

The “Wretched Man” and His Deliverance

(ROMANS 7)

(1910)

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Philip Mauro almost exclusively used the Authorized Version (King James Version) unless he specifically referred to the Revised Version, the American Revised Version (later known as the American Standard Version) or even in places to the Rotherham Version to illustrate a particular point. The use of the Authorized Version was retained throughout this work.

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PREFACE

The purpose which the writer had in mind when he began writing this volume was to put before devout readers and students of God’s Word an explanation of the conflict between the “mind” and the “flesh” so vividly depicted in the seventh chapter of Romans. In attempting, however, to carry out this purpose, it was found necessary to discuss, to some extent at least, the contents of the four preceding chapters, and also the opening verses of Chapter 8. The various threads of doctrine running through this important section of the Word are so interlaced that the attempt to trace out any one of them requires that some notice be taken of the others

The conflict between the mind and the flesh occurs in that portion of the epistle which is devoted to the doctrine concerning SIN AND DEATH. This section begins at Chapter 5:12, and extends to Chapter 8:13. In these few chapters we have teaching of a fundamental character upon the weighty subjects of Sin, Death, the Old Man, the New Man, Adam’s Disobedience, Christ’s Obedience, Law, Grace, Eternal Life, the Mind, the Flesh, the Mortal Body, and other matters. The teaching on these subjects is packed so closely into these chapters as to demand for its elucidation the exercise of much patience, diligence and care, under the direction of the Spirit of God — without which all effort to that end would be fruitless. This portion of the Word is like a fabulously rich mine, in which many precious minerals are blended together in such manner as to require, for their proper separation, a knowledge of the materials to be dealt with, and also the application of much diligence, patience, and industry.

Furthermore, in the order of the teaching followed in Romans, the subject of deliverance from SIN comes after the subject of justification from SINS; and the former must be carefully distinguished from the latter. Deliverance from *sin* is a distinct and very different matter from the justification of the sinner from his *sins*, though the difference is frequently overlooked. In order, therefore, to study intelligently the subject of deliverance from the servitude of *sin* and the dominion of *death* (which is the consequence of sin, not of sins), we must first study the subject of justification from sins.

Again, the deliverance of the justified sinner from the despotism of sin (which deliverance is effected by taking him out of the territory over which sin reigns) is, in God’s perfect order of procedure in grace, the preliminary or preparation for a “walk” in the energy and manifestation of a *supernatural life*, that is to say, that new kind of human life which is possessed by the Risen Man, Jesus Christ. God’s immediate purpose for justified sinners is that “*like as Christ was raised from the dead, even so we should walk in newness of life*” (6:4).

This brings us to the subject of the occupation and use by the Spirit of God of the “mortal body” and its “members.” The incidents attending the occupation of the *old* premises (the mortal body) by the *new* man are full of interest and of *immediate* and *practical* importance. The writer has deemed it desirable to give a rather extended consideration to the topic of the mortal body — the habitation temporarily occupied by the child of God — and to the share which, for a little time, that body has in the results of redemption. A sober consideration of this subject is especially needful in this day, which is characterized on one hand by fanatical and unscriptural systems of “healing” that are making their appearance in circles professedly Christian and on the other by rash and profane experimentation with the marvelous mechanism of the human body in the domain of empirical medical science.

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A LITERAL TRANSLATION OF PORTIONS OF ROMANS DISCUSSED IN THIS VOLUME

In order to give all possible help to the reader in studying the portion of Scripture examined in this volume, we give below a literal translation, taken from *The Englishman's Greek New Testament*, Samuel Bagster & Sons, Ltd., London, of the principal passages, and we have printed in bolder type those passages which specially connect the Mosaic Law with the Jews, and limit its application to them, and also those which distinguish between Jews and Gentiles.

CHAPTER 1

(16) For I am not ashamed of the glad tidings of the Christ; for power of God it is unto salvation to everyone that believes, **both to Jew first and to Greek.**

CHAPTER 2

(6) Who will render to each according to his works ...

(9) Tribulation and strait on every soul of man that works out evil, **both of Jew first and of Greek;**
(10) But glory, honor and peace to everyone that works good, **both to Jew first and to Greek.** (11) For there is not respect of persons with God. (12) For, **as many as without Law sinned, without Law also shall perish; and as many as In Law sinned by Law shall be judged** (for not the hearers of the Law are just with God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified)

(17) **Lo, thou a Jew art named, and retest in the Law,** and boastest in God. (18) And knowest the will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, **being instructed out of the Law...**

(20) Having the form of knowledge and of the truth **in the Law ...**

(23) **Thou, who in Law boastest, though the transgression of the Law dishonourest thou God? ...**

(25) For circumcision indeed profits, **if the Law thou doest;** but if **transgressor of the Law** thou art, thy circumcision, uncircumcision has become. (26) If, therefore, the uncircumcision the requirements of the law keep, shall not his uncircumcision for circumcision be reckoned? (27) And shall [not] the by-nature-uncircumcision, the law fulfilling, judge thee, who **with the letter and circumcision [art] a transgressor of the Law?**

CHAPTER 3

(1) What then the superiority of the Jew? or what the profit of circumcision? (2) Much in every way, first for that **they were entrusted with the oracles of God.**

(9) What then are we [Jews] better? Not at all, for we before charged **both Jews and Greeks all under sin [with] being.**

(19) Now we know that **whatsoever the Law says to those in the Law it speaks,** that every mouth may be stopped and under judgment be all the world to God. (20) Wherefore **by works of**

Law shall not be justified any flesh before Him; for **through law is knowledge of sin**. (21) But now **apart from Law** righteousness of God has been manifested, being borne witness to **by the Law and the prophets**.

(28) We reckon therefore by faith to be justified a man **apart from works of Law**. (29) **Of Jews [is He] the God only and not also of Gentiles? Yea, also of Gentiles**. (30) Since indeed one God [it is] who will justify **the circumcision by faith** (*ek pisteos*) and **the uncircumcision**

through faith. (31) Law then do we make of no effect through faith? May it not be! but law we establish.

CHAPTER 4

(14) For if those of Law [be] heirs, has been made void faith, and made of no effect the promise. (15) **For the Law wrath works out; for where Law is not, neither is transgression**.

CHAPTER 5

(12) On this account, as by one man sin into the world entered, and by sin death, and thus to all men death passed, for that all sinned. (13) For until Law sin was in the world, but **sin is not put to account there not being Law**; (14) but reigned death from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a figure of the Coming One. (15) But [shall] not as the offense, so also be the free gift? For if by the offense of the one the many died, much more the grace of God, and the gift in grace, which is of the one Man Jesus Christ, to the many did abound. (16) And [shall] not as by one having sinned [be] the gift? For indeed the judgment [was] of one to condemnation, but the free gift [is] of many offenses to justification. (17) For if by the offense of the one death reigned by the one, much more those the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness receiving, in life shall reign by the one, Jesus Christ. (18) So then as by one offense fit was towards all men to condemnation, so also by one accomplished righteousness towards all men to justification of life. (19) For as by the disobedience of the one man sinners were constituted the many, so also by the obedience of the One righteous shall be constituted the many. (20) But **Law came in by the bye, that might abound the offense**; but where abounded sin, overabounded grace; (21) That as reigned sin in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER 6

(1) What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? (2) May it not be! We who died to sin, how still shall we live in it? (3) Or are ye ignorant that as many as were baptized unto Christ Jesus unto His death were baptized? (4) We were buried therefore with Him by baptism unto death, that as was raised up Christ from among the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we in newness of life should walk.

(5) For if conjoined we have become in the likeness of His death, so also of His resurrection we shall be: (6) this knowing that our old man was crucified with [Him] that might be annulled the body of sin, that we be no longer subservient to sin. (7) For He that died has been justified from sin. (8) Now if we died with Christ, we believe that also we shall live with Him, (9) knowing that Christ having been raised up from among the dead, no more dies: death no more rules over Him. (10) For in that He died, to sin He died once for all; but in that He lives, He lives to God. (11) So also ye reckon yourselves dead indeed to be to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (12) Let not therefore sin reign in your mortal body, for to obey it in its desires. (13) Neither be yielding your members instruments of unrighteousness to sin; but yield yourselves to God, as from among the dead alive, and your members instruments of righteousness to God. (14) For sin shall not rule over you, **for ye are not under Law but under grace**. (15) What then! shall we sin because we are not under Law but under grace? May it not be! (16) Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves bondmen for obedience,

bondmen ye are to Him whom ye obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness? (17) But thanks to God, that ye were bondmen of sin but ye obeyed from [the] heart the form of teaching to which ye were delivered. (18) And having been set free from sin, ye became bondmen to righteousness. (19) Humanly I speak on account of the weakness of your flesh; for as ye yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification. (20) For when bondmen ye were to sin, free ye were as to righteousness. (21) What fruit therefore had ye then in the [things] of which now ye are ashamed? For the end of those things [is] death. (22) But now, having been set free from sin, and having become bondmen to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end life eternal. (23) For the wages of sin [is] death; but the free gift of God life eternal in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHAPTER 7

(1) Are ye ignorant, brethren, **for to those knowing Law I speak, that the Law rules over the man for as long time as he may live?** (2) **For the married woman to the living husband is bound by Law; but if should die the husband she is cleared from the Law of the husband;**

(3) So then living the husband an adulteress she shall be called if she be to another man; but if

should die the husband, free she is from the law, so as for her not to be an adulteress, having become to another man. (4) **So that, my brethren, also ye were made dead to the Law by the body of Christ,** for to be ye to another, Who from among the dead was raised, that we should bring forth fruit to God. (5) For when we were in the flesh the passions of sins, **which were through the Law,** wrought in our members to the bringing forth fruit to death; (6) **but now we were cleared from the Law,** having died [in that] in which we were held, so that **we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of letter.** (7) What then shall we say? Is the Law sin? May it not be! **But sin I knew not unless by Law:** for also lust I had not been conscious of unless the Law said Thou shalt not lust; (8) but sin having taken an occasion by the commandment worked out in me every lust; **for apart from Law sin [was] dead.** (9) But I was dead **apart from Law once;** but having come the commandment, sin revived, but I died. (10) And was found to me [that] the commandment which [was] to life, this [to be] to death. (11) For sin having taken an occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew [me]. (12) So that the Law indeed [is] holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. (13) That which then [is] good, to me has it become death? May it not be I but sin that it might appear sin, by that which [is] good to me working out death; that sin might become excessively sinful by the commandment, (14) **For we know that the Law Is spiritual; but I fleshly am, having been sold under sin.** (15) For what I work out I do not own: for not what I will this I do; but what I hate, this I practice. (16) But if what I do not will this I practice, **I consent to the Law that [it is] right.** (17) Now then, no longer I am working it out; but the dwelling-in-me sin. (18) For I know that there dwells not in me — that is in my flesh — good; for to will is present with me, but to work out the right I find not. (19) For not what good I will do I practice, but what evil I do not will, this I do. (20) But if what I do not will this I practice [it is] no longer I [who] work it out, but the dwelling-in-me sin. (21) I find then the Law to me, who will to practice the right, that with me evil is present. (22) **For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man;** (23) But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin which is in my members. (24) O, wretched man, I! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? (25) I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then **I myself with the mind indeed serve God’s Law;** but with the flesh sin’s law.

CHAPTER 8

(1) [There is] then now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, set me free from the law of sin and of death. (3) For **powerless [being] the Law** in that it was weak through the flesh, God His own Son having sent in likeness of flesh of sin, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the requirement of the Law should be fulfilled in us who not accord-

ing to flesh walk, but according to spirit. (5) For they that according to flesh are, the things of the flesh mind; and they according to spirit, the things of the spirit. (6) For the mind of the flesh [is] death; but the mind of the spirit life and peace. (7) Because the mind of the flesh is enmity towards God; for to the Law of God it is not subject; for neither can it [be]; and they that in the flesh are, cannot please God. (9) But ye are not in flesh but in spirit, if indeed [the] Spirit of God dwell in you but if anyone [the] Spirit of Christ has not he is not of Him: (10), but if Christ be in you the body indeed is dead on account of sin, but the Spirit [is] life on account of righteousness. (11) But if the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from among [the] dead dwells in you. He who raised up the Christ from among [the] dead will quicken also your mortal bodies on account of His Spirit that dwells in you. (12) So then, brethren, debtors we are not to the flesh, according to flesh to live; (13) for if according to flesh ye live, ye are about to die: but if by [the] Spirit the deeds of the body ye put to death ye shall live; (14) for as many as by [the] Spirit of God are led these are sons of God.

ONE

EXPLANATIONS USUALLY GIVEN OF THIS CHAPTER

The seventh chapter of Romans has been studied much, and with profitable results. Many useful lessons and much comfort for the saints of God have been drawn from it. Nevertheless there are great and obvious difficulties of interpretation which should provoke those who love the Word of God to further and yet more diligent study of this fruitful portion.

Among the explanations offered of the personal experience described in this chapter there are two which seem to be in special favor among spiritual teachers of the Word.

First. The experience, which the Apostle gives as his own, is supposed by many to be that of a justified and reconciled sinner struggling, against the inclinations of the old nature, to keep the Law of God. This experience is usually regarded as a struggle which takes place at an immature stage of spiritual growth and understanding, and as ending when the believer earns the complete deliverance he has in Christ from the Law. We often hear it said of the struggling believer that he is “yet in the seventh chapter of Romans”; and when his struggle ends he is said to have “come into the eighth chapter.” According to this view, the struggle is that of the new man against the old man, of the new nature against the old nature, which struggle results only in wretchedness for the believer, who delights in the Law of God, knowing that it is spiritual, and who hates what he practices. The end of this struggle (according to this view) is the discovery that there is deliverance through Jesus Christ.

But, it may be pertinently asked, how can the “wretched man” of Romans 7 be the justified man of Romans 5, who has found peace with God and a standing in grace before God through Jesus Christ, who rejoices upon hope of the glory of God, and rejoices even in tribulation? How can the man who, in Chapter 6 died to sin — having been crucified with Christ, that he might be no longer in servitude to sin — be *the* helpless bondservant of sin exhibited to us in Chapter 7? For the man of that chapter is surely the most vivid example given in all Scripture of the helpless bondservant of sin. The helplessness of this man is evident because he is exhibited as putting forth all his strength to resist the law of sin, but to no purpose whatever. His confession is that “what I work out I do not own: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I practice.” The believer in Christ does not so speak. Among the first lessons he learns is that “sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are *not under Law*, but under Grace.” (6:14). But the man of Chapter 7 is completely under the dominion of sin. He *must* practice evil, though he hates it. He cannot yield his members to God as instruments of righteousness, because there is another overmastering law in his members, warring against his mental disposition to do right, and bringing him INTO CAPTIVITY TO THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH which is in his members. His actions, moreover, are not his own actions, but those of sin dwelling in him. The fact that sin has its dwelling place in him is twice asserted (verses 17 and 20). Surely this cannot be said of a child of God, however little he may know of what the death of Christ has accomplished for him. He has still the old nature which sin has corrupted; but he is no longer identified with that old corrupted nature, but with the incorruptible nature of the Risen Christ. It is nowhere stated that sin dwells in the child of God; and certainly is he not compelled to practice, against his inclination, what sin dictates. The doctrine of the two natures in the child of God always embraces, as an essential feature, the truth that he has been *set free from* (and is no longer a slave to) *the old nature*, that he is not bound to do its bidding; but on contrary that he is free if he so wills to walk in the Spirit and *not* fulfill

the desires of the flesh. He has been “made free from sin” (Romans 6:18). The Son having made him free, he is “free indeed” (John 8:36).

The man of Romans 7 has no such liberty. We cannot assume that this man has deliverance from sin, but is ignorant of the fact, for the statement is explicit and unambiguous, that he has not been delivered. He is “carnal, sold under sin.” What he needs is, not information, but deliverance. His cry is, “Who shall deliver me?” This is not the cry of one who has found salvation in Christ, who enjoys peace with God through Him, and who merely requires teaching. It is the cry of the captive who knows nothing but the hopelessness of his own struggle against sin.

Furthermore, the struggle so graphically described in this passage is not one between the flesh (or old nature) and the new nature, but one between the flesh and the mind. The latter is not the new nature, but a very different element of man’s being, as will be seen hereafter.

There has been a great deal of ingenuity exercised in the attempt to explain this chapter as a description of the struggle between the new nature and the old nature in a man who has been born again of the Spirit; but it seems clear that the statements which have been briefly noticed above, and others that might be mentioned, are utterly inconsistent with that explanation.

Moreover, that explanation fails to take account of two conspicuous features of this chapter, first that its subject is the LAW; and second that the Apostle gives the experience here detailed as his own. Paul certainly had no such experience as this after his conversion; and no sufficient reason appears why it should be supposed that he is here speaking of himself as undergoing an imaginary experience. The correct explanation of this chapter must surely be one that takes full account of the personal element which figures so conspicuously in it; for there must be a special reason why the Apostle should bring himself into view as the one engaged in the desperate struggle here described.

Many believers, having been taught that the struggle described in this chapter is a proper, or at least a normal experience for a child of God, have sought to apply it to their own struggles with the inclinations of the flesh; but, if we are right, the experience of this wretched man is not the proper or normal experience of a child of God at all.

Second. Other commentators and teachers explain the chapter as being merely the experience of the sinner struggling with his sin, in the vain effort to reform himself and master his own passions. But it is properly objected to this explanation that the ordinary unconverted person could not say, “I delight in the Law of God after the inward man.” Nor would he have such knowledge of the nature of sin, and entertain and express such a hatred of it, as appears here.

There is, however, another view of this chapter which seems to the writer to avoid the objections noted against the two explanations mentioned above, and to be in harmony with the plan and scope of the epistle as a whole.

TWO

ANOTHER EXPLANATION SUGGESTED (JEWS AND GENTILES)

The Epistle to the Romans addresses two very distinct classes of men, namely, Jews (Israelites) and Gentiles. The feature of difference between the two, which is most prominently brought into view is that, to the Jews, God gave the Law, and commanded them to do the things written therein; whereas to the Gentiles He did not give the Law, that *they* might do the things written therein, but on the contrary, He "gave them over to an undiscerning mind to do those things which are not convenient" (1:28). The state of the Gentiles is described in Chapter 1; and in the first part of Chapter 2 there is described a special class of philosophizing moralists (of whom there were a number among the Romans). At Chapter 2:17 the Apostle turns to the Jew, saying, "Behold thou art called a JEW, and retest IN THE LAW." This possession of "the Law" is thus presented as that which, for the purpose of the teaching that is to follow, mainly distinguished the Jew from the Gentile. It is important to note this.

Then it is expressly stated that "what things soever the Law saith, it saith to *them who are under the Law*" (3:19), that is to say, to the Jews. The Law had, and has, absolutely nothing to say to the Gentile, whether a believer or an unbeliever, because the Gentiles were not under the Law. It is also clearly stated that "as many as have sinned without Law (outside the Law) shall also perish without Law; and as many as have sinned in the Law shall be judged by the Law." And once more, "When the Gentiles, WHICH HAVE NOT THE LAW," etc. This last statement leaves nothing to be desired in point of clearness.

If we observe these clear statements, and observe also the fact that Chapter 7 has to do plainly with the hopeless struggles of a man trying his very best to obey the Law, we will be in the way to a comprehension of the meaning of this chapter. What it describes is the experience of a conscientious unconverted *Jew*, fully instructed in the Law, and seeking zealously to accomplish a righteousness of his own by "works of Law." It is a practical illustration and demonstration of the statement that "by works of Law shall no FLESH be justified" (3:20). The "flesh" is one of the contending parties in Chapter 7, its antagonist being the "mind." The fact that no *flesh* can be justified by works of Law is forcibly demonstrated by the wretched experience of a man who, though fully recognizing in his "mind" the spirituality of the Law, and though striving with all his might to fulfill its requirements, yet fails utterly to do, so, because of sin dwelling in his "flesh."

In order to make it quite clear that Chapter 7 deals with the case of those who were under the Law, *i.e.*, the Jews, its opening words declare: "I speak to them that know the Law" compare Romans 11:13, where, to prevent any misapplication of the passage, the corresponding expression is used, "I speak to you Gentiles". Again, in verse 4, the expression "my brethren," is used. Paul, of course, speaks of all believers as "brethren"; but he uses the expression "*my* brethren" to designate the Jews, as in 9:3-4, where he speaks of "my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites." The statement of Chapter 7:4 is seen to be very appropriate to the Israelites. "Wherefore, my brethren, *ye* also are become dead to the LAW by the body of Christ" Chapter 6 made known the great truth that *all* believers died to sin in the death of Christ; but the Jews died in Him to something further, namely to the Law "*also*." Therefore, speaking to them the Apostle says, "Ye also are become

dead to the Law.” A moment’s thought will show that this could not be said of Gentile believers. They do not become dead to the Law, for the reason that the Law never had any authority over them.

