprisons men that they may find the true liberty; it slays them that the true life may be had. To seize with its powerful grasp, to convict of sin, and to make hopeless all efforts at self-redemption, and to cut off every way of escape save one, Christ—this is the law's prime office. Thus brought to Christ we are justified through faith in Him, become the sons of God, and are baptized into one body wherein all national distinctions disappear, and all alike become Abraham's seed and happy heirs.

(6) The contrast between the standing of saints under the Mosaic covenant and that of saints under the Gospel is additional evidence of the essential difference between law and grace (iv: 1-11). Paul is here speaking of the whole Jewish system. Under Moses saints were *minors*. They were heirs indeed, but they enjoyed little of the inheritance, they had an allowance, just enough to live on and no more. They were under guardians and stewards, and differed nothing from bond-servants. But upon the advent and redeeming work of the Son of God the heirs entered on their majority. They received the adoption of sons, the place and standing of sons. This the Galatians enjoyed in common with all believers, the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. For He was

“made” or born “under law”—He was the Lawgiver, and could not come under law in the same sense and way that men are. He took this place voluntarily that He might redeem them that are under law that we might receive the adoption of sons. To go back to the position of minors under law and to become bond-servants again, was to impeach the perfect work of Christ, and to deny that He had come in the fullness of the time appointed and determined by the Father.

7. Furthermore, to conform to the Jewish ceremonialism was a return to idolatry. They had been Gentiles, serving them that are no gods. Paul trenchantly asks them, “how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?” He identifies Judaism with heathenism. For to revivify that which had been ended with the cross and to employ it in the worship and service of God was practically idolatry. Such is the force of the repeated *again*. How the Galatians must have been shocked! They thought that as Judaism was divinely established it must be pleasing to God to go back to it and use it in connection with the Gospel. But to restore what God had superseded by the advent of His Son is to impeach His perfect wisdom and to deny His blessed work. To substitute for Christ’s riches the powerless and poverty-stricken rites of Moses is idolatrous and criminal. It is like the freed-man going back under the yoke of bondage, denying his redemption. Let ritualists be shocked to learn that their gorgeous millinery, their tapers, altars, posturings, and holy days and seasons are now regarded by

Paul as rags of heathenism, ceremonies of the grave! This most telling blow against the false doctrine is followed by a very earnest and tender appeal (vs. 12-20).

(8) Another argument is founded on the history of Abraham and his sons (iv: 21-31; v: 1). The Apostle refers to the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael, and their mothers, Sarah and Hagar, and he calls the history "an allegory"; i. e., the narrative in Gen. xvi, xxi, illustrates the deep and abiding distinction between law and grace, between the children of the promise and the subjects of legalism. Paul does not question the historical trustworthiness of the record in Genesis, nor does he spiritualize it, much less does he treat it as fictitious. No New Testament writer when referring to the Old Testament ever does so. Nor does he impose on the history an artificial or arbitrary significance. What he does and all he does is to find in it an illustrious type of the immense difference and distance between legalism and liberty, between the spirit and standing of those under law and of those under grace. At the basis of this history lies the unchanging principle of the Kingdom of God—the law of enmity between the flesh and the spirit, between the children of the promise and the children of the flesh. Over against the one we may set the other:

Sarah the free woman.	Hagar the slave-mother.
Isaac born after the Spirit.	Ishmael born after the flesh.
Isaac and believers free children.	Ishmael and Sinai-sub- jects slaves.

Covenant of promise free.	Covenant of Sinai bondage.
Jerusalem above free.	Jerusalem that now is in bondage.
Children of the Spirit persecuted.	Children of the flesh persecutors.
Free woman and her son true heirs.	Slave-mother and her son cast out.

Here is ample ground for Paul's allegory. Hagar was an Egyptian bond-woman in the household of Abraham. Her son, of necessity, must share in the condition of his mother, for the mother determines the status of her children—a slave herself, her child must needs enter the same bondage. Sarah's place in Abraham's house was that of wife, companion, mistress, and legally the equal of her husband. Her son, Isaac, is born into freedom, heirship, and liberty. Besides, Isaac was the child of promise, his birth supernatural. The difference between the two families, Hagar and Ishmael her son, Sarah and Isaac her son, is exactly analogous to that between the subjects of law and grace. There could be no joint heirship between Isaac and Ishmael. There can be none between those under law and those under grace; nor can there be a fusion of law and grace, for they are opposites. They who seek salvation on the footing of law-keeping must inevitably share the fate of Hagar and Ishmael, for they take on themselves an impossible task, viz., salvation by works of law. They apostatize from the liberty of the Gospel, Christ profits them nothing. The Apostle closes his unanswerable argument against legalism with a military challenge, and a

ringing call: "With freedom did Christ set us free; stand fast, then, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage" (v: 1, R. V.).

C. The Hortatory and Practical Section (v: 2—vi). With consummate skill and cogency the Apostle applies the preceding unfolding of the truth as to the Gospel of the grace of God to legalists in general, and to the Galatian legalists in particular.

1. He warns them of the fearful risk they run and of the certain ruin that will overtake them if they put themselves under law to obtain life (v: 2-11). They who do so sever themselves from Christ, fall away from Christ, and Christ will profit them nothing. Their doom is sealed.

2. Love is the spirit of the law (v: 13-15). "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The law of love is the love of law. Liberty is not license.

3. The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit compared and contrasted (v: 16-26). Verse 17 is obscure in our old version; the Revision is better: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other, that ye may not do the things that ye would." The evident meaning is, the "desire" of each is hostile to the other. Trapp's note here is fine, "Every new man is two men." The inspired commentary on the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit in the believer is Romans vii. Let a man put himself under law to obtain deliverance from sin, for sanctification, and he

will experience this awful combat, this rending of himself in twain. "But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." The old version enumerates seventeen "works of the flesh"; the Revision gives but fifteen, it omits "adultery" and "murder." But even with these omissions the list is surely black enough. The work of the Spirit branches out into nine lovely clusters of fruit. "Against such there is no law."

4. The restoration of the erring (v: 1-5).

5. Exhortation to liberality (vi: 6-10).

6. Paul's supreme object of glory, the cross of Christ with its double crucifixion of the world to him, and of him to the world (vi: 11-16).

7. The parting word (vi: 17, 18). His appeal to remain unmolested is full of pathos—"henceforth let no man trouble me," by gainsaying my doctrine or impugning my Apostleship; "for I bear branded on my body the marks of the Lord Jesus"—the scars and wounds I have received in His service. St. Catherine of Siena, and St. Francis of Assisi claimed alike that they bore Christ's *stigmata* in their bodies. However much of delusion, deception, or truth there was in the claim, one thing we assuredly know, that the Apostle Paul bore Christ's *stigmata*, the honorable marks of his apostleship and his loyalty. "It is not gold, precious stones, statues, that adorn a soldier, but a torn buckler, a cracked helmet, a blunt sword, a scarred face" (Pericles, quoted by Trapp).

The discussion of the vital questions involved in the Galatian defection gathers about two distinct yet inseparable propositions. The first proposition may

be summarily stated thus: Justification is wholly of grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ apart from works of law. The truth of this proposition is developed and established by the following line of argument:

1. Jews and Gentiles alike are justified before God by faith alone (ii: 11-18).

2. The believer's relation to law is that of a dead and risen man (ii: 19-21).

3. The Spirit is bestowed on the principle of faith (iii: 1-5).

4. Abraham was justified by faith in God's word of promise (iii: 6-9).

5. Christ alone redeems us from the law's curse (iii: 10-14).

6. God's free and gracious promise to save believers antedates law by centuries, therefore the law forms no part of our justification (iii: 15-22).

