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THE

NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY.



Bible. N. S. Romans, English.

THE EPISTLE TO THE  
**Romans.**

WITH COMMENTARY BY THE

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## INTRODUCTION

TO

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE  
ROMANS

I. The Epistles of St. Paul generally, and that to the Romans in particular.—It is a somewhat remarkable fact that so large a part of the documents of Christianity should be taken up with a correspondence. The contents of the Old Testament, heterogeneous as they are, correspond more nearly to what we should expect to find in a sacred volume. A legislation such as that of Moses, songs expressive of deep religious feeling like the Psalms, impassioned addresses like those of the prophets, histories such as the continuous series which trace the fortunes of the Chosen People—all these, we should have thought, were the natural vehicle for a religion. But the composition of the New Testament is something more unique. The foundation of Christianity is laid in a narrative; but the first and greatest development of Christian theology is not embodied in narrative, not in any set and formal treatise, not in liturgies, canons, and works of devotion, but in a collection of letters.

The causes of this peculiarity are not far to seek. Christianity was the first great missionary religion. It was the first to break the bonds of race, and aim at embracing all

mankind. But this necessarily involved a change in the mode in which it was presented. The prophet of the Old Testament, if he had anything to communicate, either appeared in person or sent messengers to speak for him by word of mouth. The one exception of any religious significance is a letter of Elijah to Jehoram in 2 Chron. xxi. The narrow limits of Palestine made direct personal communication easy. But the case was different when the Christian Church came to consist of a number of scattered posts, stretching from Mesopotamia in the east to Rome, or even Spain, in the far west. It was only natural that the Apostle by whom the greater number of these communities had been founded should seek to communicate with them by letter. He was enabled to do so by two things: first, the very general diffusion of the Greek language; and, secondly, the remarkable facilities of intercourse afforded at this particular time. The whole world was at peace, and held together by the organised rule of imperial Rome. Piracy had been put down. Commerce flourished to an extraordinary and unprecedented degree. In order to find a parallel to the rapidity and

ease of communication along the whole coast of the Mediterranean and the inland districts, intersected as they were with a network of military roads, we should have to come down to the present century. St. Paul was in the habit of travelling surrounded by a group of more intimate disciples, whom, as occasion arose, he despatched to the several churches that he had founded, much as a general sends his *aides-de-camp* to different parts of a battle-field; or, without falling back upon those, he had often an opportunity of sending by some chance traveller, such as was probably Phebe, the bearer of the Epistle to the Romans.

The whole of St. Paul's Epistles bear traces of their origin. It is just this occasional character which makes them so peculiarly human. They arose out of actual pressing needs, and they are couched (most of them, at least) in the vivid and fervent language of one who takes a deep and loving interest in the persons to whom he is writing, as well as in the subject that he is writing about. Precept and example, doctrine and practice, theology and ethics, are all mixed and blended together. No religious books present the same variety as the Christian, and that because they are in the closest contact with actual life.

There is, however, as we might naturally expect, a difference in the balance of the two elements—the personal or epistolary element proper on the one hand, and the doctrinal or didactic element on the other. In some of the Epistles the one, in others the other, preponderates. As types of the first class, we might take the First, and still more that noble and unsurpassable Second Epistle to the

Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Philippians. At the head of the second class would be placed the Epistles to the Romans and to the Ephesians.

It can hardly be a chance coincidence that precisely in these two Epistles there are certain MSS. which omit the words of address to the particular church. In the course of the present Commentary the reasons will be stated which have led to the suggestion that the Epistle was at an early period circulated in a double form—one that in which we now have it, and the other, with the personal matter excised, as a general treatise on Christian doctrine. In any case, this character in it is marked: it is the most like a theological treatise of any of the New Testament writings.

How are we to account for this? We shall be in a better position to answer such a question when we have considered more particularly the circumstances under which the Epistle was written, the persons to whom it was addressed, and the object for which it was designed.

**II. Time and Place of the Epistle.**—And first, as to the time and place of the Epistle. These are fixed within very definite limits. One set of allusions clearly points to Corinth as the place from which the Apostle is writing. In chap. xvi. 23 he speaks of himself as the guest of one "Gaius," and in 1 Cor. i. 14, he says that he had baptised none of the Corinthian Church "but Crispus and Gaius." The name was a common one; still there would be a *prima facie* probability in the identification. In the same verse (chap. xvi. 23), the Apostle conveys a salutation from

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Erastus, "the treasurer" ("chamberlain," Authorised version) "of the city," and in 2 Tim. iv. 20 we are told that Erastus "abode in Corinth," which would be natural if Corinth was his home. These indications are clenched by the commendatory notice in chap. xvi. 1 of Phebe, deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea, to whose care it would seem that the Epistle was entrusted. Cenchrea was the port of Corinth.

From another set of allusions (chap. xv. 25, 26) we gather that at the time at which he was writing, St. Paul was about to go up to Jerusalem, bearing with him the sums collected amongst the comparatively wealthy churches of "Macedonia and Achaia" for the poor Christians at Jerusalem. The order in which the two names are mentioned would quite fall in with the assumption that it was from Achaia—of which province Corinth was the capital—that the Epistle was written; and we should also naturally infer that he had passed through Macedonia on his way to Corinth. We find, besides, the intention expressly declared of extending the journey, after his visit to Jerusalem, to Rome (chap. xv. 23—26). All this tallies exactly with the statement in Acts xix. 21, "After these things were ended (*i.e.*, the success of the Apostle's preaching at Ephesus), Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome." Such was his programme; and that it was actually carried out appears from the notices in Acts xx. 1—3, 22, xxi. 15. In the first we find the Apostle spending three months in Greece, in the second he announces at

Miletus the destination of his journey for Jerusalem, in the third he actually arrives there. We learn, moreover, incidentally from his speech before Felix, in Acts xxiv. 17, that the object of his visit to Jerusalem was to bring "alms and offerings." And there are repeated allusions to a collection for the same purpose in both the Epistles to the Corinthians. (See 1 Cor. xvi. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2; ix. 1 *et seq.*)

The Epistle is thus placed, by a remarkable convergence of evidence, in that part of the Apostle's third missionary journey which was spent in Corinth. The journey in question began at Antioch. Thence the Apostle made his way to Ephesus by a detour through Galatia and Phrygia. At Ephesus he stayed in all about three years, and his preaching was attended with a success which roused the heathen population against him. The disturbance that ensued hastened him on his way to Macedonia. Through Macedonia he passed westwards as far as Illyricum (chap. xv. 19), and thence to Greece, where he spent three months.

It was at Corinth, then, during these three months that the Epistle was written. This would be, according to the system of the best chronologists, in the spring of the year A.D. 58. That the time of the year was spring is fixed by the fact that the Apostle had intended to sail for Syria (Acts xx. 3), which he would not have done during the winter season. The navigation of the Mediterranean was held to be unsafe from October to the middle of March. But the Apostle must have left Corinth before the spring was far advanced, as he had time,

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after passing through Macedonia and coasting along the shore of Asia Minor, to arrive at Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost—i.e., our Whitsuntide. We shall not be far wrong if we place the Epistle towards the end of the month of February.

**III. Place of the Epistle in relation to the rest of St. Paul's Epistles.**—Three other Epistles were written during the same journey, the First and Second to the Corinthians, and that to the Galatians. The First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus during the spring of the year preceding, A.D. 57. The Second Epistle was written from Macedonia in the autumn of the same year. The Epistle to the Galatians is less clearly dated. It may possibly belong to the earlier part of the three years' residence at Ephesus, and it is assigned to this time and place by the majority of commentators. But when we come to deal with that Epistle, reasons will be given for preferring another view, which places it rather between the Second Epistle to the Corinthians and that to the Romans. We should thus have the following order:—

1 Cor.	Ephesus	A.D. 57	Spring.
2 Cor.	Macedonia	„	57 Autumn.
Gal.	{ Macedonia, or perhaps more prob- ably Greece }	„	57, 58 Winter.
Rom.	{ Corinth }	„	58 Early Spring.

The Epistle to the Romans comes, in any case, last in the group.

Passing to the wider relations of the group to which the Epistle to

the Romans belongs, to the rest of the Apostle's writings, we shall see that it comes second of the four larger groups. The order would be this:—

A. 1 & 2 Thess.	{ 2nd Mis- sionary journey }	A.D. 52 (end), 53
B. 1 & 2 Cor., Gal., Rom.	{ 3rd Mis- sionary journey }	A.D. 57, 58
C. Philip., Eph. Col., Phil. ( <i>Epistles of the Imprison- ment</i> )	{ First Ro- man Im- prison- ment }	A.D. 62, 63
D. 1 & 2 Tim., Titus ( <i>Pastoral Epistles</i> )	{ Interval of free- dom and Second Roman Imprisonment }	A.D. 66—68

### IV. The Roman Church.—

The next point to be determined is the character of the Church to which the Epistle was addressed. And this we may do well to consider from two points of view. First, with reference to what may be learned respecting it from external sources; and, secondly, with reference to the indications supplied by the Epistle itself.

1. At Rome, as elsewhere, Christianity first took root among the Jews. A large colony of this people existed in Rome at the Christian era. The foundation of it had been laid by the captives carried away by Pompey after the taking of Jerusalem in B.C. 63. A number of these were settled in Rome. They attracted the favourable notice first of Julius Cæsar, and then still more of Augustus, who assigned to them a special

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quarter beyond, *i.e.*, on the right bank of the Tiber, and opposite to the modern Jewish quarter, or Ghetto, which lies between the Capitol and the river. They were allowed the free exercise of their religion, and, as was always the case where they were treated with toleration, rapidly increased in numbers. A Jewish embassy, which came to Rome after the death of Herod the Great, was able to attach to itself as many as 8,000 Roman Jews, who naturally would represent only the more respectable portion of the male community. This rapid progress received a check under Tiberius, who, in A.D. 19, probably at the instance of Sejanus, obtained a decree of the Senate, sending 4,000 Jews and Egyptians to Sardinia on military service, and forbidding the rest from the practice of their religion on pain of expulsion from Italy. Josephus tells a scandalous story to account for this, but the real reason may, very possibly, have been the fear of secret political machinations under the disguise of religion. In the latter part of his reign Tiberius reversed this policy, and its effects speedily disappeared. Under the next emperor, Caligula, an embassy of Alexandrine Jews, headed by Philo, met with a rough reception; but this would seem to have been more than counterbalanced by the favour extended to Herod Agrippa, who stood high in influence at the Court. This astute politician made use of his position to further the accession of Claudius, and, as a reward, not only was restored to the dominions of his grandfather, Herod the Great, but also obtained an extension of privileges for his countrymen throughout the empire. Later in the reign of Claudius dis-

turbances arose among the Jews at Rome, which seem to have been connected with the first preaching of Christianity, either through the excitement of the Messianic expectations, or through disputes between the Jews and Christians. Suetonius says that they took place at the instigation "of one Chrestus," which, for the heathen historian, would be a not unnatural misconception. The result was a second banishment of the Jews from Rome (Acts xviii. 2). But this again cannot have been really complete, and the Jews who were banished seem in many instances (such as that of Aquila and Prisca) soon to have returned. The effect of the repressive measures might easily be exaggerated. There is abundant evidence to show that, at the time St. Paul was writing, the Jewish community at Rome was numerous and flourishing, and its influence upon Roman society was loudly complained of alike by the philosopher, the satirist, and the historian.

The chronology of the foregoing sketch may be thus exhibited:—

Founding of the Jewish community at Rome by prisoners brought from Jerusalem by Pompey	... .. B.C. 63
Favourable position under Julius Cæsar	B.C. 48—44
and Augustus	B.C. 27—A.D. 14
Embassy to Rome after the death of Herod	... .. B.C. 4
First decree of banishment under Tiberius	A.D. 19
Philo's embassy to Caligula	... <i>circa</i> „ 40
Second decree of banishment under Claudius	... <i>circa</i> „ 49

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Return of Aquila and  
Prisca to Rome ... A.D. 57  
Epistle to the Romans ,, 58

According to the tradition which is still in vogue among the modern representatives of the Roman Church, Christianity was planted there by St. Peter in the year A.D. 41. St. Peter himself is said to have held the episcopate for twenty-five years. This tradition, however, only dates from the time of Jerome (*ob.* A.D. 420), and is therefore much too late to be of any value. It is contradicted by the whole tenor of St. Paul's Epistle, which could hardly have failed to contain some allusion to the presence of a brother Apostle, especially when we consider the express declaration of St. Paul that he was careful not to "build upon another man's foundation." Besides, a distinct *alibi* can be proved by the comparison of Acts xv. with Gal. ii. 1—9, which shows that, at the time of the Apostolic Council in A.D. 52, not only was Peter at Jerusalem, but Jerusalem had been up to that time his head-quarters. He is still the Apostle of the circumcision, and a pillar of the mother church. At a later period he is found, not at Rome, but at Antioch.

It is more probable that the germs of Christianity were carried back to Rome by the "strangers" (Acts ii. 10) whom we find in Jerusalem at the Feast of Pentecost, *i.e.*, Jews resident in Rome who had come up for the purpose of attending the feast. The rudiments of Christian teaching brought back by these would soon be developed in the constant intercourse which took place between Rome and the provinces. The fact

that, in the list of salutations at the end of the Epistle, so many are mentioned who were not native Romans, but had been already under the personal influence of St. Paul, would readily account for the advanced knowledge of Christianity that the Apostle assumes among them.

2. Turning now more exclusively to the Epistle itself, what are we to gather from it in regard to the Church to which the Apostle is writing? The main question to be decided is the proportion in which the two great constituent elements of the primitive Christian Church were mixed and combined in it. Was the Church at Rome, in a preponderating degree, Jewish or Gentile? The answer to this question usually gives throughout the apostolic times the best clue to the doctrinal bearings and general character of any Christian community.

We find throughout the Epistle an easy interchange of address, first pointed, as it were, towards Gentiles, and then towards Jews. In one place (chap. xi. 13) the Apostle says in so many words, "I speak to you Gentiles." In another place (chap. vii. 1) he says as expressly, "I speak to them that know the law," and in proof that this is not merely an external knowledge, he evidently in chap. iii. 19 is appealing to an authority which he knows that his readers will recognise. "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law." Accordingly we find, that though the Apostle begins his Epistle by addressing the Romans as a Gentile Church (chap. i. 6, 13), and although the first section of the proof of his great thesis, the uni-

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versal need and offer of salvation, bears specially upon the Gentiles, he very soon passes from their case to that of the Jews. Chap. ii. contains a direct expostulation with the one, just as chap. i. had contained a condemnation of the other. Nor is it only a rhetorical artifice that in the section chap. ii. 17—24 the Jew is addressed throughout in the second person. The Apostle evidently had actual Jews before his mind. In like manner, the long parenthetical discussion of the claims and fall of Israel in chaps. ix.—xi. is clearly intended to be double-edged. It has a two-fold application at once to Jew and Gentile. On the one hand it is intended as an apology for the justice of the divine dealings addressed to the Jew, and on the other hand it contains a warning addressed to the Gentile. If stress is laid upon the calling of the Gentiles, it is to provoke the Jews "to emulation." If stress is laid upon the rejection of the Jews, it is in order that the Gentiles may not "be high minded, but fear."

The whole phenomena of the Epistle, then, point to the conclusion that the Church for which it was destined consisted in almost equal proportions of converts from Judaism and from heathenism; and the easy transitions by which the Apostle turns from the one to the other seem to show that there was no sharp and hard antagonism between them. The Epistle is written as if both might form part of the audience that would hear it read. The Church at Rome was divided as yet by no burning questions. The Apostle did not think it necessary to speak strongly on the subject of circumcision on the one hand, or of laxity and

immorality on the other. The differences that existed were of a much milder kind. The "strong" and "weak brethren," whose mutual difficulties are weighed so judiciously in chap. xiv., are not by any means a synonym for Jew or Gentile, though there would naturally be a tendency in parties to divide according to their origin. The asceticism and observance of days alluded to were not common characteristics of Judaism, but belonged especially to the sect of the Essenes. Nor does it seem that the divisions to which they gave rise extended beyond a greater or less degree of scrupulousness or liberality.

The inferences that we have thus been led to draw receive support from an analysis of a different kind. Much light is thrown upon the composition of the Church by the list of names of the persons selected for salutation in the last chapter of the Epistle. These will be found more fully discussed in the Notes, but in the meantime we may so far sum up the results as to say that they point clearly to a mixture of nationalities. The one named Mary (= Miriam) is exclusively Jewish; Apelles is, if not exclusively, at least typically so. But besides these, Aquila and Prisca, Andronicus and Junia (or Junias), and Herodian, must have been Jews. As Aristobulus was a Jew, and the Jews generally hung much together, it is probable that the household of Aristobulus would be mostly Jews also. Urban and Ampliatus (the true reading for Amplias) are genuine Latin names. Julia would be a dependent on the imperial household, of what nationality is uncertain. The rest of the names are Greek, which tallies with the



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fact that the literature of the Roman Church was Greek, and there are other evidences that the Church bore a general Greek character up to the middle of the second century. A detailed comparison of the names with those which have come down to us in mortuary and other inscriptions, seems to show that their owners belonged for the most part to the lower section of society—petty tradesmen, and officers, or slaves. There is reason to think that the gospel had already found a footing among the slaves and freed-men of the court, who formed a prominent body in the Church some four years later, when St. Paul sent greetings to the Philippians “chiefly” from them “of Cæsar’s household” (Phil. iv. 20).

We may picture to ourselves the Roman Church as originating in the Jewish synagogues, as gradually attracting converts from the lower orders with which the Jews would come mostly in contact, as thus entering the household of the emperor himself, and, at the time when St. Paul was writing, constantly gaining ground among the Gentile community. As yet, however, the two great divisions of Jew and Gentile exist side by side in amicable relations, and with differences hardly greater than would at this day be found in the opposite views of a body professing the same creed.

**V. General Character of the Epistle to the Romans.**—We have, then, two kinds of *data* which may help us to understand the general character of the Epistle. We know that it was written at the same time as the Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians, and we know that it was written to a

Church composed partly of Jewish and partly of Gentile converts with no very pronounced antagonism between them. In these facts we may seek the explanation of the question that was raised at starting—the question how it was that the Epistle to the Romans comes to be so much of a comprehensive theological treatise.

It was addressed at once to Jews and Gentiles. There was, therefore, nothing to disturb the even balance of the Apostle’s teaching. For once, at least, he found himself able to dilate with equal fulness upon both sides of his great theme. His own mind was naturally elevated above controversy. He had worked out a system for himself, which, though its main elements were drawn from the Old Testament, yet transcended the narrow limits of Judaism. His philosophy of things was one in which Jew and Gentile alike had their place, and each received justice, but not more than justice. Hitherto his desire to hold the equilibrium between the parties had been thwarted. He wrote to the Corinthians, but his letter had been prompted by an outbreak of Gentile licence, in the face of which it would have been unseasonable to insist on the relaxation of the Mosaic law. He wrote to the Galatians, but then it was with indignation roused by Jewish bigotry. In each case a one-sided treatment of Christian doctrine was necessary. It was as necessary as it is for a physician to apply local remedies to a local sore.

In the Roman Church the necessity existed in a much less degree. Nor, even if it had existed, would the Apostle have felt it as strongly. The character of the Church was only known to him by report. He

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had not the same vivid personal impressions in respect to it as he had of the Churches of Corinth and Galatia.

In these Epistles the strong personal feelings of the Apostle and his vivid realisation of the circumstances with reference to which he is writing, come out in almost every line. "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you." "Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power." "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done the deed . . . ." "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. But if any hath caused grief, he hath not grieved me but in part: that I may not overcharge you all." "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men . . . ." "Ye know how through the infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus . . . . I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me."

These disturbing influences were wanting in the case of the Romans. If the Epistle loses somewhat in the intensity of its personal appeals, it gains in breadth and comprehensiveness. It is the most abstract of

all the Epistles. It is not a special doctrine for special circumstances, but Christian theology in its broadest sense. A double set of reasons combined to produce this. Not only the nature of the Apostle's relation to the Church at Rome and the character of that Church, but also the condition of his own mind at the time of writing. He was writing from Corinth, and just after he had despatched a letter to Galatia. An extreme upon one side balanced an extreme upon the other. Jew and Gentile were present to the mind of the Apostle in equal degree. At last he was able to express his thoughts in their own natural proportions. His mind was in its true philosophical attitude, and the result is the great philosophical Epistle, which was most appropriately addressed to the capital of the civilised world.

**VI. Contents and Analysis of the Epistle.**—The Epistle represents, then, the most mature result of the Apostle's reflection at this period of his life. It gathers up and presents in a connected form the scattered thoughts of the earlier Epistles.

The key to the theology of the apostolic age is its relation to the Messianic expectation among the Jews. The central point in the teaching of the Apostles is the fact that with the coming of Christ was inaugurated the Messianic reign. It was the universal teaching of the Jewish doctors—a teaching fully adopted and endorsed by the Apostles—that this reign was to be characterised by righteousness. But righteousness was just what the whole world, Jew and Gentile alike, had signally failed to obtain. The Mosaic law had indeed held

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up the ideal of righteousness before those who were subject to it, but it remained an ideal, utterly unfulfilled. Left merely to his own powers, threatened with punishment if he failed, but with no help or encouragement to enable him to succeed, the Jew found in the Law a hard task-master, the only effect of which was to "multiply transgressions"—*i.e.*, to provoke to sin and to increase its guilt. Christianity, on the other hand, does what the Law failed to do; it induces a state of righteousness in the believer, and opens out to him the blessedness and salvation which the Messiah came to bring.

The means by which this state of righteousness is brought about is naturally that by which the believer obtains admission into the Messianic kingdom—in other words, Faith. Righteousness is the Messianic *condition*; Faith is the Messianic *conviction*. But by Faith is meant, not merely an acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus, but that intense and loving adhesion which such acceptance inspired, and which the life and death of Jesus were eminently qualified to call out. Faith opens out a new road of access to the divine favour. This was no longer to be sought only by the painful and laborious—nay, impossible, way of a fulfilment of the divine commands. The favour of God, and admission into the Messianic kingdom, was promised to all who with a true and heartfelt devotion took the Messiah for their king. Of such it was not asked whether they had actually fulfilled the Law in their own persons; their faith was *imputed to them for righteousness*—*i.e.*, taken in lieu of it, as the condition which would exempt them from the wrath and

obtain for them the favour of God.

That which gave to faith this peculiar efficacy was the fact that Jesus, the Messiah, towards whom it was directed, by His sacrificial death had *propitiated* the anger which God could not but feel against sin, and set free the hitherto obstructed current of divine love. Henceforth the anger of God could not rest upon the followers of the Messiah, by virtue of that which the Messiah Himself had done.

But the faith of the Christian was no merely passive principle. Such an ardour of devotion must needs gain strength by its own exercise. It became by degrees a moral lever by which the righteousness, at first imputed, was made more and more real. It placed the believer in so close a relation to Christ as could hardly be described by any word short of *union* itself. And union with One so holy as Christ was could not fail to have the most powerful effect upon him who entered into it. It brought him into a new sphere entirely different from that of the Law. Henceforth the Law was nothing to him. But the end for which the Law existed was accomplished in another way. By union with Christ he became dead to sin. He entered upon a new service and a new state—a state of righteousness, which the indwelling Spirit of Christ (*i.e.*, the closest conceivable influence of the Spirit of Christ upon the soul) enabled him to maintain. The old bondage of the flesh was broken. The lawless appetites and desires engendered by the body were annihilated by the presence of a deeper and stronger emotion, fanned and cherished by the inter-

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vention of a power higher than that of man.

Such, at least, was the Christian's ideal, which he was pledged to aim at, even if he failed to reach it. And the presence of the Divine Spirit within him was something more than the guarantee of a moral life here on earth; it was the earnest of an existence still more glorious in the future. The Christian, by his adhesion to Christ, the Messiah, was brought within the range of an order of things in which not he alone, but all creation, was to share, and which was destined to expand into as yet dimly anticipated perfection. As faith is the faculty which the Christian is called upon to exercise in the present, so Hope is that by which he looks forward to the future. He finds the assurance of his ultimate triumph in the unconquerable and inalienable love of Christ.

One objection might naturally be raised to this exposition of the Christian's privileges. What relation did they bear to another set of privileges—the ancient privileges of the chosen people, Israel? At first sight it seemed as if the throwing open of the Messianic kingdom to faith only, and therefore to Gentiles equally with Jews, was a violation of the Old Covenant. To this objection there were several answers. Even if there had been some further act of choice on the part of God, involving a rejection of Israel, His absolute power of choosing one and refusing another was not to be questioned. But really the promise was not made to the whole of Israel, but only to such as should comply with the condition of faith. All Israel did not do this. Nor was all Israel rejected. If a part of Israel

was rejected, it was only with the beneficent purpose of bringing in the Gentiles. In the end Israel, too, will be restored.

The privileges of the Christian are naturally connected with his duties, and these, as we should expect, the Apostle insists upon in considerable detail. The two points that seem to have a special reference to the condition of the Roman Christians are:—First, the inculcation of obedience to the civil power. This would seem to allude to the disturbances which had led to the expulsion of the Jews from Rome (*"Judæos assidue tumultuantes Româ expulit"*—Suetonius). The second point is the stress that is laid upon the duty of toleration on the part of the more liberal members of the Church towards those who showed a greater scrupulosity in ceremonial observances, especially those connected with distinctions of meats and drinks. This may, however, have been suggested less by anything that the Apostle knew to have happened in the Church at Rome, than by his recent experiences of the Churches of Corinth and Galatia, and the possibility that similar dangers might arise at Rome.

The analysis of the Epistle which follows is intended to give the reader a clearer conception of its contents, and must not always be taken to represent a conscious division of his subject in the Apostle's mind. This is especially the case with the two headings that are printed in italics. The course of his thought happens to lead the Apostle, in the first instance, to deal with the application of the Christian scheme to the individual; and, in the second, to its application to the great question of Jew

and Gentile, but this is rather accidentally than because such a distinction entered into his plan. The headings are inserted as helping to bring out a point which really exists, and which is, perhaps, of more importance to the reader, who looks upon the Epistle as a theological treatise, than it was originally to its author.

A TREATISE ON THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME AS A DIVINELY-APPOINTED MEANS FOR PRODUCING RIGHTEOUSNESS IN MAN, AND SO REALISING THE MESSIANIC REIGN.

I.—Introduction (i. 1—15).

- a. The apostolic salutation (i. 1—7).
- b. St. Paul and the Roman Church (i. 8—15).

II.—Doctrinal.

- a. THE GREAT THESIS. Righteousness by Faith (i. 16, 17).

Proof—

Righteousness not hitherto attained either by Gentiles (i. 18—32) or by Jews (ii. 1—29).

Parenthetic answer to objections (iii. 1—8).

Confirmatory proof from Scripture (iii. 9—20).

- b. THE GREAT THESIS REPEATED AND EXPANDED.

Righteousness by Faith. The propitiatory death of Christ (iii. 21—26).

- (1) This righteousness is open to Jew and Gen-

tile alike, and excludes boasting (iii. 27—31).

- (2) Proof from Scripture—Abraham (iv. 1—5, 9—25).

David (iv. 6—9).

- (3) *First Climax*. Blissful effects of righteousness by faith (v. 1—11).

- (4) The first and the second Adam (v. 12—19).

Abundance of sin and of grace (v. 20—vi. 1).

- c. *The Christian Scheme in its Application to the Individual*.

- (1) Progressive righteousness in the Christian. Death to sin, through union with Christ (vi. 1—14).

- (2) The Christian's release (vi. 15—vii. 25).

- a. Its true nature (vi. 15—23).

- β. Illustration from the marriage bond (vii. 1—6).

- γ. The inward struggle and victory (vii. 7—25).

- (3) *Second Climax* (viii. 1—39).

- a. The Flesh and the Spirit (viii. 1—13).

- β. The adoption of sons (viii. 14—17).

- γ. Creation's yearning (viii. 17—25).

- δ. The Spirit's intercession (viii. 26—27).

- ε. Happy career of the Christian (viii. 28—30).

- ζ. Triumphant close (viii. 31—39).

## INTRODUCTION.

d. *The Christian Scheme in its world-wide significance and bearing.*

Israel's rejection (ix., x., xi.).  
A saddening thought (ix. 1—5).

a. Justice of the rejection.  
The promise was not made to all Israel indiscriminately, but confined to the chosen seed (ix. 6—13).

Absoluteness of God's choice, which is not to be questioned by man (ix. 14—23).

β. Cause of the rejection.  
Self-sought righteousness contrasted with righteousness by faith in Christ (x. 1—13).

The gospel preached and believed (x. 14—21).

γ. Mitigating considerations (xi. 1—36).

(i.) Not *all* Israel fell (xi. 1—10).

(ii.) Special purpose of the fall (xi. 11—24).

The engrafted and original olive branches (xi. 17—26).

(iii.) Prospect of final restoration (xi. 25—29).

*Third Climax.* Beneficent results of seeming severity (xi. 30—32).  
Doxology (xi. 33—36).

b. The Christian as a member of the Church (xii. 3—8).

c. The Christian in his relation to others (xii. 9—21).

The Christian's vengeance (xii. 19—21).

d. Church and State (xiii. 1—7).

e. The Christian's one debt; the law of love (xiii. 8—10).

The day approaching (xiii. 11—14).

f. Toleration: the strong and the weak (xiv. 1—xv. 3).

g. Unity of Jew and Gentile (xv. 4—13).

### IV.—Valedictory.

a. Personal explanations.  
Motive of the Epistle.  
Purposed visit to Rome (xv. 14—23).

b. Greetings to various persons (xvi. 1—16).  
A warning (xvi. 17—20).  
Postscript by the Apostle's companions and amanuensis (xvi. 21—23).  
Benediction and doxology (xvi. 24—27).

VII. *Style.*—The style of St. Paul's Epistles varies considerably, according to the date at which they were written. A highly-strung and nervous temperament like his would naturally vary with circumstances. His life was excessively wearing. We have only to read a catalogue like that in 2 Cor. xi. 23—28, to see the enormous strain to which he was exposed. The list of bodily hardships and sufferings is almost unparalleled, and his own Epistles show what the "care of all the

### III—Practical and Hortatory.

a. The Christian sacrifice (xii. 1, 2).

churches" must have been to him. Hence it is not unnatural that in the later Epistles we should trace a certain loss of vitality. The style is more depressed and formal, and less buoyant and spontaneous. The period at which the Epistle to the Romans was written was, on the contrary, that at which the Apostle's physical power was at the highest. All through the two Epistles to the Corinthians, the Galatians, and the Romans, there is the greatest energy and force of diction. This gains, perhaps, from the fact that all these Epistles were written from dictation. The name of the amanuensis in the case of the Epistle to the Romans, as we gather from chap. xvi. 22, was Tertius. In some of the later Epistles it is possible that the turn of phrase was left more to the amanuensis, but the earlier group of Epistles bears all the appearance of having been taken down just as the Apostle spoke. Hence the broken and disjointed form of some of the sentences, beginning with one construction and ending with another, as in chaps. ii. 5—10, iii. 21—26, v. 12—14, ix. 22—24. A pointed instance would be (if the view taken in this Commentary is correct) chap. vii. 21. Hence, also, the insertion of long parentheses, interrupting the sense, as in chap. ii. 13—15, and of digressions such as chap. iii. 3—8. Hence, lastly, the rapid and vehement cut and thrust of indignant questioning as in chaps. ii. 21—23, ix. 19—21, or impetuous challenge as in chap. viii. 31—35. The plain and direct style of the Apostle is well exemplified in the practical and hortatory chaps. xii.—xv. On the other hand, the more involved and elaborate style of the later Epistles finds a parallel in the opening and closing

paragraphs, chaps. i. 1—7, xvi. 25—27.

VIII.—External Evidence of the Genuineness of the Epistle.—It is hardly necessary to collect external evidence to the genuineness of the Epistle, as it bears upon itself the most indisputable marks of originality. As a matter of fact it has not been disputed by any critic of the slightest importance. The external evidences are, however, abundant. Before the first century is out there is a clear allusion to the language of the Epistle in the letter of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (A.D. 95). This writer entreats the Corinthian Christians to cast off from themselves "*all unrighteousness and iniquity, covetousness, strifes, malignities, and deceits, whisperings and backbitings, hatred of God, pride, arrogance, vain-glory, and inhospitality,*" on the ground that "*they that do these things are hateful to God; and not only they that do them, but they also that consent to them.*" The words in italics, many of them markedly peculiar, are taken from the passage Rom. i. 29—32. In another place (§ 46) in the same letter occurs the phrase, "We are members of one another," which recalls Rom. xii. 5. Other allusions that have been found in the Epistle are perhaps less certain. In the first quarter of the next century allusions to the Epistle are alleged from the letters of Ignatius and Polycarp. The first of these are, perhaps, themselves of too doubtful authenticity to be claimed very strongly in evidence. The Epistle to Polycarp, itself well guaranteed, presents an exact repetition of the phrase, "we must all stand before the judgment-

## INTRODUCTION.

seat of Christ ;” adding, “and each one must give an account of himself.” (Comp. Rom. xiv. 10, 12.) The Gnostic writers appealed to the passages, “He who raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies” (Rom. viii. 11), and “sin reigned from Adam to Moses” (Rom. v. 13, 14), in support of their own peculiar views ; but it is somewhat doubtful whether the fragments quoted by Hippolytus in which those allusions occur are really to be referred to the founders of the respective sects, Basilides (*circ.* A.D. 125) and Valentinus (*circ.* A.D. 140), or to their followers. The date, therefore, of this evidence is uncertain. So also is that derived from the Epistle to Diognetus which is commonly placed at about A.D. 170. Justin Martyr (*ob.* A.D. 148) seems pretty clearly to have made use of the Epistle, for he quotes precisely the same series of Old Testament passages as is quoted in Rom. iv. 11—17, in the same order, and in the same way—as if they were one connected passage. In the last quarter of the second century, as Christian literature becomes more copious, the references to the Epistle become more express and definite. The letter of the Churches of Vienna and Lyons to that at Rome (A.D. 177) contains an exact verbal coincidence with Rom. viii. 18 (“I reckon that the sufferings of this present time,” &c.). In Theophilus of Antioch (A.D. 181) there are unmistakable paraphrases of Rom. ii. 6—9, and of Rom. xiii. 7, 8. Irenæus, writing about A.D. 185, quotes the Epistle directly by name. “This very construction St. Paul put upon it, writing to the Romans, ‘Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ,’ &c. ; and again, writing to the Romans concerning Israel, he

says, ‘whose are the fathers,’” &c. Irenæus also quotes expressly Rom. v. 17: “And in agreement with these St. Paul, too, addressing the Romans, says: ‘Much more they who receive abundance of grace and righteousness unto life, shall reign through One, Jesus Christ.’” Besides these, there are other long quotations, which are the more to be remarked, as they show in some cases the presence of readings in the Codex used by Irenæus, which, though supported by other authorities, are certainly false, and therefore show that they have already a long history behind them. There are equally express and direct quotations in Clement of Alexandria (flourished A.D. 185—211) and Tertullian (flourished A.D. 198—210). The Epistle to the Romans is also contained in the Muratorian Fragment on the canon *circ.* A.D. 170. From this point onwards the production of further evidence is superfluous. The main points to notice in what has been given are that the *existence* of the Epistle is proved incontestably by Clement of Rome as early as A.D. 95, and that it was attributed to St. Paul by Irenæus in A.D. 185, or some fifteen years earlier by the Muratorian Fragment.

[Of the many Commentaries on this Epistle most use has been made, in the Notes which follow, of those of Meyer and Dr. Vaughan. The scholarly tact of the English commentator might, perhaps, have been allowed to correct, even more often than has been the case, the rigorous science of the German. Dr. Vaughan’s carefully assorted references have also been of much service. Special attention has been paid to all that has been written



## ROMANS.

on this Epistle, either directly or incidentally, by Dr. Lightfoot. The Notes themselves are not given to the world with any satisfaction. The writer would have been glad to devote to them more time than the exigencies of publication and the pressure of other work would allow. His most mature thoughts upon the connection between the several parts of the doctrinal teaching of the Epistle will be found in the section of the *Introduction* which deals with this subject, and in the *Excursus* at the end.]

# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS.

CHAPTER I.—<sup>(1)</sup> Paul,  
a servant of  
Jesus Christ,  
called to be

A.D. 58  
(early in  
the  
year).

a Acts  
13. 2.

an apostle, separated<sup>a</sup> unto  
the gospel of God, <sup>(2)</sup> (which  
he had promised afore by  
his prophets in the holy

Chap. i. 1-7.  
The apostolic  
salutation.

(1-7) In writing to the Romans, a Church to which he was personally unknown, and which might be supposed, so far as it was Jewish, to be prejudiced against him, the Apostle delivers with somewhat more than usual solemnity his credentials and commission. A divinely appointed minister of a system of things predicted by the prophets, and culminating in the revelation, divinely ordained and attested, of Jesus Christ, he greets the Roman Christians, themselves also divinely called. Note the repetition of terms signifying "calling," "selection," "determination in the counsels and providence of God;" as if to say: "I and you alike are all members of one grand scheme, which is not of human invention, but determined and ordained of God—the divine clue, as it were, running through the history of the world." A solemn note is thus struck at the very commencement, and in what might have been regarded as the more formal part of the Epistle, by which the readers are prepared for the weighty issues that are to be set before them.

(1) **Servant.**—More strictly, here as elsewhere in the New Testament,

*slave*; and yet not wrongly translated "servant," because the compulsory and degrading side of service is not put forward. The idea of "slavery" in the present day has altogether different associations.

**Separated.**—Compare especially Acts xiii. 2 ("Separate me Barnabas and Saul"), where human instruments—the leaders of the Church at Antioch—are employed to carry out the divine will. The reference here is to the historical fact of the selection of St. Paul to be an Apostle; in Gal. i. 15 ("it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb") it is rather to the more distant act of divine predestination.

**Unto the gospel of God.**—Singled out and set apart to convey the message of salvation from God to man. The ambiguous genitive, the gospel of God, seems to mean, "the gospel which proceeds from God," "of which God is the *author*;" not "of which God is the *object*."

(2) **Which he had promised.**—More correctly, *which He promised before by His prophets in holy writ*. There is a nicety of meaning expressed by the absence of the article before this last phrase. A slight stress is thus thrown upon

scriptures,) <sup>(3)</sup> concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David accord-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *deter-  
mined.*

ing to the flesh; <sup>(4)</sup> and declared <sup>1</sup> to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by

the epithet "holy." It is not merely "in certain books which go by the name of holy scriptures," but "in certain writings the character of which is holy." They are "holy" as containing the promises referred to in the text, and others like them. It will thus be seen how even this faint shade of meaning works into the general argument. The writings in which the promises are contained, like the promises themselves, their fulfilment, and the consequences which follow from them, all are part of the same exceptional divine scheme.

The prophetic writings describe not only salvation, the *substance* of the gospel, but also the *preaching* of salvation, the gospel itself. (See Isa. xl. 2, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem," and following verses; xlii. 4; lii. 1 *et seq.*; Pss. xix. 4; lxviii. 11, *et al.*)

**Prophets.**—In the wider sense in which the word is used, including not only Samuel (Acts iii. 24), but also Moses and David, and all who are regarded as having prophesied the Messiah.

(3, 4) Who, on the human side—as if to show that the prophecies were really fulfilled in Him—was born of the seed of David, the rightful lineage of the Messiah; who, on the divine side, by virtue of the divine attribute of holiness dwelling in His spirit, was declared to be the Son of God, by that mighty demonstration, the resurrection of the dead.

**According to the flesh.**—The word is here used as equivalent to "in His human nature, in that lower bodily organisation which He shares with us men."

(4) **With power.**—That is, in a transcendent and superhuman manner.

**According to the spirit of holiness.**—In antithesis to "according to the flesh," and therefore coming where we should expect "in His divine nature." And yet there is a difference, the precise shade of which is not easy to define. What are we to understand by the "spirit of holiness"? Are we to regard it as simply convertible with "Holy Spirit"? Not quite. Or are we to look upon it as corresponding to "the flesh," as "spirit" and "flesh" correspond in man? Again, not quite—or not merely. The spirit of Christ is human, for Christ took upon Him our nature in all its parts. It is human; and yet it is in it more especially that the divinity resides. It is in it that the "Godhead dwells bodily," and the presence of the Godhead is seen in the peculiar and exceptional "holiness" by which it is characterised. The "spirit," therefore, or that portion of His being to which St. Paul gives the name, in Christ, is the connecting link between the human and the divine, and shares alike in both. It is the divine "enshrined" in the human, or the human penetrated and energised by the divine. It is, perhaps, not possible to get beyond

the resurrection from the dead: <sup>(5)</sup> by whom we have

received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the

metaphorical language such as this. The junction of the human and divine must necessarily evade exact definition, and to carry such definition too far would be to misrepresent the meaning of the Apostle. We may compare with this passage 1 Tim. iii. 16, "God (rather, *Who*) was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit;" or St. Peter's phrase, "Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit"—rather, *in the spirit*, as the seat of that divinity by virtue of which He overcame death (1 Pet. iii. 18).

The particular act in which the Sonship of Christ was most conspicuously ratified and confirmed was His resurrection from the dead. It was ratified by His resurrection, as a manifestation of transcendent and divine power. (Comp. Acts ii. 24 *et seq.*; xvii. 31; Rom. iv. 24.)

It should be observed that this antithesis between the human and divine nature in Christ is not here intended to carry with it any disparagement of the former. Rather the Apostle wishes to bring out the completeness and fulness of the dignity of Christ, as exhibited on both its sides. He is at once the Jewish Messiah (and with the Jewish section of the Church at Rome this fact would carry great weight) and the Son of God.

**By the resurrection from the dead.**—Strictly, *by the resurrection of the dead*. There is a slight distinction to be observed between the two phrases. It is not "by *His* resurrection from the dead," but in an abstract and general sense, "by *the* resurrection

of the dead"—by that resurrection of which Christ was the firstfruits.

<sup>(5)</sup> Through Him—through Christ the Son—he, Paul, had received his own special endowment and commission to bring over the Gentiles into that state of loyal and dutiful submission which has its root in faith; all which would tend to the glory of His name.

**We have received.**—The Apostle means himself alone, but the plural is used (as frequently in Greek) with delicate tact, so as to avoid an appearance of egotism or assumption.

**Grace and apostleship.**—Grace is here divine favour manifested in various ways, but especially in his conversion. St. Augustine notes that grace is common to the Apostle with all believers—his apostleship is something special and peculiar; yet apostleship is an instance, or case, of grace. Origen distinguishes between the two—"grace for the endurance of labours, apostleship for authority in preaching;" but both terms are perhaps somewhat wider than this. Apostleship includes all those privileges which St. Paul possessed as an Apostle; grace is all those privileges that he possessed as a Christian. At the same time, in either case the meaning tends in the direction of that particular object which is expressed in the next clause. The light in which the Apostle valued most the gifts that had been bestowed upon him, was inasmuch as they enabled him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

**For obedience to the faith**

faith<sup>1</sup> among all nations, |<sup>1</sup> Or, to the obedience of faith. | whom are ye also the  
 for his name: <sup>(6)</sup> among | called of Jesus Christ: <sup>(7)</sup> to

among all nations.—Literally, *For* (to produce) *obedience of faith* (the obedience which springs from faith) *among all the Gentiles*.

Faith is not here equivalent to “the faith”—a positive body of doctrine received and believed—but, in its strict sense, that active habit and attitude of mind by which the Christian shows his devotion and loyalty to Christ, and his total dependence on Him (Gal. ii. 19).

**For his name.**—*For His name's sake.* “His,” *i.e.*, Christ's. The whole of that divine economy of which St. Paul himself forms part, tends to the glory of Christ. The Apostle's call to his office, his special endowment for his ministry, the success of his preaching among the Gentiles, as they proceed from Christ, so also have for their object the extension of His kingdom.

<sup>(6)</sup> **Among whom are ye also.**—It is, perhaps, best not to put a comma at “also.” Among these Gentile churches, to which I am specially commissioned, you Romans too are called to the same obedience of faith, and therefore I have the more right to address you.

**Called of Jesus Christ**—*i.e.*, not “called *by* Jesus Christ,” but “called and so belonging to Jesus Christ,” “your Master's own elect ones.” (Comp. LXX., 1 Kings i. 41, where the words “guests of Adonijah” are in the Greek “called of Adonijah.”)

<sup>(7)</sup> **In Rome.**—It is to be observed that one MS. of some importance, the Codex Boernerianus, omits these words. The same MS., with some others, alters the next phrase, “beloved of God,” to “in

the love of God,” thus substituting for the special address to the Romans a general address to all “who are in the love of God.” Traces of a similar reading appear to be found in the two earliest commentators on the Epistle, Origen (*ob.* A.D. 253) and the Ambrosian Hilary (A.D. 366—384). The Codex Boernerianus also omits the words “at Rome” in verse 15, while at the end of the Epistle it interposes a blank space between chaps. xiv. and xv. These peculiarities give some support to the theory that the Epistle to the Romans was circulated, most probably with the sanction of the Apostle himself, in the form of a general treatise, with the personal matter eliminated. This theory will be found more fully discussed in the Notes on the last two chapters.

**Beloved of God.**—Reconciled to God through the death of His Son, and therefore with the barrier that separated you from His love removed.

**Called to be saints.**—Consecrated or set apart by His own special summons, brought within the sphere and range of the holy life.

These epithets, high-sounding as they are, if applied by a modern writer to a modern church, would seem to be indiscriminating or conventional, but as coming from St. Paul they have not yet lost their freshness and reality. They correspond to no actual condition of things, but to that ideal condition in which all Christians, by the mere fact of their being Christians, are supposed to be. They are

all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(8) First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of through

Chap. i. 8-15.  
St. Paul and the Roman Church.

members of the new Messianic kingdom, and share in all its privileges. The Apostle will not let them forget this, but holds it up before them as a mirror to convict them if they are unfaithful.

**Grace . . . and peace.**—May God and Christ look favourably upon you, and may you enjoy, as the result of that favour, the peace and composure of mind which is the proper attribute of the Christian.

The terms "grace" and "peace" nearly correspond to two ordinary forms of Jewish salutation, the first of which has also something of a counterpart among the Greeks and Romans. But here, as elsewhere, the Apostle has given to them a heightened and deepened Christian signification. Grace is the peculiar state of favour with God and Christ, into which the sincere Christian is admitted. Peace is the state of mind resulting from the sense of that favour.

"The joy Thy favour gives  
Let me again obtain."

(8-17) The Apostle congratulates the Romans on the good report of them that he had heard. He had long and earnestly desired to visit them in person. Yes, even in Rome he must preach the gospel—of which he is not ashamed, but proud. It is fraught with nothing less than salvation itself alike to Jew and Gentile. In it is revealed that great plan or scheme of God by which man is made just before Him.

To the modern reader who does not make an effort to enter into the mind of the Apostle, the language of these verses may seem too high-pitched for the occasion. It is not easy to realise the intensity with which St. Paul felt on what in any degree, however small, affected the spiritual life of those who acknowledged the same Master that he did. He had few of those petty distractions that we have. The whole force of his rich and impressible nature was concentrated upon this one subject; and his expressions reflect the state of tension in which he felt himself to be. Thus it is that they take a solemnity and earnestness to which an ordinary correspondence would not attain.

(9) **I thank my God through Jesus Christ.**—How can the Apostle be said to thank God *through* Jesus Christ? Christ is, as it were, the medium through whom God has been brought into close relation to man. Hence all intercourse between God and man is represented as passing through Him. He is not only the divine *Logos* by whom God is revealed to man, but He is also the Head of humanity by whom the tribute of thanks and praise is offered to God.

**Throughout the whole World.**—A hyperbole, which is the more natural as the Apostle is speaking of Rome, the centre and metropolis of the world as he knew it.

out the whole world. <sup>(9)</sup> For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit<sup>1</sup> in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in

<sup>1</sup> Or. in my spirit.

my prayers; <sup>(10)</sup> making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. <sup>(11)</sup> For I long

<sup>(9)</sup> Proof that the Apostle takes this lively interest in the Roman Church conveyed through a solemn adjuration.

**Whom I serve.**—The word for “serve” is strictly used for voluntary service paid to God, especially in the way of sacrifice and outward worship. Here it is somewhat metaphorical: “Whom I serve, not so much with outward acts as with the ritual of the spirit.”

**With my spirit.**—“Spirit” is with St. Paul the highest part or faculty in the nature of man. It is the seat of his higher consciousness—the organ by which he communicates with God. “Certainly man is of kin to the beasts by his body; and if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature.” (Bacon, *Essay on Atheism*.) Of itself the “spirit” of man is neutral. When brought into contact with the Spirit of God, it is capable of a truly religious life; but apart from this influence, it is apt to fall under the dominion of the “flesh”—*i.e.*, of those evil appetites and desires to which man is exposed by his physical organisation.

**In the gospel of his Son.**—The sphere to which the Apostle feels himself called, and in which this heart-worship of his finds its field of operation, is the defence and preaching, &c., of the gospel.

<sup>(9-11)</sup> It is the constant subject of the Apostle's prayers that he may succeed in making his way to Rome; so anxious is he to open his heart to that Church in personal apostolic intercourse.

<sup>(10)</sup> **If by any means now at length.**—Note this accumulation of particles, denoting the earnestness of his desire. “All this time I have been longing to come to you, and now at last I hope that it may be put in my power.”

<sup>(11)</sup> **That I may impart unto you some spiritual gift.**—Such gifts as would naturally flow to one Christian (or to many collectively) from the personal presence and warm sympathy of another; in St. Paul's case, heightened in proportion to the wealth and elevation of his own spiritual consciousness and life. His head and his heart alike are full to overflowing, and he longs to disburden himself and impart some of these riches to the Romans. Inasmuch as he regards all his own religious advancement and experience as the result of the Spirit working within him, he calls the fruits of that advancement and experience “spiritual gifts.” All the apostolic gifts—miraculous as well as non-miraculous—would be included in this expression. Indeed, we may believe that the Apostle would hardly draw the distinction that we do between the two kinds. Both alike were in

to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; <sup>(12)</sup> that is, that I may be comforted together with

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in you.*

you<sup>1</sup> by the mutual faith both of you and me. <sup>(13)</sup> Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was

his eyes the direct gift of the Spirit.

**To the end ye may be established.**—That they may grow and be confirmed and strengthened in the faith. As a rule the great outpouring of spiritual gifts was at the first foundation of a church. St. Paul was not the founder of the church at Rome, but he hoped to be able to contribute to its advance and consolidation.

<sup>(12)</sup> **That is, that I may be comforted.**—A beautiful touch of true courtesy. He is anxious to see them, that he may impart to them some spiritual gift. But no! He hastily draws back and corrects himself. He does not wish it to be implied that it is for him only to impart, and for them only to receive. He will not assume any such air of superiority. In the impulse of the moment, and in the expansiveness of his own heart, he had seemed to put it so; but his real meaning was that they should receive mutual comfort and edification.

Strictly, the idea of *mutual* comfort is drawn from the two verses combined, not from this singly. In the last verse the Romans were the subject: "That ye may be established." Here St. Paul himself is the subject: "That I may be comforted."

**Comforted.**—The Greek word has rather more of the sense of our "encouraged," though the idea of

"comfort" is also contained in it. It is a similar word to that which is translated "comforter" in several passages in St. John's Gospel, chaps. xiv., xv., xvi.

**Together with you.**—Literally, *that I may at the same time be comforted among you*; that is, "that I may be comforted at the same time that you are comforted, by my intercourse with you, through that mutual faith which acts and reacts upon each of us." The Apostle looks to obtain benefit from his intercourse with the Roman Christians. He expects that their faith will help to increase his own.