In this view of the chapter we see a very excellent reason why the Apostle should bring himself prominently forward as an illustration of the truth he was enforcing. Who better than he could serve to illustrate the need which the Jew had to be delivered from the yoke of the Law? For who was so zealous for the Law as he, or sought more earnestly than he to establish a righteousness of his own “by works of Law”? He was a pattern of the self-righteous Jew, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, as touching righteousness that is in the Law having become blameless (Philippians 3:6). Yet his confession is that, in spite of his blameless conduct and external conformity, he was, in his own consciousness, a “wretched man,” realizing in himself the lack of a true righteousness.

It is not necessary at this point to exhaust the proof and argument available to establish the proposition that Chapter 7 details the unique experience of a man born under the Law, earnestly but vainly endeavoring to fulfill the requirements of the Law, recognizing its holiness, goodness, and righteousness, and acknowledging its binding authority upon himself. We purpose later on to consider the entire chapter in the light of the explanation here suggested. But it is desirable, before undertaking that, to examine briefly the teaching of the preceding chapters, particularly so much thereof as relates to the special case of the Jew, born under the blessings and curses of the Law, and taught to apply himself to the fulfillment of its righteous requirements.

It is very difficult indeed for us who were Gentiles, aliens from the national economy of Israel, and entire strangers to the covenants of promise (Ephesians 2:12), to realize the position and experiences of a conscientious Jew, fully instructed in the law of Moses, but totally ignorant of the principle of justification on the ground of faith apart from works of Law. Yet there were many such among the saints at Rome, and these needed to be taught, not only deliverance from the bondage and servitude of sin through the death of Christ, as clearly revealed in Chapter 6, and as applicable to all — both Jews and Gentiles — but deliverance *also* from the yoke of the Law. Consequently a large section of this Epistle is devoted to the very important matter of the relation of the Law to the subject of justification, and its part in the entire economy of redemption; and into this section of the Epistle, Chapter 7 seems clearly to fall. The Gentile believer regards the Law, not from the point of view of one who has attempted to earn its promised reward — “this do and thou shalt live” — and who has learned the impossibility of doing it, but from the standpoint of one who never was under the Law, and who studies it only for information as to the ways of God with man.

THREE

THE LAW’S RELATION TO SIN

It is obvious that Chapter 7 should be studied in the light of the whole subject of the relation of the Law to SIN and its consequences.

In Chapter 3:19 occurs the pertinent statement that the things which the Law said it said to those who were under it (namely, to Israelites), and that those things were said in order that *every* mouth might be stopped (that of the Jew, as well as that of the Gentile), and that all the world might be under judgment to God. The mouths of the Gentiles were effectually closed by the depravity to which they had all descended and by the abominable practices which prevailed among them all. And the mouth of the Jews was closed by their failure to keep the Law which God had given to them. Previously Paul — plainly speaking as a Jew — had said: “If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory, why yet am I (as a typical Jew) adjudged as sinner”? (3:7). And in view of this he asks the question, “What then? Are we (Jews) better than the Gentiles” (*i.e.*, because we have the Law?). The answer is “No, in no wise, for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are ALL UNDER SIN” (verse 9). All alike then have need of the righteousness that is out of faith of Jesus Christ, for there is in this respect “no difference” (verse 22).

All men, therefore, were “under sin,” and all had need of deliverance from the yoke of sin; but the Jews alone of all the nations of the world were “under Law,” and they *only* had need of deliverance from the yoke of the Law. Peter describes it as “a yoke which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear” (Act 15:10). The death of Christ delivers all believers from the dominion of sin; but it is written that He was “made under the LAW, to redeem them that were under the law” *i.e.*, believing Israelites (Galatians 4:4–5). Hence Paul, speaking as a Jew, as we will presently see, says to the Galatians, “Christ hath redeemed us (Jews) from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us” (Galatians 3:13).

God is the God of the Gentiles, as well as the God of the Jews, and He will justify the latter “out of faith” (not out of law works), and the former through the faith (Romans 3:30).

The case of Abraham is then taken up in view of the unique fact that part of Abraham’s life, as a child of God through faith, was spent in uncircumcision, and part in circumcision. He, therefore, stands in Scripture as the father of all believers, those without as well as those within the rite of circumcision. And it is carefully noted that the faith, in virtue of which he was justified, was faith which he had in his uncircumcised state (4:10). This is a very important point.

The Law has nothing to do with the putting away of transgressions. On the contrary the Law is what occasions the transgressions, because “where no Law is there is no transgression” (4:15). We learn at this point that justification from *sins* or unrighteous *acts*, whereof all men are guilty, is out of *faith* (not out of law works) to the end that it might be *of grace*, so that the promise might be *sure* to *all* the seed (4:16). Manifestly, if the promise depended upon works of Law, it would be sure to none. But if it depends upon the grace of God, then it is absolutely sure to all the children of Abraham; and in this connection it is to be noted that “they which are OF FAITH, the same are the children of Abraham” (Galatians 3:7).

If, then, the Law was not given in order that the Israelites might thereby secure for themselves justification from their sins, and if, on the contrary, it served merely to add to the sum total of human offenses against God, WHY WAS IT GIVEN? In Galatians 3:19 this question and the answer to it are thus stated: "Wherefore then the Law? It was added because of transgressions till the Seed should come to Whom the promise was made. Is the Law then against the promises of God? Let it not be, for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law. But the Scripture hath concluded ALL UNDER SIN, that the promise by (*i.e.*, out of) faith of Jesus Christ might be given to those that believe" (Galatians 3:21–22).

For our immediate purpose it is a sufficient comment on this important passage from Galatians to point out the connection therein defined between the *Law* and *Life*. If a law could have been given which had power to quicken (give life) then righteousness would have been by (out of) law. But, so far from this being the case, the fact is that the Scripture (of which the Law was a part) has concluded all things under sin. The consequence of *sin* is DEATH (the very opposite of life). Since the Law cannot give life to those who have, through sin, come under the power of death, *something more than the Law, was needed*. There must be a *new source of human life*. Hence we must look carefully to the instruction given us concerning SIN. When we have learned what sin is, we will be better able to comprehend the purpose of the Law.

FOUR

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SIN AND SINS

The subject of sin is taken up at Romans 5:12 and it is first of all important to get clearly in mind the distinction between *sin* and *sins*. The latter are the wicked *acts*, the immoralities, thefts, murders, etc., which men commit. Sin, on the other hand, is an *evil principle* capable of entering human nature and corrupting it. The character of sin can be best understood by referring to its Scriptural type, namely, the disease of leprosy. This dread and loathsome disease has the power to lay hold of the human body; and when it does so it infects and renders the body corrupt in every part. The Scripture presents sin as an evil principle from which humanity, as originally given existence in Adam, was free, but to which it was exposed (just as a man may be exposed to leprosy); and Scripture further informs us that, by Adam's transgression, sin gained an entrance into the stock of humanity, infecting every part of it. "Through one man sin entered the world." And in the same way that flesh infected or indwelt by leprosy is handed down to the offspring of the leper, human nature infected or indwelt by sin is handed down to all the offspring of the first sinner, Adam. This is "sin in the flesh," or corrupted human nature. A man's *sins*, then, are his own acts. His *sin* is his corrupted nature inherited from Adam.

An esteemed correspondent lately pointed out to me that the two great factors to which "modern science" refers as determining and forming human character, namely, "Heredity" and "Environment," are known in Scripture respectively as the "Flesh" and the "World." Man's heredity is "Sin," *i.e.*, corrupted flesh; and his environment is the "World," *i.e.*, corrupted human society. The Devil who corrupted the flesh, and who is the ruler and spiritual guide of the world, is the third (and chiefest) of the three great enemies of mankind and he is doubtless the source and inspiration of modern "science," to which his dupes pay idolatrous worship. God gives to the believer a new "Heredity," *i.e.*, the "Divine Nature" (2 Peter 1:4), making him a son of God; and a new "Environment," *i.e.*, the new creation "Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Now, as touching the relation of the Law to sin, we have, in Romans 5:12 three statements of great importance, namely: *first*, that sin entered the world through one man (Adam); *second*, that death entered through sin and passed to all men; *third*, that sin is *not put to account* (or, as we would say, not charged against a man) *when there is no law*.

The first and second statements require no particular comment; but the third demands close attention. In full it is given in these words: "For until Law sin was in the world, but sin is not put to account there not being Law. But death reigned from Adam to Moses (*i.e.*, from the beginning of the human family down to the giving of the Law) even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression."

Sin, then, was in the world before the Law was given, though its nature was not known. It entered through Adam and was in every one of his offspring. Death was the direct and invariable consequence of sin (not of sins). Every human being was, therefore, subject to death, whether or not he had committed sins. Thus death ruled as a despot over all mankind. What gave it this universal and despotic power was, not the wrongdoings of individual human beings, but the presence of sin in human nature. This is a very important point.

From this fact (namely, the dominion of sin over all humanity) which all experience confirms, we might deduce the necessity of a *resurrection*, that is, of a life springing out of death. And, inasmuch as resurrection cannot be a mere abstraction, there *must be a Man* possessing the qualifications (whatever they may be) to rise from among the dead — a Man Who could say “I am the Resurrection.”

The Apostle is here leading up to the great truth, now about to be revealed for the first time, that there is (and always has been in God’s purpose) a Second Man and a Second Humanity; and that, just as every member of the race of the first man received from him by natural descent a sin-infected or unrighteous constitution or nature (his “heredity”), even so every member of the race of the Second Man receives from Him a righteous constitution or nature — a nature that has been tested and found to be proof against the entrance and infection of sin. The grand pledge of this is the resurrection of that Man from the dead. Since death is the result of sin, His resurrection from the dead proves that His nature is incorruptible.

The children of Adam are not any more responsible for their inherited unrighteous constitution than the children of God are responsible for their inherited righteous constitution. For this reason sin, or the mere possession of an unrighteous constitution, is *not put against the account of the children of Adam*, (except in the special case of those who were under law). What God *does* put to their account are their *sins*, *i.e.*, their unrighteous *acts* — their murders, idolatries, immoralities, and other wickednesses — as is forcibly declared in the preceding chapters of the Epistle. (Note the frequent repetition of “*commit*” such things, “*do*” such things). For these wicked deeds the dead (those who have not received God’s gift of eternal life) will be judged. “The dead were judged ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS” (Revelation 20:12). God’s wrath is revealed from heaven against every ungodly and unrighteous *act* of men; and the only way of escape from that wrath is through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God has set forth a Mercy Seat through faith in His Blood (3:25).

Sin, then, is not imputed where there is no Law, but *sins* or *trespasses* are imputed, requiring justification out of faith, on the ground of the sufferings of Christ. Hence the word of reconciliation is this, “That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM” (2 Corinthians 5:19, and compare Romans 5:10–11 R.V.).

The marvelous consistency of Scripture is seen in the fact that the believing sinner is not said to be justified by the Blood of Christ from *sin*. When it is a question of *sin*, it is always “death” that is spoken of. Sin and death are thus closely connected, and it is plainly stated that “He that *died* is justified from SIN” (Romans 6:7). ¹

That the justified and reconciled sinner is not cleared from the consequence of sin upon, his acceptance of Christ is manifest from the fact that he is still, after his conversion, subject to physical death, which is the direct and invariable consequence of sin. But he *is* freed from the *servitude* of sin, as clearly taught in Chapter 6. If, however, sin could by any means be eradicated from a human being, that one would not be liable to physical death. Jesus Christ was the only Man in Whom was “no sin” (*i.e.*, no inherited corruption). His death was therefore a miracle. , It was only because He was more than man that He had power to lay down His life. (*psuche* — human life or soul). No one could take it from Him (John 10:18).

1 The word rendered “freed” in the A.V. is the same word that is rendered “justified” in other places in the Epistle. Some regard this verse as being limited in its application to Christ. He was “made SIN for us,” and by death He was justified, or freed there from. But the statement probably means much more than this. Those who die unpardoned will not be judged for their inherited sin, but for their sins, death having paid the penalty of sin. On the other hand, the death of Christ is reckoned to all His people, who thus are justified from their *sins* by His sufferings and from *sin* by His death.

All this goes to show how important is the fact that "Justification," as expounded in Romans 3 and 4, has to do entirely with *sins*, and not at all with *sin*. Indeed the subject of "sin" is not taken up for consideration until the doctrine of justification from Sins, and its results (peace towards God, a standing in God's grace, etc.), have been fully set forth.

It may be noticed in passing that the salvation of those dying in infancy is clearly indicated by the Scriptures we have been considering. Sin, or the corrupted nature inherited by them, is not put to their account since "sin is not imputed where there is no Law." On the other hand they have not committed any *sins* so as to require justification out of faith in the crucified and risen Savior. Hence they are within the sphere of God's saving Grace through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

If, then, sin is not put to account where there is no Law, what effect did the giving of the Law to the Israelites have in respect to the sin indwelling them? This is a question of great practical importance to them, and it receives a very clear answer in the Epistle. In Chapter 3 we find the statement that "by the Law is THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN" (verse 20). Indeed, it is only by means of the Law that the knowledge of what sin really is (namely, a corrupting principle indwelling and infecting all humanity), could be obtained; for the Apostle, speaking as a typical Jew says, "I had not known sin but by (*i.e.*, by means of) the LAW" (7:7).

One effect of the Law then was *to reveal to those to whom it was given, the presence of sin in the flesh*. For sin exists even where there are no sinful acts, as is shown by the specific illustration given: "For I had not known *lust* except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

It follows that the Law, regarded as a state or condition under which human beings were to live, was limited both as to time and scope. It was not imposed upon all mankind — God's purpose did not require that — but was imposed only upon a selected family, the offspring of one man. And it was not established as a permanency. It came in BY THE WAY, that the offense might abound (Romans 5:20). "It was ADDED because of transgressions TILL THE SEED SHOULD COME to Whom the promise was made" (Galatians 3:19). That Seed is Christ; and "He is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believeth" (Romans 10:4).

A further purpose of God in giving the Mosaic law was to make evident the exceeding sinfulness of SIN (Romans 7:13); to reveal the desperate and irremediable corruption of human nature caused by the transgression of Adam.

This purpose was fully accomplished in the experience of a select people, carefully trained and hedged about from outside influences. To them the Mosaic law was given; and the fact that it was found an impossibility for any Jew to keep it, revealed, as nothing else could do, the effect of indwelling sin. The greater the determination and effort on the part of a conscientious Jew to keep the Law, the more clearly would the power of the law of sin be manifested. The experience of the wretched man of Romans 7 is the Divinely given illustration of this.

If then the power and corrupting effect of indwelling sin be such that no Law, *even though given by God Himself and to a selected people*, could produce the righteousness that is essential to life, it is evident that *some other Way of Life must be provided*. In order to provide for perishing humanity a complete salvation, there must be away of *deliverance from sin*, in addition to a provision for *the forgiveness of sins*. Consequently, after justification from their sins to all who believe on Christ Jesus has been set forth, the subject of "Sin" is taken up; and to this part of the Epistle (5:12; 6:23), we will now give attention. After that we shall be in a position to study the subject of deliverance from the yoke of the Law for those who were under the Law.

FIVE

SIN — ITS CAUSE AND REMEDY (ROMANS 5:12; 6:23)

Verses 6 to 11 inclusive, of Chapter 5, seem properly to belong to the section we are about to consider, for in them is found the first mention of the *death* of Christ. Here we are told of the love of God towards us, which love He commends, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We should observe that while it is elsewhere stated that Christ *suffered* for *sins*, it is here declared that He *died* for *sinners*, *i.e.*, for the *persons* who sinned. This is stated several times. In these verses we also find the first mention made of the *life* of Christ, *i.e.*, His present resurrection life; and this reference occurs in connection with *salvation*. Having been reconciled to God by the Death of His Son, we shall be SAVED by His LIFE.

We have seen that all men are under sin and are liable to death, which is the consequence of sin. The question of deliverance for the dying members of Adam’s race, so that sin shall not any longer reign over them, and death shall no more have dominion over them, is a question which concerns Jews and Gentiles alike. As to this our Scripture teaches that God meets the result of sin’s entrance into the humanity of Adam by bringing into existence a *new humanity*. This new humanity, which is “constituted righteous” (this being the literal rendering of Romans 5:19), springs from a new human source or head — a new man. Adam was the type or figure of this second man, in that he was the head or source from which the first humanity sprung, and from which it derived its nature. The second humanity begins with Christ, and was “in Him” when He rose in His glorified manhood from among the dead, just as truly as the first humanity began with Adam, and fell with him into corruption and death when he transgressed God’s command.

But the parallel extends farther than this. The specific cause of the unrighteous constitution of the first humanity was a *single offense* committed by its responsible head, Adam. Likewise, the cause of the righteous constitution of the second humanity is a *single act of righteousness* accomplished by its responsible Head, Christ. In the case of Adam it was an act of disobedience; in the case of Jesus Christ it was an act of obedience — the “one accomplished righteousness” — that is to say, His obedience unto death, the death of the Cross. “By the offense of one (Adam), death reigned through the one” (Romans 5:17). “By the disobedience of one man, the many were CONSTITUTED SINNERS,” *i.e.*, acquired a sinful constitution or nature. On the other hand, “by the obedience of the One Man, the many shall be CONSTITUTED RIGHTEOUS” (Romans 5:19).

We cannot have it fixed too clearly in our minds that it is not Christ’s perfect earthly life imputed to us who are of the faith of Jesus Christ that constitutes (as some do wrongly teach) our righteousness before God. Christ’s righteousness is not imputed to us, and, indeed, is not mentioned in Scripture. The Gospel reveals God’s righteousness, that is, a righteousness whereof God is the Author, which is imputed to us who believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead (Romans 4:25). He came in the Body prepared for Him, to do the Will of God in offering Himself first to bear the *sins* of many, and then to put away *sin* by the sacrifice of Himself; and it is by this Will of God that we are sanctified through *the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ* once for all (Hebrews 9:26–27; 10:5, 7, 10).

The members of this new humanity receive by inheritance a righteous and incorruptible nature — not because the earthly life of Jesus Christ was righteous, innocent, pure, and holy (though it was all that and more) — but because He was obedient unto *death*. It is not the life He had as a Man of flesh and blood that He transmits to His race, but the new life He now has as the Firstborn from the *dead*. He had to DIE UNTO SIN and to rise again from the dead, before He could be the Beginning of a new race of human beings — the “children of the resurrection.” Except the kernel of wheat fall into the ground and *die*, it abideth *alone* (John 12:24). It is said that He died not unto *sins*, but unto *sin*. “Christ died for our *sin*” (1 Corinthians 15:3); but He died *unto sin*. This distinction, which is important, will be more fully considered hereafter. In that He died, He died unto sin once for all, that is to say, as a finality; and having been raised from the dead He dies no more; death has no more dominion over Him. Having now made the Captain of our salvation “perfect THROUGH SUFFERINGS,” God can proceed with the work of “bringing many sons into glory,” so that Christ may say, “Behold I and the children which God has given Me” (Hebrews 2:10, 13).

The consequence then of Adam’s “offense” was that “death reigned” as an absolute monarch over all men. “BUT NOW,” in consequence of Christ’s resurrection from among the dead, there is a new and marvelous thing in the universe. A stupendous event in the history of mankind has taken place. There lives now a Man OVER WHOM DEATH NO LONGER HAS DOMINION, a Man Who, though He once was dead, is now alive for evermore (Revelation 1:18). God has raised Him from the dead, and has done so *righteously* (else He could not have done so at all) because “in Him is NO SIN” (1 John 3:5).

For this Second Man and His offspring, who inherit His righteous constitution, the earth is to be prepared. For God has appointed Him the Heir of all things, and they, being children, are joint-heirs with Him. Meanwhile He is at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, awaiting the gathering of those who are to share His kingdom and glory.

The revelation of the great truth of the SECOND MAN, and of the constitution of ESTABLISHED RIGHTEOUSNESS which He imparts to His race, is the main lesson taught in the section of the Epistle now under consideration (Chapter 5:12; 6:23). There are, however, many other important lessons unfolded here and based upon this fundamental truth.

Thus, in Chapter 5 “the free gift” (the righteous constitution bestowed upon the offspring of the Second Man, and carrying with it, of necessity, eternal life) is contrasted with “the offense” of the first man, in order to show that the consequences of the former surpass those of the latter. The benefits of the Christ’s *obedience* accruing to those receiving the abundance of the grace and of the gift in righteousness, far exceed (but of course in the contrary direction) the consequences of the *offense* of Adam to those who inherit his corrupted nature. The particulars of these surpassing consequences of the free gift are not stated here, but some of them are revealed in Chapter 8 and in other Scriptures.