7. The history of Sarah and Hagar, of Isaac and Ishmael, when read and interpreted according to the mind of God, sets the seal of eternal truth on the precious doctrine of justification by faith alone (iv: 21-31).

The second proposition may be stated thus: The nature and design of the law. It is unfolded, briefly, as follows:

1. Law cannot justify the sinner (ii: 16).

2. It cannot give righteousness (ii: 21).

3. It cannot give the Spirit (iii: 2).

4. It overwhelms the sinner with its dreadful curse (iii: 10).

5. It reveals the presence and enormity of sin (iii: 19).
6. It was a schoolmaster unto Christ (iii: 24).
7. Even the heirs that were under it were bond-servants (iv: 1-3).

What a mighty protest against legalism in all its forms is this Epistle to the Galatians! How solemnly does the Spirit of God here warn against the tremendous evil of mingling law and grace in man's redemption! We see, we cannot but see, how repugnant to the Gospel, and to God, the Author of the Gospel, is the teaching that mixes these two antagonistic elements. Nothing is more destructive of the pure truth of the Lord Jesus Christ, nothing is more fatal to Christianity as a system of salvation revealed from heaven, nothing so clouds the Christian's hope and standing, nothing so effectively cuts the nerve of all Christian liberty and service, as the foisting in of law as a part of our salvation. To preach a legal gospel is disastrous, is criminal.

And yet it must be sorrowfully confessed that in spite of this tremendous indictment, the same miserable twins of those primitive churches, legalism and ritualism, live and flourish in our time and among those who still passionately claim the honorable titles of Reformed and Evangelical. One single word ominously describes a large class of religious teachers whose doctrine is not that of Paul, the word "ethical." It is surprising how great a place it fills in our modern thinking, and how deeply significant it is. A good, even a precious word in its right use it certainly is,

but when thrust into a place and prominence it has no Scriptural right to, it becomes an offence and a snare. By it is now meant in the conception of many that what man needs and must have to be saved is a piety of his own workmanship, a character built by himself and out of his own material; it is culture, moral education, the natural man saving himself. "Ethical" teaching has become in the mouths of many the rival of the cross, if not its enemy. It ignores the sacrificial atonement of Christ. Its vocabulary is strangely destitute of the New Testament term, *Blood*, a word that dyes the entire theology of Paul. Christ's example it exalts with faultless rhetoric, but Christ's death on the cross as our blessed Substitute, Christ's blood as the sole ground of our pardon and acceptance with God, it veils or forgets or ignores.

We are now taught by no small number that in virtue of His incarnation the Lord Jesus Christ saves humanity. In His matchless love He has incorporated Himself with our kind, and therefore the race is finally to be lifted by Him into a sphere of glorious fellowship with God. Never for an instant is the preciousness of the incarnation to be obscured, much less denied. Yet never is it to be forgotten that the incarnation was a means to an end, not the end in itself. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii: 14).

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (Jno. xii: 24). Had Jesus Christ gone back to the glory whence He came without passing through death, not one human being would have been saved; all alone He would have gone, all alone lived in glory, without bringing so much as one son with Him. Blessed be His name, He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; He was raised from the dead, according to the Scripture. In both death and resurrection He was our Representative, our Surety. We, too, through Him, are forgiven, saved, and through His commanding voice shall rise again and enter the glory with Him. A sacramentarian Gospel and a legal Gospel is not the Gospel of Paul nor yet of Jesus Christ.

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

The church at Ephesus was founded during Paul's third Missionary Journey, as it is commonly called. In his address to the elders of the church (Acts xx: 18-35), the Apostle reminded them that for the space of three years he had faithfully discharged his ministry among them, and he exhorted them to "take heed to themselves and to the flock" that had been entrusted to their care. It is evident from the terms employed in that address that this church was organized and well equipped for its great work. The field of its testimony was a difficult and dangerous one. Few cities of Asia Minor were so bigoted, fanatical and idolatrous as Ephesus (Acts xix). Its magnificent temple was one of the seven wonders of the world. The sun, it was said, in his course, looked down on nothing more splendid. The image of Diana, the "tall huntress," it was claimed, was the product of celestial art (Acts xix: 35). Like the Palladium of Troy, like the most ancient Minerva of Athens, like some statues and pictures of southern Europe, Diana's statue at Ephesus was believed to have fallen "down from Jupiter," the workmanship of gods or angels. And yet it was most primitive and rude, its lower portion a shapeless block. Of all such images, one can only say that art on high must be at a very low point of development if these are specimens of angelic skill and handicraft. However, the cruder and more repulsive such objects

are, the more intense is the fanaticism with which their worshipers venerate them. It was Ephesus' proud boast that it was the custodian and devotee of the temple and its sacred image. But here as everywhere the Gospel as preached by Paul and his fellow Christians won a signal victory. A very flourishing church was gathered, to which the Epistle was addressed.*

There are four Epistles which belong to the same group, and which are sometimes designated as the Prison Epistles. These are, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon; 2 Timothy being somewhat later as to date. During what imprisonment of Paul were these Scriptures written? It has been thought that a part of them, perhaps all of them, date from the captivity of Cæsarea; by others, that they were all written at Rome. In support of this latter view is the fact that the language of Philippians about the progress of the Gospel in the Imperial Guard and Household points almost in so many words to Rome; it is scarcely applicable to Cæsarea, save in a very subordinate way. If it be granted that all four are to be dated at nearly the same time, and if, as is the opinion

* The address, "at Ephesus," (i: 1), is after all probably right. The "circular" hypothesis of Ussher seems to explain the difficulties that have been raised, viz., that the Epistle was written for a group of churches of which that of Ephesus ranked as chief, and that copies were prepared in which the name was inserted of each particular assembly. Hence the "Epistle from Laodicea," (Col. iv: 16), is readily accounted for. Tychicus, who probably carried both Ephesians and Colossians to their destination, would pass through Laodicea on his way to Colosse. Findlay's descriptive phrase can hardly be improved: "The general Epistle of Paul to Ephesus and its daughter churches."

of many, Philippians was the first of the four, then Rome must certainly have been the place.

The contrast between Galatians and Ephesians is as marked as it can well be. The former is a battlefield. It has the ring of sharp steel. It resounds with the blows of one who knows that he fights for the truth of God and the freedom of God's people. We pass into the stillness and hush of the sanctuary when we turn to Ephesians. Here prevails the atmosphere of repose, of meditation, of worship and peace. The tone of the Epistle is most exalted. It must be obvious even to the casual reader that we are here set upon very high and holy ground. This is not said in disparagement of other portions of the God-inspired Scriptures. In revealing His mind God is pleased to employ various instruments of varying capabilities. The diversity of gifts among the penmen of the Word of God is not the least remarkable feature of the book. They range all the way from the loftiest poet and thinker down to the herdsman, tax-gatherer and fisherman. These diversities, however, in the writers of the Bible only serve to display the more brightly His perfections and glory who is the real, the supreme Author. Unity in variety is God's way in nature, His way also in revelation. He is no servile copyist.

