

# **God's Gospel and God's Righteousness.**

ROMANS I. to V. 11.

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**BY PHILIP MAURO**

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**“I will make mention of THY RIGHTEOUSNESS, even of THINE ONLY” (Psa 71.16)**

**“Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF GOD BY FAITH” (Phil. 2.9)**

GOD'S GOSPEL

-AND-

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

NOTES ON ROMANS I. to V.11.

## CHAPTER I.

### **God's News for Men in a Bad State.**

“Paul, a servant [bond slave] of Jesus Christ, called an Apostle, separated unto the Gospel (good news) of God (which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures), concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.” (Rom. i. 1-4).

“Good news!” These words will command attention wherever pronounced in the hearing of man. By saying “I have good news for you,” one can always secure a listener. But the real value of the tidings one gives or receives must depend first upon the source from which the tidings come, and, second, upon the manner in which and extent to which they may affect the condition of the one who receives them. Tested by these considerations, the tidings whereof we are about to speak are indeed “good.” They proceed directly from God, and they offer to all who receive them in faith such good things as pass man's understanding.

Moreover, by merely announcing “good news,” even without proving them to be true, one will always secure listeners predisposed to believe the good things announced to them. The reason for this is that the circumstances in which human beings find themselves in this life are so evil that they incline readily to listen to anything that promises amelioration. A felt need invariably gives rise to efforts to supply what is needed. Hence it is inevitable that there should be many “gospels.” Wherever there is a need there are sure to appear those who exploit that need for their own benefit; and since the greatest and most universal of all human needs is the need of “good news,” the number of gospels and gospel-purveyors is very large.

From what has just been stated it ought to follow that when one appears with the announcement: “I have *God's* good news to communicate,” he should secure the closest attention and the most favorable hearing. If this result does not always, or usually, follow the announcement of “the Gospel of God,” there must be some profound reason for it, into which we would do well to inquire. But we shall not pursue that inquiry now. Any declaration of “good news,” claiming to be from no lower source than God Himself, certainly should have the closest attention of every human being, since it is apparent to all who consider the matter that the wretchedness of mankind, subject as all human beings are to the despotic control of sin and death, from which they are powerless to deliver themselves, is such that *nothing short* of the omnipotence of God can abolish it. Therefore, the announcement that God has taken the situation of humanity in hand, for the express purpose of affording a way out of the dominion of sin and death into that of life and happiness, challenges the closest attention of all men to *the terms* of the announcement, and to the published details of the plan of deliverance.

We invoke your attention, therefore, whoever you may be that pass this way. Here are good tidings for *you*; “for UNTO YOU is the Word of this Salvation sent.” (Acts xiii. 26).

We have said that there are many gospels – many proclamations of good news – insomuch that great confusion has been caused as to which of these proclamations is authentic and worthy of credence. But the situation is clear, at least to this extent, that there is *only one*

channel that purports to convey to mankind “the GOSPEL OF GOD.” If one desires to hear or to learn anything about *God's* Gospel, he must go to the Bible for it. If there be any good news for mankind emanating from God, it can be found nowhere else but in the Bible; for there is nothing in the world in the form of a gospel which even claims God as its author, except that contained in the Bible. And we may say, with absolute confidence, that if the claim which the Bible distinctly makes, and makes in numerous passages, be true, namely, that the Gospel there announced is indeed directly from God Himself, and is stated in words chosen by Him, then it must follow that the Gospel we shall find there will have *distinguishing characteristics* that will *clearly attest its Divine origin*.

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### **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 1: *God's News for Men in a Bad State*, pages 9-12.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER II.

### The Messages Entrusted to the Apostle Paul.

Let us then, as fellow-mortals and partakers of the infirmities and troubles of flesh and blood, examine together this Gospel; for if its claim be true, it is of vital interest to us, and we cannot afford to miss it.

The "Gospel," or good news of which we speak, may be found in one form or another in every part of the Bible; but *its terms* and *details* are set forth for our instruction in the Epistle to the Romans. Here we have the *teaching* of the Gospel; but the gospel message itself, the evangel or good news of God's intervention on behalf of perishing man, may be found in every part of the Sacred Volume. The duty of defining and setting forth the details of the Gospel was committed to the Apostle Paul, and to this task he addresses himself in the letter to the Romans. This letter most appropriately stands at the beginning of the series of letters transmitted through this servant of God to seven churches. In the number seven we see a complete Divine series, and it is not by chance that Romans stands at the beginning of that series.

It has been pointed out, and is undoubtedly a significant fact, that in all manuscript copies of the New Testament, which have come down to us from antiquity, the Epistles of Paul to the seven churches always occur in the precise order in which they appear in our English Bible. There are variations in the order of other books; but none in this section of the Scriptures. Doubtless there is a Divine purpose in this arrangement, and that is further indicated by the fact that the letters to the Thessalonians, though the earliest of all in point of time, are invariably placed at the end of the series.

The appropriateness of the sequence in which these letters are arranged is seen upon familiarizing ourselves with their contents. They contain, as we all know (or should know), the special messages or revelations which the risen Lord Jesus entrusted to the Apostle Paul, to whom He said, "I have appeared unto thee for *this purpose*, to make thee a *minister and a witness*, both of those things which thou hast seen, and of *those things in the which I will appear unto thee.*" (Acts xxvi. 16). We do not know how many times the Lord appeared to Paul in pursuance of "this purpose," but it is evident from the passage just quoted that He appeared a number of times; and we recall that the Apostle frequently declared, concerning the doctrine communicated by him, that he was speaking "by the Word of the Lord."

We shall not enter at large or in detail into the special portions of the "doctrine of Christ" which He has imparted to His Church through this chosen servant. For our present purpose, which is merely to get the general relation of "the Gospel" to the whole body of doctrine whereof it forms a part, it is only necessary to point out that the revelations entrusted to Paul have to do mainly with three special topics, namely, *first* the "Gospel"; *second* the "Mystery" (i.e., the Divine Secret concerning the Church or Assembly); and *third* the "Rapture," that is, the bodily removal of the Church from the earth to meet the Lord in the air before His visible appearance in judgment. Bearing these facts in mind we see at once that, if it be appropriate that Romans, which reveals the Gospel, should stand at the beginning of the series of Church-Epistles, it is equally appropriate that Thessalonians, which reveals the Rapture, should stand at the end of the series. The preaching of the Gospel is the appointed means, and the only means, whereby those

who are to compose the Church or assembly are gathered out of the mass of humanity. Every child of Adam, who hears and receives the good news of God “concerning His Son,” becomes, by Divine grace through the operation of the Spirit, a child of God (John i. 12, 13; iii. 5, 6); and not only so but he, by the same Spirit, is made a member of the assembly, for “by one Spirit are we ALL baptized into ONE BODY, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and have been ALL made to drink into ONE SPIRIT” (1 Cor. xii. 13). This “one body” formed not by the action of human beings in voluntarily 'joining some organization, but by the sovereign action of the “one Spirit,” uniting all believers in Christ, is the “unity of the Spirit” which all believers are exhorted to give all diligence to *keep* in the bond of peace (Eph iv. 3). When, therefore, the preaching of the Gospel of God concerning His Son shall have accomplished the purpose for which it has been sent forth into the world, and when the Church which is Christ's body shall have been thereby completed as to all its members, then the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with the gathering shout, the sleeping saints will be raised from among the dead, incorruptible, and we, the living ones who remain until the coming of the Lord, shall be changed in a moment (1 Cor. xv. 52), and both together shall be caught away (Greek *raptured*) to meet the Lord in the air. Thenceforth the history of the Church will be with its Lord in the eternal glory.

It is fitting then that the revelation of the Gospel by means of which the Church is being *called out* from the world, should come at the beginning of the Church Epistles, and that the revelation of the Rapture, by means of which it is to be *taken out* of the world should come at the end of that series.

It is no less fitting that the revelation of the secret or “Mystery” concerning the Church should occupy the middle place in the series. It is in Ephesians that we are made to understand God's great “plan of the ages which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph. iii. Gr.). Paul declares that God “by revelation” made known to him the secret concerning the Church, which secret “in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men” (Eph. iii. 3-5). What is this wonderful secret which was kept concealed for so long in the Divine counsels, but was made known by special “revelation” to the Apostle Paul? Its purport, briefly, was this: God had of old an “elect people,” chosen in Abraham and called in Isaac, to whom the Messiah or Christ was promised. But when the Promised One came to His own (creation) His own (people), His “elect,” received Him not (John i. ii). They said, “We will not have this Man to reign over us”; and in order to be rid of Him they put Him to death. What then? Has God's purpose in the election of Israel failed? No, it has not failed, but it is set aside for a long period; and during that period God brings to view and carries on to completion His “eternal purpose” (*lit.* His purpose or plan of the ages) hitherto kept secret. That secret is, briefly, that God has ANOTHER ELECTION, another “calling-out” (*ek klesia*), not a people chosen in Abraham when he was taken out of Ur of the Chaldees, but a people “CHOSEN IN CHRIST before the foundation of the world.” (Eph. i. 4). And the special features of the revelation of this secret, upon which stress is laid in Ephesians are—

I. That this called-out people were chosen – not for a sphere of earthly blessing, for to that sphere Israel was called, and God's calling is without change of purpose (Rom. xi. 29) – but to a *heavenly* sphere (Eph. i. 3; ii. 6, 7); and –

II That this people were not of one family or nation only, but on the contrary, “That the Gentiles (nations in general) should be (with the Jews) *joint-heirs*, a *joint-body*, and

*joint-partakers* of His promise in Christ “; and that this should be effected “By MEANS OF THE GOSPEL, *whereof,*” says Paul, “*I was made a minister.*” (Eph. iii. 6, 7).

Hence the place of central importance assigned to the Epistle to the Ephesians. In it the heights of revelation are attained, from which the highly privileged believer of the Gospel may look back into ages past, before time was (i. 4) and look ahead into the ages to come “when time shall be no more (ii. 7). Here we have “the length and breadth, and depth and height” (iii. 18), the “fullness of Christ “(i. 23; iv. 13), the “fullness of God” (iii. 19), and “the unity of the Spirit” (iv. 3), and much more besides, upon which we should delight to meditate were it our present purpose to explore the “riches “of this Epistle. But we are here seeking only to indicate, in a very brief way, the appropriateness of assigning to the Letter to the Ephesians the central place in the series of Church-Epistles.

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 2: *The Messages Entrusted to the Apostle Paul*, pages 12-17.

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## CHAPTER III.

### **The Fundamental Importance of the Gospel.**

Of the remaining four epistles it is not necessary to say more than that the two which follow Romans (Corinthians and Galatians) relate to departure from the Gospel in practice and doctrine, respectively; and the two which follow Ephesians (Philippians and Colossians) relate to departure in practice and doctrine from the revelation concerning the oneness of the Church and its relation to Christ, its glorified Head.

From this broad view of the Church Epistles, which have such a special claim upon our attention, we may learn the *fundamental importance of the "Gospel."* In fact everything connected with the carrying out of God's purpose in this age depends upon the proclamation of His Gospel. There could be no rapture without a Church to be caught away, and there could be no Church without the Gospel.

In seeking to apprehend the value which God attaches to His Gospel we should find it very profitable to ponder the statement of Eph. iii. 5-7, namely, that God has designed that the carrying out of His purpose – a purpose which includes in its vast scope people of all the nations on earth – should be accomplished "BY MEANS OF THE GOSPEL," namely that very Gospel whereof Paul says he was "made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God, according to the *working of His power*" (Gr.). This is the Gospel which Paul in several places call "my Gospel" (Rom. ii. 16; xvi. 25; 2 Tim. ii. 8); and this is the important place assigned to it in the purposes of Him Who is "Great in Counsel and mighty in Work" (Jer. Xxxii.19). This is the Gospel which Paul had in mind when he admonished Timothy to be a "partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the *power of God, Who hath saved us according to His own purpose and grace* which was given to us in Christ Jesus *before the ages of time, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and incorruptibility through the Gospel.*" (2 Tim. i. 8-10).

Seeing then that this Gospel is God's own and *only* appointed agency for carrying out among the nations of earth His great work of the present age – namely, the gathering out from the nations a people for His Name (Acts xv. 14) – we may readily understand why the Apostle to the Gentiles was aroused to a state of burning indignation by the attempt of certain preachers in Galatia to substitute "another Gospel" for that which God had entrusted to him. No greater outrage against the God of all grace, and no greater wrong against perishing human beings, could be perpetrated than the crime of taking away the "Gospel of God," and proclaiming in its place "a different Gospel which is not another!" (Gal. i. 6, 7). But it is not the indignation and wrath of the Apostle, that those who commit this wickedness have to fear. It is the Word of God that pronounces those truly terrible words "If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. i. 8).

It is, therefore, of the very first importance that *God's Gospel* should be proclaimed until the work of the Gospel is finished. To that end it is important that the people of God should understand clearly how much depends upon the Gospel, and also *what the Gospel is*. These objects are specially before the writer's mind and heart in penning these lines; and he invites the reader's hearty cooperation – particularly in prayer – for their accomplishment. It may to some

seem strange that we thus lay stress upon the necessity of explaining what the Gospel is; but it is a fact which has been impressed upon the writer wherever he has gone, that, in this enlightened century, when the diffusion of knowledge is so much boasted of, there prevails even among church-going people a most astounding ignorance as to *what the Gospel is*. That the great majority of the people of our day do not believe the Gospel is not to be wondered at, seeing that, with few exceptions, they are as ignorant of it as if they had been reared in the darkest part of dark Africa. The writer has to make the humiliating confession that, up to the age Of 45, he could not have given a definition of the Gospel, though he had listened (with more or less attention) to hundreds of sermons.

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### **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 3: *The Fundamental Importance of the Gospel*, pages 17-20.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### **Paul's Gospel Received by Direct Revelation.**

We should further note the emphatic declarations of the Apostle that the announcements made by him touching the three great subjects of the Church-Epistles were received by him directly through Divine revelation. Touching the "mystery," he says that God "*by revelation*" made it known unto him (Eph. iii. 3) ; and concerning the rapture he said, "This we say unto you *by the Word of the Lord* (1 Thess. v. 15. But concerning the Gospel he is even more insistent in making it known that he did not receive it from any human source whatever, nor even from those who were apostles before him, but received it directly by a revelation from the risen Lord Jesus. Thus, in Gal. i. ii, he says, "But I *certify you*, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is *not* after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but **BY THE REVELATION** of JESUS CHRIST." In 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4, where the Gospel is defined in words which every believer should know by heart and make known at every opportunity to others, Paul says: "I delivered unto you first of all **THAT WHICH I ALSO RECEIVED**, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." This, he says, is "*the Gospel* which I preached unto you."

Paul repeatedly refers to the fact that the proclaiming of this particular message of good tidings for all nations was the special ministry or service which he had "received of the Lord Jesus"; and this fact fully explains, what would otherwise be inexplicable, the fortitude with which this faithful servant endured unparalleled hardships, and the calmness with which he contemplated the predicted bonds and afflictions that awaited him. "None of these things move me," he declared, "neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have **RECEIVED OF THE LORD JESUS**, to testify the **GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.**" (Acts xx.24).

Paul speaks of himself as a *trustee* of the Gospel, saying in 1 Thess. ii. 4 that since he had been approved by God "to be *put in trust with the Gospel*," so he spoke, not as pleasing men, but as pleasing God, Who proves our hearts. We all have some idea of the fidelity and carefulness that are expected of one who is appointed a trustee, and who has the interests of another in his custody; but never was a "trust" so stupendous in importance given into human custody as the trust of the Gospel which God has commanded to be proclaimed to sinners. The eternal interests of all mankind are involved in that great trust. And that trust can be properly discharged only upon the principle of pleasing God and not men. This, alas, is a principle that is almost entirely disregarded in Christendom of today, where the preacher, as a general rule, understands only too well that his employment depends upon his ability to please a more or less critical congregation.

Again in 1 Tim. i. 11, Paul speaks of "the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God," which, he says, "*was committed to my trust*"; and in Rom. i. 14, he speaks of himself as being "*a debtor* both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise." All nationalities and all classes of men were vitally interested in the Gospel that God had committed to his trust, and he therefore was willing both to spend and to be spent in the discharge of that heavy debt. It was *Christ* Who had sent him to preach the Gospel (1 Cor. i. 17) ; and because he knew the

source of this Gospel, and knew its solemn importance to all human beings, he declared that no credit or praise or other reward was due to him for preaching it. "For though the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of "for *necessity is laid upon me.*" It was in the highest degree *necessary*, not only for their sakes for whom he held it in trust, but for his own sake; for *woe was unto him* if he preached not the Gospel. (1 Cor. ix. 16). Therefore, he would receive no compensation for preaching, though God had ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel; for this was the reward he sought, namely, that when he preached he might make the Gospel of Christ without charge." (1 Cor. ix. 17).

In these passages we have the explanation of the irresistible motive that prompted and inspired the incessant labours and sacrifices of this devoted servant of Christ, and under the force of which he wrought so mightily that, before he had visited Rome, he could say that "from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum I have *fully preached the Gospel of Christ.*"

I would at this point declare my unqualified acceptance of the Apostle's statement that the good news proclaimed by him had been delivered to him directly by the risen Christ. I am constrained to believe this, *first*, because the witness who says it is competent and credible; *second* because no other explanation will account for his extraordinary conduct in casting away a promising career in order to devote himself to the delivery of the message; *third*, because no other explanation will account for the persistence he exhibited in proclaiming that message in the face of unparalleled hardships and persecutions; *fourthly*, because no other explanation will account for the marvelous results that have, for nineteen centuries, invariably attended the preaching of that Gospel wherever it has been carried, and that notwithstanding that its substance is to Jews a stumbling-block and to Greeks foolishness; and *fifthly*, because the substance of the Gospel proclaimed by him is such that it could not possibly have had a human origin, but bears plainly upon it the marks of its heavenly source. Other reasons might be added; but these will suffice.

Our study then is the Gospel which comes directly from the risen Christ-God's Gospel-and which is God's appointed means for the accomplishment of the mighty work of this day of grace. May He grant us for this study a zeal and interest in some degree proportionate to its importance.

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 4: *Paul's Gospel Received by Direct Revelation*, pages 20-24.

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## CHAPTER V.

### **God's Gospel: Introductory Statements.**

At the very beginning of the letter to the Romans, Paul declares his own status, namely, that of a bond-slave of Jesus Christ and a called Apostle, *separated* unto the “GOSPEL OF GOD.” Here we have the title of the Gospel, which title is made more specific in Acts xx. 24, where it is called the “Gospel of the Grace of God.”

This Gospel is further identified by a statement of its great Subject. It is God's good news “CONCERNING HIS SON.” God's Gospel has to do with no other subject than His own and only-begotten Son. His three-fold title is also given – “Jesus Christ the Lord,” and His human lineage is stated, “Who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.” He is set forth as “Jesus,” that is, Saviour (Matt. i. 21); as “Christ,” the anointed One of God in Whom all prophecies are fulfilled, and all the purposes of God are accomplished; and as “Lord” of all, the One Who will one day (in “the day of the Lord”) be acknowledged as such by the whole universe. “Jesus” was the Name by which He was known in the days of His flesh; “Christ” He is acclaimed in resurrection (Acts ii. 36); and “Lord” He will be confessed by every tongue in the coming age. (Phil. ii. 10,11).

We are also informed at the outset concerning the One Who is the subject of God's Gospel, that while He was of the seed of David, according to His flesh, He was announced or declared “the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.”

Whether the words “with power” refer to the mighty power with which He is invested (Matt. xxviii. 18) as the Man Whom God raised from the dead, or to the forcible character of the proclamation announcing Him the Son of God, need not now be discussed. The words may be taken in either or both senses, for both are true. But the word “power” in connection with the Gospel of God should arrest our attention. It appears again in verse 16, and it specifies one of the unique characteristics of God's Gospel. It is conspicuously a gospel of *power*. It is the only proclamation or announcement to perishing human beings that carries with it an inherent power to work, with transforming effect, in those who receive it. The results it accomplishes are always the same in kind, though they may vary in degree; and it betrays no sign of any abatement of its energy and vigour after the lapse of eighteen centuries since its first announcement. Of the power of the Gospel we wish to speak a little later. just now we are occupied with the introductory statements of the Epistle.

We learn here that this Gospel was “promised afore” in the Scriptures of the prophets; and in this respect the Gospel is in marked contrast with the “mystery,” for that had been “kept secret since the world began” (Rom. xvi. 25), having been “hid from ages and from generations” (Col. i. 26), and “in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men” (Eph. iii. 5). Among the promises “given afore” of the Gospel, God's Salvation, we may refer to Isaiah xlix. 6, where it is written: “It is a light thing that thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will ALSO give thee for a light *to the Gentiles*, that thou mayest be MY SALVATION UNTO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.” Also the prophetic words of Ps. xcvi. 2, 3, contain the same distinct promise: “The LORD hath made known HIS

SALVATION. His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight *of the heathen*. He hath remembered His mercy and truth towards the house of Israel. ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH have seen the SALVATION OF OUR GOD.”

The expressions “God's salvation,” “God's righteousness,” contain a clear intimation of the distinctive character of the blessed Gospel unfolded in Romans; while the words “ends of the earth” declare its world-wide scope. We see also the *nations* associated with the Jews in these prophecies, while God's order “to the Jew first” is observed in them.