Likewise in Chapter 6 the fact of the believer’s deliverance from the dominion of sin while yet in the “mortal body” is set forth. He need no longer serve sin, nor permit sin to reign in his *mortal body*. On the contrary, he is entirely free from that servitude, insomuch that he may dispose of himself, and of the members of his mortal body, by yielding himself to God, and his members as instruments of righteousness to God.

We do not dwell now upon these and other subsidiary lessons, our main purpose being to prepare the way for a discussion of Chapter 7; but it will be helpful to note in passing some additional points.

1. The justified and reconciled sinner learns here (as also may be learned from other Scriptures) his union with Christ in the death of the latter. It is in virtue of this union with Christ *in His death* that the believer is liberated from the servitude of sin: “Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should not henceforth be in servitude to sin.” So far then as the “old man” (Adam) was in us, he was crucified with Christ, in order that the body of sin — that is to say the entire humanity of Adam, into which sin had en-

tered and taken possession, so that it became sin’s body — might be annulled, so that we should no longer be subservient to sin. The “body of sin” of Chapter 6 is called the “body of this death” in Chapter 7, and is spoken of in Chapter 8 as “flesh of sin,” that is, sin’s flesh, or flesh which sin had taken possession of, and made its own.

The breaking up or disintegrating of the “body of sin” by means of the death of Christ was effected with a view to the formation of another body, “the Body of Christ.” This body is being formed of those who were once members of the body of sin, but have been cut off and detached there from through the death of Christ, cleansed by His Blood, washed by the water of the Word, and baptized by the Spirit into the one Body of Christ. This Body is referred to in Chapter 12:5, “So we being many are *one Body* in Christ.” This is also, as it seems to me, the “Body” of Romans 8:23. “Waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our Body.” If the individual bodies of saints were meant, the expression would be “our bodies.” In Ephesians 1:14 is a similar expression, “until the redemption of the purchased possession.” Since this point is of considerable interest it will be more fully discussed later on.

2. The position of the man in Chapter 6 is in the greatest contrast to that of the man in Chapter 7, insomuch that they cannot be identical. The man in Chapter 6 is free from the bondage of sin. The man in Chapter 7 is the bondsman of sin. As to the man in Chapter 6 the body of sin has been annulled; but of the man in Chapter 7 it is said that sin dwells in him and absolutely controls all his actions. In Chapter 6 we read: “But thanks be to God that ye *were* bondmen of sin, but ye obeyed from the heart the form of teaching to which ye were delivered (not the teaching delivered to you, as in the AV); and having been SET FREE FROM SIN ye became bondmen to righteousness.” But the man in Chapter 7 knows nothing of freedom from sin, and is forced to cry out “O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”
3. When Jesus Christ “was cut off” (Daniel 9:26) in the holy body that had been prepared for Him (Hebrews 10:5) He was cut off a *living* as well as a righteous Branch (Isaiah 11:1, John Nelson Darby’s New Translation; Jeremiah 23:6). Therefore he could be planted, so to speak, in resurrection ground, a “Plant of renown,” and bring forth “much fruit” (Ezekiel 34:29; John 12: 24). Thus He, as the Second Man, became the stock of a new humanity.
4. In Chapter 6 occurs the statement (6:14) “Ye are not under Law, but under Grace.” This is true of all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, as indeed the entire section 5:12–6:23, applies to all who are “in Christ.” The Gentile believers never were under Law, and the Jew, on believing, ceases to be under Law. But this raises the question, How does it come that the Jew upon believing is no longer under Law? This question must receive a clear and satisfactory answer, for it is, to the Israelite, a question of great importance. Therefore, it is taken up for separate consideration in Chapter 7 Its importance is emphasized by the fact that the Apostle brings forward his own experience, as a man under Law, for the purpose of illustrating and enforcing the teaching. That question having been disposed of, it is seen that the distinction between Jew and Gentile has been done away, all are shown to be one in Christ, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision; and all pardoned and reconciled sinners are brought to the great truth of Chapter 8, namely, that they all are sons of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

SIX

DELIVERANCE FROM THE LAW FOR THOSE UNDER THE LAW

We come now to the question: How about the obligations imposed by the Mosaic Law, and the curses denounced thereby, upon those who were under the Law, that is to say, the Israelites? Although the question is a large one and important, its practical bearing is temporal only. It has to do with the life of the Jew while in the flesh. The Law was given to man in the flesh. Its purpose was to control only the behavior of man in the flesh. Its blessings and curses pertain only to life on the earth. Nevertheless, the believing Jew would demand to know, in view of all that has gone before, where he stands with reference to the Law; and, if the Law is no longer operative with reference to him, he would rightly require to know exactly how he was delivered from it.

So the Apostle now takes up this question, addressing himself specifically “to them that know the Law.” We need seek no further than the first verse of the chapter for proof that it applies to Israelites only. The statement that the Law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth, could only be made with reference to those to whom the Law was given. It never had dominion over the Gentiles at all.

When the Israelite came to an understanding age, he found himself under a peculiar economy, very different from that of the Gentiles. The latter had no Law given to them by the keeping of which they might live. To the Israelites, however, God had said, with the emphasis of many repetitions, “All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, *that ye may live*” (Deuteronomy 8:1). Fifteen hundred years passed, and, during all that time, not one Israelite was found who, through the Law, could overcome death and inherit eternal life. We know now why this was; and we know that it was not the fault of the Law. The latter was indeed “powerless,” but not because of any defect in itself. It was powerless because it was “*weak through the flesh*” (Romans 8:2). The condition of the flesh, corrupted by sin, was such that the Law could effect nothing through it. “For if there had been a Law given which could have given life (*literally*, could have quickened), verily righteousness should have been by (through) the Law” (Galatians 3:21). The state of human nature was such that no law could quicken it. What humanity lost through Adam’s offense was life. The life was lost when Adam lost his innocent constitution or nature. The perverted existence of the natural man, due to his corrupted nature, is not “life” in the Scriptural sense. The giving of the Law, and the long test of man under it, showed that humanity was powerless to regain life by securing for itself a righteous constitution. The case then was hopeless, unless God should provide *another Life source*.

At last there came One of the children of Israel, One “born under the Law,” Who perfectly fulfilled all the righteous requirements of the Law, and hence had a right to live as a Man in the flesh. The fact that He fulfilled all righteousness proved conclusively that “in Him was life.” No one could lawfully take His human life from Him, for He was by Law entitled to it. The explanation of this difference between Him and other human beings was that while He was of Adam’s race (“born of woman”), He was not of Adam’s seed. Therefore, death did not “pass through to Him as a result of Adam’s offense.” “In Him *was* no sin”; “He *knew* no sin He *did* no sin” (1 John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22). Death had no claim upon Him, for there was no basis upon which that claim could rest. It could not be based upon Adam’s transgression, for the Man Jesus did not inherit the nature of Adam; and it could not be based on any act of His own — His judges found “no cause of death in Him.” But had this Sinless One exercised His undoubted right to live as a Man of flesh and blood, He would have lived

alone. “Except the kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth ALONE; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24). He chose, therefore, to die unto sin; He chose to be “MADE SIN for us, He Who knew no sin, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God IN HIM” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

So it came about, in the progress of God’s plan of redemption, that the One Who fulfilled the Law endured the curse of the Law. “When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we (Jews) might receive sonship” (Galatians 4:4, 5).

But all Israelites, other than Jesus Christ, needed deliverance from the curse of the broken Law. Of the believing remnant of them Paul says, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us” (Galatians 3:13). Clearly it is only of Israelites that this could be said, because they alone were subject to the curse of the Law. “What things soever the Law saith, it saith to them that are under the Law.” Romans 7 unfolds the truth that the believing Jew in dying with Christ when He suffered in the flesh, died not to *sin* only, but to the *Law* as well. Or, to state the doctrine in another way, the believer’s death with Christ necessarily involves his death to the Law, if he were one of those who were under the Law.

The doctrine is explained by reference to the Divine institution of marriage and the obligation which marriage imposes upon the woman. It is obvious that, for a proper comprehension of this passage, everything depends upon understanding *who are the parties to this marriage*. Let us see if we can get a clear comprehension of this fundamental point. The illustration is usually explained by assuming that the Law typifies the husband, and that the believer is like a widow, in that he is freed from the Law in the same way that a widow is freed from obligation to her deceased husband. But this explanation is inadmissible, because first, the Jew was not in any sense “married” to the Law, and second, it is not the Law that dies with Christ, but on the contrary, the Law survives and it is the man himself who dies under the righteous sentence of the Law. The statement is, “YE WERE MADE DEAD TO THE LAW by the Body of Christ” (verse 4); and again, “But now we (Jews) are delivered (or cleared) from the Law, HAVING DIED in that wherein we were held” (this being the proper translation of verse 6).

Furthermore, an intelligent explanation of the illustration demands that what the first husband represents should correspond to what the second represents; and we are told that the second represents the Risen Man, Christ Jesus. It would be exceedingly incongruous to speak of a woman as having for her first husband a code of Laws, and for her second a man. Manifestly, if the second husband is the New Man, the first must be the “old man,” the corrupted nature, or “flesh,” and the teaching of the entire chapter shows that this is the true and only admissible explanation. The first marriage then was that between the “mind” and the “flesh” The Law is that which sanctions the marriage and defines the obligations of the parties thereto.

It is to be noted also that the illustration appears on a superficial examination to be faulty. There is a seeming discrepancy between the illustration and the application thereof which follows. In the illustration the man dies, and the woman is thereby freed from the Law which bound her to her husband; whereas in the application of the illustration the persons addressed are first spoken of (or rather is spoken to) as having died to the Law and then as being alive. But a closer examination of the illustration will show that there is no discrepancy. Its Divine fitness and accuracy will be perceived upon recalling that a married pair is regarded in Scripture as an entity. “And they twain shall be ONE FLESH” (Matthew 10:5–6).

The individual human being is likewise a complex entity, composed of several parts or elements. In this chapter two distinct parts of a human being are specifically mentioned as being quite inharmoniously bound together, or married. The two that are bound together in the one individual are, in this case, “the Mind” and “the Flesh.” “With my MIND I Serve God’s Law, but with the FLESH sin’s law.” This person delights in the Law of God after the inward man, but sees another law in his mem-

bers warring against the law of his mind. Sometimes one, and sometimes the other of the united pair is spoken of as "me." In verse 23 it is the mind or inward man: "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing ME into captivity to the law of sin." In verse 18 it is the flesh: "For I know that in ME (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." The "Mind" is the self-conscious personality of the individual. The illustration, therefore, teaches that a mind once wedded to, and bound by law to serve, the old corrupt nature, may survive the death of that old nature, and be united with the New Man.

The *mind*, in the particular case under consideration, delights in the Law of God, desiring to act in accordance therewith; but sin dwells in *the flesh*, so that the latter refuses to act according to the inclination of the mind. In the illustration, the husband, because he has power over his wife, fitly represents the flesh; while the wife, because she is subject to the man, appropriately stands for the mind.

Now when either one of a married pair dies, the entity composed of the two ceases to exist just as completely as if both had died. It is the end of the "one flesh" which the two formed. Hence the Law, which bound the wife to her husband so long as he lived, ceases to be operative upon her at his death. Consequently she is "cleared from the law of the husband," notwithstanding that the Law has not been changed in the least, and that the woman herself still lives. Upon the death of the husband the woman is not only freed from his personal control and authority, but she is also released from the obligation of fidelity to him, so that she may with perfect propriety be married to another. Precisely so, if one of the pair, "flesh" and "mind," should die, the partnership composed by them would be dissolved, and would cease to exist, just as effectually as if both had died. It would also follow that all laws given for the regulation of the affairs of the partnership would be rendered nugatory. The Mosaic Law was addressed to the Jew's intelligence and will (or in a word to his "mind") and was given *for the regulation of his flesh or carnal nature*, this union of "mind" and "flesh" forming the individual man; and the Jew passed all his days while in the flesh under the obligations of the Law, there being supposedly no escape from it save by the physical death of the man. In fact there was no known Way of escape from it until the effect of the death of Christ was revealed. "But now," as the inspired Apostle points out (verse 6), the death of Christ has made a great change, and has provided another way of escape from the obligations of the Law. The dissolution of the union of flesh and mind may be brought about by the death of either one of the parties to that union; and since the flesh or "old man" of the believer has died with Christ, as taught in Chapter 6, it necessarily follows that the Jewish believer was, through the efficacy of the death of Christ, released not only from *sin*, but also from *the Law*. "So that, my brethren, YE ALSO are become dead to the LAW by the Body of Christ" (5:4).

The mind, with its desire to keep the Law of God, survives, but the carnal nature which "is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7), lives no longer. The partnership or union between the two is now at an end. And the mind, no longer yoked to the flesh in a union that was productive only of fruit unto death, is now free to be yoked to another, even to Him Who is raised from the dead, in a union productive of the fruit of the Spirit, which is "fruit unto God." "For," says the Apostle, "when we (Jews) were in the flesh, the motions (or passions) of sins, which were *through the Law* wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death, BUT NOW we were cleared from the Law, having died in that in which we were held, so that we should serve in newness of spirit, not in oldness of letter." In other words, the "service" which the believing Jew renders to his risen Lord is not imposed by the old letter of the Law delivered on Sinai, because that was given for regulation of the conduct of the flesh; but his service is now governed by the law of the Spirit, called in Chapter 8 "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." When we were in the flesh the passions of sins, which became sins "through the Law," that is, because the Law prohibited them, "DID WORK." "Now the WORKS of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, etc." (Galatians 5:19). But the result of the union with the risen Christ Whom we "serve in newness of spirit" is "FRUIT unto God." "But the FRUIT of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control: against these there is NO LAW" (Galatians 5:22-23).

SEVEN

THE UNION OF “MIND” AND “FLESH”

It will be profitable to dwell a while longer on the lesson taught by the reference made in this chapter to the institution of marriage, whereby two individuals become one *flesh*, though they be not of one *mind*.

We learn from it, in the first place, a very important fact concerning the being of the individual man, namely that it includes several distinct elements as “mind” and “flesh.” It should be carefully noted that the Greek word for “mind” (*nous*) in Chapter 8 is a different word from that used in Chapter 8 — “mind of the flesh” and “mind of the spirit.” The latter word (*phronema* — sometimes rendered “thoughts”) signifies the disposition or inclination. In that sense the “flesh” has a “mind.” But in Chapter 7 it is the intelligence *i.e.* the faculty whereby knowledge is received and comprehended, distinctions are discerned, and an intelligent choice is made. The difference between the meaning of these two words will be better understood by consideration of passages such as the following: “He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind (*phronema*) of the Spirit” (Romans 8:27). “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind (*nous*)” (Romans 12:2). “Here is the mind (*nous*) that has wisdom” (Revelation 17:9).

The “flesh” is the nature of man — human nature, which is common to all — and this nature became corrupted at its source, in Adam, by reason of the entrance of sin. Adam’s offense opened the door through which “*sin entered*” whereby it obtained lodgment in *the flesh* and has ever since “dwelt” there. Adam’s race, though comprising many millions is one mass — one humanity or mankind; and its many members have all the same nature. They compose one body. Through the “one offense” of Adam that body became the “body of sin” (Romans 6:6); and human flesh, once innocent and beautiful, became “flesh of sin” (Romans 8:2). It is absolutely necessary to lay hold of this truth in order to obtain a right understanding of the present condition of humanity.

Anyone can, with a little attention, distinguish in his own being these two elements, *mind* and *flesh*. The mind is the self-conscious, discriminating faculty, which takes note of what is going on without and within the man. The mind is also called in Scripture “the heart,” and the “understanding.” It passes judgment upon the actions of the man himself and of others. Thus my mind can so clearly distinguish itself from my “nature” as to observe and criticize my own character and conduct just as if they were those of another. The mind is also capable of entertaining very clear perceptions of right and wrong, and a high appreciation of “ethical obligations,” that is, obligations to do what is right, even though the man himself, in consequence of having a hopelessly bad character, may be habitually addicted to doing what is wrong. The word “character,” which is so often used, is but another name for the “flesh.” The flesh is that element of man in which sin lodges, and which sin has thoroughly corrupted. Therefore, all children of Adam are, by inheritance, “bad characters.” For this they are not individually responsible; and hence “sin is not imputed (put to account) where there is no Law.” For where there is no Law there is nothing to give the knowledge of sin or to make known its presence. But they *are* responsible for the consequences of indwelling sin if, after its presence *is* made known, they cling to the bad character or corrupted nature, when they could have instead the righteous and incorruptible nature which God bestows upon those who believe His testimony concerning His Son.

Sin does not lodge in the “mind.” Therefore the mind is capable of appreciating the distinction between right and wrong, and of seeing clearly the advantage of choosing the former. And not only so, but when instructed by the Law, the mind is capable of being very zealous for good, even to the extent of being rendered utterly “wretched” because of the hopeless badness of the flesh. But the flesh is absolutely incapable of being subject to the Law of God, though it be manifestly to the advantage of the whole man to be subject thereto. For the flesh persists in wrongdoing even in cases where suffering and misery are seen to be the invariable consequences thereof.

It is in *the flesh* that “traits of character” are found; and these predispositions and tendencies, which in their outworking become “habits,” mark the presence and corrupting effect of sin, even when *no sinful acts* are committed. Thus for example, a man is cruel, and if so the cruelty of his disposition is always lurking in him, even when he is not doing a cruel thing. Another man is licentious, another covetous, another dishonest, and so on. These traits of character, which are the corrupting effects of indwelling sin, are present in the man even though they be repressed so far as to give no outward manifestation of their existence. It is highly significant that many of one’s “traits of character” are inherited, showing that *sin* or corrupted flesh passes on from generation to generation.

Now the purpose and effect of the Law is to reveal in all such cases *the presence of sin in the flesh, apart from any outward manifestations thereof*. Therefore the Apostle says, “I had not known sin but by the Law.” The Lord Jesus pressed this lesson home when He declared that he who hated his brother had committed murder in his heart, and he who looked on a woman lustfully had committed adultery in his heart.

EIGHT

THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF THE HUMAN BODY

Although Romans 7 speaks only of two parts or elements of man — “flesh” and “mind” — the human being is more than a duality. He is in fact a highly complex entity, for the Bible speaks of other elements in him besides “flesh” and “mind,” namely, “soul” or “life” (*psuche*) and “spirit” and to these must be added the “mortal body,” making five elements in all. To attempt to trace these out would be a diversion from our main subject, and might needlessly involve us in subtleties of a metaphysical character. Nevertheless, a few words about these several elements will assist in the accomplishment of our main purpose.

The “Soul” of man is the seat of his vitality as a human being in the flesh, *i.e.* his flesh life, whereof the vehicle and symbol is the blood. Indeed “soul” and “life” are so related that in Scripture the same word is used for both. God breathed into the man the “breath of LIVES,” and man became a “LIVING SOUL” (Genesis 2:7). “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 LIFE of all FLESH ... for the LIFE: of all FLESH is the BLOOD thereof (Leviticus 17:11–14).

The “Spirit” of man is the most difficult element to define and to apprehend. Nevertheless “there is a spirit in man” (Job 32:8); and the “spirit of man is the candle of the Lord” (Proverbs 20:27). It is the part that is capable of receiving and giving forth Divine light. The spirit, moreover, is the seat of energy. I will pray WITH THE SPIRIT. I will sing WITH THE SPIRIT (1 Corinthians 14:15). The spirit of man is back of his understanding in grasping knowledge, “or what man knoweth the things of a man, save the SPIRIT OF MAN which is in him?” (1 Corinthians 2:11). But the spirit is distinct from the understanding, for “I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding ALSO” (1 Corinthians 14:15).

Lastly, the external element of a human being — the mortal body — needs not to be discussed at this point, since it is readily distinguished from man’s mind, his flesh, his soul, and his spirit.

It should be observed that the “natural man” is a disordered being, the proper relation between his several elements having been disarranged. The flesh should be subordinate to the mind. But in man, as he now is, the mind is unable to control the flesh. Even though the mind desires to obey the Law of God, it is entirely overruled by the desires of the flesh, which *is not* subject to the Law of God, neither indeed *can be*. In the case of the Gentiles (who have not the Law) the mind became “foolish” and was “darkened.” “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Romans 1:21–22). “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate (undiscerning) MIND” (Romans 1:28). They walked “in the vanity (or emptiness) of their MIND, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Ephesians 4:17–18).

Thus, while sin acted directly upon the *nature* or *character* of man, *i.e.* his “flesh,” and secured lodgment therein, it served also to disarrange the whole man, destroying the order and harmonious arrangement which God had established between the several elements of man’s composite being.

NINE

“THE LAW OF THE HUSBAND”

If now we have gained, through the teaching of Scripture, some idea of the difference between the elements “mind” and “flesh” in a human being, we will be better prepared to comprehend the important lesson taught in Romans 7 by means of the reference there made to the marriage relation.