There is a truth underlying the Apostle's courtesy which is not mere compliment. The most advanced Christian will receive something from the humblest. There are very few men whose "spirits are not finely touched" *somewhere*; and St. Paul was conscious that even an Apostle might not be equally strong at every point.

<sup>(13)</sup> In the previous verses the Apostle has been speaking of his *desire*; here he speaks of his *purpose*, which is one step nearer to the realisation. He had intended to add the Roman Church to the harvest that he was engaged in gathering in.

**Let.**—This is, of course, an archaism for "hindered," "pre-



let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among<sup>1</sup> you also, even as among other Gentiles. <sup>(14)</sup> I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in you.*

the unwise. <sup>(15)</sup> So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. <sup>(16)</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of

Chap. i. 16-17.  
The great thesis.

vented." The Greek is literally, "and was prevented hitherto."

It is hardly worth while to speculate, as some commentators have done, on the causes that may have hindered the Apostle from going to Rome. In a life like his there may have been many.

<sup>(14, 15)</sup> Why is the Apostle so eager to come to them? Because an obligation, a duty, is laid upon him. (Comp. 1 Cor. ix. 16, "necessity is laid upon me.") He must preach the gospel to men of all classes and tongues; Rome itself is no exception.

<sup>(14)</sup> To the Greeks, and to the Barbarians.—The Apostle does not intend to place the Romans any more in the one class than in the other. He merely means "to all mankind, no matter what their nationality or culture." The classification is exhaustive. It must be remembered that the Greeks called all who did not speak their own language "Barbarians," and the Apostle, writing from Greece, adopts their point of view.

Wise and . . . unwise.—(Comp. 1 Cor. i. 20, 26—28.) The gospel was at first most readily received by the poor and unlearned, but it did not therefore follow that culture and education were by any means excluded. St. Paul himself was a conspicuous instance to the con-

trary. And so, in the next century, the Church which began with such leaders as Ignatius and Polycarp, could number among its members before the century was out, Irenæus, and Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria, and Hippolytus, and Origen—the last the most learned man of his time.

<sup>(15)</sup> Accordingly, so far as depends upon his own will, and not upon the external ruling of events by God, the Apostle is ready to preach the gospel, as to the other Gentiles, so also at Rome.

So, as much as in me is.—There are three ways of taking this sentence, though the meaning remains in any case the same:—(1) "I (literally, *that which concerns me*) am ready." But it is doubtful whether this is sanctioned by Greek usage. (2) Still keeping the two phrases separate, "As far as concerns me (there is) readiness." (3) Combining them, "The readiness or inclination on my part (literally, *The on-my-part readiness or inclination*) is," &c. Perhaps of these three, the last, which looks the most unnatural in English, is the most natural in the Greek.

<sup>(16)</sup> The Apostle will not be ashamed of his mission, even in the metropolis of the world. He cannot be ashamed of a scheme so

Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;

to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. <sup>(17)</sup> For therein is the righteousness of

beneficent and so grand. The gospel that he preaches is that mighty agency which God Himself has set in motion, and the object of which is the salvation of all who put their faith in it, to whatever nation or race they may belong. He has, perhaps, in his mind the reception he had met with in other highly civilised cities. (Comp. Acts xvii. 32.) He had himself once found a "stumbling-block" in the humiliation of the Cross; now, so far from being ashamed of it, it is just that of which he is most proud. The preaching of the Cross is the cardinal point of the whole gospel.

**Of Christ.**—These words are wanting in the oldest MSS., and should be omitted.

**Power of God.**—A powerful agency put forth by God Himself—the lever, as it were, by which He would move the world.

**Unto salvation.**—The object of this gospel is salvation—to open the blessings of the Messianic kingdom to mankind.

**To the Jew first.**—Here again we have another exhaustive division of mankind. "Greek" is intended to cover all who are not "Jews." Before the Apostle was making, what may be called, the secular classification of men, here he makes the religious classification. From his exceptional privileges the Jew was literally placed in a class alone.

It is not quite certain that the word "first" ought not to be omitted. In any case the sense is

the same. St. Paul certainly assigns a prerogative position to the Jews. They have an "advantage" (chap. iii. 1, 2). To them belong the special privileges of the first dispensation (chap. ix. 4, 5). They are the original stock of the olive tree, in comparison with which the Gentiles are only as wild branches grafted in (chap. xi. 17 *et seq.*). It was only right that the salvation promised to their forefathers should be offered first to them, as it is also said expressly in the Fourth Gospel, that "salvation is of the Jews" (John iv. 22).

**First.**—A difficult question of textual criticism is raised here. The word is not found in the Vatican MS. in a citation by Tertullian (*circa* 200 A.D.), and in the Græco-Latin Codex Boernerianus at Dresden. In all other MSS. and versions it appears. The evidence for the omission is thus small in quantity, though good in quality; and though it shows, in any case, a considerable diffusion in Egypt and Africa as far back as the second century, internal considerations do not tell strongly either way, but it seems a degree more probable that the word was accidentally dropped in some early copy. Of recent editions, it is bracketed by Lachmann, and placed in the margin by Tregelles and Vaughan.

<sup>(17)</sup> The gospel attains its end, the salvation of the believer, by revealing the righteousness of God, *i.e.*, the plan or process designed by Him for men to become just or righteous in His sight. The essential

part on man's side, the beginning and end of that plan, is Faith. For which there was authority in the Old Testament, where it is said, "The just shall live by faith."

### The righteousness of God.

—By this is not meant, as might, perhaps, be supposed, an attribute of the divine nature—as if the essential righteousness of God were first made known through the gospel. St. Paul goes on to show in verses 19, 20, that so much at least of the nature of God might be known without any supernatural revelation. "Of God" means in the present instance "which proceeds from God." And the "righteousness" which thus "proceeds from God" is that condition of righteousness in man into which he enters by his participation in the Messianic kingdom. The whole object of the coming of the Messiah was to make men "righteous" before God. This was done more especially by the death of Christ upon the cross, which, as we learn from chap. iii. 24—26, had the effect of making God "propitious" towards men. The benefit of this act is secured to all who make good their claim to be considered members of the Messianic kingdom by a loyal adhesion to the Messiah. Such persons are treated as if they were "righteous," though the righteousness that is thus attributed to them is not any actual merit of their own, but an ideal condition in which they are placed by God. This is the well-known doctrine of justification by faith. (See *Excursus A: On the Meaning of the word Righteousness in the Epistle to the Romans, and Excursus E: On the Doctrine of Justification by Faith and Imputed Righteousness.*)

**Revealed.**—God's purpose of thus justifying men is in process of being revealed or declared in the gospel. It is revealed theoretically in the express statements of the way in which man may be justified. It is revealed practically in the heartfelt acceptance of those statements and the change of life which they involved. To the Romans the moment of revelation was that in which they first heard the gospel. St. Paul wishes them to know the full significance—the philosophy, as it might be called—of that which they had heard.

**From faith to faith.**—It is by faith that man first lays hold on the gospel, and its latest product is a heightened and intensified faith. Apart from faith, the gospel remains null and void for the individual. It is not realised. But when it has been once realised and taken home to the man's self, its tendency is to confirm and strengthen that very faculty by which it was apprehended. It does that for which the disciples prayed when they said, "Lord, increase our faith" (Luke xvii. 5).

**The just shall live by faith.**—The words are part of the consolatory answer which the prophet Habakkuk receives in the stress of the Chaldean invasion. Though his irresistible hosts sweep over the land, the righteous man who puts his trust in God shall live. Perhaps St. Paul intended the words "by faith" to be taken rather with "the just" than as they stand in the English version. "The just by faith," or "The man whose righteousness is based on faith," shall live.

The Apostle uses the word "faith" in his own peculiar and pregnant sense. But this is naturally led up to by the way in

God revealed from faith to faith : as it is written, The just shall live by faith.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Hab. 2  
4.

Chap. i. 18, et seq. An offending world; natural religion corrupted.

(18) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven

<sup>1</sup> Or, to them.

against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; (19) because that which may be known of God is manifest in them;<sup>1</sup> for God hath

which it was used by Habakkuk. The intense personal trust and reliance which the Jew felt in the God of his fathers is directed by the Christian to Christ, and is further developed into an active energy of devotion.

"Faith," as understood by St. Paul, is not merely head-belief, a purely intellectual process such as that of which St. James spoke when he said "the devils also believe and tremble;" neither is it merely "trust," a passive dependence upon an Unseen Power; but it is a further stage of feeling developed out of these, a current of emotion setting strongly in the direction of its object, an ardent and vital apprehension of that object, and a firm and loyal attachment to it. (See *Excursus B: On the Meaning of the word Faith.*)

(18) As a preliminary stage to this revelation of justification and of faith, there is another, which is its opposite—a revelation and disclosure of divine wrath. The proof is seen in the present condition both of the Gentile and Jewish world. And first of the Gentile world, verses 18—32.

**Revealed.**—The revelation of righteousness is, while the Apostle writes, being made in the person of Christ and in the salvation offered by Him. The revelation of wrath is to be inferred from the

actual condition—the degradation doubly degraded—in which sin leaves its votaries.

**From heaven.**—The wrath of God is revealed "from heaven," inasmuch as the state of things in which it is exhibited is the divinely-inflicted penalty for previous guilt. Against that guilt, shown in outrage against all religion and all morality, it is directed.

**Ungodliness and unrighteousness.**—These two words stand respectively for offences against religion and offences against morality.

**Who hold the truth in unrighteousness.**—Rather, *who suppress and thwart the truth*—the light of conscience that is in them *by unrighteousness*. Conscience tells them what is right, but the will, actuated by wicked motives, prevents them from obeying its dictates. "The truth" is their knowledge of right, from whatever source derived, which finds expression in conscience. "Hold" is the word which we find translated "hinder" in 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7—having the force of *to hold down, or suppress*.

(19) The Apostle goes on to show how the Gentiles came to have such a knowledge of right, and how they repressed and contravened it.

They had it, because all the knowledge that mankind generally possessed of God they also possessed.

showed *it* unto them.  
 (20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and

<sup>1</sup> Or, that they may be

Godhead; so that they are<sup>1</sup> without excuse: (21) because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and

So much as could be known without special revelation they knew.

**That which may be known.**

—Rather, *that which is* (generally and universally) *known*—the truths of so-called “natural religion.”

**Is manifest in them.**—Manifest or imprinted upon their consciences, because God had so imprinted it upon them. The marginal rendering, “to them,” is hardly tenable.

(20) For, though there were parts of God’s being into which the eye could not penetrate, still they were easily to be inferred from the character of His visible creation, which bore throughout the stamp of Omnipotence and Divinity.

**The invisible things of him.**—His invisible attributes, afterwards explained as “His eternal power and Godhead.”

**Are clearly seen . . . by the things that are made.**—There is something of a play upon words here. “The unseen is seen—discerned by the eye of the mind—being inferred or perceived by the help of that which is made,” *i.e.*, as we should say, by the phenomena of external nature.

**Even his eternal power and Godhead.**—A summary expression for those attributes which, apart from revelation, were em-

bodied in the idea of God. Of these “power” is the most obvious. St. Paul does not go into the questions that have been raised in recent times as to the other qualities which are to be inferred as existing in the Author of nature; but he sums them up under a name that might be used as well by a Pagan philosopher as by a Christian—the attributes included in the one term “Godhead.” *Divinity* would be, perhaps, a more correct translation of the expression. What is meant is “*divine nature*,” rather than “*divine personality*.”

**So that they are without excuse.**—They could not plead ignorance.

(21) They knew enough of God to know that thanks and praise were due to Him; but neither of these did they offer. They put aside the natural instinct of adoration, and fell to speculations, which only led them farther and farther from the truth. The new knowledge of which they went in quest proved to be fiction; the old knowledge that they had was obscured and lost by their folly. Starting with two things—a portion of enlightenment on the one hand, and the natural tendency of the human mind to error on the other, the latter prevailed, and the former became eclipsed.

their foolish heart was darkened. <sup>(22)</sup> Professing themselves to be wise, Chap. i. 23—26. they became Idolatry and its moral consequences. fools, <sup>(23)</sup> and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God <sup>a</sup> into an image made

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 106.  
20.

like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. <sup>(24)</sup> Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own

But became vain in their imaginations.—They were frustrated—reached no good and sound result with their speculations.

**Their foolish heart.**—Not the same word as “fools,” in the next verse. *Their unintelligent heart*; their heart which, by itself, was endowed with no special faculty of discernment such as to enable them to dispense with the enlightenment from above.

<sup>(22, 23)</sup> Relying upon their own wisdom, they wandered farther and farther from true wisdom, falling into the contradiction of supposing that the eternal and immutable Essence of God could be represented by the perishable figures of man, or bird, or quadruped, or insect.

<sup>(22)</sup> **They became fools.**—They were made fools. It is not merely that they expose their real folly, but that folly is itself judicially inflicted by God as a punishment for the first step of declension from Him.

<sup>(23)</sup> **Into an image made like to.**—*For the likeness of the image of mortal man.* This anthropomorphism applies more especially to the religions of Greece and Rome. Representations of the Deity under the form of beasts were most com-

mon in Egypt. “Worship was universally paid to cattle, lions, cats, dogs, weasels, and otters; among the birds, to the sparrowhawk, the hoopoe, the stork, and the sheldrake; and among fish, to the eel and lepidotus. Besides these, other creatures received local worship. The sheep was worshipped in Sais and the Thebais, but sacrificed and eaten in Lycopolis. The hippopotamus in the district of Papremis, and the crocodile in the greater part of the land, were considered specially sacred; but the latter was chased and eaten in Tentyra and Apollinopolis. The sacred serpent Thermapis, which served as head-gear for Isis, had holes in all the temples, where it was fed with veal fat.” “Among the sacred beasts,” says Dollinger, “the first place was given to the divine bulls, of which the Egyptians worshipped four.” No doubt the images in Greece and the beasts in Egypt were by some of the people regarded only as *symbols* of the Deity, but it was in all probability only a small minority who were capable of drawing this distinction.

<sup>(24—32)</sup> Hence they fell into a still lower depth; for, in anger at their perversion of the truth, God refrained from checking their downward course. He left them to

bodies between themselves: <sup>(25)</sup> who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

<sup>(26)</sup> For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that

which is against nature: <sup>(27)</sup> and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. <sup>(28)</sup> And even as they did not like to

follow their own evil bent. Their idolatry developed into shameless immorality and unnatural crimes. At last the extreme limit was reached. As they voluntarily forsook God, so He forsook them. They ran through the whole catalogue of sins, and the cup of their iniquity was full.

In the passage taken as a whole, three steps or stages are indicated: (1) verses 18—23, idolatry; (2) verses 24—27, unnatural sins allowed by God as the punishment for this idolatry; (3) verses 28—32, a still more complete and radical depravity also regarded as penally inflicted. The first step is taken by the free choice of man, but as the breach gradually widens, the wrath of God is more and more revealed. He interferes less and less to save a sinful world from its fate. It is to be noted that the Apostle speaks in general terms, and the precise proportions of human depravity and of divine judicial impulse are not to be clearly determined.

<sup>(25)</sup> **Who changed the truth of God into a lie.**—They ceased

to worship God as He is—in His own true essential nature, and worshipped false gods instead. The phrase “into a lie” is literally, *with a lie*, the “lie” being regarded as the instrument by which the substitution is made. By “a lie” is meant here “false gods,” who are the supreme embodiment of falsehood. (Comp. Isa. xlv. 20; Jer. xiii. 25; xvi. 19, &c.)

The introduction of the doxology in this verse is due to an impulse of reverential feeling. Shocked at the language which he finds himself using, and at the connection in which the most Holy Name has been mentioned, the Apostle turns aside for a moment to testify to his own humble adoration.

<sup>(27)</sup> **In themselves**—i.e., upon themselves, upon their own persons thus shamefully dishonoured.

**That recompence of their error which was meet.**—The “error” is the turning from God to idols. The “recompence of the error” is seen in these unnatural excesses to which the heathen have been delivered up.

<sup>(28)</sup> **Even as.**—Rightly translated in the Authorised version:

retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; <sup>(29)</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness,

covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, <sup>(30)</sup> backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient

“as” is not here equivalent to “because,” but means rather, *just in like proportion as*. The degree of God’s punishment corresponded exactly to the degree of man’s deflection from God.

**Did not like.**—There is a play upon words here with “reprobate” in the clause following, which cannot be retained in English. “As they reprobated the knowledge of God, so He gave them up to a reprobate mind.” As they would have nothing to do with Him, so He would have nothing to do with them. “Reprobate” means, properly, tried and found wanting, and therefore cast away as worthless.

**To retain God in their knowledge.**—The word for knowledge here means “exact,” “advanced,” “thorough knowledge.” They refused to hold the true idea of God so as to grow and increase in the knowledge of it.

**Those things which are not convenient.**—That which is unbecoming, disgraceful.

**Fornication.**—This word is wanting in the best MSS. and should be omitted, as also the word “implacable” in verse 31.

**Wickedness . . . maliciousness.**—These two words appear to be related together, so that the latter expresses rather the vicious disposition—vicious in the special

sense, the disposition to do hurt to others—the former rather the active exercise of it. Similar catalogues of sins are given in other of St. Paul’s Epistles, as, for example, 2 Cor. xiii. 30; Gal. v. 19 *et seq.*; Eph. v. 3, 4; 1 Tim. i. 9, 10; 2 Tim. iii. 2 *et seq.*

**Murder, debate.**—By “full of murder” the Apostle means “full of murderous thoughts.” “Debate” is the spirit of strife and contention generally; not as the English would seem to imply, specially verbal contention.

<sup>(29, 30)</sup> **Whisperers, backbiters.**—In the Greek the idea of secrecy is contained chiefly in the first of these words. “Secret backbiters and slanderers of every kind.”

<sup>(30)</sup> **Haters of God.**—Rather, perhaps, *hated by God*. There seem to be no examples of the active sense. The Apostle apparently throws in one emphatic word summing up the catalogue as far as it has gone; he then resumes with a new class of sins. Hitherto he has spoken of sins of malice, now he turns to sins of pride.

**Despiteful, proud, boasters.**—The three words correspond to the distinction between act, thought, and word. The first implies distinctly insolence in outward bearing; it is the word translated “injurious” in 1 Tim. i. 13. The second is a strong self-esteem mixed



to parents, <sup>(31)</sup> without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: <sup>(32)</sup> who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the

<sup>1</sup> Or, consent with them.

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same, but have pleasure in them <sup>1</sup> that do them.

## CHAPTER II.—

<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest:

Chap. ii. 1—29.  
The judgment of God admits of no exceptions.

with contempt for others. (See 2 Tim. iii. 2.) The third is used especially of boastfulness or brag-gadocio in language.

<sup>(31)</sup> **Without understanding**—*i. e.*, without moral or spiritual understanding; incapable of discriminating between right and wrong, expedient and inexpedient. St. Paul prays that the Colossians may possess this faculty (Col. i. 9).

**Without natural affection.**—The affection founded upon natural relationship—*e. g.*, between parent and child, husband and wife, brother and sister. In illustration of this particular expression, we may remember that infanticide and divorce were very common at this period.

<sup>(32)</sup> **Knowing.**—Again the word for “full or thorough knowledge.” With full knowledge of the sentence of eternal death which is in store for them.

They show that it is no mere momentary yielding to the force of temptation or of passion, but a radical perversion of conscience and reason, by the fact that they not only practise such things themselves, but in cold blood commend and applaud those who practise them.

With reference to the truth of the description which is here given of the ancient pagan world, see *Excurs-*

*sus C: On the State of the Heathen World at the Time of St. Paul.*

**Judgment.**—Just decree or sentence.

## II.

<sup>(1—29)</sup> Though such is the guilt of the Gentile, there is no one to judge him, for he who would take upon himself to judge does the very same things himself. And the justice of God has only one standard by which all mankind alike will be judged—truth. Or has he any vain idea that he will escape? Does he count lightly and carelessly upon the long-suffering and forbearance of God? The proper object of that forbearance is to lead him to repentance. But he is hard and impenitent, and therefore all that is in store for him is not pardon, but wrath. The judgment of God will be according to the strictest laws of justice. It will reward the good and punish the wicked. All that the privileges of the Jew will gain for him will be that he should be the first to be either rewarded or punished. Neither Jew nor Gentile will have any advantage. The Gentile cannot plead his freedom from law, for he has a law written in his conscience; the Jew cannot plead his enjoyment of the Law, for he has broken all its provisions.

for wherein thou judgest  
another, thou condemnest  
thyself; for thou that  
judgest doest the same

things. <sup>(2)</sup> But we are sure  
that the judgment of God  
is according to truth  
against them which com-

These old ethnological distinctions are quite confused. The real distinction between men is purely spiritual. Jewish birth and its outward sign are nothing. Men will be judged by what they are at heart.

The argument of the chapter is continuous, and does not admit of any real break. Verse 1 is the link of connection with what has gone before; verses 2, 3, 6—13 lay down emphatically the general principles of God's judgment; verses 14—16 apply these to the Gentile; verses 17—24 apply them to the Jew; and verses 25—29 reiterate the conclusion that Jew and Gentile are both as one in the sight of God.

The proposition with which the chapter begins, though general in form, is particular in substance. When the Apostle says, "Whosoever thou art that judgest," he really means the Jews. The Gentiles, being the persons upon whom judgment is supposed to be passed, are excluded, and the class indicated by "whosoever" must therefore be the Jews. At the same time, the proposition is presented in a shape which transcends divisions of race. The special application to the Jew is suggested rather than expressed. This is eminently characteristic of the Apostle's large and comprehensive way of handling history and the phenomena of humanity.

<sup>(1)</sup> **Therefore.**—The description just given of the state of one section

of the human race contains implicitly the condemnation of the other; for it is equally applicable to both.

**Wherein thou judgest another.**—By the very act of sitting in judgment upon your fellow-man, you pass sentence upon yourself. You declare those acts to be criminal of which you are yourself guilty.

The words in the Greek translated by "judge" and "condemn," are related to each other much the same as the summing up of a judge is related to his verdict. In the first, sentence is in process of being passed, but there is still a possibility of acquittal; in the second, sentence has been definitely given in a sense adverse to the accused. "Another," rather, strictly, *the other, thy fellow, or neighbour.*

<sup>(2)</sup> **We are sure.**—St. Paul assumes that this will be acknowledged as a general principle by his readers, whether Jew or Gentile, as well as by himself. There is still a strong under-current of allusion to the way in which the Jew was apt to fall back upon his privileges. "Do not think that they will save you from standing before precisely the same tribunal as the Gentiles." The Jews, it seems, had an idea that the Gentiles only would be judged, while they would be able to claim admission into the Messianic kingdom as theirs by right of birth.

**According to truth.**—The principle on which God's judgment will proceed will be that of truth or reality as opposed to appearance, worldly status, formal precedence,

mit such things. <sup>(3)</sup> And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of

God? <sup>(4)</sup> Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

&c. It will ask what a man is, not to what race he belongs.

<sup>(3)</sup> **That thou shalt escape.**—Emphatic. “Are *you*—because you are a Jew—to be the only exception to this rule?”

<sup>(4, 5)</sup> Another alternative is put forward, which has less to do with the distinction of Jew and Gentile, and in which the Apostle keeps more closely to the general form that his argument has assumed: “Or do you think to take refuge in the goodness, the benevolence and longsuffering of God?” True it is that He is good, and “willeth not the death of a sinner,” but His goodness is not absolute and unconditional. Its object is not to interfere with the just punishment of sin, but to lead men to repent of their sins, and so to obtain remission.

<sup>(4)</sup> **Riches.**—In this metaphorical sense, with reference to the divine attributes, this word is peculiar to and characteristic of St. Paul. It is thus used twelve times in his Epistles, and not besides in the rest of the New Testament, including the Epistle to the Hebrews. This is one of those instances where the evidence of style is important. Of the twelve places where this use occurs, eight are in the Epistles of the Imprisonment, three in the Epistle to the Romans, and one in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. The later and earlier

Epistles are thus linked together. A similar use is not found in the Pastoral Epistles, but it should be remembered that arguments of this kind are more important on the positive side than on the negative. It is an inference of some strength that if a peculiar word or usage is found in two separate books, those books are by the same author, but the absence of such a word or usage goes a very short way towards the opposite negative conclusion if other resemblances or characteristic points are not wanting.

**Forbearance and longsuffering.**—We may compare with this the Sinaitic revelation given in Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering.” The moral character and relation to His people thus attributed to the Deity was a feature which specially distinguished the religion of the Old Testament from that of the surrounding heathen nations.

We may observe that the fallacy against which the Apostle is protesting in these verses is not yet extinct. The goodness of God—*i.e.*, His disposition to promote the happiness of His creatures—is insisted upon as if it were unconditional, as if it were a disposition to promote their happiness simply and without any reference to what they were in themselves. We do not find that this is the case; but rather the constitution of nature, as well as reve-

(5) But after thy hardness  
and impenitent heart trea-  
surest up unto thyself  
wrath against the day of

<sup>a</sup> Jas. 5  
<sub>3</sub>

wrath and revelation of  
the righteous judgment of  
God; <sup>a</sup> (6) who will render  
to every man according to

lation, tells us that happiness is annexed to certain acts and a certain frame of mind, and that is withheld from all that is not consonant with this. The bliss of the Christian is reserved for the Christian, and is not showered promiscuously upon all men. Otherwise free-will would have no office, and righteous dealing no reward.

(6) The one condition upon which the goodness of God will come into operation, you directly contravene. Instead of being penitent, you are impenitent, and therefore the load of wrath which you have been accumulating against yourself remains unremoved. It is only waiting for the day of judgment to discharge itself upon you.

**Treasurest.**—The treasuring up of wrath is opposed to that heavenly treasure spoken of in Matt. vi. 20. The guilt of man is accumulated little by little. The punishment will be discharged upon him all at once, in one overwhelming tide.

**Against the day of wrath.**  
—Strictly, *in the day of wrath*—*i.e.*, wrath to be outpoured upon the day of wrath. "The great and terrible day of the Lord" is a conception running through all the prophetic writings. (Comp. also, in the New Testament, Luke xvii. 30; Acts ii. 20; 1 Cor. i. 8; v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 14; 1 Thess. v. 2, 4; 2 Thess. ii. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12; Rev. vi. 17; xvi. 14.)

**Revelation.**—There is a double revelation of God's wrath, the one inchoate, the other final. The former revelation, that described in the last chapter, is seen in the depraved condition of the heathen world; the latter revelation is represented as a judgment or trial reserved for the consummation of all things.

(6) **According to his deeds.**  
—The Apostle here lays down with unmistakable definiteness and precision the doctrine that *works*, what a man has *done*, the moral tenor of his life, will be the standard by which he will be judged at the last day. There can be no question that this is the consistent doctrine of Scripture. (Comp. Matt. xvi. 27; xxv. 31 *et seq.*; 2 Cor. v. 10; Gal. vi. 7 *et seq.*; Eph. vi. 8; Col. iii. 24; Rev. ii. 23; xx. 12; xxii. 12.) How is this to be reconciled with the main theme of the Epistle, the doctrine of justification by *faith*?

We may observe (1) that the theology of St. Paul has two main sides or elements: (a) that which is common to all the Jewish schools, developed in direct line from the teaching of the Old Testament, and (b) that which is peculiar to himself, or developed from minute and scattered germs in the Old Testament or from the teaching of our Lord. The doctrine of justification by faith belongs to the latter category; that of final recompense in accordance with moral action belongs to the former. Hence we are prepared to find a difference of termin-

ology without any necessary divergence of idea. (2) If we accordingly separate the two doctrines, and look at each in the connection to which it properly belongs, we shall see that they correspond to a difference in the point of view. (a) The two great classes into which mankind will be divided at the judgment will be determined by *works*, by the tangible outcome of their lives. No opposition is thought of here between the inward and the outward. Of course such an opposition is possible, but it is not present to the mind of the writer. The rule followed is simply that laid down in Matt. vii. 16, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The nature of his actions, as the expression of his character, will decide whether a man is to be classed among "the good" or among "the wicked." But (b) if we isolate the individual, and consider him no longer in relation to other men and to the great classification of mankind, but in his own intimate relations to the Judge and to the judgment, a totally different train of thought is suggested. If the conduct of the believer is to be regarded merely in the light of obedience to law (in other words, as a question of *works*), then he can neither claim nor expect any reward at all. He has broken more commandments than he has kept, and to break the Law, though only on a single point, is to lay himself open to its penalties. In any case, the extent of the reward promised to him far exceeds in proportion the extent of his obedience. It cannot therefore be by works, but must be due to a divine act, and that act is conditioned by faith. In consideration, not of any fulfilment of the Law, but that the main tenor and direction of a man's

life has been right as proved by his faith in Christ, the grace of God is extended towards him, and makes up that in which he is behind. Though not deserving, in a strict sense, the bliss of the Messianic kingdom, the believer is, nevertheless, admitted to it on account of his faith in the great Head of that kingdom, and his participation through that faith in the Christian scheme. That scheme has been wrought out *objectively*, i.e., independently of him, but he by a subjective act, in other words, by *faith*, appropriates it to himself. (3) Bearing in mind this difference in the sequence of the thought, the apparent contradiction between the two doctrines is resolved. In the doctrine of final retribution there is no opposition between faith and works. In the doctrine of justification there is no opposition between works and faith. In the former, works may be regarded as the evidence of faith; in the latter, they may be regarded as its natural and necessary outcome. They may, it is true, be set in opposition, as we shall find them later on by St. Paul himself, but that is by a special abstraction of the mind. Works are there regarded as disconnected from faith, though in the nature of things they are rather associated with it. Works may be sincere or they may be hypocritical. They may have an inward foundation in the heart, or they may not. And the Apostle looks at them in both lights, according as the course of his argument requires it. That there is no radical opposition is clearly seen if we refer to the description of the last judgment in the Synoptic Gospels. There can be no question that in those Gos-

his deeds : <sup>a</sup> (7) to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immor-

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 62.  
12 ;  
Matt.  
16. 27 ;  
Rev.  
22. 12.

tality, eternal life : (8) but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unright-

pels the doctrine prominently put forward is that of retribution according to works, and yet it is most distinctly laid down that the works so insisted upon are not merely the outward tangible act *apart from* the inward disposition ; on the contrary, when such works are pleaded they are expressly disowned (Matt. vii. 23, 24 ; comp. Matt. xxv. 44) ; and, on the other hand, we are left to infer that the righteous will have little ostensibly to allege in their own favour (Matt. xxv. 36—39). We are thus led up by easy stages to the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith, even out of the midst of that doctrine of retribution which forms the subject of the section on which we are now commenting.

(7) **To them who.**—Before the words “eternal life,” at the end of the verse, we must supply, “He will render.” The phrase “glory, and honour, and immortality” is practically equivalent to “eternal life.” “Those who honestly seek for this life shall find it.” The stress is upon the words “by patient continuance in well doing.” From the point of view of rhetoric, no doubt exception might be taken to the tautology ; but St. Paul was far too much in earnest to attend carefully to the laws of rhetoric, and it is just this spontaneity which is in great part the secret of his power.

**Patient continuance.**—A single word in the Greek, but rightly translated in the Author-

ised version, *by* (according to, by the rule of) *patience* (persistence or perseverance) *in well doing* (literally, *in good work*). In English we should naturally say, “in good works,” but the Greek, here as frequently, by the use of the singular and by the absence of the article, puts the abstract for the concrete, so covering every particular case.

(8) **But unto them . . .**—The scholar will observe that in the original Greek the construction is changed. At the end of verse 7 is an accusative “(he will render) eternal life ;” here we have the nominative, “(there shall be) tribulation and anguish.”

**That are contentious.**—An error in the Authorised version through a wrong derivation of the word. Strictly, *To those who act in the spirit of a hireling* ; hence, according to the secondary meaning of the word, “to those who act in a spirit of factiousness and self-seeking.” It is, however, quite possible that the mistaken derivation might have been current in St. Paul’s time, as it was, no doubt, somewhat later, from Origen downwards. St. Paul, it is true, distinguishes between the proper word for “contention” and that used here (*e.g.*, in 2 Cor. xii. 20 ; Gal. v. 20), but this would not exclude, it would rather seem to imply, not indeed a formal derivation, but some association of ideas. The shade of meaning will, perhaps, be expressed if we translate by some such word as “factiousness.” So

teousness, indignation and wrath, <sup>(9)</sup> tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile ;<sup>1</sup> <sup>(10)</sup> but glory,

<sup>2</sup> Gr.  
Greeck.

<sup>1</sup> Gr.  
Greeck.

honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile :<sup>2</sup> <sup>(11)</sup> for there is no respect of persons with God. <sup>(12)</sup> For as many

in Phil. i. 16 (properly 17, the order of the clauses being reversed), "the one (*the other*) preach Christ of factiousness."

**Indignation and wrath.**—The Greek equivalents for these two words are distinguished as the settled angry feeling from the passionate outbreak of anger.

**The truth.**—Here used in a moral sense, as almost equivalent to "rectitude," "that which is right." There is a tendency towards this meaning in Rom. i. 18, "Who hold down the truth in unrighteousness," though there "the truth" appears to mean rather "natural religion" in general. The ethical sense comes out clearly in John iii. 21, "he that doeth truth," opposed to "he that doeth evil." These phrases, "obey the truth," "obey unrighteousness," in a plainer style, would be simply "do good," "do evil." It may be noted that St. Paul is fond of these quasi-personifications.

<sup>(9)</sup> **Upon every soul of man.**—The phrase is not quite the same as "upon every man," but more special in character, indicating the part in which the punishment will be felt.

<sup>(11)</sup> **Respect of persons.**—Regard for the external circumstances of a man as opposed to his internal condition ; here, especially, "regard for the circumstances of birth and race." (Comp. Acts x. 34 ; Gal. ii. 6 ; Eph. vi. 9 ; Col. iii.

25 ; Jas. ii. 1, 9.) It is interesting to observe the phrase appearing in such different quarters. The great result of the Christian revelation was to break down the belief in *race-religions*—the "middle wall of partition," as St. Paul calls it.

The essential equality of Jew and Gentile before God is not affected by the precedence of the former in point of time or order, whether as regards punishment or reward.

<sup>(12)</sup> Jew and Gentile alike will be judged, each by the method proper to his case ; the Jew by the written Law against which he has sinned, the Gentile by the unwritten law of conscience against which he too has sinned. The mere hearing of the Law will bring no exemption to the Jew ; and, on the other hand, the Gentile, who, at the dictates of conscience, acts as if he were subject to law, shall have the full benefit that law can give him. In fact, his conscience is to him a law. He undergoes precisely the same conflict of self-condemnation and self-acquittal as one who has a written law to refer to. All this will be done, this strict measure of justice will be applied, at the last great day of judgment.

**In the law.**—Rather, *in law*. Here, as in the phrases which follow, "by law," "the hearers of law," "the doers of law," "the

as have sinned without law shall also perish without law : and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law ; <sup>(13)</sup> for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall

be justified : <sup>(14)</sup> (for when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves : <sup>(15)</sup> which shew the work of the law written in their

Gentiles which have not law," &c., the article is wrongly inserted by the Authorised version. Its absence shows that the Apostle had in mind, not the particular Mosaic law, but the abstraction of law. "Behind the concrete representation—the Mosaic law itself—St. Paul sees an imperious principle, an overwhelming presence, antagonistic to grace, to liberty, to spirit, and (in some aspects) even to life—abstract law, which, though the Mosaic ordinances are its most signal and complete embodiment, nevertheless is not exhausted therein, but exerts its crushing power over the conscience in diverse manifestations. The one, the concrete and special, is *ὁ νόμος*; the other, the abstract and universal, is *νόμος*" (Light-foot).

<sup>(13)</sup> **For not the hearers of the law.**—The parenthesis should not be placed here (as usually in the Authorised version), but at the beginning of the next verse. The present verse is explanatory of that which precedes. "Judged, I say, by the Law; for they must not suppose that the mere fact of their being under the Law will exempt them from this judgment. The only exemption will be that which is given to those who have *kept* the Law, and not merely had the privilege of hearing it. And," the

argument follows—the Apostle digressing for a moment to pursue this point to its conclusion—"this exemption may apply quite as much to Gentile as to Jew."

**Hearers of the law.**—Strictly (as above), *hearers of law*—i.e., those who have a law to which they can listen, and by which they may be guided. (Comp. Acts xiii. 27; xv. 21, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath"; and for the opposition between hearing and doing, Jas. i. 22, 23, 25.)

<sup>(14)</sup> A sort of parenthesis begins here. Verse 16 refers back to the main subject of the paragraph, and not to the particular point on which the Apostle digresses in verses 14, 15, the virtual operation of law among the Gentiles as well as Jews.

**By nature.**—Spontaneously; of their own motion; not acting under the coercion of any external rule, but simply by the promptings of their own conscience left to itself.

**The things contained in the law.**—Literally, *the things of the law*. In this one instance the article is used, meaning, however, not "the law of Moses," but "of this law," or "of such law"—i.e., the ideal law spoken of just before.

<sup>(15)</sup> **Which.**—Rather, *Inasmuch as they*.



hearts, their conscience also bearing witness,<sup>1</sup> and their thoughts the mean while<sup>2</sup> accusing or else excusing one another :) <sup>(16)</sup> in the day when God shall

<sup>1</sup> Or, the conscience witnessing with them.  
<sup>2</sup> Or, between themselves.

judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. <sup>(17)</sup> Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

**The work of the law.**—The practical effect or realisation of the law—written in their hearts as the original Law was written upon the tables of stone. (Comp. Jer. xxxi. 33; 2 Cor. iii. 3.)

**Also bearing witness.**—Or, *witnessing with them*, as margin. There is a double witness; their actions speak for them externally, and conscience speaks for them internally.

**The mean while.**—Rather, literally, as margin, *between themselves—i.e., with mutual interchange*, the thoughts of the heart or different motions of conscience sometimes taking the part of advocate, sometimes of accuser.

This seems, on the whole, the best way of taking these two words, though some commentators (among them Meyer) regard this quasi personification of “the thoughts” as too strong a figure of speech, and take “between themselves” as referring to the mutual intercourse of man with man. But in that mutual intercourse it is not the thoughts that accuse or defend, but the tongue. The Apostle is speaking strictly of the private tribunal of conscience.

<sup>(16)</sup> This verse takes up the main thread of the subject. “God will judge Jew and Gentile alike at the last day.” It cannot refer (as some would make it) to what immediately precedes, because there the Apostle is referring to the daily process

that goes on whenever doubtful actions are submitted to the law of conscience, here he is speaking expressly of the final judgment held by God and not by man.

**By Jesus Christ.**—As the Son of God is the Mediator of salvation so also is He the Mediator of judgment. The function of judgment is specially committed to Him. This is the consistent teaching of Scripture. (Comp. John v. 27, “the Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man”; Acts xvii. 31, “He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world . . . by that Man whom He hath ordained”; 1 Cor. iv. 5; 2 Cor. v. 10, *et al.*)

**According to my gospel.**—How is this to be taken? To what is it that the gospel, as preached by St. Paul, testifies? It may be either to the simple fact that God will judge the secrets of men, or to the particular law or standard by which He will judge them. Probably, on the whole, the former is the preferable explanation. “In the day when, as I teach, God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.”

<sup>(17)</sup> **Behold.**—An interesting case of a corrupt reading which has found its way into the Authorised version. For “behold,” a decisive consensus of the best MSS. has “but if.” The corruption was very obvious and easy. Adopting

(18) and knowest *his* will, and approvest<sup>1</sup> the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; (19) and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, (20) an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form

<sup>1</sup> Or, *triest the things that differ.*

of knowledge and of the truth in the law. (21) Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? (22) thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols,

“but if,” the answering clause of the sentence is to be found in the question; “Teachest thou not thyself?” verse 21. The connecting particle “therefore” at the beginning of the same verse is merely resumptive, or, as it is technically called, “epanaleptic.”

Turning to the Jew, the Apostle breaks out into indignant and vehement apostrophe, “If you have the name of Jew, and repose upon the Law, and make your boast in God, and do all these other things — why then, while you profess to teach others, do you not teach yourself?” A fine specimen of the natural eloquence which the Apostle derives from intense feeling. The different features of the picture crowd into his mind to point the contrast between what the Jew claimed to be and what he was.

**Restest in.**—Reposest or reliest upon a law. A passive confidence in something external. “In the Law the Jew saw the Magna Charta which gave him his assurance of salvation” (Meyer).

**Makest thy boast of God**—*i.e.*, of a peculiar and exclusive claim to His favour.

(Comp. Deut. iv. 7; Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.)

(18) **His will.**—Literally, *the will*—*i.e.*, “the supreme will.”

**Approvest the things that are more excellent.**—Probably rightly given in the Authorised version, though the marginal rendering also is possible, “triest the things that differ”—*i.e.*, “art able to discriminate between good and evil.”

**Being instructed.**—With reference to the constant reading of the Law in the synagogue.

(19) **A guide of the blind.**—Comp. Matt. xv. 14, “They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind,” *et seq.*

(20) **The form of knowledge and of the truth.**—As we might say, “the presentation of knowledge and of truth.” Here not form as opposed to substance, but as implying substance—“presentation” or “embodiment.”

(21) **Therefore.**—See above on verse 17.

(22) **Commit sacrilege.**—Properly, *rob temples*—*i.e.*, idol temples, with a pointed antithesis to that abhorrence of idols on which the Jew prided himself. This is cer-

dost thou commit sacrilege? <sup>(23)</sup> thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

<sup>(24)</sup> For the name of God is

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 52.  
5; Ezek.  
36. 20,  
23.

blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.<sup>a</sup> <sup>(25)</sup> For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the

tainly the last offence of which we should have expected the Jews of this date to be guilty, knowing the scrupulousness with which they shunned all contact with idolatry. They may, however, have thought the idol temples fair plunder. At any rate, it is clear that this charge was commonly brought against them. Comp. Acts xix. 37, where the town-clerk of Ephesus specially acquits St. Paul and his companions of "being robbers of temples." Josephus also (*Ant.* iv. 8, § 10) quotes as a precept of the Mosaic legislation, "Let no one blaspheme those gods which other cities esteem such; nor may any one steal what belongs to strange temples; nor take away the gifts that are dedicated to any god."

<sup>(23)</sup> **Dishonourest thou God?** This verse has been regarded, not as a question, but as a summary answer to the previous questions, "You, who make all this boast in the Law, by breaking the Law, dishonour God." There is a certain force in this view, but the structure of the clause is so similar to those that have gone before that it seems best, perhaps, upon the whole, to take it in the ordinary way.

<sup>(24)</sup> **Through you.**—*Because of you.*

**As it is written.**—From the LXX. version of Isa. lii. 5. The sense of the original is that the name of God is dishonoured by the enslavement and oppression of His

people. A nearer parallel in sense, though more remote in words, may be found in 2 Sam. xii. 14; Ezek. xxxvi. 22, 23. The Apostle is not careful as to the particular context from which he draws. He knew that he was giving the substance of Scripture, and he takes the aptest words that occur to him at the moment. Translated into our modern modes of thought, the formula, "as it is written," at the end of the verse amounts to little more than "in the language of Scripture." The intention, as so frequently with St. Paul, seems, as it were, to be divided between proof and illustration.

<sup>(25—29)</sup> This section forms a connecting-link with the opening of the next chapter. "The characteristic mark and badge of the Jew has two sides, the one outward and formal, the other inward and real. Its essence consists in the latter, and without this inward circumcision the outward profits nothing. It is not necessary to be born a Jew to possess it." Precisely the same language might be applied to the Christian sacraments, or to the privileges of any particular communion. Privileges they may be, but they depend for their efficacy entirely upon the disposition of the heart which underlies them.

<sup>(25)</sup> **Is made.**—*Is become,*—*ipso facto,* "is reduced to the case of."

law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

(26) Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

(27) And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? (28) For he is not a Jew, which is one

outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: (29) but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

A.D. 58.

## CHAPTER III.—

(1) What advantage then hath the Jew? Chap. iii. 1-4. The Jew's advantage.

(27) Judge thee.—Comp. Matt. xii. 41, 42, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it," *et seq.* The idea is that of "putting to shame by contrast."

By the letter.—The preposition here marks the condition or circumstance under which the action is done, and might be paraphrased, "with all the advantages of the written Law and of circumcision."

Here, again, the sentence may not be a question, but an affirmation.

## III.

(1-8) Continuing the subject, but with a long digression in verses 3 *et seq.*, the Apostle asks, What is the real value of these apparent advantages? He is about to answer the question fully, as he does later in chap. ix. 4, 5; but after stating the first point, he goes off upon a difficulty raised by this, and does not return to complete what he had begun. This, again, is characteristic of his ardent and keenly

speculative mind. Problems such as those which he discusses evidently have a fascination for him, and lead him, here as elsewhere, at once to leave the immediate subject before him, and to enter eagerly into the discussion of them. A more lethargic or timid brain would be under no such temptation.

One real and solid advantage on the part of the Jew was that he was made the direct recipient of the divine revelation. This privilege of his is not annulled by the defection of a part of the people. It rests not upon the precarious fidelity of men, but upon the infallible promise of God. Yet is not the ultimate triumph of that promise any excuse for those who have set it at nought. They will be punished just the same, and rightly. Otherwise there could be no judgment at all. The casuistical objection that sin loses its guilt if it redounds to God's glory, or, in other words, that the end justifies the means, carries with it its own condemnation.

or what profit *is there* of circumcision? <sup>(2)</sup> Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. <sup>(3)</sup> For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief <sup>a Ps. 51.</sup>

make the faith of God without effect? <sup>(4)</sup> God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings,<sup>a</sup> and mightest over-

<sup>(2)</sup> **Chiefly.**—In the first place; “secondly,” &c., was to follow, but does not, as the Apostle is drawn away to other topics (see above).

**Unto them were committed.**—This is paraphrastic. “Oracle” is the object, and not the subject, of the sentence. “They were entrusted with.”

**Oracles.**—A good translation; the Scriptures of the Old Testament as containing a revelation of God.

<sup>(3)</sup> **For what if.**—What (follows) if, &c. Or we may take the first two words by themselves, and throw the next two clauses together. How stands the case? If some rejected the faith, shall their rejection make void or defeat the faithfulness of God?

The Apostle considers an objection that might be brought against his argument that the divine revelation vouchsafed to them was a special privilege of the Jewish people. It might be said that they had forfeited and cancelled this privilege by their unbelief. He first reduces the objection to its proper limits; it was not *all*, but *some*, who were unbelievers. But granting that there were some who did not believe, this fact would have no power to shake the eternal promises of God.

<sup>(4)</sup> Impossible! Rather let God be seen to be true though all man-

kind should be proved false, even as the Psalmist looked upon his own sin as serving to enhance the triumph of God’s justice. Speaking of that justice for the moment as if it could be arraigned before the bar of a still higher tribunal, he asserts its absolute and complete acquittal.

**That thou mightest be justified.**—Strictly, *in order that*, here as in the Hebrew of the psalm. God is, in some way inscrutable to us, educed out of evil, and this is clearly foreseen by God, and forms part of His design, though so as not to interfere with the free will of man. Religion assumes that the two things, free will and omnipotence, are reconcilable, though how they are to be reconciled seems an insoluble problem. The same difficulty attaches to every system but one of blank fatalism and atheism. But the theory of fatalism, if logically carried out, would simply destroy human society.

Ps. li., in which the quotation occurs, is commonly (in accordance with the heading), though perhaps wrongly, ascribed to David after his sin with Bathsheba. The effect of this sin is to throw out into the strongest relief the justice of the sentence by which it is followed and punished. The original

come when thou art judged.

Chap. iii. 5—8.  
Digression on  
doing evil that  
good may come.

(5) But if our  
unrighteous-  
ness com-  
mend the  
righteousness of God, what  
shall we say? Is God un-

righteous who taketh  
vengeance? (I speak as a  
man.) (6) God forbid: for  
then how shall God judge  
the world? (7) For if the  
truth of God hath more  
abounded through my lie

is, "That thou mightest be just in thy speaking; that thou mightest be pure in thy judging." St. Paul adopts the rendering of the LXX., who make the last word passive instead of active, thus making it apply, not to the sentence given by God, but to the imaginary trial to which by a figure of speech that sentence itself is supposed to be submitted.

(5) **But if our unrighteousness.**—A new and profound question suggests itself to the mind of the Apostle, and his keen intellect will not let it go: "If the sin (here the unbelief) of man only tends to vindicate (commends or establishes) the righteousness of God, why should that sin be punished?" The mere raising of such a question requires an apology; it is only as a man might speak about man that he dares to utter such a thought. That, too, is an impossible objection, for if it held good there could not be any judgment. No sin would be punishable, for all sin would serve to emphasise the strict veracity of God in His denunciations of it, and therefore would ultimately conduce to His glory. It would thus cease to be sinful, and there would be nothing to hinder us from adopting the principle that is so calumniously attributed to us—that it is lawful to do evil that good may come. A calumny it is,

and any such principle with all that appertains to it—*i.e.*, with the whole of the preceding argument—is justly condemned.

(6) **For then how shall God judge the world?**—St. Paul considers it a sufficient answer merely to propound this question. He and those to whom he was writing all *assumed* that there must be a future judgment.

The way in which Bishop Butler deals with the argument from necessity is very similar to this, substituting only present for future judgment. "It is fact that God does govern even brute creatures by the method of rewards and punishments in the natural course of things. And men are rewarded and punished for their actions—punished for actions mischievous to society as being so, punished for vicious actions as such—by the natural instrumentality of each other under the present conduct of Providence," &c. Hence the necessitarian is in this dilemma: either his opinion is not true, or else it must be capable of being harmonised with these facts. The facts themselves are postulated.

(7) **The truth of God.**—In the first instance His veracity as involved in His threats and promises, and then those other attributes, especially justice, that are intimately connected with this. "Truth" is

unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? <sup>(8)</sup> And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do

evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

<sup>(9)</sup> What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for

Chap. iii. 9-20.  
Jew and Gentile  
alike convicted.

leaning towards its moral sense. (See Note on chap. ii. 8.)

**My lie.**—The Apostle puts his supposed case in the first person. "Lie," suggested as an antithesis to the word "truth," just used, has also a moral signification. It is the moral deflection that follows upon unbelief.

<sup>(8)</sup> **And not rather.**—*And (why should we) not (say) as some persons slanderously affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come.* Some such phrase as "Why should we say" must be supplied; "why" from the previous clause, "say" from that which follows. Or "(Why should we) not (do evil), as some persons slanderously affirm that we say, Let us do evil," &c. The latter, perhaps, is best, as we might then suppose the word for "let us do" repeated precisely in the form in which it stands.

The Apostle does not care to answer this argument in detail; he will not dally with such a perversion of the moral sense, but simply says, "Whose condemnation is just."

What pretext could any one possibly have for attributing such an opinion to St. Paul? The charge was no doubt utterly false as applied to him, but we know that his teaching was made an excuse for Antinomian excesses, which would not unnaturally be fastened upon the Apostle. Or, taking his teaching as it stands, we might well imagine

the Jews or the Judaising party arguing with themselves, "This man openly breaks the Law, and yet he claims to be in the right way, and that all will go well with him; is not this doing evil that good may come? Does he think to win the Messianic kingdom by the breach of the Law, and not by its observance?"

<sup>(9-20)</sup> Once more the argument returns to the main track, and at last the Apostle asserts distinctly and categorically what he had already proved indirectly, that the Jew is every whit as bad as the Gentile.

<sup>(9)</sup> **Are we better than they?**—"Can we claim a preference?" The form of the Greek verb is peculiar. It seems upon the whole best to take it as middle for active, which would be apparently unexampled, but is tenable as a question of language, and seems to be compelled by the context. There is no real opposition between the "by no means" of the reply and the "much every way" of verse 2. There the reference was to external advantages, here it is to real and essential worth in the sight of God; as much as to say, "For all our advantages are we really better?"