These opening verses of the Epistle further indicate that God's Gospel has to do with *Resurrection*, and that it is addressed to *Faith*. This statement will be more fully explained as we proceed; but it is of the very first importance to understand that God's good news have to do solely with *unseen things* (and hence objects of faith, not of sight – Heb. xi. 1), and are connected with a Man who, though He was visibly overpowered by death, is now preached as having risen from among the dead (1 Cor. xv. 12). The Son of God came forth from His Father, and was made flesh and tabernacled among men. But His mission “in the days of His flesh,” when He was an *object of sight*, was only to the house of Israel (Matt. x. 6; xv. 24). The eyes of men followed Him to the cross, and thence followed His dead body to the tomb, and there *lost sight* of Him.

It is as the Risen Man, exalted to the right hand of God, and no longer an object of sight, that He is preached among the nations. Therefore, we say that the Gospel has to do with Resurrection, apart from which there is no Gospel; and that it is addressed solely to Faith, takes knowledge of “things not seen.” The simplest and most comprehensive definition of the Gospel is that given in the great Resurrection chapter, 1 Cor. xv., in these words: “That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY according to the Scriptures”; and the rest of the chapter is occupied with proving and expounding the truth of the Resurrection.

It is of special importance in these days to insist upon the Gospel of a Risen Saviour as the only Gospel which God has given for preaching among the nations, because one of the most subtle corruptions of the Gospel at the present time consists in the preaching of Jesus Christ as a man on earth, and in holding Him up as a Man of flesh and blood for an example to be copied by other men of flesh and blood. This preaching is peculiarly dangerous and deceptive because, while apparently preaching Christ, it omits altogether the essentials of the cross and resurrection, and it ignores the fact that it is an utter impossibility for one born in sin to copy the example of Him Who was “without sin,” who “knew no sin” and who “did no sin.” It sets aside the fundamental truth that “flesh and blood CANNOT inherit the Kingdom of God” (1 Cor. xv. 50). It ignores the vital fact that the only perfect and sinless man of flesh and blood *is not a man of flesh and blood any longer*; and that hence in order to be where He is in the new creation, the indispensable pre-requisite is, *not to copy His example, but to receive the Life which He alone can impart*. “Except a man be BORN AGAIN he cannot see the Kingdom of God” (John iii. 3).

The Apostle most emphatically said, at a time when there were some living who had known Christ after the flesh, that those who had received life through His death were to live “unto Him who died for them and *rose again*. Wherefore, henceforth know we no man *after the flesh*; yea, though *we have known Christ after the flesh*, yet now henceforth know *we Him* (in that way) *no more*” (2 Cor. v. 15, 16). The death of Christ in the flesh put an end to flesh and blood humanity as having any place in the purpose of God; and His *resurrection from the dead* is the

beginning of a *new humanity*, wherein the original purpose of God (Gen. L 26) will be fulfilled. This is what is signified by the Scriptures which speak of Him as “The Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead” (Col. i. 18), “The First begotten of the dead.” (Rev. i. 5).

This Gospel is preached “for *obedience of faith* among all nations”; that is to say, for the obedience which faith renders to it upon hearing the proclamation. Verse 5 (of Rom. i.) literally rendered would read “for the obedience of faith among all nations on behalf of His Name.” The reception of the good news of the Risen Son of God *by faith* is an important feature of the teaching of this Epistle, as will be seen in pursuing our study. The obedience rendered to it is a *faith* obedience because it is wholly voluntary.

That this Gospel is, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, to be “made known to *all nations*, for the obedience *of faith*,” is stated again in Rom. xvi. 26. Furthermore, in making his defence to the Jews at Jerusalem, Paul declared to them that when the Lord appeared to him, He had said, Depart: for I will send thee far hence *unto the Gentiles* (Acts xxii. 21). Also in writing to the Galatians Paul says that when he went to Jerusalem after having preached the Gospel for fourteen years, he went in obedience to a revelation, and communicated to the other Apostles that Gospel which he had preached “among the Gentiles” (Gal.ii. 2).

We thus see that the Gospel, as originally entrusted to Paul, was full and complete. It was not to be modified for any particular place or era. It requires no change to adapt it to the characteristics peculiar to any people or to any particular period of human history. The results in this respect are sufficient to prove beyond question the Divine authorship of the Gospel to all whose minds are not blinded by the god of this age; for none other than God Himself could fashion an instrument capable of such universal and age-long service, and capable of working out the same results regardless of all diversities of the human material wrought upon. And the results thus invariably accomplished in human beings who accept the Gospel are themselves of a nature such as only Divine power could effect.

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 5: *God’s Gospel: Introductory Statements*, pages 24-30.

By Philip Mauro

Originally Published by Fleming H. Revell Company, Publisher

## CHAPTER VI.

### “Concerning His Son.”

The words of Rom. i. 3, “concerning His SON,” and those of verse 4, “declared (or announced as) the SON OF GOD,” put before us the Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; which is the Rock-Foundation truth of Scripture.

Paul speaks of himself as having, in the capacity of a wise architect, “laid the FOUNDATION” (1 Cor. iii. 11); and he adds: “For other Foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” The building which is in process of erection upon that Foundation is the Church, as appears from verse 16 of the same chapter: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” It is the same building to which Paul again refers in Eph. ii 20-22, wherein all believers are being “buildd together for an habitation of God by the Spirit.” It is a building composed of those gathered out of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, through the preaching of the Gospel of the Son of God. Since it was thus given to Paul to lay the Foundation for this great building, and since the Lord Jesus had Himself declared that He would build His Church upon the Rock-Foundation of the truth that He, the Messiah, is “the Son of the Living God” (Matt. xvi. 16-18), we see a special reason why, at the very outset of the Epistle to the Romans, prominence is given to the truth that He who is the Jewish Messiah, of the royal line of David, is the SON OF GOD, announced as such with power by the resurrection of the dead.

The Old Testament prophecies concerning the Rock or the Stone are numerous, and their application to Christ is now clear; but we need not here refer to any but Is. xxviii. 16, which is quoted by Paul in Rom. ix. 33, and by Peter in 1 Pet. ii. 6: “Behold, I lay in Zion FOR A FOUNDATION A STONE, a tried Stone, a precious corner Stone, a sure Foundation. He that believeth shall not make haste.” But it remained for the coming of Jesus Christ, and for the revelation directly made by the Father to the Apostle Peter, to make it known that this Rock-Foundation, this precious Corner Stone, was none other than “the Son of the Living God.” Until then the question of Prov. xxx. 4 remained without a clear answer: “Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in His fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established the ends of the earth? What is His Name, and what is His SON's NAME, if thou canst tell?” This is the question of questions. Have you an answer? Hear Him ask of His disciples “Whom do men say that I, the SON OF MAN, am?” Have MEN any better answer today than they had in the days when “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us?” Some said one thing, some said another. “But whom SAY YE that. I am?” Yes, we know the answer: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God” and therefore at the forefront of God's Gospel stands out the great truth that this Gospel is “Concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Another prophecy with which the opening verses of Romans are closely connected is the Second Psalm. In verse 2 of that Psalm we are informed of a time when the kings of the earth shall set themselves, and the rulers shall consult and take concerted action against the LORD and against His CHRIST (or *Anointed*). But God announces that notwithstanding this combined opposition and hostility of the world powers, He has set His King upon His holy hill of Zion. Verses 6 and 7 make it known that this King is “great David's greater Son,” and that to Him is

given the decree which, at His own time, He will publish, and in pursuance of which He will take into His hands the reins of government. And then follow the words which show that Jehovah's Christ is none other than the Son of God: "The LORD hath said unto Me, Thou art My SON; this day have I begotten Thee."

This great saying is quoted in Acts xiii. 33, and in Heb. i. 5, and v. 5. Some have taught that, because in Acts xiii. 33 the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is mentioned, the day of His resurrection was the "day of Psalm ii. 7. This, however, could not be. The day "upon which Jehovah said "Thou art My Son" is the day of a past eternity. While on earth He was already the only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father (John i. 18), and He had the direct testimony of God at His baptism, and again at His transfiguration, "This is My beloved Son."

But the subject that is just now occupying our attention is the connection of the Son of God – who is also the Son of Man, and Son of David – with the building of God's house. As relating to this subject we would recall the desire that David had to build an house to the LORD; and the message brought to him by the prophet Nathan, to whom God said, "Go and tell David My servant, thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not build Me an house to dwell in "(1 Ch. xvii. 4). But God gave to him at that time the promise that He would Himself build David a house; and He added: "And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise Up THY SEED after thee, which shall be of thy sons, and I will establish His kingdom. HE shall build Me an house, and I will establish His kingdom for ever "(1 Ch. xvii. io, ii).

We see in this prophecy a reason why, in the description of the Person of the Son of God, given in the opening verses of Romans, it is stated that He was "of the seed of David according to the flesh." This tells us that Christ is the One Who was to build the house of God. And the house which He was to build, as promised afore by His prophets in the holy Scriptures, is His Church, composed of living stones, over which "CHRIST as a SON "presides. For "Moses verily was faithful in all his house *as a servant*, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but CHRIST as a SON OVER His OWN HOUSE; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to the end." (Heb. iii. 5, 6).

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 6: "*Concerning His Son*", pages 31-34.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER VII

### **Declared Son of God by Resurrection of the Dead.**

The significance of the phrase “by the resurrection of the dead” is not free from doubt. Usually this is taken to refer to Christ's own resurrection from among the dead, and as signifying that this is what marked Him out in power as the Son of God. But the words of the original would hardly bear this interpretation. A literal rendering of these words would be “by a resurrection of dead persons.” Mr. Pember refers, for an explanation of these words, to the record in Matt. xxvii. 52, 53, where it is stated that at the time of Christ's death the graves were opened, and “many bodies of saints which slept arose and came out of the graves after His resurrection”; and it is of some significance that we have in the very next Verse the confession of the centurion: “Truly, this was the *Son of God*.” But it seems to the writer that a more satisfactory explanation is found in the teaching given by the Lord Himself, and recorded in the fifth chapter of the Gospel according to John. Here we read that Christ, after healing the impotent man with His Word, thus practically quickening the dead, publicly declared Himself to be the *Son of God*, on which account the Jews sought to kill Him, not only because He had “broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God” (verse 18). Thereupon Jesus emphasized His relationship with His Father, and His intimate knowledge of all things that the Father did; and in that connection He said: “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even SO THE SON QUICKENETH whom HE WILL.” Then follow some of the most stupendous utterances of Him Who spake as never man spake. In verse 24 He declares the manner in which He exercises this mighty power of quickening the dead: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth MY WORD and believeth\* Him that sent Me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed out of death into life.” (Verse 24 Gr.) He had just stated that the Father had committed all judgment to the Son (verse 21), and this passage accordingly brings before us the alternatives either of receiving from the Son of God, eternal life, or of coming before Him as the judge.

**\* There is no “on” before Him in the original.**

The gist and essence of the doctrine unfolded in Romans may be found in these sayings of the Lord Jesus. According to Romans iii. 19, all the world is “under judgment to God”; but the free gift of God, which is eternal life in Christ Jesus (Rom. vi. 23) is offered to all who believe the testimony of God concerning His Son.

Therefore, all those dead in trespasses and sins who hear His Word and believe the testimony of God Who sent Him into the world, have passed out of the sphere of death and judgment, and have come into the sphere of life. Romans, sixth chapter, reveals how this is accomplished through the believer's identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection.

In the next verse of John's Gospel (verse 25) we have Christ's own statement telling the manner in which He is to be announced or marked out as the Son of God in power by the quickening of the dead. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and *now* is when the dead shall hear the voice of the SON OF GOD, and they that hear shall live.” In this way Jesus Christ is shown to be “Son of God,” namely, through quickening the dead, i.e., those dead in

trespasses and sins; and the period of the exercise of that power is *now*. The hour “now is,” in which the “Son of God,” by His life-giving Word, is quickening the dead, and before this period closes there will be that “resurrection of life” of which He speaks in verse 29.

Though not strictly pertinent to the purpose for which we have cited this chapter of John's Gospel, it will be instructive to notice what Christ says in this connection of another “hour” which is not “now,” and which will not come until after the millennium (Rev. xx. 12), that is the hour of the resurrection unto the judgment of the second death.

“Marvel not at this,” He said, “for the hour is coming, in the which *all* that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (judgment). (John v. 28, 29).

A little later, the Lord Jesus gave evidence of the fact that He was the Son of God with power to raise the dead, by calling Lazarus from the tomb, and on that occasion He said to Martha, “I AM the resurrection and the life, He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John xi. 25, 26). Note now the answer, in which Martha confessed Him, and in which she used the same words used by Peter: “Yea, Lord: I believe that Thou art THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD.”

Again, just after Peter's confession of Him as Son of God, Christ stated to His disciples that some of them should not taste of death till they had “seen the Kingdom of God come *with power*” (Mark ix. 1). And after six days He took with Him Peter, James and John up into a high mountain, apart by themselves, and was transfigured before them. While there, as the Apostle Peter witnesses, “He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My BELOVED SON in whom I am well pleased.” (2 Pet. i. 17). “And there appeared unto them Elias and Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.” Here then, we have the announcement by God the Father Himself that Jesus Christ is the SON OF GOD, and we have the evidence of the *power* of God manifested in the presence of two men, one of whom had been raised from the dead, and the other translated without dying.

These passages seem to throw a clear light upon the statement of Romans i. 3, that Jesus Christ was declared, or announced, or marked out, or clearly distinguished, as Son of God in power, by resurrection of the dead.

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 7: *Declared Son of God by Resurrection of the Dead*, pages 35-38.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Power of God.

We wish now to concentrate our attention upon the important statements found in verses 16 and 17 Of Romans i., and to that end will pass over the intermediate verses without further comment. Verses 16 and 17 are very familiar, but their depths are unfathomable, and their contents inexhaustible.

“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.”

Here we have put before us the great purpose of the Gospel, namely, to reveal *the righteousness of God*; and here we have the important statement that the Gospel is the power of God unto Salvation to all who believe it, because therein, that is in the Gospel, GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS REVEALED TO FAITH.

The preaching of Jesus Christ, who was delivered up for our offences and raised again for our justification, is the preaching that calls sinners to Righteousness and Life. The object of this preaching is to awaken faith in a God Who *quickens the dead*, and Who is Himself just, and yet Who, without in the slightest degree departing from the strictest justice, or abating in the very least the requirements of His righteous laws, is the Justifier (One Who makes righteous) of all who are of the faith of Jesus Christ. In this marvelous work of justifying the unjust, or making righteous the unrighteous, there are displayed the mighty power, the infinite wisdom, the super-abounding grace, and the knowledge-surpassing love of God. The entrance of sin into the world has wrought corruption, havoc and ruin past description and yet so wonderful is the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of Hosts, so great in counsel and mighty in work (Jer. xxxii. 18, 19) that He makes the devastation caused by sin to become the occasion whereby He may display the riches of His wisdom, power, love and grace, to an extent to which they could not otherwise have been known by His creatures. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!”

In the presentation of the Gospel which proclaims these Divine “riches,” our attention is first directed to the *power* with which that Gospel is invested. A great work calls for the expenditure of power in proportion to what is to be accomplished. The work here in view is nothing less than the salvation of sinners. What does that involve? What prodigies of POWER are demanded for its accomplishment? Who can say? None but God Himself can tell us the magnitude of the undertaking that is involved in justifying a sinner from his sins, delivering him from the dominion of sin and death, and bringing him into the domain of light and life, endowed with a nature suitable to that domain. If we would learn something of the stupendous magnitude of that undertaking we must learn it from God. To that end He has given us, in the portion of this Epistle from chap. i. 21 to chap. iii. 20, a description of the condition of humanity, in its two divisions, Jew and Gentile, as it was when God sent His Son into the world upon the mission of salvation.

To the natural intelligence and reason of men the putting away of sins is a small matter, requiring only on God's part the exercise of a little good-natured indulgence. This is a great, and on the part of many a *fatal*, misconception of the facts in regard to the desperate and awful condition of the whole of humanity, as lying under the dominion of sin and death. The true condition of humanity is revealed in the treatment accorded by man to the incarnate Son of God. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ was the *direct* act of certain leading men, "the princes (rulers or leaders) of this age" (1 Cor. ii. 8); but it was the product of the heart of mankind as a *whole*, and it executed "the will of the people," which is recognized in our day as the supreme authority on earth.

Without entering further at this point into the state of that humanity to which salvation is now proclaimed by the Gospel, we would dwell upon the *power* with which God's Gospel is invested, and its adequacy, to the accomplishment of the end proposed. If we have any conception at all, though it be a very faint one, of the magnitude of the undertaking, our first question would be, "Is there sufficient power to accomplish it?" As to this, all uncertainty is removed at the outset by the statement that the Gospel is the "POWER OF GOD." This is "good news" indeed, whether or not we are able to appreciate it. The proclamation which was entrusted to Paul to be preached among all nations declares, as its first announcement, that the power of the Almighty God Himself is put forth for the salvation of every one who receives that proclamation. Whatever power men may have in other directions, they have no power unto Salvation. For that work they are impotent, "without strength." If the accomplishment of that work depended ever so little upon themselves, it would most assuredly fail. Men may think otherwise, and may vainly imagine that they have power to save themselves, but the fact is not changed by such opinions. "When we were as yet WITHOUT STRENGTH, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6).

The Gospel, then, supplies in the first place just what was lacking in all human systems and schemes for self-improvement. Human beings have not failed of salvation for lack of *effort*, but for lack of *power*. Let us, therefore, rejoice in the assurance that God's Gospel is a Gospel of *power*.

Let us notice at this point some things which the Gospel is *not*, in order to clear the ground of a few widely held misapprehensions. The proclamation which God has issued to all the nations of the world is not to the effect that there is salvation for the well-behaved, the moral, the charitable, the earnest and sincere; but that there is salvation for the "ungodly," and for "sinners," for those who were God's "enemies." That proclamation does not announce that God saves the good, for that would not be "good news" at all. It does not announce that God's power is extended for the salvation of everyone who does his best to live a moral life, but "to every one that believeth." Believe what? *What God says*, and the particular things to be believed are clearly stated in the doctrine of the Gospel, as will be seen a little later. It is sufficient at this point to bring to mind again the concise statement of the Gospel given in 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4, "How that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Whosoever believes that, upon the authority of God's Word, is within the sphere of saving grace.

But is it possible that so mighty a work as the salvation of the ungodly can be accomplished by means so seemingly inadequate as the preaching or proclaiming of the resurrection of One who was publicly executed as a transgressor, and at the instance of the only

people whom God ever recognized on earth as His? This Gospel is indeed to the religious man (“the Jew”) a stumbling block, and to the intellectual man (“the Greek”) utter foolishness. Is it credible that such are the means which God selects for the accomplishment of a work so prodigious, and the execution of a plan so vast? Yes, it is even so, “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Cor. i. 25). Men delight in great displays of power. They like to see the movement of ponderous masses of metal, as in the great marine engines by which the ocean liners are driven; but it is not always where the greatest display is made that the greatest power is in operation. On the face of human society in our day we may see mighty movements in progress having various objects in view. Men have formed gigantic organizations, through which great forces are operating. The productions of human genius may be seen in action on sea and land, under the water and in the air. But what results are there from all these ingenious contrivances of man, and these mighty displays of energy under human control? What benefits are accruing from them? It would be difficult indeed to find any. On the other hand, the preaching of the Gospel by a few obscure individuals is scarcely noticed, and is not counted worthy of the attention of the average man. There is no spectacular display, no commotion, no astonishment at what is being done through activity in the Gospel. Yet all the other forces combined are doing *nothing worthy of mention* in comparison with what God is accomplishing daily through the preaching of His Gospel concerning His Son.

We are not without illustrations of the fact that the greatest power is sometimes in operation where there is the least outward manifestation of its presence. A very familiar illustration of this is afforded by the unattractive and unpretentious looking wires which may now be seen extending along all the principal streets and roadways. Who would believe that these dull, lifeless looking wires are the means by which great power is conveyed—power sufficient to light cities, to turn ponderous machinery, to move heavy conveyances! This is a good illustration of the preaching of the Gospel; for nothing could seem more unsuited to the transmission of great power than the frail slender wires of copper or steel along which the invisible electric energy makes its way with the velocity of light. But back of that wire is the great power station, out of which the wire leads, and from which it derives all that differentiates it from the fence-wire. So it is with the preaching of the Gospel of God. It runs through the highways of the earth; but it leads out of the great Power Station in the heavens. The essential difference between the preacher of the Gospel of God and the preacher of “another Gospel” is that the former is in connection with the Power Station. So long as that connection is maintained his preaching is “according to the gift of the Grace of God given by *the effectual working of His power*” (Eph. iii. 7). If that connection be broken, the preacher's power ceases instantly; but so long as the connection remains unbroken, the power flows to the place where the operation is required, and the work of salvation proceeds. The preacher of “another gospel,” however learned and eloquent, and however high his ecclesiastical station, is like a Leyden jar, whose power is all exhausted in one brilliant spark, which dazzles the eyes with light and fills the ears with sound for a moment, but whose effect is instantly dissipated in the air.