We have learned that there is in man an element, “flesh,” *i.e.* “human nature” or “character,” in which sin has permanently lodged, from which it cannot by any means be dislodged, and which it has hopelessly corrupted. This fact being clearly grasped, the folly of measures of reform, culture, and education, and the futility of good resolutions, pledges, and the like, will be perceived.

We have learned, moreover, that there is in man another element, “mind” — the intelligence, or understanding, or consciousness — which element constitutes personality (the true “I”) and is capable of recognizing what is good, and of desiring to do it. These two elements are necessary to constitute a man, just as the two persons, man and woman, are necessary to constitute a marriage.

In the illustration given to us in the first part of Romans 7, that is to say, the figure of a marriage, the husband stands for *the flesh* or corrupted human nature, wherein sin dwells, and the wife for the *mind*, bound to the corrupted flesh by a tie which can be dissolved only by death. The illustration, therefore, carries us back to the first married pair, and to the entrance of sin into the world through their agency. The force of the figure becomes at once apparent. In the effect which the entrance of sin had upon the relations of the first married pair, we find a most impressive illustration of the effect which sin has had upon the relations between the flesh and the mind in every human being. The Scripture shows that it through the disobedience of *man* (not through the transgression of the *woman*) that sin entered and effected a permanent lodgment in the human race. Thus the *man* became possessed by sin, and came under the power of death; and because the seed of all future generations was in him, the sentence of subjection to death “passed upon all.” It could not be otherwise. Thus the judgment was “towards all to condemnation” (Romans 5:18). In like manner, *the flesh* in every human being is indwelt by sin and given over to the power of death.

But upon the *woman* a separate and lighter judgment was pronounced. She was put in subjection to the corrupted man to be ruled over by him. In like manner, the *mind* in every human being is dominated by the corrupted flesh and its “desires.”

Here again we need to pay close attention to the teaching of Scripture (which in this matter is perfectly plain and unambiguous), for the reason that it seems to be the prevailing idea that it was the sin of the WOMAN that brought ruin to humanity. This could not be, because it was the man, not the woman, whom God made the responsible head of the human race, and in whom was the “seed” of all human generations. It was *his* fall that carried the race down into ruin.

“... through one MAN (not one woman) sin entered, and death through sin; and so death passed upon all.”

Moreover, we are reminded in 1 Timothy 2:14 that “Adam was not deceived.” He disobeyed knowingly and flagrantly; whereas “the woman” (she was not yet “Eve”) was beguiled by the serpent.

When we turn to the narrative of the fall of humanity given in Genesis 3 we find that the LORD God made allowance for the woman's excuse, and passed upon her a relatively light sentence; but for the man He entertained no extenuating plea. The man's guilt was the greater for several reasons. In the first place his responsibility was greater. In the second place the commandment was given directly to him, not to the woman, who, at the time when the command was given, had not been formed. In the third place the man was given authority over the woman, yet he hearkened to her voice instead of God's. Accordingly, the LORD GOD, after having imposed upon the woman the penalty of her wrongdoing, spoke to the man, putting a curse upon the ground for his sake, and decreeing that he should eat of it in sorrow all the days of his life until he should return to it again. "For out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." The offence which brought upon the man this sentence was thus defined: "Because THOU hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded THEE, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it."

It is significant that, in a narrative characterized by severe brevity, God carefully defined the offense of the man. On the contrary, He did not define the offense of the woman, although He dealt with her transgression first. It is a noteworthy fact that the woman, afterward named "Eve," was taken out of Adam (who was the entire stock of humanity) before the latter sinned. She therefore received originally an uncorrupted nature, being, in this unique respect, different from every other offspring of Adam.

Many questions might be asked here. Was any commandment given directly to the woman? Was Adam responsible for her conduct? Was he present when she ate of the tree? Did she derive her knowledge of the prohibition from Adam? Apparently, from her response to the serpent, she either did not perfectly apprehend, or else she distorted, the terms of the Divine prohibition; for she does not quote it in the precise form in which it was given to Adam. It is sometimes inferred that she purposely misrepresented and distorted the terms of God's command; but Scripture does not afford a sufficient basis for this inference. We do not, however, propose to discuss these questions here. The important matter for our purposes is that the woman's sin was adjudged by the Righteous judge to be an offense less serious than that of the man, and that it received a correspondingly lighter punishment. The particular feature of that punishment which is pertinent to our present purpose is stated in the words, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee."

The man, then, aptly typifies the "flesh" in that sin entered and took possession of *him*, and the woman aptly typifies the "mind" in that whatever she might will and purpose to do was ineffectual because her desire was subject to her husband, the corrupted man, and he ruled over her.

Manifestly, married to such a man, the woman could only bring forth "fruit unto death." All her offspring by that husband were food for death's rapacious maw, as soon became evident. But the Law, which held her to this servitude, obviously binding upon her only so long as her husband lived. We can see that, if she had outlived her husband, and if there had been another man whose nature was not corrupted by the presence of sin, she might have been married to that other, and have brought forth fruit unto God. This is not an idle speculation. The supposition is warranted by the fact that the Lord God, in passing sentence upon the serpent, distinctly promised that there should be born of the woman One Who should crush the serpent's head. We now know that this figurative statement signified that One was to be "born of woman" Who should have power over and should "destroy him who had the power of death, that is the Devil" (Hebrews 2:14) who is "that old serpent" (Revelation 12:9). Accordingly, when, in the fullness of time, "God sent forth His Son, born of woman" (not "made of a woman" as in the A.V.) that Sinless One was not begotten of the seed of Adam, but by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20). God "can *bring* a clean thing out of an unclean" (Job 14:4); but the thing that is brought out must itself be clean. Every child of *Adam's* generation is unclean, because the seed is corrupt. Therefore, the One sent from God to be the Redeemer of men and the Head of a new humanity could not have accomplished the purposes of God had He been begotten of a human father. He could be "born of woman," because, as said above, God can *bring a clean thing* out of an unclean. But He Himself must be "THAT HOLY THING," conceived of the Holy Ghost, and therefore called "the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

Moreover, the woman received the name by which we know her *immediately after the death sentence was passed upon the man and his offspring*. Adam was henceforth the father of all the dying. “In Adam all die” (1 Corinthians 15:22) and “Adam” had been, up to that time, the name of them both, for God “called THEIR NAME ADAM in the day when they were created” (Genesis 5:2). But now there has come such a difference between them that this name is no longer suitable to the woman. So we read that immediately “Adam called his wife’s name EVE (*i.e.* Life) because she is the mother of all LIVING” (Genesis 3:20).

Thus we see that the illustration given in Romans 7:1–4, follows with striking accuracy the record of the entrance of sin and death into the world; and from this illustration many and profound lessons may be learned if we would but take the pains to trace them out.

We have seen, then, that the two elements, “mind” and “flesh,” are yoked together in every human being, the mind being subject to the will of the flesh, and compelled to submit to the law of sin which operates in the flesh, just as the woman’s desire was to be to her husband and he was to rule over her. But ordinarily there is no strife between the two elements. So long as the mind consents to the desires of the flesh, and lends itself to be used for devising and procuring the means whereby those desires may be satisfied, there is no conflict. Such was and is the case of ordinary Gentile sinners who are not enlightened in regard to sin. Because these did not “APPROVE to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to an UNAPPROVING MIND, to do things not fitting” (Romans 1:28). In the case of the Gentiles the “mind” was usually in full accord with the flesh in *doing* the things for which the latter craved; and the result was that the character and conduct of the Gentiles sank to unspeakable depths of depravity.

But with the Jew it was far otherwise. His “mind” was, from childhood, brought under the influence of God’s holy law. He was carefully trained in it, and its lessons were deeply impressed upon him. Paul instances himself in this chapter because he was the best possible example of a Jew thoroughly instructed in the Law. He says of himself that he was brought up “at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the PERFECT MANNER OF THE LAW Of the fathers” (Acts 22:37). The Jew would therefore find, as a matter of painful experience, that there was in him a nature which *could not* be brought into subjection to the Law of God, notwithstanding that his *mind* fully approved of that Law. The more he delighted in that Law and attempted to conform his conduct to it, the more forcibly he would realize, through continuous and repeated failure, that there was another law in his members warring against the law of his mind. In a word, the experience detailed in the latter part of Romans 7 would be *the normal experience of a conscientious unconverted Israelite*.

The union of flesh and mind in the Israelite was, so to speak, legitimate. It was sanctioned by the Mosaic Law and was therefore respectable though unfruitful. But the conjunction of flesh and mind in the Gentile was utterly lawless, and resulted in unnamable abominations and excesses.

What this chapter puts before us is clearly not the conflict of the two natures in a believer — not a conflict between the old man and the new man, between flesh and spirit, between the nature that does not practice sin (1 John 3:9), and the nature that habitually practices it (Romans 7:20). It is quite a different conflict, namely, one between the *corrupted nature (the flesh)* and the *mind* in a man whose mind has been fully instructed in the Law of God, who fully approves of it, and who endeavors through the flesh to obey it. The conflict between the two natures in a believer continues throughout this present life; but the conflict between the mind and flesh in a man under Law is ended when he turns to the crucified Messiah. From the wretched state of such a man there is complete *deliverance* through the efficacy of the death of Christ, Who died “for that nation” (John 11:51).

For *the flesh*, whether in Jew or Gentile, there is nothing but death. On the other hand, the *mind*, which is the true conscious personality, survives, just as the woman, in the illustration, survives her husband. The believer, having put off, according to the former conduct, the “old man,” which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, needs to be “renewed in the spirit of his MIND” (Ephesians

4:22–23). He needs to be “transformed by the renewing of the MIND” (Romans 12:2). But the flesh is utterly corrupt and must be entirely disposed of — put off.”

The believing Jew, therefore, gets deliverance from the Law through the death of Christ, having died with Him in that in which he (the Jew) was held, in order that he should thenceforth serve in newness of spirit, not in oldness of letter (5:6). This verse calls our attention to an interesting point, and one which shows very conclusively that the passage under consideration applies to the Jews. The Gentile *begins* to serve God at his conversion; but the Jew’s service begins before conversion. To the Jews pertains “the service.” Every Israelite was called upon to serve the Lord; but, on conversion to Christ, the *character* of his service changes. He is no longer to serve in the oldness of the letter, that is, in the attempt to fulfill the requirements of the Law, but in newness of the Spirit. The new nature or “spirit” which the believer receives from Christ, the Head of the new humanity, requires no curb of the Law. “The Law came in BY THE BYE, that the offense might abound” (Romans 5:20). It was ADDED because of (or for the sake of) “transgressions” (Galatians 3:19). It was given in order to reveal by the constant transgressions of those who were put under it, the presence of *sin in the flesh*. By the Law is the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20). But there is no sin in the new nature, and hence the Law is not for the new man.

TEN

IS THE LAW SIN?

But there is the possibility of a misunderstanding arising at this point. From the circumstance that the believing Jew died in Christ, not only to sin, but also to the Law, it might be hastily inferred that there was some similarity between the Law and sin. The apostle emphatically repels this inference, and strongly asserts the spirituality, holiness, and goodness of the Law. Sin and the Law are put in the greatest contrast. “Is the Law sin? Let it not be. Nay, I had not known sin but through (by means of) the Law, for I, had not been conscious of lust, except the Law said, Thou shalt not lust” (Romans 7:7).

This brings us to the point at which Paul describes his own personal experience in order to elucidate the doctrine. His understanding of the nature of sin was gained by means of the Law, in which he had been carefully instructed, and for which he was most zealous. The distinction between *sin* and *sins* is strongly marked in this verse; for Paul chooses as an example of “sin” a *condition* of the heart — lustfulness — and not a wrongful *act*. And he says that this inward evil nature — sin dwelling in him — having taken an occasion through the Law, *worked out* in him every lust; for apart from Law sin was dead. That is to say, sin made use of the law to work *out* and bring to the surface every manner of desire that was latent *in* the flesh. It matters not whether these desires be coarse or refined, whether “lust of concupiscence,” or of fame, or of money, or of pleasure, they are all for self, and are equally the products of the corruption of human nature. This goes to show how very evil sin is, — so evil that it could find in the Law an occasion for working out, in a man under the Law, every manner of lust.

“Apart from Law sin was dead” (verse 8). The expression “apart from Law” occurs three times in the Epistle, as follows: (a) “But now *apart from Law* righteousness of God has been manifested” (4:21); (b) in verse 8 of Chapter 7, “*Apart from Law* sin was dead”; and, lastly (c) in the next verse, “But I was alive *apart from Law* once.” Apart from Law sin was ineffective to make its presence known as sin. It was unrecognized, unidentified, and its nature unknown. Apart from Law it could not be known that all the wicked and abominable practices of men proceeded from a hopelessly corrupted nature. Hence “the *strength* of sin is the Law” (1 Corinthians 15:56). Knowledge of the requirements of the Law is what gives sin its effectiveness against the individual conscience. Apart from Law a man might be very conscious of the wickedness of his evil *acts*; but the Law is needed to reveal the fact that *sin* is present as the *nature* of all human beings.

“I was alive apart from Law once; but the commandment having come, sin revived, but I died.” This, of course, is not physical death, “the wages of sin,” but is a strong expression for the effect produced by sin, on a conscience which has been enlightened through the Law. It was death to the attempt to attain to righteousness through Law works. Paul was alive before he acquired knowledge of the Law; but when the commandment came, and he thoroughly understood that one could live through the Law only by fulfilling every requirement of it, he found that the Law brought him not life, but death. “The commandment which was ordained to life” (because it said “This do and thou shalt live”) “I found to be unto death.” “For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me” (verse 11). It was sin, dwelling in him, that made it impossible for him to keep the Law.

Sin thus brought to naught all his efforts at self-righteousness, and it did this by taking advantage of the Law; for the “strength of sin is the Law.”

“Wherefore the Law is holy” because it detects and then strikes down unsparingly that which is unholy — “and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (verse 12). This suggests another question, “Was that which is *good* made death to me?” Far from it. The purpose of the Law, on the contrary, was to exhibit the awful nature of sin. By means of the Law sin is shown to be so exceedingly evil that it is capable of working out death even by means of that which is *good*. It can turn that which is holy, just, and good to a destructive purpose.

Thus the Law not only detects the presence of sin indwelling human nature, but it also exhibits its exceeding sinfulness — “that sin *through the commandment* might become exceeding sinful” (verse 13).

11

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN MIND AND FLESH

At this point comes the description of the conflict between the *mind* (of one who knows the Law, and upon whom its obligations rest) and the *flesh*, which is so corrupt that it cannot be subject to that Law. The man who knows the Law knows that it is spiritual, but he comes also to learn that he himself is “carnal, sold under sin” (14). This statement determines conclusively the application of the passage. The believer, however little light he may have, is not any longer in the servitude of sin. But the man whose desperate struggle is here depicted is said expressly to be the bondsman of sin — “sold under sin.” Moreover, this wretched man declares that he “practices” (rendered “do” in the A.V.) that which he hates, and not what he wills (verses 15–16, 19–21). This statement further proves that this man is the slave of sin, for the Lord Jesus explicitly declared that “Whosoever PRACTICETH (“committeth” in the A.V.) sin, is the BONDSMALE OF SIN.” Here, then, in the seventh of Romans we have a man who confesses that he habitually practices sin. He is therefore the bondsman of sin. His case is so far common enough; but it is peculiar in that he practices sin knowing that it *is* sin and hating it as such, and knowing also that the wrath of God is denounced against the sinner. His case is also peculiar in that he practices sin in spite of his utmost efforts to the contrary. “What I hate that I practice.” It is quite certain that Paul could not have made these statements as descriptive of his condition after his conversion to Christ.

Furthermore this man says: “What I work out I do not own: for what I will *not* to do, this I do” (verse 15). What he “works out” as the result of all his carnal efforts to keep the Law, is so bad that he disowns it. It is not his, because it is not what he, in his attempts at Law keeping, intended to do; far from it. This shows that he fully approves of the Law which prohibits these practices. “If I practice what I will not to do, I consent to the Law that it is good” (verse 16). And another conclusion follows, namely that there must be *another and overmastering agency at work* which causes these wicked deeds. “Now then, it is *no longer I* that am working it out, but the SIN indwelling me” (verse 17). This statement shows us that the personality, the true *self*: personal identity of the man is connected with that part of him which is here called the “mind.” It explains why, after conversion, though there is a change of “nature,” or character, the converted man perceives that there has been no change of *identity*. He is still *the same person*. The “mind” or conscious personality does not die, but passes over into union with the new nature. The real agent, therefore, of the evil deeds which the wretched man habitually did, contrary to the Law and contrary to himself, is *sin* which dwelt in him. For he knows that there dwells in him, that is to say, in his flesh — not in himself, since the mind, not the flesh, is the true self— no good (thing).

The statement that “in me, that is in my flesh, dwells not any good thing,” connects with the previous statement that the Law is good, and with the question, “Was then that which is good made death to me?” The Law is “that which is good”; and by means of the Law sin is made to appear sin. This man knows that that which is good does not dwell in his flesh. It is not the “good” Law that dwells there, but another law entirely, called later on “the law of sin and death.” He comes to know this by discovering that while “to will” what is right is present with him, to “work it out” he finds not. “For,” he again confesses, “not the good that I will to, do I practice, but the evil that I will not to do, this do I” (19). The conclusion from this is deemed so important that it is repeated in verse 20. “But if I practice that which I will not to do, it is no longer I that work it out, but the sin indwelling me.” Since the

“working out” is directly contrary to the inward willing, and is simultaneous therewith, it is plain that both cannot proceed from the same agency. And since it is “I” that do the willing, it plainly cannot be “I” that do the working. Therefore it must be the indwelling sin.

It is instructive to compare this passage with Philippians 2:12–13. The word “work out” is the same word that occurs four times in Romans 7 verses 15, 17, 18, 19 (rendered “do” in verses 15, 17, 19, and “perform” in verse 18). The passage in Philippians is addressed to the “sons of God” in whom it is God that does the inward “willing,” and hence that which is wrought in them, and which they are to “work out” is “salvation.” Very different indeed is the case of the man in Romans 7. In him it is his own unrenewed mind that does the “willing” (“what I will”), and it is indwelling sin that wrought in him all manner of lust (verse 8), so that what he “worked out” was hateful even to himself. From this appears again the impossibility of supposing that the wretched man of Romans 7 is a child of God.

To sum up our answer to the question “Why was the Law given?” we have found that the Law *served first* to reveal the *presence* of sin in the flesh; *secondly*, to reveal the exceedingly *sinful character* of sin; and *thirdly* to reveal the *outworkings* of sin in the flesh.

In verses 21–25 the Apostle sums up his experience as a man in the flesh under Law, telling us what he “finds,” namely that, notwithstanding he delighted in the Law of God after the inward man, he saw *another law* in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into *captivity* to the *law of sin*, which was in his members. His condition therefore was one of “*captivity*” wherein he was compelled, against the strenuous but ineffectual protest of his will, to render obedience to the law of sin. The chief desire of a captive is for *deliverance*; and hence he puts up here the captive’s cry, “Who shall deliver me?” The deliverance for which the wretched man cries out is deliverance “from the body of this death.” In Chapter 6:6 occurs the very similar expression, “body of sin;” and in the context are the expressions “law of sin” and “law of sin and death.” Since the law of sin and death operates in the “flesh,” or Adamic human nature broadly, it seems we are warranted in concluding that it is the flesh, or body of humanity, that is referred to under the expressions “body of sin” and “body of death.” The former expression is appropriate to the sixth chapter where deliverance from *sin* is the theme; and the latter is appropriate to the seventh chapter where deliverance from *Law*, with its sentence of *death* is the theme. The same conclusion is reached from the consideration that deliverance from the “body” referred to comes through the death of Christ; for it is the flesh, or corrupted Adamic nature in the believer, that is disposed of by the death of Christ (Romans 6:6). Or viewed in another way it is the death of Christ, *i.e.* His exodus from the humanity of Adam, which takes all His redeemed people out of that corrupted humanity.

The condition of man in the flesh under Law is concisely summed up in the last words of the chapter. “So then with the MIND I myself serve the Law of God; but with the FLESH the law of sin.” In these few words all the prominent points of the passage under consideration are presented; *namely*, *first*, the distinction between the mind and the flesh; *second*, the complete subservience of the flesh to the law of sin, even in a case where the mind is subservient to the Law of God; *third*, the identification of the conscious personality (“I, myself”) with the mind; *fourth*, the fact that, in the unconverted man, the flesh is master.

The subject of “the Law” continues in Chapter 8, the last reference to it being in verse 7. Likewise the subjects “sin,” “death,” and “the flesh,” are further discussed in Chapter 8. The last reference to the flesh, to death, and to the deeds of the body, occurs in verse 13. There is, therefore, no break between Chapters 7 and 8, so far as concerns the subjects under consideration. There is, however, a great difference in the relation of the man himself to those subjects. Chapter 8 begins with the words, “Therefore now.” The word “*now*” is an adverb of time, and it marks the period of the conversion of the “wretched man” of Chapter 7. That man was the Apostle himself, who, speaking “now” from his new position in Christ Jesus, testifies that the Law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set him free from the law of sin death. The same change of condition is marked by the words “But now” in Chapter 3:21 and Chapter 7:6.