Students of the Bible recognize a degree of harmony between the penman's capacity and the communications made through him. Moses, David, Isaiah, Daniel, Paul, John, and others among the writers of Scripture were endowed with extraordinary talents, perhaps genius in its broadest sense. Their gifts were

of the highest order. But super-added to the great faculties they possessed was the gift of the Holy Spirit of God, without whom they could no more have given us the revelation than they could have made a world. Yet there appears to be a measure of adaptation of the messenger to the majesty of the message. Of Saul of Tarsus the Lord said: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts ix: 15). "A chosen vessel" indeed; gifted as few of our race have been; a Hellenist Jew, profoundly versed in the Old Testament Scriptures, and skilled in the practices and principles of Judaism; brought to a saving knowledge of Christ by a personal and supernatural revelation to him of the Son of God, He was fitted to be the channel of the deepest communications from God, the instrument through which it pleased Him to disclose the thoughts and counsels of His heart. Of all the Epistles of this man there is none that rises higher than this to the Ephesians.

Was there some degree of correspondence between the saints here addressed and the measure and manner of the Spirit's communications to them? We find it so in others, e. g., Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Hebrews, etc. But whether the Ephesian Christians possessed such intelligence of divine things, whether they apprehended their state and standing before God as believers in His Son, Jesus Christ, so as to apprehend the supreme import of this great message we do not know. Paul plainly told the elders of this church that serious dangers threatened the flock both from

without and from within, that "from among their own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts xx:30). More than thirty years after, our Lord charged this same church with having left its first love (Rev. ii:4). It is unlikely that the Christian body in Ephesus, in its knowledge, its spirituality, its grace and devotedness, measured up to the lofty standard of grace possessed and life lived that are here described. On the whole, it is better to regard it as intended for the entire company of the redeemed, for the Body of Christ. That gracious and lovely company do know the Lord, they rejoice in conscious fellowship with Him, they live in holy separation from the world, and they faithfully follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They and they alone answer to the marvelous description given of the saints of God in this profound and beautiful letter.

A close resemblance exists between Ephesians and Colossians. All readers of the two Epistles recognize it. The resemblance appears in the occurrence in both of the same words and forms of expression, in the identity of thought while the language is varied, and in the general structure of the two. But there are as striking differences between them. While Colossians bears every indication of having been written to a particular congregation, and in reference to their peculiar circumstances, the absence of these features is a marked characteristic of Ephesians. Controversy is prominent in Colossians; it is almost wholly absent from Ephesians. The main object of Colossians is to

warn Christians of the dangers arising from philosophic speculation, against Judaistic ritualism, in short, against admixture of Oriental mysticism and Jewish ceremonialism, a sort of incipient Gnosticism; while the chief aim in Ephesians is to unfold the glorious work of God on behalf of His church, the saved from among the two great branches of the race, the Jew and the Gentile. Ephesians treats of oneness with Christ; Colossians, of completeness in Christ; the first has for its key, *in Christ*; the second, *Christ's headship*, and His infinite sufficiency.

ANALYSIS

- I. The Greeting (i: 1, 2). "Saints," separated and holy ones; "Faithful," distinguished for their faithfulness and loyal attachment to Christ their Redeemer—these are the lofty titles he bestows upon them.
- II. Thanksgiving for the Blessings Given Them (i: 3-14).
 1. The source and medium of the blessings (v. 3).
 2. Election of believers and its end (v. 4).
 3. Their adoption (vs. 5, 6).
 4. Their redemption (vs. 7, 8).
 5. God's comprehensive purpose in Christ (vs. 9, 10).
 6. The saints' heritage (vs. 11, 12).
 7. Their sealing and security (v. 13).
- III. The Apostle's Prayer (i: 14-23).
 1. Its occasion (vs. 15, 16); their faith and love prompted it (cf. Col. i: 4).
 2. Its twofold object (vs. 17-19).
 3. Its ground and certainty (20-23).

- IV. Spiritual History of the Redeemed (ii: 1-22).
1. Condition by nature (ii: 1-3).
 2. State by grace (vs. 4-10).
 3. Their past and present (vs. 11-13).
 4. Christ's work of reconciliation (vs. 14-19).
 5. Unity and glory of the church (vs. 20-22).
- V. The Mystery of the Gospel, and Paul's Second Prayer (iii: 1-21).
1. The great parenthesis (iii: 1-13).
 - a. Its purpose, viz., to reveal the mystery (vs. 1-4).
 - b. The mystery revealed (vs. 5, 6).
 - c. Paul commissioned to make it known to men (vs. 7-13).
 2. His second prayer (iii: 14-21). Five comprehensive petitions:
 - a. Strength by the Spirit (v. 16).
 - b. Christ's indwelling (v. 17).
 - c. Established in love (17).
 - d. Apprehension of Christ's love (vs. 18, 19).
 - e. Divine fulness (19).
 3. Doxology, triumphant assurance of being heard and helped (vs. 20, 21).
- VI. The Believer's Walk (iv—vi: 10).
1. Maintenance of unity (iv: 1-6).
 2. Spiritual gifts and their object (vs. 7-16).
 3. Separation from the old life (vs. 17-19).
 4. Living the new life (vs. 20-24).
 5. Rags of the old man, robes of the new (vs. 25-32). Six sharp antitheses:

- a. Falsehood—truth.
 - b. Anger—forgiveness.
 - c. Theft—doing good through honest toil.
 - d. Corrupt speech—pure and helpful speech.
 - e. Grieving the Spirit—obeying the Spirit.
 - f. Bitterness—love and tenderness.
- 6. The walk as to society (v. 1-21).
 - a. Separation from its evils (vs. 1-14).
 - b. With circumspection (vs. 15-21).
 - 7. Walk in the home (vs. 22-33).
 - a. Duties of husbands and wives (v. 22-33).
 - b. Duties of children (vi. 1-4).
 - c. Duties of servants and masters (vi. 5-9).
- VII. Christian Warfare (vi: 10-20).
- 1. The enemy (vi: 12).
 - 2. The armor (vs. 11, 13-17).
 - 3. The victory (vs. 18-20).
 - 4. Personal matters (vs. 21-24).

From this analysis, Ephesians is seen to fall into two main parts: the first doctrinal mingled with praise and prayer (ch. i—iii). The second is practical and hortatory (ch. iv—vi), the sublime truths unfolded in the first section are applied to the lives of Christians in the tenderest and most cogent manner. Paul first exhibits the lofty station where believers are set in the grace and purpose of God, and then from this majestic height they are shown their relations, duties, behavior—the saintliness which should distinguish them in their work and walk in this world. We are here brought up to the every summit of the Delectable Mountains,

and we see in the clear, pure atmosphere about us something of the amazing grace that has been so richly given us, the wondrous love wherewith God has loved us, the beauty and the glory with which He has crowned us. *Unity* is one prominent feature of the Epistle. All its various parts are knit together in the closest way, and with the utmost compactness. Its *doctrine* is another. Profound, comprehensive, far-reaching is the teaching of this incomparable Scripture. It stretches from eternity to eternity; it deals with God's purposes of grace, with the perfect redemption which He planned before the world was, and which has now been revealed in the person and work of His blessed Son, Christ our Lord; with the quickening, resurrection and exaltation of the Body of Christ, the Church of the living God, which is in Christ, and one with Him. Its *morality* is of the very highest order. Suppose one were to fashion his life according to this pattern; suppose he were really and actually to demean himself according to this exalted standard, he would present the world with an example, not only of what Christianity is and can do for humanity, but with the noblest, purest, and most unselfish specimen of human character; such ought to be every member of the family of God.