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 8: *The Power of God*, pages 39-45.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER IX.

### **God's Power unto Salvation to Every One who Believes.**

We have said that back of the preaching of the Gospel, however unpretentious and inconspicuous the preacher may be, is the mighty power of God. The power which issues forth from God along channels devised and appointed by Him is sent out for the accomplishment of the work which God has undertaken on behalf of man. The illustration of the electric power current will serve us a little further in presenting the truth stated in the Scripture now under consideration. That current, in the case of an electric railway, has certain well-defined results to accomplish. It lights the cars at night, and in cold weather it supplies warmth to the passengers; but these results are of minor importance. In like manner the Gospel gives light and comfort to those who are occupying the

Gospel-car and journeying to the Salvation-terminus. We are entitled to make much of the light and warmth which the Gospel brings to those who are the heirs of salvation and are travelling to the land of their inheritance. But that is not the main object of the Gospel. It is not said that the Gospel is specially, God's power for ministering comfort and blessing to those who receive it; but that it is pre-eminently His power *unto Salvation*. The main work which the power current has to do is to *propel the car*. The power must be adequate to carry it up the steepest grades, and to move it under the maximum load. So the power with which the Gospel proclamation is charged is for moving the Gospel car and its occupants against every resistance. The power of God in the Gospel is equal to all that. There is POWER ENOUGH to move the whole mass of humanity, and to carry them up "the steep ascents of heaven." There is no lack of power; nor is there lack of capacity in the car.

Moreover, the power-current must be great enough not merely to move the car a part of the way. It must carry it *all* the way to the terminus, *and without the assistance of the passengers*. So with the Gospel. God's power in the Gospel is not exerted for the purpose of "putting a man on his feet again" after he has fallen by the way, nor for the purpose of encouraging him to struggle along to salvation ground. The Gospel is God's power UNTO SALVATION. It brings its passengers all the way, and without help from them. It is God's glory to do this; and the glory of being the Saviour of men He will not share with another, least of all with the objects of His saving grace. "For Christ hath also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that HE MIGHT BRING US TO GOD" (1 Pet. iii. 18). What He has undertaken to do, and what was so dear to His heart that He endured the cross in order that He might accomplish it, was to BRING US TO GOD. He will not fail to accomplish the object for which He became the bearer of the sins of His people; and He will accomplish that object without help from them. Another than Boaz was in the mind of the Spirit of God when by His inspiration it was written: "For the man will not be in rest till He have *finished the thing this day*." (Ruth iii. 18). He who suffered for this object now lives for its accomplishment, in the power of His unchangeable priesthood. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 24, 25).

But if the Gospel car be of ample capacity to accommodate the entire human race, and if the power be ample to carry them all the way to Salvation ground, why are not all men saved ?

The answer is found in the human will. The reason is given in the words uttered by Christ Himself to those who, though they searched the Scriptures, yet did not recognize Him of whom those Scriptures testified: “Ye WILL NOT come to Me that ye might have life” (John v. 40). Every passenger on the Gospel-car is sure of safe passage to Immanuel’s land; but many, alas, refuse to get aboard. Why do they not enter? Because of unbelief. The Gospel is the power of the Almighty God unto Salvation “*to every one that believeth.*” There is no exception to that; but those words draw a sharp and clear line between the saved and the unsaved, between the heirs of Salvation and the heirs of wrath. Thus did the inspired Apostles proclaim the Gospel. In the words of Peter we read: “And He (God) commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it was He (Christ) which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH ON Him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts x. 42, 43).

The Apostle Paul also preached to Jew and Gentile saying: “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him ALL THAT BELIEVE are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses “ (Acts xiii. 38, 39). The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ is “UPON ALL THAT BELIEVE” (Rom. iii. 22). “ For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching (i.e., the thing preached) to save THEM THAT BELIEVE” (1 Cor i. 21, A.R.V.).

It needs but a little reflection to make it clear that, in saving only those who believe His message, God is not acting in an arbitrary manner. It could not be otherwise, seeing that man is a responsible being, enjoying the great privilege of exercising freely his own will. The power of intelligent and conscious *choice* is undoubtedly a marvelous power, and its possession shows that the creature who enjoys it was designed for a station of high dignity and responsibility. Every man who hears the Gospel must *choose for himself* life or death. “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you *life and death, blessing and cursing*”; and the gracious words are added: “*Therefore choose life.*” (Deut. xxx. 19). The alternatives are plainly presented to all men, and they are urged to choose life. Christ Jesus, Who is risen from the dead, and is the custodian of that eternal life which is God’s “free-gift,” sends forth His chosen ambassadors “beseeking” men to be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. v. 19, 20). But of what avail is the provision of life to those who *will* not receive it? Over such Christ utters the lament: “Ye WILL NOT come to Me that ye might have life (John v. 40).

It is so in our dealings with one another. If I bring to a fellow man the information that a great benefit awaits him in a certain direction, such message will be of no avail to him *unless he believes it*. Likewise with the Gospel message, though the car be waiting with its doors wide open and its destination plainly marked upon it; though there be ample power to carry it through without stop to the desired terminus; though there be *no fare to pay*, seeing that Divine opulence and liberality has prepaid (at enormous cost) the fare of every one who takes passage; though the onlookers and passers-by are invited urgently and persistently to enter, and are warned that there is *no other* means of conveyance to the ground of safety, and that destruction will surely and speedily overtake all who linger after the signal to start is given – all will be in vain for *those who believe not*. “And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to THEM

THAT BELIEVED NOT? So we see they could not enter in BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF” (Heb. iii. 18, 19).

If we seek reasons for the unbelief of those who turn away from the invitation and warnings of the Gospel, we shall find, under the general cause of unbelief, many specific reasons. Probably the chief reason is human pride or self-confidence. This is the “crime of the Devil” (1 Tim. iii. 6 Gr.). The great project upon which man started at the instigation of the Devil was to *achieve greatness for himself*, to become “as God.” Consequently there is in everyone of us an inherited tendency to confidence in the powers of man to conquer all opposition to the “progress of the race,” and to bring about by means of human effort, ingenuity and enterprise, a condition of peace and plenty on earth. This is unquestionably the master motive of human beings; and it is working in human society at the present time with greater energy than ever before. For we have now reached the period of *consolidated* or *federated* human effort – a period in which the individual counts for practically nothing, and that non-existent thing, that idol of modern man, called the “Race,” or “Society,” is everything. Past failures teach no lesson of humility; for what isolated individuals could not do shall (according to the creed of the modern man) be achieved by the consolidated and co-acting forces of vast human organizations. Such is the proud spirit of man; and nothing so affronts that spirit as to be told that man, so far from being as he supposes, the master of all-powerful forces, is actually helpless, impotent, “without strength.” The idea that man needs a Saviour is one that the natural mind instinctively resents; and here is the chief difficulty that the Gospel encounters in its appeal to men. The Gospel is for “sinners” It is for “the ungodly.” It is for those who are “without strength” (Rom. v. 6, 8). Those who receive it do thereby confess their *need* of a Saviour; and this confession calls for a humiliation that is foreign to the proud spirit of the natural man. We might say that the Gospel car has a low door, making it necessary that those who enter should *stoop* for admission. There is the trouble. To confess oneself a sinner, and unable to do anything toward one's own salvation, to acknowledge that one is hopelessly lost unless a salvation be furnished him without cost to himself and wholly apart from his own works, is an act from which the natural man holds back with all his strength of will.

It is because of this inherited tendency to pride and self-confidence, that great religious systems flourish. Men will patronize and flock to systems of religion which provide a place for the works of man himself; but to accept the free grace of God is hard for the flesh. Man must humble himself in order to receive the words in which God declares *His* Salvation: “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that NOT OF YOURSELVES: it is the gift of God: NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. ii. 8, 9). But there is no place, in an age whose leading characteristic is boastfulness regarding the works of man, for a plan of salvation which is expressly not of works lest man should boast. An occasion for boasting is what the natural heart demands; hence the world contains, among its great stock of religious and other commodities, whereby the prince of this world strives to please every taste and fancy, many systems of religion wherein man's own works play a greater or less part in the accomplishment of Salvation, and wherein, as a necessary consequence, the question of salvation remains in uncertainty until death.

It is a most curious phenomenon that human beings, who admit the possibility of being eternally lost, and who have no assurance at all of their own salvation, often betray no solicitude whatever as to the outcome of their religious practices. This is commonly the case with religious people, showing that they really care little about their *salvation*, but that they care a great deal

about their own *religious works*. They are not willing to give up the latter in order that they may secure the former.

Again, unbelief at the present day commonly takes the form of “broad-mindedness.” The idea that the Gospel-car is the *only* conveyance by which passengers can reach Immanuel's land is denounced as “narrow” and “bigoted,” and as wholly unsuited to an age of “liberal Christianity,” “charitable tolerance,” and “progressive ideas.” It belongs to a group of doctrines which were tenaciously held by our forefathers, but which the progress of humanity has, it is said, left far behind. It is old-fashioned and outgrown. The Gospel car is a very plain looking, unpretentious affair, utterly destitute of modern religious improvements. It was all very well, no doubt, for a by-gone day, before the dazzling era of scientific development was inaugurated. But along with the invention of motor-cars and aeroplanes, new *religious* conveyances have been contrived, and old ones are being “modernized” so as to make them acceptable to the “spirit of the age.”

Then, too, it is noticed that as a rule the passengers who accept the Gospel invitation and enter the Gospel car are very ordinary people. Very few of the intellectual, cultivated and influential members of the community are of the number. Among them will be found many from the lower orders of society, but “not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many high born” (1 Cor. i. 26). Of course, many are influenced by these considerations, for the spirit that prompted the question, “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?” (John vii. 48) is very potent in human society today.

Thus, in this era of novelties (for Satan must anticipate God and must first have *his* attempt at making “all things new”), the human mind is easily persuaded that the old-fashioned Gospel car is out of date, and while it may yet please those who would cling to the tallow dip and other relics of by-gone days, the modern methods, new theologies, new thought, ethical culture, liberal Christianity, and the like, are much more suited to “the religious sentiments of these enlightened times.”

We need not speak further of specific difficulties which impede the acceptance of the Gospel of God concerning His Son. The great difficulty is that God will not modernize and improve His ways, nor subject them to the operation of that potent force in human affairs commonly worshipped under the name of “Evolution.” Hence the mighty wave of Human Progress has carried the mass of humanity past the immovable Rock of Redemption. A few stragglers in the rear may yet heed the call “Look unto Me and be ye saved”; but soon the voice that now speaks in grace the word “Come,” will be heard in judgment pronouncing that other word “Depart.” And of those who neglected that “great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him, God also bearing witness with signs and wonders and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost” (Heb. ii. 3, 4), it shall be said, “So we see that they could not enter in BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF.” (Heb. iii. 19).

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 9: *God's Power unto Salvation to Every One who Believes*, pages 46-55.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER X.

### God's Righteousness Revealed.

Verse 16 of the first chapter of Romans is explained by the succeeding verse, which should have our close attention. The successive steps of the argument are these: *First*, Paul declares that he is ready to preach to them that are at Rome because he is not ashamed of the Gospel; *second*, his reason for being not ashamed of the Gospel is that it is God's power to Salvation to every one who believes it; *third*, the Gospel is God's power to salvation because *in it the righteousness of God is revealed*. Thus we arrive at the great subject of the revelation to men of a RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. This is what is put forward as chiefly distinguishing the Gospel of God, namely, that in it, or by it, God's Righteousness is revealed.

This does not mean that the Gospel reveals righteousness as an attribute of God, making it known that God is righteous. That fact would not be “good news” to sinners. The last person the unrighteous man would wish to deal with would be a righteous God. Indeed, such a revelation would not be “news” at all; for the Old Testament abundantly reveals the righteousness of God in all His dealings. “The Lord is righteous in all His ways” (Ps. cxlv. 17). The righteousness of God in this sense was proclaimed from the beginning. Even Pharaoh acknowledged it (Ex. ix. 27); so that that would not be a “gospel” truth. What meets us here is a very different statement. The Scriptures of the Old Testament reveal that not only is God Himself righteous, but that He requires absolute and undeviating righteousness in men. For thousands of years God had sought for righteousness among men, and men had sought to produce righteousness for God. The result of all that testing, both under the Mosaic law and outside the law, was that not one righteous man was to be found. God's record declares: “There is none righteous, no not one.” (Rom. iii. 10, quoting Ps. xiv. 1).

The case of humanity, therefore, stood thus: God demanded righteousness of man; but man was proved to be utterly incapable of meeting that requirement. This condition and inherent incapacity having been fully and conclusively demonstrated by man's failure under the *law*, God issues the proclamation of the *Gospel*, the essence of which is that inasmuch as man cannot produce righteousness for God, God has undertaken to furnish HIS OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS TO MAN. This is “good news” indeed. We see then that the “righteousness of God,” which is revealed or made known by the Gospel, is so called to distinguish it from man's righteousness. It is a righteousness (there is no definite article in the original) which God Himself supplies and which *He* puts upon man, and hence is a “righteousness of God.”

The literal meaning of the word translated “revealed” presents the truth with intensified force. It is the verb from which our word “apocalypse” is taken, and signifies literally “unveiled.” The idea thus presented to us is that, during all the centuries wherein man was attempting vainly to produce by means of law-works, a righteousness acceptable to God, God had in reserve and hidden, as it were, behind a veil, a *righteousness of His own*; and when man's failure was conclusively established, then, by the proclamation of God concerning His Son, the veil is taken away, and God's righteousness, offered to man in pure grace, is disclosed to all. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” (Titus ii. 11).

Scripture mentions two kinds of righteousness, God's and man's, which are thus distinguished as to their respective source or authorship. Both are mentioned in Phil. iii. 9, where Paul gives expression to his intense desire to gain Christ and be found in Him, "not having mine own righteousness." This is man's righteousness, "which is of the law"; and although Paul had just declared that he had been "touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless," yet he would not dare to be found of God clad therein. He desired to be found clothed in that righteousness "which is, through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by (literally, *upon*) faith"; that is to say, the righteousness which God provides and places upon faith, wherever faith is found. This is "the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and *upon all* them that believe" (Rom. iii. 22). This is the best robe, the wedding garment, which can be obtained *only from God*, but which He freely bestows upon those who believe the Gospel message and heed the Gospel invitation.

The same contrast is found in the prophecy of Isaiah, who says: "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Is. Ixiv. 6); but God has through the same prophet given the promise of the Gospel, saying: "But My righteousness shall be for ever, and My salvation from generation to generation" (Is. li. 8).

Herein is the unique greatness of the Gospel message. It flashes as a beam of dazzling light upon the dark scene of human failure. It comes at the moment when the unspeakable wickedness of man, manifested in the crucifixion of the One Who was truly Righteous, at the hands of the crowd led by the self-righteous Pharisees, would seem to have sealed the eternal doom of the race of Adam. And not only does God choose the very darkest hour in the dark history of man for the unveiling of His righteousness, but He makes it known that the very crime itself, whereby the Light of the World was put out, and the "power of darkness" was spread over all the human race, has become the righteous ground upon which God can Himself be righteous, and at the same time *make righteous* those who believe upon the crucified and risen Son of God. For there, upon the cross of Calvary, "He hath made to be sin for us, Him who knew no sin; that we might be made the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIM" (2 Cor. V. 21). This is that "righteousness of God" which is unveiled in the Gospel, and in consequence of which the Gospel is God's power unto Salvation to every one that believes it.

The further unfolding of the subject of the "Righteousness of God," which constitutes the essence of the Gospel of God, is taken up at Romans iii. 21, which Scripture we hope to consider a little later on. The intermediate portion of the Epistle is occupied with the setting forth of the hopelessly corrupt and unrighteous condition of the natural man, God in His wisdom deeming it necessary to give us a faithful picture of the condition of man in order that the need of God's righteousness might be apparent, and that the unspeakable value of His Gospel might be recognized. We quote the words of chap. iii. 21 : "But now a righteousness of God apart from law is manifested," but we quote them at this point only for the purpose of pointing out that, in the word rendered "manifested," we have another exceedingly forceful expression in regard to the righteousness of God. That is the verb from which the word "epiphany" is taken, signifying an outshining from the temple of God.

This righteousness of God which has now *shined forth* from the temple of God, and which by the Gospel has been *unveiled* to the eyes of believing sinners was the subject of Old Testament prophecy. This fact further accounts for the statement that the Gospel had been "promised afore" by God's prophets in the Holy Scriptures (Rom. i. 2). Thus it is written:

“My RIGHTEOUSNESS is near; MY SALVATION is gone forth, and Mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon Me and in Mine arm shall they trust. Lift up your eyes unto the heaven, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but MY SALVATION shall be for ever, and My RIGHTEOUSNESS shall not be abolished ...

“For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but My RIGHTEOUSNESS shall be for ever, and MY SALVATION from generation to generation.” (Is. li. 5, 6, 8).

And what is this Righteousness and this Salvation of God which has now shined forth from heaven and which the Gospel unveils to faith? An answer is given in the prophecy of Jeremiah.

“Behold the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a RIGHTEOUS BRANCH, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His Name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6).

This shows us that God's Righteousness is a Person, and that Person is the subject of God's Gospel. This is God's Righteousness, the “Best Robe” with which the believing sinner is clothed upon, the One Who is “of God made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, and Sanctification and Redemption.” (1 Cor. i. 30). Who was *made sin* for us that we might be made in Him the *Righteousness of God*.

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 10: *God's Righteousness Revealed*, pages 55-61.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XI.

# God's Righteousness is from Faith, and is Revealed "to Faith."

We come now to another point of deep interest and great importance. Verse 17 states the conditions under which God's righteousness is unveiled to men. It reads: "For (or because) therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The expression "from faith to faith" is obscure, and it will require some study and attention on our part if we would apprehend the meaning of these words. Part of the statement, however, is easily grasped, namely, that God's righteousness is revealed "to faith," and only to faith. Those who are not of faith catch no glimpse of it. For them the veil has not been removed, and they have no revelation of a righteousness Divine in character, and which God Himself supplies to those who by nature and practice are unrighteous. This part of the verse offers no difficulty. But what is meant by the saying, "the righteousness of God is revealed *from faith*?" This phrase introduces us to a peculiar expression much used by the Holy Spirit in setting forth, by the writings of Paul, the great doctrine of justification. It is, therefore, an expression which we shall find it very profitable to study; but of necessity our present comments upon it must be brief. The expression that is rendered "from faith," is in the original Greek *ek pisteos*. It is an expression of such uncertain or variable meaning that it is variously rendered in our English version. It occurs again in the latter part of the same verse and is there rendered "by faith." In Rom. v. 1, it is also rendered "by faith." In Rom. iv. 16, it occurs twice and is rendered the first time "of faith," and the second time "of the faith." In Gal. iii. 8, it is rendered "through faith." I have been impressed with the importance of seeking diligently the thought of God which has been embodied in these two words, because of the relation they bear to the doctrine of justification, and particularly because of the meaning ordinarily attached to the oft-quoted and highly important words, "Being *justified by faith*, we have peace with God," etc. The idea one would naturally derive from these words is that the believing sinner is justified by means of his faith; or, in other words, that his faith is the instrumental cause or factor in effecting his justification. Obviously, unless some material qualification be added, this would make the sinner his own justifier. That, however, is very far indeed from the teaching of Scripture. It is GOD who is "the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). "It is GOD that justifieth" (Rom. viii. 33). Believers are "justified *freely* By HIS GRACE" (Rom. iii. 22-24). Again it is written "Being now justified BY HIS BLOOD" (Rom. v. 9). Thus the Scriptures clearly teach that the believing sinner is justified by God, that it is by reason of God's *grace* that He justifies the believer, and that the ground of his justification is *the blood of Christ*. Therefore, believers are *not* justified by their faith, as the expression is usually understood, any more than by their works. Not by our faith, nor by anything else in ourselves, do we merit or procure or bring about the justification which God effects for us. If there were any procuring merit in us it would not be "by grace," and if we had to do anything in order to gain it we would not be "justified freely."

In studying the usage of the expression *ek pisteos* it was found that it occurs just seven times in the doctrinal portion of Romans, and seven times in the corresponding portion of Galatians. For the benefit of those who may wish to study these passages we give them below,

but cannot comment in detail upon them. We print in capital letters the English words which represent the Greek words “ek pisteos.”

- Rom. i. 17, “Revealed FROM FAITH to faith.  
i. 17, “The just shall live BY FAITH.”  
iii. 26, “Him which BELIEVETH IN Jesus.  
This verse should read: “Him that is of (the) faith (ek pisteos) of Jesus.”  
iii. 30, “Seeing it is one God that shall justify the heathen BY FAITH.”  
iv. 16, “Therefore it is OF FAITH that it might be by grace.”  
iv. 16, “To that also which is OF THE FAITH of Abraham.”  
v. 1, “Being justified BY FAITH.”
- Gal. iii. 7, “They that are OF FAITH the same are children of Abraham.”  
iii. 8, “For seeing that God would justify the nations THROUGH FAITH.”  
iii. 9, “So then they that be OF FAITH are blessed.”  
iii. 11, “The just shall live BY FAITH”  
iii. 12, “The law is not OF FAITH.”  
iii. 22, “That the promise BY FAITH of Jesus Christ.”  
iii. 24, “That we might be justified BY FAITH.”