In Chapter 5 it was declared that, in consequence of Adam's offense, sin entered and secured permanent lodgment in human nature, and that God's judgment upon that one offense was "to condemnation" (Romans 5:12,16). *But "now" there is "no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."* Furthermore, the judgment of God, which was the consequence of Adam's offence, was "towards all men to condemnation" (verse 18). In like manner the deliverance *from* condemnation is towards all that are in Christ Jesus — whether Jews or Gentiles. These have all received "the free gift of God," which is "eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (6:23); and since, as previously stated (verse 15), the consequences of the free gift abound to those who receive it far beyond the consequences of the offence, we are prepared to hear that the believing sinner receives great benefits and blessings, in addition to deliverance from the condemnation of Adam's offence.

There is then a "law of sin and death," that is to say a normal and definite mode or principle of operation whereby these destroying agencies "work out" their evil results. For "sin reigns" or "has dominion" over an empire, which, like other empires, has its law; and every child of Adam is born into the sphere wherein that law is supreme. Hence the judgment of God arising out of Adam's offence was "towards all men to condemnation." That Law of sin and death has not been abrogated. It still remains in force in the sphere of the Adam humanity. The *only way* to escape from its operation and consequences is *to pass out of the race of the first Adam into that of the last Adam*. This way of escape has been provided by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Those who hear His Word and believe on Him that sent Him, avoid the judgment, and pass out of death (the sphere of the first man) and into life (the sphere of the Second Man). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed OUT OF DEATH INTO LIFE" (John 5:24).

But while there is a Law (of sin and death) operating in the domain of the flesh, and exercising its sway over all who are in the flesh, there is also a Law operating in the domain of the *spiritual* humanity. This Law is called "the Law of the spirit of the life that is in Christ Jesus." When, by the working of the mighty power of God, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead (Ephesians 1:19–20) the believing sinner is taken out of the humanity of Adam (the body of sin and death) and transplanted into the humanity or "body" of Christ, he is brought into the sphere of a *new sort* of human life. This new sort of human life is in the risen Man, Christ Jesus. He is "*the Resurrection and the Life*" (John 11:25). The redeemed sinner is thus brought under the influence of the law of that new life; and God's purpose for him is that he should henceforth "walk in newness of life." He has left the flesh behind. He has "put off the old man which was corrupt," and has "put on the new man." To all who are in Christ it is said, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit" (Romans 8:9). The law of the spirit of this new life has forever liberated them from the law of sin and death. The Mosaic Law was powerless to effect this, because of the weakness of the flesh. Therefore, God sent forth His own Son to accomplish the work of Redemption. In order to do this He assumed "the likeness of flesh of sin." It is far beyond our power to apprehend the depth of the humiliation to which the Holy One submitted when He assumed the likeness of that corrupt nature wherein sin dwelt. This is the climax of the lesson and lies close to the heart of the holiest of all mysteries. "The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us," sinners; and the flesh He assumed was "the likeness of flesh of sin." It is to be particularly noted that He assumed, not the flesh of sin, that is corrupted human nature, but "*the likeness of flesh of sin.*" This He did in order that He might become a Sacrifice for sin; and upon Him, while thus in the likeness of flesh of sin, God executed the condemnation due to "sin in the flesh." "For powerless being the Law in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in likeness of flesh of sin, and for sin (or a sacrifice for sin) condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). God made Him Who knew no sin to be "sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians v.21). When thus "MADE SIN for us" He both endured, in the flesh which He had assumed for that purpose, the sufferings due for the *sins* of His people, and also submitted to the consequence of *sin*, namely, death. The blessed result is that God, having now condemned sin when the stroke fell upon the Person of the Sinless Sacrifice, the condemnation of sin is exhausted; and, moreover, the righteous requirement of the Law is fulfilled in us who walk (or while walking) not after the flesh but after the spirit.

But God did not send His own Son to bear the condemnation of sin in the flesh until, by means of a trial lasting fifteen hundred years, it had been conclusively demonstrated that even a holy Law, delivered amid the terrors of Sinai, was *powerless* to effect the improvement of the flesh; and that, indeed, the only effect of the holy Law of God upon man in the flesh was to multiply transgressions beyond all computation, thus making manifest the exceeding sinfulness of sin. There remained, after that trial, no alternative but to *condemn* sin in the flesh. If, then, there was to be any salvation for sinners of the race of Adam it is clear that “Christ MUST NEEDS have suffered and RISEN AGAIN from the dead” (Acts 17:3). But the lesson taught by the trial of man in the flesh under Law is almost wholly lost sight of in these days, in which man in the flesh is busier than ever, and better satisfied than ever, with his schemes of salvation by means of works, works that are trivial compared with those that the Law of God demanded.

God condemned sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement (not the “righteousness” as in the A.V.) of the Law, might be fulfilled in us who walk not after (or according to) the flesh, but after the spirit (8:4). Although the believer is no longer regarded as being in the flesh, and hence (if a Jew) is no longer under Law, God does not lose sight of “the righteous requirement of the Law.” God does not in anywise diminish His righteous demand; and because the Son of God endured sin’s condemnation for us, and the Spirit of God dwells in us, the Law’s righteous requirement is fulfilled in us who walk (*i.e.*, while we are walking) not according to the nature of the old man, the flesh, but according to the nature of the new man, the spirit. The expression “righteousness of the Law” in Romans 8:4, is a defective translation. It is not the righteousness of the Law that is fulfilled in us, but its righteous requirement. “Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believeth” (Romans 10:4). This latter statement is made with reference to Israelites, and its import is that Christ is the end at which the Law aimed, in other words, the purpose of the Law, unto (*eis*) righteousness to every believing Jew.

We now get in Romans 8:5, and succeeding verses some particulars of the walk in newness of life which is God’s purpose for those who are bidden to reckon themselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ. I take the word “spirit” in these verses as signifying the new nature which is born of the Holy Spirit, for “that which is born (or begotten) of the Spirit is *spirit*.” The contrast between “flesh” and “spirit” is the same as in John 3:6. But even if we assume that the Person of the Spirit of God is referred to, our understanding of the passage will be practically the same.

“For they that are according to flesh mind (*i.e.* incline towards, or have a mind for) the things of the flesh, and they that are according to spirit mind the things of the spirit. For the mind (or inclination) of the flesh is death, but the mind of the spirit is life and peace.” The sense of this appears to be that the things upon which the flesh sets its mind or thoughts (*phronema*) tend towards death; whereas the things upon which the mind of the spirit is set make for life and peace. Or we may take it as meaning that the things of the flesh lie in or pertain to the sphere wherein death reigns, whereas the things of the spirit are in the realm of everlasting life and peace. The statement “the mind of the flesh is death” is explained by verse 7, “Because the mind of the flesh is enmity towards God, for it is not subject to God’s Law, and indeed cannot be.” The condition of the mind that is at enmity with God is described as a condition of death. The expression is figurative, and is more intense than if the adjective “dead” had been used in place of the substantive “death.” The thoughts and inclinations that are not subject to God’s Law are, of course, influenced by the Devil who exercises the authority of death (Hebrews 2:14).

Conversely we may understand that the thoughts of the spirit (or new man) are in full subjection to God’s Law, which, for the redeemed of this dispensation is not the Law given to Moses on Sinai, but the higher Law of the spirit of life in Christ. This “Law of Christ” which the believer is called upon to fulfill (Galatians 6:2) is found in the commandments of Christ recorded in the New Testament. Its essence is to, “love one another.” This then is a brief summary of the Law of God: “That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as HE GAVE US COMMANDMENT” (1 John 3:23).

The mind of the Spirit is said to be life *and peace*; whereas the mind of the flesh is *death*, there being no contrast in verse 6 to the word “peace.” This, however, is supplied by verse 7; the *enmity against God*, spoken of in that verse, being in contrast with the “peace” spoken of in verse 6.

The condition of the thoughts of the spirit, which are vividly described as being “life and peace,” is that which the Apostle Paul declared to be his own — a condition wherein, all imaginations were cast down and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and EVERY THOUGHT was brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). Here indeed is a state of thorough subjection to God’s Law.

It follows that they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God. It is impossible for them to do so, no matter how hard they may strive with their law works. God has now, after centuries of forbearance, finally and irrevocably condemned the flesh in condemning sin in the flesh. Through the proclamation of the Gospel, God requires of men that they accept this condemnation of the flesh by believing on the name of His Son, crucified and raised from the dead, that they receive the free gift of eternal life in Christ, and that they walk no longer according to the flesh, but according to the spirit of life in Christ. Those who refuse to obey the Gospel, and remain in the condemned flesh, cannot please God.

“But ye” (addressing those who have been crucified with Christ and raised together with Him) “are not in flesh but in spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you; but if any one has not the spirit of Christ, he is not of Him. But if Christ be in you, the body indeed is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” This is a literal rendering of verses 9 and 19, following *Bagster’s Englishman’s Greek New Testament*, whose renderings are very reliable where the literal significance is sought. In this verse there is an unmistakable reference to the Holy Spirit Himself—“the Spirit of God.” Commentators are divided as to the meaning to be assigned to the word “*pneuma*” in the earlier verses of the chapter. I have already given it as my opinion, with such light as I now have, that the “spirit” which is contrasted with the “flesh” in verses 4–8 is the new nature produced by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit in everyone who believes on Christ Jesus. This view is in strict accordance with the explanation given by the Lord to Nicodemus, “That which has been born of THE SPIRIT is *spirit*” (John 3:6). In every believer there is “that which has been born of the Spirit,” and which accordingly is “spirit.” But can we affirm with certainty that the Holy Spirit “dwells” that is, abides continually, in every believer, regardless of his conduct? I am aware that many competent teachers of the Word maintain that view. But I find it very difficult to reconcile with it such Scriptures as that just quoted. Why then the repeated use of the word “if?” “If Christ be in you ... If the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus from the dead *dwells* in you.” Undoubtedly every believer has his place eternally secured in Christ, and doubtless all believers are being built into the spiritual house for a habitation of God by the Spirit (Ephesians 2:20–22; 1 Peter 2:4–5); but it does not follow that Christ *dwells* in every believer. Where the Spirit of Christ *dwells*, His presence will surely be manifested by a godly walk and by the production of the fruit of the Spirit. In John 14:23 Christ says, “If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and (in that case) My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode (*i.e.* dwell) with him.” Here again the promise of “dwelling” is conditional. Ephesians 3:17 points strongly to the same conclusion. Paul there prays “that Christ *may dwell* in your hearts by faith,” which seems clearly to indicate that Christ does not “dwell” in every believer. In writing to the Galatians, who had “fallen from grace” into a legal state, having indeed “*begun* in the Spirit,” but having been diverted by false teaching into an attempt to become perfect or mature by works of the flesh (Galatians 3:3), Paul addresses them as in a condition of spiritual infancy, saying, “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ *be formed in you*” (4:19).

It thus appears that the Scriptures make a difference between receiving Christ (John 1:12), or believing on Him (John 3:16), or receiving the Spirit (Galatians 3:2), which takes place once for all upon the “hearing of faith,” and the permanent *abiding* or *indwelling* of Christ or the Spirit. It is entirely clear that all believers have redemption through the Blood of Christ, the remission of sins, the free gift of eternal life, and the earnest of the Spirit, by Whom they all are sealed until the redemption of the purchased possession (Ephesians 1:7; John 5:24; Ephesians 1:14; Romans 8:23). But it does not

follow that Christ “dwells” in every believer. Nor does this follow from 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19. In the first of these passages (“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”) the saints are addressed collectively. In the second passage (“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you?”) there is no mention of the *dwelling* or permanent *abiding* of the Spirit. The body of every believer is indeed a potential sanctuary of the Spirit of God; but it is does not follow that He occupies all these sanctuaries. It is not to be supposed, for instance, that He would dwell in a body defiled by fornication. All this, however, is said by way of suggestion only, since the subject is a difficult one, and there is much yet to be learned about it. But, in view of this uncertainty, we shall do well to take nothing for granted, but should rather seek diligently that our hearts be continually in such a state towards God that Christ may indeed *abide* therein.

TWELVE

“THE BODY” AND THE “MORTAL BODIES”

We have now reached a passage which is unquestionably of great importance, but in regard to the meaning of which there is much diversity of opinion. Verse 10 as given in *The Englishman’s Greek New Testament* reads: “But if Christ [be] in you the body indeed [is] dead on account of sin, but the Spirit life on account of righteousness.” What “body” is it that is “dead on account of, or through (*dia*) sin?” We deem it to be very clear that this is *not* the physical body of the individual believer. Some of the proofs that the physical body is not meant are these:

1. The physical body of the individual believer is not dead. To apply this statement to the physical body would make it assert what is obviously not true in a literal sense, and is without meaning in a figurative sense.
2. In Romans 12:1 believers are urged to present their bodies to God as “LIVING sacrifices.” They could not do this if their bodies were *dead*.
3. In the very next verse to that which says the *body* is dead, occur the words, “shall also quicken *your mortal bodies*.” Nothing can be clearer than that the physical *bodies* of believers are here designated as “mortal” for the express purpose of distinguishing them from the *body* of the preceding verse, which is designated as *dead*. It could not be said of the same body that it was both “mortal” and “dead.”
4. This distinction is emphasized by the use, in verse 11, of the plural, “bodies” (as in 12:1) as distinguished from single “body” The plural personal pronoun “your” is used for the same purpose.
5. In verse 13 it is said, “if ye live after the flesh ye shall die.” This can only mean physical death, and that would be impossible if the physical body were already dead. It is appointed unto men once to die (*i.e.* physically).
6. The word “indeed” (“the body *indeed* is dead”) which occurs in the original, but not in the A.V., indicates that the fact of the death of the body here referred to has already been mentioned. It is, moreover, *the* body — some particular body — that is meant.

There is a “body,” prominently mentioned in the preceding portion of the Epistle, and which I am well satisfied is that contemplated in Romans 8:10 and 13. In Chapter 6:6 we read of “the BODY OF SIN,” and in 7:24 of “the BODY OF THIS DEATH.” Here is a body of which sin has taken possession, and into which death has entered. This description, as we have seen, fits the first humanity — the body of Adam. We learned from Chapter 5:12 exactly how this body became the body of sin and death, and came under the operation of the law of sin and death; “for by one man *sin* entered the world, and *death* by sin.” Moreover, the preposition “by” in the clause “death by sin” is the same as that rendered “because of” in the clause “dead because of sin.”

This body, of which death has thus taken possession, is in contrast with yet another Body mentioned in Chapter 12, to wit, the Body of the *new* humanity: for “We being many are ONE BODY in Christ” (12:5). The death of Christ takes the believer out of the corrupted body of the old humanity, and the resurrection of Christ brings him into the incorruptible body of the new humanity. This new “body” I believe to be that contemplated in Romans 8:23, “waiting for the adoption, the redemption of OUR BODY;” but I shall not digress here to give the reasons for this view.

A similar usage of the word “body,” and one that strongly confirms the explanation we have offered, is found in Colossians 2:11, which reads: “In whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the “BODY OF THE FLESH in the circumcision of Christ” (American Revised Version). The “*body* of the flesh” which the believer has put off in the circumcision of Christ (circumcision being here used figuratively for His death on the Cross) is clearly the old humanity.

Our explanation helps to clarify the meaning of Romans 8:13, “But if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the DEEDS OF THE BODY, ye shall live.” This could not mean the deeds (or literally the *doings*) of the physical body. The doings of the latter are the natural functions of its various members, and if these be mortified the occupant of the body does not live, but on the contrary dies. But the “doings” of the old humanity, referred to in Chapter 1 and in many other Scriptures, as Colossians 3:5 must be mortified (*i.e.*, put to death) if we would truly *live*, that is, would manifest the characteristics of the life of the Risen Christ.

Romans 8:13 puts before us a death struggle. If we live according to the flesh (or, adopting the expression of Colossians 2:11, the *body* of the flesh) *we* shall die. But if, through the Spirit we put to death the *doings of the body* (of the flesh) we shall live. The doings of the body of the flesh, or corrupted humanity, which we are called upon to put to death, are specified in Romans 1:28–31.

At this point we are reminded that the results of the free gift (eternal life) abound “much more” than the results of the offense. The body indeed is dead on account of sin, but the Spirit is life on account of righteousness. This is a great statement, and we shall be blessed indeed if, by the grace of the same Spirit, we are able to apprehend something of its meaning. Here again there is evidently a contrast drawn between the unrighteous act of Adam and the righteous act of Christ (Comp. verse 18). The body of the old humanity is indeed dead because of the sin of Adam, but, if Christ be in you, the Spirit is life because of the righteousness of Christ.

The body of the first man is, in the sight of God, a dead body, filled with corruption and with all the loathsome results of sin. Death has seized it, and is preying upon all its members. “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17). Life has departed from this body. How then is it possible for us, while yet on earth, to walk according to the Spirit, and to serve and glorify God? The answer is that the “Spirit is life.” He has been given for that very purpose, and if we fail to avail ourselves of this wondrous provision of God’s grace, the fault is our own; for we are commanded to “be filled with the Spirit.”

We have cited the Scriptures which state that, “the blood is the life of all flesh,” that is to say, the blood is the agent or medium whereby all parts of the body are renewed and the physical life is maintained in all its members. When the blood is shed, or when it stagnates, life departs. When the blood is impoverished, life wanes. When the blood is rich and plentiful, and flows without impediment throughout the body, the physical or natural life is full and vigorous. “The blood is the life” of the natural man. But in the case of the spiritual man “the Spirit is life,” that is to say, the Spirit is the agent or medium whereby the life of the Risen Christ is communicated to those who live in Him. When the supply of spirit is small the spiritual life is feeble. When the supply is full, and has free access to every part of the being, the life is correspondingly full and vigorous. Therefore, “be ye filled with the Spirit.” The Spirit is *received* by “the hearing of faith” (Galatians 3:2); but the condition of being *filled* with the Spirit is the obedience of faith, that is to say, the obedience that true faith renders to the commands given by God to those who have been justified out of faith. The first of these commands is,

as we have seen, that we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but *alive unto God* in Christ Jesus. Moreover, we are commanded to yield ourselves unto God as those who are *alive from the dead*. The Spirit is the life that is in the Risen Man Christ Jesus, and those who are alive to God in Him are partakers of that life. Here is the source of all spiritual power for a holy, fruitful and vigorous spiritual life, and for the maintenance of a walk with God.

The effect of the presence of the indwelling Spirit, pervading and vitalizing every part of the being of the man who has yielded himself unto God and his members instruments of righteousness unto God, extends also to the “mortal body,” as is stated in verse 11. But we reserve for the present our remarks on that subject, as there are several other topics that have a prior claim to our consideration.

Verses 12–13 bring to a conclusion the teaching on the general subject of *sin, death*, and the new *life* of the believer. “So then, brethren, ye are not debtors to flesh according to flesh to live.” Those who have access to the inexhaustible stores of the life that is in the risen Christ are not indebted to the flesh to live according to the ways of the flesh. “For if according to flesh ye live, ye are about to die; but if by the Spirit the deeds of the body ye do put to death, ye shall live.” This surely signifies that the believer who lives according to flesh is inviting physical death, because in so doing he exposes himself to the attack of the enemy who has the power of death, that is, the Devil. But if, in the energy of the Spirit — having been strengthened with might by God’s Spirit in the inner man — we do resolutely and persistently devote to death *the practices or doings* of the body of sin, from which body we have been severed by the death of Christ, including all the self-pleasing and self-exalting ways, the indulgences of the flesh and old habits of thought, we shall live. This, of course has nothing to do with the resurrection, for the resurrection of the believer is not in the slightest degree dependent upon his watchfulness and obedience. Moreover, the resurrection of individual believers is not taught in Romans. Attention is there focused upon the *resurrection of Christ*, and the participation therein of the believer while yet in the mortal body. The passage conveys to the believer the promise that he shall be enabled, even while yet in the mortal body, to live a “life which is life indeed,” because lived in the energy of the Spirit and to the glory of God. And to us who are now living it conveys also the stimulating hope of serving the living and true God *until the coming of His Son from heaven* and our gathering together unto Him. Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of *the life that now is*, as well as of that which is to come.

This subject of living and manifesting the supernatural life in the mortal body through the indwelling Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus from the dead will be considered further in our comments upon verse 11.