**Proved.**—Adopt rather the marginal rendering, *For we before charged both Jews and Gentiles with being all under sin.*

we have before proved <sup>1</sup> both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; <sup>(10)</sup> as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: <sup>a</sup> <sup>(11)</sup> there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. <sup>(12)</sup> They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. charged.  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. 5. 9.  
<sup>a</sup> Ps. 14. 1-3.  
<sup>c</sup> Ps. 140. 3.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. 10. 7  
<sup>e</sup> Isa. 59. 7, 8.

<sup>(13)</sup> Their throat is an open sepulchre, <sup>b</sup> with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; <sup>c</sup> <sup>(14)</sup> whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: <sup>d</sup> <sup>(15)</sup> their feet are swift to shed blood: <sup>e</sup> <sup>(16)</sup> destruction and misery are in their ways: <sup>(17)</sup> and the way of peace have they not known: <sup>(18)</sup> there is no fear

The verses are a striking instance of the way in which the Apostle weaves together passages taken from different sources. It also affords an example of the corruptions in the text of the Old Testament to which this practice gave rise. The whole passage as it stands here is found in some manuscripts of the LXX. as part of Ps. xiv., whence it has been copied not only into the Vulgate but also our own Prayer Book, which will be seen to differ from the Bible version.

The quotations have different degrees of appositeness, so far as they may be considered in the modern sense as probative rather than illustrative. The first, from Ps. xiv., is couched in such general terms as to be directly in point; the second and third, from Pss. v. and cxl., are aimed specially against the oppressors of the Psalmist; and so, too, the fourth, from Ps. x., but in a more general and abstract form; that from Isaiah indicates the moral degradation among the prophet's contemporaries that had led to the Captivity; while the last, from Ps. xxxvi., is an expression applied, not

to all men, but particularly to the wicked.

<sup>(12)</sup> They are together become unprofitable.—Here the adjective is used to express a state of moral corruption and depravity. "Together," means "altogether;" "the whole mass of mankind, with one consent, has fallen to ruin."

<sup>(13)</sup> Their throat is an open sepulchre—i.e., their speech is at once corrupt and corrupting. It is compared to a "yawning grave"—not merely to a pit into which a man may fall, but to a sort of pestiferous chasm yawning and ravenging, as it were, after its prey.

They have used deceit.—Strictly, *they were deceiving*; a continued action brought up to the present time.

Under their lips.—As the poison-bag of the serpent is directly under the kind of tooth by which its venom is discharged.

<sup>(14)</sup> Bitterness.—Malignity; from the notion that venom was contained in the gall. (Comp. Acts viii. 23.)

<sup>(18)</sup> The fear of God, which is properly a subjective feeling, is



of God before their eyes.<sup>a</sup> a Ps. 36. 1.

(19) Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.<sup>1</sup>

(20) Therefore by the deeds

1 Or, subject to the judgment of God.

of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

(21) But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed

Chap. iii 21—26. The great thesis repeated.

here projected, as it were, and regarded as an external rule of life.

(19) In order to bring home this testimony of Scripture more directly to the Jews, and to prevent any subterfuge by which they might attempt to shift the reference from themselves on to the Gentiles, the Apostle calls attention to the fact that the Law—*i.e.*, the Old Testament, from which he has been quoting—speaks especially to those to whom it was given.

**Saith . . . saith.**—Different words are here used in the Greek; the first is applicable as much to the matter as to the utterance of that which is spoken, the second refers specially to the outward act by which it is enunciated or promulgated; this is addressed to certain persons.

**Guilty before God.**—Rather, *guilty to God*; the dative expresses the person to whom the penalty is due.

(20) **Therefore.**—Rather, *because*. All mankind alike owe the penalty for their sins. *Because* not even the Law can protect its votaries. It has no power to justify. All it can do is to expose in its true colours the sinfulness of sin.

The proposition is thrown into a

general form: not by the works of the (Jewish) Law, but by "works of law"—*i.e.*, by any works done in obedience to any law. Law, in the abstract, as such, is unable to justify. It might perhaps, we gather from later portions of the Epistle, if men could really keep it, but no law can be kept strictly and entirely.

**Knowledge of sin.**—"Full and thorough knowledge."

In the state anterior to law, man is not supposed to know what is sinful and what is not. Conscience, gradually developed, comes in to give him some insight into the distinction, but the full knowledge of right and wrong, in all its details, is reserved for the introduction of positive law. Law has, however, only this enlightening faculty; it holds the mirror up to guilt, but it cannot remove it.

(21—26) This then introduces the solemn enunciation, repeated more fully from chap. i. 16, 17, of the great subject of the Epistle, the declaration of that new scheme by which, through Christ, God had removed the guilt which the Law (whether Jewish or any other) could not remove.

(21, 22) Such was the condition of the world up to the coming of Christ.

by the law and the prophets; <sup>(22)</sup> even the righteousness of God *which is*

by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is

But now, in contrast with the previous state of things, a new system has appeared upon the scene. In this system law is entirely put on one side, though the system itself was anticipated in and is attested by those very writings in which the Law was embodied. Law is now superseded, the great end of the Law, the introduction of righteousness, being accomplished in another way, viz., through faith in Christ, by which a state of righteousness is superinduced upon all believers.

<sup>(21)</sup> **But now.**—In these latter days. The Apostle conceives of the history of the world as divided into periods; the period of the Gospel succeeds that of the Law, and to it the Apostle and his readers belong. (Comp. for this conception of the gospel, as manifested at a particular epoch of time, chap. xvi. 25, 26; Acts xvii. 30; Gal. iii. 23, 25; iv. 3, 4; Eph. i. 10; ii. 12, 13; Col. i. 21, 26; 1 Tim. ii. 6; 2 Tim. i. 10; Heb. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 20.)

**The righteousness of God.**—Rather, *a righteousness of God*—i.e., “bestowed by God,” “wrought out by Him,” as in chap. i. 17. The reference is again, here as there, to the root-conception of righteousness as at once the great object and condition of the Messianic kingdom.

**Without the law.**—In complete independence of any law, though borne witness to by the Law of Moses. The new system is one into which the idea of law does not enter.

**Is manifested.**—Hath been, and continues to be manifested. The initial moment is that of the appearance of Christ upon earth. The scheme which then began is still evolving itself.

**Being witnessed.**—The Apostle does not lose sight of the preparatory function of the older dispensation, and of its radical affinity to the new. (Comp. chap. i. 2; xvi. 26; Luke xviii. 31; xxiv. 27, 44, 46; John v. 39, 46; Acts ii. 25, 31; iii. 22, 24; xvii. 2, 3; xxvi. 22, 23; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.)

<sup>(22)</sup> A further definition of the nature of the righteousness so given to the Christian by God; it is a righteousness that has its root in faith, and is coextensive with faith, being present with every believer.

**By faith of Jesus Christ**—i.e., *by faith which has Christ for its object*, “faith in Christ.” “Faith” in St. Paul’s writings implies an intense attachment and devotion. It has an intellectual basis, necessarily involving a belief in the existence, and in certain attributes, of the Person for whom it is entertained; but it is moral in its operation, a recasting of the whole emotional nature in accordance with this belief, together with a consequent change in character and practice. (See *Excursus B: On the Meaning of the word Faith.*)

**And upon all.**—These words are wanting in the best MSS., and should be omitted.

**For there is no difference.**—The righteousness that God gives

no difference: <sup>(23)</sup> for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,

<sup>(24)</sup> being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ

is given to *all* that believe, without any distinction of Jew or Gentile; for all equally need it, and it is free equally to all.

<sup>(23)</sup> **All have sinned and come short.**—Strictly, *all sinned*; the Apostle looking back upon an act done in past time under the old legal dispensation, without immediate reference to the present: he then goes on to say that the result of that act (as distinct from the act itself) continues on into the present. The result is that mankind, in a body, as he now sees them, and before they come within the range of the new Christian system, fall short of, miss, or fail to obtain, the glory of God.

**Glory of God.**—What is this glory? Probably not here, as in chap. viii. 18, 21, the glory which will be inaugurated for the saints at the *Parusîa*, or Second Coming of the Messiah—for that is something future—but, rather, something which is capable of being conferred in the present, viz., the glory which comes from the favour and approval of God. This favour and approval Jew and Gentile alike had hitherto failed to obtain, but it was now thrown open to all who became members of the Messianic kingdom. (Comp. for the sense, chap. ii. 29, and for the use of the word, as well as the sense, John xii. 43, “they loved the praise [*glory*] of men more than the praise [*glory*] of God.”)

<sup>(24)</sup> **Being justified.**—We should more naturally say, “but now *are* justified.” The construction in the Greek is peculiar, and

may be accounted for in one of two ways. Either the phrase “being justified” may be taken as corresponding to “all them that believe” in verse 22, the change of case being an irregularity suggested by the form of the sentence immediately preceding; or the construction may be considered to be regular, and the participle “being justified” would then be dependent upon the last finite verb: “they come short of the glory of God, and *in that very state of destitution* are justified.”

**Freely.**—Gratuitously, without exertion or merit on their part. (Comp. Matt. x. 8; Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 17.)

**By his grace.**—*By His own grace.* The *means* by which justification is wrought out is the death and atonement of Christ; its *ulterior* cause is the grace of God, or free readmission into His favour, which He accords to man.

**Redemption.**—Literally, *ransoming*. The notion of ransom contains in itself the triple idea of a bondage, a deliverance, and the payment of an equivalent as the means of that deliverance. The bondage is the state of sin and of guilt, with the expectation of punishment; the deliverance is the removal of this state, and the opening out, in its stead, of a prospect of eternal happiness and glory; the equivalent paid by Christ is the shedding of His own blood. This last is the pivot upon which the whole idea of redemption turned. It is therefore clear that the redemption of the sinner is an act wrought objectively,

Jesus : <sup>(25)</sup> whom God hath set forth <sup>1</sup> to be a propitia-<sup>1</sup> Or, fore-  
ordain-  
ed. tion through faith in his blood, to declare his righ-

and, in the first instance, independently of any change of condition in him, though such a change is involved in the appropriation of the efficacy of that act to himself. It cannot be explained as a purely subjective process wrought in the sinner through the influence of Christ's death. The idea of dying and reviving with Christ, though a distinct aspect of the atonement, cannot be made to cover the whole of it. There is implied, not only a change in the recipient of the atonement, but also a change wrought without his co-operation in the relations between God and man. There is, if it may be so said, in the death of Christ something which determines the will of God, as well as something which acts upon the will of man. And the particular influence which is brought to bear upon the counsels of God is represented under the figure of a ransom or payment of an equivalent. This element is too essentially a part of the metaphor, and is too clearly established by other parallel metaphors, to be explained away; though what the terms "propitiation" and "equivalent" can mean, as applied to God, we do not know, and it perhaps does not become us too curiously to inquire.

The doctrine of the atonement thus stated is not peculiar to St. Paul, and did not originate with him. It is found also in the Synoptic Gospels, Matt. xx. 28 (= Mark x. 45), "The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many," and in Heb. ix. 15, "And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of

death, for the redemption (*ransom-  
ing*) of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Comp. 1 John ii. 2; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; ii. 24, *et al.*)

(25, 26) The death of Christ had a twofold object or final cause:—(1) It was to be, like the sacrifices of the old covenant, an offering propitiatory to God, and actualised in the believer through faith. (2) It was to demonstrate the righteousness of God by showing that sin would entail punishment, though it might not be punished in the person of the sinner. The apparent absence of any adequate retribution for the sins of past ages made it necessary that by one conspicuous instance it should be shown that this was in no sense due to an ignoring of the true nature of sin. The retributive justice of God was all the time unimpaired. The death of Christ served for its vindication, at the same time that a way to escape from its consequences was opened out through the justification of the believer.

Precisely in what sense the punishment of our sins fell upon Christ, and in what sense the justice of God was vindicated by its so falling, is another point which we are not able to determine. Nothing, we may be sure, can be involved which is in *ultimate* conflict with morality. At the same time, we see that under the ordinary government of God, the innocent suffer for the guilty, and there may be some

teousness for the remission<sup>1</sup> of sins that are past, | <sup>1</sup> Or, *passing over.* | through the forbearance of God; <sup>(23)</sup> to declare, *I say,*

sort of transference of this analogy into the transcendental sphere. Both the natural and the supernatural government of God are schemes "imperfectly comprehended." In any case, Christ was innocent, and Christ suffered. On any theory there is a connection between His death and human sin. *What* connection, is a question to which, perhaps, only a partial answer can be given. Some weighty remarks on this subject will be found in Butler's *Analogy of Religion*, Part II., chap. v. (latter part).

<sup>(25)</sup> **Hath set forth.**—Rather, *set forth, publicly exhibited*, in the single act of the death upon the cross.

**A propitiation.**—The Greek word properly means "that which renders propitious." Here, "that which renders God propitious." In some way, which is not explained at all in this passage, and imperfectly explained elsewhere, the death of Christ did act so as to render God "propitious" towards men. He became more ready to pardon as they became more anxious to be pardoned.

There is a remarkable use of the same Greek word in the LXX. version of the Old Testament to express the *mercy-seat*, *i.e.*, the lid or covering of the ark which was sprinkled by the high priest with the blood of the victim on the Day of Atonement. Some have thought that there is a reference to this here. Christ is the *mercy-seat* of the New Covenant. It is upon Him, as it were, that the divine grace, drawn forth by His own atoning blood, resides. It would hardly be a conclusive objection

to this view that, according to it, Christ would be represented as at once the victim whose blood is sprinkled and the covering of the ark on which it is sprinkled; for a similar double reference certainly occurs in Heb. ix. 11, 12, where Christ is typified at one and the same time both by the victim whose blood is shed and by the high priest by whom it is offered. There seem to be, however, on the whole, reasons for supplying rather the idea of "sacrifice," which is more entirely in keeping with the context, and is especially supported by the two phrases, "whom God hath set forth" (*i.e.*, exhibited *publicly*, whereas the ark was confined to the secrecy of the Holy of Holies), and "in His blood." We should translate, therefore, *a propitiatory or expiatory (sacrifice)*.

**Through faith.**—Faith is the *causa apprehendens* by which the proffered pardon takes effect upon the soul of the believer.

**In his blood.**—On the whole, it seems best not to join these words with "through faith," but to refer them to the main word of the sentence. "Whom God set forth by the shedding of His blood to be a propitiatory offering through faith." It was in the shedding of the blood that the essence of the atonement exhibited upon the cross consisted. No doubt other portions of the life of Christ led up to this one; but this was the culminating act in it, viewed as an atonement.

<sup>(26)</sup> **To declare.**—The second object of the death of Christ was

at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier in him which believeth in Jesus.

(27) Where is boasting

then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: Chap. iii. 27—31. Boasting excluded. but by the law of faith. (28) Therefore we conclude that a

to remove the misconceptions that might be caused by the apparent condoning of sins committed in times anterior to the Christian revelation. A special word is used to indicate that these sins were not wiped away and dismissed altogether, but rather "passed over" or "overlooked." This was due to the forbearance of God, who, as it were, *suspended* the execution of His vengeance. Now the Apostle shows by the death of Christ that justice that had apparently slept was vindicated.

Thus God appeared in a double character, at once as just or righteous Himself, and as producing a state of righteousness in the believer. Under the Old Testament God had been revealed as *just*; but the justice or righteousness of God was not met by any corresponding righteousness on the part of man, and therefore could only issue in condemnation. Under the New Testament the justice of God remained the same, but it *was* met by a corresponding state of righteousness in the believer: a righteousness, however, not inherent, but superinduced by God Himself through the process of justification by faith. In this way the great Messianic condition of righteousness was fulfilled.

(27—31) A review of the consequences of this process of justification. How does it affect the

pretensions of the Jew? It shuts them out by laying stress no longer on works, which were the proper fulfilment of the first law as it stood, but upon faith. Faith is the true medium of justification. And faith belongs as much to Gentile as to Jew. For faith is the appointed means by which all mankind will be justified; and they will all be justified before the same tribunal, whether they be circumcised or not. Still this involves no abrogation of the Law, but rather a confirmation of it.

(27) **It is excluded.**—Strictly, *It was excluded*—at the moment when the law of faith—*i.e.*, the gospel—was brought in.

**By what law?**—Properly, *By what kind of law?* Is this law which gets rid of boasting one which calls for works; or is it one that calls for faith?

**The law of faith.**—Another name for the gospel.

(28) **Therefore** . . . .—There is a remarkable division of some of the best authorities in this verse between "therefore" and "for." The weight of authority seems somewhat in favour of "for," which also makes the best sense. That boasting is excluded is much rather the consequence than the cause of the principle that man is justified by faith. This principle the Apostle regards as sufficiently proved by his previous argument.

man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. <sup>(29)</sup> *Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: <sup>(30)</sup> seeing it is one God,*

which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. <sup>(31)</sup> *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*

**We conclude.**—This conveys too much the idea of an inference; the statement is rather made in the form of an assertion, “we consider,” or “we hold.” “For we hold that a man (any human being—whether Jew or Greek) is justified by faith, independently of any works prescribed by law.”

<sup>(29)</sup> **Is he not also.**—Insert “or.” “Or are we to suppose that God is the God of (literally, *belongs to*) the Jews only?”—taking up the point in the last verse, that any man, simply *quâ* man, and without regard to distinction of race, was capable of justification.

<sup>(30)</sup> **Seeing it is . . .**—With a slight change of reading, *if at least; if as we are sure is the case.*

The argument is strictly logical. If there is to be any distinction between Jew and Gentile, this can only be upon the assumption either that there are more gods than one by whom they will be justified, or that they will be justified by some different law, in some different way. But neither of these is the case. Therefore it follows that there is no distinction.

**Shall justify.**—The future signifies, “throughout the Christian dispensation”—wherever the Christian system extends.

**By faith.**—*Through faith.* In

the one case faith is regarded as the instrument, in the other as the means; but the two expressions come to be almost convertible. In like manner there is no essential difference indicated by the fact that the first noun has not the article, while the second has it. The former is more abstract—the quality of faith in man; the latter more concrete—faith as embodied in the gospel. The two prepositions, “by” and “through,” are in English nearly convertible, or differ from each other no more than “instrument” and “means.”

<sup>(31)</sup> **Do we then make void the law.**—In opposition to many commentators it seems right to take this as an isolated statement to be worked out afterwards (chap. vi. 1 *et seq.*) more fully. It cannot, without straining, be connected directly with what follows. The Apostle deals with two objections to his theory of justification by faith; (1) that there ought to be a different rule for the Jew and for the Gentile; (2) that if not, the law is practically abolished. He meets this latter by a contradiction, saying that it is not abolished, but confirmed. This is, however, drawing upon the stock of conclusions in his own mind to which he had come by process of meditation: the detailed proof is reserved.

## CHAPTER IV.—

A.D. 58.

Chap. iv. 1—25.  
Abraham himself  
justified by faith.

(1) What shall  
we say then  
that Abra-

ham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? (2) For if Abraham were justified by works, he

## IV.

(1—25) The subject of the chapter is an application of the foregoing to the special (and crucial) case of Abraham, with particular reference to two ideas that are continually recurring throughout the last chapter: (1) the supposed superiority of Jew to Gentile (and, *a fortiori*, of the great progenitor of the Jews); (2) the idea of boasting or glorying based upon this superiority. Following out this the Apostle shows how even Abraham's case tells, not against, but for the doctrine of justification by faith. Indeed, Abraham himself came under it. And not only so, but those who act upon this doctrine are spiritually descendants of Abraham. It is entirely a mistake to suppose that they of the circumcision only are Abraham's seed. The true seed of Abraham are those who follow his example of faith. He put faith in the promise, they must put their faith in the fulfilment of the promise.

(2) To come back to the question of chap. iii. 1, repeated in chap. iii. 9, in what did the superiority of Abraham, the great representative of the Jewish race, really consist?

**As pertaining to the flesh.**  
—The construction of these words appears to be determined by their position in the sentence. According to the best MSS. they are

distinctly separated from "hath found" and joined with "our father." They would therefore mean simply "our father according to the flesh," *i.e.*, by natural descent, as in chap. i. 3.

**Hath found.**—*Hath got, or gained*, by way of advantage.

(2) We know that he obtained justification. If that justification had been earned by his own works, it would then have been something to be proud of, it would be a pride that he might fairly hold both towards men and towards God; for to men he could point to the privileged position that he had gained, and in the sight of God he would be able to plead a certain merit of his own. But he has *not* this merit. His justification was *not* earned, but it was bestowed upon him, not for the sake of his works, but of his faith. This is the express statement of Scripture. And hence it follows, that though his privileged position in the sight of men remains, he has nothing to boast of before God.

**But not before God.**—This is an instance of the rapid and eager dialectic of the Apostle. If the whole train of thought had been given it would probably have run much as above; but the greater part of it is suppressed, and the Apostle strikes straight at the one point which he intended to bring into relief: (Whatever there might be before men) there is no boasting before God.



hath *whereof* to glory ; but not before God. <sup>(3)</sup> For what saith the scripture ? Abraham believed God,<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 15. 6.

and it was counted unto him for righteousness. <sup>(4)</sup> Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned

<sup>(3)</sup> The Apostle gives a proof of this from Scripture. Abraham was not justified by works, and therefore had nothing to boast of in God's sight. He was justified by faith. His righteousness was not real, but imputed. His faith was treated as if it had been equivalent to a righteousness of works. It met with the same acceptance in the sight of God that a righteousness of works would have done. But—the argument goes on—faith carries with it no such idea of merit or debt as works. It is met by a pure act of grace on the part of God.

**Abraham believed God.**—The quotation is taken from Gen. xv. 6, where it appears as a comment upon Abraham's belief in the promise that he should have a numerous posterity. The same passage is elaborately commented upon by Philo and others, so that it would seem to have been a common topic in the Jewish schools. It should be noticed that the word "faith" is not used in quite the same sense in the original and in the application. In Abraham's case it was trust in the fulfilment of the divine promise, in St. Paul's sense it is rather enthusiastic adhesion to a person. This is part of the general enlargement and deepening of the Old Testament terminology by St. Paul. A writer of less profundity (though marked by striking and elevated qualities), the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews,

applies the word more strictly. (See Heb. xi. 8 *et seq.*) In Jas. ii. 23 the word has the still thinner meaning of a merely intellectual assent. St. Paul quotes the same passage in the same sense as here in Gal. iii. 6. (See *Excursus B: On the Meaning of the word Faith.*)

**It was counted unto him.**—It should be observed that the same words are translated by the Authorised version here, "it was counted unto him;" in verse 9, "faith was reckoned to Abraham;" in verse 22, "it was imputed unto him;" in Gal. iii. 6, "it was accounted to him;" in Jas. ii. 23, "it was imputed to him." A defect in the translation, which, however, hardly obscures the true meaning.

The sense of imputation is not to be got rid of. It is distinctly a forensic act. The righteousness attributed to Abraham is not an actual righteousness, but something else that is considered and treated as if it were equivalent to such righteousness. It is so treated by God acting as the judge of men. (See *Excursus E: On the Doctrine of Justification by Faith and Imputed Righteousness.*)

<sup>(4)</sup> This, then (the righteousness attributed to Abraham), was an act of grace on the part of God, and not of merit on the part of man. It therefore carries with it no ground of boasting.

The proposition is put in a general form. Those who base

of grace, but of debt. (6) But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (6) Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth

a Ps. 32.  
1, 2.

righteousness without works, (7) saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,<sup>a</sup> and whose sins are covered. (8) Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. (9) Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision

their claim on works have a right to their reward. It is not conceded to them by any sort of imputation, but is their *desert*. On the other hand (verse 5), those who rely only upon faith, even though ungodly themselves, have righteousness imputed to them. This latter was Abraham's case, and not the former. (The specific application to Abraham is not expressed, but implied.)

**The reward.**—Literally, *his wages*. The relation between what he receives and what he does is that of wages for work done. He can claim it, if need be, in a court of law. There is in it no element of grace, or favour, or concession.

(6) But to him who puts forward no works, but has *faith* in God, who justifies men, not for their righteousness, but in spite of their sins, &c.

**The ungodly.**—A stronger word is here used than simply "the unrighteous," "the impious," or "ungodly." Their impiety is condoned to them in virtue of their single exercise of faith. It is characteristic of the Apostle not to flinch from the boldest expression, though, as a matter of fact, the two things, faith and positive impiety, would hardly be found

together. "The ungodly" clearly belongs to the general form of the proposition, and is not intended to apply to Abraham.

(6-8) A further instance of the nature of the justification which proceeds from faith is supplied by David. From his evidence it will appear that such justification implies, not the absence of sin, but its forgiveness; not its real obliteration, but the forbearance of God to impute it. It is an *amnesty*, not an *acquittal*.

(9) **Even as.**—In strict accordance with this description of the justified state we have another, that of David.

**Describeth the blessedness.**—Rather, *speaks the felicitation, felicitates, or pronounces blessed.*

(7) **Forgiven.**—The stress is upon this word; "whose sins are not abolished, but forgiven; not annihilated, but covered up, removed from sight, hidden by the absolving grace of God."

(9-12) What is the bearing of this upon the relation between Jew and Gentile? Is the blessedness of the justified state reserved only for the former? Is it limited to those

only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. <sup>(10)</sup> How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. <sup>(11)</sup> And he received the sign of cir-

cumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: <sup>(12)</sup> and the father of circumcision to them who

who are circumcised? On the contrary, the state of justification was attributed to Abraham himself *before* he was circumcised. Justification is the result of faith, not of circumcision. Circumcision is so far from superseding faith that it was only the sign or seal of it.

This, then, is the great test. Those who have it may hope for justification, whether their descent from Abraham is spiritual or literal.

**(9) Cometh this blessedness.**

—We shall, perhaps, best see the force of the particles “then” and “for” if we take the sentence out of its interrogative form. “It follows from the language of David that the blessedness thus predicated belongs to the uncircumcised as well as to the circumcised, *for*”—then comes the first premiss of the argument by which this is proved. It was the act of faith which was the cause of Abraham’s justification. But both the act of faith and the justification consequent upon it were prior to the institution of the rite of circumcision. The narrative of this institution falls in Gen. xvii., when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, and Ishmael, his

son, thirteen (Gen. xvii. 1, 24, 25), while the vision and promise of Gen. xv. apparently came before the birth of Ishmael.

<sup>(11)</sup> **The sign of circumcision**—*i.e.*, circumcision as a sign. The expression is an instance of what is known in Greek as the “genitive of apposition,” but it is common in English. Thus we speak of the City of London, the County of Kent.

Abraham is the father (1) of faithful uncircumcised—he himself being so—and (2) of circumcised, *but only* of faithful circumcised.

**A seal of the righteousness** . . .—The Apostle here puts forth his view of the real import of circumcision. It was not (as so many of his contemporaries supposed) the cause or condition of Israel’s privileges so much as the sign or ratification of them. It ratified a state of things already existing when it was instituted. Hence, to those who inherited that state of things (justification by faith) the want of circumcision was no bar.

<sup>(12)</sup> And on the other hand, the mere performance of the rite was

are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being yet uncircumcised. <sup>(13)</sup> For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed,

through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>(14)</sup> For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: <sup>(15)</sup> because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is*

no guarantee for justification, unless it was attended with a faith like Abraham's. Of the two things, faith itself, and circumcision the sign of faith, the first only was essential, and the second was useless without it.

<sup>(13)</sup> Abraham was the father of *all* who walk in his steps. For this *all* is not limited by the Law any more than it is limited by circumcision. The promise of that world-wide inheritance was not given through the agency of the Law (which at that time did not exist), but as an effect of the righteousness which proceeds from faith.

**Heir of the world.**—This promise was explained by the Jews of the universal sovereignty of the Messiah.

**Through the righteousness of faith.**—As a further consequence of that (imputed) righteousness which proceeds from faith. Three stages are indicated: (1) faith, (2) imputed righteousness, (3) access to the Messianic kingdom with all its privileges.

<sup>(14-17)</sup> This Messianic kingdom cannot have anything to do with law; for if it had, faith and the promise would cease to have any

office. Faith and law cannot co-exist. They are the opposites of each other. The proper effect of law is punishment; for law only exposes sin. Faith, on the other hand, is the real key to the inheritance. It sets in motion grace; and grace, unlike law, excludes no one. It is open alike to the legal and to the spiritual descendants of Abraham; in other words (as the Scripture itself testifies), to all mankind, as the representative of whom Abraham stands before God.

<sup>(14)</sup> **Is made void.**—Literally, emptied of its meaning, becomes an empty name, and the promise rendered nugatory. There is nothing left for either to do, if the votaries of law, simply as such, are to be the inheritors of the Messianic kingdom.

<sup>(15)</sup> But in reality the Law is unable to admit them to this. It has an entirely contrary function—namely, to call down punishment upon the offences that it reveals. The Law and faith, therefore, mutually exclude each other, and faith is left to be the sole arbiter of salvation.

**Where no law is.**—Transgression is *ex vi termini* the transgres-

no transgression. <sup>(16)</sup> Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, <sup>(17)</sup> (as it is written, I have made thee

a Gen. 17.  
5.

a father of many nations,<sup>a</sup>) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were: <sup>(18)</sup> who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So

sion or breach of law, and therefore has no existence in that age of unconscious morality which precedes the introduction of law.

<sup>(16)</sup> **Therefore it is of faith.**—The words “it is” have to be supplied. “It” stands for the Messianic inheritance, or, in common phrase, salvation. Faith on man’s part is correlative with grace on the part of God, and salvation being thus dependent upon grace is as wide and universal as grace itself. It knows no restriction of law.

**Not to that only which is of the law.**—Not only to that part of the human race which belongs to the dispensation of the Law, but also to that which is in a spiritual sense descended from Abraham by imitating his faith.

<sup>(17)</sup> **Before him.**—Rather, *in the presence of*. These words are to be connected closely with those which precede the parenthesis: “Who stands as the father of us all in the presence of that God in whom he believed.” Abraham is regarded as (so to speak) confronting the Almighty, as he had done when the promise was first given to him.

**Who quickeneth.**—“Who gives life to that which is dead,

and issues His fiat to that which is not as though it were.” The words have reference, in the first instance, to the dealings of God with Abraham, described in the verses that follow—(1) to the over-ruling of the laws of nature indicated in verse 19; (2) to the declaration, “So shall thy seed be.” There is, however, also an undercurrent of reference to the calling of the Gentiles: “I will call them My people which were not My people, and her beloved which was not beloved.”

<sup>(18-22)</sup> Extended description of the faith of Abraham.

<sup>(18)</sup> **Who.**—It must be noticed that the relative here refers to Abraham, whereas in the previous verse it referred to God.

**Believed in hope.**—The force of the preposition gives rather to the sentence the meaning of “grounded his faith upon hope”—that internal subjective hope that was strong within him, though there were no objective grounds for hoping.

**That he might become.**—So as by exercise of faith to carry out God’s purpose.

shall thy seed be.<sup>a</sup> <sup>(19)</sup> And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: <sup>(20)</sup> he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; <sup>(21)</sup> and being fully persuaded that, what he

a Gen. 15.  
5. —

had promised, he was able also to perform. <sup>(22)</sup> And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. <sup>(23)</sup> Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; <sup>(24)</sup> but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; <sup>(25)</sup> who was delivered for our offences, and was

<sup>(19)</sup> **Considered not.**—The negative should, in accordance with the evidence of the best MSS., be omitted. "Who, because he was not weak in faith, considered indeed—took full account of—the natural impediments to the fulfilment of the promise, and yet did not doubt."

<sup>(20)</sup> **In faith.**—Better, *through or by faith*, corresponding to "through unbelief" in the preceding clause. Unbelief did not make him doubt, but faith made him confident and strong.

**Giving glory to God.**—This phrase does not necessarily refer to a verbal ascription of praise, but may be used of anything which tends to God's glory, whether in thought, word, or deed (comp. Josh. vii. 19; Ezra x. 11; Jer. xiii. 16; Luke xvii. 18; John ix. 24; Acts xii. 23); here it seems to be applied to the frank recognition of God's omnipotence involved in Abraham's faith.

<sup>(23-25)</sup> Application of the foregoing. The history of Abraham is a type of the dispensation of grace; his faith, the imputation of righte-

ousness to him, and his reward, each severally a type of the same things in the Christian. Even in details the resemblance holds. Abraham put faith in a God "who quickeneth the dead," and in like manner the Christian must put faith in God as the Author of a scheme of salvation attested by the resurrection of Christ. The death of Christ was the ground of that scheme, the resurrection of Christ its proof, without which it would not have been brought home to man.

<sup>(24)</sup> **That raised up.**—It is an association of ideas which leads the Apostle up to this point. The birth of Isaac resembles the resurrection of Christ in that it involved the exercise of Omnipotence, and in that Omnipotence Abraham believed and we are to believe. The Apostle is further led to allude to the Resurrection (though he has not laid so much stress upon it hitherto) because of the place which it held in his theory of the gospel.

<sup>(25)</sup> **Was delivered.**—*i.e.*, to death, as in Isa. liii. 12 (LXX. version); Matt. xvii. 22; *et al.*

raised again for our justification.

CHAPTER V. — A.D. 58.

(1) Therefore being justified by faith, Chap. v. 1-11. The effects of justification. we have peace with God

**For our offences.**—*Because of our offences—i.e.*, in order that He might atone for them.

**For our justification.**—*Because of our justification—i.e.*, that justification might take effect in us.

The death of Christ is the proper cause of justification, or means of atonement, according to St. Paul; the resurrection of Christ is only the mediate or secondary cause of it. The atoning efficacy lay in His death, but the proof of that efficacy—the proof that it was really the Messiah who died—was to be seen in the Resurrection. The Resurrection, therefore, gave the greatest impulse to faith in the atoning efficacy of the death upon the cross, and in this way helped to bring about justification. (Comp. especially 1 Cor. xv. 17, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins"—*i.e.*, you have no guarantee that your sins have really been remitted; if the death of Christ had not been followed by His resurrection, the inference would have followed that it was merely the death of an ordinary man, and without any special saving efficacy.)

The distinction should be carefully observed between the bearing of these two acts, the death and the resurrection of Christ, on the doctrines of justification and sanctification respectively. For the latter see especially chap. vi. 2 *et seq.*

In looking back over the argu-

ment of this fourth chapter, we feel that it is a keen and subtle *argumentum ad hominem*, addressed to Jews, and based upon their own method of interpretation. Its permanent value is derived from its bearing upon the theological system of St. Paul himself—the doctrines of faith, grace, no boasting, the supreme disposing power of God, the saving efficacy of the death of Christ.

V.

(1-11) A description of the serene and blissful state which the sense of justification brings. Faith brings justification; justification brings (let us see that it *does* bring) peace—peace with God through the mediation of Jesus. To that mediation it is that the Christian owes his state of grace or acceptance in the present, and his triumphant hope of glory in the future. Nay, the triumph begins now. It begins even with tribulation, for tribulation leads by gradual stages to that tried and approved constancy which is a virtue most nearly allied to hope. Such hope does not deceive. It is grounded upon the consciousness of justifying love assured to us by the wonderful sacrifice of the death of Christ. The one great and difficult step was that which reconciled sinful man to God; the completion of the process of his salvation follows by easy sequence. Knowing this, our consciousness, just spoken of, takes a glow of triumph.

through our Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>(2)</sup> by whom also we have access by faith

into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

(1) **Being justified.**—The present chapter is thus linked on to the last. Christ was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. “Being *justified* then,” &c. This opening has a wonderful beauty which centres in the Christian idea of peace. After all the gloomy retrospect which fills the preceding chapters, the clouds break, and light steals gently over the scene. Nor is it merely the subsidence of storm, but an ardent and eager hope that now awakens, and looks forward to a glorious future.

**We have.**—A decided preponderance of MSS. authority compels us to read here, “Let us have,” though the older reading would seem to make the best sense. A hortatory element is introduced into the passage, which does not seem quite properly or naturally to belong to it. It is just possible that there may have been a very early error of the copyist, afterwards rightly corrected (in the two older MSS. Vat. and Sin., the reading of the Authorised version appears as a correction) by conjecture. On the other hand, it is too much always to assume that a writer really used the expression which it seems to us most natural that he should have used. “Let us have” would mean “Let us enter into and possess.”

**Peace.**—The state of reconciliation with God, with all that blissful sense of composure and harmony which flows from such a condition. “Peace is the special legacy be-

queathed by Jesus to His disciples (John xiv. 27; xvi. 33); it is also the word used, with deep significance, after miracles of healing, attended with forgiveness (Mark v. 34; Luke vii. 50). Boswell notes a remark of Johnson’s upon this word. “He repeated to Mr. Langton, with great energy, in the Greek, our Saviour’s gracious expression concerning the forgiveness of Mary Magdalen: ‘Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace’ (Luke vii. 50). He said, ‘The manner of this dismissal is exceedingly affecting’” (*Life of Johnson*, ch. 4, under the date 1780). For other illustrations of this supreme and unique phase of the Christian life, we may turn to the hymns of Cowper, especially those stanzas commencing “Sometimes a light surprises,” “So shall my walk be close with God,” “Fierce passions discompose the mind,” “There if Thy Spirit touch the soul”; or to some of the descriptions in the *Pilgrim’s Progress*.

(2) **By whom.**—More accurately translated, *through whom also we have had our access* (Ellicott). “Have had” when we first became Christians, and now while we are such.

**Into this grace.**—This state of acceptance and favour with God, the fruit of justification.

**Rejoice.**—The word used elsewhere for “boasting.” The Christian *has* his boasting, but it is not based upon his own merits. It is a joyful and triumphant confidence in the future, not only felt, but expressed.



(3) And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) and patience, experience; and experience, hope:

(5) and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (6) For when we were

**The glory of God.**—That glory which the “children of the kingdom” shall share with the Messiah Himself when His eternal reign begins.

(3) But much more than this. The Christian’s glorying is not confined to the future; it embraces the present as well. It extends even to what would naturally be supposed to be the very opposite of a ground for glorying—to the persecutions that we have to undergo as Christians. (Comp. especially Matt. v. 10, 12, “Blessed are the persecuted;” 2 Cor. xi. 30; xii. 9, 10, “glorying in infirmities;” Acts v. 41, “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame;” 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13, “think not the fiery trial strange, but rejoice.” Attention has here been called to Bacon’s aphorism, “Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity of the New.” This is a very profound side of the Christian revelation.

(3, 4) A climax in which we put forward higher and higher grades of fortitude and constancy.

(4) **Experience.**—“Approvedness,” the quality of being tried and approved. The result of patient endurance is to test, confirm, and refine the better elements of faith. Out of this, in its turn, grows hope. Hope began and ends the circle. It is the knowledge of

what is in store for him that, in the first instance, nerves the Christian to endure; and that endurance, being prolonged, gives him the steady, calm assurance no longer of the novice but of the veteran.

(5) **Hope maketh not ashamed.**—This Christian hope does not disappoint or deceive. It is quite certain of its object. The issue will prove it to be well founded.

**Because the love of God.**—This hope derives its certainty from the consciousness of justifying love. The believer feeling the love of God (*i.e.*, the love of God for him) shed abroad in his heart, has in this an assurance that God’s promises will not be in vain.

**By the Holy Ghost.**—The communication of Himself on the part of God to man is generally regarded as taking place through the agency of the Spirit. (Comp. chap. viii. 15, 16; Gal. iv. 6.)

**Which is given.**—Rather, *which was given*—*i.e.*, when we first believed. (Comp. Acts viii. 15, xix. 2; 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Gal. iv. 6; Eph. i. 13; iv. 30.)

(6—11) Exposition showing how the love of God comes to have this cogency. That love was evidenced in the death of Christ. And consider what that death was. It is rare enough for one man to die for another—even for a good man. Christ died not for good men, but

yet without strength, in due time<sup>1</sup> Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>(7)</sup> For

<sup>1</sup> Or, according to the time.

scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good

for sinners, and while they were sinners. If then His death had the power to save us from punishment, it is an easy thing to believe that His life will lead us to glory.

(6) **For when we were yet . . .**—The reading at the beginning of this verse is doubtful. The reading of the Vatican MS. is very attractive, "If at least," "If, as we know to be the fact, Christ died," &c. But, unfortunately, this has not much further external support. If we keep the common reading we must either translate "For, moreover," or we may suppose that there is some confusion between two constructions, and the word translated "yet" came to be repeated.

**Without strength.**—Powerless to work out our own salvation.

**In due time.**—Or, *in due season*. So the Authorised version, rightly. Just at the moment when the forbearance of God (chap. iii. 25) had come to an end, His love interposed, through the death of Christ, to save sinners from their merited destruction.

**For the ungodly.**—The force of the preposition here is "for the benefit of," not "instead of." St. Paul, it is true, holds the doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, but this is expressed by such terms as the "propitiation" of chap. iii. 25, or the "offering and sacrifice for us" of Eph. v. 2, and especially the "ransom for all" of 1 Tim. ii. 6, not by the use of the preposition.

(7, 8) What makes the sacrifice of Christ so paradoxical is that it was undergone for *sinners*. Even for a righteous man it is rare enough to find another who will be ready to lay down his life. Yet some such persons there are. The one thing which is most extraordinary in the death of Christ, and which most tends to throw in relief the love of God as displayed in it, is that He died for men as sinners, and at the very moment when they were sinning all around Him.

(7) **Yet peradventure.**—The true reading is, undoubtedly, *for peradventure*.

**For a good man.**—Literally, *for the good (man)*, i.e., for the good man in question, the righteous man mentioned above. It would be possible to take the phrase "for the good" as neuter rather than masculine, and to understand by it "in a good cause." It would be possible also to give to the word translated "good" the special meaning of "benefactor"—"a man might be found to die for his benefactor." But if this had been intended it might have been more clearly expressed, and upon the whole it seems best to take the passage as it is taken in the English version. There is a slight distinction in the Greek, as in English, between the words translated "righteous" and "good." To be "righteous" is to direct the will in obedience to an external standard; to be "good" is to have a natural goodness, espe-

man some would even dare to die. <sup>(8)</sup> But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>(9)</sup> Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

<sup>(10)</sup> 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. <sup>(11)</sup> And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by

cially kindness or benevolence of disposition. But this distinction is not insisted upon here. The two words are used almost convertibly.

<sup>(8)</sup> **Commendeth.**—The English word happily covers the double meaning of the Greek. The same word is used (1) of things in the sense of “prove” or “establish,” here and in chap. iii. 5; (2) of persons in the sense of “recommend,” in chap. xvi. 1.

**His love.**—Strictly, *His own love*. The love both of God and of Christ is involved in the atonement. Its ultimate cause is the love of God, which is here in question. The love of Christ is evidenced by the fact of His death; the love of God is evidenced by the love of Christ.

**Toward us.**—The question whether these words should be taken as in the English version, “His love to, or toward, us,” or whether they should not rather be joined with “commendeth”—“commendeth to us”—is chiefly one of reading, the words being variously placed in the different authorities. The balance of evidence is close, but perhaps the translation may be allowed to remain as it is.

**Sinners.**—There is, of course, a

stress upon this word in contrast to “the righteous man,” “the good man,” of the preceding verse.

<sup>(9)</sup> **From wrath.**—*From the wrath*, the divine wrath, or the wrath to come.

<sup>(10)</sup> The interval that separates the state of enmity from the state of reconciliation is a large one, that which separates the state of reconciliation from the state of salvation is a small one. And yet there is a difference. Reconciliation is the initial act; the removal of the load of guilt, justification. Salvation is the end of the Christian career, and of the process of sanctification. Justification is regarded as being specially due to the death of Christ. Sanctification is brought about rather by His continued agency as the risen and exalted Saviour. The relations in which the risen Saviour still stands to the individual Christian are more fully worked out in chaps. vi. 4 *et seq.*; viii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 22 *et seq.*; 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11; Phil. iii. 10.

<sup>(11)</sup> **And not only so.**—Some such word as “reconciled” must be supplied from the previous verse. “We shall be saved as the sequel of our reconciliation, but we are something more than reconciled. Ours

whom we have now received the atonement.

(12) Wherefore, as by one

man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;

Chap. v. 12—21.  
The first and the second Adam.

is not merely a passive but an active state. We exult or glory in God, who, through Christ, hath given us this reconciliation."

**Now.**—In this present time, in our present condition. Reconciliation in the present is a foretaste of glory in the future.

(12—21) Contrast between the reign of death introduced by the sin of Adam, and the reign of life introduced by the atonement of Christ.

The sequence is, first sin, then death. Now, the death which passed over mankind had its origin in Adam's sin. Strictly speaking, there could be no individual sin till there was a law to be broken. But in the interval between Adam and Moses, *i.e.*, before the institution of law, death prevailed over the world, which was a proof that there was sin somewhere. The solution is, that the sin in question was not the individual guilt of individual transgressors, but the single transgression of Adam. Here, then, is the contrast. The single sin of the one man, Adam, brought death upon all mankind; the single act of the one Redeemer cleared away many offences—also for all men. Under the old dispensation law entered in to intensify the evil; but, in like manner, under the new, grace has come in to enhance and multiply the benefit. Thus the remedial system and the condemnatory system are co-extensive, the one over against the other, and the first entirely cancels the second.

(12) **Wherefore.**—The train of thought which follows is suggested by the mention which has just been made of atonement, reconciliation. We see here another instance of the Apostle's fondness for transcendental theology, and for the development of the deeper mysteries of God's dealings with man. The rapidity with which ideas of this kind throng into his brain is such as to break the even flow and structure of his sentence.

**As by one man.**—This clause, "as by one man sin and death entered," ought to have been answered by "So by one Man grace and life entered." But a difficulty occurs at the very outset. How can it really be said that sin and death entered by Adam? For sin does not exist without law, and the law did not come in till Moses. And yet we have proof that sin must have been there; for death, its consequence, prevailed all through this period in which law was still wanting. The fact was, the sin which then prevailed, and had such wide and disastrous effects, was Adam's. So that it is strictly legitimate to compare his fall with the act of redemption. It is strictly true to say that by one man sin and death entered into the world, as life and grace entered by another. In either case the consequence was that of one man's act.

**For that all have sinned.**—Rather, *for that*, or *because*, all sinned—*i.e.*, not by their own individual act, but implicitly in Adam's transgression. They were summed

and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: <sup>(13)</sup>(for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

<sup>(14)</sup> Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the

up, and included in him as the head and representative of the race.

<sup>(13)</sup> So much we can see; so much is simple matter of history, that sin was in the world from Adam downwards. But here comes the difficulty. Sin there was, but why guilt? And why death, the punishment of guilt? The pre-Mosaic man sinned indeed, but could not rightly be condemned for his sin until there was a law to tell him plainly the distinction between right and wrong.

It will be observed that the law of nature (chaps. i. 19, 20; ii. 14, 15) is here left out of consideration. In the places mentioned, St. Paul speaks of the law of nature only as applicable to his contemporaries or to comparatively recent times. He does not throw back its operation into the primitive ages of the world; neither does he pronounce upon the degree of responsibility which men, as moral agents, then incurred. This would fall in with the doctrine that the consciousness of right and wrong was gradually formed. It is not, indeed, to be said that St. Paul exactly anticipated the teachings of the inductive school of moralists, but there is much in their system, or at any rate in the results to which they seem to be coming, that appears to fall into easy and harmonious relations with the teaching of the Apostle.

<sup>(14)</sup> After the similitude of Adam's transgression — *i.e.*, "in direct defiance of divine command." They had not incurred just punishment as Adam had, and yet they died. Why? Because of Adam's sin, the effects of which extended to them all, just in the same way as the effects of the death of Christ extend to all.

**Who is the figure.**—Better, *type*. There is thus hinted at the parallelism which was omitted in verse 12. Adam was the type of Christ, his sin and its effects the type of Christ's death and its effects. No doubt the way in which this point is introduced is, in a mere rhetorical sense, faulty. St. Paul was, however, much above caring for rhetoric. And beside, it must be remembered that he wrote by dictation, and, probably, never revised what the amanuensis had written. This fact has very rightly been insisted on by Dr. Vaughan (Preface to Third Edition, p. xxii), "We must picture to ourselves, in reading this profound Epistle to the Romans, a man full of thought, his hands, perhaps, occupied at the moment in stitching at the tent-cloth, dictating one clause at a time to the obscure Tertius beside him, stopping only to give time for the writing, never looking it over, never, perhaps, hearing it read over, at last taking the style into his hand to add the last few words of affectionate benediction."

figure of him that was to come. <sup>(15)</sup> But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is by one*

man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. <sup>(16)</sup> And not as *it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto*

<sup>(15)</sup> Now comes the statement of the contrast which extends over the next five verses. The points of difference are thrown into relief by the points of resemblance. These may be, perhaps, best presented by the subjoined scheme:—

Persons of the action.	One man, Adam.	One man, Christ.
The action.	One act of trespass.	One act of obedience.
Character of the action viewed in its relation to the Fall and Salvation of man.	The great initial trespass or breach of the law of God.	The great accomplished work of grace or the gift of righteousness.
Persons affected by the action.	All mankind.	All mankind.
Proximate effect of the action.	Influx of many transgressions.	Clearing away of many transgressions.
Ulterior effect of the action.	Death.	Life.

**The offence.**—Perhaps rather, *trespass*, to bring out the latent antithesis to the *obedience* of Christ. (Ellicott.)

**One . . . many.**—Substitute throughout this passage, "*the one*," "*the many*." By "*the many*" is meant "mankind generally," "all men." Dr. Lightfoot quotes Bentley on the importance of this change: "By this accurate version

some hurtful mistakes about partial redemption and absolute reprobation had been happily prevented. Our English readers had then seen what several of the Fathers saw and testified, that *the many*, in an antithesis to *the one*, are equivalent to *all* in verse 12, and comprehend the whole multitude, the entire species of mankind, exclusive only of *the one*." "In other words," Dr. Lightfoot adds, "the benefits of Christ's obedience extend to all men potentially. It is only human self-will which places limits to its operation."

**Much more.**—Because God is much more ready to exercise mercy and love than severity, to pardon than to punish.

**The grace of God, and the gift by grace.**—The grace of God is the moving cause, its result is the gift (of righteousness, verse 17) imputed by His gracious act to the many.

<sup>(16)</sup> **The judgment was by one.**—The judgment, verdict, or sentence from a single case ends in, or in other words takes the form of, condemnation; whereas, on the other hand, the free gift, starting from, or prompted by many sins, ends in, takes the form of, justification. In the former of these cases the verdict is "Guilty," while in the other case it (or rather the

justification. <sup>(17)</sup> For if by one man's offence<sup>1</sup> death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) <sup>(18)</sup> Therefore as by the offence<sup>2</sup> of one judgment came upon

<sup>1</sup> Or, by one offence.  
<sup>2</sup> Or, by one righteousness.

<sup>2</sup> Or, by one offence.

all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one<sup>3</sup> the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. <sup>(19)</sup> For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. <sup>(20)</sup> Moreover the law

free act of grace which takes its place) is a verdict of acquittal.

<sup>(17)</sup> Further confirmation of the contrast between the effect of Adam's sin and the atonement of Christ. The one produced a reign of death, the other shall produce a reign of life.

<sup>(18)</sup> Therefore.—Recapitulating what has just been said.

The offence of one.—Rather, *One trespass*.

Judgment came. — These words are supplied in the English version, but they are somewhat too much of a paraphrase. It is better to render simply, *the issue was*, which words may also be substituted for the "free gift came," below.

<sup>(19)</sup> Many were made sinners.—*The many*, or mankind collectively, were placed in the position of sinners.