The same expression occurs three times in the latter part of Romans (ix. 30; ix. 32; x. 6), and once in the latter part of Galatians (v. 5).

A close study of the use of the preposition *ek* in these and in other passages will show that it usually denotes “of” (in the sense of “out of”), or, “from,” indicating a condition, or state, or locality, or source from out of which the thing spoken of proceeds. Thus, in Romans i. 3, where it is said that Jesus Christ was “of the seed of David,” the preposition governing the word “seed” is “*ek*.” It would seem, therefore, that faith is a certain state or condition into which the heart of a man may be brought, and that where this state or condition of heart exists, God will justify that man, that is, will declare him to be judicially righteous or acquitted of all guilt incurred by his sins. This state or condition of heart, called “faith,” is an effect wrought in the heart of man by means of the Word of God (Rom. x. 17), and is in fact an attitude of the heart *towards God Himself*. It is that attitude of heart which is characterized by readiness to hear and receive *whatever God says*, and to accept as truth *His statement* touching every matter in regard to which God has spoken. Faith not only *believes* the Word of God, but it also recognizes it, and receives it, “not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God” (1 Thess. ii. 13). Faith is able to distinguish between the Word of God and the word of mere man. When I am asked, “How do you know the Bible is the Word of God?” I feel like retorting, “How is it you do *not* know it to be the Word of God?” Surely it has characteristics which distinguish it in the most radical way from all human utterances;\* insomuch that there seems to be no excuse for any who fail to recognize the Bible as a Divine book.

\*See “Life in the Word,” by the Author.

Those who do thus recognize it and thus receive it are those who are “of faith”; and upon such God puts His righteousness. He acquits them of all charges against them, not imputing their

trespasses to them, that is, not putting their trespasses to their account as one charges up debit items in book-keeping (2 Cor. v. 19), but imputing (putting to their account) their faith for or instead of righteousness. (Rom. iv. 22-24). This appears to be the meaning of the doctrine that believing sinners are “justified by (*ek, out of*) faith.” God clears or acquits them on the ground of faith, and not on the ground of works of law; for “by (*ek*) deeds of law shall no flesh be justified in His sight” (Rom. iii. 20).

Romans iii. 26 states that God's procedure in respect to the remission of sins is such that, without in the slightest degree departing from strict righteousness, He is able to justify, that is to declare judicially free from all guilt, the man who is “of the faith (*ek pisteos*) of Jesus.” We learn from this Scripture that the sinners whom God justifies or clears of all guilt are those that are of the faith of Jesus – not those who are of the Protestant faith, or of the Catholic faith, or of the Anglican faith, or of the Wesleyan faith, but *of the faith of Jesus*; those whose faith rests wholly upon, and centres in, and is concerned with, the Incarnate Son of God.

A similar expression occurs in Gal. ii. 20, where Paul says that the life he then lived in the flesh, he lived by (or in) faith, “that of the Son of God.” The faith by (or in virtue of) which the believer lives is not that of a system of theology, or a code of ethics or doctrine, but is essentially that of a Person, namely, the Son of God. It is His faith, in the sense that it has to do with Himself, insomuch that if He were eliminated the faith would be wholly gone. Not a vestige of it would remain.

This is the distinguishing characteristic of true Christianity – that which differentiates it from all systems of religion. Christianity is not a “religion,” and to speak of it, which is often done, as one of “the great religions of the world,” is to betray utter ignorance of its character. Christianity is in its essence *the sharing of the life of the Man Whom God has raised from the dead*. It has nothing whatever to do with religious practices of any sort or description. It does not bring a man to, or require him to “join,” any earthly system whatever. It brings him to a Divine Person, and unites him with that Person in a vital bond. What is required of him thereafter is, not to keep religious observances and ceremonies, but to manifest on earth the characteristics of the life of the Risen Christ in heaven; for “as He is, so are we in this world” (1 John iv. 17).

It is of the utmost importance that believers should understand what God has done for them upon their believing on His Son, and especially that they should see that He did not make the members of any religious system, or of any institution of *the world*, but made them members of Christ, thereby giving them a standing *wholly outside this world*, in the new creation whereof the Risen Christ is “the Beginning” (Col. i. 18; Rev. iii. 14).

Again, in connection with the expression – of the faith of Jesus,” reference may profitably be made to the words of the Lord Himself recorded in Mark xi. 22. Responding to Peter's reference to the withered fig tree, the Lord said: “Have faith of (not *in* as the A.V. has it) God”; or literally, “Have God's faith.” It is only by the faith of which God is the author that mountains may be removed. This brings to mind the lesson taught in Rom. x. 17, namely, that the faith whereby man believes unto righteousness is a faith wrought in his heart by the power of God operating through His Word. “Faith is by (*ek*) hearing (or arises out of the report), and hearing (*i.e.*, the thing heard, not the act of hearing) by (*dia*, by means of) the Word of God.” In this passage the English word “by” does duty for two Greek words of different significance. The instrumental cause of faith is the Word of God, and it is governed by the preposition signifying

“through,” or “by means of.” Thus we are taught that the faith which is found in the man whom God justifies is not that man's own faith, it is the faith of God – God's faith – produced there by God's Word.

To the same effect the risen Son of God is spoken of as “the Author and Finisher of faith” (Heb. xii. 2). The Christian's faith began with the hearing or report of the crucified and risen Jesus, the Son of God, and in all the stages of its perfection to its very completion, it grows by the contemplation of Him. It is by looking away unto Him that the faith which sprang originally from the report of Him as the Saviour of sinners, is carried on to perfection.

We may, therefore, take the meaning of the words, revealed from faith to faith,” to be that God's righteousness is not bestowed because of works of law, nor does it proceed from works of law. It is bestowed because of faith. It is from (or from out of) faith ; and God puts it upon those in whom faith is found. And since faith can only be found where the seed of the Word of God has been deposited, it follows that the righteousness of God springs from “faith,” which His own Word has produced in the heart of the hearer.

The meaning of the passage is further elucidated by the Scripture which the Apostle cites in proof of the doctrine: “As it is written, The just shall live BY FAITH “(*ek pisteos*). In this quotation from Habakkuk ii. 4, we observe that *righteousness* and *life* are coupled together as subjects that are closely related to each other; and this connection between righteousness and life is fully brought out in the subsequent teaching of Romans. Both righteousness and life are of faith,” that is to say, they arise from a condition of faith, not from a condition of works (though the faith may be shown by works, and if not manifested in works is dead, James ii. 17, 18). Therefore, the Statement of the prophet Habakkuk is cited here as proof that the just man shall live, not in virtue of any works of righteousness that he may have done, but because “of faith.”

This important Scripture, which embodies in germ the doctrine of the faith principle upon which “justification of life” (Rom. v. 18) is based, is quoted three times in the New Testament. In Rom. i. 17 the emphasis appears to be upon the word “just.” It is the just, that is, they whom God has justified by reason of faith, who shall live, and who are to reckon themselves “alive unto God in Christ Jesus” (Rom. vi. 11 Gr.). In Gal. iii. 11, the contrast presented by the context is between *faith* and *law*. “But that no man is justified by (in virtue of) the law is evident, for the just shall live by FAITH.” It is manifest that in this passage the emphasis is on the word “faith.” In Heb. x. 38, 39, the emphasis is on “live,” the contrast being between those who “believe to the saving of the soul (life),” and those “who draw back unto perdition.” Those who have been justified do the former, not the latter. “Now the just shall LIVE by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we (believers) are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 11: *God's Righteousness is from "Faith and is Revealed to Faith."*, pages 61-70.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XII.

### The Wrath of God Revealed from Heaven.

The argument of Rom. i. 17 is carried on without interruption into the 18th verse, and is greatly intensified by the statement there made. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." It is to be observed that the wrath of God is not said to be revealed in the Gospel. That is no part of the "good news," but the revelation of it is nevertheless necessary to a full appreciation and right estimate of the importance of the good news. The righteousness of God is revealed in the Gospel; but of the wrath of God it is merely stated that "there is revealed wrath of God from heaven,"

Thus the successive steps of the argument are presented in the following order: Paul is ready to preach the Gospel to them that are at Rome because he is not ashamed of the Gospel; he is not ashamed of it because in it a righteousness of God is revealed, a righteousness arising *out of faith* (apart from law - works) and revealed *to faith*; this righteousness of God is revealed, and the revelation of it is "good news" because it affords the only escape from the wrath of God which has been revealed from heaven against every ungodliness and every unrighteous act of men.

The wrath of God is not a popular topic. Hence it does not figure prominently in the preaching of the day; but it is a subject whereof much is said in the Word of God. The plainest declarations that we have on this subject are those which came from the lips of the gentle and compassionate Saviour. He has spoken with clearness and emphasis of the "damnation of hell," where there worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" of the place of the "outer darkness," where there is "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." But such statements as these are not in harmony with "the best religious thought of our day;" and since this is the age of the triumph of democratic principles, it is not surprising that the wishes of "the people," whose authority is supreme in all things, are consulted with reference to the topics that are to be discussed in the pulpit.

Lately I had a chance conversation with an intelligent and well educated woman, who said she attended the church presided over by a very popular preacher in Boston, and she spoke of the crowds of people who flocked eagerly to hear him. The characteristic of his preaching which commended it to herself was the "broadness" of his views. I ventured to remind her of what Christ said about the "broad" way, and that it was *breadth* and not *truth* that usually attracts the crowds. But she brought the conversation abruptly to a close, saying that she liked preaching which was tolerant, and would never go to a church "where they preached about hell." It is better, however, to hear the truth about hell now, than to learn it by personal experience hereafter. The silence of the popular preachers on that subject and the dislike of the people for it, do not abolish the institution, nor would an act of Parliament or of Congress avail to that end. I have noticed a peculiar thing about those who profess broad and tolerant views, namely, that their views are just broad enough to embrace everything *but the truth*, and sufficiently tolerant to make room for every doctrine *except* the "doctrine" of Christ.

It is natural that men should heartily dislike the principle of retribution, that is, as applied to themselves, though they usually approve the application of that principle to others. Yet no one

can deny that retribution is an *essential* element of justice, and that without its enforcement human society would be an impossibility. No government could stand a day if the principle of retribution were abolished. It is a principle absolutely essential to the conduct of human affairs. Therefore, men are without excuse for accepting any doctrine which ignores a matter so vital as retribution.

Not only is retribution an essential factor in the conduct of human affairs, and in the regulation of any human society, but it is only the willfully blind who fail to see the operation of Divine retribution in the world. The consequences of wrong-doing are visited upon the head of the wrong-doer with sufficient frequency to warrant an appeal to this well-known fact as one way wherein the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against the unrighteous acts of men. On the other hand, it also happens frequently that the wicked enjoy great prosperity all their days. In very many cases wrong-doings of a most grievous character seem to pass unrequited. There remains, therefore, a long list of ungodly and unrighteous acts to be dealt with by the Supreme Ruler of the universe; and a consideration of this well recognized fact should suffice to convince every intelligent person that there must be a coming day of retribution, when the Righteous judge will deal righteous judgment to every man <sup>49</sup> according to his works.”

The Scripture we are studying makes it plain that the subject of the wrath of God lies in very close juxtaposition to the Gospel. The wrath of God is as much a fact as the love of God, and it is a fact that gives to the Gospel of God its special value. Since God's wrath is against every ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and since no man is or can be righteous through his own efforts, it follows that the case of humanity would be hopeless but for the “good news” that, to every believing sinner, God freely grants a righteousness of His own.

It is appropriate that we should give heed at this point to some of the solemn passages of Scripture that tell of the wrath of God which is stored up against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

In Psalm 50 it is written (ver. 2-6)

“Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence, a fire shall devour before Him. and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself.”

But the Gospel of Salvation is close at hand, for in verses 14, 15, we read:

“Offer unto God thanksgiving” – which is the sacrifice that is acceptable to Him – “and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.” As it is elsewhere written, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel ii. 32; Rom. x. 13).

Another prophet, who also is the bearer of the promise of the Gospel, speaks plainly about the wrath of God:

“Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And *I will punish the world for their evil, and the*

*wicked for their iniquity*,, and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger “(Is. xiii. 9-13).

“Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning with His anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: His lips are full of indignation, and His tongue as a devouring fire : And His breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people causing them to err.”

But even here, against this dark background of predicted wrath, shines the word of promise to the people of God:

“Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel. And the LORD shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of His arm, with the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones” (Is. xxx. 27-30).

“For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he bath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it” (Is. xxx. 33).

And the Scriptures make it plain that the One who executes the wrath of God is none other than the Lamb of God, He who speaks in righteousness, and who is mighty to save:

“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art Thou red in thine apparel, and Thy garments Eke him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My raiment. For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come (Is lxiii. 1-4).

The times of ignorance on this subject are now past, for “Now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent: Because he bath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He bath ordained; whereof He bath given assurance unto -all men, in that He bath raised Him from the dead” (Acts xvii. 30, 31).

It is noticeable that the New Testament writer who writes most fully of the love of God, is the one who also writes most fully of the wrath of God; for it is the last book of the Bible, which contains the most complete description of the pouring out of the wrath of God. It is there we read of the futile efforts made by the great men of the earth to find a refuge in the day of wrath, calling to the mountains and rocks, and saying: “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and from the face of the Lamb: For the *great day of His wrath is come*; and who shall be able to stand?” (Rev. vi. 16, 17).

The very same chapter of the Gospel of John which declares the love of God in the gift of His own Son, declares also the unending wrath of God against those who refuse that gift. “He

that believeth on the Son bath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM” (John iii. 36).

The Apostle Peter, speaking of the judgment of God as beginning at the house of God, asks: “And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL OF GOD?” (1 Pet. iv. 17). The direct answer to this question is found in 2 Th. i. 7, 8, where we read of the coming day, “When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance upon them that know not God, and that OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The coming of the day of wrath is therefore a certainty. But this information is not imparted to men with a view to terrifying or intimidating them into the acceptance of the grace of God. The appeal that God makes to man is not on the ground of fear of punishment, but on the ground of *reconciliation* by the blood of Christ. The revelation of the wrath of God is given in faithfulness, in order that no one who hears the Gospel should be ignorant of the consequences of refusing to heed and obey it. And this revelation is made in order that, by the exceeding greatness of the wrath of God against all unrighteousness, the exceeding riches of His grace might appear in providing righteousness for the unrighteous.

This then is the greatness of the Gospel, that it announces salvation through Christ Jesus from the wrath to come. Those who receive the Gospel are thenceforth waiting for the Son of God from heaven, “Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, *which delivered us from the wrath to come*” (1 Th. i. 10). For “God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be *saved from wrath through Him*” (Rom. v. 8, 9).

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 12: *The Wrath of God Revealed from Heaven*, pages 70-78.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### **The State of Humanity: Jews and Gentiles.**

The next point established by the doctrine of Romans, is the *universal need* of the proclamation of a Gospel, or message of good news from God. With a view to proving the existence of this need, the whole state of humanity is set forth as it appeared in the sight of God. The purpose of the spirit of God is to show the vital importance of the Gospel to every human being, before giving an exposition of the Gospel itself. Therefore, we are not informed at the outset what the Gospel is, but are only told that it is the power of God unto Salvation to every one who believes His message, because therein His righteousness is unveiled to faith. The detailed explanation of what is meant by “the righteousness of God” is postponed to the third chapter (that subject being taken up again at verse 21 of that chapter), and the intervening portion of the Epistle is devoted to an exposition of the state into which humanity had fallen, and in which it existed at the time when God sent forth His Son into the world, not (at that time) to judge the world, but that the world by Him might be saved (John iii. 17).

For the purpose of this explanation, humanity as a whole is viewed in its two grand divisions or sections, *i.e.*, Jews (Israelites) and Gentiles (nations). This is God's division. Man would not have divided the subject in that way, but, at the date of the Epistle to the Romans, would have said that the two great divisions of humanity were Romans and Barbarians – the Jews being a very insignificant part of the latter division.

Between the two sections of humanity, Israelites and Nations, there existed a very radical difference. It is important to a comprehension of this Epistle to keep this difference in mind, and to observe the application of the different parts of the Epistle, that is, to note whether it is the one class or the other that is spoken of.

The seven-fold difference, which existed from of old between Israelites and other branches of the human family, is given in Romans ix. verses 4 and 5, and consists of: the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the law, the service, the promises, the fathers; and to these is added an eighth, which came to pass in the fullness of time, namely, that from the Jews, “as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God blessed for ever more.”

The children of Israel are the only people with whom God had dealings nationally, with whom He made covenants, with whom His glory dwelt, to whom He gave a law, from whom He required service, and to whom He made promises. These facts constitute a very great difference between the Israelites and all other peoples of the earth, of whom no one of these things could be said. Of the Israelites God says: “You only have I known of all the families of the earth” (Amos iii. 2). God had declared that they should be His own possession from among all people Ex xix. 5). For the purpose of the instruction to be imparted in this Epistle the most important distinction between Israel and the nations, is that the former God gave a law. As stated in Romans iii. 2: “Unto them were committed the oracles of God.” “He showed His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. *He has not dealt so with any nation:* and as for His judgments they not known them.” (Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20). “For ask now . . . from the one side of heaven to the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?”

Out of heaven He made thee to hear His voice that He might instruct thee: and upon earth He showed thee His great fire: and *thou heardest His words out the midst of the fire*" (Deut. iv. 32,33,36).

The Jews then had the unspeakable advantage of receiving instruction directly from God through His law; whereas in speaking of other nations Paul refers to them as "the Gentiles *which have not the law*" (Rom. ii. 14). If the reader will bear clearly in mind this great difference between the Israelites and the nations, and will remember too the important fact that what things soever the law saith, it saith *to them who are under the law*," that is to the Israelites, and to them only, he will be spared from the confusion which very many have fallen through not observing explicit distinctions.

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### **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 13: *The State of Humanity: Jews and Gentiles*, pages 79-81.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### The Nations.

The light of God's truth is turned first upon the condition of the nations. The picture is familiar, and though appalling in its hideous details, its accuracy has never been questioned, so far as I know, by anyone who could claim to be a competent judge of the matter. We shall not repeat here the details of this unadorned description, but will touch only a few prominent points.

Let us note in the first place that the nations, *as nations*, are without excuse for not having the knowledge of God: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in (*i.e.*, among) them; for God hath showed it unto them" (ver. 19). They all have the witness of creation, as set forth in Psalm xix. 1-6. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showed His handiwork." This witness is repeated daily – "day unto day" and "night unto night" – and there is no speech or language where the voice of these great and awe-inspiring witnesses is not heard. In this way the "invisible things of Him," even "His eternal power and Godhead," are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made: "*so that they are without excuse*" (ver. 20).

Furthermore, every nation in its beginning had a knowledge of God by revelation, and had a record both of His judgment of the wicked by destroying them in the flood, and of His salvation of His own people out of it. God was thus known both as a judge and as a Saviour. But when they thus knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, neither were thankful, but became empty in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Out of these nations, which turned away from the true light because they *did not like* to retain God in their knowledge, sprang sciences and philosophies – great systems of human wisdom, which are so widely venerated and so highly esteemed among men at the present day. In this way, "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Then followed idolatry – the worship of *images*, that is to say, creatures of man's own *imagination* (ver. 21-23). This is the inevitable result of turning away from the true God; and in the matter of turning to idols our cultured age is in no respect behind its predecessors. In fact there is probably more idolatry on earth today than ever before. The names and forms of the idols have changed to suit the times in which we live; but idolatry itself continues in full vigour.\*

\*See "The Number of Man," by the Author; chapter on Latter Day Idols.

These nations, having given up God, He likewise "*gave them up*" to their own desires. Three times this solemn fact is stated: "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness"; "For this cause God gave them up to vile affections"; "And even as they did not like to *retain* God [lit., did not *approve* to have God] in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate (lit., *unapproving*) mind, to do those things that are not convenient," or fitting (ver. 24, 26, 28).

The wrath of God having been revealed from heaven against *all unrighteousness*, the light of truth is turned upon the nations, with the result of disclosing that they were “FILLED WITH ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS” (ver. 29). All were therefore “vessels of wrath *fitted* to destruction” (Rom. ix. 22) – not fitted thereto by God, but by themselves.

Then follows, in verses 29-32, a list of the evil things which flourished among the nations that had not wished to retain God in their knowledge. With this catalogue of human achievement before our eyes, let us remember that there are many today, including the great majority of the intellectual and cultivated people of all civilized nations, who profess “faith in man,” and who speak in glowing terms of what man can (and will) do when *left to himself*. It is also a prominent article of this modern creed, generally known as “Humanism” (i.e., the religion of Humanity, or “Man”-worship), that what has chiefly hindered man heretofore in the development of his latent potentialities have been the “shackles” imposed upon him by the “dogmas” derived from the Bible. These “shackles,” it is said, have impeded the free exercise of the human intellect. But such imaginations are doubly “vain,” and the hearts from which they spring are doubly “foolish” and “darkened,” in view of the fact that the nations of the world were “left to themselves” for over twenty-five centuries, from the flood to the birth of Christ, and some of them (as China, Japan, India, etc.) from that day until modern times. During all these centuries, which have witnessed the rise and fall of many great civilizations, the human intellect (except in the case of the Israelites) has been unfettered by the dogmas of Scripture. Full time and opportunity have therefore been allowed for the development of all the “latent powers” of man; and the developments are accurately stated, in the verses now before us.