THIRTEEN

THE GENTILE BELIEVER AND THE LAW

We have said (and we trust that the Scriptures we have now examined together make it clear to the reader) that the experience of the “wretched man” of Romans 7 is not the *normal* experience of a converted Gentile. It is, nevertheless, a sad fact that it may (and often does) become the *abnormal* experience of converted Gentiles, who, through ignorance of the great gospel truths revealed in Romans, or through the influence of Judaizing teachers and legal systems of theology, fall from their standing in grace, and seek justification, or the gift of the Spirit, through law works. Hence the solemn warning of Galatians 5:4: “Ye are deprived of all effect from Christ, whosoever IN LAW are being justified: ye are fallen from grace.” For as there were in Paul’s day, so are there now, many who desire “to be teachers of THE LAW; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm” (1 Timothy 1:7).

So also the struggle of that “wretched man” becomes the experience of many *unconverted* Gentiles, who, totally ignorant of remission of sins through faith in the Blood of Christ, of justification by the grace of God, of death to self and sin through the crucifixion of Christ, and of new life from the Risen Christ imparted by the Spirit of God to the believer while yet in his mortal body, are seeking perpetually (because seeking vainly) for an *inclination of the heart* to keep the Mosaic Law. The condition of such, if they be earnest and sincere in their desire to keep the Law, is indeed “wretched” in the extreme.

It was needful, therefore, that, in addition to the revelation given in Romans 7 of deliverance for the believing Jew from the yoke of the Law, the Epistle to the Galatians should have been incorporated into the Word of God, in order to instruct and warn Gentile believers against putting themselves under that yoke.

In referring, however, to the Epistle to the Galatians, our object will be simply to seek the light it throws upon the conflict described in Romans 7. What we find in Galatians affords strong confirmation to the view that the experience described in Romans 7 is that of a conscientious unconverted Israelite, and not at all a “Christian” experience. In fact, the main object of the Apostle in writing to the assemblies of Galatia was to warn them against teachings which would lead them into such an experience.

In Galatians 2 Paul relates how he remonstrated with the Apostle Peter for compelling the Gentiles to live as do the Jews (verse 14). We may be sure that the matter in dispute is esteemed by the Spirit of God to be exceedingly important; otherwise it would not be brought to our attention in the form of a rebuke administered by Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, to Peter, the leader of the twelve. In this connection Paul draws the line sharply between Jews and Gentiles, saying: “We, JEWS BY NATURE, and not sinners of the GENTILES, knowing that a man is not justified out of (*ek*) works of Law, but out of the faith of Jesus Christ, even WE (Jews) have believed on Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith of Christ, and not out of works of Law” (verses 15, 16). And he adds: “For if I build again the things that I threw down, I constitute myself a transgressor.” That is to say, if he should set up the Law again as an obligation for himself, he would make himself a lawbreaker. “For,” he continues, “I through the Law died to the Law, that I might live unto God,” Here Paul again brings himself

forward, as a typical Jew, and repeats in few words the doctrine elaborated in Romans 7. "I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live"; or, as the Greek may be equally well rendered "I am not any longer living, it is Christ that liveth in me; and the LIFE I NOW LIVE IN THE FLESH I live by the faith of the Son of God." It is possible for every believer to reach the place where he can make this saying of Paul his own. It involves death unto sin and life unto God in Christ, and the abiding presence of the Spirit of Him Who raised up Christ from the dead. This verse obviously contains a condensed statement of the truth revealed in Romans 6 and 8, concerning the believer's death (as to his old nature) with Christ, and his living again, in the new supernatural life of the risen Christ. That new life is *not lived under the Law of Sinai*.

"I do not," says Paul, "make void the grace of God" (as Peter was doing by his dissimulation and by returning to the practice of Judaism) "for if righteousness comes through Law, then Christ died for nought" (verse 21).

After having thus dealt with the case of the believing Jew, who had been delivered from the Law by means of the death of Christ, the Apostle directly addresses the Galatians, who, being Gentiles, never were under Law, but *began their relations with God in the Spirit*. The Jew began his service of God *in the flesh*. For him, therefore, there might be found some excuse for continuing, after conversion, as a man in the flesh under Law, not exercising the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free. But for Gentile believers, who never were under the Law, but had the great advantage of *beginning in the Spirit*, to put themselves under Law and to attempt to be perfected in the flesh, was the "senseless" action of those who have been "bewitched." "O senseless Galatians, who has bewitched you," that you should act thus, after the truth concerning Christ crucified has been plainly put before you? "Are ye so senseless? Having BEGUN in the Spirit, are ye now being PERFECTED in the flesh?" (Galatians 3:1-3). It was indeed "senseless" in the extreme to undertake the perfecting in *the flesh* of the work that was begun in the Spirit.

The Apostle then refers to Abraham, whose *faith* was accounted to him for righteousness, and points out that the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations (Gentiles) out of faith, proclaimed that good news to Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all nations (Gentiles) be blessed" (Galatians 3:8).

The Galatians are then warned of two very serious facts, *first* that all who are of the *works* of the Law (in contrast to those that are "of faith") are under the *curse* of the Law; and *second* that the curse comes upon every one who continues not in *all things* which are written in the book of the law to do them. From this it follows that no one is being justified with God in virtue of Law: "For the just shall live out of faith; but the man that *doeth* those things (required by the Law) shall live in virtue of them" (verses 10-12).

In view of this, it would naturally be asked, How does it come about that the Jews, who were placed under the Law, which none of them has kept, have escaped from the curse of the Law? The answer is, "Christ hath *redeemed us* (Jews) *from the curse of the Law*, HAVING BECOME A CURSE FOR us." This statement manifestly applies *solely to Israel*, for the curse of the Law was never pronounced against the Gentiles. Hence Paul uses in this verse (13) the pronoun "us." The contrast between Jews and Gentiles is again clearly marked by the next verse (14), which goes on to say that Christ was made a curse for *the Jews*, in order that the blessing of Abraham might come on the *Gentiles* in Christ Jesus (not "through Jesus Christ.") The contrast between the *curse* of the Law (pronounced upon those who were under the Law), and the *blessing* of Abraham coming to the Gentile believers in Christ, is very instructive. And an additional result of the endurance by Christ of the curse of the Law is then set forth, namely, that we (Jews) might receive *the promise of the Spirit* through faith.

The promise was made to Abraham and to his seed long before the Law was given, from which it follows that this promise cannot be nullified by the Law, which was given 430 years after. If then the Law was not given for the purpose of adding anything to the promise, or of taking any thing from it, why *was* it given? It was added for the sake of transgressions, that is in order that the repeated trans-

gression of the Law by every Israelite might reveal the presence and nature of sin in the flesh, and show the futility of attempting to secure justification out of Law works. Moreover, it was given, not as a permanent institution, but only “UNTIL the Seed should come to Whom the promise was made” (verse 19). This statement shows that the period of the Law was *strictly limited in time*, as it was limited also *in scope* to the children of Israel. Its era did not *begin* until 430 years after God had begun to deal with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants; and it ceased when the promised Seed died under the Law. The curse of the Law was exhausted when Christ was made a curse by hanging on a tree (Deuteronomy 21:23). Whatever, therefore, were the purposes which God designed to be accomplished by means of the Law, they were *all accomplished* when the promised Seed died on the Cross. Since that event even the Jew is no longer a man under Law, for by no amount of law keeping can he now secure the promised blessings of the promised land. The old covenant is entirely at an end (2 Corinthians 3:7–11; Hebrews 8:13). The words on the Cross, “It is finished” (in the original it is the single word “accomplished”) included the purpose of the Law, which thereupon came to an end.

The temporary character of the Law as a Divine institution is further set forth, and with great clearness, in verses 23–25. “*Before* faith came,” says the apostle, “we (Jews) were kept (or guarded) under Law, having been shut up to the faith which was about to be revealed. Wherefore the Law has been OUR pedagogue (or tutor) up to Christ in order that out of faith we might be justified. But FAITH HAVING COME, we are NO LONGER under a tutor.” By noting the tenses of the verbs, as given in the above renderings, the sense will be readily and clearly apprehended. It is very clear indeed that these statements apply only to Israelites. The Gentiles were not kept under Law, but were left without Law. They were not “shut up” in any way, but allowed to follow the devices of their own hearts. They were not under a pedagogue, or under tutors and governors (4:2), for God had no dealings with them. God has called Israel His “Son” (Hosea 11:1; see Amos 3:2); and of Israel alone, of all the peoples of the earth, can it be said that they were under tutors awaiting the time appointed of the Father.

After thus speaking in the first person of the Jews, the Apostle, addressing the Gentile Galatians says by way of contrast:

“For YE are all the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. THERE IS NEITHER JEW NOR GREEK.” The contrast between the “we” of verses 24, 25, and the “ye” of verse 26, is very significant.

In Chapter 4 the case of the Jew born under Law is taken up for further explanation, the object of this part of the discourse being to show that, as a youth on coming of age passes from the state of tutelage under guardians and stewards, which state is similar to that of a bondservant, into the state and responsibilities of manhood, so the Jew, on believing in Christ, passes from under bondage into the liberty of sons of God.

Some of the statements here are broad enough to embrace both Jews and Gentiles, for both were, before conversion, in bondage to the elements of the world; but the special bondage of the Jew — the yoke of the Law and the penalty of its curse is also specifically mentioned. As the heir is “under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father; even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, made UNDER THE LAW, TO REDEEM THEM THAT WERE UNDER THE LAW, that WE (Jews) might receive the status of sons. But because YE (Gentile believers) ARE SONS, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying “Abba, Father.” (4:2–6). The defective reading of verse 6, in the A.V. “*And* because ye are sons,” instead of “*But*,” as it is in the original, hides the contrast between the case of the believing Israelite and that of the believing Gentile. The former needed to be redeemed from under the Law before he could receive the status of a son (“adoption of sons”); whereas for the latter there was no such need. The bondage of the Gentile was a different kind of bondage. They, not knowing God at all, were in bondage to those

who by nature are not gods (verse 8); but the point we wish to emphasize is that they were not under Law at any time, and this point is very clearly presented in the passage we have been examining.

FOURTEEN

THE BELIEVER’S STATE NOT ONE OF LAWLESSNESS

In emphasizing the important truth that the believer is not under the Law, because, if a Jew he was delivered from the yoke of the Law by the death of Christ, and if a Gentile he never was under the Law at all, we must not obscure the important fact that the state of the believer is not one of *lawlessness* — far from it. What is spoken of in Romans 7 as “the Law” is the Law given to the Israelites through Moses. That Law was by no means a complete statement of God’s requirements, though it was quite sufficient for the purpose of revealing the presence of sin in the flesh, for demonstrating the utter corruption of human nature, and for making manifest the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The teachings of Jesus Christ showed that the full requirements of God’s holiness and righteousness are far above those of the Law of Moses. “Ye have heard that it was said by (or to) them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; ... but I SAY UNTO You, Whosoever is angry with his brother without cause, etc.” (Matthew 5:21–48).

The believer of this dispensation is not living under the Law of Moses. That Law was given (as has been already stated) for the regulation of the conduct of men in the flesh. The believer is “not in the flesh, but in the Spirit” (Romans 8:9). He is, therefore, not in the sphere in which the Law of Moses was effective.

The child of God, however, though not under the Law of Moses, is “not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ” (1 Corinthians 9:21). He owns the risen Christ as his Lord, and judges that his entire life in the body is to be lived, no longer unto himself, but unto Him Who died for him and rose again (2 Corinthians 5:15). Being in the Spirit he is to be governed by “the law of the Spirit” (Romans 8:2). Being in Christ, he is to “fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). This is a condition very different from that of the Israelite under the Law of Moses, and on a much higher plane. The life of the child of God is not a life hedged about by constraints and prohibitions, but a life of liberty, wherein he who possesses it, is free to follow all the leadings of the Spirit, and all the inclinations of the new nature which the Spirit imparts to those whom He quickens. It is a life of freedom — not freedom to sin, but freedom *not* to sin. He who practices sin is the *slave* of sin; only *the free man* can refuse obedience to the demands of sin, and yield himself to God as one who is *alive* from the dead. The Word of God abounds in directions addressed to the children of God, by which their walk, while yet in the body, is to be guided and controlled. These directions are found in the commandments of Christ, and in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul, whom the risen Lord called and empowered to be the channel for the revelation of His special communications to and concerning the Church. And these directions are illustrated by all the holy Scriptures, the things which happened to the Israelites having been written (not for our imitation but) for our admonition (1 Corinthians 10:11).

The believer has been called into *liberty*; and he is exhorted to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free (Galatians 5:1). Yet he is not to use his liberty so as to furnish occasions for gratifying the desires of his old nature. “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another (rather than self). For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself Having been brought, through the resurrection of Christ, into the sphere of the Spirit, the believer is commanded to *remain* there; that is, to be occupied with, and interested in the things of the Spirit. While so engaged he can-

not at the same time be fulfilling the desires of the flesh. “This I say then, walk in (or by) the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the desires of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16). “If ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under the Law” (Galatians 5:18).

The Epistle to the Ephesians, which specially reveals the position of believers as quickened together with Christ, raised up (*i. e.* ascended) together with Him, and seated together in the *heavenlies* in Christ, abounds in practical directions for the believer’s guidance in all his *earthly* relations. We do not propose to comment upon the directions which in that Epistle are addressed to the children of God, but merely to, call attention to them in order to guard against the supposition that, because the believer of this dispensation is not under the Law of Moses, he is therefore in a state of lawlessness.

The main points, then, of the teaching we have been examining, are these:

1. That the *sufferings* of Christ were incurred for the sins of His people, that is to say, the sins of those whom God justifies upon the principle of faith.
2. That the *death* of Christ delivers the believing sinner, whether Jew or Gentile, from the servitude of *sin*.
3. That the *death* of Christ also brought the economy of the Law to an end, and delivered all converted Israelites from the yoke of the Law.
4. That the *resurrection* of Christ brings all believers into the sphere of a new humanity, where there is a new life, whose Source is the Risen Christ, which life is imparted by the Spirit of God to the believer while the latter is yet in the mortal body.
5. That believers, though not under the Law of Moses, are governed by the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and are required to “fulfill the law of Christ.”

The fact that the new life of the Risen Man is imparted to the child of God while he is yet in the mortal body, and that the latter serves for a time as the place where the characteristics of that new life are developed and manifested, is a fact of the very highest interest and importance. It is indeed a marvelous thing that the life of the Second Man should be communicated to those who died and rose with Him, while they are yet occupying their mortal bodies. Every scrap of information we can gather upon that subject is of great and *immediate* importance. The writer is impressed with the thought that the matter of the “walk” of the saints, *i. e.* of their entire conduct, including actions, words, and thoughts, while yet in the body, reaches its supreme importance in the closing days of the age, wherein a select company of saints is being sanctified wholly, in order that they may be preserved blameless, spirit, soul, and BODY, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

Every detail of the life of the believer involves the use of *some member* of the mortal body — eyes, ears, hands, feet, and chiefly, tongue and brain. We propose, therefore, to prolong our study a little further, in order to examine some of the teaching which the Word of God contains with reference to the life of the child of God while yet in the mortal body, and to the use by him of its marvelous faculties in God’s service. But inasmuch as this subject stands in Scripture as a subdivision of the larger subject of *sin and death*, it will be helpful to notice at this point, more fully than we have thus far done the work of Christ with respect first to *sins* and second to *sin*.

FIFTEEN

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST FOR SINS, AND THE DEATH OF CHRIST TO SIN

The distinction we have noted between sin and sins serves to call our attention also to the distinction which the Scriptures observe between two aspects of the atoning work of Christ, namely, His SUFFERINGS for *sins*, and His DEATH unto *sin*. We are not accustomed in our thought of the Atonement of Christ to draw a distinction between His penal sufferings in the flesh, and His physical death, *i.e.* His exit or departure *from* the flesh. Yet it is apparent upon a close study of the Scriptures that there is a distinction between the sufferings of Christ and the death of Christ, and that it is a distinction of much importance. Even before we inquire into the extent and character of this distinction we may learn something of its importance from the single fact that the believer is identified with Christ in His *death*, but not in His *sufferings*. The identification of the believing sinner with Christ BEGINS AT THE MOMENT OF HIS DEATH, and continues thereafter, through His burial His resurrection, and through His eternal resurrection life as the Man Who dieth not again, but is alive for evermore.

Let it be carefully noted that the “sufferings of Christ” spoken of in 1 Peter 1:12, and foretold by the prophets, who searched “what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when He testified beforehand the SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST and the glory that should follow,” are the special sufferings which He endured for the sins of His people. They are the sufferings peculiar to His office of “the Christ.” They are referred to in such Scriptures — as Luke 24:26, 46: “Ought not CHRIST to have SUFFERED, those things?” “And He said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved CHRIST TO SUFFER.” Also Acts 17:3, “CHRIST must needs have SUFFERED.” As soon as He was recognized by His disciples as “the Christ,” He *began* to teach them concerning the things He *must* suffer. “He *began* to teach them that the Son of Man *must suffer many things*, and be rejected ... *and be killed*, and after three days rise again” (Mark 8:31; Matthew 17:22–23). These special “sufferings” of the Christ are to be sharply distinguished from the griefs and sorrows which marked His entire pathway through a world under the dominion of sin and death. In this last mentioned kind of sufferings His followers may, and should, in some measure, participate; as it is written in Romans 8:17, “If so be that we suffer with Him, that we maybe also glorified together.” These are the “leftover *afflictions* of Christ” (a different word from *sufferings*) referred to in Colossians 1:24, which Paul said he was filling up in his flesh. There are yet some of these afflictions or tribulations “left over” for us. But the “sufferings of Christ” as the Bearer of the sins of His people, during the period when the wrath of God was poured out upon Him — when He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities — were endured By HIM ALONE. That cup which His Father gave Him He drained to the dregs. “For Christ also hath once suffered for SINS, the just for the unjust” (1 Peter 3:18).

The period of these special “sufferings of Christ” began with His arrest in the garden of Gethsemane. He was “delivered up for our offenses” (Romans 4:25). He “gave Himself up for our sins” (Galatians 1:4). He Himself noted the beginning of that period by the words, “This is your hour, and the power of darkness” (Luke 22:53). The next words of the inspired record are, “Then they took Him.” Never before had His enemies been able to lay hands on Him. Never had darkness such power as in the hour when it prevailed over the true Light. That was the beginning of the experience of

darkness for Him — a new and fearful experience for One Who had dwelt always in the bosom of the Father, for “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5).

That period reached its culminating intensity during the three hours of darkness on the Cross, when the Father’s face was averted, when Christ was forsaken of God, and when even the light of nature was withdrawn. In the garden He was apprehended as a criminal — as a transgressor of the Law which He had given on Sinai — and His arrest was effected by the hand of the officers of the Law. They came out against Him as against a thief. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. And at that moment He was left ALONE. All the disciples “forsook Him and fled” (Matthew 26:55–56).

This period of the sufferings of Christ, during which His Blood was shed for the remission *of sins*, continued until the end of the three hours of darkness. He did not die in agony, but in perfect peace, saying, “Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit” (Luke 23:46). Before His actual departure from the body of His humiliation, He had come out of the darkness and could say “It is finished!” In all these sufferings for sins He was quite alone. But now, after His sufferings for our sins, which He bore in His own Body on the tree, had been accomplished, it was yet a necessary part of the work He came to do that He should *die to sin*; that is, should actually pass, by the gateway of physical death, out of the humanity of flesh and blood. He had taken the likeness of “flesh of sin” and had come “for (or concerning) sin” (Romans 8:2), and now He had to pass out of that likeness of sinful humanity through the only door of exit, namely, physical death. He entered humanity in the natural way — by being born of a woman — and He departed in the natural way, by the separation of His spirit from His body. When His work was done He went back to Him Who sent Him (John 17:4, 10).

It is necessary to insist upon the important truth that Christ, in His sufferings for sins, was alone. The Scriptures never associate His redeemed people with Him in His sufferings for sins. On the other hand, the Scriptures repeatedly associate His people with Him in His death (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Colossians 3:3; see R.V. for the proper rendering of the tenses). His death, or exit from the body, took with Him all who belong to Him out of the Adam humanity. It is particularly to be noted that in such Scriptures as “He died unto sin once,” the verb “die” signifies His departure or “exodus” (Luke 9:31, *Greek*) from the body. In all our comment on the death of Christ we used the words “die” and “death” in this specific sense. In some Scriptures the word “die” is used in a comprehensive sense, and takes in the whole period of His vicarious sufferings (1 Corinthians 15:3). “Christ died for our sins” is an instance of this.

The ending of the period of Christ’s sufferings is marked in Psalm 22:2 1 “Thou hast heard Me”; and in Psalm 119:29.