Obedience.—This term is chosen in contradistinction to the disobedience of Adam. The obedience of Christ was an element in the atonement. (Comp. Phil. ii. 8; where it is said that He "became obedient unto death;" and Heb. x. 7, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," specially in connection with the atone-

ment.) But if we interpret St. Paul by himself, we must not see in it the sole element to the exclusion of the "propitiatory sacrifice" of chap. iii. 25; Eph. i. 7; v. 2; 1 Tim. ii. 6.

<sup>(20, 21)</sup> The Apostle had already (verses 13, 14) alluded to the intervention of the Law. Now he returns to the topic, and in order to complete his historical view of the origin of sin through Adam, and its atonement through Christ, he considers what was its effect upon the former, and how that effect was met and neutralised by the latter. Mankind had already been led into sin by Adam. The Law came in to make matters still worse. It substituted conscious sin for unconscious, and so heightened its guilt. But all this is more than retrieved by grace.

<sup>(20)</sup> Entered.—A graphic metaphorical expression: "Came in to the side of" the sin already existing; "took its place," as it were, "by the side of" sin, and joined forces with it, thus greatly adding to its extent and power.

Abound.—This word should be reserved for the last of the three places in this verse in which it appears in the Authorised version.

entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: <sup>(21)</sup>that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace

reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

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## CHAPTER VI.—

(1) What shall we say then?

The original in the other two places is different, and has the force of "might be multiplied," or "increased"—*i.e.*, made more and made worse.

(21) **Unto death.**—Rather, *in death*; death being, as it were, the domain in which its sovereignty was exercised.

In this last section we seem still to trace the influence of the school of Gamaliel. It appears that the Jewish doctors also attributed universal mortality to the fall of Adam, and regarded his sin as including that of the rest of mankind. (On the whole section, see *Excursus F: On St. Paul's View of the Religious History of Mankind.*)

## VI.

(1-5) These considerations might seem to lead to an Antinomian conclusion. If the increase of sin has only led to a larger measure of forgiveness, it might be thought well to continue in sin, and so to enhance the measure and glory of forgiving grace. But to the Christian this is impossible. In regard to sin he is, in theory and principle, dead. When he was converted from heathenism, and received Christian baptism, he gave himself up unreservedly to Christ; he professed adhesion to Christ, and especially to His death; he pledged himself to adopt that death as his own; he entered into fellowship with it in order that he might also enjoy the

fellowship of the resurrection of Christ. This fellowship or participation is both physical and ethical.

(2) **Shall we continue in sin?**—Again the Apostle is drawn into one of those subtle casuistical questions that had such a great attraction for him. But he soon returns to the root ideas of his own system. In previous chapters he had dealt with one of the two great root ideas, justification by faith; he now passes to the second, union with Christ. The one might be described as the *juridical*, the other as the *mystical* theory of salvation. The connecting-link which unites them is faith. Faith in Christ, and especially in the death of Christ, is the instrument of justification. Carried a degree farther, it involves an actual identification with the Redeemer Himself. This, no doubt, is mystical language. When strictly compared with the facts of the religious consciousness, it must be admitted that all such terms as union, oneness, fellowship, identification, pass into the domain of metaphor. They are taken to express the highest conceivable degree of attachment and devotion. In this sense they are now consecrated by the use of centuries, and any other phrases substituted for them, though gaining perhaps somewhat in precision, would only seem poor and cold. (See *Excursus G: On the Doctrine of Union with Christ.*)



Shall we continue in sin,  
 that grace  
 may abound?  
 (2) God forbid.  
 How shall we,

Chap. vi. 1-14.  
 Death to sin by  
 union with  
 Christ.

that are dead to sin, live any  
 longer therein? (3) Know  
 ye not, that so many of us  
 as were baptized into Jesus  
 Christ were baptized into

(2) **That are dead.**—Rather, *that died*. It is well to bear in mind Dr. Lightfoot's remarks on the importance of keeping the strict aorist sense as opposed to that of the perfect (*i.e.*, the single past action as opposed to the prolonged or continued action) in passages such as this. "St. Paul regards this change—from sin to righteousness, from bondage to freedom, from death to life—as summed up in one definite act of the past; potentially to all men in our Lord's passion and resurrection, actually to each individual man when he accepts Christ, is baptised into Christ. Then he is made righteous by being incorporated into Christ's righteousness, he dies once for all to sin, he lives henceforth for ever to God. This is his *ideal*. Practically, we know that the death to sin and the life to righteousness are inchoate, imperfect, gradual, meagrely realised even by the most saintly men in this life; but St. Paul sets the matter in this ideal light to force upon the consciences of his hearers the fact that an entire change came over them when they became Christians—that the knowledge and the grace then vouchsafed to them did not leave them where they were—that they are not, and cannot be, their former selves—and that it is a contradiction of their very being to sin any more. It is the definiteness, the absoluteness of this change, considered as an

historical crisis, which forms the central idea of St. Paul's teaching, and which the aorist marks. We cannot, therefore, afford to obscure this idea by disregarding the distinctions of grammar; yet in our English version it is a mere chance whether in such cases the aorist is translated as an aorist" (*On Revision*, p. 85). These remarks will form the best possible commentary upon the passage before us. It may be only well to add that the change between the position of the first Christians and our own involves a certain change in the application of what was originally said with reference to them. Baptism is not now the tremendous crisis that it was then. The ideal of Christian life then assumed is more distinctly an ideal. It has a much less definite hold upon the imagination and the will. But it ought not therefore to be any the less binding upon the Christian. He should work *towards* it, if he cannot work *from* it, in the spirit of Phil. iii. 12-14.

It would be well for the reader to note at once the corrections suggested in the rendering of this verse by Dr. Lightfoot's criticism:—In verse 4, "we *were* buried" for "we are buried;" in verse 6, "the old man *was* crucified" for "is crucified;" in verse 8, "if we *died*" for "if we be dead."

(3) **Know ye not.**—It should be as in the Greek, *Or know ye not*. Do you not admit this principle;

his death? <sup>(4)</sup> Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even

so we also should walk in newness of life. <sup>(5)</sup> For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his*

or am I to suppose that you are ignorant? &c.

**Were baptized into Jesus Christ**—*i.e.*, “into communion with Him and incorporation in His mystical body” (Ellicott on Gal. iii. 27). “As many of you as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ.” Your baptism signified an intimately close and indissoluble attachment to Christ.

**Were baptized into his death.**—And this attachment had a special relation to His death. It involved a communion or fellowship with His death. This fellowship is ethical, *i.e.*, it implies a moral conduct corresponding to that relation to Christ which it assumes.

Why has baptism this special connection with the *death* of Christ? In the first place, the death of Christ is the central and cardinal fact of the ‘Christian scheme. It is specially related to justification, and justification proceeds from faith, which is ratified in baptism. In the second place, the symbolism of baptism was such as naturally to harmonise with the symbolism of death. It was the final close of one period, and the beginning of another—the complete stripping off of the past and putting on of the “new man.”

<sup>(4)</sup> **We are buried with him.**—Burial is the consequence of death. It is the seal set upon it, as it were, which shows that no

revival is possible. Besides, it is the one step which separates it from resurrection. The idea of “buried with Christ” is therefore introduced, on the one hand, to show that the ethical death with Him was final and decisive, and on the other, to prepare the way for an ethical (as well as physical) resurrection with Him.

**Into death.**—The ideas of physical and moral death and resurrection and life are inextricably blended in the thought of the Apostle.

**By the glory of the Father.**—The resurrection of Christ is more usually and more naturally ascribed to the power or Omnipotence of God. The word “Glory” is here to be taken as standing for the sum of the divine perfections, power being included among them, “the Majesty on High.”

**Even so.**—It is to be observed that the mysticism is here resolved into a relation of resemblance. The resurrection of Christ, and the new life of the Christian, are *compared* instead of being identified. The Apostle does not say “being dead with Christ, let us rise with Him;” but, “*as* Christ rose again, *so* we also should walk in newness of life.” The mystical expression for this is given in the next verse.

<sup>(5)</sup> **If we have been planted together.**—“If (so surely as) we have *grown into*—become *conjoined with.*” The metaphor is taken

resurrection : <sup>(6)</sup> knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be

<sup>1</sup> Gr. justified.

destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. <sup>(7)</sup> For he that is dead is freed<sup>1</sup> from sin. <sup>(8)</sup> Now

from the parasitic growth of a plant, but applies to *natural* growth, not "*planted together with*," as in the Authorised version. The idea would correspond to the growth of a bud or graft regarded as part of that of the stock in which it is inserted, but without reference to the operation of budding or grafting. It is used here to express the closest intimacy and union.

**In the likeness of his death.**—Not here "His death itself," but "the *likeness* of His death," *i.e.*, an ethical condition corresponding to, or *conformable* to, the death of Christ. If our nature has grown "into conformity with" His death, it will be also conformable to His resurrection.

This conformity means, of course, *lying to trespasses and sins*, being completely removed from the sphere of their influence, and entering a new sphere corresponding to the glorified life of the Redeemer. The ethical resurrection of the Christian begins (or is ideally supposed to begin, and with the early Christian usually did begin) in baptism, is continued through life, and is completed with his physical resurrection.

<sup>(6-11)</sup> Further description of this process. The Christian's union with the crucified Christ binds him also to crucify or mortify (ascetically) the sinful desires of his body. Thus he is released from the dominion of those desires. But this is not all. Just as Christ passed from the cross

to the resurrection, and overcame death once for all, exchanging for it a life wholly dependent upon God; so, too, His followers must consider themselves cut off irrevocably—as if by death itself—from sin, and living with a new life dedicated and devoted to God, through their participation in the death and life of Jesus Christ their Lord.

<sup>(6)</sup> **Our old man.**—"Our old self" (Vaughan), as in Eph. iv. 22, 24; Col. iii. 9, 10.

The old self, or that congeries of evil habits acquired in the state of heathenism, was, ideally if not actually, mortified and killed in our baptism. This change was wrought by a power brought to bear upon the will through the contemplation of the crucifixion of Christ. Hence, instead of saying simply "mortified," the Apostle writes rather "crucified," *i.e.*, put to death, not in any way, but specially *through the cross*.

**That the body of sin might be destroyed.**—The "body of sin" is the body subject to sin, or that supplies sin with the material on which it works. This substratum of carnal and fleshly desire, the Apostle tells us, is to be ascetically chastened and disciplined until it ceases to be a source of sin.

<sup>(7)</sup> **Is freed.**—"Absolved," the same word that is used elsewhere for "justified." The dead man is no longer liable to have the charge of sin brought against him. This

if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him : <sup>(9)</sup> knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more ; death hath no more dominion over him. <sup>(10)</sup> For in that he died, he died unto sin once : but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. <sup>(11)</sup> Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through

<sup>1</sup> Gr.  
arms,  
or,  
weap-  
ons.

Jesus Christ our Lord. <sup>(12)</sup> Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. <sup>(13)</sup> Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments <sup>1</sup> of unrighteousness unto sin : but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God. <sup>(14)</sup> For sin shall not have

is the general proposition, the major premise, adduced in proof of what had gone before, viz., the particular proposition that he who is ethically dead is no longer the slave of sin.

<sup>(9)</sup> **Dieth no more.**—The eternal subsistence of the life of Christ is a guarantee for the permanence and reality of our own life, so far as it is dependent on His. If it were possible that the life of Christ should fail, the whole fabric that the believer's faith builds upon it would fall to the ground.

<sup>(10)</sup> But it is not possible that the life of Christ should fail. Death has lost all its power over Him. The death which He died, He died to sin. It was the last sacrifice which He made to sin, and one that freed Him from its dominion for ever. He died to it once for all, and His death did not need to be, and could not be, repeated. On the other hand, His life is assured, because it is wholly dependent upon God.

<sup>(11)</sup> Theoretical application to the readers. They are to regard them-

selves as dead, *i.e.*, insensible and inaccessible to sin, but living in close allegiance and devotion to God through union with Christ.

<sup>(12-14)</sup> Practical and hortatory consequence. Therefore expel sin, and refuse to obey its evil promptings. Keep your bodies pure and clean. Let them no longer be weapons in the hands of wickedness ; let them rather be weapons with which to fight the battle of righteousness and of God. You have every encouragement to do this. For sin shall no longer play the tyrant over you. The stern and gloomy empire of Law (which only served to heighten the guilt of sin) is over, and in its stead the only power to which you are subject is that of free forgiveness.

<sup>(12)</sup> **Mortal.**—And therefore at variance with the immortal life just described.

<sup>(13)</sup> **Instruments.**—Rather, as margin, *arms*, or *weapons* which sin is to wield. The same military metaphor is kept up in verse 23,

dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

(15) What then? shall we sin, because

Chap. vi. 15—23. True nature of the Christian freedom. we are not under the law, but

under grace? God forbid.

(16) Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his

<sup>1</sup> Gr  
wheretoe  
ye were  
delivered.  
ed.

servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (17) But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.<sup>1</sup> (18) Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of

“the wages of sin” (your pay as soldiers of sin) “is death.”

(15—23) *Free forgiveness!* What does that mean? Freedom to sin? Far from it. That were to return into the old slavery. To yield to sin is to be the servant or slave of sin, with its consequence—death. On the other hand, obedience and righteousness go together. Happily you have escaped from sin, and taken service with righteousness. Service, I say, using a plain human figure to suit your imperfect and carnal apprehension of spiritual things. Exchange the service of uncleanness for that of righteousness. I appeal to your own experience. You found that sin brought you no pay from your master but death. Now you are started upon a road that leads to sanctification and eternal life. This will be given you, not as wages, but as the free gift of God in Christ.

(15) The Apostle returns to a difficulty very similar to that which presented itself at the beginning of the chapter. The answer is couched under a slightly different metaphor.

It is no longer death to the one, life to the other, but freedom from the one, service to the other. These are correlative terms. Freedom from sin implies service to God, just as freedom from God means service to sin. The same idea of service and freedom will be found worked out in John viii. 32—34, 36, and in Gal. v. 1.

(16) **Know ye not.** — An apparent tautology, but one which really teaches a deep ethical truth. Don't you know that what you make yourself that you become? The habit which you form ends by becoming your “second nature.”

(17) **Have obeyed.** — Rather, *obeyed.* (See Note on verse 2.) In like manner correct “have yielded” to “yielded” in verse 19.

**That form of doctrine.** — That *pattern of teaching*, or express moral rule of life.

**Delivered you.** — Literally, *to which you were delivered* — to the *direction of which you were handed over.*

(18) **Ye became the servants.** — Comp. “Whose service is per-

righteousness. <sup>(19)</sup> I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh : for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity ; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. <sup>(20)</sup> For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.<sup>1</sup> <sup>(21)</sup> What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now

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1 Gr. to  
right-  
cousness.

ashamed? for the end of those things *is* death. <sup>(22)</sup> But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. <sup>(23)</sup> For the wages of sin *is* death ; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## CHAPTER VII.—

<sup>(1)</sup> Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to

Chap. vii. 1-6.  
Release by  
death.

fect freedom," adopted from St. Augustine.

<sup>(19)</sup> **I speak after the manner of men.**—I am using a merely human figure of speech, a figure taken from common human relations, and not a high mystical phrase such as I used just now, because of the dulness of your understanding : that form of expression you might not be able to comprehend ; this present figure is clear even to a mind that is busy with earthly and carnal things, and has not much faculty for taking in anything beyond.

**Your flesh.**—This corresponds nearly to what is elsewhere called "the carnal mind," a mind alive only to material and sensible things.

**To iniquity unto iniquity.**—Ye yielded up your members to iniquity for the practice of iniquity.

**Unto holiness.**—Rather, *for sanctification ; to be made holy.*

<sup>(21)</sup> **For.**—(You had no fruit) for, &c. Some put the question at

"then." "What fruit had ye therefore (omitted in the Authorised version) at that time? Things of which ye are now ashamed ; for their end is death." But the construction of the Authorised version is probably best.

<sup>(22)</sup> **Ye have your fruit.**—You are no longer without fruit. Your fruit is the new Christian life which leads on to sanctification and finally to eternal life.

<sup>(23)</sup> **The gift of God.**—The natural antithesis would be "wages ;" but this would here be inappropriate, and therefore the Apostle substitutes "the free gift." In spite of your sanctification as Christians, still you will not have *earned* eternal life ; it is the gift of God's grace.

## VII.

<sup>(1-6)</sup> The Apostle takes up an idea to which he had alluded in verses 14, 15 of the preceding chapter, "Ye are not under the

them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? <sup>(2)</sup> For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her*

husband. <sup>(3)</sup> So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. <sup>(4)</sup> Wherefore, my brethren,

Law, but under grace;" and as he had worked out the conclusion of the death of the Christian to sin, so now he works out that of his death to the Law. This he does by an illustration borrowed from the marriage-bond. That bond is dissolved by the death of one of the parties to it. And in like manner the death of the Christian with Christ releases him from his obligation to the Law, and opens out to him a new and spiritual service in place of his old subjection to a written code.

<sup>(1)</sup> **Know ye not.**—Here again insert "or"; *Or know ye not, &c.*, carrying on the thought from the end of the last chapter. Is not, argues the Apostle, what I say true? Or do I hear the old objection raised again, that the system under which the Christian is living is not one of grace in which eternal life is given freely by God, but the Mosaic law? That would show an ignorance—which in *you* I cannot believe—of the fact that the dominion of the Law ceases with death, of which fact it is easy to take a simple illustration.

**To them that know the law.**—The Roman Church, as we have seen, was composed in about equal proportions of Jewish and

of Gentile Christians. The Jews would naturally know the provisions of their own law, while the Gentile Christians would know them sufficiently to be aware of the fact, from their intercourse with Jewish members of their own community, and from hearing the Old Testament read in the synagogues, where their public worship was still conducted. The practice of reading from the Old Testament did not cease on the transition from Jewish to Christian modes of worship; it survives still in the "First Lesson."

<sup>(2)</sup> **For the woman which hath an husband.**—The illustration is not quite exact. The Law is here represented by the husband, but the Apostle does not mean to say that the Law dies to the Christian, but the Christian to the Law. The proposition must therefore be understood to be stated in a somewhat abstract form. Relations of the kind indicated are terminated *by death* (not necessarily the death of one party to them more than another). The relation of wife and husband ceases absolutely and entirely on both sides, and not merely so much of it as affects the person who dies.

<sup>(4)</sup> **Are become dead.**—*Were rendered dead*—somewhat stronger than simply "ye died."

ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *passions*.

forth fruit unto God. <sup>(5)</sup>For when we were in the flesh, the motions<sup>1</sup> of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

**By the body of Christ—i.e.,** by the death of the human body of Christ upon the cross. The Christian, as the last chapter has shown, is so united to Christ that whatever has happened to his Master has happened also to him. Christ was put to death upon the cross; *he* therefore has also been put to death with Him. But why put to death *to the Law*? Probably all that is meant is simply that the Christian died, and therefore all the relations contracted before that death came to an end. At the same time he entered upon new relations corresponding to his new and risen state.

The argument can hardly be said to have a logical cogency in a controversial sense. It is not, quite strictly speaking, argument at all, but rather emphatic assertion, with all the weight of apostolic authority, and in a graphic illustrative form. The gist of it all is, "You have done with the Law and assumed a new spiritual life in Christ: see that you make this a reality."

**That we should bring forth fruit unto God.**—This mystical and ethical union with Christ will not be unproductive; it will have for its fruit a life consecrated to God.

<sup>(5)</sup> The new alliance ought not to be unproductive, for the old alliance was not unproductive. Before that mortification of the flesh which proceeds from our relation to the

death of Christ, we bore a fruit generated through our carnal appetites by the Law, and the only being to whose honour and glory they contributed was Death.

The sins committed under the old dispensation are regarded as due to a two-fold agency—on the one hand to the Law (the operation of which is described more particularly in verses 7, 8), and on the other hand to the flesh, which was only too susceptible to any influence that would call out its sinful impulses. Those impulses have now been mortified, as if by a course of asceticism, through union with the death of Christ.

The "body" is regarded by St. Paul as a neutral principle, which is not in itself either good or bad. It is simply the material frame of men, which though itself "of the earth earthy," is capable of becoming a dwelling-place for the Spirit, and being put to holy uses. The "flesh" is the same material frame regarded as the seat of sinful appetites, and with a tendency to obey the lower rather than the higher self. The proper way to overcome this lower self is by that spiritual asceticism which the believer goes through by his appropriation of the death of Christ.

**Motions of sins.**—The same word which is translated in Gal. v. 24, "affections"—those emotions or passions which lead to sin.



(6) But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead<sup>1</sup> wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

<sup>1</sup> Or, being dead to that.

<sup>2</sup> Or, concupiscence.

(7) What shall we say then? *Is the law sin?* God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust,<sup>2</sup> except the

Chap. vii. 7-25. The inward strife.

**Which were by the law.**—Which the Law served to stimulate and quicken in the manner described below.

**Did work.**—Were active or astir, opposed to that state of torpor or mortification to which they were reduced in the Christian.

**Unto death.**—Death is here personified as the king of that region which sin serves to enrich.

(6) **That being dead.**—Our translators seem to have had a false reading here, which is not found in any MS., but arose from an error of Beza and Erasmus in interpreting a comment of Chrysostom's. The true reading runs thus: "But as it is we were" (not "are") "delivered from the Law, having died to that wherein we were held." In the act of our baptism, which united us to Christ, we obtained a release from our old tyrant, the Law.

**Wherein we were held.**—Oppressed, held in bondage.

**That we should serve.**—Rather, perhaps, *so that we serve*; result, not purpose. Our release from one master implied an engagement to another. Our new state is one in which we serve an active living Spirit; our old state was a bondage to the dead and formal letter.

The "Spirit" is here the Holy Spirit, as the animating principle of the new life, and as opposed to a

system which proceeds merely by external precepts and requirements.

(7) **What shall we say then?**—The Apostle had spoken in a manner disparaging to the Law, and which might well give offence to some of his readers. It was necessary to correct this. And so now he proceeds to lay down more precisely in what it was that the Law was defective, and what was its true function and relation to the history and struggles of humanity.

In what follows the Apostle speaks throughout in the first person. He is really making a general statement which applies to all mankind; but this statement is based upon his own personal experience. Self-analysis is at the bottom of most profound psychology. The Apostle goes back in thought to the time before he had embraced Christianity, and treats his own case as typical. There can be little question that the description which follows to the end of verse 24 is a description of the *unregenerate* state of man. It is one prolonged crisis and conflict, which at last finds its solution in Christ.

**Is the law sin?**—The law had just been described as stimulating and exciting "the motions of sin." Was this true? Was the Law really immoral? No, that could not be.

law had said, Thou shalt not covet. <sup>(8)</sup> But sin, taking occasion by the

commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without

**Nay.**—Rather, *howbeit* (Ellicott), *nevertheless*. The Law is not actually immoral, but it is near being made so. It is not itself sin (sinful), but it reveals, and so in a manner incites to, sin.

**I had not known.**—Strictly, *I did not know*. I had no acquaintance with sin except through the Law. Before the introduction of law, acts that are sinful in themselves, objectively viewed, may be done, but they are not sinful with reference to the person who does them. He has no knowledge or consciousness of what sin is until it is revealed to him by law.

**Sin.**—Here a sort of quasi-personification. The principle or power of sin into contact and acquaintance with which the Apostle was brought for the first time by the Law.

**I had not known lust.**—The Apostle introduces an illustration from a special law—the Tenth Commandment. “Lust” is here to be taken in the special sense of covetousness, desire for that which is forbidden. Doubtless there would be many before the giving of the Law who desired their “neighbour’s wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant,” &c.; but this would not be *coveting*, it would not be desire of that which was forbidden, for the simple reason that it was not forbidden. Covetousness, then, as a sin, the Apostle did not know until he was confronted with the law against it.

<sup>(8)</sup> **Taking occasion.**—The word in the Greek implies originally a military metaphor: taking

as a “base of operations,” *i.e.*, an advance post occupied as the starting-point and rendezvous for further advances. Sin is unable to act upon man without the co-operation of law, without being able to hold up law before him, and so show itself in its true colours.

The words “by the commandment” may either go with “taking occasion” or with “wrought in me.” The sense would, in either case, be very much the same, “taking advantage of the commandment,” or “wrought in me by the help of the commandment.” The first is the construction usually adopted, as in the Authorised version, but there seem to be reasons of some force for preferring the second. The phrase “wrought in me coveting by the commandment” would thus be parallel to “working death in me by that which is good,” below.

**Concupiscence.**—Rather, *coveting*; the same word which had been used above. Sin and the Commandment together—Sin, the evil principle in men, acting as the primary cause, and the Commandment as the secondary cause—led their unfortunate victim into all kinds of violation of the Law. This is done in two ways: (1) the perverseness of human nature is such that the mere prohibition of an act suggests the desire to do that which is prohibited; (2) the act, when done, is invested with the character of sin, which hitherto it did not possess. It becomes a distinct breach of law, where previously there had been no

the law sin *was* dead.

<sup>(9)</sup> For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

<sup>(10)</sup> And the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death.

<sup>(11)</sup> For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, de-

ceived me, and by it slew me. <sup>(12)</sup> Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. <sup>(13)</sup> Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is

law to break. This is what the Apostle means by saying that "without the Law sin was dead." Until there was a written prohibition, Sin (the evil principle) was powerless to produce sinful actions.

<sup>(9)</sup> **I was alive.**—The state of unconscious morality, uninstructed but as yet uncondemned, may, compared with that state of condemnation, be regarded as a state of "life."

**Revived.**—The English version well represents the meaning of the original, which is not that sin "came to life," but that it "came to life *again*." Sin is lurking in the heart from the first, but it is dormant until the Commandment comes; then it "revives."

**I died.**—Became subject to the doom of eternal death.

<sup>(10)</sup> **Which was ordained to.**—"The very commandment which was for life I found to be for death" (Ellicott). The Law was instituted in order that it might give life to those who were under it and kept it. They did not keep it, and therefore it brought them not life but death.

<sup>(11-13)</sup> The cause of this mis-carriage lay not with the Law but with Sin. Sin played the tempter, and then made use of the Command-

ment to condemn and destroy its victims. All this time the Law (*i.e.*, the whole body of precepts) and the Commandment (*i.e.*, the particular precepts included in the Law) remained perfectly good in themselves. They could not be otherwise, having come from the hand of God Himself. Sin was the fatal power. The Law and the Commandment were only passive instruments which it wielded for the destruction of man. But at the same time Sin itself was exposed by them in all its ever-increasing enormity.

<sup>(12)</sup> **Wherefore.**—This word introduces a conclusion, not from the verse immediately preceding, but from the whole of the last five verses. The Apostle glances back for a moment over the course of his argument.

<sup>(13)</sup> **Was then that which is good . . . ?**—Was it possible that the Law, holy and good as it was, could simply lead miserable men to death and ruin? No, it was not possible. It was not the Law that did this, but Sin—acting, it is true, through the instrumentality of the Law. All this, however, only had for its end to show up Sin for the monster that it really is.

good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. <sup>(14)</sup> For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. <sup>(15)</sup> For that which I do I allow <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gr.  
know.

not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. <sup>(16)</sup> If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is good*. <sup>(17)</sup> Now then it is no more I that

**Sin, that it might appear sin.**—We must supply with this, “was made death.” Sin, no longer remaining covert and unrecognised, but coming out in its true colours, brought me under the penalty of death.

**By the commandment.**—If the Commandment served to expose the guilt of man, still more did it serve to expose and enhance the guilt of that evil principle by which man was led astray. Such is the deeper philosophy of the whole matter. This short-lived dominion was no triumph for Sin after all. The very law that it took for its stay turned round upon it and condemned it.

<sup>(14-25)</sup> Further and detailed proof why it was that though the Law appealed to all that was best in man, still he could not obey it.

<sup>(14)</sup> **For we know.**—There is no need to argue the question. We Christians all *know* that the Law is spiritual. It is divinely given and inspired. On the other hand, man, though capable of communion with God, is dominated by that part of his nature which is the direct opposite of divine, and is entirely earthly and sensual. This sensual part of his nature is the slave—and just as much the slave as if he had been sold in the auction mart—of

Sin. (Comp. 1 Kings xxi. 20, 25.)

<sup>(15)</sup> **That which I do I allow not.**—Rather, *that which I perform I know not*. I act blindly, and without any conscious direction of the will; that higher part of me which should preside over and direct my actions, is kept down by the lower physical nature.

**Which I do.**—St. Paul uses three words for “to do” in this passage, the distinction between which is hard to represent in English. That which is employed here and in verses 17, 20, is the strongest, “*perform*”—deliberate action, thoroughly carried out. The other two words differ, as “do” and “practise,” the one referring to single, the other to habitual and repeated actions.

**What I would.**—If my will had free course I should act very differently.

<sup>(16)</sup> But the fact that I desire to do what is right is itself a witness to the excellence of the Law, which commands that which I desire.

<sup>(17)</sup> This, then, appears to be the true explanation of the difficulty. There is really a dualism in the soul. I am not to be identified with that lower self which is enthralled by sin.

do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. <sup>(18)</sup> For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. <sup>(19)</sup> For the good that I would I do not:

but the evil which I would not, that I do. <sup>(20)</sup> Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. <sup>(21)</sup> I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. <sup>(22)</sup> For I delight in

(18—20) Enthralled it is, and the will is powerless. What I do and what I will are opposite things. It is therefore sin that acts, and not I.

<sup>(21)</sup> I find then a law.—Of the many ways of taking this difficult verse, two seem to stand out as most plausible or possible. In any case “a law” should be rather “the law.” This is taken by the majority of commentators, including Bishop Ellicott, in the sense of “rule,” “habitually-repeated fact.” “I find this law, or this rule, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.” Such is my constant and regular experience. The objection to this interpretation is that it gives to the word “law” an entirely different sense from that which it bears in the context, or in any other part of St. Paul’s writings. The other view is that which is maintained by Dr. Vaughan. According to this we should have to assume an *anacoluthon*. The Apostle begins the sentence as if he were going to say, “I find therefore the Law (the Mosaic law), when I desire to do good, *unable to help me* ;” but he changes somewhat the form of the sentence in the latter portion, and instead of say-

ing, “I find the Law unable to help me,” he says, “I find that evil is at my side.” “To me” is also repeated a second time, in the Greek superfluously, for the sake of greater clearness. Or perhaps a still simpler and better explanation would be that the Apostle had intended in the first instance to say, “I find the Law, when I wish to do good, *putting evil before me*,” and then shrank (as in verse 7) from using so harsh an expression, and softened it by turning the latter half of the sentence into a passive instead of an active form—“I find the Law, when I wish to do good—that evil is *put* before me.”

<sup>(22)</sup> I delight.—“I delight in (and with) the Law of God.” I sympathise with and approve of it after the inward man, *i.e.*, in the higher part of my being. “The inward man” corresponds nearly, though not quite, to the “law of my mind,” in the next verse. It stands rather midway between it and the spirit. The mind is the moral and rational faculties considered as moral and rational. “The inward man” is the higher part of man’s nature considered as capable of receiving the divine grace. The “spirit” is the same when actually brought into communion with God.

the law of God after the inward man : <sup>(23)</sup> but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. <sup>(24)</sup> O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body

<sup>1</sup> Or, *this body of death.*

A.D. 58.

of this death ? <sup>1</sup> <sup>(25)</sup> I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God ; but with the flesh the law of sin.

## CHAPTER VIII.—

<sup>(1)</sup> *There is* therefore now

<sup>(23)</sup> **Another law.**—A different law. "In my members," *i.e.*, that has its chief seat of activity in my members. This is the law of sin, which is ready to take advantage of every fleshly impulse.

<sup>(24)</sup> So this intestine struggle goes on unceasingly and reaches no decision, till at last the unhappy man cries out, almost in despair. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Who, that is, will help me to overcome these fleshly desires, gendered by a corrupt human nature, which are dragging me down to imminent destruction? The body is the cause of sin, and therefore of death. If only it could be released from that, the distracted soul would be at rest and free.

**The body of this death.**—*This body* (the slave of sin and therefore the abode) *of death.* The words are a cry for deliverance from the whole of this mortal nature, in which carnal appetite and sin and death are inextricably mingled. To complete this deliverance the triple resurrection—ethical, spiritual, and physical—is needed.

<sup>(25)</sup> It *has* been released. It is Jesus our Lord to whom the thanks

and praise are due. Though without His intervention there can only be a divided service. The mere human self serves with the mind the law of God, with the flesh the law of sin.

**I myself.**—Apart from and in opposition to the help which I derive from Christ.

The abrupt and pregnant style by which, instead of answering the question, "Where is deliverance to come from?" the Apostle simply returns thanks for the deliverance that has actually been vouchsafed to him, is thoroughly in harmony with the impassioned personal character of the whole passage. These are not abstract questions to be decided in abstract terms, but they are matters of intimate personal experience.

The deliverance wrought by Christ is apparently here that of sanctification rather than of justification. It is from the domination of the body, from the impulses of sense, that the Christian is freed, and that is done when he is crucified to them with Christ.

## VIII.

The Apostle has now again reached a climax in his argument similar to that in the opening of

chap. v. His subject is once more the blissful condition of the Christian who has made full use of the means of grace offered to him. This is now worked out at length and in detail. The eighth chapter may, in fact, be described as not only the climax of a particular argument, but also as the climax—the broad extended summit, as it were—of the Epistle. It differs from the first section of chap. v. in this, that while both describe the condition of the regenerate Christian, and both cover the whole range of time from the first admission to the Christian communion down to the ultimate and assured enjoyment of Christian immortality, chap. v. lays stress chiefly on the initial and final moments of this period, whereas chap. viii. emphasises rather the whole intermediate process. In technical language the one turns chiefly upon justification, the other upon sanctification. The connecting link between the two is the doctrine of Hope. The sense of justification wrought for us by Christ gives rise to hope; the sense of sonship and communion with Christ, carrying with it the assurance of final redemption, also gives rise to hope. It may be said that Faith is also a connecting-link; because faith in the death of Christ is the same apprehensive faculty which later brings home the sense of communion with Christ to the believer. A further link is suggested in the words of chap. v. 5, "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." There it is the consciousness of justifying love which is so diffused, but the doctrine of the special agency exercised by the Holy Ghost is largely expanded in chap. viii.

This chapter carries us into the inmost circle and heart of Christianity; it treats of that peculiar state of beatitude, of refined and chastened joy for which no form of Secularism is able to provide even the remotest equivalent.

(1-11) A result is thus attained which the law of Moses could not accomplish, but which is accomplished in the gospel. The Christian is entirely freed from the law of sin and death, and from the condemnation that it entails. But he is so upon the condition that this freedom is for him a reality—that it really proceeds from the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

(1) **Therefore.**—The Apostle had already, at the end of the last chapter, "touched the confines" of that state of deliverance and of liberty which he is now going on to describe. The opening of this chapter is, therefore, connected in form with the close of the last. The intervention of Christ puts an end to the struggle waged within the soul. There is, *therefore*, no condemnation, &c.

**Condemnation.**—The condemnation which in the present and final judgment of God impends over the sinner, is removed by the intervention of Christ, and by the union of the believer with Him. By that union the power and empire of sin are thrown off and destroyed. (Comp. verse 3.) There is a certain play on the word "condemn." By "condemning" the law of sin, Christ removed "condemnation" from the sinner. He removed it objectively, or in the nature of things, and this removal is completed subjectively in the individual through that bond of

no condemnation to them  
 which are in  
 Christ Jesus,  
 who walk  
 not after the  
 flesh, but after the Spirit.

Chap. viii. 1-4.  
 The law of the  
 flesh and the law  
 of the Spirit.

(2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through

mystical and moral attachment which makes what Christ has done his own act and deed.

**To them which are in Christ Jesus.**—Those “who live and move and have their (spiritual) being” in Christ. To “have the Spirit of Christ” is a converse expression for the same idea. In the one case the believer is regarded as reaching upwards, as it were, through faith, and so incorporating and uniting himself with the Spirit of Christ: in the other case, the Spirit of Christ reaches downwards and infuses itself into the believer. This is the peculiar mysticism of the Apostle.

**Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**—These words are wanting in the foremost representatives of every group of authorities (except, perhaps, those which belong to the region of Syria), and must certainly be omitted. They have been brought in here from verse 4.

(2) A statement of the great antithesis, of which the rest of the section is a development, between the law of the Spirit of life and the law of sin and of death.

**The law of the Spirit of life.**—A phrase defining more fully the mode in which the union with Christ becomes operative in the believer. It begins by imparting to him the Spirit of Christ; this

Spirit creates within him a law; and the result of that law is life—that perfect spiritual vitality which includes within itself the pledge of immortality.

**The Spirit.**—That is, the Spirit of Christ, as in verse 9, which is hardly as yet conceived of as a distinct personality, but representing the continued action and influence which the ascended Saviour exercises upon the believer.

**In Christ Jesus.**—These words are best taken with “hath made” (rather, *made*, when it was imparted to me) “me free.” The law of the Spirit of life, in Christ (*i.e.*, operating through my union with Christ), made me free from the law of sin and of death.

**From the law of sin and death.**—The direct contrast to the foregoing. Not here the law of Moses, but the power of sin, the corrupt element in our nature, acting upon the soul, and itself erecting a kind of law, saying, “Thou shalt,” where the law of God says “Thou shalt not;” and “Thou shalt not,” where the law of God says “Thou shalt.” The effect of this reign of sin is death—spiritual death—bearing in itself the pledge of eternal death.

(3) How was I freed? Thus. Precisely on that very point where the law of Moses showed its impotence—viz., in the attempt to get rid of sin, which it failed to do



the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of <sup>1 Or, by a sacrifice for sin.</sup> sinful flesh, and for sin,<sup>1</sup> condemned sin in the flesh :

because of the counteracting influence of the flesh—precisely on this very point God interposed by sending His Son in a body of flesh similar to that in which sin resides, and as an offering to expiate human sin, and so dethroned and got rid of sin in the flesh which He had assumed. The flesh, the scene of its former triumphs, became now the scene of its defeat and expulsion.

**What the law could not do.**—Literally, *the impossible thing of the Law—i.e.*, “that which was impossible to the Law.” The construction is what is called a *nominativus pendens*. The phrase thus inserted at the beginning of the sentence characterises what follows. God did what the Law could not do—viz., condemned sin.

**In that it was weak through the flesh.**—There was one constant impediment in the way of the success of the Law, that it had to be carried out by human agents, beset by human frailty, a frailty naturally consequent upon that physical organisation with which man is endowed. Temptation and sin have their roots in the physical part of human nature, and they were too strong for the purely moral influence of the Law. The Law was limited in its operations by them, and failed to overcome them.

**In the likeness of sinful flesh—i.e.**, in the flesh, but not in *sinful* flesh. With a human body which was so far like the physical organisation of the rest of

mankind, but yet which was not in Him, as in other men, the seat of sin; at once like and unlike.

**And for sin.**—This is the phrase which is used constantly in the LXX. (“more than fifty times in the Book of Leviticus alone”—Vaughan) for the “sin-offering.” The essence of the original sin-offering was that it was accepted by an act of grace on the part of God, instead of the personal punishment of the offender. The exact nature of this “instead” appears to be left an open question in Scripture, and its further definition—if it is to be defined—belongs to the sphere of dogmatics rather than of exegesis. It must only be remembered that St. Paul uses, in regard to the sacrifice of Christ, similar language to that which is used in the Old Testament of this particular class of sacrifice, the sin-offering.

**Condemned sin.**—The meaning of this expression is brought out by the context. It is that which the Law was hindered from doing by the hold which sin had upon the flesh. That hold is made to cease through the participation of the believer in the death of Christ. Sin is, as it were, brought into court, and the cause given against it. It loses all its rights and claims over its victim. It is *dispossessed* as one who is dispossessed of a property.

**In the flesh.**—In that same sphere, the flesh, in which sin had hitherto had the mastery, it now stood condemned and worsted; it was unable to exercise its old sway any longer.

(4) that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (5) For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the

1 Gr. the mind-  
ing of  
the  
flesh.  
2 Gr. the  
mind-  
ing of  
the  
Spirit.  
3 Gr. the  
mind-  
ing of  
the  
flesh.

flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. (6) For to be carnally minded<sup>1</sup> is death; but to be spiritually minded<sup>2</sup> is life and peace. (7) Because the carnal mind<sup>3</sup> is enmity against God: for

(4) The consequence of this was a great change. Hitherto the Law could not be kept because of the antagonistic influence of the flesh; henceforth it may be kept for the reason that this influence has ceased and that its place is taken by the influence of the Spirit.

**The righteousness.**—The just requirement of the Law, its due and rightful claims.

**Might be fulfilled in us.**—That we might be examples of its fulfilment.

**Who walk not after the flesh.**—Who direct our conduct not as the flesh would guide us, but according to the dictates and guidance of the Spirit—*i.e.*, the indwelling Spirit of Christ, as in verse 2.

(5-8) Further description of the antithesis between flesh and spirit in regard to (1) their object, verse 5; (2) their nature, verses 7, 8; (3) their end, verse 6.

(6) **They that are . . .**—Those who not only walk (direct their conduct) according to the promptings of the flesh, but who are in themselves and in the whole bent of their dispositions the slaves of these promptings.

**Do mind the things of the flesh.**—Their whole mental and

moral activity is set upon nothing else but the gratification of these cravings of sense. The phrase "who mind" is not confined to the exercise of the intellect, but includes the affections; in fact it includes all those lesser motives, thoughts, and desires which are involved in carrying out any great principle of action—whether it be selfish and "carnal" or spiritual.

(6) Translate, *For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace.* To think of nothing but the gratification of the senses, is in itself death—that dead condition of the soul which issues in eternal death; and, on the other hand, to have the thoughts and affections governed solely by the Spirit, brings with it that healthful, vital harmony of all the functions of the soul which is a sure pledge and foretaste of a blissful immortality. Death and life are here, as elsewhere, most frequently in St. Paul, neither spiritual death and life alone, nor eternal death and life alone, but both combined. The Apostle does not here draw any distinction between the two things.

(7) The carnal mind is death—because it implies enmity with God, and enmity with God is death.

it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. <sup>(8)</sup> So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>(9)</sup> But ye are

not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Chap. viii. 9—13.  
The quickening  
power of the  
Spirit.

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. <sup>(10)</sup> And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>(11)</sup> But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised

<sup>(8)</sup> So then . . .—Rather, *and*. Neither can it be expected that those who are absorbed in the things of sense should be able to please God.

<sup>(9)</sup> Such is not your case—if at least the Spirit of God and of Christ dwells in you, as it should in every Christian.

**The Spirit of God . . . the Spirit of Christ.**—It is to be observed that these two terms are used as convertible. The Spirit of Christ is indeed the presence of Christ Himself in the soul. (Comp. John xiv. 16, 18, 20, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever. . . . I will not leave you comfortless (*orphans*): I will come to you. . . . At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.")

**Dwell in you.**—This expression is the complement of the other, "to be *in* the Spirit," "to be *in* Christ." It denotes the closest possible contact and influence of spirit upon spirit. No mysticism, however vivid and intense, can really go beyond this without infringing the bounds of personality,

and contradicting the direct testimony of consciousness.

<sup>(10)</sup> The results of the presence of Christ in the soul.

**The body is dead because of sin.**—Here the word is evidently used of physical death. The doom entailed by sin still, indeed, attaches to the body—but only to the body. The body, indeed, must die, but there the hold of sin upon the Christian ends; it cannot touch him farther.

**The Spirit is life because of righteousness.**—But turn to another side of human nature; take it in its highest part and faculty—the spirit. That is full of vitality because it is full of righteousness, first imputed and then real. Life and righteousness are correlative terms, the one involving the other.

<sup>(11)</sup> And this vitality extends beyond the grave. It will even react upon that material body which had just been spoken of as given over to death. Die it must; but the same Spirit to which the soul owes its life will also reinfuse life into the dead body, just as the body of Christ of Himself was raised from the dead.

up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit<sup>1</sup> that dwelleth in you.

(12) Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

(13) For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if

<sup>1</sup> Or, because of his Spirit.

ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. (14) For

as many as Chap. viii. 14—17. The adoption of sons. are led by

the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. (15) For ye have not received the

**By his Spirit . . .**—The balance of authority is in favour of the reading, "because of His Spirit" (as in margin); the other is an Alexandrian correction. It cannot be thought that God would leave in the grave that body in which His own Spirit has dwelt, *i.e.*, has been with not only in close but permanent contact, though the psychological question was, of course, not present to the mind of the Apostle.

(12—17) These verses form a hortatory application of the foregoing, with further development of the idea to live after and in the Spirit.

(12) **We are debtors.**—*We are under an obligation.* Observe that in the lively sequence of thought the second clause of the antithesis is suppressed, "We are under an obligation, not to the flesh (but to the Spirit)."

(13) **If ye through the Spirit . . .**—If under the influence of the Spirit you reduce to a condition of deadness and atrophy all those practices to which the impulses of your material nature would prompt you.

(14—17) This life in the Spirit im-

plies a special relation to God—that of sons. I say of sons; for when you first received the Holy Ghost it was no spirit of bondage and reign of terror to which you were admitted, but rather the closest filial relation to God. This filial relation is attested by the Divine Spirit endorsing the evidence of our own consciousness, and it includes all that such a relation would naturally include—sonship, heirship, nay, a joint-heirship in the glory of Christ, who is Himself pre-eminently the Son.

This idea of "sonship" is also worked out in the Epistle to the Galatians (iii. 25; iv. 1—7). It is the Christian transformation of the old theocratic idea. The Israelite, *quod* Israelite, had stood in this special relation to God; now it is open to the *spiritual* Israel, of whatever race they may be. The idea itself, too, is largely widened and deepened by the additional doctrines of the continued agency of the Spirit and of the Messiahship of Jesus. The sense of sonship is awakened and kept alive by the Spirit; and of all those in whom it is found, the Messiah Himself stands at the head, ensuring for them a share in His own glory.

(15) **Spirit of bondage.**—The

spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. <sup>(16)</sup> The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the

children of God: <sup>(17)</sup> and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also

Chap. viii. 17—  
25. Creation's  
yearning.

Greek corresponds very nearly to what we should naturally understand by the English phrase, "such a spirit as would be found in slaves." The word "spirit" varies much in meaning in these verses. Here it is the "dominant habit or frame of mind;" in the next verse it is used both for the Spirit of God and the spirit of man.

**Again to fear.**—So as to take you back under the old terrorism of the Law. The Law, if it contained promises, was still more essentially a system of threats; for the threats took effect, while the promises remained ineffectual, because the Law could not be fulfilled.

**Spirit of adoption.**—That spirit which is characteristic of those who are taken to be sons, who, like the Christian at his baptism, are admitted into this relation of sonship.

**Whereby we cry.**—The intensity of the Apostle's feeling comes out in this simple definition. Instead of any more formal elaboration of his meaning, he says the Spirit of adoption is that which prompts the impassioned cry, "Abba, Father."

**Abba, Father.**—"Abba" is the Aramaic equivalent for father. The repetition is one of endearment and entreaty, taken from the natural impulse of children to re-

peat a beloved name in different forms. Comp. Newton's hymn—

"Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,  
My Prophet, Priest, and King," &c.

<sup>(16)</sup> **The Spirit itself beareth witness.**—What is the nature of this concurrent testimony? It would seem to be something of this kind. The self-consciousness of the believer assures him of his sonship. The relation in which he feels that he stands to God he knows to be that of a son. But, besides this, he is aware of an eternal objective cause for this feeling. That cause is the influence of the Holy Spirit.

This passage makes it clear that the Apostle, in spite of the strongly mystic tone of his language elsewhere, never confuses the human and the divine.

<sup>(17)</sup> One characteristic of the son is that he is his father's heir. So it is with the Christian. He, too, has an inheritance—an inheritance of glory which he will share with Christ. But he must not be surprised if, before sharing the glory, he also shares the sufferings.

**Suffer with him.**—All who suffer for the sake of the gospel are regarded as suffering with Christ. They "drink of the cup" that He drank of (Matt. xx. 22, 23).

glorified together. <sup>(18)</sup> For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. <sup>(19)</sup> For the earnest expecta-

tion of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. <sup>(20)</sup> For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the

(Comp. 2 Cor. i. 5; Phil. iii. 10; Col. i. 24.)

<sup>(18-25)</sup> The mention of "suffering" and "glory" recalls the Apostle to a sense of his own position—what he had to go through, and what was the hope that he had to animate and encourage him. A vivid impression of the stormy life of the Apostle at this period is given by Acts xix. 23—41; 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5; xi. 23—28. But he counted it as nothing (Phil. iii. 8) as compared with his triumphant out-look into the future. Here, then, there follows a statement of the nature of the Christian's hope, viewed not only as it affects the individual, but also in its cosmical aspect.

<sup>(18)</sup> **Revealed in us.**—*Upon us*—i.e., reaching to us, and illumining and transfiguring us. The Coming of Christ is always thus conceived of as a visible manifestation of glory in those who take part in it.

<sup>(19)</sup> Nor is ours a mere isolated hope; we have our place—

"Mid onward sloping motions infinite,  
Making for one sure goal."

The whole creation is looking earnestly and intently for the same manifestation of glory as ourselves.

**Earnest expectation.**—A single word in the Greek and a very striking one. It means, literally, a straining forward with outstretched head, just as we might imagine the crowds outside a race-course straining over the ropes to catch a sight of the runners; an eager, intent expectation. The same word is used once again in the New Testament (Phil. i. 20).

**Creature.**—Creation, the whole world of nature, animate and inanimate.

**Waiteth for.**—Another strong word, "waits with concentrated longing and expectancy."

**Manifestation.**—Translate rather by the ordinary word, *revelation*, as in the last verse ("glory which shall be revealed"). The *Parusia*, or Coming of Christ, is to be accompanied by an appearance of the redeemed in glorified form.

<sup>(20)</sup> **For the creature.**—The Apostle gives the reason for this earnest expectation in the present state of nature; pointing out what creation *is*. If creation were perfect, and were fulfilling the noblest possible purpose, there would be no cause for looking forward hopefully to the future.

**Was made subject to vanity.**—"Vanity" = "emptiness" or "nothingness." Creation is fulfilling an unworthy instead of

same in hope, <sup>(21)</sup> because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into

<sup>1</sup> Or, every creature.

the glorious liberty of the children of God. <sup>(22)</sup> For we know that the whole creation<sup>1</sup> groaneth and

a worthy and noble end. (Comp. Gen. iii. 17, 18.) It was made subject to this "not willingly," *i.e.*, by its own act or with its own concurrence, but "by reason of Him who hath subjected the same," *i.e.*, in pursuance of the sovereign purpose and counsel of God. The one thing which takes out the sting from this impoverished and degraded condition is Hope.

It is needless to say that this is not Darwinism, but it is easily reconcilable with evolution. Indeed, such a theory seems to give it additional force and emphasis. It helps to bring out both the present "vanity" and hope for the future, and to show both as parts of one "increasing purpose" widening through the ages. "Allowing for irregularities and fluctuations, on the whole, higher and higher forms of life have appeared. There has been unquestionably an enormous advance between the times of the Eozoon Canadense and our own. And, further, we have to notice that a new kind of progress, of far greater intrinsic importance than mere physical improvement, has of late appeared. I mean intellectual and moral progress, as it is seen in man. . . . And this progress, I would say, is most important in our argument as to the character of God, for it is full of promise of far better things than this sad world has ever seen. It points most decidedly to a supremacy of the power for good, and a great hope of final happiness for our race." (Rev.

S. T. Gibson, *Religion and Science*, p. 34.)

<sup>(21)</sup> **Because the creature.**—The reason for the hope which survives through the degradation of nature; what creation *is to be*.

**Because.**—Perhaps rather "that," to be joined on to the end of the last verse, "in hope that creation also," &c. See Meyer and Ellicott.