It may be that some unregenerate persons, on reading these verses, might comfort themselves with the thought that they have not been personally guilty of *all* the crimes and evil doings mentioned in this catalogue of wickedness. Moreover, it may be said that the civilized communities of our day are not in such a state of utter corruption as is here described. We wish not to exaggerate the evil conditions of our day; but it must not be forgotten that such standards of social ethics and civic righteousness as prevail among us are simply the by-products of Christianity (to which, however, no credit is given therefor). They are the products of those very dogmas of the Bible from which the efforts of science, scholarship and theology are now seeking to rid mankind. The state of a community which has had a Gospel testimony, however feeble, is vastly different from that which has had none. The presence of even a little “salt” will act as a powerful check to the spread of corruption in an infected mass of organic matter. But there are at least two things that must be admitted by every candid reader of these verses; namely, *first*, that the tree of humanity has produced *every one* of the evil fruits here enumerated; and, *second*, that some *one or more* of these fruits have been manifested in *every branch* of that tree – that is to say in *every human being*. These broad facts cover the whole case, and establish the conclusion that the entire tree is corrupt, and that every branch, and leaf, and twig is in imminent danger of destruction.

These facts, as to the actual and undeniable state of humanity as a whole, raise the very serious question, what shall be done with a tree which produces such evil and corrupt fruit? If the reader were the owner of a tree whose fruit produced foul odors and spread filthiness and disease, what would he be likely to do with it? The Lord Jesus, who “knew what was *in* man (John ii. 25), declared that out of the *heart* of man proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.” (Matt. xv. 19). No one can deny that the heart of man is the

source from which all these things have proceeded, and that the flow of this stream of evil has not been checked in all the centuries of so-called human progress. What then shall God do with the humanity which is thus shown to be incurably evil at the heart? The owner of a tree, such as we have referred to above, would realize that his own credit required the suppression of so grievous a nuisance, and that he must *for his own sake* cut down the pestilential growth and cast it into the fire. Likewise it is manifest that God must, for His own glory, dispose of this corrupt humanity. This He will surely do; but inasmuch as God has eternally purposed to have a *Man* in the place of authority over the material universe, and since the first man has failed to qualify for the place, but on the contrary has himself become a prolific source of corruption, his presence on the earth is permitted only until the incorruptible humanity of the Second Man is ready to occupy the place of “dominion” (Gen i 26). Not only so; but God is, in infinite wisdom and infinite grace, forming the members of the Second Man, Christ Jesus, by regenerating and quickening those children of Adam who believe and obey the Gospel. This truth is brought out in the fifth chapter of Romans, and is to be considered later.

In view then of the undeniable facts as to the corruption of humanity, let us ask if the nations of the earth were not in need of a Gospel of God, and a Righteousness of God? Surely, none who comes to the feeblest apprehension of the state of the nations at the time when God sent forth His own Son to be His Salvation unto the ends of the earth, can fail to realize that God's Gospel is the one thing in the universe that is of unspeakable value and importance to them all. There can, therefore, be no crime against the nations and peoples of earth so great as that of withholding from them this Gospel of God “concerning His Son,” and proclaiming to them instead the inherent capacity of man to save himself, or some other of the numerous and popular “gospels of the day.”

But in every community of human beings, however corrupt, there is found a capacity for forming moral judgments, that is to say, for distinguishing between what is right and what is wrong. In fact, the habit of pronouncing judgment upon the doings of *other people* is one to which practically all men are addicted. It is, moreover, a practice in which they take keen delight, because it indulges the propensity of the natural heart of man to exalt himself at the expense of others. All nations, therefore, show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile either *accusing* or else *excusing* one another. (Rom. ii. 14). Whether it be in accusing another of wrong-doing, or in seeking to provide for themselves an excuse therefor, it is clear that evil is recognized as such, and that *the principle of judgment* and of *punishment for wrong-doing* is also recognized. We have called attention to the fact that the recognition of judgment, and the attempt to exercise it upon the acts of others, is universal; but we fear that very few of those who so freely and lightly enter into judgment realize the bearing of their conduct in so doing. The principal consequence thereof is the admission, which is conclusive against themselves and effectually closes their mouths, that *judgment is righteous*. This important point is brought out in chap. ii. ver. 1-16 inclusive. This section of the Epistle begins with men judging one another, and ends with God judging the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, to Whom all judgment is committed. (See also John v. 27 and Acts xvii. 31.

The main feature of the teaching here given is the solemn fact that, whenever a man pronounces judgment of wrong-doing upon another, he is in reality *condemning himself*. How very little is this understood by those who delight in condemning the wrong they see in others!

One of the common traits of our corrupt human nature leads us to exalt ourselves by depreciating others. In indulging this practice men often harbor the vain idea that, in expressing approbation of virtue, and in severely condemning lapses therefrom on the part of others, they have done something commendable and deserving of a reward. But in fact they have done just the reverse. The Scripture before us pierces all the disguises of hypocrisy and human assumptions of righteousness, laying the bare the undeniable fact that the man who judges is himself guilty of the same things – not necessarily the identical things, but things of the same kind, unrighteousness of similar character. How absolutely just then is the statement before us that the man who judges, whosoever he may be, is really pronouncing his own judgment. His judgment of what is wrong in others shows that he *knows the difference between right and wrong*. When, therefore, the light of the day of judgment reveals the wrong that is *in himself*, there is no need to establish his guilt, for his own judgment has already condemned him. Hence his mouth is effectually closed. Men who are capable of drawing moral distinctions, and who nevertheless harden themselves against the goodness of God, which is ever leading them towards repentance, are but treasuring up to themselves, not treasure in heaven – which they might be doing – but wrath against the coming day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render unto every man according to his deeds” (ver. 5, 6).

And how can the man that judges complain if he be judged concerning those very things in respect of which he so freely expressed his own judgment? He’s bound to know that “the judgment of God is according to truth against those who commit such things.” Therefore, it is vain for him to think that he himself can escape the judgment of God. The ground upon which God is willing to judge such men is virtually the ground of their own judgment, namely, that eternal life is the desert of those who, by *patient continuance in well-doing* seek after glory and honour and incorruptibility, but that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish are justly awarded to them that obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness (ver. 7-10). There is manifest justice in the principle of wrath and anguish to every soul of man that worketh evil, but glory, honour and peace to every man that worketh good, whether Jew or Gentile; but it should not require either evidence or argument to show that no man could be found to whom eternal life could be awarded on that principle, but that, on the contrary, wrath and indignation must be the portion of all who stand to be judged *on the ground of their actions*. And no man can object to being judged on that ground because it is the very ground upon which he himself has judged others.

The purpose of all this teaching is to magnify the Gospel; and it is easy to see how this purpose is served by the section now before us. Men, by themselves entering into judgment, have acknowledged the righteousness of judgment; while at the same time the record of mankind shows that none can by any possibility clear himself when brought into judgment. What a wonderful message then is that of the Gospel, which proclaims that the man whom God justifies **SHALL NOT COME INTO JUDGMENT!** (John v. 24), and that the righteousness which God bestows is that “of faith,” not “of works !”

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 14: *The Nations*, pages 82-91.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XV.

### The Jews.

The subject of the state of the Jews at the time of the Incarnation of the Son of God is taken up at verse 17 of chapter ii.: “Behold, thou art called a Jew and *restest in the law*, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest His will, and approvest the things that are excellent, *being instructed out of the law*; and thou art confident that thou art thyself a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hath the form of knowledge and of the truth *in the law*.”

No one understood better than the Apostle Paul the mental attitude of the Jew, and his complacent feeling of superiority over the people of the nations, whom they regarded as “dogs.” And this passage shows that the evil heart of man is such that it will turn any available thing into a cause of pride and self-exaltation. The prominent subject in this passage is “the law,” and here we learn that the consequence to the ordinary Israelite of being in possession of a God given law was that he “rested” in it, and prided himself that, in virtue of having it, he was himself a guide of the blind, a light to the unlightened, an instructor of the unwise, a teacher of the immature. The fact that the law was that whereby he should be *judged* was wholly lost sight of. That fact was no more agreeable to the educated Jewish mind of the first century than is the thought of retribution to the religious man of the twentieth. The Jew had no wish to be reminded of the fact that “as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law” (Rom. ii. 12).

The circumstances of the giving of the law were well known to every Jew. All the people were assembled in obedience to the direction of the LORD, to hear His commands from His own mouth. God said to Moses: “Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud that the people *may hear when I speak* with thee and believe thee for ever” (Ex. xix. 9). And, the people being assembled at the appointed time, there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people trembled. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And then, in the hearing of the people, “GOD SPAKE all these words” (Ex. xx. 9). To these ten commandments, spoken by God in the hearing of all the people, He added other words and judgments, which, at the special request of the people, were communicated through Moses, because they could not bear the voice of God. They said: “Let not God speak with us lest we die” (Ex. xx. 19). And in response to all this, “All the people answered with one voice and said: All the words which the LORD hath said *will we do*.” And again, when Moses had written all the words of the LORD in a book and read it in the audience of the people, they said: “All that the LORD hath said *will we do and be obedient*” (Ex. xxiv. 3, 4, 7).

That law was a special covenant between Jehovah and Israel. It spoke to Israel and to Israel only. Blessed indeed is the knowledge that we are “not under law.” Those who realize, however faintly, what it is to be under the law, to be judged by it, and to be subject to its curse,

can in corresponding measure understand the indignation of the Apostle at the work of those Judaizing teachers who sought to put the yoke of the law upon the Christians in Galatia.

What then had been the result of the giving of this holy law, spoken by the voice of God Himself, to a specially chosen people? Had they, by obediently submitting themselves to be molded by it, brought glory to God, so that His Name was revered among the Gentiles? Far from it. Though they made the law their boast, nevertheless, through breaking it, they dishonoured God, and caused His Name to be blasphemed among the nations (ver. 23, 24).

The Apostle does not allege against the Jews the long list of wickednesses which he charged against the Gentiles, but simply mentions the breaking of certain of the ten commandments. This is enough to show that, if judged by the law, they must be condemned, for he that offends in one point is guilty of all (James ii. 10). "What then," he asks, "are we (Jews) better (than the Gentiles)? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are ALL UNDER SIN" (Rom. iii. 9).

Here then, is summed up, in the words of the 14th Psalm (verse 1) the state of all humanity before God, the Jews to whom God gave the law upon their promise to do the things written therein, and the Gentiles whom God gave up to an undiscerning mind to do the things that are not fitting: "There is none righteous, *no not one.*"

NONE RIGHTEOUS. Such was the result of the long trial of man to which God had with infinite patience and forbearance, subjected him. Not that the trial was needed to show to God what was in man; but man had himself to learn the condition into which he had fallen – to learn his own utter helplessness and impotence, and to learn and confess the righteous judgment of God. For God would have man himself to see that God is justified in entering into judgment (Ps. li. 4). He would leave no room for any one to question His righteousness in pronouncing the sentence of universal condemnation. It was His purpose that "*every mouth should be stopped.*" This purpose has now been accomplished. The mouth of the Gentiles is stopped by the many forms of wickedness that flourished unchecked in their midst, by the depths of depravity to which they had sunk, and by their own moral judgments of the very things which they suffered to exist among them. But lest it might be said that, if man had been given the benefit of specific commandments from God prohibiting certain wrong-doings and making them a legal offence, he could have justified himself, God gave to a selected people a law, that they who kept it might live in virtue thereof. But the failure of the Jews under law was complete; and thus it has been demonstrated that man is incapable in his corrupted nature, of keeping a righteous law. This, then, is the reason for the giving of the law, as set forth in Rom. iii. 19: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law (to wit, Israelites), that *every* mouth (that of Jew as well as of Gentile) might be stopped, and all the world may be brought under judgment of God" (R.V.).

God, then, looked for righteousness in men that He might give them life; but what He found was universal unrighteousness. None righteous, no not one. God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men, but God's test finds none righteous, no not one.

It is to a world thus hopelessly submerged in unrighteousness and justly subject to wrath that "*righteousness of God is unveiled.*" Such a message, for such a world! No possible righteousness was there on the part of man! What then remained but the condemnation of eternal wrath? From this there would be manifestly no escape except by infinite and Divine *grace* is and

it is by grace the message comes to all, proclaiming a righteousness of God available to faith. This is indeed “good news!” But how can it be true? How *can* God be just and at the same time acquit and declare righteous those who are confessedly unrighteous, who are so clearly guilty that their mouths are stopped from uttering a plea in denial or extenuation? This is the subject that now comes up for explanation; for God would make it very clear that, while He acts in pure grace in acquitting the believing sinner, He also acts in *exact* righteousness.

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 15: *The Jews*, pages 91-96.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### The Mercy-Seat.

“But now righteousness of God without law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets” (Rom. iii. 21).

“But now!” These words introduce a great and blessed change in the character of God's dealings with men, and they should be heavily underscored in our Bibles. *Then*, the whole world was under condemnation; *but now* the situation is totally changed, and there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. *Then* the whole of humanity was sunk in unrighteousness; and even those who had received the law and had said: “It shall be *our righteousness* if we observe to do all these commandments” (Deut. vi. 25), had found that by deeds of law shall no flesh be justified in His sight; *but now* a righteousness of God's own providing has shined forth, a righteousness which is expressly declared to be wholly “apart from law.”

Many who are Christians, at least in name, know nothing of the radical change effected by the death and resurrection of Christ. To them the economy of grace is a mere continuation of the economy of law, a mere enlargement of the bounds of Judaism to embrace all the nations of the earth. It needs, therefore, to be strongly emphasized that Christianity is *not* the extension of the law of Moses to peoples to whom that law was not originally given. On the contrary, Christianity is the end of the economy of the law altogether; because the law was given only *until the Seed should come* to whom the promise was made. (Gal. iii. 19). And now “Christ is the *end of the law* for righteousness to every one (*i.e.*, every Israelite) that believeth (Rom. x. 4).

A similar radical change of conditions is marked by the words: “But now,” in Rom. vii. 6; and again by the same words in Acts xvii. 30. So also in Eph. ii. 1-3 we have a condensed statement of the condition of all mankind, Gentiles (“wherein in time past *ye* walked”) and Jews (“among whom also *we*”) as being under the dominion of the world, the flesh and the devil; but then comes the marvelous change introduced by the words “But God.”

And once more, in Hebrews ix., we have a reference to the old economy with its fruitless sacrifices, whose constant repetition bore witness to their imperfection, and which could not purge the conscience of the offerer (ver. 7-10); “*But Christ being come*” (ver. 11), there is a complete change, not only in the character of the sacrifice, *but in the results*. For He appeared, at His first coming, “to put away *sin* by the sacrifice of Himself,” and was “once offered to bear the *sins* of the many” (ver. 26, 28).

We see, therefore, that it is important to the understanding of God's ways with man that we should take note of the immense difference effected by the proclamation to the world of God's Gospel concerning His Son, which difference is marked by the words “But now.”

For our greater convenience in studying the passage before us we give here a literal rendering of Rom. iii. 21-26, taken from Bagster's “Englishman's Greek N.T., with literal Translation.”

“But now, apart from law, RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD has been manifested, being borne witness to by the law and the prophets; RIGHTEOUSNESS EVEN OF GOD through faith of Jesus Christ towards all and upon all those that believe: for there is no difference; for all sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified gratuitously by His grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth a mercy-seat, through faith in His blood; for a showing forth of HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS in respect of the passing by of the sins which had before taken place in the forbearance of God; for the showing forth of His RIGHTEOUSNESS in the present time for His being just and justifying him that is of the faith of Jesus.”

It seems clear that the thought to which the Spirit of God gives prominence in this passage is – not the justifying of the unrighteous, – but GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS in justifying those who are of the faith of Jesus. God's righteousness is mentioned four times in this short passage (which fact has been made conspicuous by the use of capital letters) showing clearly that this is the matter which, in the mind of the Spirit, is of chief importance. It is not the kindness of God nor the mercy of God, nor the love of God in the remission of sins, to which attention is here directed; but we are specially and emphatically called upon to contemplate God's *righteousness* in, and while, justifying the unrighteous.

We would lay all possible stress upon the fact that what is of the greatest importance in God's sight is, not that the sinner should be justified, but that God, in justifying him, “*might Himself be just*” (Am. R.V.). We are prone to seize eagerly upon what is for ourselves, and in so doing to overlook or to slight what is for God. The point, therefore, that is of the highest importance is that God, in whatever He does, is righteous, and that we, His redeemed and pardoned creatures, should recognize this, as David did in saying: “Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done evil in Thy sight: that THOU MIGHTEST BE JUSTIFIED when Thou speakest, and CLEAR WHEN THOU judgest” (Ps. li. 4). The Epistle, therefore, gives prominence to God's Righteousness, whether in *judging* the guilty who refuse His mercy (“the righteous *judgment* of God” – Rom. ii. 5), or in *justifying* those that are of the faith of Jesus (iv. 26).

The whole period of time over which God's righteous justification of believing sinners extends is here divided into two parts. Mention is first made of the sins “that are past.” When God, in Old Testament times, through His *forbearance*, remitted the sins of those who believed on Him, He did it in view of the righteous ground that was thereafter to be established by the blood shedding of the spotless Lamb of God; and our attention is called to this fact. Then His righteousness “in the present time” is mentioned, in that *now* “in the present time,” He can Himself be just, and at the same time the Justifier of the believing sinner.

And what is the ground on which God has righteously in the past remitted sins: and is righteously in the present remitting them? The answer to this question is, I fear, obscured to many readers of the A.V. by the long word “propitiation” – a word that is usually hurried over in reading because regarded as a hard theological term whose meaning is too profound to be apprehended by the ordinary unlearned reader. The meaning is indeed profound, though scarcely less so to the most learned than to the most simple; but the substance of the great and blessed fact which is here declared can be readily apprehended by all. In seeking the truth here presented we may obtain substantial aid by referring to the only other passage in the New Testament where the word, which is here rendered “propitiation,” occurs. That passage is Hebrews ix. 5. A brief

description is there given of the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle, “the Holiest of all,” which contained as its most conspicuous object the Ark of the Covenant, wherein was the golden pot that held the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; “And over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the MERCY-SEAT.” The word here translated “MERCY-SEAT” is the same word translated “propitiation,” in Rom. iii. 25, and is the only other occurrence of that word in the N.T. The English word “propitiation” occurs in 1 John ii. 2; but it is there given as the rendering of a different Greek word, so that it need not be here taken into consideration.

Therefore, the passage before us teaches that God's righteousness in justifying the sinner who is of the faith of Jesus, is inseparably connected with and dependent upon His setting forth of Christ Jesus *as a mercy-seat*. This puts before us the foundation truth of Redemption. The superlative importance of that truth will justify (and will amply repay) any amount of time we may devote to the study of it. The use of this word, moreover, links the Gospel of the grace of God directly with the central doctrine of the Old Testament Scriptures – the doctrine that was taught to Adam and Eve immediately after their transgression, the doctrine that was emphasized in God's dealings with Cain and Abel, and that was incorporated in all the sacrifices of the Mosaic law – namely, that *without the shedding of blood there is no remission*.

We thus learn that when God sets forth His Son as an Object of faith for those under the condemnation of sin, He sets Him forth as a Mercy-seat. We should therefore inquire of the Old Testament Scriptures just what the Mercy-seat is. In the description given in Exodus xxv. 17-22, two features of the Mercy-seat are prominently mentioned. It was to be of “pure gold,” and was to be of certain dimensions. The gold expresses the Divinity of the true Mercy-seat, and the dimensions speak clearly of the *strict limitations* which God sets to His saving grace. It is all very well to say: “There's a wideness in God's Mercy,” but it is much better to understand clearly what is signified by the words “two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.” God's mercy is, indeed, wide enough to take in every sinner who contritely presents himself at the appointed Mercy-seat, *but it extends no further than that*. The limits are divinely established and are unalterable.

Above the mercy-seat were to be two cherubim, one at each end, their wings outstretched, thus, as said in Heb. ix. 5, “shadowing the mercy-seat.” Then we read the words of the LORD saying, “And THERE I will meet with thee, and will commune with thee FROM ABOVE THE MERCY-SEAT, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony.”

The principal lesson which this Scripture teaches us is that the Mercy-seat is *the place* which God has appointed, at which He will in grace meet the sinner. It is blessed to know that there is a place, accessible to the sinner, where God will meet him, not in the judgment which he deserves, but in the mercy which he does not deserve; and it is of the very highest importance for the sinner to understand where that place is, and to know that there is *NO other place*.

When, therefore, we read that God has set forth His Son *a Mercy-seat*, we are to understand that to Him, the Son of God, the sinner must come for the mercy of God. The Lord Jesus stated this truth in the words: “No man cometh unto the Father but by Me” (John xiv. 6); and it has been made very familiar to us by such clear passages as “Neither is there salvation in any other” (Acts iv. 12), and “There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim. ii. 5). It is to be noted that of old time the mercy-seat was concealed; but now, the true Mercy-seat has been *It set forth*,” and is approachable by all.