II. Thanksgiving for the Blessings of Redemption through the Lord Jesus Christ (i: 3-14). This section of the Epistle is remarkable for many things; e. g., it is a single sentence, broken indeed into parts, but still a unit, the same great thought running through it from the beginning to the close; it enumerates the

various and multiplied grounds of praise; it attests the central truth of Christianity that believers are in Christ, and therefore all is theirs, nothing wanting to detract from their blessing, nothing in excess to interrupt their peace, and nothing out of place to mar their joy. They who get all in such lavish profusion must surely adore Him who gives all.

The Doxology (i: 3) summarizes all the blessings with which the hand of infinite love has enriched the saints. These blessings are spiritual, i. e., they are the product of the Holy Spirit; the sphere within which they are engaged is "the heavenly places," and the relation in which they become ours is "in Christ." The precious words *in Christ*, are the key to this wonderful Scripture. Note how often it or its equivalent is found in this first chapter (vs. 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13). Since the saints are in vital union with Him, since they form that mysterious and mystical Body of which Christ is the glorified Head nothing is too great or too good for God their Father to bestow upon them. It is worthy of remark, also that the little preposition *in*, denoting union, is never found in connection with the name Jesus, the Lord's human, earthly title; they cannot be in Jesus; they are in the Christ who with them receives this official and exalted name (1 Cor. xii: 12).

1. The origin and source of the redemption (vs. 4-6). It is traced to the grace of God, to His undeserved mercy, to His free and sovereign gift. In His wondrous grace He chose us in Christ before time was, adopted us as His sons, gave us the place, the rights,

and the privileges of children in His own household, and secured our sanctification and our blamelessness before Himself. In redemption as in all His other purposes, God works according to a very definite and comprehensive plan. His plan is dateless, timeless, formed "before the foundation of the world." The Fall was no surprise to Him, nor was redemption an after-thought. In His love He thought of us and provided for our salvation before one star glittered in the infinite expanse. Every saint, the least and the greatest, without distinction and without exception, is in the Family, as near the Father as the glorious Son Himself, for all are in Him, and hence are welcomed with the same joyousness and glad acclaim as the Lord Jesus.

2. The price paid for the redemption (i:7). The redemption is effected by the blood of the Son of God, and it secures the remission of sins, a first and an essential element in salvation. But redemption is much wider, as other Scripture abundantly testifies. It means not only our deliverance from sin, and Satan, and death, but entrance into all that is good, all that our loving Father provides and promises His people—life, peace, joy, and a title to heaven and fitness for it. Hence Paul attaches the definite article to his great word, "the redemption"; it is something both grand and unique, something well known, and yet something enshrined in solitary eminence. It is the theme of the Old Testament, it is likewise the main subject of the New. And then it is declared to be the present possession of all who are in Christ—"we have" it. But

let no one fail to see and deeply realize that this mighty redemption is alone through the blood of the Lord Jesus. All readers know full well that "the blood" is the pre-eminent subject of the Old Testament. It is the scarlet line that binds all its diversified parts together. It lies at the foundation of all Paul's teaching as well. It is the one supreme topic of the New Testament.

Note how large a place it fills in our salvation: We are redeemed by His blood (Eph. i:7); justified by His blood (Rom. v:9); purged as to the conscience by His blood (Heb. ix:14); forgiven by His blood (Col. i:14); cleansed by His blood (1 John i:7); made white by His blood (Rev. vii:15); have peace through His blood (Col. i:20); enter the holiest by His blood (Heb. x:19). God makes everything of the blood of His dear Son. The value He sets upon it is infinite, for by it He pardons, justifies, and saves the believing sinner. It is the blood that atones, propitiates, expiates, satisfies. By His blood Christ bought us for God. There is redemption also by power. Christ will one day by His own might raise up all who sleep in Him and glorify them in their bodies forever (Phil. iii:20, 21).

The redeeming work of the Lord Jesus extends further and embraces more than the Church. It primarily saves the saints, but ultimately all things both in heaven and earth shall be gathered together into one under the sovereign rule of the Son of man. A reorganized creation, the reunion of earth and heaven which sin has long sundered, under the supreme head-

ship of Christ will be the final and triumphant issue of His redemptive work. But the inauguration of the "dispensation of the fulness of the times" and its complete victory does not contemplate universalism, nor restorationism, but a redeemed earth as well as a redeemed people, the universe acknowledging Him as its Head and supreme Lord. He who once described Himself as the meek and lowly One, whom men despised and vilified, whose person they smote with their hands, and into whose face they dared to spit, is invested with universal sovereignty and power. His empire knows no limit, His rule no rival. God has made known the "law of His house" (economy), viz., that in the fulness of the times all things absolutely are to be headed up in His Son. Worlds, angels, and men must own His sway. Even death and the unseen world of spirits must bow beneath his victorious scepter (1 Cor. xv: 25, 26; Eph. i: 22, 23; Rev. xx: 14). His glorious Kingdom, when He shall have cleared it of every foe and expunged from it every trace and stain of sin, shall be delivered up to God, Christ's blessed work of redemption and restoration having attained its goal, its peerless consummation.

3. The saints' place in this great redemption is a very prominent one (i: 11-14). They are the very center of it all. Upon them God lavishes His wealth with amazing prodigality. Three times in the chapter their heritage is spoken of (vs. 11, 14, 18). They have an inheritance, and they are God's inheritance. Theirs is wonderful, ineffable. Peter describes it (1 Pet. i: 4) as "in its substance incorruptible, in its purity

undefiled, in its beauty unfading." It is imperishable in its nature, untainted in its possession, and in its enjoyment unailing. They are God's heritage, "made a heritage" (R. V.), and "the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Israel was His heritage (Deut. iv:20; ix:29; xxxii:9). We know what He did for that people, and what He is yet to do for them. But in a higher and better sense the saints are now His inheritance. On them He is now expending the riches of His grace, and on them He will expend the riches of His glory. Israel's beauty was perfect because God had put His comeliness upon them (Ezek. xvi:14); but the prayer of Moses, the man of God, will yet be fulfilled for all the saints: "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us" (Psa. xc:17). In that majestic beauty how they shall shine! "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself" (Phil. iii:20, 21, R. V.). The saints are now God's own possession, the dear objects of His love. They are to be the dear objects of His glory as well. In Zeph. iii:17 a remarkable word is spoken: "He will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." It is the only place in all the Scripture where God is represented as singing. It is over redeemed Israel He sings. But we are justified in applying the prediction to the saints, for in this section of Ephesians we have, first, Jews

who are in Christ, who pre-trusted in Him (v. 12), and then believing Gentiles (v. 13). The two classes united in Him hope together for the glory which is to be revealed to them and in them. In that day, the glad day of full and complete redemption, God will sing with joy over them. What a thrilling day, an indescribable day it will be!