**Delivered from the bondage of corruption.**—The state of decay and ruin into which the world by nature has fallen, is regarded as a servitude opposed to the state of liberty into which it will be ushered at the Coming of Christ.

**Glorious liberty of the children of God.**—Translate rather, *into the liberty of the glory of the children of God*—*i.e.*, into the state of liberty or emancipation which will attend the appearance of the Messiah and His redeemed. Their state will be one of liberty, and in that liberty the whole creation hopes to share.

<sup>(22)</sup> **Groaneth and travaileth.**—In the view of the physical evil and misery prevalent in the world, the Apostle attributes a human consciousness of pain to the rest of creation. It groans and travails *together, i.e.*, every member of it in common with its kind. The idea of travailing, as in childbirth, has reference to the future prospect of joyful delivery. (Comp. John xvi. 21.)

**Until now.**—This consciousness of pain and imperfection has been

travaileth in pain together until now. <sup>(23)</sup> And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the

<sup>a</sup> Luke 21. 28.

adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>(24)</sup> For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? <sup>(25)</sup> But if we

continuous and unbroken (nor will it cease until an end is put to it by the Coming of Christ).

<sup>(23)</sup> Nor is it only the rest of creation that groans. We Christians, too, though we possess the firstfruits of the Spirit, nevertheless inwardly groan, sighing for the time when our adoption as the sons God will be complete, and even our mortal bodies will be transfigured.

**Which have the firstfruits of the Spirit.**—Though we have received the first partial outpouring of the Spirit, as opposed to the plenitude of glory in store for us.

**The adoption.**—The Christian who has received the gift of the Spirit is *already* an adopted child of God. (See verses 15, 16.) But this adoption still has to be ratified and perfected, which will not be until the Coming of Christ.

**The redemption of our body.**—One sign of the imperfect sonship of the Christian is that mortal and corruptible body in which the better and heavenly part of him is imprisoned. That, too, shall be transformed and glorified, and cleared from all the defect of its earthly condition. (Comp. 1 Cor. xv. 49—53; 2 Cor. v. 1 *et seq.*; Phil. iii. 21.)

for the adoption”? Because hope in the future is of the very essence of the Christian’s life. It was by hope that he was saved. Hope, at the time when he first believed, made him realise his salvation, though it is still in the future. This is, indeed, implied in the very nature of hope. Its proper object is that which is future and unseen.

**By hope.**—It is usually faith rather than hope that is represented as the means or instrument of salvation. Nor can it quite rightly be said that hope is *an aspect* of faith, because faith and hope are expressly distinguished and placed as co-ordinate with each other in 1 Cor. xiii. 13: “and now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three.” Hope is rather a secondary cause of salvation, because it sets salvation vividly before the believer, and so makes him strive to obtain it.

It must not, however, be overlooked that the phrase translated “by hope,” may be taken rather to mean “*with*” or “*in* hope.” It will then serve to limit the idea of salvation. We were saved, indeed, in an inchoate and imperfect manner, but our full salvation is still a subject for hope, and therefore it is not past but still in the future.

<sup>(25)</sup> If salvation were something that could be seen, something that

<sup>(24)</sup> Why do I say that we “wait



hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. <sup>(26)</sup> Likewise

<sup>1</sup> Or, that.

the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:

for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. <sup>(27)</sup> And he that

searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because<sup>1</sup> he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

<sup>(28)</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Chap. viii. 28—30. The happy career of the Christian.

could be grasped by sight, then there would be room for hope. As it is we do *not* see it; we *do* hope for it; and, therefore, we patiently endure the sufferings that lie upon the road to it.

<sup>(26, 27)</sup> A second reason for the patience of the Christian under suffering. The Spirit helps his weakness and joins in his prayers.

<sup>(26)</sup> **Likewise.**—While on the one hand the prospect of salvation sustains him, so on the other hand the Divine Spirit interposes to aid him. The one source of encouragement is human (his own human consciousness of the certainty of salvation), the other is divine.

**Infirmities.**—The correct reading is the singular, "infirmity." Without this assistance we might be too weak to endure, but the Spirit helps and strengthens our weakness by inspiring our prayers.

**With groanings which cannot be uttered.**—When the Christian's prayers are too deep and too intense for words, when they are rather a sigh heaved from the heart than any formal utter-

ance, then we may know that they are prompted by the Spirit Himself. It is He who is praying to God for us.

<sup>(27)</sup> God recognises the voice of His own Spirit, because the prayers that the Spirit prompts are in strict accordance with His will.

**What is the mind of the Spirit.**—What are the thoughts of the Spirit, and therefore what is the echo of those thoughts in the prayers that are offered to Him.

<sup>(28-30)</sup> These verses contain a third reason for the patience of the Christian. He knows that whatever happens all things are really working together for good of him.

<sup>(28)</sup> **All things.**—Persecution and suffering included.

**Work together.**—Contribute. There is a rather remarkable reading here, found in the Vatican and Alexandrian MSS., and in Origen, inserting "God" as the subject of the verb, and making "all things" the object. "God works all things with," or "co-

(29) For whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to

the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

operates in all things." This reading is very early, if not original.

**To them who are the called.**—Further description of those "who love God." They have also, as in His eternal counsels He had designed it should be, obeyed the call given to them in the preaching of the Gospel, and definitely enrolled themselves in the kingdom of the Messiah.

(29, 30) **For whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate.**—The process already summed up under these two phrases is now resolved more fully and exactly into its parts, with the inference suggested that to those who are under the divine guidance at every step in their career nothing can act but for good. The two phrases indicate two distinct steps. God, in His infinite foreknowledge, knew that certain persons would submit to be conformed to the image of His Son, and He predestined them for this.

When we argue deductively from the omniscience and omnipotence of God, human free-will seems to be obliterated. On the other hand, when we argue deductively from human free-will, the divine foreknowledge and power to determine action seem to be excluded. And yet both truths must be received without detriment to each other. We neither know strictly what God's omnipotence and omniscience are (according to a more exact use of language, we ought to say, perhaps, "perfect power and knowledge"—power and knowledge such as would belong to what we are incapable of

conceiving, a perfect Being), nor do we know what human free-will is in itself. It is a necessary postulate if there is to be any synthesis of human life at all; for without it there can be no distinction between good and bad at all. But we do not really know more than that it is that hypothetical faculty in man by virtue of which he is a responsible agent.

**To be conformed . . .**—The final cause of the whole of this divine process is that the Christian may be conformed to the image of Christ—that he may be like Him not merely in spirit, but also in that glorified body, which is to be the copy of the Redeemer's (Phil. iii. 21), and so be a fit attendant upon Him in His Messianic kingdom.

**Firstborn among many brethren.**—The Messianic kingdom is here conceived of rather as a family. In this family Christ has the rights of primogeniture, but all Christians are his brethren; and the object of His mission and of the great scheme of salvation (in all its stages—foreknowledge, calling, justification, &c.) is to make men *sufficiently like Him to be His brethren*, and so to fill up the number of the Christian family. The word "firstborn" occurs in a similar connection in Col. i. 15, "firstborn of every creature" (or rather, *of all creation*), and in Heb. i. 6, "When he bringeth in the first-begotten (*first-born*) into the world." It implies two things—(1) priority in point of time, or in other words the pre-

(30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justifi-

fied: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

(31) What shall we then say to these things? If God be

existence of the Son as the Divine Word; and (2) supremacy or sovereignty as the Messiah. The Messianic use of the word is based upon Ps. lxxxix. 27, "Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth."

**Among many brethren.**—Comp. Heb. ii. 11 *et seq.*, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren," &c. There is a stress on "many." The object of the Christian scheme is that Christ may not stand alone in the isolated glory of His pre-existence, but that He may be surrounded by a numerous brotherhood fashioned after His likeness as He is in the likeness of God.

(30) **Predestinate.**—This is the term which seems most to interfere with human free-will. Foreknowledge does not interfere with free-will, because the foreknowledge, though prior in point of time, is posterior in the order of causation to the act of choice. A man does not choose a certain action because it is foreknown, but it is foreknown because he will choose it. Predestination (the word is not inadequately translated) appears to involve a more rigorous necessity. All we can say is that it must not be interpreted in any sense that excludes free-will. Free-will is a postulate on which all the superstructure of morals and religion must rest. The religious mind, looking back over the course by which it has been brought, sees in it predominating the hand of God; but however large the divine element in

salvation may be, it must in the end be apprehended by faith, which is an act of free-will. And the subsequent actions of which faith is the moving cause, though done under a co-operating and divine influence, yet belong to the sphere of human freedom. (See Note on chap. ii. 6.) It should be remembered that St. Paul is not now writing in the calm temper of philosophical analysis, but in an intense access of religious emotion, and therefore he does not stay to put in all the qualifying clauses that philosophy might require. It is well for mankind that he has done so. In all great and creative religious minds the consciousness of free-will has retired into the background.

**Called.**—By presenting to them the gospel, directly or indirectly, through the preaching of Christ and His Apostles.

**Justified.**—In the Pauline sense, as in chap. iii. 24, *et al.*

**Glorified.**—Strictly, the glorying of the Christian awaits him in the future, but the Apostle regards all these different acts as focussed together as it were on a single point in the past. Glorification is involved in justification.

(31—39) Now follows the sublime and triumphant conclusion from the foregoing—expressed with passionate energy and with the most intense consciousness of the reality of a Christian belief in penetrating and sustaining the mind in all outward trials, however severe.

for us, who *can be* against us? <sup>(32)</sup> 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? <sup>(33)</sup> Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is*

God that justifieth: <sup>(34)</sup> 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, who also maketh intercession for us: <sup>(35)</sup> who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation,

Erasmus remarks on this, that "Cicero never said anything grander." It is needless to add that, setting aside other considerations, Cicero was not for a moment comparable in spiritual intensity, and therefore in true eloquence, to St. Paul.

<sup>(33, 34)</sup> **Who shall lay any thing . . . ?**—The punctuation and arrangement of these clauses are somewhat difficult. It seems best on the whole to connect together the two clauses at the end of verse 33, and beginning of verse 34. The whole passage to the end of the chapter will then form a continuous proof of the certainty that all things shall be freely given to the Christian. Nothing can frustrate this: either on the side of *God*, for when He justifies none can condemn; or on the side of *Christ*, whose death, and resurrection, and ascension, and intercession, are pledges that nothing can separate us from His love.

What have we to fear? When God pronounces our acquittal there is none who can pronounce our condemnation. Literally, *God is He who justifies, who then can condemn?* And answering to this in the next verse we have, Christ is He that

died, &c. This is the two-fold answer to the question, "Who shall come forward to accuse God's elect?" It is a conclusive reply to this to state the relation in which the accused stand to God and to Christ.

**God's elect.**—Christians as such with especial reference to the process which the Apostle has been describing in verses 29, 30.

<sup>(34)</sup> **It is Christ . . .**—The remainder of this verse is to be closely connected with the opening of the next. "He that died, rose, &c., is Christ: who then shall separate us from His love?" The two questions, "Who is he that condemneth?" and "Who shall separate us?" are really parts of the reply to the main question thrown into an interrogative form. At another moment the sentence would probably have been differently cast, but the Apostle's mind is in an attitude of challenge.

**Yea rather.**—*Yea more.* The pledges that Christ has given us of His love did not end, but only began with His death.

<sup>(35)</sup> **The love of Christ.**—That is to say, the love which Christ has for us, not that which we have for Christ.

**Shall tribulation.**—Comp. 2 Cor. vi. 4, xi. 23. The Apostle is

or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>(36)</sup> As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long;<sup>a</sup> we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. <sup>(37)</sup> Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. <sup>(38)</sup> For I am persuaded, that neither

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 44.  
22.

A. D. 58.

death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, <sup>(39)</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHAPTER IX.—<sup>(1)</sup> I say the truth in Christ, I

speaking from his own actual experience.

<sup>(36)</sup> **For thy sake we are killed.**—The quotation is taken from Ps. xli. 22, which was apparently written at some period of great national distress, at what precise period the *data* do not enable us to say, but probably not earlier than Josiah. The sufferings of God's people at all times are typical of each other. There is the further reason for the application in the text that the psalm does not lay stress upon the guilt of the people, but regards their sufferings as undergone in the cause of the theocracy. At the same time the tone of the Psalmist wants the exulting and triumphant confidence of the Apostle.

<sup>(37)</sup> **Nay.**—*Yet, or But.* So far from being vanquished, we are conquerors; when we are weak then are we strong.

<sup>(38)</sup> **Neither death, nor life . . .**—The enumeration that follows is intended to include (poetically rather than logically) every possible category of being, especially those unseen powers of evil against which the warfare of the Christian was more particularly directed.

**Nor principalities.**—Comp. Eph. vi. 12, "We wrestle . . . against principalities, against powers;" terms belonging to the Jewish enumeration of angels. The critical evidence is, however, absolutely decisive in separating "powers" from "principalities" in this instance and placing it after "things present, nor things to come." It would be better, therefore, to take it in a wider sense: "Agencies of every kind, personal or impersonal."

<sup>(39)</sup> **Nor height, nor depth**—No remoteness in space. (Comp. Ps. cxxxix. 8 *et seq.* "If I ascend up into heaven," &c.)

**Any other creature.**—Any other created thing.

**The love of God.**—It is to be observed that for the shorter phrase, "the love of Christ," the Apostle now substitutes the fuller but, as it would seem, equivalent phrase, "the love of God *in* Christ."

## IX.

There is a distinct break in the Epistle at this point. The subject of the preceding chapters, the

lie not, my conscience

<sup>1</sup> Or, se-  
parated.

that myself were accursed<sup>1</sup>  
from Christ for my bre-  
thren, my kinsmen accord-  
ing to the flesh: <sup>(4)</sup> who  
are Israelites; to whom  
*pertaineth* the adoption,  
and the glory, and the  
covenants, and the giving

also bearing

Chap. ix. 1-5. A sad reflection:

Israel's privi-  
leges and fall. me witness

in the Holy

Ghost, <sup>(2)</sup> that

I have great heaviness and

continual sorrow in my

heart. <sup>(3)</sup> For I could wish

development of the gospel scheme, has been worked up to a climax. We might imagine that at the end of chapter viii. the Epistle was laid aside, and the Apostle now begins upon a new topic, in the discussion of which, however, he still retains the vein of deep emotion that had characterised his latest utterances. This new topic is the relation of the Christian system just expounded to the chosen people. And here, after a few opening words of patriotic sympathy (verses 1-5), the Apostle discusses: (1) the justice of their rejection (verses 6-29); (2) its causes (verse 30 to chap. x. 21); (3) its compensations and qualifications (chap. xi. 1-32); with a closing doxology (chap. xi. 33-36). The section including these three chapters is complete and rounded in itself.

<sup>(1-5)</sup> My heart bleeds for Israel, my country, that highly privileged people. I could fain have changed places with them, and been myself cut off from Christ, if only they might have been saved.

<sup>(1)</sup> I say the truth in Christ. —The meaning of this expression seems to be, "From the bottom of my soul, in the most sacred part of my being as a Christian man united

to Christ, I make this solemn asseveration."

**My conscience.**—Here, as in chap. ii. 15, very much in the modern sense of the word, the introspective faculty which sits in judgment upon actions, and assigns to them their moral qualities of praise or blame. "This conscience of mine being also overshadowed with the Holy Spirit, and therefore incapable of falsehood and self-deception."

<sup>(3)</sup> I could wish . . . .—Rather, *I could have wished*. The wish, of course, related to what was really impossible. Still it is a nobly generous impulse, at which some weak minds have been shocked, and out of which others have made sentimental capital. Let us leave it as it is.

**Accursed from Christ.**—Separated from Christ and devoted to destruction. Does not the intensity of this expression help us to realise one aspect of the Atonement—"being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13)? (The Greek word for "curse" is different, but comes to be nearly equivalent.)

<sup>(4)</sup> The adoption.—They are the theocratic people, the people whom God had, as it were, adopted to Himself, and taken into the special filial relation. (Comp. Hos. xi. 1, "I called my son out of Egypt;")

of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ;  
 (5) whose are the fathers,

and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for

Ex. iv. 22, "Israel is my son, even my firstborn;" *et al.*)

**The glory.**—The Shechinah, or visible symbol of God's presence. (Comp. Ex. xvi. 10; xxiv. 16; xl. 34, 35; 1 Sam. iv. 22; 1 Kings viii. 10, 11; Ezek. i. 28; Heb. ix. 5.)

**The covenants.**—Not the two tables of stone, but the several compacts made by God with Abraham and his descendants (Gen. xii. 1—3, 7; xiii. 14—17; xv. 1—21; xvii. 1—22; xxii. 15—18; xxvi. 2—5, 34; xxviii. 13—15; xxxv. 9—12; xlvi. 3, 4).

**The service of God.**—The temple service and ritual.

**The promises.**—Especially the Messianic promises, a term correlative to the "covenants" above.

(5) **The fathers.**—The patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

**Who is over all, God blessed for ever.**—These words are a well-known subject for controversy. Trinitarian and English interpreters, as a rule, take them with the punctuation of the Authorised version, as referring to Christ. Socinian interpreters, with some of the most eminent among the Germans, put a full stop after "came," and make the remainder of the verse a doxology addressed to God. "Blessed for ever be God, who is over all." Both ways are possible. The question is, Which is the most natural and probable? and this is to be considered, putting altogether on one side prepossessions of every kind. We are not to read meaning into Scripture; but to elicit meaning

from it. The balance of the argument stands thus:—(1) The order of the words is somewhat in favour of the application to Christ. If the clause had really been a formal doxology, the ascription of blessing would more naturally have come at the beginning in Greek as in English, "Blessed be God," &c. (2) The context is also somewhat in favour of this application. The break in the form of the sentence becomes rather abrupt on the other hypothesis, and is not to be quite paralleled. Intruded doxologies, caused by a sudden access of pious feeling, are not uncommon in the writings of St. Paul, but they are either worked into the regular order of the sentence as in chap. i. 25; Gal. i. 5, or else they are formally introduced as in 2 Cor. xi. 31; 1 Tim. i. 17. (3) But on the other hand, to set somewhat decidedly against this application, is the fact that the words used by the Apostle, "Who is over all," and the ascription of blessing in all other places where they occur, are referred, not to Christ, but to God. (Comp. chap. i. 25; 2 Cor. i. 3; xi. 31; Eph. i. 3, iv. 6.) There is, indeed, a doxology addressed to Christ in 2 Tim. iv. 18; it should, however, be remembered, that the Pauline origin of that Epistle has been doubted by some, though it is also right to add that these doubts do not appear to have any real validity. The title "God" does not appear to be elsewhere applied to our Lord by St. Paul, though all the attributes of Godhead are ascribed to Him: *e.g.*,

ever. Amen. <sup>(6)</sup> Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel :

Chap. ix. 6—13. The promise confined to the chosen seed.

a Gen. 21. 12.

<sup>(7)</sup> neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children : but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.<sup>a</sup> <sup>(8)</sup> That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the

in Phil. ii. 6 *et seq.*, Col. i. 15 *et seq.* In 1 Tim. iii. 16, which would be an apparent exception, the true reading is, "Who was manifested," and not "God was manifested." On the other hand, St. John certainly makes use of this title, not only in John i. 1, xx. 28, but also in the reading, adopted by many, of John i. 18, "God only begotten" for "Only begotten Son." Weighing the whole of the arguments against each other, the *data* do not seem to be sufficient to warrant a positive and dogmatic conclusion either way. The application to our Lord appears perhaps a little the more probable of the two. More than this cannot be said. Nor is a stronger affirmation warranted by any considerations resting on the division of authorities.

<sup>(6-13)</sup> Now follows a vindication of the dealings of God in rejecting Israel. And this is divided into three parts. Part 1 extends to the end of verse 13, and the object of it is to clear the way by defining the true limits of the promise. It was not really to *all* Israel that the promise was given, but only to a particular section of Israel.

<sup>(6)</sup> **Not as though.**—The scholar will observe that there appears to be here a mixture of two constructions, "the case is not such

that," and "I do not mean to say that," "I do not intend to say that the case is such as that."

**Taken none effect.**—"Fallen through," or "failed of its accomplishment."

**Of Israel.**—*i.e.*, descended from Jacob. (Comp. Gen. xxxii. 28.) The promise of God was indeed given to Israel, but that did not mean roundly all who could claim descent from Jacob without further limitation.

<sup>(7)</sup> Neither are all the bodily descendants of Abraham also his spiritual descendants. It was expressly stated from the first that the promise was confined to a particular branch of his posterity. The posterity of Abraham, strictly so called, was to be that derived through Isaac. This is very nearly the sense of the original, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," *i.e.*, in "Isaac shalt thou have posterity, which shall be called thy posterity"—"true and legitimate descendants," thus excluding the seed of Hagar.

<sup>(8)</sup> **They which are the children.**—The Apostle explains this restriction in a spiritual sense. Mere natural descent gives no claim to membership in the theocracy.

**Of the promise.**—*i.e.*, not merely "promised children," but



children of God : but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

<sup>(9)</sup> For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.<sup>a</sup> <sup>(10)</sup> And not only *this* ; but when Rebecca also had conceived

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 18.  
10.

by one, *even* by our father Isaac ; <sup>(11)</sup> (for *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth ;)  
<sup>(12)</sup> it was said unto her,

“children born through the miraculous agency of the promise ;” the promise is regarded as being possessed of creative power. (Comp. chap. iv. 18—20.)

<sup>(9)</sup> **This is the word of promise.**—Rather, *this saying is of promise.* The children of promise, I say, for the saying, “At this time will I come,” &c., is a matter of promise ; it implied a divine and miraculous intervention, and did not come in the ordinary course of nature.

**At this time**—*i.e.*, at the corresponding time of the next year.

<sup>(10, 11)</sup> Nor was the restriction and special selection confined to the case of Abraham alone. It also appeared when Rebecca bore sons to Isaac. It was indeed *pure* selection. The children themselves had done nothing to make a preference be given to one over the other. There was no merit in the case. The object of the declaration was to ratify the divine electing purpose which had already chosen Jacob to be the inheritor of the Messianic blessings.

Here we have the doctrine of election and predestination stated in a very unqualified and uncompromising form. And it does in-

deed necessarily follow from one train of thought. However much we lay stress on free-will, still actions are the result of character—the will itself is a part of character ; and character is born in us. Of the two elements which go to determine action, outward circumstances, and inward disposition, neither can be said strictly to be made by the man himself. If we follow this train of thought, then it would certainly appear that God, or the chain of natural causes set in motion and directed by God, made him what he is. In other words, he is elected and predetermined to a certain line of conduct. This is the logic of one set of inferences. On the other hand, the logic of the other set of inferences is just as strong—that man is free. There is an opposition irreconcilable to us with our present means of judging. We can only take the one proposition as qualified by the other.

<sup>(12)</sup> **The elder shall serve the younger.**—The margin gives us an alternative rendering, “the greater shall serve the lesser.” The quotation is taken from the LXX., in which there is the same ambiguity.

This ambiguity also appears to exist in the Hebrew, where it is a

The elder<sup>1</sup> shall serve the younger.<sup>2 a</sup> (13) As it is written, Jacob have I loved,<sup>b</sup> but Esau have I hated. (14) What shall we say then? *Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.* (15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will

Chap. ix. 14—23.  
The absolute-  
ness of God's  
choice.

1 Or.  
greater.  
2 Or.  
lesser.  
a Gen. 25  
23.  
b Mal. 1.  
2.

c Ex. 33.  
19.

d Ex. 9.  
16.

have compassion.<sup>c</sup> (16) So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.<sup>d</sup> (18) Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will

disputed question whether the words refer to age or to the comparative strength of the two peoples. In either case, it is the nations that should spring from Esau and Jacob that are meant.

(14—18) These verses contain the second part of the vindication. This power of choosing one and refusing another has always been reserved to Himself by God; as is seen by the examples of Moses and Pharaoh.

(14) **Is there unrighteousness?**—Again, as in chap. iii. 5, the Apostle anticipates a possible objection. Does not this apparently arbitrary choice of one and rejection of another imply injustice in Him who exercises it? The thought is not to be entertained.

(15) **For he saith to Moses.**—In the most characteristic period of the Old Testament the divine favour was promised in this way to Moses and denied to Pharaoh. The original of the first quotation has reference to the special revelation

vouchsafed to Moses on Sinai, "I will show grace to whom I will show grace."

(16) **Of him that runneth.**—A metaphor taken from the foot-races as St. Paul may very possibly have seen them practised at Corinth. (Comp. chap. ix. 16; Gal. ii. 2; v. 7; Phil. ii. 16.) The meaning is that the prize does not depend on human will or human effort, but on the grace of God.

(17) The converse proposition is also true, that God also uses the wickedness of men as a means of exhibiting His power and justice.

**Raised thee up.**—Brought into the world and on to the scene of history.

**Shew my power.**—By the plagues of Egypt and by the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.

(18) Summary conclusion from the above.

**He hardeneth.**—The doctrine of the divine sovereignty is here

have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. <sup>(19)</sup> Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? <sup>(20)</sup> Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? <sup>1</sup> Shall the thing formed say to him

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 45.  
9.

<sup>b</sup> Jer. 18.  
6;  
Wisd.  
15. 7.

<sup>1</sup> Or,  
answer-  
est  
again,  
or, dis-  
putest  
with  
God?

that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? <sup>a</sup>  
<sup>(21)</sup> Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? <sup>b</sup>  
<sup>(22)</sup> What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to

expressed in its most trenchant and logical form. In Ex. viii. 32, ix. 34, xiii. 15, &c., the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is attributed to his own act. That act may, however, be regarded as a part of the design of Providence. God's decrees include human free-will, without destroying it. But *how* they do this we cannot say.

<sup>(19-21)</sup> These verses contain the third part of the vindication, which is based upon a possible extension of the objection. Not only might it seem as if this absolute choice and rejection was unjust in itself, but also unjust in its consequences. How can a man be blamed or punished, when his actions are determined for him? The Apostle meets this by a simple but emphatic assertion of the absolute and unquestionable prerogative of God over His creatures.

<sup>(20)</sup> **Nay but, O man.**—The answer is not so much a solution of the intellectual difficulty, as an appeal to the religious sense to prevent it from being raised. That His dealings should be questioned at all is a breach of the reverence due to God.

<sup>(21)</sup> **Hath not the potter . . . ?**—In strict logic, this verse would

supply a confirmation, rather than a refutation, of the original objection. If man is merely as clay in the hands of the potter, it would not be unreasonable to say, "Why doth He yet find fault?" No one would think of blaming a piece of earthenware because it was well or badly made. The argument of the Apostle is not directed to this. He has left the point with which he started in verse 19, and is engaged in proving the position taken up in verse 20. Whatever they may be, God's dealings are not to be canvassed by men. Still, we cannot overlook the fact that there is apparently a flaw in the logic, though, perhaps, only such a flaw as is inseparable from our necessarily imperfect conceptions of this mysterious subject. The two lines of thought—that which proves the divine sovereignty and that which proves human freedom—run parallel to each other, and are apt to collude when drawn together. (See Notes on chaps. viii. 29, 30; ix. 11, 18, above.)

For the imagery of the clay and the potter, compare Isa. lxiv. 8; Jer. xviii. 3—10.

<sup>(22-29)</sup> These verses supply the concluding section of the vindication. All this scheme of God's

make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted<sup>1</sup> to destruction: <sup>(23)</sup> and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

<sup>1</sup> Or, made up.

<sup>(24)</sup> even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? <sup>(25)</sup> As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and

Chap. ix. 24—33. Exemplified in the different fates of Jew and Gentile.

dealings, apparently so severe, is really most merciful. To those who really deserved His wrath, He showed longsuffering. While for us who now believe, Gentiles as well as Jews, He had mercy and glory in store. But in both cases the final result was strictly in accordance with prophecy. Hosea had foretold the admission of the Gentiles, Isaiah the exclusion of the greater part of the Jews.

<sup>(22)</sup> **What if . . .**—The sentence in the original is incomplete. In its full form it would run, "If God, willing to show His wrath" . . . (what can man reply?) This latter clause is dropped or lost in the course of the argument. The best and simplest expedient to supply its place is that adopted in the Authorised version, inserting "what" in italics at the beginning: "What if," &c. There is a second suppression later in the sentence. At the end of verse 23 we should have to insert some such clause as "He reserved His glory for them," in order to make the sentence strictly grammatical. These irregularities are due to the Apostle's habit of dictating, and to the lively flow of his thoughts.

**Willing.**—While His will was (ultimately) to execute His wrath

and display His sovereign judicial power, nevertheless He bore with evildoers, and gave them time for repentance.

<sup>(24)</sup> **Even us.**—So far the form of the sentence had been abstract—"vessels of wrath," "vessels of glory." Now the Apostle explains who are meant by these abstract terms. The "vessels of glory" are those who were intended to accept the Christian teaching, whether Jews or Gentiles. The "vessels of wrath" are the unbelieving mass of the people of Israel.

<sup>(25)</sup> **As he saith also in Osee.**—The original of the prophecy in Hosea relates to the pardon and reconciliation promised to the apostate and idolatrous people of the northern kingdom. It is here typically and prophetically applied to the Gentiles. Those who had ceased to belong to the chosen people, and those who had never belonged to it, were to all intents and purposes in the same position.

**Osee.**—"It may be questioned whether this word should be pronounced as a dissyllable, the double *e* being regarded as an English termination, as in Zebedee, Pharisee, &c., or as a trisyllable, the word being considered as a reproduction of the Greek form of the name." (Lightfoot, *On Revision*, p. 156, n.)

her beloved, which was not beloved.<sup>a</sup> (26) And it shall come to pass,<sup>b</sup> that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. (27) Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the

c Isa. 10.  
22, 23.  
a Hos. 2.  
23; 1  
Pet. 2.  
10.  
b Hos. 1.  
10.  
1 Or, the  
account.

d Isa. 1. 9.

sand of the sea,<sup>c</sup> a remnant shall be saved: (28) for he will finish the work,<sup>1</sup> and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. (29) And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed,<sup>d</sup> we had been as Sodoma, and been made

(26) **And it shall come to pass.**—This, too, was originally spoken of the restoration of the northern exiles to the land of Palestine. As applied to the conversion of the Gentiles, it would mean that the lands which had previously been heathen should become Christian. There is some doubt whether the Hebrew of Hosea should not rather be translated, “instead of calling them,” for “in her place where it was said unto them.” Instead of calling them “Ye are not my people,” they will be called “Sons of the living God.” So Ewald and Hitzig.

(27) **Crieth.**—With reference to the impassioned utterance of the prophet.

**A remnant.**—Rather, *the remnant*, with an emphasis upon the word. “The remnant, and only the remnant.”

**Shall be saved.**—In the original, *shall return*—i.e., as it is explained in the previous verse, “return to God.” St. Paul has followed the LXX. in putting the consequences of such conversion for the conversion itself.

(28) **For he will finish.**—Literally, according to the correct

reading, *For a sentence, accomplishing and abridging it, will the Lord execute upon the earth*; in other words, “A short and summary sentence will the Lord execute upon the earth.” The severity of the sentence is a proof that only a remnant can be saved from it. St. Paul follows the LXX., with but slight deviation. The sense of the Hebrew appears to be somewhat different:—“For though thy people, O Israel, were as the sand of the sea, but a remnant of them shall return: a destruction is decreed overflowing with righteousness—i.e., penal justice. For destruction by a sure decree will Jehovah of Hosts perform in the midst of all the earth.” (Cheyne.)

(29) **Said before**—i.e., in an earlier part of his book. The Book of Isaiah was at this time collected in the form in which we have it. In Acts xiii. 33, we find an express reference to the present numbering of the Psalms—“It is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” (Some authorities read “first,” the two psalms being arranged as one, but “second” is probably the true reading.)

like unto Gomorrha.  
<sup>(30)</sup> What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness; have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. <sup>(31)</sup> But Israel, which

followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. <sup>(32)</sup> Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled

A seed.—Equivalent to the “remnant” of verse 27. The point of the quotation is, that but for this remnant the rejection of Israel would have been utter and complete.

<sup>(30-33)</sup> The Apostle has finished with his vindication of the rejection of Israel, and finished also with the course of argument which seemed to bear a strong character of determinism. He now takes up a point of view which is the direct opposite of this, and in explaining the *causes* which led to the rejection of Israel, those which he puts forward are all such as depend for their validity on the freedom of the will. It is needless to say that this is abundantly recognised in other parts of St. Paul's writings, especially in the earnest practical exhortations which he addresses to his readers. This, then, must be taken to qualify the argument that has preceded. The freedom of the will and the absolute sovereignty of God are two propositions which, though apparently contradictory, are both really true at one and the same time. When stated singly, each is apt to appear one-sided. They are reconciled, as it were, beneath the surface, in some way inscrutable to us. Both rest on evidence that in itself is incontrovertible.

The great reason for the rejection of Israel and for the admission of the Gentiles is that the Gentiles did, and that they did not, base their attempts at righteousness upon faith. Righteousness is the middle term which leads to salvation. The Gentiles, without seeking, found; the Jews, seeking in a wrong way, failed to find it.

<sup>(30)</sup> Which followed not after righteousness.—Not having a special revelation, and being inattentive to the law of conscience.

Attained to righteousness.—By accepting the offer of Christianity, and especially the Christian doctrine of justification by faith.

<sup>(31)</sup> Israel, on the other hand, though ostensibly pursuing a law the object of which was righteousness, did not reach such a law. They tried to keep the Law, but failed to keep it, and to bring themselves under its protection. The second “righteousness” is omitted in the best MSS.

<sup>(32)</sup> For they stumbled.—“For,” in this clause, should be omitted, and the two clauses thrown together, the words “of the law” also going out—Because (seeking righteousness), not of faith, but as if of works, they stumbled, &c.

at that stumblingstone ;  
 (33) as it is written, Behold,<sup>a</sup>  
 I lay in Sion a stumbling-  
 stone and rock of offence :  
 and whosoever believeth on  
 him shall not be ashamed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Isa. S.  
 14, & 28.  
 16; 1  
 Pet. 2. 6.

<sup>1</sup> Or, con-  
 found-  
 ed.

and prayer to God for Israel  
 is, that they  
 might be  
 saved. (2) For  
 I bear them  
 record that  
 they have a  
 zeal of God,  
 but not according to know-

Chap. x. 1-13.  
 The cause of  
 Israel's fall. Self-  
 sought right-  
 eousness con-  
 trasted with  
 righteousness  
 through faith in  
 Christ.

CHAPTER X.—<sup>(1)</sup> Bre-  
 thren, my heart's desire

**That stumblingstone.** —  
 Christ. When Christianity, with  
 the justification by faith which  
 goes with it, was offered to them,  
 they "were offended," and refused it.

(33) **Behold, I lay in Sion.**—  
 A free combination of Isa. xxviii.  
 16—"Behold, I lay in Zion for a  
 foundation a stone; . . . he that  
 believeth shall not make haste"—  
 and Isa. viii. 14, "And He shall be  
 . . . for a stone of stumbling  
 and for a rock of offence to both  
 the houses of Israel." In the first  
 of these passages the prophet refers  
 to the foundation-stone of the  
 Temple as a symbol of the divine  
 faithfulness; in the second to God  
 Himself. St. Paul, like the Jewish  
 Rabbis, applied both passages to the  
 Messiah; not wrongly, for they  
 foretold the triumph of the theo-  
 cracy which was fulfilled in the  
 Messiah. The same two quotations  
 appear in 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7, and with  
 similar variation from the LXX.,  
 but they are there kept distinct.

**Shall not be ashamed.**—So,  
 too, the LXX. The Hebrew is,  
 "Shall not make haste."

## X.

(1) **My heart's desire.** —  
 Strictly, *the goodwill of my heart.*

The earlier portion of this chapter  
 is occupied with a more particular  
 exposition of the cause of Israel's  
 rejection, which has been just  
 alleged. They sought to do a hard  
 thing—to work out a righteousness  
 for themselves—instead of an easy  
 thing—simply to believe in Christ.

This chapter, like the last, is  
 introduced by an expression of the  
 Apostle's own warm affection for  
 his people and his earnest desire for  
 their salvation.

**For Israel.**—The true text is,  
 "for them." "Israel" has been  
 put in the margin as an explanatory  
 gloss, and thence found its way  
 into the text. What made the re-  
 jection of Israel so peculiarly  
 pathetic was that they were not a  
 mere godless and irreligious people.  
 On the contrary, they had a sincere  
 zeal for religion, but it was a mis-  
 directed and ill-judged zeal.

(2) **A zeal of God, but not  
 according to knowledge.**—It  
 would be difficult to find a more  
 happy description of the state of  
 the Jews at this period. They had  
 "a zeal for God." "The Jew,"  
 said Josephus, "knows the Law  
 better than his own name. . . .  
 The sacred rules were punctually  
 observed. . . . The great feasts  
 were frequented by countless thou-  
 sands. . . . Over and above the

ledge. <sup>(3)</sup> For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not

submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. <sup>(4)</sup> For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

requirements of the Law, ascetic religious exercises advocated by the teachers of the Law came into vogue. . . . Even the Hellenised and Alexandrian Jews under Caligula died on the cross and by fire, and the Palestinian prisoners in the last war died by the claws of African lions in the amphitheatre, rather than sin against the Law. What Greek," exclaims Josephus, "would do the like? . . . The Jews also exhibited an ardent zeal for the conversion of the Gentiles to the Law of Moses. The proselytes filled Asia Minor and Syria, and—to the indignation of Tacitus—Italy and Rome." The tenacity of the Jews, and their uncompromising monotheism, were seen in some conspicuous examples. In the early part of his procuratorship, Pilate, seeking to break through their known repugnance to everything that savoured of image-worship, had introduced into Jerusalem ensigns surmounted with silver busts of the emperor. Upon this the people went down in a body to Cæsarea, waited for five days and nights in the market-place, bared their necks to the soldiers that Pilate sent in among them, and did not desist until the order for the removal of the ensigns had been given. Later he caused to be hung up in the palace at Jerusalem certain gilded shields bearing a dedicatory inscription to Tiberius. Then, again, the Jews did not rest until, by their complaints addressed

directly to the emperor, they had succeeded in getting them taken down. The consternation that was caused by Caligula's order for the erection of his own statue in the Temple is well known. None of the Roman governors dared to carry it into execution; and Caligula himself was slain before it could be accomplished.

Justice must be done to the heroic spirit of the Jews. But it was zeal directed into the most mistaken channels. Their religion was legal and formal to the last degree. Under an outward show of punctilious obedience, it concealed all the inward corruption described by the Apostle in chap. ii. 17—29, the full extent of which was seen in the horrors of the great insurrection and the siege of Jerusalem.

<sup>(3)</sup> **God's righteousness**—See chaps. i. 17, iii. 21.

**Their own righteousness.**—A righteousness founded on their own works.

<sup>(4)</sup> **The end of the law.**—"End," in the proper sense of termination or conclusion. Christ is that which brings the functions of the Law to an end by superseding it. "The Law pursues a man until he takes refuge in Christ; then it says, Thou hast found thine asylum; I shall trouble thee no more; now thou art wise; now thou art safe." (Bengel.)

**For righteousness to every one that believeth.**—So that



(5) For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.<sup>a</sup> (6) But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine

<sup>b</sup> Deut. 30. 12.

<sup>a</sup> Lev. 18. 5; Ezek. 20. 11; Gal. 3. 12.

heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?<sup>b</sup> (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*;) <sup>(7)</sup> or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) <sup>(8)</sup> But what saith it? The

every one who believes may obtain righteousness.

(5) **For Moses describeth.**—The Law required an actual literal fulfilment. Its essence consisted in works. “The man which doeth these things shall live.”

**By them.**—The true reading is, probably, *in it*—i.e., the righteousness just mentioned. “The man who doeth this righteousness” (according to a more correct text) “shall live in and by it.”

(6) **But the righteousness.**—In opposition to this righteousness of works, so laborious and so impracticable, the Apostle adduces another quotation to show that the righteousness which depends on faith is much easier and simpler.

The original of the quotation has, indeed, a quite different application. It referred to that very law which the Apostle is depreciating. Moses had described the *Law* as something quite easy and accessible; but history had shown that, especially in the development in which the Law was known to the Apostle, the words were really much more applicable to his doctrine of a righteousness which was based upon faith. He therefore regards them as spoken allegorically and typically with reference to this.

**The righteousness which is of faith speaketh.**—This faith-

righteousness is personified as if it were speaking itself, because the language used is applicable to it.

**That is, to bring Christ down from above.**—The Apostle adds these interpretations so as to give a specially Christian meaning to the words of Moses. All that these had meant was that the Law was not remote either in one direction or in another. The Apostle in the phrase “ascend into heaven” sees at once an allusion to the ascended Saviour, and he interprets it as if it implied that the Christian must ascend up to Him, or, what comes to the same thing, as if He must be brought down to the Christian. In like manner, when mention is made of descending into the abyss, he sees here an allusion to the descent of Christ into Hades. Again, he repudiates the idea that the Christian is compelled to join Him there in literal bodily presence. A far easier and simpler thing is the faith of the gospel. All the Christian has to do is to listen to it when it is preached, and then to confess his own adhesion to it.

(7) **Into the deep.**—In the original, *beyond the sea*. The word which St. Paul uses is found in the LXX. for “the sea,” but here means *the abyss of Hades*.

word is nigh thee,<sup>a</sup> *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; <sup>(9)</sup> that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. <sup>(10)</sup> For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. 30. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Isa. 28. 16.

<sup>c</sup> Joel 2. 32; Acts 2. 21.

<sup>(11)</sup> For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.<sup>b</sup> <sup>(12)</sup> For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. <sup>(13)</sup> For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.<sup>c</sup> <sup>(14)</sup> How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and

Chap. x. 14—21. Hearing and believing.

<sup>(9)</sup> If thou shalt confess with thy mouth.—Interesting as containing the earliest formal confession of faith; that in Acts viii. 37 (see Note there) is not genuine.

There is no opposition between the outward confession and the inward act of faith. The one is regarded as the necessary consequence and expression of the other. In the next verse this takes the form of Hebrew parallelism, in which the balanced clauses are regarded as equivalent to each other.

**The Lord Jesus.**—Jesus as Lord.

**Hath raised him from the dead.**—Comp. chap. iv. 25. Though the death of Christ apprehended by faith is more especially the cause of the Christian's salvation, still the Apostle regards the Resurrection as the cardinal point; for without the resurrection the proof of the Messiahship of Jesus would have been incomplete, and His death would not have had its saving efficacy.

<sup>(11)</sup> Whosoever believeth.—All who believe shall be saved, for, &c.

<sup>(12)</sup> For the same Lord over all is rich.—Rather, *for the same Lord* (is Lord) *over all, abounding, &c.* Christ is the Lord alike of Jew and of Gentile. (Comp. Eph. iv. 5.)

<sup>(13)</sup> Upon the name of the Lord.—Originally, as meaning "of Jehovah," but with especial reference to the Messianic Advent. Here, therefore, it is applied to our Lord.

<sup>(14—21)</sup> Thus there is a distinct order—belief, confession, invocation. But before either the last or the first of these steps is taken the gospel must be preached. The Jew, however, cannot plead that the gospel has not been preached to him. It *has* been preached both to Jew and Gentile. Both Moses and Isaiah had foretold the conversion of the Gentiles, and Isaiah had also foretold the unbelief of the Jews.

how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? <sup>(15)</sup> And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace,<sup>a</sup> and bring glad tidings of

<sup>b</sup> Isa. 53.  
1;  
John  
12. 38.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 52.  
7; Nah.  
1. 15.  
<sup>c</sup> Ps. 19. 4.

good things! <sup>(16)</sup> But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord,<sup>b</sup> who hath believed our report? <sup>(17)</sup> So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. <sup>(18)</sup> But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth,<sup>c</sup>

<sup>(15)</sup> The happy consequences of this preaching were already intimated by the prophet Isaiah.

**Preach the gospel of peace.**—These words are omitted in the group of oldest MSS., and should be left out in the text. The whole of the quotation is not given by St. Paul.

<sup>(16)</sup> Applying this condition of the necessity of preaching to the gospel, we nevertheless see that, as a matter of fact, all did not accept it. Just as Isaiah had said.

The argument does not run quite smoothly. The Apostle has two thoughts in his mind: (1) the necessity that the gospel should be preached before it could be believed; (2) the fact that, although it was preached (and accepted by many among the Gentiles), it was not accepted by the Jews. He begins to introduce this second topic before he has quite done with the first. Verse 17 goes back to and connects logically with verse 15, while verse 16 anticipates verses 19 and 21.

**Our report.**—So Authorised version, rightly. The Greek word

means literally, *our hearing*. Here it is, the message preached by us, but heard by those who listened to it.

<sup>(17)</sup> So then faith cometh.—Inference from the prophecy just quoted. Before men can believe, there must be something for them to believe. That something is the word of God, which we preach and they hear. It must be remembered that the word for “report” in verse 16, and for “hearing” in verse 17, is the same, but with a slight difference of meaning. In the first place, both the act of hearer and preacher are involved; in the second place, only the act of the hearer.

**By the word of God.**—We should read here, without doubt, “by the word of *Christ*”—i.e., by the gospel first delivered by Christ and propagated by His ministers.

<sup>(18)</sup> **Have they not heard?**—The relations of hearing to belief suggest to the Apostle a possible excuse for the Jews, and the excuse he puts forward interrogatively himself: “But, I ask, did they (the Jews) not hear?” Yes, for the gospel was preached to them, as indeed to all mankind.

and their words unto the ends of the world. <sup>(19)</sup> But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are no people,*<sup>a</sup> and by a foolish nation I will anger you. <sup>(20)</sup> But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not;<sup>b</sup> I was made manifest unto them that asked not after

c Isa. 65.  
2.  
a Deut.  
32. 21.  
A.D. 58.

b Isa. 65.  
1.

me. <sup>(21)</sup> But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.<sup>c</sup>

## CHAPTER XI.—<sup>(1)</sup> I

say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the

Chap xi. 1.—36.  
Three trains of reflection on Israel's fall.

**Their sound.**—Here, the voice of the preachers; in the original of Ps. xix., the unspoken testimony of the works of nature, and especially the heavenly bodies, to natural religion (“What though no real voice or sound,” &c.).

<sup>(19)</sup> Did not Israel know that the preaching of the gospel would be thus universal, and pass over from them to the Gentiles? Yes, certainly, for Moses had warned them of this.

**First.**—In the order of time and of Scripture.

**I will provoke you.**—In requital for the idolatries of the Jews, Moses prophesied that God would bestow His favour on a Gentile nation, and so provoke their jealousy; and the Apostle sees the fulfilment of this in his own day.

**No people . . . a foolish nation.**—Terms used by the Jews of their Gentile neighbours. They were “no people,” because they did not stand in the same recognised relation to God. They were “a foolish nation,” because they

had not received the same special revelation, but, on the contrary, worshipped stocks and stones.

<sup>(20)</sup> **Is very bold.**—Comes forward and tells them the naked truth.

**I was found.**—The original of the quotation referred to the apostate Israel; St. Paul here applies it to the Gentiles.

<sup>(21)</sup> **To Israel.**—With regard to Israel.

**He saith.**—Isaiah, speaking as the mouthpiece of God.

**All day long.**—This quotation is from the next verse to the preceding, and there is no such distinction in the persons to whom it is addressed as the Apostle here draws.

**Gainsaying.**—A people which refused the proffered salvation.

## XI.

The eleventh chapter may be divided into three sections; still dealing with the rejection of Israel, and containing (1) verses 1—10, limitations and qualifications to this; (2) verses 11—24, compensations;

seed of Abraham, of the  
tribe of Benjamin. <sup>(2)</sup> God  
hath not cast

away his  
people which  
he foreknew.

Wot ye not  
what the scripture saith of  
Elias? how he maketh in-  
tercession to God against  
Israel, saying, <sup>(3)</sup> Lord, <sup>a</sup>

<sup>b</sup> 1 Kgs.  
19. 18.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kgs.  
19. 14.

they have killed thy pro-  
phets, and digged down  
thine altars; and I am  
left alone, and they seek  
my life. <sup>(4)</sup> But what saith  
the answer of God unto  
him? I have reserved to  
myself seven thousand  
men, <sup>b</sup> who have not bowed  
the knee to *the image of*  
Baal. <sup>(5)</sup> Even so then at

(3) verses 25—32, consolations:  
the whole being closed with a  
doxology.

(1) **I say then.**—Are we to infer  
from the language of Isaiah just  
quoted that God has cast away His  
people? Far be the thought. The  
Apostle is himself too closely iden-  
tified with his countrymen to look  
upon it with anything but horror.

**I also.**—This appeal to his own  
descent from Abraham seems to be  
called forth by the Apostle's patri-  
otic sympathy with his people, and  
not merely by the thought that he  
would be included in their rejec-  
tion. This last explanation, which  
is that usually given, is less accord-  
ant with the generous chivalry of  
his nature, and does not agree so  
well with chap. ix. 3.

**Of the tribe of Benjamin.**—  
And therefore of the purest blood,  
because the tribes of Judah and  
Benjamin alone kept up the theo-  
cratic continuity of the race after  
the Exile. (Comp. Phil. iii. 5.)

(2) **Which he foreknew.**—  
This must not be pressed too far,  
as implying an absolute indefecti-  
bility of the divine favour. God,  
having in His eternal counsels set  
his choice upon Israel as His pecu-

liar people, will not readily disown  
them. Nor is their case really so  
bad as it may seem. Now, as in  
the days of Elijah, there are a  
select few who have not shared in  
the general depravity.

**Of Elias.**—Literally, in *Elias*  
—i.e., in the section which contains  
the history of Elias. So in Mark  
xii. 26; Luke xx. 37; “in the  
bush” and “at the bush,” mean,  
in the paragraph relating to the  
bush.

(3) **I am left alone**—i.e., of the  
prophets.

(4) **To the image of Baal.**—  
The name “Baal” is here, as fre-  
quently in the LXX., in the femi-  
nine gender, and it is to account  
for this that our translators have  
inserted the word “image.” How  
the feminine really came to be  
used is uncertain. Some have  
thought that the deity was andro-  
gynous, others have conjectured  
that the feminine is used contemp-  
tuously. Baal was originally the  
sun-god. The sun, it may be re-  
membered, is feminine in German  
and some other languages.

(5, 6) As there was a remnant then,  
so also is there a remnant now.

this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (6) And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (7) What

<sup>1</sup> Or, *hardened.*

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 29. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *remorse.*

<sup>b</sup> Isa. 6. 9.

then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded<sup>1</sup> (8) (according as it is written, God<sup>a</sup> hath given them the spirit of slumber,<sup>2</sup> eyes that they should not see,<sup>b</sup> and ears that they

That there should be so is due not to any human merit on the part of those exempted from the fate of their nation, but to the spontaneous act of the divine grace selecting them from the rest. These two things, "grace" and "works," really exclude each other.

The Apostle reverts somewhat parenthetically, and because his mind is full of the thought, to his idea of chap. ix. 11—16. We have here also a break in the train of argument. After establishing the fact that there is this remnant, the Apostle inquires *how* there came to be one. The reason was because the mass of the people trusted to their own works instead of relying upon grace; therefore grace deserted them, and they were left to a judicial blindness.

(6) **And if by grace.**—The true text of this verse differs considerably from that which is translated in the Authorised version, "But if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more seen to be grace."

The preservation of the remnant cannot be due to grace and works at the same time; it must be due to one or the other.

(7) What is the result? Not

only did Israel fail to obtain the salvation which it sought, and which the select few succeeded in obtaining, but it was consigned to a state of complete spiritual apathy and torpor, and its very blessings became a curse and a snare.