Turning now to the doctrine of justification from sins as unfolded in Romans, we find that the basis whereupon God may in perfect righteousness forgive sins, is the “Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set forth A MERCY SEAT (“propitiation”, A.V.) THROUGH FAITH IN His BLOOD, for a showing forth of His righteousness” (Romans 3:24–25). God set forth His beloved Son as a “Mercy Seat” for the showing forth of “His RIGHTEOUSNESS for (in respect of) the REMISSION OF SINS that *are past*, through the forbearance of God”; and also for the showing forth “at *this* time of HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS: that He might be just (righteous) and the Justifier of him that is of the faith of Jesus” (verses 25, 26).

The place of prominence in this passage is given, not to the forgiveness of sins, but to the showing forth of the *righteousness of God*. Twice it is stated that, in the shedding of the Blood of Christ, God’s righteousness is displayed, first in respect of the passing by of *the past* sins of His people, in regard to which He had exercised forbearance at the time they were committed; and secondly in justifying *now*, in this present dispensation, those who are of the faith of Jesus.

It is all important to note that a distinguishing feature of the Mercy Seat, the place where God met with His people, was that the blood of the sin offering, whereby atonement was made for the sins of all the congregation of Israel, was sprinkled upon it (Leviticus 16:14–17).

We observe, then, that the Blood of Christ has to do with the remission *of sins*, whereas the Death of Christ, or the Cross, has to do with deliverance from *sin*. This distinction is found elsewhere in Scripture, though of course, as already pointed out: the mention of the death of Christ frequently includes also the sufferings preceding His actual departure out of this life. For example, in Romans 5:8, where it is stated that Christ died for us, it means that He suffered for us as well. So also in 1 Corinthians 15:3, the statement that "Christ died for our sins" is manifestly a comprehensive reference to His sufferings that preceded His departure from the body. It was to save His people from their sins that He came in flesh, and the coming in flesh necessitated His death. Thus He died for our sins.

In Romans 5:9 we find the expression "justified by His Blood"; but, by way of contrast, the Blood is not mentioned in the section beginning at verse 12, where the subject of sin and death is taken up. In this portion it is His death unto sin that is made prominent. Indeed, the emphasis in Romans is on "Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again" (8:34).

Many other passages of Scripture associate the Blood of Christ with the remission *of sins*. Thus, in Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:14, reference is made to the redemption which we have through His Blood — the forgiveness *of sins*. In Ephesians 2:11–13 it is stated that those (*i.e.*, Gentiles) who were dead in trespasses and *sins*, and were afar off from God, "are made nigh by the Blood of Christ." In Colossians 1:20 we read that He made peace "through the Blood of His Cross." Again, in Hebrews prominence is given to that aspect of the work of Christ which has to do with the purging *of sins*: "Who ... when He had by Himself purged our SINS, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (1:3). Hence prominence is also given in Hebrews to the *Blood* of Christ, comparison being made with the blood of bulls and goats, which is ineffective to purge the conscience from *sins* (see 9:14, 22; 10:2, 12, 17, 19). Again, in Revelation 1:5 the Lord is spoken of as He Who loveth us, and hath "washed us from our SINS in His own Blood." Some of the manuscripts read "loosed" instead of "washed," the words being very similar in the original, but the meaning is practically the same.

In 1 John 1:7 the Blood is apparently mentioned in connection with *sin*. The verse reads in our version, "the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." But the literal rendering would be "from every sin," showing that the word signifies, not the sinful *state* or condition of the child of Adam, but sinful *acts*. This is in strict harmony with the statement which closely follows: "And He is the Propitiation for our *sins*: and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (2:2).

Thus the Scriptures consistently connect the Blood of Christ with the sins of His redeemed people. From all these Scriptures it is clear that the penal sufferings which Christ endured, from the moment of His arrest in the Garden down to the moment when He declared the work "finished," and yielded up His Spirit into His Father's hands, constitute His atonement for the SINS of His people. Because of what He thus suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, God can in justice justify *from* their sins those who believe on the Divine Sufferer. But even after their sins are remitted, the *unrighteous constitution or nature*, which is inherited from the first man and is shared by his entire race, yet remains in them, and renders every one of them *subject to death*. The Savior, therefore, completed His work of salvation by dying unto *sin* once for all, that is to say, never to die again. When He comes a second time, it will be "apart from sin" (Hebrews 9:28). This gives a special significance to Christ's exit from the body through the portal of death, as having to do particularly with releasing His redeemed people from the humanity of Adam, and as a preliminary to bringing them into the new and incorruptible humanity of the Risen Man. It is at this point, namely, in His exit from the "flesh and blood" humanity, that He becomes the "Second Man," that is, the Head of a race or family of human beings. This section of Romans (5:12–8:13) and 1 Corinthians 15 (where Christ's death and resurrection are the theme) are the only Scriptures in which He is called the "Second Man." This designation expressly points Him out as the Head of a new human race, to each member of which He imparts His own nature. Therefore, by the exercise of faith in the statements of God's Word, we are to reckon ourselves to have been crucified with Christ, and so to have "died unto sin." But no Scripture bids us to reckon ourselves to have *suffered* with Him for our *sins*. For the *death* of Christ (using the word "death" as signifying His departure from the body) is the point in His work of redemption, at which the believing

sinner becomes identified or “conjoined” with Him. It is highly important that this truth should be impressed firmly upon our minds. The union of the believer with Christ *begins at His death*. For, “so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized INTO HIS DEATH”; and thus we have been “CONJOINED in the likeness of HIS DEATH” (Romans 6:3, 5). This union, beginning with His death, continues on through burial and resurrection, and to the ages of the ages.

The believer, then, is justified from his *sins*, or made righteous, by (or in) the Blood of Christ; and he thus obtains peace with God through Him, as well as a standing in God’s favor. All this is on the ground of “the sufferings of Christ.” But, *in addition* to this, the justified and reconciled believer has become a child of God, having *died with Christ* out of the body of the humanity of Adam, and having been begotten again unto a living hope *through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead* (1 Peter 1:3). Such is the state of the believer while yet in the mortal body.

Very appropriately, therefore, the Epistle to the Romans proceeds to give us teaching with reference to the mortal body, wherein the believer continues to sojourn for a brief time after his conversion. To some points of this important and highly practical teaching we will refer in the next chapter.

16

THE BELIEVER AND THE MORTAL BODY

We have now learned how God disposes of sin in the flesh by the crucifying with Christ of the old man (*i.e.* the flesh, in which sin dwells); and we have also learned that, in view of this truth, the believer’s proper attitude towards sin and the old man is to reckon himself to have died unto sin, and to have put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

We have, moreover, learned that the justified sinner is not under the Law; because, if a Gentile, he never was under Law, and if a Jew he has died to the Law. In connection with this teaching there arises the very practical matter of the justified sinner’s behavior or conduct (called in Scripture his “walk”) subsequent to his conversion; and the principal point involved in the believer’s walk is the use of the members of the physical body — the eyes, hands, tongue, brain, etc.

In studying this branch of the subject it is needful to consider the several passages in this Epistle wherein the physical body is mentioned. In the case of the Gentiles who, when they knew God glorified Him not as God, we learn that God gave them up to uncleanness to dishonor their own BODIES between themselves (1:24); and that He also gave them over to an undiscerning MIND, to do those things which are not convenient (verse 28). *Body* and *mind* are thus coupled together and both come under the influence of corruption. The Jews, however, had the check of Mosaic Law, and consequently did not, as a people, sink to, the same depths of depravity as the Gentiles. Nevertheless, all manner of law breaking was common among them, and, when measured by the requirements of the Law, there was found not one righteous man among them. The condition, therefore, of all humanity was that none understood and sought after God, that none did good, and that the physical members, the throats, lips, tongue, eyes, and feet of all men were habitually put to wicked uses (3:10–18).

After the believer’s justification by the grace of God from *sins*, and his death with Christ to *sin*, he has still the *same mind* and the *same body*. The differences between his former state and his present state are mainly these: *first* that his sins have been forgiven through the merit of the atoning Blood of Christ; *second* he has been reconciled to God by the death of His Son, being no longer an enemy and an alien; and *third*, that he has received a *new nature or constitution*, which is righteous and incorruptible, instead of unrighteous and corrupted. This new and incorruptible human nature is that of the Second Man — not the man who was made out of the dust of the earth, but the One Who has been raised out from among the dead — “Who was delivered up on account of our offences, and was raised again on account of our justification” (4:25). This *new nature* is the NEW THING in the believer, and that which distinguishes him from the unconverted man.

But, notwithstanding this “gift in grace” of a new and incorruptible nature, in which eternal life is inherent, the old nature remains in the believer *unchanged and unchangeable*. All the tastes, inclinations and propensities of the old man remain precisely as they were before. God’s plan of salvation *does not embrace any scheme whatever for the improvement of the flesh*. The only provision made for it is CRUCIFIXION.

Nearly all believers, doubtless, have been perplexed and discouraged by the manifest presence in themselves, after conversion, of the old corrupted nature with which they were born, and still more so by the unabated strength of its desires. Many have wondered why, at conversion, the old nature is

not taken away entirely, and why the new man is not given sole and undisputed possession of the members of the body. This is an interesting question and, by searching the Scriptures — especially the analogies and types afforded by the experiences of the Israelites after their deliverance out of Egypt — we might obtain much light upon it. But that would be a digression, and it will suffice here to have in mind two important considerations.

First, the redemption of sinners is a Divine work which is mighty and prodigious beyond our conception, and which requires for its accomplishment we know not what exercises of Divine wisdom, and what expenditures of Divine energies. The putting into effect of all the results of redemption is a long and slow work. The Lord Jesus said, “My Father worketh hitherto and I work” (John 5:17). And we know that, after Christ’s ascension, the Holy Spirit came to take up the work on earth, while the Son continues His work for His people as their Advocate and High Priest in the heavens. We know further that He will be thus occupied until He comes again to do His “strange work” of executing vengeance upon them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Although we may not now comprehend fully the reason for the Divine method of procedure, the Scriptures make it very clear that God, in the working out of His purposes in Christ, brings into the being of the converted sinner the new nature, that which is born of the Spirit, before removing the old nature.

The latter is dead in God’s sight, and faith reckons it dead; but as to present experience the old man still lingers in the mortal body, attempting to occupy and to use the premises as before, and stubbornly contesting with the new man for possession thereof. The old tenant has been righteously evicted, but has not yet departed; and the new tenant, who is entitled to the occupation and use of the premises, has come in before the former has moved out. The connection (whatever its nature may be) between the “old man” and the *mind* and *body* of the complex human being does not wholly cease until the believer either dies or is “changed” at the Lord’s return.

Second, it is only by the continued presence of the old nature in us after our conversion that we are able to learn the utter corruption of that nature, and that we obtain certain spiritual exercises which are needful for the development of the new man. To learn the utter corruption of the old man is a most wholesome and humbling, and also a most necessary, lesson; and the more thoroughly we learn it, the more we will be constrained to give glory to God for the wonderful salvation which, when the work is completed, shall have delivered us forever from that loathsome body of sin and death.

Having arrived at this point in our teaching, and in the experience which that teaching so clearly explains, we find ourselves charged with *responsibility for the use of the mortal body and its members*. These members were once the instruments, or implements, of unrighteousness, wholly at the disposition of the “old man”; but this is no longer to be permitted. The believer is to reckon himself to be dead indeed as to sin, and alive as to God in Christ Jesus our Lord (6:2); and the first commandment given to the justified sinner after he has been informed of his deliverance from sin is, “Let not sin therefore reign IN YOUR MORTAL BODY, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” Sin will attempt to continue its sway in the mortal body; but the believer has been placed, by the death and resurrection of Christ, in such a position that he may dethrone this old ruler and bring his wicked reign to an end.

It is evident that the old man (so thoroughly corrupted by sin that he is *called* “sin”) can do nothing unless he has the use of the members of the mortal body. If he be deprived of their use he is in the position of a ruler who no longer has any subjects or servants that obey his orders. The members of the mortal body are, therefore, spoken of as implements, or weapons; and the believer, liberated from the service of sin, is charged with responsibility for the use of these members. This is of great importance, for it is here that *individual responsibility begins*. Up to this point all has been God’s work. It is all of grace, not of works, lest any man should boast. There can be no works which God will recognize *until the flesh has been brought to an end*. Up to this point the Apostle has been disclosing God’s righteousness which is revealed from faith to faith; but now the *walk of faith* is to begin justification from sins *out of faith*, is a preparation — for walking *by* faith; and the condition of walking by faith is that we reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The believer is now free, and hence is responsible. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be FREE INDEED" (John 8:36). So the Lord spoke; and to those to whom He addressed those words He further said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the WORKS of Abraham" (verse 39) *i.e.*, works of *faith*. The believer is taught how he is to use this freedom. He is not to yield his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. His freedom is such that he *may* do this if he wills so to do. He is further bidden to yield *himself*, his entire being, unto God, and that *not* in the condition in which he was by nature, because they that are in the flesh cannot please God, but he is to yield himself to God AS ONE THAT IS "ALIVE FROM THE DEAD." God will not receive the natural man, however cultivated, moral, or religious he may be. The man He receives is the one who acknowledges that he deserves death, and thus reckons himself *to be* dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ, the Risen Man. The justified sinner, who has been delivered from the despotism of sin through the death of Christ, is free to choose whom he will serve — whether sin, whose wage is death, or God, Whose free gift is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. But with the announcement of this freedom of choice we have the solemn warning: "If *according to the flesh* ye live, ye are about to die; but if, by the Spirit, ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Romans 8:13).

In Romans 6 we are not charged with responsibility as to the *details* of the uses to which our physical bodies are to be put in God's service. Our responsibility, as there defined, is limited, *first*, to not permitting that sin shall have the service of our members, and, *second*, to placing them at the absolute disposal of God for such uses as He may be pleased to make of them. The implication is that, if we have yielded our members to God with a view to their use by Him as instruments of righteousness, He will furnish all the guidance and power required for their intelligent and effective service. That belongs to Him, for "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23), and apart from Him we can do nothing. Our part is simply to yield to Him the members which are at the disposal of our will.

Manifestly nothing can be more practical, and nothing can be of greater importance for the time of our sojourning here, than the truth now before us. Most earnestly, therefore, we would urge our fellow — saints to consider the immense importance of grasping and applying the doctrine *concerning the mortal body now*, while yet we remain in that body. Soon, *very* soon, we shall exchange the earthly tent for the heavenly house (2 Corinthians 5:1); and then, not only will it be too late to glorify God in our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:20), but we must then be manifested before the judgment Seat of Christ, that each one "may receive the things DONE IN HIS BODY, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). The original says "the things done through (or by means of) the body," that is to say, we must each receive according to the use we have made, as free men in Christ, of the members of our mortal bodies.

There is a disposition among believers to treat the assurance of salvation and the eternal security they have in Christ as if they were thereby relieved of all responsibility for the use of their faculties and members; and the result is seen in a lamentable condition of general slackness and indifference, which is often spoken of and "deplored," but for which usually no remedy is proposed. The Scripture we have just cited declares that at Christ's judgment Seat we are to receive not only for the *good* deeds done by means of our physical members, but also for the *bad* deeds. Even for every idle word we shall be called to account. What a serious and costly mistake, then, to assume that there are no disagreeable and painful experiences awaiting those who, because they are saved by God's grace through faith in His Son, shall stand before Christ's judgment Seat! The Apostle has faithfully warned us against the danger of such a mistake, and has made this warning as impressive as possible by adding, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men" (2 Corinthians 5:11).

Let us also carefully note and lay to heart the experiences of the people whom God redeemed under the blood of the paschal lamb, and delivered out of Egypt with a mighty hand. These were a "saved people," every one of them; for "the Lord SAVED Israel that day" (Exodus 14:30). Yet because they *walked not* according to His statutes and judgments, He visited them with afflictions that are truly terrible in their severity. They were "*all* baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and

did *all* eat of the same spiritual *food*, and did *all* drink of the same spiritual drink” — that is to say of the water coming out of the Smitten Rock that accompanied them — “and that Rock was Christ” (1 Corinthians 10:2–4). Notwithstanding *with the most of them* God *was* not well pleased, inasmuch that their corpses strewed the desert. Now these things ALL happened to them for types or ensamples of what may happen to us, if we profit not by the instruction imparted to us, and by the plenteous stores of grace to which we have access. Moreover, these things were written specially for *our* admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come. What heed are we giving to them? (1 Corinthians 10:5–11).

We often recall, with comfort and satisfaction, that God’s Arm is not shortened that He cannot save. Let us also remember for our profit that neither is His Arm shortened that He cannot punish His disobedient and heedless children. “It is a *fearful thing* to fall into the hands of the living God.”

Since, then, we are to be dealt with according to the uses which, as free men in Christ, we make of the members and faculties of our mortal bodies, let us pay the most earnest heed to the commandments which God has given to us, with reference to those bodies. Those commandments are given to the believer *the moment* his deliverance from the despotism of sin, through the death of Christ, is announced.

And here again it is important to discriminate between the sufferings of Christ, whereby the believer is justified from his *sins*, and the death of Christ, whereby he is freed from the servitude of *sin*. The believer receives the full and immediate benefit of the *sufferings* of Christ *apart from any works of his own*, “being JUSTIFIED GRATUITOUSLY by His GRACE, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:24). “A man is justified out of faith APART FROM WORKS OF LAW” (3:28, *Greek*) But on the other hand the extent to, which the justified sinner obtains, while in the body, the benefit of the *death* of Christ, DEPENDS UPON HIMSELF. The death of Christ has made the believer free from the exactions and the rule of sin, but has left him entirely responsible for the way in which he employs that freedom, and also for the consequence thereof “For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” (Romans 8:13). Everything depends upon the *obedience* we render to the first words which God addresses, through His Apostle, to the man who, has been justified by the Blood of Christ and freed by His death from the servitude of sin. Those words are “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (not in Jesus Christ, as the A.V. has it). “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in the desires thereof. Neither be yielding your members instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God, as alive from among the dead, and your members instruments of righteousness to God.”

Up to this point we have been learning what God has done for us. Now we are taught what we are to do for God, and for ourselves. We have read these words often, have heard them expounded again and again, and perhaps have expounded them to others. But have we *obeyed* them? That is the important question. Do we persistently maintain the attitude of faith in God’s Word, by reckoning ourselves as dead to sin, that is to say, as being inert and unresponsive to all its promptings; and also reckoning ourselves to be alive unto God in Christ? Do we believe and act upon the statement that we have been “baptized into the death of Christ,” and have thereby become” conjoined in the likeness of His death”? Do we reckon ourselves to be *as Christ is*, dead to, sin and alive to God? Do we steadfastly refuse to permit sin to reign in our mortal bodies, so that we should obey it in its desires? Do we steadfastly refuse to permit the old man to make use of the members and faculties of our bodies? Have we yielded ourselves wholly to God, and our physical members to His service for use as instruments of righteousness? If not, will it be just the same with us now, and at the judgment seat of Christ, as if we were faithfully observing these clear and definite rules of conduct? We often say that “we walk by faith”; but to walk by faith is to walk in the *obedience* which faith renders to the commandments given to us for the regulation of our walk. Do we think that we, to whom the grace of God has superabounded, can with impunity make light of the words which He addresses directly *to us*? And if we in this life escape discipline whereof all are partakers, and if we seem to prosper and to pass the time of

our sojourning, not in fear and trembling, but in ease and self-indulgence, do we suppose that God’s opportunities for chastening His children cease when we reach the end of our earthly journey? Let us not prepare disappointment, pain and loss for ourselves, by neglecting “so great salvation” as has been wrought for us. We have already quoted the solemn warning of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:11. The Apostle John also admonishes us to abide in Him in order that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and *not be put to shame from before Him at His coming* (1 John 2:28). The Authorized Version renders this passage “not be ashamed before Him,” which might suggest merely a momentary humiliation, such as would be produced by a mild reproof but the original speaks of being sent away from His presence in disgrace, which is quite another matter. It is something which should arouse us to a state of continual diligence to the end that we may be found of Him *in peace* (2 Peter 3:14). Again, the beloved disciple exhorts us to abide in love “that we may have boldness in the Day of judgment” (1 John 4:17). This is, of course, the judgment of the conduct of believers. To abide in His love is to keep His commandments, for “this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” There is no excuse for failure to do this, because His COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT GRIEVOUS (or burdensome) (1 John 5:3).

God’s first word, therefore, with reference to the mortal body of the justified sinner, is that its members be set apart for God’s service. When we were the bond slaves of sin we yielded our members to the service of our master with all zeal and persistence, sparing no pains or effort to accomplish the purposes of lawlessness; and now we are reminded how faithfully we served our old natures, and are called upon to be at least as earnest and zealous in the service of righteousness unto holiness (Romans 6:19). To love Christ is to keep His Word, and His promise is, “If a man love Me he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him” (John 14:23). Again, it is written, “He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him and He in him” (1 John 3:24). There is no Scripture to warrant the thought that Christ *dwells* in believers who are not obedient to His commandments. It is highly important to note this, if we would go on to secure and enjoy the blessings spoken of in Romans 8, where the mortal body is again made the subject of Divine instruction. We there read: “They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God DWELL in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His; and IF CHRIST BE IN YOU the body is indeed dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead DWELL in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also QUICKEN YOUR MORTAL BODIES by His Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Romans 8:8–11).