4. Their security is divinely pledged, they are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, the earnest of their inheritance (vs. 13, 14). A twofold use of the seal is here mentioned, viz., first it denotes safety, inviolability. What is sealed is secure; no one tampers with it, no one may break it. Second, it denotes possession, property-right. What is sealed belongs alone to the sealer. God is the Sealer of His people (2 Cor. i: 21, 22; Eph. iv: 30). He owns them, protects them, keeps them, and none shall pluck them out of His hand (John x: 27-29). The seal is not baptism, nor the Lord's Supper, nor faith, nor assurance, but the Holy Spirit Himself. Security cannot be surer. But the Spirit is more; He is the earnest, the pledge of the inheritance. In receiving Him the saints have received the advance payment of the purchased possession of God. As certainly as they have Him, so certainly will they have the heritage in full. For He is part of it already given, the first installment, as men say. And if God has paid this great and blessed installment, we may rest secure He will pay *all*.

These vast and unparalleled blessings of redemption the Apostle ascribes to the grace of God. Four times he uses the suggestive and profound phrase, "To the

praise of the glory of his grace" (vs. 6, 7, 12, 14). In the four the terms are not quite the same, but in substance they are identical. Paul sees in each stage of our redemption grace, rich grace, glorious grace, and nothing but grace. In its past inception, in its present blessings and enjoyments, in its future glories, grace is supreme, redemption is God's free gift to sinners. *Grace reigns.*

x III. Prayer, that the Saints May Fully Realize their Divine Privileges and Prospects in Christ (i: 15—ii: 10).

Two prayers of Paul are introduced into this Epistle, this, and the one in iii: 14-21. Very remarkable these prayers are for the solid ground upon which the various petitions rest, for their comprehensiveness, and for the mighty truths by which the earnest plea is enforced. Nearly all the prayers in the Bible are argumentative, i. e., the intercession or petitions are supported by appeal's to God's promises or covenant or character. What a force of argument appears in Solomon's Dedicatory Prayer (1 Kings viii), and in the Lord's Intercessory Prayer (John xvii). It is thus also in vs. 15-23 of our Epistle and in iii: 14-21. Because of what God is in Himself and His relation to the Lord Jesus as His God and Father, and because of what He has already done for the saints and is yet to do, Paul urges his mighty plea on their behalf.

The prayer has two aims, immediate and ultimate. Its immediate object is that the saints may be given a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of God. The Holy Spirit must not be excluded from

this petition, for He alone is able to bestow the boon sought, as the Puritan Trapp well says: "He revealeth unto us God's depths and reads us his riddles (1 Cor. ii). He enlightens both the organ and the object." "The eyes of your heart" is the accepted reading—an expression which includes the will as well as the affections. "All great thoughts come from the heart." Clear, cold intellect never yet fathomed the depths of the mysteries of God's grace and love. It is *insight*, profound and true, that the Apostle asks for. The ultimate aim of the prayer is that believers may apprehend what the hope of God's calling is—a calling which is from Him and summons to Him—what the wealth of divine glory there is in store for them, and what the exceeding greatness of His power is upward. The power is identical with that exerted in the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, the power that not only raised Him from the dead but exalted Him above and far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, and that put all things in subjection under His feet. How can we doubt that every promise of God to us who believe will not be made good? The same Almighty which seated Jesus amid the blaze of the ineffable glory is pledged to seat the Church of the redeemed with her Redeemer in the same glory, for He and they form one Body, the mystic Christ.

Not only so, but believers are already in the grace and purpose of God risen; they have been quickened together with Christ, raised up together with Him, and are made to sit together with Him in the heav-

enlies; i. e., He and they are even now in God's gracious purpose and intent together in glory! This exceeds! One is lost in the contemplation of it. How the saints need to have their minds clarified, their thoughts elevated, their heart-eyes opened, their spirits raptured above, to apprehend even a little of these glories. "There I stand, poor worm," said Gamble. "We have taken up our rooms aforehand in heaven," says another. And Graham writes, "My heart, my home, my treasure, are all in heaven. My Lord, my Love, my Life, is there also. Faith shall soon be changed into sight, and I shall see Him as He is and be with Him and like Him forever."

But here again the Apostle insists that it is all of grace, and coming ages shall witness the wealth of it when they shall see God's infinite kindness towards "us." As if he said, Your new life is a gift; your position as risen with Christ is a gift; the object on whom you believe, the Son of God, is a gift; and the faith by which you receive it is also a gift. "Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we shall walk in them."

IV. The Outcasts Brought Home (ii: 11-22). The terms in which the Spirit describes the Ephesians, and by implication all the pagan world, disclose the deepest wretchedness and misery. Various epithets are applied to them, and each in turn reveals darker traits, a more dreadful degradation. Israel had the covenant sign and seal in their flesh, the theocratic Kingdom with all

its privileges and blessings was rightfully theirs and only theirs, theirs also the promises and hopes, the covenants and the oracles of God. The Gentiles were without these. No such hopes or promises were made known to them. They were "far-off," "aliens and strangers." Nothing to satisfy them here or to yield them happiness hereafter had they. Their future was a night without a star. "In Hellas, in the epoch of Alexander the Great, it was a current saying, and one profoundly felt by all the best men, that the best thing of all was not to be born, and the next best to die" (Mommsen, quoted by Moule). The pre-Christian Ephesians were Christless, and therefore hopeless, godless, and homeless.* Nor is it otherwise with the unevangelized nations at the present time. What was true in the apostolic age touching them is still true. The tremendous sentence of John holds as firmly now as when he penned it—"We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one" (1 John v: 19). No more dismal image of the godless world can be imagined—lying in the lap of the devil! It may shock the sensitive and refined sentimentalism of our Sadducean age for John thus to speak; but to him who still believes the Word of God, it is the sentence and the judgment of Him whose "eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men." And from that sentence there is no appeal.

But "in Christ" these outcasts are brought back,

* A specimen pagan epitaph: "Let us drink and be merry: for we shall have no more kissing and dancing in the kingdom of Proserpine. Soon we shall fall asleep, to wake no more."

brought nigh, brought into the bosom of God's family. They are "made nigh by the blood of Christ." They have peace with God, and peace with one another. The old enmity between Jew and Gentile is slain by the cross. How bitter and deep-seated the enmity was, pagan literature abundantly discloses. Nor do we need to go back so far. In our own time and in many countries the animosity between Gentile and Jew is as bitter as in the apostolic age. The fierce anti-Semitism of continental Europe, the hostility between Asiatic and European, French and German, American and African, Irish and English, witness to the depth of the cleavage that sunders vast sections of our poor humanity. But wherever the Gospel of God's grace is received, and wherever Jew and Greek, Oriental and Occidental are found, "in Christ," there is seen the lovely spectacle of genuine union and fraternal love, brotherhood that God Himself owns and blesses. Nothing else can by any possibility effect so vast a task as to reconcile and reunite these scattered and hostile members of the human family. The dream of the socialist, the charmed watchword of the hour, "Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man"—a cry which alas, too often ignores or denies the atonement of Jesus Christ, is as powerless to bind into one these inimical elements of society as are the knife and the pistol of the fanatical Nihilist and the murderous Anarchist. Jesus Christ is now through His Word and Spirit making "one new man," so "making peace." In this New Man, the mystic man, distinctions of race, intervals of ages, types of civilization, degrees of men-

tal culture, even sex itself, disappear; "ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii: 28; Col. iii: 11).