To learn the mode of approach to the mercy-seat we must turn to Lev. xvi. There we find (ver. 14, 15) that the blood of the sin-offering, which was slain outside the Holy Place, was taken into the same by the high priest, and sprinkled once *on* the mercy-seat (probably signifying the *one* offering of Christ) and seven times *before* it (probably signifying the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ).

The important points of this lesson are, *first*, that the mercy-seat was hidden in the Holy of Holies from the view of the sinner who desired to approach God; and, *second*, that the mercy-seat bore the mark of the blood of the sin-offering. No other use was made of the mercy-seat but to receive the application of the blood. This is interpreted to us in the 9th of Hebrews, where it is written: "But into the second (sanctuary) went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while as the first tabernacle was yet standing... *But Christ being come* an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say not of this building (creation); neither by the blood of bulls and goats, but by His own blood He entered in once (*i.e.*, once for all, not repeatedly) into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (ver. 7, 8, 11, 12).

This "eternal redemption" which Christ the Son of God thus obtained is "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," referred to in Rom. iii. 24, through (or on account of) which God righteously justifies all who are of the faith of Jesus. This redemption is in Christ – nowhere else; and the price of it is the shedding of His own blood. For in Him "we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins" (Eph. i. 7).

The doctrine, stated in few words, is this : Jesus Christ, the true Mercy-seat, is in heaven, and being thus hidden from view is an object of faith. He has entered there *with His own blood*, the proof of the offering of His human life as a sacrifice – (His *psuche* not *zoe*, see John x. 11, 15, 17). The sinner whom God justifies is the sinner who has faith in the virtue of that blood, that is to say, in the sufficiency of the offering of Christ as an atonement for his sins; for such a one is justified "through faith in His blood."

The 9th of Hebrews, from which we have already quoted, tells us that Christ offered Himself UNTO GOD, and that for this reason He is the Mediator of a new covenant in order that, *by means of death*, for the *redemption* of the transgressions which took place under the first covenant, they that are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance (ver. 15). God has declared the sufficiency of this offering by raising Christ up from among the dead and seating Him at His own right hand; so it is for the sinner, to whom the Gospel is preached, to rest his confidence in the merit of that sacrifice. Those who do so are said to be "of the faith of Jesus"; for they trust wholly in the merit of His precious blood for the forgiveness of their sins and for their acceptance with God. The argument urged upon the Hebrews, who were able to appreciate its force, since they knew the value of the blood of bulls and goats to effect a ceremonial cleansing, was expressed thus: "For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; *how much more* shall the blood of Christ, Who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. ix. 13, 14).

This expresses God's estimate of the value of the blood of Christ, not indeed as stating the value of that which is beyond all computation and all verbal statement, but as declaring its sufficiency – and “much more “ – as a basis for the righteous justification of all who meet God *at the place appointed by Him* From the statement that Christ offered Himself *to God*, it follows that God's act in giving to His Son (see John vi. 37, 39; xvii. 6, etc.) those whose sins He bore, and for whom He prays, is an act of *righteousness to Christ*. The price was ample, so that God is “righteous” in giving to His Son all who come to Him; and His declared purpose with reference to them is that of all whom the Father has given Him, He should “lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day “(John vi. 39); or as stated in John xvii. 2: “As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that *He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.*”

It is, of course, enough for faith that God has declared the value of the blood of Christ to be ample as affording a righteous ground for acquitting those who believe on Him; for who will question or doubt the estimate which God sets upon the merit of that offering? This should fully assure our hearts as to the ground upon which the forgiveness of our sins rests, and should fully satisfy us that no question of our guilt can ever be raised against us. Having, therefore, *boldness in consequence of the blood of Jesus* to enter into the holiest by the new and living way which He has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say His flesh, we may draw near *with full assurance of faith* (Heb. x. 19-22).

Some unspiritual persons, who view the atonement of Christ as if it were a commercial transaction, have asked how it is possible that the sufferings of one person during a comparatively short period could suffice to save multitudes of sinners from eternal perdition. In this connection it is sometimes remarked that other men have endured with much fortitude physical sufferings as great as those of Christ. It is, of course, impossible for us to form the faintest conception of what Christ suffered when “made sin for us” (2 Cor. v. 21). This is a mystery into which we may not enter. But to such suggestions as the foregoing it is sufficient to say that the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ derives its value, not so much from the severity of His sufferings, as from *the excellence of His Person*. In order to appreciate the value of His sacrifice one must learn, not what He suffered, but *Who He is*. The value of the sacrifice lies in the Person of the Victim. Realizing this, we know that the value is ample. This indeed is the “better sacrifice.” “For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. x. 4). Other men may indeed have endured, and often with admirable fortitude, the pains of a slow and agonizing death, “BUT THIS MAN, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God” (Heb. x. 12).

Here then we have the answer to the question, how can God in perfect righteousness, justify [declare righteous] those who by nature and practice are unrighteous? The “innocent blood” bears witness in heaven that the just (Righteous) One has suffered for the unjust (unrighteous), so that God can righteously clear the latter. This is the ground, and the only possible ground (seeing that God is a righteous God) upon which sins may be forgiven.

Having now ascertained the ground upon which God justifies the sinner by the putting away or removal of his sins, we may understand why the announcement of the forgiveness of sins occupies so prominent a place in the Gospel proclamation. When the Lord, after His resurrection, opened the understanding of His disciples that they might understand the necessity for His sufferings and resurrection, He said: “Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and

to rise from the dead the third day; and that *repentance and remission of sins* should be preached in His Name among all nations “(Lu. xxiv. 46, 47).

Repentance, that is a complete change of attitude towards God (which change is the expression of faith) and the forgiveness of sins, are the prominent items of the proclamation which God has sent forth by His messengers to all nations; and the ground of the forgiveness by Him of the sins of those who believe, is the great truth of the sufferings and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Such is the message carried from place to place by the Apostle to the Gentiles: “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins*; and by Him *all that believe are justified* “ (Acts xiii. 38, 39). And this is still the Gospel of the grace of God.

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 16: *The Mercy-Seat*, pages 96-108

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### **The Mercy-Seat.** *(Continued.)*

God has set forth His Son as a Mercy-seat. It is as the true Mercy-seat, upon which the blood of the spotless Lamb of God has been sprinkled, that *God sets forth His Son*, by the proclamation of His Gospel, to a world of unrighteousness and ungodly men. Let us earnestly endeavour to lay hold of the significance of this fact, because, in what passes for the preaching of the Gospel in this day, both the fact and its significance are almost wholly set aside. If God has presented His Son to sinners as a mercy-seat, it is a departure from the preaching of His Gospel – a departure radical in its nature and fatal in its consequences – to set Him forth in some other capacity, for instance as a teacher. or as an example. He is indeed *the Teacher* and *the Example*; but *not to unregenerate sinners*. To such Christ must be preached as the Mercy-seat; that is to say, as the One Who died for sinners and rose again. It is the crucified and risen Christ who has authority to put away sins and to bestow eternal life. The sinner who would come to God *must first of all* have dealings with Christ *about his sins*. Until they are dealt with and disposed of, that man is still an enemy of God, unpardoned and unreconciled. His first real knowledge of Christ must be through the forgiveness of his sins, and to that end he must learn the foundation truth which the Gospel proclaims, namely, “that Christ died *for our sins* according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4). This is God's Gospel concerning His Son; and the preaching of this Gospel is the setting forth of Christ as the Mercy-seat. Any other preaching, however eloquent it may be, and even though Christ be the topic of the discourse, leaves the sinner exactly as he was, dead in his sins. “If Christ be preached *that He rose from the dead*,” then there is new life for all who believe the preaching; but “if Christ be not risen,” or if He be not preached as risen, “then is our preaching vain.” “And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are *yet in your sins*. Then they also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished” (1 Cor. xv. 12-18).

We would lay the greatest stress upon the point now under consideration, for the tactics of the great Enemy and opposer of truth have in recent years assumed a most dangerous aspect. As the result of these new tactics church-going sinners are permitted to hear from unregenerate seminary graduates, and sometimes even from those who know the Gospel, discourses about Christ, His blameless life, His good deeds, His wonderful teachings, and even His self-sacrificing death-discourses which hold Him up to admiration from every point of view *except that of His suffering for the sins of others*, and which set Him forth in every admirable capacity *except that in which God has set Him forth*, namely, as the *blood-stained Mercy-seat*. We must be very clear and plain spoken at this point; for the fact is that in recent years many of the theological seminaries have been captured by the enemy, so that many of the preachers who are graduated yearly from these seminaries are men who do not themselves know Christ as the Mercy-seat, and who, therefore, cannot preach the Gospel of God. These men are not the ministers of Christ, for they do not bring His message. They are the ministers of Satan, disguised as ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. xi. 15), and most successfully are they accomplishing their master's work, however little they may be conscious of what they are doing.

The fact that the preaching now heard in the pulpits of many of our churches (city churches in particular, and the wealthy and prosperous churches most prominently of all) is radically different from what it was a generation or two ago, will be admitted on all sides. It will also be admitted that the difference consists mainly in the elimination of the fundamental doctrine of the Gospel of God, namely, the doctrine of the Mercy-seat, or in other words the doctrine of the sufferings of Christ for the sins of others. In fact, leading ministers in leading denominations, call attention, publicly and vociferously, *to this very change*, and hold it up to public admiration as progress in religious thought. Let us, then, not be deceived as to what has taken place. It is not that ministers of the Gospel have made a radical change in the character of their preaching. Ministers of Christ could not do otherwise than proclaim the message He commanded them to preach to all nations. And it is not that the opponents of the truth of Christ's death and resurrection have lost any of their hostility to this central doctrine of redemption. What has happened is that ministers of the Gospel are no longer tolerated in the churches of which we are speaking. Their congregations have adopted the thoroughly democratic practice of "heaping to themselves teachers" who teach what suits their "itching ears" (1 Tim. iv. 3). Hence, the preachers of the Gospel must, for the most part, deliver their Lord's message elsewhere than in church buildings. On the other hand, the preachers of other Gospels, which once railed from the outside at the churches and at the doctrines proclaimed in them, are now occupying the pulpits of those very churches, and are preaching from them, and to the entire satisfaction of the people by whom they have been "called," the pantheistic doctrines of Humanism. And not only so; but they are preaching those doctrines from Bible texts, and often in the very name of Christ.

The mischief done by the leaders of the progressive theology of our day, and by the doctrines they boldly proclaim, is not confined to their own congregations and to those who are directly exposed to their influence. They have also succeeded in corrupting the preaching of many who themselves know and believe the Gospel of God. But since these are forced, so long as they remain in their respective denominations, to fraternize with these enemies of Christ, and to recognize them as "brothers in the ministry," or perhaps even as "right reverend fathers in God," it is manifestly impossible for them to be faithful to the truth of the Gospel.

In the preaching and religious literature of the day Christ is often referred to as a great teacher, and His moral precepts are highly praised and commended to the favourable notice of the modern man. The latter is very critical, and he has, moreover, unbounded confidence in the soundness of his own judgment. It pleases him to be appealed to as one who is quite competent to pass upon the relative merits of the great teachers who have, at various epochs and in different parts of the earth, assumed to instruct their fellows in the principles of right conduct. The modern man much prefers a sermon which addresses him as a competent judge of ethics and solicits his approval of the teaching of Christ, to one which addresses him as a perishing sinner and warns him to flee from the wrath to come. And inasmuch as the modern man is in the habit of getting what he likes, there is a copious supply of sermons and religious literature of the sort mentioned above.

But it is vain to present Christ as a *teacher* to men who are wiser in their own conceit than all teachers. Moreover, sinners are not saved through assent to the moral precepts found in the teachings of the Lord Jesus, but solely, through faith in His blood." Therefore, God did not set forth His Son as the great Teacher of sinners, but as the "Mercy-seat," where the blood of the sin-offering has been sprinkled. It is not Jesus Christ the Teacher who saves sinners, but Jesus

Christ the Lamb of God, crucified by men, but raised up from among the dead by the mighty power of God, and seated at His own right hand in the heavenly places.

If Christ had lived a thousand years on earth teaching men the right way to live, and had in departing from the world left to it the legacy of a hundred volumes of His incomparable teachings, and had then returned to His Father without suffering the death of the cross, His teachings would not have availed to the salvation of a single soul.

What human beings lacked was not some one to tell them the difference between right and wrong. They knew that difference well enough, and Christ did not come to point it out. What they lacked was the *power* to refrain from evil and to do good. They needed, not some one to point out the path of righteousness, but one with *power* to keep them in it. In the condition of the people of the great Chinese empire we have an object lesson showing the utter futility of wholesome ethical teaching. The people of that most populous country on earth have had the benefit, for twenty-five centuries, of a code of ethics that is well nigh perfect, and they have been, moreover, for all that great stretch of time, secluded from extraneous corrupting influences. The result is a nation sunk in depravity, and ready, now that the barriers have been removed, to receive with eagerness and to add to their own stock of vices, those that flourish in our Western civilization.

It is vain then to point men to Christ as a teacher until they have come to know Him as a Saviour. Salvation comes first, discipleship afterwards. It is vain to commend Him to the unregenerate as “a teacher come from God.” One of old who came to Him with the words, “we know that thou art a *teacher come from God*,” was met instantly with a truth which put the sincerity of that profession to a decisive test: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man BE BORN AGAIN he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John iii. 3). Here, then, is the foundation of “the doctrine of Christ,” namely, that in order to enter into, or even to see, the kingdom of God it is necessary – not that a man give heed to good moral precepts, but – that he be “born again.” But those who laud Christ as a teacher come from *God* are generally careful to avoid, even if they do not go so far as to contradict, the plain *teachings* of Christ as to the absolute necessity for a new birth, and as to the necessity for the shedding of His own blood as the price of the redemption of sinners. These modern preachers express great admiration for the “Sermon on the Mount,” ignoring the fact that, in this discourse, Christ taught *His disciples* (Matt. v. 1, 2); but they do not press upon their hearers the foundation truths of redemption as taught by Him in such passages as “The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and *to give His life a ransom for many*” (Matt. xx., 28); and “This is My blood of the new covenant which is *shed for many for the remission of sins*” (Matt. xxvi. 28); and “Thus it behoved Christ to *suffer* and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and *remission of sins* should be preached in His Name” (Lu. xxiv. 46, 47): and “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone; but *if it die* it bringeth forth much fruit” (John xii. 24).

Again, it is common in the preaching of the day to commend the life of Christ in the days of His flesh as an example to be copied. God, however, does not set forth His Son as a pattern to sinners, and for the very good and sufficient reason that there is *no power* in them to copy that perfect Example. If human beings had before them the record of the life on earth of the Incarnate Son of God *as a pattern*, whereof whosoever should make a creditable copy might not perish, but have everlasting life – if that, we say, were the Gospel of God concerning His Son – it would be the proclamation of doom to every one. If that were the message, then the perfect life of the Man

of Galilee would be the despair of every child of Adam. But the clear word of God is that the Eternal Son became a partaker of flesh and blood, not that He might improve human nature, or set an example for corrupt men to copy, but “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, 15).

So we may say, concerning the earthly life of Jesus Christ, as we said concerning His teaching, that if, after having lived that perfect life He had laid aside His humanity and returned to the Father, without His sufferings and death upon the cross, He would not have saved a single soul.

Nothing could be further from the teaching of Scripture concerning the earthly life of Jesus Christ than the modern doctrines so widely promulgated, which make Him one of our common humanity, whose mission in the world was to be one of the leaders of the race in its progress towards ideal social conditions. The truth of Scripture is that the life and example of Jesus Christ is something that this world *could not tolerate*. So far from being received in the world as a leader He was violently thrust out of it, and denied *any* place in it. And the age whose “rulers” “crucified the Lord of Glory” (1 Cor. ii. 8) still rejects Him; for the “Jesus” who is preached as a fascinating leader of men and as social reformer, is not the Word made flesh and dwelling among us, but is “another Jesus” (2 Cor. xi. 4). In the Christ of God no beauty was seen, or is now seen, that men should desire Him. On the contrary, they hated Him, and yet do, with a murderous hatred. “This is the heir, come let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours,” is the counsel that prevailed with the leaders of this age. This counsel was fully carried out, and the inheritance is now in the hands of those who have derived their title from the murderers of the Heir. But soon their unlawful tenancy will be brought to an end, and He Whom God has “appointed Heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds,” and who when He had by Himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens (Heb. i. 2, 3) shall come to occupy the purchased possession. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than the truth that Jesus Christ has no part or lot whatever in this world, and that He is no longer a partaker of flesh and blood; and the reason why He is no longer a partaker of flesh and blood, and of the world, is that the man of flesh and blood has put Him to death in order to rid the world of His presence.

On the other hand, the doctrine of Scripture is that the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh, so far from being an *example* by means of which sinful men could make themselves fit for the presence of God, was in fact an *effectual barrier* preventing them from drawing near to Him. The flesh of Jesus Christ was the veil of the temple, which barred the way to God. Before a sinner could come unto God's presence it was necessary that a way should be consecrated “*through* the veil, that is to say, His flesh” (Heb. x. 20). It was not until the Lord Jesus had bowed His Head in death upon the cross that, by the act of God, “the veil of the temple was rent in twain *from the top to the bottom*” (Matt. xxvii. 50, 51). That the rending was from the top downwards shows that this was God's act. And what was the consequence? It was this, that through the rent veil the MERCY-SEAT WAS EXPOSED TO VIEW. The veil up to that time had hidden it; “but now,” by the rending of the veil, God had set forth His Son a Mercy-seat. The eyes of those who would approach God in faith see no longer the veil, that is Christ's perfect humanity of flesh and blood, shutting out the view of the holy place; but through the veil they may see the Mercy-seat, upon which has been sprinkled the blood of the spotless Victim that

flowed when that veil was rent. In this rending of the-veil we have the representation of the end of flesh and blood; for the death of Jesus Christ was the end of the only perfect Man of flesh and blood. It is evident that, so long as that One perfect Man of flesh and blood was in the world, it was utterly impossible that God could accept those whose *flesh* was corrupt and whose *blood* was vile and impure. "Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it *abideth alone*" (John xii. 24). From this we may also learn how, through that mighty transaction of the cross where the perfect human flesh was rent and the it precious "blood was spilt, the way has been prepared for a NEW HUMANITY, bom from the dead, who shall be partakers of the Nature of Him Who is the first begotten from the dead:" But if it die it bringeth forth much fruit."

This subject of the new humanity of the Second Man belongs to the fifth chapter of Romans, so we shall not pursue it further at present. What is now immediately before us is the Mercy-seat where God meets the sinner and puts away his individual sins; and the truth we wish to impress upon the minds of our readers is that, according to the Gospel of God, the Mercy-seat is now revealed to sinners through the rent veil of the flesh of Jesus Christ; whereas the popular modern preaching, which presents Christ as a man of flesh and blood, whose example is to be copied by other men of flesh and blood, virtually closes up the *only* way of approach to the Mercy-seat leaving the sinner to face the cherubim of judgment, which were wrought into the fabric of the veil, and which guarded the way of mercy and forgiveness, as the cherubim at Eden guarded the way to the tree of life (Gen. iii. 24). The preaching of Jesus Christ in His perfect humanity of flesh and blood as an example to corrupt men of flesh and blood, is thus a denial of the cross and resurrection of Christ, which are the foundations of redemption truth. It is in view of the fact that Christ "died" as a man of flesh and blood, "and rose again," a man of a new order, that the Apostle uses those impressive words: "Wherefore, henceforth know we no man *after the flesh*: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh (as some then living had) *yet now henceforth know we Him no more*. Therefore, if any man be in Christ there is a new creature (creation)" (2 Cor. v. 16, 17). We have nothing to do with the bettering of the old man and the old creation. The cross made an end of both before God, and the Risen Christ is "The Beginning" of a new humanity (Col. i. 18). "Old things are *passed away*" – not are undergoing repairs – "Behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ."

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 17: *The Jews*, pages 109-120.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### The Substance of “the Faith of Jesus.”

Thus far the Epistle to the Romans has given us instruction concerning believers, concerning faith, concerning the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, and concerning God as the justifier of those who are “of the faith of Jesus.” But now, in chapter iv., we are to receive more definite instruction on a very important point, namely, what *particular fact or thing* we are called upon to believe in order that we may be among those upon whom God puts His own righteousness. This point is explained by reference to the faith of Abraham, who is called in verse ii “the father of all them that believe”; and the substance of the teaching is that the faith which God looks for, and which, when found, He credits as righteousness on the account of the one who has it, is faith of the sort that Abraham manifested. This doctrine is based upon the written Word: “For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness” (ver. 3). The Scripture here cited is Gen. xv. 4-6, where we read that, at a time when Abraham was without offspring, and without natural expectation thereof, “*the Word of the Lord* came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir: but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them : and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. *And he believed in the LORD and He counted it to him for righteousness.*”

Passing by for the moment the lessons to be learned from consideration of the particular period in Abraham's life at which this “Word of the LORD” came to him, we would call special attention to the fact that the faith of Abraham which God counted for righteousness consisted in believing in the promise of God, and His power, *to quicken the dead* (ver. 17). At the time when this promise was given Abraham's body was “now dead” (ver. 19), or, as stated in Heb. xi. 12, “as good as dead” ; but Abraham was influenced in his belief, not by consideration of the impossibility of the fulfillment of the promise according to the natural course of events, but by faith in the power of God to act “according to that which was spoken,” though it was directly contrary to the natural course of events. Therefore, Abraham “staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that *what He had promised* He was able also to perform. And THEREFORE it was imputed to him for righteousness” (ver. 20-22).