**Were blinded.**—An erroneous translation, arising from a confusion of two similar words. The correct rendering, "were hardened," is given in the margin. So, too, "were blinded," in 2 Cor. iii. 14, and "blindness," in verse 25 of this chapter and Eph. iv. 18, should be changed to "were hardened," "hardness." The corresponding words in the Gospels are rightly translated. The term is one used in medicine for the forming of chalkstone, &c.

(8) **The spirit of slumber.**—This phrase, again, has a curious history. Etymologically, the word translated "slumber" would seem to agree better with the marginal rendering, "remorse." It comes from a root meaning to "prick or cut with a sharp instrument." There happens to be another root somewhat similar, but certainly not connected, which means "drowsiness," "slumber." Hence, where the word in the text has been used

should not hear;) unto this day. <sup>(9)</sup> And David saith, Let their table be made a snare,<sup>a</sup> and a trap, and a

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 69.  
23.  
<sup>a</sup> 1's. 69.  
22.

stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: <sup>(10)</sup> let their eyes be darkened,<sup>b</sup> that they may not see, and

to render the Hebrew word for "slumber," it has been thought that there was a confusion between the two. It appears, however, from the LXX. usage, that the sense of "slumber" had certainly come to attach to the word here used by St. Paul. From the notion of a sharp wound or blow came to be derived that of the bewilderment or stupefaction consequent upon such a blow, and hence it came to signify stupor in general.

The quotation is a free combination of two passages of the LXX. (Isa. xxix. 10, and Deut. xxix. 4), no doubt put together by the Apostle from memory.

<sup>(9)</sup> **And David saith.**—It appears highly improbable that this Psalm was really written by David. Nor can the Davidic authorship be argued strongly from this passage, as "David" merely seems to stand for the Book of Psalms, with which his name was traditionally connected.

St. Paul is quoting freely from the LXX. In the original of Ps. lxix. these verses refer to the fate invoked by the psalmist upon his persecutors; here they are applied by St. Paul to the fiat of the Almighty which had been pronounced against the unbelieving people of Israel.

**Let their table . . .**—In the very moment of their feasting, let them be caught in a stratagem of their enemies.

**And a trap.**—These words are not found either in the Hebrew or

in the LXX., and appear to be added by St. Paul. Translate rather, *Let them be for a chase—i.e.*, instead of feasting, let them be hunted and persecuted.

**And a recompence unto them.**—Similarly the LXX. The Hebrew is, "When they are in peace, let it be a trap" ("that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap"—A.V.)—*i.e.*, when they are eating and drinking securely, let them be caught as in a trap; let their security itself deceive them. By "recompence unto them" the Apostle means, Let their prosperity bring unto them retaliation for what they have done—namely, for their rejection of Christ.

<sup>(10)</sup> **Let their eyes be darkened.**—In the Apostle's sense, "Let them be spiritually blinded, incapable of discerning or receiving the truth, and let their backs be bound with the yoke of spiritual thralldom!" The Hebrew is, "Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not, and make their loins continually to shake." On which Perowne remarks: "The darkness of the eyes denotes weakness and perplexity, as the enlightening of the eyes denotes renewed vigour and strength. Similarly, the shaking of the loins is expressive of terror and dismay and feebleness."

<sup>(11-24)</sup> In this section the Apostle goes on to consider further the bearings of the rejection, and here, first (verses 11—16), he considers the

bow down their back alway.

<sup>(11)</sup> I say then, Have they

stumbled that

they should

fall? God

forbid: but

rather through their fall

salvation is come unto the

Gentiles, for to provoke

<sup>a</sup> Or, *de-*  
*cay,* or,  
*loss.*

them to jealousy. <sup>(12)</sup> Now

if the fall of them *be* the

riches of the world, and the

diminishing<sup>a</sup> of them the

riches of the Gentiles; how

much more their fulness?

<sup>(13)</sup> For I speak to you

Gentiles, inasmuch as I

am the apostle of the

more hopeful side of it as regards the Jews themselves; their fall was not to be final, and there was every reason to think that their re-conversion would more than make up for their fall; secondly (verses 17—24), he turns to the Gentiles and bids them remember how it was that they came to be inserted like a graft in the true theocratic stem, and warns them not to make use of their new privilege to boast against those who were refused to make way for them.

<sup>(11)</sup> The Jews did, indeed, stumble at the stumbling-block mentioned in chap. ix. 32, 33. Many were offended at Christ. But did their stumbling involve their utter and final ruin? It had a far more beneficent purpose than that. It brought salvation to the Gentiles, and it did this only to react as an incentive upon the Jews.

**For to provoke them to jealousy.**—The reason why salvation had been extended to the Gentiles was to stir up them (the Jews) to emulation. Their privileges had made them negligent and apathetic. The sight of others stepping into those privileges was to rouse them from their apathy.

<sup>(12)</sup> And if the fall of the Jews

had such good results, much more might be expected from their reinstatement.

### Diminishing . . . fulness.—

It is, perhaps, difficult to suggest a better translation. The Apostle seems to have in view not only the supersession of the Jews by the Gentiles, but also, under the figure of a defeat in battle, the reduction of their numbers to a small remnant. And, on the other hand, he looks forward to their full and complete restoration, when every Jew shall be a member of the Messianic kingdom, and there shall not be one missing. The full "complement," as it were, of the nation is what is meant by "fulness;" its temporary reduction and degradation is expressed by "diminishing."

<sup>(13—16)</sup> In this I am speaking to you Gentiles. It is you who will benefit by the restoration of the Jews. And this is the real reason why, as Apostle of the Gentiles, I make the most of my office. I do it in order to incite to emulation my own countrymen, knowing that the effects of their rejection lead us to infer the very happiest effects from their readmission. For their end will be as their beginning was. They began their career as the



Gentiles, I magnify mine office: <sup>(14)</sup> if by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them. <sup>(15)</sup> For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead? <sup>(16)</sup> For if

the firstfruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*: and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches. <sup>(17)</sup> And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them par-

Chap. xi. 17—24.  
The engrafted  
and the original  
branches.

chosen people of God, and the conclusion of it will be still more glorious.

<sup>(13)</sup> **For I speak to you Gentiles.**—The connecting particles of this verse must be altered according to an amended reading. “For” should be omitted, a full stop placed after “Gentiles,” and “then” inserted after “inasmuch.” “I speak to you Gentiles” —spoken with something of a pause. “Inasmuch then” (or, *in so far then*) “as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I seek to do honour to my office. But not without an *arrière-pensée*. My motive is at least partly to win over my own countrymen.”

<sup>(15)</sup> **Reconciling of the world.**—The gospel could not be preached to the Gentiles until it had first been offered to and rejected by the Jews. Hence the casting away of the Jews might be said to have caused the reconciling of the rest of the world.

**Life from the dead.**—The reconversion of the Jews will be a signal to inaugurate that reign of eternal life which will be ushered in by the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>(16)</sup> And we have the strongest reason for believing in this reconversion of the Jews. Their forefathers were the first recipients of the promise, and what they were it is only natural to hope that their descendants will be. When a piece of dough is taken from the lump to make a consecrated cake, the consecration of the part extends over the whole; and the character which is inherent in the root of a tree shows itself also in the branches. So we may believe that the latter end of Israel will be like its beginning. The consecration that was imparted to it in the founders of the race we may expect to see resumed by their descendants, even though it is for a time interrupted.

**The firstfruit . . . the lump.**—The allusion here is to the custom, described in Num. xv. 19—21, of dedicating a portion of the dough to God. The portion thus taken was to be a “heave-offering”—*i.e.*, it was to be “waved,” or “heaved,” before the Lord, and was then given to the priest.

<sup>(17—24)</sup> The admission of the Gentile to the privileges of the Jew is

takest of the root and fatness of the olive tree ;  
 (18) boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.  
 (19) Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.  
 (20) Well ; because of unbelief they were broken

off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear : (21) for if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee. (22) Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God : on them which fell, severity ; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his*

no ground for boasting on his part. It is merely an *admission*. The Gentile is, as it were, a branch grafted into a stem that was none of his planting. Nor is his position absolutely secured to him. It is held conditionally on the tenure of faith. He ought, therefore, anxiously to guard against any failure in faith. For the moment God has turned towards him the gracious side of His providence, as towards the Jew He has turned the severe side. But this relation may easily be reversed, and the Jew received back into the favour which he once enjoyed.

(17) **And.**—Rather, *but*.

**Among them**—*i.e.*, among the branches of the olive-tree generally, both those which are broken off and those which are suffered to remain. This seems on the whole the more probable view ; it would be possible to translate the words, *in place of them* (the branches broken off).

**Partakest of the root and fatness.**—The meaning of this is sufficiently obvious as it stands. If, as perhaps is probable, we ought to drop the second “and,” reading, “of the root of the fatness,” the sense is that the rich flow of sap in

which the wild olive partakes does not belong to the wild olive itself, but is all drawn from the root.

The evidence for the omission of the second “and” is that of the Vatican, Sinaitic, and rescript Paris manuscript—a strong combination.

(18) **Thou bearest not the root.**—There can be no boasting, for the privileges which the Gentiles possess are derived, and not original.

(19, 20) It might be possible for the Gentile to claim a special providence in his substitution for the Jew. He should rather be reminded that there is a condition—faith—which is attached to this substitution ; this he must be careful to observe, or else he will lose all that he has gained.

(21) **Take heed lest . . .**—The better reading seems to be to omit these words, *neither will He spare thee*.

(22) As Providence had been appealed to, the Apostle states the true Providential aspect of God's rejection of Israel. It had a double side—one of goodness towards the

goodness : otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. <sup>(23)</sup> And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in : for God is able to graff them in again. <sup>(24)</sup> For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree : how much more shall these, which

<sup>1</sup> Or, *hardness.*

be the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree? <sup>(25)</sup> For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits ; that blindness<sup>1</sup> in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Chap. xi. 25—32.  
Third reflection :  
Israel's restoration.

Gentile, one of deserved severity towards the Jew. But, at the same time, the fact that the covenant was made originally with the Jew, and that he was the natural heir to the promises which it contained, is a guarantee for his restoration if he would only dismiss his unbelief.

<sup>(25—32)</sup> There was a deep meaning underlying the temporary rejection of Israel, of which he has been speaking—a meaning which has hitherto been kept secret, but now to be revealed as a corrective to any possible pride on the part of the Gentiles.

<sup>(25)</sup> **Mystery.**—The word always means throughout St. Paul's writings something which, though not to be known or fully comprehended by unassisted human reason, has been made known by direct divine revelation. It is therefore not to be taken in this passage in its usual sense, of something hidden and concealed from all except a few, but rather of all such truths as, though previously hidden, had been made manifest by the gospel.

It is thus applied to the whole or any part of the Christian system. To the whole, as in chap. xvi. 25 ; 1 Cor. ii. 7—10 ; Eph. i. 9 ; vi. 19 ; Col. i. 26, 27 ; ii. 2 ; 1 Tim. iii. 9, 16. To any part, as (a) the admission of the Gentiles, Eph. iii. 3 *et seq.*, and partly here ; (b) the mystical union of Christ and His Church which is typified in marriage, Eph. v. 32 ; (c) the transformation of the "quick" at the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 51 ; and (d) the opposition of Antichrist to the gospel, 2 Thess. ii. 7.

Here the reference is to the whole of the divine purpose as shown in the dealings with Jew and Gentile, and especially in the present exclusion and future re-admission of the former. This last point the Apostle goes on to prove.

**Blindness.**—Rather, as in the margin, *hardness*, a hardening of the heart so that the gospel could not find entrance into it.

**In part.**—These words qualify "Israel." The hardness extends over some, but not over all. There were Jewish as well as Gentile converts in Rome itself.

(26) And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer,<sup>a</sup> and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: (27) for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. (28) As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election,

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 28. 9; and 59. 20.

<sup>1</sup> Or, obeyed.

<sup>2</sup> Or, obeyed.

*they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes. (29) For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance. (30) For as ye in times past have not believed<sup>1</sup> God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: (31) even so have these also now not believed,<sup>2</sup> that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

### The fulness of the Gentiles.

—As above, *the complete number; the full complement of the Gentiles.*

(26) When this ingathering of the Gentiles is complete, then the turn of Israel will come round again, and the prophecies of their conversion will be fulfilled.

### There shall come . . .

This prophecy is peculiarly appropriate, as it refers to the exiles who had apostatised in Babylon. Then, as now, a part of the nation had remained true, and those who had not would come back to their obedience.

**Out of Sion.**—There is a curious variation here from the original, which is rather, *to Sion*. The LXX. has “for Sion”—*i.e.*, in the cause of Sion. The Apostle appears to be quoting from memory, and is influenced by a reminiscence of other passages. Zion is the centre and capital of the theocracy, but the Messiah must first take up His abode there before He can issue from it.

(27) The second part of the quotation, “For (rather, *and*), this is my covenant with them,” &c., appears

to be taken from the LXX. version of Isa. xxvii. 9. The connecting-links between the two are the removing of transgression from Jacob, and the form of the phrase, “This is my covenant with them.” (“This is his blessing,” Isa. xxvii. 9, LXX.)

(28) The real position of the Jews is this: They have been suffered to fall into a state of estrangement in order to make room for the Gentiles. But this does not abrogate God's original choice of them. They are still His beloved people, for the sake of their forefathers, the patriarchs, if not for their own.

(29) **Without repentance.**—Not to be revoked or withdrawn, not even to be regretted.

(30, 31) **Have not believed . . . unbelief . . . not believed . . .**—Rather, *disobeyed . . . disobedience . . . disobeyed.*

(31) **Through your mercy**—*i.e.*, through the mercy vouchsafed to you. The sight of the admission of the Gentiles is to act as a stimulus upon the Jews, and so lead to a renewal of their faith and obedience.

(32) For God hath concluded<sup>1</sup> them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. (33) O the depth of the

Chap. xi. 33—36.  
Doxology.

riches both of  
the wisdom  
and know-

<sup>1</sup> Or, *shut them all up together.*

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 40.  
13: 1  
Cor. 2.  
16;  
Wisd.  
9, 13.

ledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (34) For who hath known the mind of the Lord?<sup>a</sup> or who hath been his counsellor? (35) or

(32) Unhappy as the fate of the world might seem, first the Gentiles and then the Jews being consigned to a state of disobedience, this has really had a merciful object in the end. It will lead to a happy and complete reunion, "one flock under one shepherd."

**For God hath concluded them all in unbelief.**—A weighty sentence embracing the whole course of human history, and summing up the divine philosophy of the whole matter. We might almost take these profound words of St. Paul as a motto for the theological side of the theory of evolution. Severe and rigorous as that doctrine may seem, its goal is *perfection*, the absolute harmony of all things working in accordance with the divine will. And if an objection is taken on the ground of the waste of individual life, this may be subject to we know not what beneficent rectifications in a sphere removed from that of the senses. We are able to see only a "part of God's ways," and the drift and tendency of visible things makes it not difficult for us to believe that "all things work together for good," even where the process by which they do so is not to be traced by the human eye.

(33—36) This grand and comprehen-

sive view of the divine purposes makes so deep an impression upon the Apostle that he breaks out into an impassioned ascription of praise, with which the first (doctrinal) portion of the Epistle is brought to a close.

(33) **Riches.**—The two substantives which follow may be taken as dependent upon "riches." This is the construction adopted in the Authorised version, and is expressed by the use of the word "both." Or all three substantives may be independent, *O the depth of the riches, and of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* In either case, "riches" means "inexhaustible resources," implying either that the wisdom and knowledge of God are inexhaustible, or that the materials at their command are inexhaustible. By means of these infinite resources God is able to bring good even out of evil.

**Judgments.**—*Decisions*, such as that by which Israel was excluded and the Gentiles admitted.

(34) **For who hath known the mind of the Lord.**—The two clauses in this verse are illustrative of the wisdom and knowledge of God, just as the next verse is illustrative of His "riches."

(35) The depth of God's knowledge none can penetrate, and the

who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? <sup>(36)</sup> For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

A.D. 58

CHAPTER XII.—<sup>(1)</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable

counsels of His wisdom admit of no assessor. The means by which God works are not supplied to Him from without, but proceed from the boundless stores of His omnipotence.

<sup>(36)</sup> Of him, and through him, and to him.—All things proceed from God, all things are made or wrought by Him, and all things exist for His glory, and to carry out His ends. It is a mistake to see in this, as some of the older commentators have done, an allusion to the Trinity. This can hardly be. The subject of the whole verse appears to be God the Father, and the prominent idea is rather the unity of creation corresponding to the unity of the Godhead. The whole system of things issues from and returns to Him, accomplishing in its course His beneficent designs. It is true, however, that the use of the prepositions is such as in more analytical passages would be taken to express the threefold relation (origination, mediate causation, and retrocession) which the doctrine of the Trinity embodies.

## XII.

<sup>(1)</sup> At this point the Apostle turns from the speculative, or doctrinal portion of his Epistle, and begins a series of practical exhortations to

his readers as to their lives as Christians. In the first two verses of the chapter he speaks of this in general terms, but then goes on to give a number of special precepts in no very distinct arrangement or order.

**Therefore.**—We may well believe that the Apostle having brought his argument up to a climax at the close of the last chapter, would make a pause in his dictation, and perhaps not resume it until another sitting. The one prevailing impression left on his mind, both by the argument just ended and by the whole previous portion of the Epistle is a profound sense of the merciful and benevolent purposes of God, who, out of seeming evil, only educes the highest good. This sense is still strong upon him, and he makes it the link of transition by which the earnest practical exhortations which follow are bound to what precedes. The sequence is as much one of feeling as of ratiocination.

**Your bodies.**—Not merely a periphrasis for “yourselves,” but in the strict sense “your bodies,” *i.e.*, the very part of you which is apt to be “an occasion of falling.” The Apostle takes the two main parts of human nature separately. In this verse he deals with the bodies of men, in the next verse with the

service. <sup>(2)</sup> And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by

the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable,

“mind,” or the intellectual and spiritual faculties.

**A living sacrifice.**—“How is the body to become a sacrifice? Let thine eye look upon no evil thing, and it hath become a sacrifice; let thy tongue speak nothing filthy, and it hath become an offering; let thy hand do no lawless deed, and it hath become a whole burnt offering. But this is not enough, we must do good works also; let the hand do alms, the mouth bless them that despitefully use us, and the ear find leisure evermore for the hearing of Scripture. For sacrifice can be made only of that which is clean; sacrifice is a firstfruit of other actions. Let us, then, from our hands, and feet, and mouth, and all our other members, yield a firstfruit unto God” (St. Chrysostom).

The idea contained in sacrifice is that of dedication. We are to *dedicate* our bodies to God. But there is to be this distinction between the old Jewish sacrifices and the Christian sacrifice: the one was of dead animals, the other of the living man. The worshipper must offer, or present, before God, *himself*, with all his living energies and powers directed consciously to God's service.

**Holy, acceptable unto God.**—The qualification sought for in the Jewish sacrifices was that they were to be unblemished, without spot. In like manner the Christian's sacrifice must be holy and pure in God's sight, otherwise it cannot be acceptable to Him.

**Reasonable service.**—The English phrase is somewhat ambiguous. It might mean “a service demanded by reason.” Such, however, is not the sense of the Greek, but rather “a service of the reason,” *i.e.*, a service rendered by the reason. Just as under the old dispensation the mind expressed its devotion through the ritual of sacrifice, so now under the new dispensation its worship takes the form of a self-dedication; its service consists in holiness of life, temperance, soberness, and chastity.

<sup>(2)</sup> **Be not conformed . . . but be ye transformed.**—Here the English is somewhat misleading. It would naturally lead us to expect a similar play upon words in the Greek. But it is not so; indeed, there is a clear distinction between the two different words employed. It is the difference between an outward conformity or disguise and a thorough inward assimilation. The Christian is not to copy the fleeting fashions of the present time, but to be wholly transfigured in view of that higher mode of existence, in strict accordance with God's will, that He has chosen.

**This world.**—Not here the same word as that which is used, *e.g.*, in 1 John ii. 15—17, but another, which signifies rather the state of the world as it existed at the coming of Christ, as opposed to the newly-inaugurated Messianic reign. “To be conformed to this world” is to act as other men do, heathen who know not God; in

and perfect, will of God.  
 (3) For I say, through the  
 grace given unto me, to  
 every man that is among  
 you, not to think of him-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. to  
 sobriety.

self more highly than he  
 ought to think; but to  
 think soberly,<sup>1</sup> according  
 as God hath dealt to every  
 man the measure of faith.

opposition to this the Apostle exhorts his readers to undergo that total change which will bring them more into accordance with the will of God.

**By the renewing of your mind.**—“The mind” (*i.e.*, the mental faculties, reason, or understanding) is in itself neutral. When informed by an evil principle, it becomes an instrument of evil; when informed by the Spirit, it is an instrument of good. It performs the process of discrimination between good and evil, and so supplies the *data* to conscience. “The mind” here is not strictly identical with what we now mean by “conscience;” it is, as it were, the rational part of conscience, to which the moral quality needs to be super-added. The “*renewed mind*,” or the mind acting under the influence of the Spirit, comes very near to “conscience” in the sense in which the word is used by Bishop Butler.

**Prove.**—As elsewhere, “discriminate, and so approve.” The double process is included: first, of deciding what the will of God is; and, secondly, of choosing and acting upon it.

**What is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**—The “will of God” is here, not the divine attribute of will, but the thing willed by God, the right course of action. Are we to take the adjectives “good, and acceptable, and perfect” (with the Authorised version), as in agree-

ment with this phrase, or are they rather in apposition to it, “that we may prove the will of God, that which is good, and acceptable, and perfect”? Most of the commentators prefer this latter way of taking the passage, but it is not quite clear that the former is impossible, “that good, and acceptable, and perfect thing, or course of action which God wills.” “Acceptable,” that is to say, to God Himself.

(3) Having thus stated the broad principle which is to govern the conduct of the Christian, the Apostle now goes on to apply it to certain details, and, first, his object is to secure that temper in the members of the Roman Church which will best enable them to act with union and efficiency.

**Through the grace given unto me—*i.e.***, in virtue of his apostolic authority.

**To every man that is among you.**—A rather more pointed expression than simply “to you all,” “to each one of you severally and individually.”

**Not to think of himself . . .**—There is a play upon words in this phrase, and those which follow, which is not preserved, and can hardly be preserved, in the English. “Not to be high-minded beyond that which he ought to be minded, but to be minded unto sober-mindedness.” Our



(4) For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: (5) so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and

every one members one of another. (6) Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let*

words, "to be minded," "high-minded," &c., very nearly express the sense of the Greek, which is to have the thoughts and feelings habitually turned in a certain direction. This is brought out with emphatic repetition in the phrase "to be minded unto the being sober-minded," *i.e.*, to keep sobriety of mind constantly in view as the object or ideal towards which all the thoughts and feelings converge.

**According as God hath dealt to every man.**—The standard of action which each Christian ought to propose to himself should be in proportion to the amount of his faith as given to him by God. He who has the strongest faith may assume the highest standard, and offer himself for the highest offices, and so on down the scale. It is, however, essential that the estimate which each man puts upon the strength of his own faith, should be thoroughly single-minded and sincere, nor biassed by self-love. The Apostle assumes that this will be the case.

(4, 5) In the Church there must be a graduation, a hierarchy, a division of labour, every one doing that for which he is best fitted, just as in the body one member has one office assigned to it, and another another. All Christians, viewed collectively, make up one body, the unity of which is supplied by their relation to Christ. Viewed individuallv.

they stand to each other in the same sort of relation as the different limbs and organs of the natural body, as foot and hand, or hand and eye.

(4) **Members in one body.**—This figure of the body and the members is worked out more fully in 1 Cor. xii. 12—27.

(5) **In Christ.**—Christ is the unifying principle in the Church, just as the personality or will is the unifying principle in man.

**Every one.**—A somewhat peculiar phrase in the Greek, not found in this form in classical writers, meaning "as individuals."

**Members one of another.**—Strictly speaking, the members are called members in their relation to the body, and not in their relation to each other. We should say, rather, "fellow-members with one another."

(6) **Gifts differing according to the grace.**—The English loses a point here. The word translated "gifts" means specially "gifts of grace," grace standing here for the operation of the Spirit. Different kinds of grace, with different forms of expression, are given to different individuals, and they are to be cherished and used accordingly.

**Prophecy.**—The gift of prophecy is treated at length in 1 Cor. xiv. From the detailed description there given, we gather that it was a kind of powerful and inspired preaching which, unlike the gift of

us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; <sup>(7)</sup> or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

<sup>1</sup> Or, *imparteth.*  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *liberally.*

<sup>(8)</sup> or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth,<sup>1</sup> let him do it with simplicity;<sup>2</sup> he that ruleth, with diligence; he that

tongues, was strictly within the control of the person who possessed it. What precise relation this bore to the prediction of future events, mentioned in Acts xi. 27, 28, xxi. 10, 11, does not appear.

**According to the proportion of faith.**—It seems best to take this, not as having reference to the objective rule of faith or doctrine, the due proportions of which are to be preserved, but rather of the active faculty of faith present in him who prophesies. It would then be very nearly equivalent to the condition above—"according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." The prophet is to let his utterances be regulated strictly by the degree of faith of which he is conscious in himself. The inward inspiration and the outward deliverance must keep pace, and advance step by step together. Preaching in which this proportion is not observed is sure to become rhetorical and insincere.

<sup>(7)</sup> **Ministry.**—The word used is the technical term for the discharge of the office of deacon. The institution of this office is described in Acts vi. 1—5. Its object was to provide for the practical business as opposed to the spiritual ministrations of the Church. It included more especially the distribution of alms and the care of the poor, the sick, widows, &c. The functions of the diaconate are called "serving tables" (*i.e.*, in the literal sense, "providing food" for those who

needed it) in Acts vi. 2, 3, and "helps" in 1 Cor. xii. 28.

**Let us wait on . . .**—These words are supplied in the English, "Let us be absorbed in, devoted to, our ministering."

**He that teacheth.**—Comp. 1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. ix. 11; 1 Tim. v. 17. It would seem from the first of these passages ("thirdly teachers") that teaching was considered as a special office, though, not perhaps, confined to special persons.

<sup>(8)</sup> **He that exhorteth.**—It will be observed that in the apostolic writings, the one idea of "preaching" is divided into its several branches, "speaking with tongues," "prophesying" (which appears to have had reference to the more recalcitrant portions or relations of the faith), "teaching," "exhortation." This last form of address, corresponding perhaps rather to our word "encouragement," would be especially needed in the troubled circumstances of the early Church.

**He that giveth.**—In this and the following phrases the Apostle passes on from considering the definite functions of the ministry to those which were common to all members of the Church; "giveth" is therefore here to be taken in a wide sense.

**Simplicity.**—With singleness of motive, desiring only God's glory, and to benefit the object for which he gives, and with no secret thought of self-exaltation. He who gives "to be seen of men," or

sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. <sup>(9)</sup> Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in the love of the brethren.*

good. <sup>(10)</sup> Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; <sup>1</sup> in honour preferring one another; <sup>(11)</sup> not slothful in business;

with any selfish motive, exhausts thereby the merit of the act. (See Matt. vi. 2 *et seq.*)

**He that ruleth.**—He who holds any position of prominence or importance in the Church. The same word is applied to “presbyters” in 1 Thess. v. 12; 1 Tim. v. 17; and to heads of families in 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5, 12.

**He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.**—A happy combination, which is an instance of the Apostle’s fresh and genuine view of human nature. The kindness of charity is doubled when it is done in a cheerful and kindly way. There is a class of religious minds which is especially apt to forget this. Cheerfulness is not merely a matter of temperament, but to be cultivated as a duty.

<sup>(9-21)</sup> Now follow to the end of the chapter a number of general exhortations, not addressed to particular persons or classes, but to the Church at large.

<sup>(9)</sup> **Without dissimulation.**—The same Greek word is translated “unfeigned” in 2 Cor. vi. 6; 1 Tim. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 5; and “without hypocrisy” in Jas. iii. 17. This last is the most literal rendering, and brings out the resemblance to Matt. xxiii. 13, *et al.*

**Abhor that which is evil.** This clause seems linked on to the last through the word “without hypocrisy”: “Let your love arise

from genuine and deep emotion; let the basis of your character be an intense hatred of evil, and as strong an adhesion to good.” The Apostle does not here enter into the more difficult question as to how those in whom these emotions are naturally weak are to strengthen them. Perhaps no shorter advice is to be given than “become Christians.”

<sup>(10)</sup> **With brotherly love.**—Better translated as in the margin, *In love of the brethren* (fellow Christians) *be kindly affectioned.* The word for “kindly affectioned” is specially used of the family relation, and is, therefore, appropriately applied to the brotherhood of the Christian family.

**Preferring one another.**—Rather, perhaps, *anticipating one another.* The Christian is to take the initiative, and show honour or respect to others without waiting for them to show it to him.

<sup>(11)</sup> **In business.**—Rather, *in zeal*; the reference is to the spiritual and not to the practical life, as the English reader might suppose.

**Fervent.**—In the literal and etymological sense, *boiling or seething.* The temperament of the Christian is compared to water bubbling and boiling over the flame.

**In spirit**—*i.e.*, not “in the Holy Spirit,” but “in that part of you which is spirit.”

**Serving the Lord.**—Some of the extant Græco-Latin codices, and others known to Origen and

fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; <sup>(12)</sup> rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; <sup>(13)</sup> distributing

to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. <sup>(14)</sup> Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. <sup>(15)</sup> Rejoice with

Jerome, read here by a slight change of vowels "serving the time"; no doubt wrongly, though the expression might be compared with 1 Cor. vii. 29; Eph. v. 16, *et al.*

<sup>(12)</sup> **In hope.**—The Christian's hope, of which we have had more in chap. viii. 20—25.

**Patient in tribulation.**—This virtue was, of course, specially needed in the troublous times through which the Church was passing. So, again, in the next verse, the "hospitality" of which the Apostle speaks is something more than the ordinary entertainment of friends. The reference is to a state of things in which the Christian was liable to be persecuted and driven from city to city, and often compelled to seek for shelter with those who held the same faith as himself.

<sup>(13)</sup> **Distributing to the necessity of saints.**—By "saints" is here meant simply "Christians." So in Eph. i. 1, we find the salutation addressed to the "saints which are at Ephesus." (Comp. Acts ix. 13; xxvi. 10.) The reference is to the well-known poverty of the early Christian communities.

**Necessity.**—Some of the Græco-Latin manuscripts and fathers here read, *memories*, or *commemorations*, by a slight change of letters, "taking part in the commemoration of the saints," as if the allusion was to the later ecclesiastical usage of holding festivals in honour of martyrs. The best manu-

scripts are wonderfully free from corruptions of this kind, and even inferior manuscripts admit them to a much smaller extent than might have been expected. Other examples would be the insertion of the phrase "and fasting" in Mark ix. 29, and the addition of the doxology to the Lord's prayer in Matt. vi. 13.

<sup>(14)</sup> **Bless them which persecute you.**—Apparently with allusion to Matt. v. 44. It was probably just about the time that St. Paul was writing this Epistle, or at most a year or two later, that the series of compositions which ultimately took the shape of our present Gospels began. It is not, however, necessary to suppose that St. Paul had actually seen one of these. The record of our Lord's teaching was no doubt at first preserved and circulated in the Church orally, and it would be in this form that St. Paul first became acquainted with the precept to which he here seems to allude. There is, perhaps, another reference to the Sermon on the Mount in 1 Cor. vii. 10. Such references occur (as we should expect) more frequently in the Epistle of St. James.

<sup>(15)</sup> **Rejoice with them that do rejoice.**—The feeling of sympathy is perhaps more under the control of the will than might be supposed. It becomes so, however, not so much by isolated efforts as by a conscious direction given to the whole life. The injunction in this verse is one of those that have

them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

<sup>(16)</sup> *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.<sup>1</sup> Be not wise in your own

<sup>1</sup> Or, be contented with mean things.

conceits. <sup>(17)</sup> Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. <sup>(18)</sup> If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. <sup>(19)</sup> Dearly

been perhaps most fully carried out in modern times. It has entered into the social code, and belongs as much to the gentleman as the Christian. The danger, therefore, is that the expression of sympathy should be unreal and insincere. This will be prevented by the presence of the Christian motive.

<sup>(16)</sup> **Be of the same mind . . .**—In every Christian community there should be that harmony which proceeds from a common object, common hopes, common desires.

**Condescend to men of low estate.**—Probably, on the whole, rightly translated in our version; “Let yourselves be carried on in the stream with those who are beneath yourselves in rank and station; mix with them freely; be ready to lend them a helping hand if ever they need, and do this in a simple and kindly way; do not let any social assumptions keep you at a distance.” “Accommodate yourselves,” or “condescend”—of course without any conscious idea or appearance of condescension. Another rendering would be “condescend to lowly things,” in which case the sense would be nearly equivalent to that of Keble’s well-known and beautiful lines—

“The trivial round, the common task,  
Will furnish all we need to ask;  
Room to deny ourselves, a road  
To bring us daily nearer God.”

The scholar will observe that in this way of taking the passage, the Greek word for “condescend” (*sunapagomenoi*) has to be a little forced, or at least is not so expressive and natural as in the other. On the other hand, in the Epistles of a writer like St. Paul, it does not by any means follow that because the word for “high” is neuter, that for “low estate” must be neuter too.

**Be not wise in your own conceits.**—Comp. chap. xi. 25, and Prov. iii. 7. Humility is necessary to the Christian not only in his dealings with others, but also to keep his mind open and teachable. He sees his errors, and learns from them.

<sup>(17)</sup> **Provide things honest . . .**—Let your purposes be such that all men shall recognise their complete integrity. Do not engage in enterprises of a doubtful character, that might bring not only yourselves but the Christian body into ill repute. (Comp. Matt. v. 14—16; 2 Cor. viii. 21.)

<sup>(18)</sup> The Christian can only be responsible for himself. So far as he is concerned, he is to do his best to maintain peace. The history of St. Paul himself, which is one of almost constant conflict, shows that this would not always be possible.

<sup>(19)</sup> **Give place unto wrath.**—It seems best to understand this

beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath : for it is written, Vengeance is mine ;<sup>a</sup> I will repay, saith the Lord. <sup>(20)</sup> Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him ;<sup>b</sup> if he thirst, give him drink : for in so doing thou shalt heap

<sup>a</sup> Deut.  
32. 35.

A. D. 58.

<sup>b</sup> Prov.  
25. 21.

coals of fire on his head.  
<sup>(21)</sup> Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

### CHAPTER XIII. —

<sup>(1)</sup> Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but

of "the wrath of God" (indicated in the Greek, here as elsewhere, by the use of the article). Stand aside yourself as a mere spectator, and let the wrath of God have free course to accomplish itself as He shall think well. The other most plausible interpretation would be, "Give room to the wrath of your adversary ; let it spend itself ; resist not evil," &c., as in Matt. v. 39. The sense, "Allow time for your own anger to cool," cannot be got out of the Greek. The view first stated is to be preferred.

**Vengeance is mine ; I will repay.**—The form of this quotation, which differs both from the LXX. and from the Hebrew, is precisely similar to that in Heb. x. 30. This should be noted as a point of resemblance between St. Paul and the author of that Epistle, but its strength as an argument for the identity of the two is much diminished by the fact that other marked coincidences are found in the literature of this age, which seem to point to the conclusion that forms of text were current (perhaps confined to a few familiar quotations) of which no direct representations have come down to us.

<sup>(20)</sup> **Thou shalt heap coals of fire.**—Comp. Ps. xviii. 12, 13,

14, where the phrase "coals of fire" is used of the divine vengeance. So here, but in a strictly metaphorical sense, it means, "Thou shalt take the best and most summary vengeance upon him." There may be the underlying idea of awakening in the adversary the pangs of shame and remorse.

<sup>(21)</sup> **Be not overcome of evil, but . . .**—A fine sentiment. The infliction of vengeance is not a sign of strength, but of weakness. To repress the desire for revenge is to gain a victory over self, which is not only nobler in itself, but will also be much more effectual. It will disarm the enemy, and turn him into a friend.

### XIII.

<sup>(1-7)</sup> **Subject unto the higher powers.**—Looking impartially at the passage which follows, it would seem at first sight—and perhaps not only at first sight—that the Apostle distinctly preaches two doctrines, both of which are now discredited, the doctrines of divine right and of passive obedience. The duty of obedience is grounded upon the fact that the power wielded by the magistrate is derived from God, and that duty itself is stated without qualification.

What are we to understand by this? Are we to say, for instance, that Hampden was wrong in refusing the payment of ship-money? Or if he was not wrong—and the verdict of mankind has generally justified his act—what are we to think of the language that is here used by St. Paul?

1. In the first place it should be noticed that though the duty of obedience is here stated without qualification, still the existence of qualifications to it is not therefore denied or excluded. Tribute is to be paid to whom tribute is due. But this still leaves the question open, whether in any particular case tribute is rightfully due or not. There may possibly be a conflict of rights and duties, and the lower may have to yield to the higher. All that is illegal is that, *primâ facie*, the magistrate can claim the obedience of the subject. But supposing the magistrate calls upon the subject to do that which some other authority co-ordinate with that of the magistrate forbids—supposing, for instance, as in the case of Hampden, under a constitutional monarchy, the king commands one thing, and the Parliament another—there is clearly a conflict of obligations, and the decision which accepts the one obligation is not necessarily wrong because it ignores the other. There will always be a certain debateable ground within which opposite duties will seem to clash, and where general principles are no longer of any avail. Here the individual conscience must assume the responsibility of deciding which to obey.

We are not called upon to enter into the casuistry of the subject. It may only be well to add one caution. Any such seemingly direct

collision of duties must be at the very lightest a most serious and difficult matter; and though the burden of deciding falls ultimately on the individual, still he must be careful to remember that his particular judgment is subject to that fallibility to which all individual judgments are liable. Where the precept is appealed to, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's," one man will say that the particular point in question comes under the first head, another that it comes under the second. In either case a great responsibility is assumed, and it is especially desirable that the judgment of the individual should be fortified by the consent of others, if possible by the suffrages of the majority of those who are in a position to judge. It is one thing to say that a conflict of duties may arise, and that the higher is to be obeyed. It is another thing to say that in a certain given case such conflict has arisen, and that the duty which commends itself to the individual is the higher of the two. Whatever the decision arrived at, it ought not to be made in a spirit of levity, nor ought it to be supposed that the dictum of the single conscience bears anything like the same validity as the universal principles of morals. And there will be the further drawback, that in such cases the individual usually acts as judge in his own cause, where his conscience is pretty sure to be biassed. There is therefore a very strong *onus probandi* thrown upon the person who takes upon himself to overrule what is in itself a clear obligation.

2. But the question of political obedience cannot be rightly considered without taking into account

the relation of Christianity to political life generally, neither can this isolated passage in an Epistle of St. Paul's be considered apart from other teaching upon the same subjects in the rest of the New Testament. Very similar language, it will be remembered, is found in 1 Pet. ii. 13—17. And going back to the fountain-head of Christian doctrine, we find, indeed, no express statements, but several significant facts and some important intimations. When He was arrested by the civil power, and unjustly tried and condemned, our Lord made no resistance. Not only so, but when resistance was made on His behalf, He rebuked the disciple who had drawn the sword for Him. When the didrachma was demanded of Him, which it was customary for the Jew to pay towards the repair and maintenance of the Temple, He, though as Lord of the Temple He claimed exemption, nevertheless, for fear of putting a stumbling-block in the way of others, supplied the sum required by a miracle. On another occasion, when a question was asked as to the legitimacy of the Roman tribute, He replied in words already quoted, "Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's." And lastly, when appeal was made to Him to settle a disputed inheritance, He refused, saying to His petitioner, "Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?" Here we have really the key to the whole question. So far as His practice was concerned, our Lord pursued a course of simple obedience; into the theory of political or civil obligation He absolutely refused to enter. The answer, "Render to Cæsar," &c., left matters precisely as they stood, for the real

question was, "What was Cæsar's, and what was not?" The ambiguity of the reply was intended. It was practically a refusal to reply at all.

The significance of this comes out very strikingly when it is contrasted with the state of feeling and opinion current among the Jews at the same time. With them politics and religion were intimately blended. They carried into the former sphere the fanaticism natural to the latter. Their religious hopes took a political form. The dominion of the Messiah was to be not a spiritual, but a literal dominion, in which they, as a people, were to share.

Clearly, the relations which our Lord assumed towards politics had especial reference to this attitude of the Jews. He wished to disabuse His disciples once and for all of this fatal confusion of two spheres in themselves so distinct. He wished to purify and to spiritualise their conception of the "Kingdom of Heaven," which He came to found. And, lastly, He finally submitted to the civil power, as the instrument divinely employed to inflict upon Him those sufferings which were to be the cause of our redemption.

*Vicit patiendo.*

It would seem as if by some intuitive perception the disciples entered into the intention of their Master. Towards the civil power they maintained an attitude of absolute submission. They refused to avail themselves of the elements of fanaticism which existed wherever there were Jews, and at the head of which they might easily have placed themselves. Instead of this, they chose to suffer and die, and their sufferings did what force could never have done—they leavened and Christianised the world.



3. It is an expression of this deliberate policy (if by that name it may be called) which we find in these first seven verses of chap. xiii. At the same time, the Apostle may very well have had a special as well as a general object. The Church at Rome was largely composed of Jews, and these would naturally be imbued with the fanatical spirit of their countrymen. The very mention of the Messiah would tend to fan their smouldering passions into flame. The Apostle would be aware of this. His informants at Rome may have told him of excitement prevailing among the Jewish portion of the community. His experience in Palestine would tell him to what unscrupulous acts of violence this might lead. And he forestalls the danger by an authoritative and reasoned description of the attitude which the Christian ought to assume.

It does not necessarily follow that precisely the same attitude is incumbent upon the Christian now. In this section of Christian teaching there was something that was temporary and local, and that had reference to conditions that have now passed away. And yet as a *general* principle, the injunctions of the Apostle entirely hold good. The exceptions to this principle are few and far between. And he who would assert the existence of such an exception must count the cost well beforehand.

(1) **Every soul.**—A Hebraism for "every person," though at the same time here, as in chap. ii. 9, there is a slight stress upon the fact that man is a conscious and intelligent being, capable of moral relations, and it is especially with reference to these relations that the phrase is used.

**Higher powers.**—Authorities, *i.e.*, magistrates, the abstract for the concrete.

**There is no power.**—It is strange that the Apostle seems to go almost out of his way to include even usurped and tyrannical power. He is, however, evidently speaking of the magistracy in its abstract or ideal form. It is the magistrate *quâ* magistrate, not *quâ* just or unjust magistrate. In this sense, not only is the human system of society a part of the divinely-appointed order of things, but it partakes more especially in the divine attributes, inasmuch as its object is to reward virtue and to punish vice. It discharges the same functions that God Himself discharges, though in a lower scale and degree. Hence Bishop Butler feels himself justified in taking the principles which regulate civil society as an analogy for those which will regulate the ultimate divine disposition of things. "It is necessary to the very being of society that vices destructive of it should be punished as being so—the vices of falsehood, injustice, cruelty—which punishment, therefore, is as natural as society; and so is an instance of a kind of moral government, naturally established, and actually taking place. And, since the certain natural course of things is the conduct of Providence or the government of God, though carried on by the instrumentality of men, the observation here made amounts to this, that mankind find themselves placed by Him in such circumstances as that they are unavoidably accountable for their behaviour, and are often punished and sometimes rewarded under His government in the view of their being mischievous or eminently beneficial to society." In other

of God : the powers that be are ordained<sup>1</sup> of God. <sup>1</sup> Or, *ordered.*  
 (2) Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God : and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. (3) For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou

then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same : (4) for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid ; for he beareth not the sword in vain : for he is the minister of God,

words, the machinery of civil society is one of the chief and most conspicuous instruments by which God carries out His own moral government of mankind in this present existence. It may be said to be more distinctly and peculiarly derived from Him than other parts of the order of nature, inasmuch as it is the channel used to convey His moral approbation, or the reverse.

**The powers that be.**—Those that we see existing all around us.

(2) **Damnation.**—*Condemnation*—*i.e.*, the sentence passed upon him by the judge or magistrate as God's representative.

(3) **To good works.**—Literally, *to the good work*, as if it were personified. Human law can only take account of that which is actually done, not of the intention.

In this and the following verse it is clearly the ideal aspect of the magistracy that the Apostle has in view. So Bishop Butler, in the paragraph next to that just quoted, continues : " If it be objected that good actions, and such as are beneficial to society, are often punished, as in the case of persecution and in other cases, and that ill and mischievous actions are often rewarded, it may be answered distinctly: first, that this is in no sort necessary,

and consequently not natural, in the sense in which it is necessary and therefore natural, that ill or mischievous actions should be punished ; and in the next place, that good actions are never punished considered as beneficial to society, nor ill actions rewarded under the view of their being hurtful to it. So that it stands good . . . that the Author of Nature has as truly directed that vicious actions, considered as mischievous to society, should be punished, and put mankind under a necessity of punishing them, as He has directed and necessitated us to preserve our lives by food." Occasional failures of justice on the part of the executive do not make the strict administration of justice any the less its proper duty and office.

(4) **The sword.**—Not apparently the dagger worn by the Roman emperors, but, in a strict sense, "the sword." "To bear the sword" seems to be a recognised Greek phrase to express the power of the magistrates. It was carried before them in processions, and on other important occasions.

It is clear from this passage that capital punishment is sanctioned by Scripture. At the same time its abolition is not excluded, as the

a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. <sup>(5)</sup> Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. <sup>(6)</sup> For for this cause pay *ye* tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending con-

tinually upon this very thing. <sup>(7)</sup> Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. <sup>(8)</sup> Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he

abolition of slavery was not excluded, if the gradual development of Christian principle should seem to demand it. Whether or not capital punishment ought to be abolished, is a question for jurists, publicists, and statesmen. The theologian, as such, has no decision to give either way.

<sup>(5)</sup> It follows, from this divine authority and title enjoyed by the magistrate, that he ought to be obeyed, not only from fear of the punishment that he is empowered to inflict, but also from the respect due to legitimate power. Of this respect conscience is the natural guardian.

<sup>(6)</sup> **Ministers.**—The words thus translated here and in verse 4 are not the same, but both are words commonly used in the New Testament of a sacred office; that in verse 4 is the original of our word "deacon," that used in this verse is (in another form) the original of our word "liturgy." The choice of such terms harmonises with the conception which is presented in this chapter of the divine origin and character of the state system.

<sup>(7)</sup> **Tribute.**—Rather, *taxes*—*i.e.*, taxes upon person or property as opposed to the customs levied

upon goods. These were collected by different officers.

**Fear . . . honour.**—There would be one class of officers who could claim respect for their official position, though they had no special means of enforcing it. Another class would have the power of inflicting punishment. This last would necessarily be feared, looked upon with a certain awe and reverence, as well as honoured.

<sup>(8)</sup> **Owe no man anything.**—The word for "owe" in this verse corresponds to that for "dues" in the last. The transition of the thought is something of this kind. When you have paid all your other debts, taxes, and customs, and reverence, and whatever else you may owe; there will still be one debt unpaid—the universal debt of love. Love must still remain the root and spring of all your actions. No other law is needed besides.

**Another.**—Literally, *the other*—that is to say, his neighbour, the person with whom in any given instance he has to deal.

We naturally compare with this passage Matt. xxii. 39, 40; Gal. v. 14; Jas. ii. 8. It shows how thoroughly the spirit of the Founder of Christianity descended upon His followers, that the same teaching should appear with equal promi-

that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. <sup>(9)</sup> For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment,

it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. <sup>(10)</sup> Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law. <sup>(11)</sup> And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to

nence in such opposite quarters. The focussing, as it were, of all morality in this brief compass is one of the great gifts of Christianity to the world. No doubt similar sayings existed before, and that by our Lord Himself was quoted from the Old Testament, but there it was in effect overlaid with ceremonial rules and regulations, and in other moralists it was put forward rather as a philosophical theorem than as a practical basis of morals. In Christianity it is taken as the lever which is to move the world; nor is it possible to find for human life, amid all the intricate mazes of conduct, any other principle that should be at once as simple, as powerful, and as profound.

<sup>(9)</sup> **Thou shalt not commit adultery.**—It will be seen that in this arrangement the seventh commandment precedes the sixth. The same arrangement is found in Mark x. 19, Luke xviii. 20, and Jas. ii. 11. On the other hand, the ordinary arrangement appears in Matt. xix. 18. There can be no doubt that St. Paul followed an order that was found in the copies of the LXX. that he was in the habit of using. The famous *Codex Vaticanus* still presents the same order in Deut. v. 17. In Ex. xx. 13—15 it places the seventh com-

mandment first, then the eighth, then the sixth.

<sup>(10)</sup> **Fulfilling of the law.**—The form of the Greek word implies not only that love helps a man to fulfil the law, but that in the fact of the presence of love in his heart the law is actually fulfilled.

The principle here stated is beautifully worked out in 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7.

<sup>(11—14)</sup> The Apostle now gives a reason for enforcing this and other duties upon his readers. The end of the world itself is near.

St. Paul, like the other Apostles (comp. 1 Pet. iv. 7; Rev. xxii. 20, *et al.*), certainly believed that the *Parusia*, or Second Coming of Christ, was near at hand. This was in strict accordance with Mark xiii. 32, and resulted naturally from the peculiar form of the Jewish Messianic expectation. A great shock had been given to the disciples by the crucifixion of Him whom they thought to be the Messiah, and though they began to recover from this as soon as they were convinced of His resurrection, they yet could not reconcile themselves to it entirely. The humiliation of the cross was still a stumbling-block to them *taken alone*, but, falling back upon another portion of their beliefs,

awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

<sup>(12)</sup> The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put

<sup>1</sup> Or, decently.

on the armour of light.

<sup>(13)</sup> Let us walk honestly,<sup>1</sup> as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. <sup>(14)</sup> But put ye

they looked to see it supplemented, and its shameful side cancelled, by a second coming "in power and great glory." Their previous expectations, vague as they were, led them to regard this as part of the one manifestation of the Messiah, and they did not expect to see a long interval of time interposed.

<sup>(11)</sup> **And that, knowing the time.**—And that there is all the more urgent motive for you to do—this law of love it is the more incumbent on you to practise—because you know what a critical moment it is in which you are living. The word for "time" is different from that used in the next clause, and means a definite and critical season.

**Awake out of sleep.**—A striking metaphor. The true, the genuine Christian life is like the state of a man whose eyes are open and whose faculties are all alert and vigorous. All besides, whatever it be, the state of heathenism or of imperfect and lukewarm Christianity, is like the torpor of sleep.

**Our salvation.**—That blissful participation in His kingdom which the Messiah at His Second Coming should inaugurate for His people. (Comp. chap. viii. 19, 23, "the manifestation of the sons of God," "the redemption of the body;")

Luke xxi. 28, "your redemption draweth nigh.")

**When we believed.**—When we first became Christians. Every hour brings the expected end nearer.

<sup>(12)</sup> **The night.**—The time during which the Messiah is absent from His people is compared to night. He is the sun, whose coming converts it to day.

It is rather strange that here, as in 1 Thess. v. 8, the metaphor of night and day should suggest that of "armour." The warfare in which the Christian is engaged is between the powers of light and of darkness. (Comp. Eph. vi. 12.) And the use of the word "putting off" (stripping oneself as of clothing) supplies a link between the two ideas by suggesting the putting on of a different kind of clothing, the Christian panoply.

<sup>(13)</sup> **Honestly.**—*Decorously, becomingly*, as men do when their actions are seen.

It is interesting to know that this verse, happening to catch the eye of St. Augustine, had a great effect in leading to his baptism and change of life.

<sup>(14)</sup> **Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.**—A continuation of the metaphor introduced in verse 12. So invest and identify yourselves with the spirit of Christ as to reproduce it in your outward walk and conduct.

on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

A.D. 58.