They who are "in Him" have a city of their own, a city whose builder and maker is God (Heb. xi: 10); they have a citizenship the noblest and the purest known, for it is celestial (Phil. iii: 20). They are "fellow-citizens with the saints," not with angels nor with men nor with living Christians alone, but with the whole glorious Body both in heaven and on earth. They are of the "household of God," members of His family, children of the Blood Royal. And they form God's new and splendid Temple of which Solomon's was but a thin shadow, a feeble type. In them dwells the Holy Spirit of God.

This second chapter may be summarized thus:

THE CHARACTER OF MAN.	THE CHARACTER OF GOD.
Dead in sin.	Rich in mercy.
Dominated by the world.	Great in love.
Dominated by Satan.	A Gracious Quickener.
Dominated by the flesh.	A Glorious Exalter.
Children of wrath.	A Mighty Workman.
Aliens from Israel's commonwealth.	A Perfect Reconciler.
Strangers to the promise.	An Accessible Father.
Without hope.	A Blessed Peace-maker.
Christless and Godless.	A Matchless Builder.

The heathen world is Christless, outcast, pessimistic, and atheistic. The Gospel of God's grace is the world's only hope.

V. The Parenthesis and the Second Prayer (iii). The sentence begun in verse 1 is abruptly broken off at verse 2, and is only resumed at verse 14. It is Paul's

way thus to interrupt his thought and to set forth into a digression which seems at first sight to be subordinate, if not irrelevant. But his *asides* go to the core of the subject and flood it with light. Let us be thankful for this magnificent parenthesis as for all his others.

His object is to make known to his readers "the mystery" which had been revealed to him, and of which the ministry had been committed to him (vs. 3-9). In i:9, 10 Paul discloses the great mystery of the summing up of all things under Christ. In v:30-32 he speaks of the great mystery of Christ and the Church, as he does likewise in the passage now under consideration. In the New Testament the term "mystery" always means "a truth undiscoverable except by revelation." "It never necessarily means a thing unintelligible or perplexing *in itself*." A mystery when revealed may not be understood by us in all its details, e. g., that of 1 Cor. xv:51; 1 Tim. iii:16; but we may know enough of it to furnish a good ground for hope and for action. Concerning this mystery, the Apostle tells us that it was "not made known in other ages unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (v. 5); that it was "from the beginning of the world hid in God" (v. 9). Obviously, Paul means that the mystery was a secret to past ages, and that it is disclosed by himself who received it by revelation.

What is the mystery? Verse 6 announces it, viz., that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the Body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in

Christ Jesus through the Gospel. To express it in other terms, believing Gentiles are co-heirs, con-corporate, and consorts as to the promise, with believing Jews in all that God so richly bestows through Christ Jesus, and which He offers men by His glorious Gospel. This divine purpose of placing believers of any race on a corporate equality in the Body of Christ was unknown to previous ages. The Old Testament is not silent as to blessing for the Gentiles, nor is it silent as to blessing for the whole world, the restoration of this planet to the favor of God. But it says nothing of a union of all believers of every nationality in the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to form a Body, of which Christ is Himself the glorified Head. Hints there are of this mystery in the older Scriptures, faint gleams of it in type and symbol, as Paul intimates in the words, "as it is now revealed" (v. 5). But a full revelation of it there was none.

For centuries life flowed through a nation, was confined to it, the nation of Israel. Now it flows from the Head into a Body. All spiritual nourishment flows from the Head; all divine communications likewise. It is by the instrumentality of the Body, the Church, that the Lord Jesus acts upon the world, convicting and converting souls. It is by His Body His grace is manifested, and by His Body His glory will be seen (v. 10). The Head is one with God; the Body is one with the Head. And these two, united in one, form the New Man, the colossal Man, the Second Adam. This is indeed a mystery hid to other ages.

The prayer (iii: 14-19) has five marvelous petitions. ,

It begins with a supplication that the saints may be strengthened with power through the Spirit; as if "strengthened" were insufficient to meet our case, there is added "with might," or power, i. e., mightily strengthened by the Spirit. To the work of the Spirit he adds the Lord Jesus Himself, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Then his prayer takes wings, as we may say, and soars into infinite regions: "That ye may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the length and breadth and height and depth." The object is left unnamed, but certainly it is none other than the Divine Love twice named in the connection. In its amplitude and magnitude how inconceivably vast that love is. It is knowledge-surpassing. And the ultimate aim is that they may be filled with all the fulness of God. The blessings asked for may appear too rich, too boundless for us, and for God likewise. As if to silence such a doubt, the Apostle immediately subjoins a Doxology: "Now unto him who is able to do," etc. This ascription of praise to God's ability, like a thousand amens, expresses our assurance of being heard in all our vast petitions. Seeing He transcends our highest desires and largest conceptions, why should we hesitate to offer our deepest supplications, ask for anything? He is able to do up to the full measure of our need and far beyond. Note this most expressive and exhaustive language: He is "able to do"—what we ask, all we ask; what we think, all we think; above all we ask or think; abundantly above all we ask or think; exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. The term "abundant"

expresses the idea of excessive, more than enough. Enough is a measuring word. It is the exact filling of a given measure. It satisfies the demand, it equals the want, but it goes no further. But "abundant" is something over and above. It is enough, and to spare. It not only fills the required measure, but makes it full, heaps it up and overflows its sides. But Paul adds a preposition to this word, and it becomes *over*-abundant, a superfluity of abundance. He adds a second preposition, and then his redoubled term becomes the excess of the superfluity of abundance.

A crust of bread and a cup of water may be enough to stay the fainting soul of the hungry. But God is not sparing of His stores. He sets not His children down to crumbs, but seats them at a royal table. Many of us can say, "He brought me into his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." "Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly O beloved." "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." Such is God's infinite munificence His abundance and superabundance, and His ability to make every pledge He has given us good, and more than good. "But, alas, if this language is infinitely below the reality which is in God it is infinitely above the reality which is in us. To pass from Scripture to our experience, seems like a fall from heaven to earth" (Monod).

Paul has completed the doctrinal section of his Epistle. Very wonderful is the revelation herein made of the redemption which we have in Christ Jesus; the calling, standing, state, and destiny of the Church of God, as here unfolded to our view, is equally wonder-

ful. The wealth of the divine love, the riches of divine grace, so conspicuous in these three chapters, surpass human speech to describe and human heart to conceive. Silence, adoration, and gratitude become us.

The Apostle turns to the corresponding duties and responsibilities of those who by the Spirit and by faith have been united with the glorious Christ. His fervent appeals are addressed to the whole company of believers. His burning desire is that they should be united, loyal, holy, upright, and blameless in the whole circle of their relations with each other, with the unbelieving world around them, and with God their Father. In the family, in society, and in the assembly they are to be true and pure, glad and happy, pilgrims singing on their way to the glory (iv—vi). The appeal is based upon two great facts: First, the fact of a present redemption, "by grace ye are saved" (ii: 5, 8). The tense of the verb in both these verses indicates an accomplished fact in the divine purpose and covenant—"Ye have been and now are saved." Since you are saved, live and walk and speak as redeemed men should (iv: 1, 2). Second, Christ's love the supreme motive of life, and Christ's sacrifice the supreme example of self-sacrifice (v: 1, 2). Since He loved you and died for you, be you imitators of God, as dear children, and walk in love.