Now let us particularly note that the record of this transaction was not written for Abraham's sake alone. Indeed it was not necessary for his sake that it should have been written at all, seeing that it was not written until more than four hundred years later. But it was it FOR US ALSO,” to whom it (righteousness) shall be imputed, or counted (lit., put to account), “if we believe on Him that RAISED UP JESUS OUR LORD FROM THE DEAD; Who was delivered up for our offences and was raised again for our justification” (ver. 23-25).

This is a very important statement, and its meaning should be clearly grasped. It plainly declares that what is required for the justification of the sinner is that he believe on the God *who raised up Jesus our Lord from among the dead*. According to this declaration, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, or, in other words, Jesus Christ in resurrection, is put into the central place in Christian doctrine. If that be denied, all is denied. If that be gone, all is gone. The

statement is practically the same as that given in Rom. x. 9, and there declared by Paul to be “*the Word of faith* which we preach,” namely, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thine heart *that God hath raised Him from the dead*, thou shalt be saved.”

The man of faith, therefore, hears and believes that the visible order of things is under judgment, and he rests his hope entirely upon the God who has raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead to be the Beginning of a new creation. Hence it is not enough to believe in God. What is required is definite belief in *the God of resurrection*, and specifically in the God Who has raised up Jesus Christ, Who was delivered up for our offences. It follows that whoever believes not in the actual resurrection of Jesus Christ lacks what is essential to saving faith, whatever else he may believe. But whoever believes the testimony of God by His Spirit in His Word, and the testimony of the “witnesses chosen before of God” (Acts x. 41), that God has raised up the One Whom men condemned and put to death, does, in so believing, take God's side with reference to Christ in His controversy with man and the world. And God imputes to that man His own righteousness, clearing him of all the consequences of his sins.

We do not mean to say that it is essential to salvation that the sinner's faith should be formulated in his own mind. He may be quite ignorant of the *doctrine* of saving faith, and yet have the faith itself. That comes first, and of course it comes unformulated. The understanding of the doctrine comes afterwards through study of the Word. The object of the *preaching* of the Gospel, as distinguished from the *teaching* of the Gospel, is to awaken in the sinner's conscience the sense of a need of forgiveness of sins, and to lead him to trust therefor in a living Saviour Who died on the cross, but Whom God raised from the dead. Where that faith in the risen Christ is found, God puts it to the possessor's account as righteousness.

We have seen that the essential characteristic of Abraham's faith was belief in God's Word that He would act directly contrary to the ordinary course of nature. By the ordinary course of nature, man passes from life into death. According to God's Word the whole and only hope of humanity rests upon His mighty act in bringing a Man out of death into endless and incorruptible life – in one word, upon the Resurrection. From this it is easy to understand the tactics of the enemy of mankind, in promulgating, in the name of “science,” the doctrine of the invariable uniformity of natural processes, and the unbreakable sequence of cause and effect in all natural phenomena. Thus a fundamental tenet of modern science is in direct opposition to the essential point of saving faith. Science declares that the course of nature cannot be interrupted, much less reversed. The Word of God declares for the obedience of faith among all nations, that the course of nature in its most inexorable movement *has been* reversed by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and that a similar reversal of the course of nature is the true and only hope of all believing sinners.

A widespread acceptance of the doctrine of the uniformity of nature and natural processes, or, in other words, that all things continue and go on as from the beginning of creation, was predicted as a special mark of the last days. These “last days” were to be characterized by the coming of those who scoff at miracles, men walking according to their own desires, instead of according to the Word of God, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as from the beginning of the creation “(2 Peter iii. 3, 4). The holders of this highly scientific doctrine, which Sir William Dawson happily characterized as “uniformitarianism,” are declared by the Apostle to be

“willfully ignorant,” there being abundant evidence that all things have not continued as from the beginning of creation.

In the chapter now under consideration (Romans iv.) our attention is called to the interesting fact that a large part of Abraham's life as a justified man was passed in uncircumcision. The important doctrine deduced from this fact is that justification is not dependent upon circumcision, or limited to those who received that rite. David describes the blessedness of the men to whom God imputeth righteousness, saying (in Ps. xxxii. i), “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” And the Apostle shows, by the record of God's dealings with Abraham, the pattern man of faith and the father of all believers, that “this blessedness” comes not upon the circumcision only, but upon the uncircumcision also, when the latter *walk in the steps* of the faith which Abraham had *being yet uncircumcised* (ver.6-12).

Moreover, the promise to Abraham that he should be the heir of the world was not to be fulfilled through, or by the operation and effect of, the law, but through the righteousness of faith. This must be so, for the reason that if they that are of the law be heirs faith is rendered void, or of no effect. Had God dealt with men on that basis, Abraham himself would have been excluded from the benefit of the promise, and so would Isaac and Jacob, and the twelve sons of Jacob as well, and all their descendants for four hundred years, because these all lived and died before the giving of the law of Sinai.

And not only so, but the effect of the giving of the law was not to produce righteousness. On the contrary, the law works out wrath. The effect of the law was to multiply transgressions; for where there is no law there is no transgression, there being nothing to transgress (ver. 13-15).

Therefore, the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham arises out of faith (*ek pisteos*) in order that it might be according to grace, to the end that the promise might not be dependent upon such a contingency as man's keeping of a law, but might be “sure to all the seed” of Abraham, not to that seed only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith (*ek pisteos*) of Abraham, who is the father of all of us who believe on the God of resurrection (ver. 16). There is immense comfort to be derived from this verse by observing how God has shaped His dealings with unrighteous man in such a way that the promise might have a “*sure*” foundation. It is no part of God's plan to leave the human soul in any doubt or uncertainty whatever as to its standing before Him. Uncertainty on this point can be due only to neglect of the Scriptures, which are given to us that we may “know *the certainty* of those things in which we have been instructed” (Lu. i. 4).

Thus the inspired record of God's dealings with Abraham is shown to embody the foundation of the doctrine that man is justified out of faith apart from works of law; for “To him that worketh not *but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness” (ver. 5).

There is to some minds an apparent conflict between the teaching of Paul in regard to justification and that given in the second chapter of James. It is commonly said that Paul teaches justification by faith, whereas James teaches justification by works. But neither of these statements is correct. We have tried to show that Paul does *not* teach that we are justified *by* our faith; and it is also quite clear that James does not teach that we are justified *by our works*. The much discussed passage in James ii. 14-26 does not unfold the doctrine of justification at all;

that is to say it does not go into the subject of God's work in declaring righteous the sinner who rests his faith for salvation upon the crucified and risen Christ. It tells us what true or *live* faith is, and in so doing quotes the same passage quoted by Paul, namely, "Abraham *believed God* and it was counted to him for righteousness" (James ii. 23). James appeals to Abraham's act in offering Isaac as being simply an evidence of his faith, proving that it was a real or live faith. Thus James and Paul are in full and obvious agreement in respect of the doctrine that faith *of the kind that Abraham had*, is counted in place of the righteousness which all men lack.

It is interesting and instructive to note that James refers to Abraham's act in offering up his son Isaac as the evidence of the fact that Abraham truly believed God. In Romans, however, the Holy Spirit speaks only of the promise upon which Abraham's faith, rested, and tells us that Abraham believed that promise.

The Spirit does not refer in Romans to the results of Abraham's faith, or the actions whereby its reality was attested, but only to the faith itself and the Word of the Lord by which it was produced – "According to *that which was spoken*, So shall thy seed be" (Rom. iv. 18). But from the Epistle of James we learn that, many years afterwards, Abraham was still resting upon that same Word of the Lord: "Accounting" (as stated in Heb. xi. 19) "that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." We thus see that true faith is vigorous and persistent, triumphing over all adverse circumstances.

It thus appears that the prominent feature of the lesson taught in James is that a real or *live* faith must manifest itself by shaping the conduct of the man who possesses it. If real faith be in the heart it will show itself outwardly in *works* of faith. Such was the case with Abraham, the pattern man of faith, who was in the most evident way justified before all men by his works, because these testified convincingly that his faith was real. In this sense a man is justified out of works and not out of faith *only* (or alone), that is, a faith which does not shape his course and mould his conduct. Such a faith is "dead," or, in other words, is not real faith. The first words of the passage under consideration (James ii. 14) give expression to this prominent feature of the lesson taught in James: "What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man SAY he hath faith and hath not works?" Manifestly, if the faith does not show itself in appropriate actions, as it did in Abraham's history, it is of no avail at all for a man to *say* he has faith. To say he has faith will not save him. He must really have it; and if he has it his conduct will give unmistakable evidence thereof. It is not enough for salvation to believe that there is one God (ver. 19). Many believe that, and yet their manner of life is wholly unaffected thereby. Demons believe that and tremble. But to believe in the heart upon the God Who raised up Jesus Christ from among the dead, thus acknowledging that crucified One as Saviour and Lord, is a very different matter. To believe *this* is to accept the whole doctrine of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to rest upon the sufficiency of His sacrifice of Himself as a ground upon which God can righteously forgive the sins of the believing sinner. To believe *this* is to accept, as a free and unmerited gift, God's pardoning love as proclaimed in *His* Gospel – the Gospel which He sends to sinful men. It would not avail demons to believe this Gospel, because it is not proclaimed to demons but to human beings. It is a message concerning the risen *Man*, Who AS MAN suffered for sinful *men*. In order to accomplish the work of salvation the Son of God took not the angelic nature, but became a partaker of flesh and blood. "For not indeed of angels does He take hold, but OF THE SEED OF ABRAHAM He takes hold" (Heb. ii. 16 Gr.). Therefore, they that are of the faith of Jesus Christ

are the children of Abraham (Gal. iii. 7). And these do the works of Abraham, *i.e.*, works of faith; because they have the faith of Abraham.

The Jews in the time of Christ's earthly life claimed to be the children of Abraham; but He said to them: "If ye were Abraham's children ye would *do the works of Abraham*" (John viii. 39).

The lesson taught in James' Epistle, namely, that faith without works is dead, being not real faith, is clearly implied in the teaching of Romans, because the faith there spoken of is real faith, to wit, the faith which Abraham had, and which shaped his whole life. There is no difference in this respect between the two portions of the Word which we are considering. In both it is clearly taught that the faith which God imputes for righteousness must be real or live faith; and live faith manifests itself, when the test is applied, in works *of faith*. The "works" which in Romans are spoken of as affording no basis for justification are not works of faith, but *works of law*. "Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith *apart from works of law*" (Rom. iii. 28 Gr.). It would be a fatal error to substitute works of law for faith. It would be equally fatal to mistake for live faith what is merely a mental assent to a creed or doctrine about God. Works without live faith are vain. Faith without works is *dead*. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that he remembered their "work of faith," which was the evidence to him that their faith was real. In Eph. ii. 8-10, after saying "by grace are ye saved through *faith, not of works* lest any man should boast," he declares that we are "created in Christ *unto good works*." Thus works apart from faith are vain, but faith is to be followed by works. And this appears just as clearly in the teaching of Paul as in that of James. Likewise in Titus iii. 5-8, Paul says: "Not by *works of righteousness* which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us"; and he follows this by saying: "and these things I will that thou affirm constantly that they which have *believed* in God might be careful to maintain *good works*."

Thus we see that the substance of what God requires men to believe upon the evidence of His Word is the fact of the resurrection of Him Whom the world cast out and nailed on the cross; and that this faith is a *Eve* thing which shapes the conduct of the man in whose heart it dwells, insomuch that he acts not according to appearances, but according to the promise of God, even though that promise can only be fulfilled by a reversal of the ordinary course of nature. The God on Whom Abraham believed is a God Who reverses the ordinary course of nature. which is from life to death. That faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness. And it will be imputed TO US ALSO if we believe on Him Who has reversed the course of nature in raising up Jesus our Lord from the dead, Who was delivered up for our offences, and was raised again for our being justified through Him (Rom. iv. 24, 25).

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

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By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### The Consequences of Justification.

It will doubtless be helpful to some readers to have at this point a concise summary of the teaching of Scripture on the important subject of *Justification*. The leading points of this great doctrine can be readily understood by the simple and unlearned. In this connection we shall refer again to Paul's sermon in the Jewish Synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, of which an account is given in Acts xiii. 16 – 41. In that notable discourse the preacher gives prominence to the subject of the death and resurrection of Christ, laying special emphasis on the fact that “God raised Him from the dead” (ver. 30). On the basis of that mighty work of power Paul proclaimed the “glad tidings” (the same word as that usually rendered “gospel”), namely, that “the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same IN THAT HE HATH RAISED UP JESUS AGAIN; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art My Son, this day I have begotten Thee” (ver. 32, 33). On the basis of the resurrection of Christ, Who, in fulfillment of Ps. xvi., “saw no corruption,” the preacher makes the following proclamation, which is of vital importance to all mankind: “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him *all that believe* (whether Jews or Gentiles) are justified from all things from which ye (Jews) could not be justified by the law of Moses” (ver. 38, 39).

These verses give us very clearly the essence of the teaching concerning justification as that subject is explained in Romans iii. and iv. The principle points are the following:

1. justification is God's act. “By Him all that believe are justified.”
2. The substance of the act of justification is *the forgiveness of sins*: “Be it known unto you that through this Man is preached unto you THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.” What is here in contemplation is the putting away of the sinful acts of the individual believer. It is the judicial clearing of a man from his wrongful acts, not *an acquittal* upon a verdict of “not guilty”; but a judicial decree declaring the penalty of the criminal's acts to have been fully paid, and every claim of justice against him satisfied. It is important to bear in mind that God's justice or righteousness is inflexible, and that by no possibility can the smallest sin be passed over without the exaction of the penalty that Divine justice, which is absolute and unerring, assigns to it.
3. Since the sinner can do nothing to procure for himself the decree of judicial satisfaction, that decree does not come *through himself*. It must be through another; and it can come through none but the risen Man, Jesus: “THROUGH THIS MAN is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.” He, and He alone, has endured the penalty for the sins of His redeemed people. “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust” (1 Peter iii. 18). “Christ died for our sins . . . and rose again the third day” (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4). “Who died for them and rose again” (2 Cor. v. 15). “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, *yea rather, that is risen again*, who is even at the right hand of God” (Rom. viii. 34). It should be carefully noted that the resurrection of Christ is made very prominent in those Scriptures which declare the ground of the forgiveness of sins. His resurrection from the dead to the right hand of God is the Divine proclamation to the universe that the claims of justice against those whose sins He bore have been fully met. Christ so completely assumed their sins that He “*must needs* have suffered” (Acts xvii. 3), and must

have suffered until the penalty thereof was fully paid. Hence, the position which Christ now occupies at the right hand of God is the proof and pledge of the favour in which the pardoned sinner stands before God. This will come before us again in considering the opening verses of chapter v.

4. It follows from what has just been said that justification is a complete work, clearing the sinner from the consequences of *all* his sins. He is “justified from ALL THINGS.”

5. The sufferings of Christ for sins are effective only to those who believe: “By Him ALL THAT BELIEVE are justified from all things.”

Having now, in chapters iii. and iv., unfolded the great subject of God's righteousness in clearing the unrighteous from all his unrighteousness, the Apostle pauses, at the beginning of chap. v., to point out some of the immediate consequences of justification. “Therefore, having been *justified* by faith, we, have *peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The first and most blessed consequence of being justified is peace with or towards God. In addition we, through Him, have “access by faith into this grace wherein we stand”; and, moreover, “we rejoice upon hope of the glory of God.” In addition to all this “the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us.” Here then are the immediate consequences of justification from sins: Peace with God, a standing in grace, joy at the hope of the glory of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Righteousness is immediately followed by *peace*, and that by *joy* in the Holy Ghost. Other Scriptures testify to this. “The work of *righteousness* shall be *peace*; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever” (Is. xxxii. 17). In Psalm lxxxv. 7-11, where God's salvation is the theme, we read: “I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for He will speak *peace* unto His people . . . . Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him. . . . Mercy and truth are met together; *righteousness* and *peace* have kissed each other. *Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.*” In James iii. 18, it is written: “The fruit of *righteousness* is sown in *peace* of them that make peace.”

In chap. xiv. ver. 17 of the Epistle to the Romans, we read: “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but *righteousness, peace* and *joy* in the Holy Ghost.” It may be said, then, that the happy man whose sins are forgiven and whose iniquities are covered by the blood of Christ, is brought at once into the kingdom of God. No longer an enemy, and so no longer excluded from God's kingdom, he having been justified from his sins enters into the domain over which God rules, and into the benefit of the essential characteristics of that domain, namely, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Again, in chap. xv. ver. 13, is a prayer for the Gentile converts, based on the prophecies cited in the preceding verses (“Rejoice ye Gentiles with His people.” “Praise the Lord all ye Gentiles,” etc.): “Now the God of hope fill you with all *joy* and *peace* in *believing*, that ye may abound in hope *through the power of the Holy Ghost.*” In *believing* (from which comes justification) we may be *filled* with *all joy* and *peace*; and may not only rejoice upon hope of the glory of God, but may *abound* in hope “through the power of the Holy Ghost.” For hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is poured out in our hearts *by the Holy Ghost.*

Again, in Heb. vii. we find the subjects of righteousness and peace associated together, and both connected with the one offering of Christ for sins and His entrance by resurrection into

heaven as our great High Priest. The “hope” which we have is as an anchor of the soul, and it “enters into that which is *within the veil*, whither as a forerunner Jesus is entered for us, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. vi. i8-2o). Then it is pointed out in the opening verses of chap. vii., that this Melchisedec, King of Salem, is first “by interpretation King of *Righteousness*, and after that also King of Salem, which is the King of *Peace*.” He is the one who comes forth, without human ancestry or descendants, beginning of days or end of life, to bless *Abraham, the father of all believers*. This great personage, shown by verses 7-10 to be greater than Abraham, stands for Christ, the Son of God, who continues ever, having an unchangeable priesthood, in consequence of which “He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (ver. 24, 25). The fifth of Romans likewise carries us on to this same truth in verse 10, where we read, “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be *saved by His life*”; that is, by His life in resurrection power, and His unfailing intercession.

Thus the great fact of justification from our sins on the righteous ground that Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, suffered for them, and has been raised from among the dead to the place of highest honour, is linked with immediate blessings, of inestimable value. Into these, our present possessions, we would inquire somewhat further in the chapters that follow.

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 19: *The Consequences of Justification*, pages 133-138.

By Philip Mauro

Originally Published by Fleming H. Revell Company, Publisher

## CHAPTER XX.

### **Peace with God.**

The first message of the resurrection is peace with God – settled, firm, everlasting peace, resting upon the enduring foundation of the sacrifice and sufferings of Christ. His first word to His disciples when He appeared in their midst after His resurrection was “Peace”; and then He sent them forth with the word of reconciliation to proclaim forgiveness of sins (John xx. 21-23). Moreover, He brought them *joy*; for we read: “Then were the disciples *glad*, when they saw the Lord” (ver. 20). Peace and joy were theirs in consequence of resurrection made known to them; and also the gift of the Holy Ghost, for “He breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” “Having MADE PEACE by the blood of His cross” (Col. i. 20), He came in person and “proclaimed peace,” not only to those who were near, His Jewish disciples, but to them that were afar off, *i.e.*, Gentiles (Eph. ii. 17). This is in fulfillment of the promise of Is. lvii. 19, “I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord.”

This is the message of peace that falls so sweetly, and with such assurance upon the believer's ear, when he learns that his sins have been put away, and justly put away, in view of the value of the blood of the cross. There are some things that are said to be too good to be true. But this message of peace is too good not to be true. No one but Him who *is* true could have originated such a message.

Man in his natural state is at enmity with God, and remains an enemy until the great work of his justification has been accomplished. For it is a man's sins that make him the enemy of God. The commission of offences necessarily constitutes the one who commits them the enemy of him to whom he is accountable for them. The criminal is of necessity an enemy of the law, and of the legally constituted authority; and he would, if it were in his power, abolish the law, even by resort to violence. So the sinner is the enemy of God, and would by any means, even by violence, get rid of God. That state of enmity must continue until the sins which caused it have been put away; and since God alone can put them away, and since He cannot do it except it be done in absolute righteousness, the removal of man's enmity is seen to depend upon the provision of a foundation whereon God can righteously remit the sinner's offences. The removal of the enmity and the new condition or relations resulting therefrom, is called in Scripture RECONCILIATION.

There are three long words used in the portion of Romans that we have been studying, concerning the meaning of which many readers of Scripture have a very confused or inadequate notion. These words are justification, Propitiation, and Reconciliation. The two first have been explained, and we now come to the third, the meaning of which is very easy to grasp. The act of reconciliation is spoken of in Scripture as having been accomplished both for persons and things. Scripture assumes, as is plain enough, that the world-including both persons and things-had gotten out of its proper relations with God. The act of bringing back a thing into its proper relations or adjustment is called “reconciliation.”