1 Or, not to judge his doubtful thoughts.

CHAPTER XIV.—  
 (1) Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.<sup>1</sup>

**Make not provision for the flesh.**—Take no thought for the flesh, so as to supply a stimulus to its lusts. A life of luxury and self-indulgence is apt to excite those fleshly impulses which the Christian should try rather to mortify. He therefore warns his readers not to give their thoughts to such things.

#### XIV.

There appears to have been a party in the Church at Rome which had adopted certain ascetic practices over and above the common rule of Christianity. We gather that they abstained altogether from flesh and wine, and that they (or possibly some other persons in the same church) also made a point of observing certain days with peculiar sanctity. When we ask what was the origin and affinities of this party, the answer is not quite obvious. It can hardly have been a branch of the Judaising party, such as it was met with in the churches of Galatia, for then more stress would have been laid on the duty of circumcision, and their antagonism to St. Paul would probably have been more pronounced. Besides, if they had taken their stand upon the law of Moses, that law only forbade certain meats and drinks, and not all flesh and wine. A more plausible theory would be that which connects the party in question with the scruples mentioned in 1 Cor. viii. 4—13. The avoidance of meat offered to idols

might easily be extended so as to cover all meat whatsoever. It would be difficult to ensure the complete absence of such pollution as was involved in the idol sacrifices, and a scrupulous person may have thought that the only safe measure was a total abstinence from animal food. And in like manner, as regards wine, which was liable to be used in heathen libations. The objection to this view is, that there is no allusion to the idol sacrifices, and as the Apostle enters into the subject so minutely in 1 Cor. viii., he might naturally be expected not to pass it over without some allusion here. It seems best, therefore, to regard the practices referred to in the Roman Church as a natural development of ascetic or purist elements within the Church itself. These would be supplied by those who had come over to Christianity from the sect of the Essenes, with the tenets of which sect the allusions in this chapter would quite sufficiently agree. It would appear to have been a further development of the same doctrines which, at a later date, vexed the Church at Colossæ. At Rome, the tendency had hitherto been slight and unaggressive, and the Apostle therefore deals with it mildly; at Colossæ it had become more arrogant and intolerant, and therefore it is rebuked sharply. (See Col. ii. 16—23.)

The whole of this chapter affords a most striking instance of the practical wisdom of St. Paul. It is

(2) For one believeth that he may eat all things : another, who is weak, eateth herbs. (3) Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not ; and

let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth : for God hath received him. (4) Who art thou that judgest another man's servant ? to his own master

a *locus classicus* on the two subjects, toleration and asceticism.

(1) **Weak in the faith . . .**—The presence of a single strong master-motive is apt to silence petty scruples. Where the "eye is single" where all the powers and faculties of the man are concentrated upon one object, and that object the highest that can engage human thought or affection—there will naturally be a certain largeness of view. The opposite of this is to be "weak in the faith." There may be a sincere desire to lead a religious life, and yet the mind is taken up with petty details, each of which is painfully judged by itself, and not by reference to a central principle.

**Receive ye.**—Take to yourselves, stretch out the hand of friendship to him.

**Doubtful disputations.**—The marginal rendering is more exact, "to judge his doubtful thoughts," or "to criticise his scruples." The strong are to deal tenderly with the weak, and not engage them in casuistical discussions.

(2) **Believeth that he may . . .**—Rather, perhaps, *hath confidence to eat all things*. His faith is strong enough to prevent his conscience from becoming uneasy.

(3) **Let not him that eateth.** The two classes of men are exposed to two opposite faults. The strong

despise the weak ; the weak judge the strong. In the one case there is contempt for what is thought to be narrowness and pedantry, in the other case censorious judgments are passed on what is regarded as levity and irreligion. Human nature alters very little.

**God hath received him.**—Strictly, *received him*, admitted him into His Church when he was baptised, and so took him for His own.

(4) **Who art thou ?**—This is addressed to the weak. The Apostle indignantly challenges his right to judge. That right belongs to another tribunal, before which the conduct of the stronger Christian will not be condemned but approved and upheld.

**He standeth or falleth.**—It seems most in accordance with what precedes to take this of judicial condemnation or approval from the Master whom he serves — *i.e.*, Christ.

**Holden up.**—The same word as that in the clause following, and similar to that in the clause preceding—"Made to stand."

**God is able to make him stand.**—The true reading here is "the Lord" — *i.e.*, Christ ; the word is the same as "his Master" above. "Make him stand" seems to be still judicial. "Secure his acquittal," but with reference to his previous course of conduct on which that acquittal is grounded. The trial is not necessarily reserved

he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. <sup>(5)</sup> One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded <sup>1</sup> in his own mind. <sup>(6)</sup> He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth

<sup>1</sup> Or, fully assured.

to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. <sup>(7)</sup> For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself <sup>(8)</sup> For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. <sup>(9)</sup> For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived,

for the last day, but is rather the judgment which Christ may be supposed at any moment to pass upon His servants. If they can sustain this judgment, it is only because His grace has enabled them so to act as not to be condemned by it.

<sup>(5)</sup> **One man esteemeth.**—For the observance of days and seasons, compare Gal. iv. 10; Col. ii. 16. From these passages, taken together, it is clear that the observance of special days has no absolute sanction, but is purely a question of religious expediency. That, however, is sufficient ground on which to rest it, and experience seems in favour of some such system as that adopted by our own Church.

<sup>(6)</sup> **Regardeth.**—Much as we might say, "he who minds the day," or directs his thoughts and feelings to it.

**He that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.**—This clause is omitted by the best MSS. and editors.

**For he giveth God thanks.**

—By the saying of grace at meat, the meal, whatever it may be, is consecrated to God, and he who partakes of it shows that he does so in no irreverent spirit.

<sup>(7-9)</sup> The larger principle holds good, and therefore much more the smaller. It is not only his food that the Christian consecrates to God (or rather, immediately, to Christ, and through Christ to God), but his whole life to its very last moments.

<sup>(7)</sup> **Dieth to himself.**—Even in the act of death the Christian is conscious of his relation to Christ; he dies "*in the Lord*" (Rev. xiv. 13).

<sup>(9)</sup> **And rose, and revived.**—For these words the best MSS. substitute simply "and lived." The Received text is a gloss upon this. It was through the resurrection that Christ was finally enthroned at His Father's right hand, and



that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. <sup>(10)</sup> But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>(11)</sup> For it is written, *As I live,*<sup>b</sup> saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and

<sup>a</sup> 2 Cor. 5. 10.

<sup>b</sup> Isa. 45. 23.

every tongue shall confess to God. <sup>(12)</sup> So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. <sup>(13)</sup> Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way. <sup>(14)</sup> I know, and am persuaded

that universal dominion was given to Him.

<sup>(10-12)</sup> Such being our relations to Christ, and such the judgment to which we look forward, there is no room for any human judgment. Censoriousness is thus condemned.

**<sup>(10)</sup> Judgment seat of Christ.**

—The true reading is, *of God*.

<sup>(11)</sup> **As I live.**—The original has, "I have sworn by Myself," for which St. Paul, quoting from memory, substitutes another common Hebrew formula—"As I live," or, "by my life."

**Shall confess . . .**—The Greek word is capable of two renderings—"confess" and "praise." Most commentators prefer the latter, but it is not quite clear that the English version is wrong. That the word can bear this meaning is, especially in view of Jas. v. 16, unquestionable, and the sense seems to agree better with the next verse.

<sup>(13)</sup> **Judge this rather.**—The word "judge" forms the connecting-link between what follows and what has gone before. If any

judgment is to be formed at all, let it be rather as a principle to guide our own action, and not in the shape of a criticism upon others. This principle, in the case of those who are themselves liberal and large-minded, should be not to put temptation in the way of their weaker brethren.

**Stumblingblock or an occasion to fall.**—The same words that occur in chap. ix. 33. That translated "occasion to fall," is the origin of our word "scandal." It is properly a trap or snare. Both the idea and the word are found in Matt. xviii. 6 (=Mark ix. 42), where it is disguised by the translation "offend," in the sense of "cause to stumble." The same translation appears frequently elsewhere. One of the special characteristics of Christianity is its tenderness for the weak.

<sup>(14)</sup> **I know, and am persuaded.**—The Apostle clearly identifies himself with the less scrupulous party. For one of his intense penetration and grasp on the realities of things, any other position was impossible. But while these essential features in the Apostle's character find the noblest

by the Lord Jesus, that *there is nothing unclean*<sup>1</sup> of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean,<sup>2</sup> to him *it is unclean.* <sup>(15)</sup> But if thy brother be grieved with *thy*

<sup>1</sup> Gr. common.  
<sup>2</sup> Gr. according to charity.  
<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 8. 11.  
<sup>4</sup> Gr. common.

meat, now walkest thou not charitably.<sup>3</sup> Destroy not him with thy meat,<sup>4</sup> for whom Christ died. <sup>(16)</sup> Let not then your good be evil spoken of: <sup>(17)</sup> for the kingdom of God is not

expression, we cannot but note his attitude of gentle forbearance towards those whose faith is less deep and less robust than his own. This comes out especially in that pathetic and pregnant appeal, "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died."

**By the Lord Jesus.**—Rather, *in the Lord Jesus.* A solemn form of asseveration. The Apostle is speaking from the very depths of his Christian consciousness as one who knows that he has himself put on the Spirit of Christ.

**To him that esteemeth.**—This would mean, in philosophical language, that the quality of uncleanness was not an objective property in the thing itself, but a subjective quality in the mind of the person regarding it as such. Still, this subjective quality is for the individual a real one, and should be treated as real. (Comp. Mark vii. 15.)

<sup>(15)</sup> **But.**—The true reading is undoubtedly *For*, the connection of which is somewhat difficult to trace. It appears to leap over verse 14, and go back to verse 13. We may suppose that the substance of this verse recurs to the Apostle's mind after the parenthetical statement just inserted, and though he does not repeat it in words, he connects on to it the sequence of his thought. "The Christian should not put a

stumbling-block in his brother's way. Not, indeed, that there is anything unclean in itself, but relatively to the person who so regards it, it is unclean. [Therefore the Christian should be careful as to what he does.] For to cause distress to another about a mere matter of food is to be uncharitable."

Two stages are noted in the words "grieved" and "destroy." When one man sees another do that which his own conscience condemns, it causes him pain, but when he is further led on from this to do *himself* what his conscience condemns, he is in danger of a worse fate; he is morally ruined and undone. The work of redemption that Christ has wrought for him is cancelled, and all that great and beneficent scheme is hindered of its operation by an act of thoughtlessness or want of consideration on the part of a fellow Christian.

**With thy meat.**—Rather, *because of meat*, on a mere question of meat.

<sup>(16)</sup> **Your good.**—That blessing of Christian liberty which you enjoy. This is not to be used so as to give rise to reproaches and recriminations which will make a bad impression on the outside world.

<sup>(17)</sup> **Meat and drink.**—Strictly, *eating and drinking.*

**Righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.**

meat and drink ; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

<sup>(18)</sup> For he that in these

things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. <sup>(19)</sup> Let us therefore follow after the

—By “righteousness and peace” is not here meant imputed righteousness or justification and reconciliation with God, but rather the moral condition of righteousness in the Christian himself, and concord with his fellow-men. These are crowned in the confirmed Christian by that feeling of subdued and chastened exultation which is wrought in him by the presence in his heart, or constant influence, of the Holy Spirit.

It is remarkable how, with all the wide difference in terminology between the writings of St. Paul and the Gospels, they yet come round to the very same point. The “kingdom of God,” as here described, is exactly what we should gather from the fuller and more detailed sayings of our Lord. “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man ;” “The kingdom of God is within you ;” “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation ;” “If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light ;” “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness ;” “Blessed are the peacemakers ;” “Rejoice and be exceeding glad.”

It has not been beyond the power of heathen or even Christian philosophers, such, *e.g.*, as Marcus Aurelius, to arrive at the conception of righteousness and peaceableness as duties to be observed and striven after. The peculiarity of Christianity consists in the unity which it gives to these attributes as naturally

flowing from a spring of deep religious emotion, and from the finish and perfection which it adds to them by the introduction of that third term, “joy in the Holy Ghost.” Many individuals have shown, and still show, with greater or less approximation, what the Christian type should be, but the great and only perfect Exemplar is Jesus Himself ; and that less, perhaps, in the later portion of His career, when He was fulfilling that other side of His mission, to “bear the sins of many” as the Saviour of mankind, than in the earlier untroubled phase which finds expression in the Sermon on the Mount. This is in closest contact with the normal life of men.

<sup>(18)</sup> In these things.—The more correct reading is, *in this (way)*. The meaning, however, is the same.

**Serveth Christ.**—Here the principle of unity which holds together different sides and manifestations of the Christian character is indicated.

**Approved of men.**—So that he will not be evil “spoken of.” as the uncompromising legalist or anti-legalist is apt to be.

<sup>(19)</sup> Let us therefore follow.—The best MSS. have the indicative mood, “so then we follow.” There is, however, some good support for the Received text, especially in the patristic quotations and versions ; and mistakes of this kind were peculiarly liable to be made.

**Edify.**—The word has unfortunately lost its freshness of meaning,

things which make for peace, and things where-with one may edify another.

<sup>(20)</sup> For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; <sup>a</sup> but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

<sup>b</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 8.  
15.

<sup>a</sup> Tit. 1.  
15.

<sup>(21)</sup> *It is* good neither to eat flesh, <sup>b</sup> nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* where-by thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. <sup>(22)</sup> *Hast thou faith?* have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that

but we have no other single equivalent for it in English. It is the "upbuilding," or mutual help and assistance in the spiritual life which Christians receive from their intercourse with each other.

<sup>(20)</sup> **Destroy not.**—A different word from that employed in verse 15. It is the correlative and opposite of "edify," and means to "unbuild" or "pull down."

**The work of God.**—The fabric which the grace of God has begun, and which the edification of Christians by each other may help to raise in the soul; the gradual formation of a truly Christian character, both spiritual and moral.

**For that man who eateth with offence.**—It seems, on the whole, best (though the other view is taken) to refer the "eating" here to the strong in faith, and the "offence" to that which his eating causes to the weaker brethren. The force of the preposition is that his eating is *attended* with offence.

<sup>(21)</sup> **It is good neither to eat flesh.**—These direct, clear, incisive sentences are as characteristic of the style of the Apostle (when he is dealing with moral questions of present urgency, and not with the abstract problems of theology) as the generous impulse which prompts them is of his heart.

**Any thing**—*i.e.*, to do *anything*; all three words have to be supplied.

**Or is offended, or is made weak.**—There is a remarkable division of authority for the omission or retention of these words, the Sinaitic and Alexandrine MSS. with the Paris rescript being on the one side, and the Vatican with the Græco-Latin Codices, on the other; and the versions pretty nearly divided. Here internal evidence comes in, and decides us to omit the words as most probably a gloss.

<sup>(22)</sup> **Hast thou faith?**—It is with some reluctance that in deference to the union of the four best MSS. we give up the Received text here, and substitute (by the insertion of the relative) "The faith which thou hast, have to thyself before God," *i.e.*, reserve the exhibition of it to the privacy of your own direct communion with God, and do not display it ostentatiously in public where it may do harm. "It is indeed"—the Apostle continues—"a happy thing to have no self-condemnatory scruples of conscience, but, on the other hand, it is fatal to have scruples and to disregard them."

**In that thing which he alloweth.**—In the acts which he permits himself. He is a happy man who can eat what he pleases, and drink what he pleases, without

condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. <sup>(23)</sup> And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not

A.D. 58.

of faith : for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

## CHAPTER XV.—

<sup>(1)</sup> We then that are strong

any qualms of conscience to condemn him while he does so.

<sup>(23)</sup> **And he that doubteth.**—The one thing which justifies a man in neglecting such nice and punctilious distinctions is a faith so strong that it can afford to make light of them. Where faith is not strong enough for this, and where the conscience deliberately approves one course, and the other course is chosen, this alone stamps the act as wrong. "He who hesitates as to what he ought to do is condemned, or does wrong, if he eats (in opposition to his conscience), for he has not the one faculty which can overrule the decisions of conscience, and give them a different direction."

**Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**—This is intended as a general principle, but only as a general principle covering this particular kind of case. Where the conscience is in doubt, faith alone can make it right to choose the side against which conscience inclines. Nothing is said about those cases in which conscience is either not appealed to at all, or approves what is done. Hence St. Augustine was wrong in arguing from this passage that even good actions, when done by unbelievers, were of the nature of sin.

## XV.

These concluding chapters present some remarkable phenomena

which seem to need a special theory to account for them.

It will be seen that chap. xvi. ends, according to the Received text, with a two-fold benediction and a doxology, one at the end of verse 20, another in verse 24, and the third covering verses 25—27.

Of these, the two benedictions in verses 20 and 24 are alternatives. They are not found in the same group of MSS. at both places, but the MSS. which insert them in the first place omit them at the second, and *vice versa*. Weighing the authorities on both sides together, there can be little doubt that the earlier position is the right one—that the doxology ought to stand at chap. xvi. 20, and to be erased in chap. xvi. 24. How it came to be inserted there we shall see presently.

The longer, concluding doxology is also placed where it is by a quite decisive preponderance of authority. At the same time it is also found at the end of chap. xiv. in one important MS., the Codex Laudianus, and in a number of others of lesser value, while the Alexandrine Codex and Porphyrian Palimpsest, with some few others, have it in both places.

It is to be observed also that Marcion, the Gnostic writer, who lived about 140 A.D., had a copy of the Epistle in which these last two chapters were omitted altogether.

How is this series of facts to be accounted for? It is obviously

only a rude and reckless logic which infers from them that the whole two chapters are not genuine. The same conclusion has been supported by other arguments, which need not be mentioned in this Commentary. The proof of the genuineness of the chapters is overwhelming.

Other theories have been propounded, which, while assigning the chapters to St. Paul himself, have treated them as either entirely or in part fragments inserted here from some other lost Epistle. For instance, Ewald held that chap. xvi. 3—20 was written by St. Paul from Rome to Ephesus, and M. Renan has recently put forward the view that the main body of the Epistle was sent to different churches with different endings—chaps. i.—xi. with the ending chap. xv. to the Romans; chaps. i.—xiv. with the ending xvi. 1—20 to the Ephesians; chaps. i.—xiv. with the ending xvi. 21—24 to the Thessalonians; and chaps. i.—xiv. with the ending xvi. 25—27 to a fourth unknown church.

This last is an ingenious theory, but, like the rest, does not appear to be tenable when applied in detail.

We will only mention one more theory, which has the advantage of being simpler than most, and which seems to account almost if not quite satisfactorily for the complex and peculiar phenomena of the text, while it accords well with the general character of the Epistle. It is this:—

The Epistle was originally written and sent to the Romans in the form in which we have it now, except that it ended at chap. xvi. 23. The portion which was dictated by St. Paul himself really concluded with the benediction given in chap. xvi.

20, but a brief and informal postscript was added by Tertius and his companions.

At some later period of his life, probably during one or other of his two imprisonments, finding the Epistle current in Rome, it occurred to the Apostle that it might with advantage be circulated more widely. Accordingly he struck out the whole of the more personal matter, *i.e.*, chaps. xv. and xvi. And, in order to give somewhat more finish to the composition, he added the elaborate doxology, which now concludes the whole, at the end of chap. xiv. At the same time, at the beginning of the Epistle, he erased the express mention of Rome (chap. i. 7), and left merely the general phrase, "To them that are beloved of God"—a change of which some traces are still to be found remaining in the MSS.

There was thus a shorter and a longer recension of the Epistle—the shorter with a formal ending, the longer without. It was the shorter form which happened to fall into the hands of Marcion, who, for reasons of his own, cut off the doxology. Later copyists, observing the ragged edge which was caused by the postscript of Tertius, sought to remedy this by transferring the benediction of verse 20 to verse 24: and others, with more success, by adding to the original Epistle the doxology composed for the shorter recension. The general tendency in the scribes being to add and accumulate rather than to subtract, all three forms have come down to us.

The main arguments in favour of this theory are—(1) the extent to which it accounts for the phenomena of the text; (2) the striking resemblance between the style and diction

ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. <sup>(2)</sup> Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification. <sup>(3)</sup> For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 69.  
9.

reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.<sup>a</sup> <sup>(4)</sup> For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have

of the concluding doxology and those of the Epistle to the Ephesians and Pastoral Epistles, which would make it appear as if it had been composed at that later date, rather than when St. Paul originally wrote to the Romans; and <sup>(3)</sup> the analogy of the Epistle to the Ephesians, which seems to have gone through a somewhat similar process, being circulated in two forms—as a circular or general Epistle, and also as one addressed to a particular Church. The opinion is also growing that the Gospel according to St. Luke received additions, and was issued in an enlarged form during the lifetime of the Evangelist himself.

It would not be well to speak too positively where all is so much a matter of conjecture; but so far as conjecture can carry us, this theory seems, on the whole, the most probable and most likely to represent the real state of the facts. The author of it is Dr. Lightfoot.

<sup>(1)</sup> **We then that are strong.**—The opening verses of the chapter are intimately connected with the close of the last. Not only ought those who are strong in faith to be careful what they do in the matter of meat and drink, but in all things they should show sympathy and consideration for their weaker brethren.

This unbroken continuity in the two chapters would be enough to show that the Epistle cannot originally have ended with chap. xiv.

**Bear the infirmities.**—Take them upon ourselves, act as if they were our own, and, at the same time, by our sympathy relieve the consciences of the weak.

<sup>(2)</sup> **For his good.**—The object of this tender dealing with others is to be their benefit and growth in spiritual perfection. It is grounded on the example of Christ Himself.

<sup>(3)</sup> **The reproaches . . .**—Literally, after the LXX. version of Ps. lxix. 9, one of those psalms of suffering which, like Isa. liii., afford a type of the sufferings of the Messiah.

**Reproached thee fell on me.**—The insults directed against God Himself fell upon His servants.

<sup>(4)</sup> **For . . .**—These words of the Old Testament may rightly be taken as having a bearing upon us, "For," &c.

**Through patience and comfort of the scriptures**—*i.e.*, "by the patience and comfort which the Scriptures afford." The promises and consolations of Scripture support the Christian under his trials, and enable him to endure them not only patiently but cheerfully.

**Might have hope.**—Literally, *the hope*—*i.e.*, the Messianic hope.

hope. <sup>(5)</sup> Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:<sup>a</sup> <sup>(6)</sup> that ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God,

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 1 10.

even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>(7)</sup> Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. <sup>(8)</sup> Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister

The promises of Scripture centre in the hope of the future Messianic glory, and the fortitude with which the Christian endures his trials is to be sustained by that hope, and itself reacts upon the hope and makes it held with firmer tenacity.

<sup>(5)</sup> **Now the God of patience and consolation.**—Such, then, should be the temper of the Roman Christians. The Apostle prays that along with the spirit of steadfast endurance God will also give them that spirit of unanimity which proceeds from singleness of aim. There seems, at first sight, to be little or no connection between the God of “patience and consolation” and the being “likeminded.” They are connected, however, through the idea of singleness of purpose. He who is wholly self-dedicated to Christ, and who in the strength of that self-dedication is able to endure persecution, will also have a close bond of union with all who set before themselves the same object.

**Consolation . . .**—The same word as “comfort” in the previous verse.

**To be likeminded . . .**—To have the same thoughts, feelings, sentiments, hopes, and aims.

**According to Christ Jesus.**—The conforming to that “spirit of Christ” which it is to be assumed that all who call themselves Christians have put on.

<sup>(6)</sup> **With one mind and one mouth . . .**—It is in the heart that the spirit of humanity arises, and with the mouth that it is expressed.

<sup>(7)</sup> **Received us.**—There is again a division of the best authorities, the Vatican and Claromontane MSS. reading “us,” while the Sinaitic, Alexandrine, Paris rescript, and others, read “you.” The latter is, perhaps, to be preferred, but with no real difference to the sense. The word “received” is the same as that at the beginning of chap. xiv., the subject of which chapter is still continued, and is now taken up for the last time. The duty of Christians to show cordiality to each other is now based upon the comprehensiveness of the love of Christ, whose mission was directed with the same impartiality towards Jews and Gentiles. To the Jews He came to confirm and fulfil His promises; to the Gentiles He came to bring joys and hopes from which they had been hitherto excluded.

**To the glory of God.**—That God might be glorified by the admission into the Church of Gentiles as well as Jews; a parenthetical remark without direct bearing on the argument.

<sup>(8)</sup> **Now I say . . .**—Rather, *For I say.* My doctrine is that Christ came with a two-fold



of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers: <sup>(9)</sup> and that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, For this cause

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 18.  
49.

<sup>b</sup> Deut.  
32. 43.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 117.  
1.

I will confess to thee among the Gentiles,<sup>a</sup> and sing unto thy name. <sup>(10)</sup> And again he saith, Rejoice,<sup>b</sup> ye Gentiles, with his people. <sup>(11)</sup> And again, Praise the Lord,<sup>c</sup> all ye Gentiles; and

purpose: on the one hand, with a mission to the Jews, the chosen circumcised race, to vindicate to them the truthfulness of God in respect to His promises, by Himself confirming and fulfilling those promises; and, on the other hand, with the object to exhibit the mercy of God in rescuing the Gentiles from their state of condemnation, and giving them cause to glorify God's name.

**Was . . .**—This is the reading of the Vatican MS. and Paris re-script; the Sinaitic and Alexandrine have, "hath been made."

**For the truth of God—i.e.**, to make good the truthfulness of God in keeping His promises.

<sup>(9)</sup> **For his mercy.**—On account of His mercy. The Jews had their covenant to appeal to, and the attribute of God most clearly brought home to them in Christianity was His veracity in fulfilling the promises contained in this covenant. The Gentiles had no such covenant, and their admission to the blessings of Christianity was an act of pure grace and mercy, which they could only thankfully recognise. The Apostle then proceeds to quote from the Old Testament a succession of passages bearing upon this ultimate reception and triumph of the Gentiles.

**For this cause . . .**—Ps. xviii., from which this quotation is taken,

is assigned by the heading, as most commentators believe, rightly, to David himself, as a review of his past life, and a thanksgiving for his deliverance from his enemies. David is here taken as a type of Christ. He is said to "confess to God among the Gentiles," inasmuch as He is the head of the Gentile Church, in whose name its praises are offered, and by whom they are presented.

**Confess . . .**—Comp. the Note on chap. xiv. 11. Here the meaning, "praise," is more distinctly brought out. The confession or acknowledgment of mercies is itself an act of praise.

<sup>(10)</sup> **Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.**—St. Paul here follows the LXX. version, which varies somewhat from the original. The sense of the Hebrew is disputed. That which appears to suit the context best—"Rejoice, O ye nations of His people," *i.e.*, the Jewish tribes—is questioned on the ground of linguistic usage. In place of this, we may either adopt the rendering of the Vulgate—"Ye nations (Gentiles) praise His people," or, "Rejoice, ye nations (Gentiles), who are His people." This, however, hardly seems to fall in with the context so well.

<sup>(11)</sup> **All ye Gentiles.**—An invitation addressed to the Gentile peoples without restriction, at a

laud him, all ye people.

<sup>(12)</sup> And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse,<sup>e</sup> and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust. <sup>(13)</sup> Now the God of hope fill you

<sup>e</sup> Isa. 11.  
10.

with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

<sup>(14)</sup> And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are

time when the monotheistic conception of God as Lord of the whole earth was thoroughly established.

<sup>(12)</sup> **And again, Esaias saith.**—St. Paul still adheres to the LXX., which here diverges more widely from the Hebrew. The sense of this is rightly given by the Authorised version of Isa. xi. 10—"In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek." In either case, the passage is Messianic.

**A root of Jesse.**—Strictly, *the root*, or, *root-shoot* of Jesse, as in Prov. v. 5—*i.e.*, the expected descendant of Jesse's line, which, to bring out its intimate connection with the founder of the line, and to distinguish it from all other collateral branches, is identified with the very root, or first shoot, of the line itself.

**Trust.**—The same word as "hope" in the next verse, the introduction of which was probably suggested, through the association of ideas, by the concluding words of the LXX. quotation—"On Him shall the Gentiles place their hopes. Now the God of hope," &c.

<sup>(13)</sup> **Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace . . . hope.**—Hope, joy, and peace, form a triad which re-

presents the attitude of the Christian in looking towards the future, and so far as that future is reflected on the present. Hope may be taken as including the other two, as it is upon the certainty of the Messianic promises that they all depend, just as it is through the constant energising power of the Holy Ghost that they are kept alive.

<sup>(14)</sup> **And I myself also.**—From this point onwards the Apostle gives a personal turn to his letter. The greetings at the end are naturally introduced by a few words of explanation as to the way in which the more general exhortations that preceded are to be received by the Roman Christians, and a somewhat longer statement on the part of the Apostle of his own relations to the Church at Rome. This might seem to be the more necessary as the Church was not one of his own founding, and he might seem to be both going out of his way and acting in contradiction to his own principles in writing to them at all.

I write thus to you though you do not really need all these exhortations. Not only do others tell me, but I am convinced myself that you possess all the qualifications which would fit you to teach others instead of receiving instruction yourselves.

full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

<sup>(15)</sup> Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in

mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, <sup>(16)</sup> that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles

**Ye also.**—Rather, *even yourselves*, as you are, and without any stimulus or incitement given to you from without.

**Goodness**—*i.e.*, goodness of disposition, readiness to practise all the Christian virtues, especially those to which the last section had been exhorting.

**Knowledge**—*i.e.*, of the doctrinal aspects of Christianity as they had been set forth in the earlier portion of the Epistle. No doubt the Apostle had really much to teach his readers—he does not say that he had not—but he courteously gives them credit for all they knew.

<sup>(15)</sup> **Nevertheless, brethren.**—Apologetic. Holding this good opinion of you as I do, I nevertheless presumed somewhat upon my position as an Apostle, and especially as an Apostle of the Gentiles, to write with an earnestness which I should, perhaps, otherwise not have ventured to show.

**Brethren.**—The weight of evidence in the MSS. is against the retention of this word.

**In some sort.**—Literally, *in part*, qualifying the phrase, "I have written more boldly," both in extent and degree. In some passages the Apostle feels that he had gone beyond the modest limits which he might have seemed to mark out for himself by what he had just been

saying. He had taken a liberty, but not too great a liberty. He had spoken to them rather pointedly at times, but he had been careful not to go too far. The reference may be supposed to be to exhortations such as those in chaps. xiii. and xiv., and in other parts of the Epistle.

**As putting you in mind.**—Another delicate expression. The Apostle has not been telling them of something that they did not know before, but merely reminding them of what they knew. And he claims the right to do this because of the special grace given to him as an Apostle. The Judaizing section in the Church at Rome did not go so far as that in Galatia. It recognised the apostleship of St. Paul, and he knew that he could safely appeal to this recognition.

**Because of the grace.**—Comp. "grace and apostleship" in chap. i. 5. "Grace" is here that special endowment with divine gifts by which the Apostles were distinguished from other Christians.

<sup>(16)</sup> **Minister . . . ministering.**—These are two different words in the Greek, but allied in their signification. Both refer originally to the liturgical service of the Temple; the first to the whole of the functions both of the priests and Levites, the second to the special function of the priests in the

might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. <sup>(17)</sup> I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain

to God. <sup>(18)</sup> For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

offering of sacrifice. St. Paul is a "minister of Jesus Christ;" *i.e.*, his sacred office was given to him by Christ; it was Christ who appointed and ordained him to it; and his special duty as a priest of the gospel was to see that the Church of the Gentiles, whom it fell to him to present as a sacrifice to God, should be fit for such a sacrifice, made holy by the indwelling Spirit, and therefore acceptable to Him to whom it was offered.

**To the Gentiles.**—Strictly, in reference to the Gentiles. The branch or department of the Christian ministry specially allotted to St. Paul, was the evangelisation of the Gentiles.

**Ministering the gospel of God.**—Serving the gospel of God as a priest stands at the altar in the service of the tabernacle. The offering which the priest is thus to present is the Gentile Church.

**The offering up of the Gentiles.**—Not "that which the Gentiles offer," but "the offering which the Gentiles are;" the sacrifice which they themselves form and constitute.

**Sanctified by the Holy Ghost.**—Rather, *consecrated in the Holy Ghost*. The sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost *overshadows*, as it were, the Church, encloses and embraces it on every side.

<sup>(17)</sup> This is really the title on which I rest my claim. I *can* boast

of a specially sacred office and ministry, given to me by Christ, and not merely of my own devising. The sphere of this office is a religious sphere, it relates to "the things pertaining to God."

<sup>(18)</sup> Nor in basing my claims upon this head do I go at all beyond my own proper province. I will take credit for no man's labours but my own. They have, indeed, been quite signal enough.

**I will not dare to speak.**—I have a certain just and legitimate pride, but I shall not, therefore, presume to boast of successes of which others have been the instrument. *All* successes in the mission field are due ultimately to Christ; for some He has made use of me, for others of other men. I will confine myself to those in which I have been myself directly concerned.

**To make the Gentiles obedient.**—Comp. chap. i. 5, "for obedience to the faith among all nations" (*i.e.*, to bring over all the Gentiles into obedience to the faith; see Note).

**By word and deed.**—This goes with the phrase "wrought by me," and signifies "either by preaching or by miracles."

It will be seen that the structure of this verse is not, in a rhetorical sense, quite elegant. The Apostle uses a negative form of sentence where a positive form would seem

(19) through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so

that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached

to be more appropriate. Instead of saying, "I will confine myself to what Christ *has* wrought by me," he says, "I will *not* speak of what Christ has *not* wrought by me," though the description which follows is that of his own ministry.

(19) **Through mighty signs and wonders.**—Literally, *through the might of signs and wonders—i.e.*, through those extraordinary powers which found their expression in signs and wonders. "Signs and wonders" is the phrase regularly used throughout the New Testament for the Christian miracles: so frequently in the Gospels. (Comp. also 2 Cor. xii. 12; 2 Thess. xi. 9; Heb. xi. 4.) The two words are very similar in meaning. They denote the same acts, but they connote different aspects in which those acts may be regarded. The word "signs" tends to bring out the symbolical character of the miracle, the spiritual truth of which it was, as it were, the physical expression. In the word "wonders" stress is laid rather upon its character as a portent, a manifestation of supernatural, divine power. That St. Paul himself claimed miraculous powers is a fact that cannot be doubted.

**By the power of the Spirit of God.**—The two clauses at the beginning of this verse correspond roughly to "by word and deed" at the end of the last. "Signs and wonders" are the manifestation of the effectual working of Christ in "deed." The "power of the Spirit

of God" is exemplified both in "deed" and in "word."

**So that . . .**—It is to be noticed that the language of the Apostle becomes more and more definite and concrete, till he ends by describing the geographical extent of his own labours.

**Jerusalem.**—The Apostle naturally takes this as the *terminus à quo*, partly because it was at this time the centre and head-quarters of Christianity, and also more especially because it was the extreme point eastwards and southwards of his own public ministry. (His sojourn in "Arabia," which may include the desert of Sinai, appears to have been of a more private character.)

**And round about . . .**—In a sort of rough curve, embracing a large portion of Asia Minor, and finally turning towards the starting point again in Illyricum.

**Illyricum.**—A Roman province stretching along the eastern coast of the Adriatic, and forming the northern boundary of Epirus, and the north-western of Macedonia. Whether St. Paul had actually visited Illyricum does not appear from his language in this passage. Illyricum is the *terminus ad quem* of his journeyings, but it may be inclusive, or it may be exclusive. The description would be sufficiently satisfied if he had approached the outskirts of Illyricum during his journey through Macedonia. That journey must be the one recorded in Acts xx. 2. The earlier journey of Acts xvi., xvii.,

the gospel of Christ. <sup>(20)</sup> Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: <sup>(21)</sup> but as it is written, To whom he was not spoken

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 52.  
15.

<sup>1</sup> Or.  
many  
ways,  
or  
often-  
times.

of, <sup>a</sup> they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

<sup>(22)</sup> For which cause also I have been much <sup>1</sup> hindered from coming to you. <sup>(23)</sup> But now having no more place in these parts, and having

can be traced clearly from place to place, and did not extend far enough inland, while the vague expression which we find in Acts xx. 2, "When he had gone over those parts," affords ample room for the circuit in question. This would place it at the end of the year 57 A.D.

**Fully preached.**—Literally, *fulfilled*. The translation of our version can perhaps hardly be improved, though, at the same time, it seems probable that what is intended is the publication of the gospel to its full geographical extent, and not the subjective sense in the Apostle of his own fulfilment of the duty of preaching the gospel laid upon him.

<sup>(20, 21)</sup> Throughout all this long missionary career, the Apostle had made it his endeavour not merely to go over old ground where others had been before him, but to seek out new and virgin soil, where he might enter as a pioneer, and convey the good news of the kingdom of heaven for the first time.

<sup>(20)</sup> **Yea, so have I strived.**—Rather, *but making it my ambition*. The Apostle set it before him as a point of honour, not merely to carry forward a work that others

had begun, but to build up the whole edifice from the foundation himself.

**Not where Christ was named.**—Not in places where there were Christians already.

**Another man's foundation.**—Comp. 2 Cor. x. 15, 16; and for the use of the word "foundation" for the first preaching of the gospel, 1 Cor. iii. 10.

<sup>(21)</sup> **To whom . . .**—From the LXX. of Isa. lii. 15. The original has reference to the servant of Jehovah, first suffering and then glorified, so that *kings* should be dumb with astonishment at the change. Here it is applied to the evangelisation of distant heathen nations.

<sup>(22)</sup> **For which cause also.**—And just because I was so anxious to preach the gospel in new regions, and to finish what I had begun there, I have been prevented from coming to you sooner.

**Much.**—*These many times; so often*.

<sup>(23)</sup> **But now having no more place.**—The work had been finished, so far as the Apostle was concerned, in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece. The churches had been founded, and fairly set going; and now he felt it his duty to go on to new fields, his duty in this respect also falling in with his

a great desire these many years to come unto you ;  
 (24) whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will

come to you : for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you,

wishes, as it would bring him to Rome.

**Place.**—Room for (new) working. The whole ground had been already occupied.

**Parts.**—A peculiar word from which our word “climate” is derived. The original idea appears to be the *slope* or *inclination* of the earth from the equator towards the pole. Hence a “zone” or “region.” The same word occurs in 2 Cor. xi. 10; Gal. i. 21.

(24) **Into Spain.**—In his eagerness to seek out entirely new regions, and to avoid any possibility of crossing the lines of his fellow Apostles, desiring also himself to gather in the “fulness of the Gentiles” so far as lay in his power, he had determined to push on even to Spain. Whether he ever succeeded in carrying out his purpose we cannot say positively, but it is, perhaps, rather more probable than not. A tradition which dates back to the Epistle of Clement of Rome (*circ.* A.D. 95) says that he visited “the extreme limit of the West,” a phrase which seems hardly satisfied by being interpreted simply of Rome. The author of the Muratorian Fragment (*circ.* A.D. 170) speaks expressly of a journey to Spain, though his language looks as if it might be an inference from this Epistle. The Acts, it is true, do not carry the Apostle beyond Rome, but the phenomena of the pastoral Epistles and tradition together seem to justify us in assuming the probability of a later

journey or journeys not recorded in that volume, and the argument from silence, as the book in any case stops short of the death of the Apostle, counts for but little. This is just a case in which it cannot be wrong to accept the balance of the argument as it stands. At the same time it is impossible not to feel the grievous blank which lies over the later years of the life of St. Paul, and few things would be more deeply interesting, or would throw more light on the principles of criticism, than the discovery, if only it were possible, of the merest fragment bearing upon it. It is to be feared, however, that there is no reasonable hope of such a discovery being ever made.

**I will come to you . . . .**

—These words are wanting in the true text, and have to be supplied. The sentence is left unfinished.

**To be brought on my way.**—A graphic description of this “bringing upon the way” is given in the account of the departure of St. Paul after his seven days’ sojourn at Tyre, Acts xxi. 5. (*Comp.* xx. 36—38.)

**Somewhat filled.**—Another characteristic touch. The Apostle will not allow it to be supposed that he could have *enough* of the society of the Roman Church. He therefore qualifies his expression, “somewhat filled,” or “satisfied,” “satisfied if only in part.”

**If first I be somewhat filled** is practically equivalent to “when I have been filled.”

if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.<sup>1</sup> <sup>(25)</sup> But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

<sup>(26)</sup> For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

<sup>(27)</sup> It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors

<sup>1</sup> Gr. with you, ver. 32.

they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. <sup>(28)</sup> When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. <sup>(29)</sup> And I am sure that, when I

<sup>(25)</sup> **But now.**—Before very long I hope to pay you this visit, but for the present I am bound for Jerusalem, in the service of the Church, to convey the alms collected in Macedonia and Achaia for the poorer members of that community. In reference to this contribution, comp. Acts xxiv. 17; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, *et seq.*; 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2; ix. 1, *et seq.*

<sup>(26)</sup> **The poor saints.**—Literally, *for the poor among the saints*. It cannot, therefore, be inferred from this that the Church at Jerusalem consisted entirely of poor. Still from the first it would seem as if persons like Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, and Mary the mother of Mark, were exceptions, and we know that the Church at Jerusalem suffered severely during the famine in the reign of Claudius. Wealthier churches, such as those of Macedonia and Greece, would naturally be glad to have the opportunity of sending relief to the mother Church, from which they might be said to be derived themselves. St. Paul himself proceeds to urge this very argument. From Jerusalem went forth the gospel which had been preached

in Greece and Macedonia, and it would be but a small and due return if some of the superfluous wealth of those more favoured regions found its way to Jerusalem.

<sup>(27)</sup> **It hath pleased them.**—It pleased the Macedonians and Achaians to make their contribution. And, indeed, they owed a debt to the Church of Jerusalem, which it was their duty, so well as they could, to discharge.

<sup>(28)</sup> **Sealed to them this fruit.**—Placed in their hands the sum raised by the collection. This will appear at first sight a somewhat stilted expression, but it takes a certain solemnity from the fact that St. Paul seems to regard this journey to Jerusalem as the close of his own apostolic labours in those parts, the dropping of the curtain, as it were, before a new act in his career.

**Will come by you.**—Will pass through your city on my way to Spain.

<sup>(29)</sup> **I shall come in the fulness.**—I shall bring with me, come furnished with, the fulness of the blessing of Christ. The words "of the gospel" should be omitted. By "the fulness of the blessing of



come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. <sup>(30)</sup> Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me; <sup>(31)</sup> that I may be delivered from them that

<sup>1</sup> Or, are disobedient.

do not believe <sup>1</sup> in Judæa; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; <sup>(32)</sup> that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. <sup>(33)</sup> Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Christ" the Apostle means the full or abundant measure of those spiritual blessings which he, as the Minister and Apostle of Christ, was commissioned to impart to them.

<sup>(30)</sup> **The love of the Spirit**—i.e., the love inspired in them by the Spirit—flowing from the Spirit.

**Strive together with me.**—Second my own earnest entreaties.

<sup>(31)</sup> **From them that do not believe.**—This prayer of the Apostle was, perhaps, it may be said, partially granted. He escaped with his life from his unbelieving countrymen (Acts xxiii. 27), but only to be delivered over to the Romans. He was naturally in fear of the party to which he had himself once belonged, and who would regard him as one of the worst of apostates. But it is to be observed that he expresses no apprehension of the Judaising *Christians*, as might have been expected if their antagonism had really been as violent as some would make out.

**My service which I have for Jerusalem.**—*My service or ministration* (i.e., "The gift of which I am the bearer") which is destined for Jerusalem.

**May be accepted.**—It is possible, though we cannot speak at all positively, that there was mingled with the desire of the Apostle to benefit the Church at Jerusalem something of a wish to do a graceful and conciliatory act to that Judaising branch of the Church from which circumstances tended to estrange him.

<sup>(32)</sup> The way in which he was received at Jerusalem would make a great difference to the feelings with which the Apostle would arrive at Rome. A favourable reception in Jerusalem would add much to his enjoyment and benefit from intercourse with the Roman Christians.

**With you be refreshed.**—The Greek word is a rare compound, which is found besides in the LXX. version of Isa. xi. 6, "the leopard shall lie down with the kid." The whole phrase ("and may with you be refreshed") is wanting in the Vatican MS.

<sup>(33)</sup> **Amen.**—The weight of MS. authority is decidedly in favour of retaining this word, though it is omitted by three MSS. of some importance.

It does not, however, follow that

CHAPTER XVI.— A.D. 58. | Phebe our sister, which is a  
 (1) I commend unto you | servant of the church which

the benediction was intended, as some have thought, to close the Epistle. Intercalated benedictions and doxologies are frequent in the writings of St. Paul. (Comp. chaps. ix. 5, xi. 36; Gal. i. 5; Eph. iii. 20, 21, *et al.*)

### XVI.

It has been observed as strange that of all the Epistles of St. Paul, this to the Romans and that to Colossians contain the greatest number of personal salutations, though these were precisely the two churches that he had never seen up to the date of his writing. A few critics, headed by Baur, have used this as an argument against the genuineness of the portion of the Epistles in question. But reasoning like this may safely be dismissed, as these very portions are just those which it would be most senseless and aimless to forge, even if it were possible on other grounds to think of them as a forgery.

On the other hand, there is some truth in the suggestion that the Apostle might think it invidious to single out individuals for special mention in the churches where he was known, while he would have no hesitation in naming those with whom he happened to be personally acquainted in churches where he was not known.

Besides this, it should be remembered that the Christians at Rome had been recently in a state of dispersion. All Jews by birth had been expelled from Rome by Claudius. It was this fact which had brought Aquila and Priscilla to

Corinth and Ephesus, where St. Paul fell in with them, and he would naturally meet with other members of the dispersed Church in the same way.

We are apt to underrate the amount of rapid circulation which went on in these early Christian communities. We know from Pagan writers that there was a great tendency all along the shores of the Mediterranean to gravitate towards Rome, and the population thus formed would naturally be a shifting and changing one, loosely attached to their temporary dwelling-place, and with many ties elsewhere. It will be noticed how many of the persons mentioned in the list had some prior connection with St. Paul, quite apart from their relation to the Church at Rome. Andronicus, Junias, and Herodion, are described as his "kinsmen." Aquila and Priscilla, and we may add, almost with certainty, Epænetus, he had met in Asia. Of Amplias, Urban, Stachys, Persis, and Rufus, he speaks as if with personal knowledge. If the Received reading were correct ("us" for "you"), Mary would have to be added to this list, and possibly also Apelles.

Analysing these lists of names from another point of view, two further general conclusions appear to be borne out. (1) The Church at Rome did not consist to any great extent of native Romans. The only strictly Latin names are Amplias (for Ampliatus), and Urbanus. Julia, in verse 15, merely marks a dependent upon the court. Aquila and Priscilla, Andronicus

is at Cenchrea : <sup>(2)</sup> that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of

you : for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. <sup>(3)</sup> Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus :

and Junia (or Junias), Herodion, and probably Rufus, appear to be Jews. The name Apelles, though not confined to Jews, was proverbially common among them. Aristobulus may be the Herodian prince of that name ; in which case his household would be likely to be in great part Jews. The rest of the names are Greek. And this would tally with the fact that from the first there seems to have been a large Greek element in the Church at Rome, so much so, that out of the twelve first bishops, only three seem to have borne Roman names, while the literature of the Church, until some way into the third century, was Greek. (2) The names seem to belong in the main to the middle and lower classes of society. Many are such as are usually assigned to slaves or freed-men. Some are especially frequent in inscriptions relating to the imperial household ; and this, taken in connection with the mention of "Cæsar's household" in Phil. iv. 22, may lead to the inference that Christianity had at this early date established itself in the palace of the emperor, though only among the lower order of servants.

<sup>(1)</sup> **Phebe.**—As the Roman Church is especially exhorted to receive Phebe, it has been inferred that she was one of the party to which St. Paul entrusted his Epistle, if not the actual bearer of it herself.

**Our sister**—*i.e.*, in a spiritual sense—a fellow-Christian.

**Servant.**—Rather, a *deaconess*, keeping the technical term. Deacons were originally appointed to attend to the wants of the poorer members of the Church. This is the first mention of women-deacons, in regard to whom instructions are given to Timothy (1 Tim. iii. 11). The necessity for an order of deaconesses would gradually make itself felt where women were kept in a stricter seclusion, as in Greece and some parts of the East.

**Cenchrea.**—The port of Corinth, at the head of the Eastern or Saronic Gulf, about nine miles from the city.

<sup>(2)</sup> **In the Lord.**—With the consciousness that you are performing a Christian act, subject to all those serious obligations implied in the name.

**As becometh saints.**—As Christians ought to receive a fellow-Christian.

**Succourer.**—Patroness or protectress, in the exercise of her office as deaconess.

**Of myself also.**—Perhaps in illness.

<sup>(3)</sup> **Priscilla.**—The correct reading here is *Prisca*, of which form *Priscilla* is the diminutive. It is rather remarkable that the wife should be mentioned first. Perhaps it may be inferred that she was the more active and conspicuous of the two.

Aquila was a Jew of Pontus, whom St. Paul had found with his wife at Corinth (Acts xviii. 1).

(4) who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. (5) Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved

Epænetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. (6) Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us. (7) Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the

They had there been converted by him, and afterwards appear in his company at Ephesus (Acts xviii. 18, 26; 1 Cor. xvi. 19). At the time when this Epistle was written they were at Rome, but later they seem to have returned to Ephesus (2 Tim. iv. 19).

The Jew Aquila, who rather more than a century later made a translation of the Old Testament, critically compared with the LXX. in the *Hexapla* of Origen, also came from Pontus.

(4) **Laid down their own necks.**—Whether this expression is to be taken literally or figuratively we do not know, neither can we do more than guess at the event to which it refers. It may have something to do with the tumult at Ephesus, and with that “fighting with beasts” mentioned in 1 Cor. xv. 32.

(5) **The church that is in their house.**—A party of Christians seem to have been in the habit of meeting in the house of Aquila and Priscilla for purposes of worship at Rome, as previously at Ephesus (1 Cor. xvi. 19). Similar instances may be found in Acts xii. 12; Col. iv. 15; Philem. verse 2.

**Salute.**—The same word in the Greek is translated indifferently by “salute” and “greet,” an unnecessary caprice.

**Firstfruits of Achaia.**—For “Achaia” we ought certainly to read “Asia”—*i.e.*, the Roman province of Asia, a broad strip of territory including the whole western end of the peninsula of Asia Minor, from the Propontis in the north to Lycia in the south. Ephesus was the capital, and the seven “churches in Asia” to which St. John wrote in the Apocalypse—Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea—were the most central and important of its cities.

By “firstfruits of Asia” is meant one of the first converts won over to Christianity in Asia. (Comp. “firstfruits of Achaia,” in 1 Cor. xvi. 15, through the parallelism of which the text of our own passage became corrupted.)

(6) **On us.**—The true reading seems to be, *on you*. The readers would know to what the Apostle referred. It is useless for us to attempt to conjecture.

(7) **Junia.**—Or, possibly, “Junias” (for Junianus), a man's name.

**My kinsmen.**—From the number of persons (six in all, and those not only in Rome but also in Greece and Macedonia) to whom the title is given in this chapter, it would seem as if the word “kinsmen” was to be taken in a wider sense

apostles, who also were in Christ before me. <sup>(8)</sup> Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord. <sup>(9)</sup> Salute Urbane,

our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. <sup>(10)</sup> Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which

than that which it usually bears. It probably means members of the same nation—Jew like myself.