1. Christian unity and Christian ministry (v: 1-16). The Apostle begins his application by an appeal for unity among the people of God—the unity of the Spirit in the bond which is peace. It is a unity effected by the Spirit alone, and by Him maintained. He it is

who by uniting believers with Christ unites them also to one another. The way to maintain their union with each other is to realize their union with the Lord Jesus. In seven particulars the unity is exhibited: one Body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father. The one Body is the creation of the Spirit of Christ who likewise fills and thrills all believers with the blessed hope to which they are called. The one Lord is the supreme object of faith, of which baptism is the sign and seal; and God our Heavenly Father is the ultimate source of all true unity, as of all grace and love.

The Christian ministry is the gift of the ascended Saviour. Paul traces it to its Head, and then points out its design. He prefaces his quotation from the 68th Psalm with the words, "wherefore he saith." Who saith? Either the Lord or the Lord's Word, for with Paul as with all the New Testament writers the Word and its author are convertible terms. "When he ascended on high . . . he gave gifts unto men." The Apostle sees in His receiving gifts their distribution: He took them in order to give them. Those who are bewitched with what is called "the scientific method" of interpretation, see no Messiah in this Psalm, nor any indeed in the Old Testament. They say that the Conqueror of the Psalm is a human warrior, a prince; Paul says He is Christ. They say "on high" means the heights of Mount Zion at Jerusalem; the Apostle says the words mean heaven. Which is right? One who believes the Bible to be the very Word of God has no difficulty in deciding which.

The ministry as bestowed by the Lord Jesus consists of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. Christ gives them. A university, a theological seminary, a presbytery or the imposition of episcopal hands can never alone make a minister of Jesus Christ. He is the sole gift of Christ. The Apostles and prophets appear to have been extraordinary officers in the Church, and the office ceased when the Church was firmly established and the canon of revelation complete. The evangelists were missionaries, while pastors and teachers form one class, a pastor being a teacher. The appointment of these various ministries was for a definite end, viz., "for the perfecting of the saints . . . for the building up of the body of Christ." That the Body may be built up, that the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God may be attained by all, that the mature age of the full-grown Man may be secured, these holy offices were instituted, and they will endure till the end is accomplished.

All Christians have a share in the edification of the Body. By a very beautiful and suggestive figure, Paul exhibits the interdependence of the various members, their adaptation each to the other, their relation to the glorified Head who is the infinite supply of what they need and all they need, that the growth of the Body may be secured. The Church is an organism. Its center of life is Christ. Round this center the various members are harmoniously set (see his work in the Greek, v. 16). This supernatural Body, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and bound by Him to the Head, is

so knit together and compacted as that every part helps and is helped, strengthens and is strengthened, whereby the whole grows and makes "increase with the increase of God" (Col. ii: 19). No member is superfluous. Each does his own part in the place where he is set. The humblest service is just as needed and as precious in its place as the highest, the most arduous, the most heroic. Paul the Apostle labors in word and doctrine, while Priscilla and Aquila attend to his physical necessities; the Twelve give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word, while the seven deacons "serve tables." Lydia ministers to Paul, Phoebe carries his great letter to Rome, Peter preaches and Dorcas makes "coats." William Carey descends into the "Black Hole" of Calcutta, and the loving hands of fellow believers hold the ropes back in England. In God's economies and ministries there are really no great and little deeds of service, all are great because all are indispensable to the gathering, the compacting, and the building of the Body.

This wonderful revelation of the calling of believers and of the ministries appointed for their growth and walk in this world is applied with great earnestness and force. The "old man" with his corruptions and passions is to be put off, and the "new man," which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth, is to be put on. Why should not this exchange be made? Are filthy rags becoming the saints? Should the heirs of God, the members of Christ, lie or steal or pollute their mouth with defiling speech? Two reasons are assigned for the sanctity we should practice, viz.,

“for we are members one of another”—each vitally and directly joined to the Head and so joined to each other. Very aptly Chrysostom said, “If the eye were to spy a serpent or a wild beast, will it lie to the foot?” Then, “grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” “It is a foul fault to grieve a father; what, then, the Spirit of God?” Let Christians remember they are saints and behave accordingly.

2. Christ’s love is the supreme motive and pattern of Christian living (v: 1, 2, 8-14). Believers are exhorted to be “imitators of God, as dear children.” It is a marvelous word—imitators of God! Had it been said, Be imitators of Peter, or James, or Paul even, it would not have been surprising. But the august model is God. No lower standard will serve, for the saints are God’s children, Christ’s Body, and the Temple of the Spirit. Look back at iv: 32—what an amazing sentence is there—kindness, tenderheartedness, forgiveness, after the pattern of God’s kindness and tenderheartedness and forgiveness of us. That is the spirit and the measure of our imitation. Nor is this all. We are children of light, we are to walk as such, bringing forth the fruit of the light in all goodness and righteousness and truth (2 Cor. iv: 4); He shined *in*, that we might shine *out*. If one fail or refuse to shine he becomes both useless and hurtful. Better no street lamppost on a dark night than one unlit or gone out; the danger is less for the belated passer. Better no professing body than one that has quenched its light—that has lost its illuminating power.

3. The holy war: armor and enemies (vi: 10-18). No Christian can go through this world in fidelity to his Lord without fighting for his faith and his life. Paul saw too deeply into what separation to God and devotion to Him means to ignore the struggle that must come and the combat that must be fought. He may set the saints in the "heavenly places in Christ," as he does, and as they certainly are; but into these same heavenly places the war with evil and with evil spirits is carried (vi: 13, "spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" is the unquestioned rendering). And accordingly he gives the saints this revelation of what they must meet in their journey heavenward, and instructs them touching their behavior; they are to put on the panoply of God and sturdily fight it out to the end. Victory is certain.

A hierarchy of the evil forces is here traced; "the principalities, the powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, the spiritual hosts (or bands) of wickedness in the heavenly places." At the head of these ranks of wicked spirits is Satan, not here named indeed, but recognized in other parts of the Epistle, e. g., ii: 2; iv: 27. The subject is a forbidding one, but the levity with which it is treated in many circles of people, the number of those who scout the idea of personal evil spirits whose sole aim is to antagonize the Lord's work of grace among men seem to justify some reflections on it. Certain notorious criminals have a profusion of *aliases*. Probably there is no creature known to us that has so many *aliases* as Satan, the criminal of the universe. We subjoin a list (not exhaustive) of the

names and titles given him by the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit: Abaddon (Rev. ix: 11); Accuser (Rev. xii: 10); Adversary (1 Pet. v: 8); Angel of the Abyss (Rev. ix: 11); Apollyon (Rev. ix: 11); Beelzebub (Mark iii: 22); Belial (2 Cor. vi: 15); Devil (Matt. iv: 1); Dragon (Rev. xx: 2); Great Red Dragon (Rev. xii: 3); Evil One (Matt. xiii: 19); Enemy (Matt. xiii: 39); Father of Lies (John viii: 44); Prince of the Devils (Mark iii: 32); Prince of This World (John xii: 31); Prince of the Power of the Air (Eph. ii: 2); Liar (John xii: 44); God of This World (2 Cor. iv: 4); Murderer (John viii: 44); Satan (2 Cor. xi: 14); Serpent (2 Cor. xi: 3); Strong One (Luke xi: 21); Spirit of Evil (Eph. ii: 2); Tempter (1 Thess. iii: 5).