Man, being by nature the enemy of God, can secure peace with God only through being reconciled; and this is effected through the death of the Son of God : “When we were ENEMIES

we were RECONCILED to God THROUGH THE DEATH OF HIS SON” (Rom. v. 10). “Having abolished in His flesh THE ENMITY . . . for to make in Himself of twain (Jew and Gentile) one new man, so MAKING PEACE; and that He might RECONCILE BOTH UNTO GOD in one body BY THE CROSS, having slain the enmity thereby.” (Eph. ii. 15, 16). These passages need no elucidation, for they tell us plainly that man is naturally the enemy of God, and that the effect of Christ's death upon the cross is to remove the enmity, so that – the cause of the enmity being removed – man might have peace with God, and all the blessings resulting therefrom. The enmity then is gone, because its cause is gone. What became of it? Christ has removed it. How? He abolished it in His flesh. He has slain it in His cross. Man's enmity against God has expended itself upon the Holy One of God. It has done its utmost, He having placed Himself unresistingly in the hands of God's enemies, and they having done to Him whatever they would.

And now it rests with the individual man, to whom the Gospel of forgiveness and removal of sins (the cause of enmity), is proclaimed, whether he will or will not *receive* the reconciliation. For men are free to reject the reconciliation if they will, and to remain in enmity through refusal of the offer of remission of sins. Those, however, who have been justified, have entered into the blessed state of peace with God, having now “*received the reconciliation*” (Rom. v. 11). (In this verse the word “reconciliation” is, unfortunately, rendered “atonement” in the A.V.).

The doctrine of reconciliation is so little understood that we often hear it said that God has been reconciled to us in the death of His Son. But this idea involves exactly the reverse of the teaching of Scripture in regard to reconciliation. It is nowhere taught or suggested that God has been reconciled to man by the death of Christ; and, indeed, that could not be, seeing that God never was the enemy of man. The enmity between God and man is wholly on *man's* side. Man by his sins fell out of his right relations with God; but God never departed from His right relations with man His goodness extends to all; “For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. v. 45). So far from being the enemy of sinners, it was for such that God gave His own Son. It is written that He loved us with His great love even *when we were dead in sins* (Eph. ii. 4, 5); and He commends His love toward us in that “while we were *yet sinners*, Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8).

Every passage of Scripture in which reconciliation is mentioned speaks of it as the reconciliation of either persons or things to God. In none of them is there the suggestion of God being reconciled to His creatures. As these passages are few in number they can be quickly reviewed.

The first passage is Rom. v. 10, 11: “For if when we were enemies we were *reconciled* to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the *reconciliation*” (R. V.). We need not comment further on this passage. The next is 2 Cor. v. ig, 20: “Therefore, if any man be in Christ, there is a new creation. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, *Who hath reconciled us to Himself* by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the *ministry of reconciliation*; to wit, that God was in Christ *reconciling the world unto Himself*, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us *the word of reconciliation*. Now then we are ambassadors for (on behalf of)

Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD.”

In this passage the blessedness of the new creation is referred to, wherein all things are in their right relations with God. Thus the work of the cross is declared to be the foundation of blessing to all creation. The ministry or service of reconciliation was the work given to Paul, and to all who are called to labor in the Gospel, whereby those on whose behalf the reconciliation has been effected may learn the good news, and enter into the benefits of that work. The “word (*logos*) of reconciliation” which was committed to (or, literally, was put into) Paul, embraces the entire teaching, on this subject which is unfolded only in his writings. The substance of the doctrine is that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, but, on the contrary, imputing righteousness to all who believe. This passage shows that men may, if they will, refuse the service of reconciliation, and reject the word of reconciliation. The attitude of God towards sinners is beautifully revealed in this passage. He does not threaten men with the consequences of refusing the benefit of the work of the cross, but, on the contrary, He sends ambassadors *beseeking* them to be reconciled to God. It should be noticed that the doctrine of reconciliation presented in this passage is, as elsewhere, directly based upon the fact of the death and resurrection of Christ (ver. 14, 15).\*

\* It has been suggested to the writer that the words, “Be ye reconciled,” were addressed to the saints at Corinth, who, though they had been reconciled to God, were not exemplifying practical reconciliation in their ways. This suggestion is worthy of careful consideration.

The next passage is Eph. ii. 14-17, to which a brief reference has already been made: “For He is our *peace*, Who hath made both (Jew and Gentile) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so *making peace*; and that He might *reconcile both unto God* in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” From this passage we learn that one result of reconciliation is to abolish the separating wall that had existed for fifteen hundred years between Jews and Gentiles; and to obliterate all distinctions, solidly uniting into one body all who receive the word of reconciliation.

The next (and last) passage is Col. i 20-22: “And *having made peace* through the blood of His cross, by Him to *reconcile all things unto Himself*; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and *enemies in your mind* (or in mind) by wicked works (i.e., as a consequence of your evil deeds), yet *now hath He reconciled* in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in His sight.” In this passage we see the work of reconciliation, effected by Christ upon the cross, extending to embrace *things* in earth and *things* in heaven. This statement brings forcibly before us the derangement of the material creation, whose “things” are not being used according to the mind of God, nor to His glory, nor the furtherance of His purposes. We do not know to what uses the things in the heavenly places are being put by the hosts of wicked spirits that are there; but we can clearly see that men, who have now the free handling of “things in the earth,” are actively manipulating them, to their great satisfaction, in the attempt to make the world a delightful place for unreconciled sinners to live in. But all this mishandling of God's things will soon come to an end; and when the whole creation shall have been brought into the state of reconciliation, and when peace shall be established for ever through the work of the cross, then we shall learn the

real purposes for which, in the wisdom of God, the things in earth and things in heaven were created.

These are the passages that speak expressly of reconciliation. The word occurs once more in the AN, namely, in Heb. ii. 17 – “to make reconciliation for the sins of His people”; but the word there should be “propitiation,” as in the RX., being the verb from the. word that occurs in 1 John ii. 2.

The fact of reconciliation, and the ground upon which it is established, are clearly set forth in Is. liii. 5, although the word itself does not there occur. We there read that “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; *the chastisement of our peace was upon Him*; and with His stripes we are healed.”

It would not be possible to overstate the value of the doctrine of Reconciliation, based upon the work of the cross. The scope of reconciliation is more comprehensive than that of salvation. The latter signifies the recovery of human beings from the consequences of the corruption caused by the transgression of Adam, as well as their recovery from the consequences of their individual sins. Reconciliation signifies the perfection of the *entire creation* by the bringing of every part into its proper relations with God and with every other part.

As we look out upon the world of our daily experience we see, in every direction, the evidences of derangement. In every part of creation there are discords, struggles, and sufferings. “The *whole creation* groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Rom. viii. 22). The evidences of this derangement are more conspicuous among human beings than elsewhere. Men struggle against each other and against nature. Generation after generation goes down into the grave, but the struggle continues, with no end in sight. Nations compete against each other for territory, influence, and commerce; and they almost bankrupt themselves in arming for the protection of what they have acquired, and the acquisition of greater trade advantages and the like. Their very existence as nations is constantly menaced by the efforts of their neighbours to improve their own position. In like manner, individuals and combinations of individuals compete with each other in a struggle wherein the gain of one is the loss of another. Human society, instead of being an harmonious body, wherein every member contributes to the health and well-being of every other, is a mass of discordant and warring elements.

This condition of humanity, wherein the masses drag out a wretched existence in order that the favoured few may enjoy the temporal advantages which wealth confers, is not one that exists by reason of choice, but of necessity ; for the ideal of a consolidated humanity is one whose attainment is earnestly sought by the ruling majorities of our democratic era. The persistent efforts to establish peace, and their conspicuous failure, testify strongly to the fact that something has happened to produce a *fatal derangement* of the relations of human beings. In the record of Scripture, which tells of the departure of the human family from its right relations with God, we have an adequate explanation of this condition, and there is no other explanation that will account for the facts. The derangement of the relations between men and God necessarily introduced confusion, conflict and suffering into human society, and affected injuriously the relations between man and man. The pressing social need, therefore, is-not the control of the “trusts,” or equal opportunity, or the abolition of ownership of land, or universal education, or international arbitration of disputes, but – RECONCILIATION.

It is also easy to see that the relations between human beings and other creatures have become deranged. Man does not properly govern and care for the lower animals, and they do not trust him or submit willingly to his control and direction. Fishes, birds, insects and wild animals are wholly beyond the sphere of human control.

And since there is no central authority capable of governing the animal kingdom, the different species are at war among themselves, and prey one upon another. Many living organisms are in such a state of lawlessness that they are known solely as the causes of more or less virulent diseases.

We have, however, become so accustomed to this unhappy condition of competition, confusion and suffering, that we are prone to regard it as the normal state of things; but a little consideration should enable us to realize that this condition of universal derangement among living creatures, and the impotence of man to control and protect the creatures that are beneath him in the scale of being, is beyond question an abnormal condition, the result of some catastrophe sufficiently great and far-reaching as to throw everything in the scene about us into disorder.

Then again, the relations existing between mankind and *inanimate* creation testify clearly to the same state of derangement. Man's knowledge of the world and the things in it is so very small, in comparison with what he does *not* know concerning them, that his condition in that regard is (notwithstanding his boasted progress and sciences) one of almost total ignorance. He is even in constant physical peril because of his ignorance and misuse of the materials and forces of nature, and his control over inanimate and unintelligent nature is so very slight and precarious as to show that he has clearly failed to attain the imperial position for which his intellectual superiority seems to have fitted him.

In the normal state of a physical organism composed of many parts every member contributes to the well-being of every other. The welfare of the entire body depends upon the harmonious relations between all its members. The dislocation of one member throws the whole body into confusion, introducing suffering and, it may be, causing death. Thus we find, upon exercising our powers of observation, that the condition of the visible creation is just such as would result from a general derangement of its various parts. Therefore, the chief need of the world, as of human society, is *Reconciliation*. This need God has undertaken to supply, for we learn from the Scriptures that the foundation for complete reconciliation of every deranged part and element of creation has already been laid in the blood of the cross of Christ. Thus we are assured that the new creation will be established upon a secure foundation, not upon creature responsibility, but upon reconciliation effected by the death of Christ. Hence it will not be liable to derangement through sin and death. Christ came to *put away sin* (Heb. ix. 26), and to *abolish death* (2 Tim. i. 10); and through the effect of the blood of His cross all things in the new creation are eternally secured. It was to this end that He tasted death "for every thing" (Heb. ii. 9 Gr.).

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**GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 20: *Peace with God*, pages 139-150.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### **Standing, Access, and Rejoicing.**

We have dwelt at length upon the subject of the peace with God into which the believing sinner enters as the immediate result of his justification from sins, and we have done so because the Scriptures make much of this subject. It is highly important for the pardoned sinner to understand the radical change that has taken place in his relation towards God; but it must be acknowledged that, for lack of proper teaching, many of God's children are left in utter ignorance as to this. No greater change of personal relations can be imagined than that from enmity to friendship; and this is precisely the character of the change which justification effects in the relation of the sinner towards God. Those whom God has justified and who were by nature His enemies become now His friends. They are the children of Abraham, and he had the unique distinction of being "called the Friend of God" (James ii. 23, 2 Chron. xx. 7; Is. xli. 8).

Another immediate result of justification is a new "standing." "By whom (Christ) also we have access by faith into *this grace wherein we stand.*" As sinners our standing was in disgrace; as pardoned and reconciled to God by the death of His Son our standing with God is in grace, that is to say, in favour. Through accepting the reconciliation effected by the work of the cross, the sinner stands where God can deal with him in grace. God *is* a gracious God, or God of grace (Ex. xxii. 27; 1 Peter ii. 3), and He desires to *be* gracious unto all. But God cannot act in grace towards those who refuse the salvation which His grace has provided. The first act of grace which the sinner experiences must of necessity be the forgiveness of his sins. "By grace ye are saved." So long as those sins remain, God cannot be gracious. As to all who refuse the gift of God's Son, He is waiting to be gracious. "Therefore will the Lord wait that He may be gracious unto you." (Is. xxx. 18). But once the sins are put away, then God's desire to be gracious is unrestrained; for the justified sinner has now a standing in the sphere or domain of grace, being in "Christ," where God can now do any thing, for him; for "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not WITH Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32).

Here again, justification works a radical change of condition – a change from a standing in condemnation to a standing in grace. As unreconciled sinners what confronted us was a throne of judgment (Rev. xx. 11, 12). As justified by the blood of Christ and reconciled by His death, we are privileged to come freely to a throne of grace (Heb. iv. 16).

The subject of grace is a great and blessed one, but we cannot here discuss it at length. In the passage before us it is referred to as a new sphere into which the pardoned sinner is introduced in consequence of the forgiveness of his sins. In verse 21 it is spoken of as a sphere in which grace reigns. Those who have thus been brought into the sphere wherein the grace of God operates are exhorted to grow therein (2 Peter iii. 18). Admission into that sphere is the act of God; but once brought into the sphere of grace we may and should grow therein.

Christ is the door that admits us into the grace of God. "By whom also we have access into this grace": and entrance thereinto is "by faith," not by works of law. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John i. 17). In the Apostolic greeting grace

is specially associated with the Lord Jesus Christ, as love is associated with the Father, and fellowship with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. xiii. 14). The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is manifested in that though He was rich beyond all our power of comprehension, yet He willingly impoverished Himself, in order that, through His poverty, we might be enriched. “For ye know *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich (2 Cor. viii. 9). The grace which thus enriches us is “sufficient” for all the trials through which we may be called upon to pass (2 Cor. xii. 9).

By Him we have access into this grace. Christ speaks of Himself as “the door” (John x. 9), and as “the way” (John xiv. 6); and in Hebrews (x. 20) He is spoken of as the “new and living way.” These expressions vividly set Him forth as the One through Whom sinners may approach God. He came from heaven to earth; from the highest place to the lowest; and is gone back to heaven again. “Now that He ascended what is it but that He descended first into the lower parts of the earth? (Eph. iv. 9). Thus He constitutes Himself a “Way” from the lowest to the highest.

To us who were “in time past Gentiles in the flesh” (Eph. ii. 11) this wondrous privilege of access to God through Jesus Christ should be specially cherished. Once we were “without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, . . . having no hope, and without God in the world. But now *in Christ Jesus* we who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace. . . . For THROUGH Him we both (Jews and Gentiles) have ACCESS by one Spirit unto the Father” (Eph. ii. ix-i8). He is also the way of deliverance out of every trouble, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God THROUGH JESUS CHRIST” (Rom. vii. 24, 25).

Another immediate consequence of the putting away of our sins is that we *rejoice*, and this rejoicing is based upon the hope of the Glory of God: “And rejoice in (lit., upon) hope of the glory of God.”

Here again is a radical change of condition for the pardoned sinner. The glory of God is mentioned in chap. iii., where it is stated that all come short of it. The prospect of the glory of God, therefore, was anything but a subject for rejoicing. On the contrary it was that which we, as unpardoned sinners, had the greatest reason to dread. The coming of the glory of God to the earth means the doom of the unpenitent. But now, by the marvelous change resulting from justification, that which was calculated to fill our hearts with terror (whether it actually had that effect or not) becomes a prospect that fills us with joy—a prospect in which we can exult. *Then* our prospect was “a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries” (Heb. x. 27); *but now* it is our privilege to rejoice upon the hope of the glory of God; and surely we shall rejoice continually if we receive by faith the glad tidings that we are no longer enemies and aliens in mind because of our evil works, but that these have been put away, and we ourselves fully and eternally reconciled to God by the death of His Son.

The word “rejoice” in this verse is literally “boast upon”; and this expression marks a contrast with chap. iii. 27: “Where is boasting then? It is excluded”; and iv. 2, “For if Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to glory” (boast). Our justification gives us no ground for boasting, for we had no part in it; but having been justified, we boast upon hope of the Glory of God.

The grace of Christ is particularly realized by His disciples while they are enduring the tribulation which He warned them they should experience in the world. “In the world ye shall

have” not eminence, honour, dignity, station, but – “*tribulation*: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John xvi. 33). There is ample provision of grace for this; for not only do we have peace towards God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and access by Him into this grace wherein we stand, but we are also enabled to glory, or boast even in tribulations: “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh out patience,” etc. (Rom. V. 3). We boast or rejoice not only in the prospect of the coming glory of God, which is yet future, but even in the present we may boast in tribulations also.

Paul was certainly speaking for himself in this saying, for he had fully proved the sufficiency of the grace of God to keep him boasting throughout his long experience of unparalleled tribulations. “And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. *Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities* (weaknesses), that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2, Cor. xii. 9). In the preceding chapter he has said: “Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool), I am more: in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness” (2 Cor. xi. 23-27). How marvelous the grace which enables a frail human being not only to endure, but actually to glory in such tribulations as these! Yet such is the grace of God into which we have access through Jesus Christ.

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## **GOD’S GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 21: *Standing, Access, and Rejoicing*, pages 150-156.

By Philip Mauro

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### Faith, Hope, Love: These Three.

It is very noticeable that in the summary of the results of justification contained in the first part of chapter v., prominence is given to faith, hope, and love. Being justified out of *faith* and having access by *faith* unto this grace wherein we stand, we rejoice upon *hope* of the glory of God; and *hope* maketh not ashamed because the *love* of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Who is given to us, and God commendeth His *love* toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. And the greatest of these is love; for it is His love toward us that God commends, rather than His righteousness or His wrath, or His power. His love is manifested in His giving. This is the characteristic manifestation of love. And God commends His *love* in that He gave *His Son*. And not only so, but He gave His Son *to die* for us. And even this statement does not give the full measure of His love, for He gave His Son to die for us *while we were yet sinners*. This is love indeed, and this is God; for “God is love.”

It is also worthy of notice that this remarkable passage embraces the past, present, and future of the justified sinner. The words, “Having been justified,” speak of a *past* work, completed once for all and requiring no repetition. As the result of this, we have in the *present*, peace with God and a standing in His grace. Then as to the *future*, we rejoice in the hope of the glory. Looking back we see nothing to cause fear or apprehension, for the great fact of our past experience is, not the sin and failure which have characterized our lives, but the mighty work of God in righteously clearing us from all our transgressions and iniquities. Looking into the future we see again nothing to fear, but we see, on the contrary, cause for constant rejoicing upon the hope of the coming glory; and so much the more as we see the day approaching. And the entire interval between is the period of testing and experiencing the all-sufficient grace of God in which we stand.

Finally we would notice that the passage brings before us the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost as all participating in the great work of grace whereof “sinners,” “enemies” “the ungodly” are the objects. God the Father gives His Son to die for sinners, and gives the Holy Spirit, by whom His love is poured out in our hearts. This mention of all three Persons of the Godhead marks the passage as one of special importance.

And here we would bring our very inadequate comments to a close, as we have not purposed in this volume to go further than the subject of God's work in righteously justifying the believing sinner from his sins. At verse 6 of chap. v. a new subject\* is introduced, namely, the subject of what men *are by nature*, as distinguished from *what they have done*.

\* See “Newness of Life.” Comments on Romans v. 12 to viii. 13, by the Author.

By nature men are “sinners,” “without strength” “ungodly,” “enemies.” Such is the *character* of all men regardless of their individual *conduct*. justification has to do with a man's individual sins. It is the settlement of the account against him, as an individual sinner, by reason of those sins. It has not to do with the evil nature in him whereof his sins were the outward manifestation. A man might be cleared from all his offences, and yet remain as to his nature or character precisely what he was before. We, therefore, have yet to be taught how God, after having put away the sins of

the believing sinner, deals with the corrupt nature which he inherited from the first man. It is not by the commission of sins that one becomes a sinner. It is sharing the life and nature of Adam, received by his natural birth, that makes him a sinner. Man is not a sinner because he commits sins; but, on the contrary, he commits sins because he is a sinner. He, being a sinner and hence under the dominion of sin, in other words being the bond-slave of sin (John viii. 34), cannot do otherwise than commit sins. Hence there is, in the complete work of salvation, something more to be done than clearing the sinner from his own individual sins. He has to be delivered from the dominion of sin and death, and this necessitates a complete disconnection from the humanity of Adam and from the creation which fell with him into the bondage of corruption – a complete severance of all ties with the old humanity and the old order of things – and the establishment of new vital relations with *another humanity*.

This portion of the work of salvation undertaken by the Son of God, and based upon His death and resurrection, is taken up for our instruction at verse 12 of Romans v. At that point begins the teaching of the Epistle concerning the state of the entire humanity of the first man Adam, as being under the dominion of sin and death, and concerning the state of the humanity of the Second Man, the Risen Christ, as inheriting from Him, righteousness and life. This teaching shows the necessity for the new birth. Inasmuch as, by our first birth, we were brought into the family of Adam, which is under condemnation, and received the character of Adam, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, it is manifest that, in order to escape condemnation and to receive an incorruptible character, we must be born again, into another family. We learn, in the section of the Epistle beginning at chap. v. 12, that God's great plan of salvation contains provision for this need. Here we are taught that there is another human family, the members of which are "Sons of God," that the Risen Man, Jesus Christ, is the Head of this family, and that He imparts to all who believe on Him, a new nature, and a new kind of life.

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## **GOD'S GOSPEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Chapter 22: *Faith, Hope, Love: These Three*, pages 157-160.

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