**Fellowprisoners.**—It is not at all known to what this refers. The only imprisonment of St. Paul recorded in the Acts after this date would be that at Philippi, but allusions such as those in 2 Cor. vi. 5, and xi. 23, at once show the defectiveness of the narrative, and point to occasions when the persons mentioned might easily have shared imprisonment with him.

**Of note among the apostles.**

—An ambiguous expression, which *might* mean, and, judging by the word alone, would perhaps more naturally be taken to mean, “distinguished as Apostles themselves.” This sense is not to be disregarded as absolutely impossible, for the title “Apostles” does not appear to have been limited to the Twelve. It is decidedly more probable that James, the Lord’s brother, who is called an Apostle in Gal. i. 19, and elsewhere, was not identical with James the son of Alphæus. And, however this may be, there can be no question about Barnabas, who is called an Apostle in Acts xiv. 14. St. Paul himself seems to draw a distinction between “the Twelve” and “all the Apostles,” in 1 Cor. xv. 7. Still, on the whole, it seems best to suppose that the phrase “of note among the Apostles” means “highly esteemed by the apostolic circle.”

**Were in Christ . . . —i.e.,** became Christians.

<sup>(8)</sup> **Amplias.**—The three oldest MSS. have “Ampliatius,” for which “Amplias” would be in any case a contracted form. The name is a common one, in several instances found in connection with the imperial household.

<sup>(9)</sup> **Urbane.**—Urbanus, or Urban; the final “e” should not be sounded. Like Ampliatius, a common name found among members of the household.

**Our helper in Christ.**—The “helper,” that is, both of St. Paul and of the Roman Church by her efforts in spreading the gospel.

**Stachys.**—A rarer name than the last two; it appears as that of a court physician in the inscriptions of about the date of this Epistle.

<sup>(10)</sup> **Apelles.**—This name is also found among the dependents of the emperor. Horace, in the well-known phrase, “Credat Judæas Apella” (*Ep.* 1, v. 100), takes it as a typical Jewish name.

**Approved in Christ.**—Whose fidelity to Christ has been tried, and has stood the test.

**Aristobulus’ household.**—Aristobulus, a grandson of Herod the Great, was educated and lived in a private station at Rome. From the friendly terms on which he stood with the Emperor Claudius, it seems not unlikely that, by a somewhat common custom, his household may have been transferred to the emperor at his death. In that case, his slaves would be designated by a term such as we find in the Greek.

are of Aristobulus' household. <sup>(11)</sup> Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord. <sup>(12)</sup> Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which

laboured much in the Lord. <sup>(13)</sup> Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. <sup>(14)</sup> Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them. <sup>(15)</sup> Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his

<sup>(11)</sup> **My kinsman.**—See the Note on verse 7.

**Them that be of the household of Narcissus.**—A phrase similar to that which is translated, "Them which are of Aristobulus' household," above. Narcissus, too, is an historical name. There had been a famous Narcissus, a freed-man, and favourite of Claudius, who had been put to death three or four years before this Epistle was written. His household would naturally pass into the hands of the emperor, though still keeping his name. In the case of Aristobulus, the transference would be effected by bequest, in that of Narcissus by confiscation. Many instances of both methods occur in the history and records of the time.

The interpretation here given, and the identification of Aristobulus and Narcissus with the historical bearers of those names, is some way short of certain, but may be said to have some degree of probability.

<sup>(12)</sup> **Tryphena and Tryphosa.**—Probably sisters or near relatives. They, too, may have been attached to the court.

<sup>(13)</sup> **Rufus.**—Simon of Cyrene is described in St. Mark's Gospel (xv. 21) as "the father of Alexander and Rufus," and as there is a substantial tradition, favoured by some

internal indications, that this Gospel was written at Rome, it is not unlikely that the same Rufus may be meant.

**Chosen in the Lord.**—An eminent Christian.

**His mother and mine.**—His mother, who has also been like a mother to me.

<sup>(14)</sup> Of the names in this and the next verse, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, Philologus, Julia, Nereus (with the corresponding female name Nereis), all occur with more or less frequency in inscriptions relating to the household. Hermas and Hermes are very common. The first is a contraction from several longer forms. Patrobas is contracted from Patrobis. We find that a freed-man of Nero's who bore this name was put to death by Galba; but the person saluted by St. Paul is more likely to have been a dependent of his than the man himself.

Taking the list of names as a whole, and comparing them with the inscriptions, we may—without going so far as to identify individuals, which would be precarious ground—nevertheless, note the general coincidence with the mention of "Cæsar's household" in Phil. iv. 22.

sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them. <sup>(16)</sup> Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you. <sup>(17)</sup> Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the

doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. <sup>(18)</sup> For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. <sup>(19)</sup> For your obedience is come

<sup>(16)</sup> **Salute one another.**—As a mark of brotherly feeling among themselves, St. Paul desires those who are assembled at the reading of his Epistle to greet each other in a Christian way. It is to be their own act and not a salutation coming from him.

**With an holy kiss.**—A common Eastern and Jewish custom specially consecrated in Christianity. (Comp. 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 26; 1 Pet. v. 14.)

**The churches of Christ.**—The word "all" should be inserted. As being the Apostle of the Gentiles, and knowing as he did the interest which all would take in the church of the great metropolis, St. Paul feels himself fully justified in speaking for all the churches of his foundation.

<sup>(17-20)</sup> Here the Epistle would naturally end, but an afterthought occurs to the Apostle. His experience of other churches, especially those at Corinth and in Galatia, suggests to him that he should warn his readers against false teachers, though such had not as yet obtained any great hold among them.

<sup>(17)</sup> **Cause divisions and offences.**—Set traps in the way

of the unwary, so as to entice them into false doctrine and schismatical practices.

<sup>(18)</sup> **Their own belly.**—Compare the description in Phil. iii. 18, 19, where the Apostle is also denouncing certain persons who made "a god of their belly." It is not, however, quite clear that the class of persons intended is precisely the same. There the Apostle is condemning Antinomian extravagances which professed to be based on his own teaching; here he would seem to have in view some more radical divergence of doctrine, "contrary to" that which they had learned. Self-indulgence is unfortunately a common goal, to which many diverse ways of error will be found to lead.

**By good words and fair speeches.**—The difference, perhaps, is between "insinuating" or "specious address," and "fine phrases" in a rhetorical sense.

**Simple.**—Literally, *guileless*. Those who have no evil intentions themselves, and do not readily suspect others of them.

<sup>(19)</sup> No harm has been done as yet. Still it is well to be upon your guard.

**Simple concerning evil.**—This is not at all the same word as

abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. <sup>(20)</sup> And

<sup>1</sup> Or, *tread*.

the God of peace shall bruise<sup>1</sup> Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen. <sup>(21)</sup> Timotheus my workfellow, and

that which is translated "simple" above. The first is that freedom from dishonest motives which makes a man an unsuspecting and easy prey for designing persons, and applies rather to natural bent and disposition. The second refers rather to the confirmed habit of one who has come in contact with evil, and is still uncontaminated by it; who has resisted all the plots and schemes that have been laid for him; and whose love for what is good and hatred of evil has only been strengthened and disciplined. The word for "simple" here means "unmixed," "uncontaminated," "pure and clear."

<sup>(20)</sup> **The God of peace.**—We can well understand how the Apostle, in the midst of "fightings without and fears within," should look forward with joyous confidence to the time when both for him and his readers all this turmoil and conflict would give way to "peace." The reference seems to be to his near expectation of the Messiah's return, and with it the final victory of the faith. The Romans have not begun to feel the bitterness of divisions as yet; he foresees a time when they will do so, but beyond that he foresees a further time when all will be hushed and quelled, and the Great Adversary himself for ever overthrown.

**Bruise.**—With reference to Gen. iii. 15.

**The grace . . .**—The more

correct reading of the benediction is simply, *The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you*, the other words being omitted. The four principal Græco-Latin Codices omit the benediction here altogether and insert it in verse 24, where it also appears in the Received text, though wanting in MSS. of the best type.

<sup>(21-23)</sup> The companions of St. Paul add their own greetings to the Roman Church.

<sup>(21)</sup> **Timotheus.**—Timothy had been sent on in advance from Ephesus (Acts xx. 22). He would seem to have gone on into Greece and to Corinth itself (1 Cor. iv. 17, and xvi. 10). He had thence rejoined St. Paul on his way through Macedonia (2 Cor. i. 1), and he was now with him again in Greece.

In the other Epistles (2 Cor., Phil., Col., 1 and 2 Thess., and Philem.), when Timothy was present with St. Paul at the time of his writing, he is joined with him in the salutation at the outset. Why his name does not appear in the heading of the present letter we can hardly say. Perhaps he happened to be away at the time when it was begun; or, St. Paul may have thought it well that a Church which was entirely strange to him, and to which Timothy too was a stranger, should be addressed in his own name alone.



Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you. <sup>(22)</sup> I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord.

<sup>(23)</sup> Gaius, mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

**Lucius.**—This may, perhaps, be the Lucius of Cyrene mentioned in Acts xiii. 1; but the name is too common for anything to be asserted positively.

**Jason.**—A Jason is mentioned as having received St. Paul and his companions on their first visit to Thessalonica, and getting himself into trouble in consequence (Acts xvii. 5—9). It would be some slight argument for this identification if the word “kinsmen” were taken in its narrower sense; there would then be a reason why St. Paul should have found hospitality in the house of Jason.

**Sosipater.**—Possibly “Sopater, the son of Pyrrhus, of Bercea,” mentioned in Acts xx. 4 (corrected reading).

<sup>(22)</sup> **Tertius.**—The Apostle’s amanuensis. It was the custom of St. Paul to add a few words of parting benedictory encouragement or admonition in his own handwriting, partly as a mark of his own personal interest in his readers, and partly as a precaution against forgery. (See especially Gal. vi. 11, and 2 Thess. iii. 17.) We have observed in the course of this Commentary how frequently the involved and broken style is to be accounted for by this habit of dictation, and, as it would seem, not very punctilious revision. We have the thoughts and words of the Apostle as they came warm from his own mind.

<sup>(23)</sup> **Gaius.**—Three persons of this name are mentioned, Gaius of Corinth (1 Cor. i. 14), Gaius, a Macedonian (Acts xix. 29), and Gaius of Derbe in Lycaonia (Acts xx. 4). The Gaius of the Epistle would probably be identical with the first of these. The name was a common one.

**Mine host, and of the whole church.**—St. Paul was now lodging in the house of Gaius, as on his previous visit, first in that of Aquila and then in that of Justus (Acts xviii. 2, 7). It would seem that Gaius lent his house for the meetings of the Church, or it is possible that St. Paul may be alluding, with graceful hyperbole, to the hospitality which he was always ready to exercise.

**Erastus.**—It is not quite easy to identify this Erastus with the one mentioned in Acts xix. 22, 2 Tim. iv. 20, who there appears as a travelling companion of the Apostle. The office of “treasurer” to an important city like Corinth would naturally, we should suppose, involve a fixed residence.

**Chamberlain.**—A better word would seem to be *treasurer*. The officer in question had charge of the revenues of the city. The title appears upon inscriptions.

**A brother.**—Rather, *the brother*. No special predicate seems to be needed, and therefore St. Paul (or Tertius) simply describes him as the Christian of that name.

(24) The grace of our Lord |

| Jesus Christ be with you

(24) **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.**—This verse is wanting in the oldest group of MSS., and is found chiefly in Græco-Latin Codices and in Antiochene authorities of the fourth and fifth centuries, whose leaning is towards the latter text.

If the theory stated in the introduction to chapter xv. is correct, the doxology which follows was added by the Apostle to complete the *shorter* edition of the Epistle, but soon came to be taken as a fitting close to the whole.

Allusion has been made to the resemblance which it presents to the Pastoral Epistles and the Epistle to the Ephesians. This will readily be seen when the parallel expressions are placed side by side.

Rom. xvi. 25  
—27.—“To Him  
that is of power.”

“According to  
my gospel.”

“The preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the

Eph. iii. 20.—  
“Unto Him that  
is able” (pre-  
cisely the same  
words in the  
Greek).

2 Tim. ii. 8.—  
“According to  
my gospel” (the  
same phrase is,  
however, found  
in Rom. ii. 16).

Eph. iii. 3, 5, 6.  
—“By revela-  
tion He made  
known unto us  
the mystery...  
which in other  
ages was not  
made known un-  
to the sons of  
men, as it is now  
revealed unto  
His holy apostles  
and prophets by

commandment  
of the everlast-  
ing God, made  
known to all na-  
tions for the obe-  
dience of faith.”

the Spirit, that  
the Gentiles  
should be,” &c.

Eph. iii. 9, 10.  
—“The mystery  
which from the  
beginning of the  
world hath been  
hid... to the in-  
tent that now...  
might be known.”

Tit. i. 2, 3.—  
“Which God...  
before the world  
began” (peculiar  
and identical  
phrase); “but  
hath in due times  
manifested His  
word through  
preaching, which  
is committed un-  
to me according  
to the command-  
ment” (same  
word) “of God  
our Saviour.”

2 Tim. i. 9, 10.  
—“Which was  
given us... before  
the world began,  
but is now made  
manifest,” &c.

1 Tim. i. 17.—  
“Now unto the  
King eternal”  
(similar to “ever-  
lasting God”  
above), “the only  
wise God” (but  
“wise” is a  
doubtful read-  
ing), “be honour  
and glory for  
ever and ever.  
Amen.”

“To God only  
wise, be glory,  
through Jesus  
Christ for ever”  
(Greek, “for ever  
and ever”).  
“Amen.”

all. Amen. <sup>(25)</sup> Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept

secret since the world began, <sup>(26)</sup> but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all

<sup>(25)</sup> **Stablish**—*i.e.*, to confirm and strengthen in all the elements of a Christian character.

**According to my gospel.**—By those means of grace which the gospel that I preach indicates and enjoins you to use.

**My gospel.**—The gospel preached by me; the gospel preached as I preach it.

**And the preaching of Jesus Christ.**—And in accordance with that preaching, the subject matter of which is Christ. The establishment of the Roman Christians was to take place through those appointed ways and means that are laid down in the gospel, and form the main topic of Christian preaching. All means of grace centre in Christ, and it is only in accordance with the due proclamation of Him that the Christian can hope to become confirmed and strengthened.

**According to the revelation.**—An involved and difficult sentence. The two clauses which began with "according to" are co-ordinate together, and are both dependent upon the word "stablish" above. "May God establish and confirm you in all those ways that the gospel of Christ lays down; that gospel the introduction of which it has been reserved for these latter days to see; a secret long hidden, but now revealed, and corroborated as it is by the prophetic writings,

and preached by the Apostles at God's express command; the great instrument of bringing over the Gentiles to the faith."

**Of the mystery.**—The word "mystery" is used elsewhere in the New Testament precisely in the sense which is so clearly defined in this passage of something which up to the time of the Apostles had remained secret, but had then been made known by divine intervention. The "mystery" thus revealed is the same as that described in the two preceding clauses—in one word, Christianity. All through the Old Testament dispensation, the Christian scheme, which was then future, had remained hidden; now, with Christ's coming, the veil has been taken away.

**Since the world began.**—The English phrase here is paraphrastic. Literally, the Greek is *in eternal times*—*i.e.*, from this present moment, stretching backwards throughout eternity—an emphatic way of saying, "never before." "The Old Testament is the hand of a clock, proceeding silently round the dial—the New Testament is the striking of the hour" (Bengel).

<sup>(26)</sup> **But now is made manifest.**—The first clause of this verse goes with the last clause of the preceding "mystery," which before was kept secret, but now has been "made manifest." The rest of the

nations for the obedience of faith: <sup>(27)</sup> to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cencrea.

verse all hangs together: "this mystery, through the help of the corroboration which it derives from the prophets of the Old Testament, has, by God's command to us, the Apostles, been made known."

**By the scriptures of the prophets.**—Through the help of that appeal to prophecy which we are enabled to make.

**According to the commandment.**—That which had taken place according to the command of God was the making known of the gospel to the Gentiles, as *e.g.*, when Paul and Barnabas were specially "separated" for the work by the Holy Ghost.

**Made known to all nations.**—The word "to" has a little more stress laid upon it than would appear from the English, "made known so as to reach all nations."

**For the obedience of faith.**—An exact repetition of the phrase in chap. i. 5, "to win over the Gentiles unto the allegiance demanded of them by faith in Christ."

<sup>(27)</sup> **To God.**—Our English translation has evaded the difficulty of this verse by leaving out two words. The Greek stands literally thus, "To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever." "To whom," if it refers to God, as it is decidedly more probable that it was intended to refer, is ungrammatical. If it is inserted, the words "To him that is able . . . to God, the only wise," are left without government. This might, indeed, under ordinary circum-

stances, be got over, as such broken constructions are frequent with St. Paul, but it is somewhat different in the last solemn words of an Epistle, and would be especially so if this doxology were composed by itself separately from the rest of the Epistle. There would not then be the usual excuse of haste; and for so short a passage it may be doubted whether the Apostle would even employ an amanuensis. The difficulty is heightened when we ask what is meant by the phrase, "through Jesus Christ." Separated, as it would then be, from the ascription of glory, and joined to "the only wise God," it would seem to be impossible to get any really satisfactory sense out of it: "To God, who through Christ has shown Himself as the alone wise," is maintained, but is surely very forced. Our conclusion then, prior to the evidence, would be that there was a mistake in the reading, and that the words "to whom" had slipped in without warrant. And now we find that a single uncial MS., but that precisely the oldest and best of all the uncials, the *Codex Vaticanus*, with two cursives, omits these words. The suspicion would indeed naturally arise that they had been left out specially on account of their difficulty. But this is a suspicion from which, on the whole, the Vatican MS. is peculiarly free. And, on the other hand, it is just as natural to assume that another common cause of corruption has been at work. Doxologies so

frequently begin with the relative, "To whom be glory," &c., that the copyist would be liable to fall into the phrase, even in places where it was not originally written. The probabilities of corruption may therefore be taken to balance each other, and it will seem, perhaps, on the whole, the most probable solution that the relative has really slipped in at a very early date, and

that the English version as it stands is substantially right. There are some exceptions to the rule that "the more difficult reading is to be preferred," and this is perhaps one.

The subscription in its present form hardly dates back beyond the ninth century. The earliest form of subscription up to the sixth century was simply "To the Romans."

## EXCURSUS ON NOTES TO ROMANS.

### EXCURSUS A: ON THE MEANING OF THE WORD "RIGHTEOUSNESS" IN THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

RIGHTEOUSNESS is necessarily the object of all religions. Religion exists in order to set men right before God, to place them in that relation in which He would have them be, to make them secure of His favour and fit to perform His service.

The conception of "righteousness" entered in a special and peculiar way into the religion of the Jews at the time of our Lord. The word had a clearly-defined sense, which was somewhat narrower than that usually attached to it. It meant, not so much the subjective condition of righteousness—that disposition of the heart and mind which necessarily leads to righteous actions—as the objective fact of acting in accordance with the divine commands. Righteousness was the *fulfilling of the Law*. From what kind of motive the Law was fulfilled the Jew did not stay to enquire. The main point with him was that the Commandments of the Law should be kept, and that having thus fulfilled his share in the compact he could lay claim to the blessings which the divine covenant promised.

As might have been expected, the idea of "righteousness" holding so prominent a place in Jewish teaching generally, held an equally prominent place in that group of ideas which centered in the Messiah.

Righteousness was to be the main characteristic of the Messianic reign. This appears distinctly in the *pre-* and *post-* Christian Jewish literature. Thus the Sibylline Books (*circ.* B.C. 140): "For all good order shall come upon men from the starry heaven, and righteous dealing, and with it holy concord, which for mortals excels all things, and love, faith, hospitality. And from them shall flee lawlessness, blame, envy, anger, folly." "And in righteousness, having obtained the law of the Most High, they shall dwell happily in cities and rich fields." The Book of Enoch (B.C. 150—100): "God will be gracious to the righteous, and give him eternal righteousness, and give him dominion, and he shall be in goodness and righteousness, and walk in eternal light. And some shall go down into darkness for ever and ever, and shall no more appear from that day for ever." The Psalms of Solomon (*circ.* B.C. 48): "He shall not suffer unrighteousness to lodge in the midst of them, and there shall not dwell with them any man who knows wickedness." The Book of Jubilees (before A.D. 70): "After this they will turn to me in all righteousness, with all their heart and all their soul, and I will circumcise their heart and the heart of their seed, and will make for them a holy spirit and purify them,

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that they may no more turn away from me from that day for ever." The Fourth Book of Ezra (perhaps A.D. 80 or 97): "The heart of the inhabitants of the world shall be changed, and turned into another mind. For evil shall be destroyed, and quite extinguished; but faith shall flourish, and corruption be overcome, and truth, which for so long a time was without fruit, shall be displayed."

But the righteousness of the Messianic period was to be as much ceremonial as moral. The Sibyl prophesied that there was to be "a sacred race of pious men, devoted to the counsels and mind of the Most High, who round about it will glorify the temple of the great God with libation and savour of victims, and with sacred hecatombs and sacrifices of well-fed bulls, and perfect rams, and firstlings of the sheep, and purely presenting on a great altar fat flocks of lambs as whole burnt offerings." The Book of Jubilees declares circumcision to be "an everlasting ordinance," and insists upon the obligation of eating the tithe of all produce before the Lord: "It has been established as a law in heaven;" "for this law there is no end of days; that ordinance is written down for ever." The Targum of Isaiah directly connects the Messianic advent with the triumph of the Law: "At that time the Messiah of the Lord shall be for joy and for glory, and the doers of the Law for magnificence and for praise;" "they shall look upon the kingdom of their Messiah, . . . and the doers of the Law of the Lord shall prosper in His good pleasure."

Christianity took the conception of righteousness as it stood in the current Jewish beliefs, but gave to

it a profounder significance. Much as the Jews insisted upon righteousness, our Lord insisted upon it still more. The righteousness of the Christian was to surpass that of the Jew, both in its amount and in its nature: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." In exposition of this principle, our Lord proceeds to show by a series of examples how the righteousness, which had hitherto been outward, should become inward, and extend to the inmost thoughts and disposition of the heart. At the same time He proposed Himself as the personal object of the religious life. His invitation was, "Come unto Me;" and His reproach was, "Ye will not come unto Me."

St. Paul arrives at the same result, but in a different way. He, too, took as his starting-point the Jewish conception of righteousness. What impressed him most in it was the impossibility that it could really be carried out. It was impossible to keep the whole law, but to transgress it at all was to transgress it, and so to forfeit the Divine favour. But if righteousness was not to be obtained by the Law, how was it to be obtained? It was to this question that Christianity supplied the great solution through the doctrine of the Messiahship of Jesus. Jesus is the Messiah. With His coming the Messianic reign is begun. But the characteristic of that reign is righteousness. Therefore, by becoming a member of the Messianic kingdom, the Christian enters into a condition of righteousness. This righteousness is, in the first instance, ideal rather than actual. In the language of St. Paul,

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it is "imputed." It does not necessarily involve a real fulfilment of the Divine Law, but the sincere Christian, by virtue of the relation into which he enters with Christ, is treated as if he had fulfilled it. He has recovered his lost state of favour with God.

This is, however, only the beginning of his career. The simple entrance into the Messianic kingdom carries with it so much. But the whole of the Christian's life, as a member of the kingdom, is to be a constantly increasing realisation in his own walk and conduct of the ideal righteousness at first attributed to him. This realisation takes place through the same agency as that by which he first entered into the kingdom—faith. Faith, by intensifying his hold upon Christ, gives him a greater and ever greater power to overcome the impulses of sin and adopt the life of Christ as his own. Hence the Apostle speaks of the righteousness of God being revealed "from faith to faith," meaning that faith ends as well as begins the career of the Christian, and that it is the one faculty that he is called upon to exercise all through.

And yet all the righteousness to which the Christian attains—whether it is as ideal and imputed, or whether it is seen and realised in a course of action consistent with his profession—all this comes to him as a part of his Messianic privileges. He would not have it unless he were a member of the Messianic kingdom. It is not his own making, but he is placed within reach of it by virtue of his participation in the Messianic scheme. Inasmuch, therefore, as that scheme is, in all its parts, a divine act, and the working out of the divine counsel, the righteousness of the Christian is described as a "righteousness of God," i.e., a righteousness *proceeding from God*—a state produced by divine intervention, and not by human means. The whole scheme is planned and set in motion by God, man's part consisting in taking to himself what God has prepared for him; and merely to do this involves a life-long effort and a constant call upon the will.

[The references to the Jewish Messianic idea in this Excursus are taken from Prof. Drummond's work, *The Jewish Messiah*, pp. 323—326.]

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### EXCURSUS B: ON THE MEANING OF THE WORD "FAITH."

Faith is the distinctively Christian faculty. So far as concerns the apprehension by man of the divine scheme of salvation, it is the cardinal point in Christian theology. And that it occupies this place is due more than anything else to the teaching of St. Paul.

If we ask how St. Paul himself arrived at his conception of "faith," the answer would seem to be, From reflection upon certain passages of the Old Testament Scripture, seen in the light of his own religious experience.

There were two passages in



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which faith was brought into direct connection with ideas that lay at the root of all Jewish theology. In Habakkuk ii. 4, "The just shall live by his faith," faith was associated with life—*i.e.*, salvation. In Gen. xv. 6, the faith of Abraham was said to be "imputed to him for righteousness." Faith was here associated with another idea, the importance of which we have just seen—that of righteousness. There appears to be sufficient evidence to show that this second text was one much discussed in the Jewish schools both of Alexandria and of Palestine. It is, therefore, very possible that the attention of the Apostle may have been turned to it before his conversion.

But what was the Faith which thus brought with it righteousness and salvation? The answer to this question was furnished to St. Paul by his own religious experience. His own consciousness of a complete revolution wrought within him dated from the time when he accepted Jesus as the Messiah. That one change, he felt, had worked wonders. It placed him in an altogether different relation to his old difficulties. Righteousness was no more impossible to him. If he found a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, he could "thank God through Jesus Christ his Lord." But, apart from this, without any actual righteousness of his own, the mere fact of being assured that he was a member of the Messianic kingdom was enough to give him confidence that righteousness in some sense or other was his. He felt himself bound up with a system of which righteousness was the characteristic. As a member of that system he, too, must be righteous. But that

which made him a member of this system was the heartfelt acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus. And to this acceptance St. Paul gave the name of Faith. Faith, however, was with him, not a single act which began and ended in itself, it was a continued state—an active energy of loyalty and devotion directed towards Jesus as the Messiah.

Faith in the Old Testament had meant "trust," "reliance"—a firm reliance upon God, and confidence in the fulfilment of His promises. When a similar feeling was entertained towards a definite human person, who had exhibited a character in the highest degree winning and attractive, and who had ended a life of self-sacrifice by a nobly and pathetically self-sacrificing death, it was natural that these emotions should develop into something still stronger. Trust became devotion. Passive reliance strengthened into an ardent and energetic service. The strongest feeling that could bind the soldiers of an army to their captain had its place here. Love, veneration, gratitude, devoted loyalty—all were blended into a single feeling, and that feeling was what St. Paul meant by faith.

As life went on, and the tie which bound the Christian to Christ was tested by experience, faith became stronger and stronger. Its object being personal, it became more and more concentrated on that Person. By degrees it took a different shape. It brought the Christian so closely within the influence of his Master, it led to such an assimilation of his life to his Master's, that something nearer and more intimate had to be found to express the nature of the relation

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between them. St. Paul speaks of it as if it were an actual union—a oneness, or fellowship with Christ. But the agency which brings about this union is Faith—the same faith which began with the simple historical affirmation, “Jesus is the Messiah.” When once the Messiahship of Jesus was recognised, the rest all followed by natural train and sequence. The last per-

fection of Christian character is connected with its first initial step, just as the full-blown flower is connected with the germ that first appears above the ground. Its existence is continuous. The forces which give it vitality are the same. And the forces which give vitality to the religious life of the Christian are summed up in the one word, Faith.

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### EXCURSUS C: ON THE STATE OF THE HEATHEN WORLD AT THE TIME OF ST. PAUL.

In regard to the terrible description of the state of the heathen world, given at the end of chap. i., two questions may be asked: (1) How far does it correspond with what we gather from other sources? (2) Supposing the picture to be in the main a true one, do the causes and process of corruption appear to have been such as the Apostle describes?

(1) No doubt, if we take the evidence that has come down to us simply as it stands, there is enough to justify the very strongest language. But some considerations, perhaps, may be urged in mitigation of this.

(a) Our knowledge of the state of morals in that age is largely derived from the satirists. But it may be said that satire has never been quite a fair index of the average state of things. By the nature of the case it seeks out that which is extravagant and abnormal. It deals with exceptions rather than with the rule. And even where it exposes not so much the vices and follies of an individual as those

prevailing over a larger section of society, it still presupposes a higher standard of judgment in the public to which it appeals. It assumes that what it reprehends will be generally held to be reprehensible. It would not be able to hold its ground at all unless it could calculate upon the support of the sounder portion of the community.

(b) Accordingly we find that many of the worst forms of corruption are mentioned only to be condemned. It was “burning indignation” which inspired the verse of Juvenal. Historians like Tacitus, moralists like Seneca, Epictetus, and M. Aurelius, lift up their voice to condemn the depravity of the age. Horace, though without being a Puritan himself, complains how the generation to which he belonged had degenerated from their ancestors. Ovid and Martial are obliged to defend themselves against the charge of indecency that was evidently brought against them by some of their contemporaries. Stringent laws were in existence, if seldom enforced, against some of the

crimes of which the satires are fullest. And there was a point beyond which the toleration of law and of opinion would not go. Witness the summary punishment that followed upon the discovery of a gross scandal perpetrated in the temple of Isis. The guilty persons were banished, the priests crucified, the temple razed to the ground, and the statue of the goddess flung into the river. It is only fair to state both sides of the question. If the idolatrous worship led to such things, the judgment of mankind was at least not so far perverted that wrong could be done with impunity.

(c) Nor was this altogether a hypocritical condemnation. There are some conspicuous exceptions to the general corruption. It may be doubted whether any age can produce examples of a more consistent and earnest pursuit of the highest accessible standard than were afforded by Plutarch, Epictetus, and M. Aurelius. If we estimate them, not so much by the positive value of the morality to which they attained as by the strength of their aim and effort to realise a lofty ideal, these men will not easily be equalled. Again, Cicero, Atticus, the younger Pliny, may be taken as types of the cultivated gentlemen of their day, and they would have had a high place even in our own time. The emperors occupied a position singularly open to temptation, and no less than five of them in succession would have done honour to any throne. The pages of the historian which describe the decline of political and social morals are, nevertheless, lighted up with deeds of heroism and ancient Roman virtue. The women emulated the men. Occasionally, as in the case of the elder Arria, they surpassed

them. But many others showed a constancy broken only by death. Descending to lower ranks, the inscriptions tell us not a few touching stories of conjugal fidelity and affection. "She was dearer to me than my life; she died in her twenty-third year, greatly beloved by her friends." "To my dearest wife, with whom I lived for eighteen years, without a complaint." "She never caused me a pang but by her death." "I have done for thee those sad rites which thou shouldst have done for me, and which I know not who will do now." Nor are there wanting in ancient literature touches of domestic felicity which show those times to have been akin to that which is best in our own. We are apt to forget that to a Latin poet is due the original of that familiar scene in the *Cotter's Saturday Night*, and in Gray's *Elegy*—

"For them no more the blazing hearth  
shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening  
care."

And the Latin version is the finest of the three—the most intense and the most real.

(d) Besides these considerations, if we look at certain aspects of modern life—at the court of Charles II. or Louis. XV., or at some phenomena among ourselves—the contrast with ancient heathenism may seem less striking.

And yet the darker view of the ancient world is, it is to be feared, on the whole the true one.

It is not by any means the satirist alone from whom the evidence is derived. The Christian apologists in the early centuries accumulate charges which they would not have ventured to publish unless they had

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been largely supported by facts. The satirists themselves are most damaging when, like Horace, they write with careless ease, evidently taking what they describe as a matter of course. And the evidence thus obtained is confirmed beyond dispute or question by the monumental remains that have come down to us.

It will not be denied that, after all deductions, the standard has been greatly raised. Even Cicero, like Plato and Aristotle before him, accepts much that is now condemned. And even men like Antoninus and Trajan fall short when judged by a Christian standard, especially on the points to which St. Paul is referring.

But it is the condition of the masses that the Apostle has chiefly in view. The elevation of individuals through the gradual development of a purer form of ethics and philosophy, was part of the wide preparation for the gospel which God in His providence had been working. It must not be thought that He had left Himself without witness in the heathen world. The witness was there, and it was listened to by some in every age, while there were more who, under the same divine guidance, were groping their way towards one or another portion of the truth. St. Paul directly contemplates such a class when he speaks of those who "having not the law, are a law unto themselves."

Judging, however, not by these, but by the average condition of mankind, there can be no doubt that modern society in Christian countries does really represent a great improvement upon ancient. And if the exceptions are only too widespread and too glaring, it must

be remembered that the success of Christianity, as of every other belief, has always a limit in the free-will of man. The question is *not*, Has Christianity made the world virtuous; but, Does it *tend* to make men virtuous so far as they are Christians? These are two quite distinct things. Instances, such as the court of Charles II. or of Louis XV., may be quoted as showing how difficult it is for Christianity to take a real root and hold upon men; but they are no proof that, having taken hold, it is ineffectual. Experience proves to us the contrary. Human nature is much the same as ever it was. It is open to the same temptations; it has the same evil tendencies now as ever. In many instances the Christian motive still does not come in to check these tendencies; but where it does come in, it is the strongest restraining force known, and if it should lose its power, there seems none that is at all likely to take its place.

(2) On the second point, the relation of idolatry to immorality and the gradual stages of moral corruption, it may be observed that St. Paul does not regard the question, as has been done in modern times, historically, but ideally. Historically, there may be distinguished a double process. It is hardly to be said that idolatry is a corruption of natural religion. It is rather a stage by which man gradually arrives at natural religion. Anthropomorphism lies on the upward road from fetichism to a pure monotheism. But, on the other hand, it is equally true that idolatry has almost universally had those debasing accompaniments—ever more and more debased—which the Apostle describes. The

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primitive religions, though of a cruder form intellectually, have been of a purer form morally. The old Roman or Spartan simplicity was not merely a dream of later times. Crude, rude, and coarse it was; but it had not the special and still worse vices of a more advanced civilisation. That which brought to a few select spirits gain, brought to the masses greater loss. And here again it is at the masses that St. Paul is looking. His Rabbi-

nical education probably had not made him acquainted to any great extent with the nobler efforts of philosophy, while the gross material sensualism of the masses was brought vividly and palpably before him. He was writing at this moment from Corinth, a city notorious for the licentiousness of its idol worship, and we cannot wonder that he should see in the abominations by which he was surrounded the worst and latest development of evil.

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### EXCURSUS D: ON THE PROPITIATORY SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.

The chief "stumbling-block" which had in the first instance prevented St. Paul from becoming a Christian was the death of Christ upon the cross. Like the rest of his countrymen, he could not reconcile himself to the idea of a suffering Messiah. Nor would it seem that he had got over this difficulty at the moment of his conversion. The order of his thoughts was not "The Messiah was to suffer: Jesus suffered, therefore Jesus is the Messiah;" but rather, "Jesus is the Messiah: therefore a suffering Messiah is possible." The vision upon the road to Damascus convinced him once for all of the Messiahship of Jesus; and that great fact being assumed, all his previous difficulties had to be brought into harmony with it.

The question then arose, How was the death of Christ to be interpreted? What could be the significance of the death of the Messiah? As is usually the case with intellectual difficulties, where they

are fairly faced and not evaded, the answer to this was found to give a much deeper and clearer insight into a number of collateral questions.

The root idea which supplied the key to these difficulties was that of *sacrifice*. The death of the Messiah was of the nature of a sacrifice.

Our Lord Himself had given an intimation of this. In words, which we know to have been familiar to St. Paul, He had given to His own death a sacrificial meaning. At the last Paschal Feast, when the cup was handed round, He had bidden His disciples drink it, on the ground "This cup is the new testament" (rather, *covenant*) "in My blood." The allusion to the new covenant recalled the ceremony which had inaugurated the old. Upon his return from the mount, Moses offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings unto the Lord. "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord

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hath made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. xxiv. 8). The first covenant was ratified with the shedding of blood; the second covenant was also to be ratified with the shedding of blood, but in this case not with the blood of calves and of goats, but with nothing less than the blood of the Messiah Himself.

The shedding of blood had a second aspect, to which our Lord had also made allusion. It was the appointed means of making atonement for sin. "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11). In accordance with this principle of the Mosaic Law, our Lord had spoken of His own life as given to be "a ransom for many" (Mark x. 45), and of His own blood as "shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28).

Here, then, were the main outlines of the doctrine of the significance of the death of Christ already laid down. The Apostle found it easy to adapt them to his own theological system.

He taught that the Coming of Christ was the inauguration of the Messianic reign. The condition of that reign was to be righteousness, and, as he himself taught, all who became members of the Messianic kingdom necessarily entered into a state of righteousness. But from what was this state of righteousness derived? What was it that made the Messiah's presence diffuse righteousness around it? It was the shedding of His cleansing blood. By that blood the new covenant was sealed, a new compact was inaugurated, and once more

His followers, the children of the kingdom, became "an holy nation, a peculiar people."

Another train of thought led the Apostle to the same result. He was much addicted to metaphysical speculation, and a difficulty presented itself to his mind founded upon the nature of the divine attributes. The justice of God required the punishment of sin. How then could God still be just if that punishment were remitted? How could these two things—justice and remission—be reconciled? The middle term by which they were reconciled was the propitiatory death of Christ. As under the old Law the death of the victim was accepted instead of the death of the sinner, so in the public exhibition of the death of Christ God had given clear proof that His own attribute of justice remained unimpaired. If the accumulated load of human guilt had brought down no adequate penalty, it was not because the justice of God really slept, but because it was reserving itself for one signal manifestation. That done, its mission was absolved; no further sacrifice was needed either for sins past or for sins future.

The idea of sacrifice borrowed directly from the Levitical legislation is thus too deeply ingrained in the Apostle's system to be got rid of as a merely passing metaphor. In laying the stress upon it that he does, St. Paul is at one with our Lord Himself, with St. Peter and St. John, the "pillar Apostles." Nor can the idea be eliminated from Christian theology without serious loss. The moral and spiritual greatness of St. Paul rests less upon his labours for Christ than upon the spirit in which he underwent them. It was no working

out of his own righteousness, no self-complacent survey of his own achievements; it was not the shallow confidence of one who makes light of his own sinfulness because he has never learnt to feel the true character of sin. The attitude of St. Paul is just the opposite of this. He has an almost oppressive consciousness of his own weakness and helplessness. But just where these are felt most deeply the grace of God intervenes. The deliverance is wrought for him by a power outside himself. There is no danger of his boasting, for he acknowledges no merit in his triumph. It is just his very helplessness which brings him relief from above. "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 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, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." This was not said in the first instance quite strictly of the atoning sacrifice, but it represents the habitual attitude of mind of one to whom the sense of that atonement was ever present. "All for me, nothing by me;" "no merit of my own;" "my extremity, God's opportunity," is the language such a one would use. And we cannot but feel that this is really

the very loftiest Christian temper. The modern deification of humanity and boasted perfectibility of human nature is shallow and flippant by the side of it. The very paradox marks its grandeur—*When I am weak, then am I strong.*

Nor when we rise to a really elevated and comprehensive view of the dealings of Providence with man do the difficulties in the doctrine of sacrifice appear what they were. If they do not disappear altogether, they at least retire into the background. When we accept the lessons taught by the theory of evolution, and prepare ourselves to see the divine action stretching over vast tracts of space and immense periods of time, and leading up through a number of rudimentary forms to some culminating phenomenon, in the light of such broad, general principles the ancient sacrificial rites of Jew and Gentile acquire a new significance. To a dispassionate view no widely diffused institution like this can be called common or unclean. If at certain times and places the forms of sacrifice appear rude, gross, distorted, and even monstrous, this is only what takes place in nature on its way upwards to higher forms of being. In the spiritual world, as in the physical, the rudimentary existence comes first, but the philosopher looking back upon them sees in them traces of the divine plan; and he will be ready enough to admit that when the whole of that plan (so far as its extent is concerned) seems to be unrolled before him, there may still be much that he cannot fully grasp and comprehend. "These are parts of His ways, but how little a portion is heard of Him? but the thunder of His power who can understand?"

## EXCURSUS.

### EXCURSUS E: ON THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH AND IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

St. Paul treats the case of Abraham as a typical case. The text which spoke of the acceptance that was given to Abraham's faith he takes as laying down a law for all believers. The faith of Abraham was imputed to him for righteousness, and St. Paul elevates this into a general principle. Wherever there is genuine faith, it is "imputed for righteousness."

The metaphor in the word "imputed" is commercial, from the balancing of accounts. Strictly speaking, in order for a man's account to stand right before God, there ought to be placed to his credit "righteousness," or a complete fulfilment of the divine law. But, in the case of the believer, his faith is taken *in lieu of* righteousness. It is treated as an equivalent to it, and has the same effect of setting the account right before God.

Stated in this bare and naked way, in the dry form of a scholastic definition, it is not unnatural that this doctrine should have given rise to some objections. How, it may be asked, can righteousness be imputed? It is of the very essence of righteousness that it should be thoroughly real and genuine. A fictitious righteousness is no righteousness at all.

It may be well to observe in

passing that the faith of the Christian is treated as equivalent to righteousness specially in regard to its *effect*. It has the same effect of clearing the account which has to go before the divine tribunal. It is not said that faith takes the place of righteousness in any other way.

When we go back to St. Paul's conception of faith, we shall see that, so far from being the substitute for righteousness in any sense which would seem to diminish the worth of righteousness as an element in the Christian life, it is rather a safeguard and security for it. By faith St. Paul meant an ardent and enthusiastic adhesion to One who was Himself without sin. Faith carried to its full extent involved an assimilation to this ideal character. What better guarantee could possibly be given for a consistently righteous conduct? And the righteousness which springs from faith must needs be as much superior to that which proceeds from the works of the Law as the finest and highest personal devotion is superior to the narrow and mechanical performance of rules. Thus, in the very act of seeming to discard righteousness, the theology of St. Paul really secured a better righteousness than the best of that which was known to the scribes and Pharisees.



## EXCURSUS.

### EXCURSUS F: ON ST. PAUL'S VIEW OF THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF MANKIND.

One striking feature of the Epistle to the Romans is the broad view that it takes of the course of human history. It is, indeed, a philosophy of history considered in its religious aspects; and, as such, it presents much that has but recently found its way into ethical systems.

St. Paul may be said to divide the history of man into four, or, perhaps, rather, three periods. The first is the period prior to all law, when the moral principles are in process of forming and are not yet fully formed. In this stage, though there may be wrong action (*i.e.*, action which is wrong if judged by an objective standard), it does not amount to sin, or carry with it a subjective consciousness of guilt, because it does not involve a breach of law. This would correspond very much to what is now called by moralists the period of "unconscious morality." St. Paul would make, however, just one exception to the absence of positive law, and therefore of sin in this period. Adam sinned against a positive precept, and that was why his sin entailed a penal consequence—death, which extended also to his descendants, though they had not broken any positive command.

The next great period is that of Law. The Jew was brought under this by the giving of the Mosaic law, the Gentile by the gradual development of the law of nature. Conscience by degrees acquired fixed principles, and the contemplation of the external world brought some

knowledge of God. This period had not a hard and fast beginning. With the Gentile it was the result of a gradual process; with the Jew, though the Law was given from Sinai at a definite moment of time, there was still before this a similar process going on to that exemplified in the Gentile. Though not actually under the Law, the patriarch Abraham could not be said to be quite without law. He belonged rather to the margin between the two periods, where the one was passing into the other. In this interval then must be placed the giving of the Promise.

The Law had not its proper and normal effect of producing conformity to the divine will. It was found only to serve to increase and enhance transgressions. The result of the whole period of Law was a general and complete corruption both of Jew and Gentile. This paved the way for the introduction of the Messianic system. The kingdom of the Messiah was founded upon earth; and though the Jews did not take advantage of their privileged position to enroll themselves in it, it was entered largely by the Gentiles. The exclusion of the Jews was, however, not to be final. When they too had been admitted the kingdom would be complete, and the Messiah would return to take it under His direct and personal reign.

The distribution of these periods may be concisely printed in a tabular form:—

## EXCURSUS.

### RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF THE WORLD FROM THE CREATION TO THE SECOND COMING OF THE MESSIAH.

Jews.

Gentiles.

Period I.—State of Primitive Innocence prior to Law (chaps. iv. 15; vii. 7—9).

Broken by the sin of Adam, which entailed death upon his descendants (chap. v. 12), though, strictly speaking, there could be no guilt where there was no law (chap. v. 13, 14).

[*The Promise.*

*Ratified by circumcision* (chap. iv. 11).

*Pre-Messianic privileges of Israel* (chaps. iii. 1, 2; iv. 1, 13; ix. 4, 5).]

Period II.—State of Law.

Law of Moses.

Law of Nature.

Effects of the Law: (1) to enhance guilt by making sin the transgression of positive commandment; (2) to provoke to sin through the perversity of human nature straining after that which is forbidden (chaps. iii. 20; v. 20; vii. 5, 7—11, 13).

Knowledge of God imprinted on conscience, or on the external order of things (chaps. i. 19, 20; ii. 14, 15).

This knowledge lost: (1) by self-willed speculations leading to idolatry; (2) idolatry leading to unnatural crimes; (3) these leading to other and yet other sins (chap. i. 21—32).

Universal wickedness of mankind (chaps. i. 21; iii. 19, 23).

A revelation of divine wrath (chaps. i. 18; xi. 32).

### THE MESSIANIC ADVENT.

Jews.

Gentiles.

Period III.—First stage. A revelation of righteousness proceeding from God (chaps. i. 17; iii. 21—26).

This righteousness is the essential character of the Messianic kingdom obtained for it by the death of Christ, whose one righteous act is thus set against the one sin of Adam (chap. v. 15—21).

The Messianic righteousness is offered alike to Jew and Gentile (chaps. i. 16; ii. 28, 29; iii. 29, 30; iv. 11, 12; v. 18; x. 12).

Attachment to Christ involved release from the Law (chaps. vii. 1—6; viii. 2, 3; x. 4).

[*The Promise fulfilled not to the literal but to the spiritual descendants of Abraham, whether Jew or Gentile* (chap. ix. 6—9).]

## EXCURSUS.

### The offer of Messianic righteousness

Rejected in the main by the Jews (chaps. x. 3, 21 ; xi. 7).

Accepted by the Gentiles.

Object of this, not only the salvation of the Gentiles, but also to provoke the Jews to emulation (chap. xi. 11—16).

Final restoration of the Jews (chap. xi. 26—29, 31).

Making up of the full complement of the Gentile Church (chap. xi. 25).

Universal admission to the divine mercy (chap. xi. 32).

Second stage.—Reappearance of the Messiah, and completion of His kingdom (chap. viii. 18—21).

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## EXCURSUS G: ON THE DOCTRINE OF UNION WITH CHRIST.

We have seen that faith, or the feeling of personal attachment to the Messiah, when it has had time to deepen and strengthen, attains to such a degree of closeness, and involves so complete an assimilation of the believer to his Lord, that it comes to be called by another name—that of oneness, or fellowship. Looking back over his career, the Apostle saw that the decisive step, to which all this later development was due, had been taken when he first entered the Messianic community. It was then that he assumed that relation to Christ in which all the rest was implicitly contained. But this first decisive step was itself ratified by an outward act. Baptism was the mark of admission to membership in the Messianic kingdom. Baptism and faith went together. The one was the inward apprehension of the Messiahship of Jesus, the other was the outward confession of adhesion to Him. The convert was baptised *into Christ*. Something of

the later feeling, which arose from a clearer contemplation of the object of Christian worship and longer experience of the spiritual realities of Christian life, was reflected back upon this phrase. It came to imply something of that mystical communion which was potentially latent in that relation to Christ with the assumption of which it was connected. The believer who was baptised “into Christ,” if he was not at once conscious of that closer relation, was sure to become so sooner or later, if his belief was real and vital. That the formula of admission should have somewhat of an ideal character is only in harmony with what all forms are, and ought to be, and with the consistent language of the Apostle himself. Forms for general use should rise to the level of the best of those who can possibly come under them, and not be written down to the level of the worst. They represent standards to be aimed at, rather than measures of

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what is attained ; and even for those who conspicuously fall beneath them, they serve as a stimulus and reminder of better things.

But baptism had also another aspect. It was a mark not only of the assumption of something new, but of the giving up of something old. At the time when St. Paul wrote it in most cases accompanied conversion. It meant the giving up of heathen or Jewish practices, repentance for past sins, and a more or less complete change of life. It meant, besides, an admission to the Messianic privileges and immunities, including more especially the "righteousness" which was to be the characteristic of the children of the kingdom. This putting off of the old and putting on of the new was symbolised by the immersion in water. The process was one of spiritual cleansing. The conscious effort of the human will, and the divine influences of the Messianic kingdom, both converged upon this one point. Heathenism, Judaism, and the carelessness of life which went with either, were laid aside, and the white robe of Christian righteousness (ideal, or in part actual) was put on.

Now there was another act, the symbolism of which coincided almost exactly with that of baptism. Death is a change from one state to another ; it is a putting off of the old and a putting on of the new. But death—a death—the death of Christ—assumed a most important part in that system of things into which the Christian at his baptism entered. It had won for him that "righteousness" which he was to put on ; it had removed for him that curse of the law which he hoped to escape. Was it strange, then, that St. Paul, instead of de-

scribing the object of baptism in the usual terms, as a baptism into Christ, should describe it specially as a baptism "into the death of Christ" ? And having done this, was it strange that he should apply the symbolism of death in the same way in which he would have applied those of cleansing or ablu-tion, and in connection with his teaching as to the union of the Christian with his Saviour ? All these three elements enter into the passage on which what has been here said is a comment : " Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death ? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into (His) death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life " (Rom. vi. 3, 4). The conclusion is hortatory and ethical ; we are to walk in newness of life. This is based upon the relation of intimate union into which we were brought at our baptism with Christ. But mingled with the argument from the nature of this union, is one based upon the notion which the idea of baptism and of death implied—the necessity of total and complete change. In modern language we should call this a metaphor. In the language of St. Paul it becomes something more than metaphor, through its connection with the mystical doctrine of union—a doctrine which stands side by side with the other great doctrine of the Epistle, that of justification by faith. We have seen how the one passes into the other, and how between them they cover the whole of the Christian career.

It should be observed that the more elaborate teaching of chap.

viii. is all an extension of this doctrine of union. The union of the Christian with Christ, as seen from another side, is the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in the Christian. That indwelling, when fully realised, must needs bring with it holiness of life. It is a testimony to the inclusion of the Christian in the Messianic scheme, and to his close relation to the Messiah. But the Messiah is none other than the Son of God. The Christian, therefore, partakes in His Sonship. He, too, is a child, if not by birth, yet by adoption; and his filial relation to God assures to him the inheritance

of the fulness of the Messianic blessings. It gives to his prayers all that touching tenderness and efficacy of appeal which belong to the petitions of a child to its father. It establishes a bond of peculiar sympathy within the Godhead itself, so that even its most inarticulate yearnings find an intercessor as well as a response. The terms in which the Apostle expresses the nature of this sympathy and of this intercession, carry us up to those fine relations of the Spirit of God to the spirit of man, and to the Essence of the Godhead, where it is well that definition should cease.

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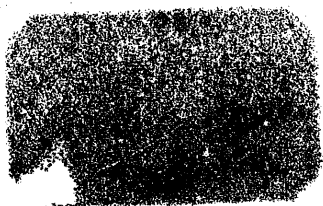
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