Here are twenty-four names given Satan, each of which is descriptive of his disposition, his energy, and his power. Our Lord Himself calls him "the prince of this world," a title which invests him with marvelous authority. Paul calls him by a pair of titles the full significance of which it is impossible to unfold. One is "the god of this world" (or age); the other, "the prince of the power of the air." Both describe the sphere of the devil's influence, and both have to do with that strange, lawless, and godless thing we name "the spirit of the age." How profoundly this spirit of the age is dominated by Satan and interpenetrated by his subtle influence every student of history knows, and every observant Christian perceives. It was the Earl of Shaftsbury (I believe) who said with great acuteness, "There is scarcely a beneficent invention of

these passing years that is not at length perverted largely into an engine for evil."

There is no real work for God possible to the Church that is not doomed to encounter the fiercest opposition, even in the so-called Christian states. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," is no less true of the whole body of saints as of the individual believer. Across every onward movement of Christians to obey their Lord's command to carry the Gospel to all peoples, Apollyon straddles, as in Bunyan's immortal picture, saying, "Here I withstand thee; here I will spill thy soul." The devil's chief work, it might be said, his whole work, is to deceive and blind men as to the truth of God, the blessed salvation of the Lord Jesus. So Paul conceives of it (2 Cor. iv: 3, 4). Men dream of a devil, horned and hoofed—a hideous, ridiculous monster—that haunts the squalid slums and vice-dens of cities, and tempts the depraved to acts of atrocity or shame. But according to the Bible he "fashions himself into an angel of light," and his ministers "fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness." Does such a ministry incite men to commit outrages? Hence, also, the deep significance of the terms employed to designate his forms of action, e. g., "wiles," "devices," "snares." His aim is to substitute something else and something different for the truth and grace and saving power of God. His lie is the denial of Christ and His perfect work on our behalf. He will foster everything that may serve to displace Christ, be it rationalism, ritualism, infidelity, socialism, ethics even, and the Sermon on

the Mount. He may be a ferocious persecutor at one time or a champion of the broadest liberalism at another, an angel of light now and the accuser of God's people then, an unctious flatterer of God's Book and at the same time its slanderer.

With such a foe confronting him, the Christian needs God's whole armor. Blessed be His name, it is fully provided and freely given. The loins girded with truth, the head protected by the helmet, the heart by the breastplate, the feet shod that the warrior may have a firm foothold, and then over all and besides all armed with the shield of faith, that broad and ample protector that has never been used in vain, for it is made up of the Word and promise of the living God, and then the sword of the Spirit, so keen, so well tempered as to cut through every device, lay bear each wile, and sever every snare (Heb. iv: 12, 13). The key of this magnificent description of the battle and the armor lies in the term "stand"—"having done all, to stand"—"stand, therefore!"

There is a series of climaxes in the Epistle which arrest attention as one devoutly studies it. Paul carries us up one majestic height after another, and from the summit, as we may express it, we are bidden survey the magnificent and thrilling view—the blessings that are now ours and the blessings which are soon to become ours.* These climaxes are here merely

* Dr. Arthur T. Pierson has in one of his addresses beautifully expounded some of these climaxes. To him we owe the idea, as for much beside.

stated and numbered; the development of them is left to the reader.

1. The climax of the full and free salvation of all believers (i: 1-14). They have been chosen in Christ before the world was, they have been redeemed in time by the blood of God's own Son, they are adopted into the heavenly family, they are promised an illustrious heritage, they are sealed by the Spirit of the living God, and they have God's pledge of their final and everlasting salvation.

2. The climax of Christ's exaltation (i: 19-23). Power was displayed in Christ's resurrection from the dead; power and honor were exhibited in His glorification. Above all principalities and powers, above the thrones and dominions of all creaturehood, God has exalted His Son, and seated Him at His own right hand in the heavens. The highest position in creation is yet beneath Christ. He has no equal and no superior. The scepter He sways is the scepter of the universe; no sphere, however lofty or distant, is exempt; no creature, however puissant, is beyond His jurisdiction. The brow once crowned with thorns now wears the diadem of universal sovereignty. He who lay dead in Joseph's tomb has ascended the throne of unbounded empire. And yet His power and His glory stand in a near, tender, necessary, and indissoluble relation with the Church, which is His Body. He is "given to be head over all things to the Church."

3. The climax of perfect participation with Christ for all believers in His life, bliss, and glory (ii: 4-7). What is affirmed of Him as Saviour is likewise

affirmed of them. Did He die? They died with Him. Was He raised from the dead? They are said to be risen together with Him. Is He now seated in the heavenly places? They are seated together with Him there also. For He and they are one. They are with Him in the glory now in God's purpose of grace; they shall be actually with Him there in due time, not one lost nor one missing.

4. The climax of the saints' everlasting Home (ii: 19-22). How vivid is the contrast between what they were and what they are to be: once aliens, strangers, Christless, hopeless, godless; now fellow-citizens with the saints, both with those who are in heaven and those on earth. They are members of God's family, inmates of His house, dear to Him as His very own, and dear to one another. They are God's Temple within which the Holy Spirit Himself is pleased to dwell. The Father has chosen this Temple, the Son has redeemed it, and the Spirit has taken possession of it.

5. The climax of prayer (iii: 14-19). It is that the saints may know and apprehend the "breadth, and length, and depth, and height" of Christ's love. Mercy is one chief element in this love, and mercy is given dimensions in the Scripture. "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds" (Ps. xxxvi: 5, 6). There is the height "For great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell" (Ps. lxxxvi: 13). There is its depth. "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee." "The Lord, the Lord, a God full

of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth" (Ex. xxxiii: 19; xxxiv: 6, 7). There it its breadth. "For the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting" (Ps. c: 5; ciii: 17). There is its length. To know this unparalleled mercy and consciously to have it is to be "filled with all the fulness of God."

6. The climax of the saints' walk (v: 18-20). "And be not drunk with wine . . . but be filled with the Spirit." A gulf lies between spirituous and spiritual exhilaration. The drunkard has his indulgence—the thrill of the nerves, the unnatural excitement of the brain, and the guilty rapture. But the inevitable consequence ensues—the "riot" or dissoluteness, the shattered health, the depraved conscience, and the bitter and useless remorse. Meditate on the "Fruits of the Spirit" (Gal. v: 22, 23). There are nine of them, and they are the most satisfying, precious, and enduring of all our possessions. The Spirit gives genuine elevation and mental freedom, victory over depressing influences, and cheerfulness in the presence of great disappointment and loss, and a refined and permanent enjoyment.

Then, too, the saint goes singing on his way to glory: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." And their home-coming shall be greeted with songs of gladness, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." As a happy evangelist was returning from a meeting one evening in

London, he was singing as he walked. A man met him and said, "What is the matter with you, man? Are you drunk?" "Yes, drunk with the coming glory!"

7. The climax of the saints' conflict with the forces of evil and their victory through the armor of God (vi: 10-18). Paul carries up these seven peaks of the mountain of our calling, standing, hope, walk, and warfare. We stand on the Delectable Mountains, we see something of the goodly land that lieth beyond. Now and then a flash from that bright world fills our eyes with light, our hearts with joy, and we can say with Bernard of Cluni:

"Even now by faith I see Thee,
Even here Thy walls discern;
To Thee my thoughts are kindled,
And strive, and pant, and yearn."

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