In these verses, upon which we have already commented in part, it is plainly stated that the mortal body of the justified man shall be quickened by the indwelling Spirit of life, provided that the Spirit dwell in him. The condition, then, requisite to the quickening operation of God’s Spirit upon our mortal bodies, with all that results there from (including power for a holy, a fruitful and a healthy life) is that the Spirit *abide in us*.

It is easy to see that the teaching of this chapter links itself directly to that of Chapter 6 and that it supplies details which are not given in the latter. Here (in Chapter 8) we learn the provision which God has made for the use of the bodies of those justified sinners who have *obeyed from the heart* the form of doctrine to which they were delivered, (Romans 6:17, *Greek*) and have truly yielded their members to His service. It is not enough that the old man should be reduced to a state of impotence by depriving him of instruments wherewith to serve his purposes. It is not enough that the old man be treated as dead, being denied the use of the brain to think his thoughts, of the eyes and ears to see and hear the things which please him, of hands to do his bidding, and of feet to walk in his self-pleasing ways. God contemplates that all these members shall be occupied, and not only so, but that they shall be occupied in a manner that is *directly contrary* to the desires of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit has desires against the flesh; and these are “contrary,” the one to the other (Galatians 5:17). Where then is the Power to be had which shall enable a man to reverse his habits of thought and life, and to maintain a walk which is opposed to the inclinations of his natural heart, to the course of this world, and to the prince of the powers of the air? Evidently it is an *intelli-*

gent power that is needed for this, since the justified sinner requires not only vital energy for such a walk, but also guidance. But the provision is ample. The Spirit of God has come to take up this great ministry on behalf of believers who now learn, from the chapter before us, the wonderful truth that they are “sons of God.” The Spirit comes to occupy their mortal bodies, making these tenements of clay, for the time being, His sanctuaries, to impart vital energy thereto, and to lead their occupants in the ways of God; “for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (verse 14). The Spirit knows the mind of God; He can help our infirmities and make intercession for us according to God; He is able to employ for the glory of God all the members and faculties of the bodies wherein He dwells; He can direct our thoughts, supply our words, control our actions, and strengthen us with might in the inner man. He can, moreover, supply the vital energy required for the service of God. “If Christ be in you, the body is dead indeed because of sin; but THE SPIRIT IS LIFE because of righteousness” (8:10).

The Holy Spirit is described in verse 11 as “the Spirit of Him that RAISED UP JESUS FROM THE DEAD.” This is very appropriate, and it carries us directly back to the sixth chapter where the question of continuing in sin is answered by the statement that we (believers) having died to sin are not to continue any longer therein; and where we are further told that we have been buried with Christ by baptism unto death in order 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” (6:4). The *walking* (*i.e.*, the behavior, of the child of God, which involves the use he makes of his members) and the *newness of life*, briefly mentioned in Chapter 6, are taken up for detailed teaching in Chapter 8. We there learn that the Spirit, indwelling the believer, is the “life” or vital energy for this walk.

In Chapter 6 we also read: “For if we have been conjoined in the likeness of His death, we shall be also (conjoined) in the likeness of His resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him that the body of sin might be annulled, to the end that henceforth we should not serve sin” (6:5–6). Manifestly our conjunction with Him in the likeness of His resurrection, which is here spoken of, does not refer to our resurrection at His coming, but to our *present* participation in Christ’s own resurrection; and the purpose thereof is that we should not henceforth (*i.e.*, while yet in the mortal body) be subservient to sin, but, on the contrary, should walk in newness of life. The word “newness” signifies not another term of existence after the present has expired, but a new *kind* of life, to wit, the life of the Risen Man imparted by the Spirit to those who have been, by God’s grace, united with Him in death and resurrection. The Spirit is so identified with this new kind of life that it is said “the Spirit is life.” It seems immaterial whether “Spirit” here: signifies the Holy Spirit, or that which is born of the Spirit, which *is* Spirit (John 3:5) — *i.e.*, the new nature.

It is not *our* resurrection that is here spoken of, but Christ’s resurrection. We are to live now, while yet in the mortal body, as those who share the likeness of *His* resurrection, reckoning ourselves to be alive unto God IN Him.

If then, the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus (the Man) from among the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ (the Head of the body, the Church, the Head of creation, and of the new humanity) from among the dead, shall ALSO — (an additional work) QUICKEN YOUR MORTAL BODY (for the purpose of walking not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit) by means of His Spirit dwelling in you (8:11).

The use of the words “mortal body” in this verse is most significant and important; and it seems to the writer very strange indeed that its plain meaning should be so often disregarded, and the whole benefit of the teaching be lost, through making this verse mean simply that the dead in Christ will be raised hereafter, at His coming. We deem it clear and certain that the passage has *nothing whatsoever* to do with the dead in Christ, but applies *wholly and exclusively* to saints who are yet in the “mortal body.” It speaks of the effect produced upon the *mortal* body of a child of God by the Spirit of Life *while dwelling in that body*. It does not refer in any sense whatever to the *dead* bodies of believers, for the “mortal body” in which the Spirit dwells is not the *dead* body which rots in the grave. The Spirit of

God does not dwell in dead bodies. The quickening *of dead* bodies is not in view here at all, nor is the resurrection of dead saints within the scope of the teaching of this chapter or of any part of Romans.

Neither does this passage refer to the *immortal* bodies with which believers are to be clothed when the Lord comes. It expressly, and in the plainest terms, refers to the *mortal* bodies of the *now living* saints. It is a special and extraordinary provision of Divine grace for quickening bodies which would otherwise be the same as dead for all the purposes contemplated in the context. It is not a matter of raising the dead. That is not said to be the work of the Spirit, but that of Christ. (“I will raise him up at the last day” John 6:4). This Scripture does not refer to them that sleep, but to all believers, and “we shall *not all* sleep.” It does not refer to a future work of power, but to a present work of the indwelling and quickening Spirit. It speaks, concerning those “who walk after the Spirit,” who are “in the Spirit,” who “through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body,” who are “led by the Spirit of God,” and who “have received the Spirit of sonship whereby we cry Abba Father.” To these the blessed assurance is given that there is for them *a present and continuous participation in the benefits of the resurrection of Christ*; and that He Who raised Him up from among the dead shall ALSO quicken for His service their mortal bodies, by His Spirit dwelling in them. God quickened the mortal body of Abraham, and that of Sarah, and that of Samson. He quickened the mortal body of Paul, specifically at Lystra (Acts 14:19–20). The mortal body of the impotent man in John 5 was quickened. And now faith is given the assurance that there is a provision available when needed, for the quickening of the members and faculties of the bodies of those in whom God’s Spirit dwells. Many have experienced this quickening action when the natural powers have failed, and more would enjoy the experience if they were made aware of the promise.

This assurance should present no difficulties to faith. Indeed the marvelous fact declared in this passage is that the Spirit of God condescends *to dwell* in the mortal body. That being true, it should not be difficult to believe that, while dwelling in the mortal body of the child of God, He should quicken it when necessary for a holy walk and for the service of God. Indeed it would be strange if the presence of the Spirit of Life in the mortal body did not have a quickening effect thereupon.

It has been argued that the auxiliary verb “shall” before “quicken” signifies a postponement of the operation to the future time of the resurrection of the dead in Christ. But this is untenable. The statement is conditional, and the particle “if” requires grammatically the auxiliary verb “shall.” The same construction occurs in verse 13. The word “shall” is also used to denote an action or condition which is to continue. An instance occurs in Romans 6:14, “For sin SHALL not have dominion over you.” Obviously this does not refer to the future resurrection state, but to the present life in the body; and it is equally clear that the promise of quickening the mortal body refers to the same period.³

But let it be clearly understood that the quickening power of God’s Spirit for a holy and a *healthy* life in the mortal body, as disclosed in Chapter 8, is based upon the command given to the believer in Chapter 6 not to permit sin to reign in that body, but to yield his members to God. It cannot be supposed that the Holy Spirit will impart of the life of the risen Christ to a believer whose members are yielded to the unholy service of sin. And let it be remembered also that “sin” here means not only vicious or immoral ways of living, but includes *all* the carnal and self pleasing ways of the old man. It means, in a word, continuing in the old manner of life. To continue in the things which constituted our life before we came to the Cross of Christ, is to continue in sin.

If then we would look for the present practical benefit of the resurrection life of Christ through the indwelling Spirit of Him Who raised Him from among the dead, and would look also for commendation at Christ’s judgment Seat, let us pay strict attention to the charge given to us in Chapter 6. The items of this charge we recite again, namely, (1) not to permit sin to reign in the mortal body to obey it in its desires; (2) not to be yielding our members to sin for use as instruments of unrighteousness; (3) to yield ourselves unto God, and our members to Him for use as instruments of righteousness.

We should note the different tenses of the verb “yield” in Romans 6:13. The first time it is “be not yielding your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin.” It is here a continuing action. Sin

will always be seeking to obtain the use of the members of the body, requiring continuous vigilance and refusal on our part. "But yield yourselves unto God." Here it is an action taken once for all, and not to be repeated. If in honesty and with purpose of heart we have done this, we may confidently and in the fullest assurance of faith, expect that our members will be used by Him in the vital energy of the indwelling Spirit. What we shall then do in God's service will be done, not in the energy of the life derived from Adam, but in the energy of the life derived from the Risen Man Jesus Christ, and communicated through His Spirit. We know that what is done in the energy of the flesh (the old man) can effect nothing for God. To serve Him effectively we need vital energy from *another Source*: and here we learn that God has made provision for this. "The Spirit is Life."

We would exhort and encourage the believer to spare no effort to lay hold of the truth revealed in this portion of the Word. The resulting gain will more than repay the effort, however great. What is required to this end is, not intellectual capacity, *but faith* to accept in simplicity the stupendous fact that the believer is a human being who, though occupying for a time a mortal body, is nevertheless connected with the Risen Man, Jesus Christ, and who receives life from Him — a new kind of human life — which is imparted by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him. It is not required or even expected of us that we shall understand this, but that we shall *believe* it. When the child of God has apprehended this truth by faith, life in the mortal body becomes thereafter a very different affair from what it was before. Our *thoughts* afford a good indication of what our life is, for as, one thinketh in his heart, so is he (Proverbs 23:7) and out of the heart are the issues of life. If our thoughts are habitually of Christ and the things of Christ which the Spirit brings before us in the Word; if our delight is in those writings which testify of Him, and our affections are *set* on things above, where He is, then we can say "For me *to live is Christ*." To be occupied with Him is true holiness and wholeness, and such occupation on the part of the hidden man of the heart must necessarily manifest itself outwardly by a walk in the newness of His resurrection life.

SEVENTEEN

SICKNESS AMONG THE CHILDREN OF GOD

It follows from the teaching to which we, as children of God, have been delivered, that our mortal bodies have been taken out of the old relations which existed while we were serving sin (as the Israelites served in Egypt) and have been brought into new relations with God, in Christ Jesus (as the Israelites were brought into new relations with Him, and new dependence upon Him for the sustenance of life, after they had crossed the Red Sea). Prominent among the incidents which are effected by this change is that of sickness and the treatment thereof. The Scriptures make it very clear that sickness among the children of God is a very different matter from sickness among the people of the world, and arises from different causes. It should, therefore, receive correspondingly different “treatment.” Any believer who has grasped, though it be but very imperfectly, the doctrines of Romans 6 and 8, must be conscious, to some extent at least, of the incongruity of resorting to man’s medicinal remedies for the healing of that body whose members have been yielded to God for His service, and which is indwelt by His Spirit. To do this is to put the mortal body of the child of God back where it was before he died with Christ and rose with Him.

Sickness is appropriate to Egypt; that is to say it belongs to that old system of bondage from which God has delivered His people, from which they are separated by the Red Sea, of Christ’s death and resurrection, and to which they are warned not to return for any help against their enemies. Diseases are incidents of the service of sin, installments of the wages which sin pays to its servants. “Medical science” also belongs to Egypt (Genesis 1:2) being an important — and indeed a necessary — feature of Egyptian “civilization.” But the crossing of the Red Sea, which typifies the believer’s participation with Christ in His death and resurrection, leaves Egypt behind, with its medical science as well as its diseases. Thereafter, so long as the believer remains in the mortal body, he is called upon to *walk in God’s ways*. And particularly is he charged not to go back to Egypt either for *gratification* or for *assistance against his enemies*. It is just at this point in the experience of the redeemed people, that is to say immediately after the crossing of the Red Sea, that God places *responsibility* upon them, giving them a charge to hearken to His voice, to do what is right in His sight, to give ear to His commandments, and to keep all His statutes; and in that case, He says. “I will put none of *these diseases* upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am Jehovah Ropheca*, Jehovah Who healeth thee” (Exodus 15:26). Thereupon He brings them to springs of water and palm trees (Exodus 15:27) and He also rains bread from heaven for them, “That I may prove them, **WHETHER THEY WILL WALK IN MY WAY OR NOT**” (Exodus 16:4). Here we see every provision for health and sustenance and healing; but the provision is coupled with responsibility as to the believer’s “walk” while journeying through the wilderness.

Sickness may, of course, come upon a child of God through other causes than his own disobedience or departure from God’s ways. Instances of this will be given later on. Nevertheless, disobedience is doubtless the most fruitful cause of sickness among saints, and consequently the path of obedience is that which is most favorable to physical health and well-being. Even in the rare case of sickness occurring to a child of God while abiding in His Will, it would be manifestly wrong to seek deliverance from it through the use of human expedients.

Whether or not sickness ever comes to children of God except as a means of chastening or discipline, or as a check against a course of self-will not necessarily involving any moral evil, or as a means of instruction in His ways, it is in any case clear that it is not of faith for them to seek deliverance from sickness through the agency of those expedients which unbelieving man has devised, and by means of which the latter endeavors to maintain himself in a state of independence of God. The efficiency of any particular medicinal remedy or “cure” furnishes no argument for its use by a child of God, but rather the reverse. So long as sickness is or may be a chastening of the Lord, the certainty of a humanly devised means of escape from it, would rather furnish a greater reason why it should not be used. There could be no worse issue to the sickness of a child of God than to lose the benefit of the purpose for which it was permitted to overtake him. Whatever view, therefore, we may take of sickness, it is in any case certain that, for a child of God to put himself in the hands of a doctor, and to take into his body the drugs he may prescribe, is not walking by faith.

It is not necessary at this point to inquire whether “Divine Healing” is taught or implied in this or that passage of Scripture, or whether the promises of the Word of God with respect to healing are available to believers of this dispensation, or are the exclusive property of the Israelite. The believer of this dispensation, who is a member of the Body of Christ and a sharer of His resurrection life through the indwelling Spirit, and whose special call is to walk by faith, has no need to invade the covenant privileges of the Israelite in order to obtain the promise of healing for the mortal body. The relation of the believer to the Risen Christ brings the mortal body of the former into a position of privilege and blessing to which the Israelite was a stranger. The believer’s access to Divine life and health is direct and ample. To him healing for the body comes — not through a miracle or outward sign, as in Old Testament times, and as in the days of our Lord’s earthly ministry among His own earthly people, nor yet by the exercise of the “gift of healing,” (which was used so far as the record goes, *only* on those outside the Church), but by means of his vital union with the glorified Man Whom God has raised from among the dead, and through the presence of the Spirit of Life, indwelling and quickening the mortal body.

There are two aspects of this important subject. We have to consider *first* the resources which the members of Christ’s Body have in Him; and *secondly* the matter of the believer’s separation from the world and its resources. The first we have already discussed. As to the second, it is clear that there can be no *complete* separation from the world so long as the child of God places dependence for relief from sickness upon the remedies of the world. The question of the use of such expedients is settled for every believer who has gained a clear apprehension of the position into which he has been brought by the crucifixion of Christ and His resurrection from the dead. The doctrine of Galatians 6:14 which teaches that the believer has been crucified to the world, would have little meaning if he is remanded to the remedies of the world system for the cure of his physical ailments. If it be a departure from the believer’s place of separation unto *his* crucified Lord to participate in the world’s pleasures and projects, or to compete for its honors, it must be equally (if not more so) a departure for him to seek the aid of “medical treatment” when chastened by sickness. The writer has not been able to find in Scripture any shadow of a reason why believers should subject to medical “treatment” the bodies which God has demanded for His service, which He alone understands, and which the Holy Spirit condescends to occupy as His temples. If it grieves the loving heart of our Heavenly Father whenever a child of His looks to the things of the world for any pleasure, gratification, or benefit, how very grievous to Him it must be when they seek the world’s expedients for deliverance from evil!

In considering this subject it must be remembered *first* that disease is a manifestation of the power of evil (that is, of Satan’s power, who has the power of death), and *second* that man’s “medical science” is largely the outcome of his efforts to be independent of God. It is, therefore, a dishonor to God and a triumph to His enemies whenever a child of God seeks the aid of human expedients for deliverance from sickness. Occasion is thereby given to the scoffer to say that God’s children can talk about trusting Him when all goes well, but that when a *real* need arises, and a real trouble overtakes them, they immediately fly for help to man’s remedies. On the other hand, by so doing the child of

God deprives those who are observing his conduct, of such a benefit of a testimony to God's faithfulness as can be given in no other way. The writer knows of a remarkable conversion wrought through the trust exhibited by a little child, who had been taught to look to God and to Him alone, for deliverance from sickness.

Furthermore, to choose God's way rather than man's is to choose *the better way*. The inadequacy of medicinal remedies is being specially manifested and recognized in these perilous times, wherein the power of Satan is being increasingly displayed. God's children, therefore, have special need to be taught, at this time, the place which He has given to their mortal bodies in His work of redemption, in order that they may be protected, not only from the blunders and inefficiencies of the medical practitioner, but also from the more serious dangers which have been lately introduced into the sphere of professing Christianity by the "psychotherapist" and other religious charlatans.

I am the more urgent to press this matter upon the people of God at this time, and to exhort them earnestly to seek God's mind about it, as He has revealed it in His Word, because I am persuaded that the saints living in the CLOSING days of this present evil age are *specially* called upon to walk in *complete separation from the world*. I am persuaded that, to seek God's way in sickness, and to walk in it, will especially characterize those whose wonderful privilege it shall be to be changed in a moment at the coming of the Lord. These are they in whom the Apostle's prayer shall be answered, for they shall be wholly sanctified or set apart unto God from every thing that is of the world, and shall be preserved blameless, spirit, soul, AND BODY, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

For these reasons I have been deeply impressed with the thought that God's gracious purpose is to give to His people at this time a fuller knowledge of His ways with regard to the use and care of their physical bodies and members. I believe that He is calling them to take, in this matter, a position in advance of that to which the saints of former generations were called, whose bodies were not to experience the marvelous change referred to above. And if this be indeed His purpose, we can readily understand Satan's activity in seeking to obscure God's path of simple faith by bringing forward and making prominent, just at this time, the false healing cults and movements which constitute such a remarkable feature of these strange and evil days. May the Holy Spirit find every child of God who may read these lines ready to follow where He may lead.

EIGHTEEN

THE “CAUSE” OF SICKNESS AMONG SAINTS

The Scriptures give us one, and only one, direct statement as to what *may* be the cause of sickness in a believer of this dispensation, a member of the Body of Christ. That solitary reference teaches in the clearest way that it is not so much the natural cause of diseases, exposure to contagion, or to unsanitary conditions, or to the elements — that the child of God has to fear, as the supernatural or *spiritual* causes. The passage is 1 Corinthians 11:27–32, where instruction is given concerning the commemoration and the showing forth of the Lord’s death, in the manner appointed by Him. We are commanded to do this in remembrance of Him and thereby to show forth His death until He come. That can be done “worthily” only by those members of His Body whose manner of life is consistent with the fact that they have been conjoined in the likeness of His death. It follows that “whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord”; that is (as I understand it) shall be guilty in regard to the purpose for which the Body was broken and that Blood poured out; for he who eats and drinks unworthily treats them as a nullity. “But let a man examine (or prove) himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s Body. FOR THIS CAUSE many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged (literally, being judged) of the Lord we are CHASTENED, that we should not be condemned with the world.”

Among the truths that are to be learned from this important passage of Scripture the following are prominent, and are unmistakably clear, namely:

First, that sickness is sometimes permitted to overtake and lay hold of a child of God whose conduct is unbecoming one who is in Christ, and has been allowed to pass *without self-judgment*.

Second, that this is permitted as a *chastening* or *discipline* of the Lord.

Third, that God’s purpose in thus chastening His children is to the end that the latter may be exercised to repentance, godly sorrow, and confession, so that they may not be “condemned with the world.”

It thus most clearly appears that sickness in a child of God is a *totally different affair* from the sickness of an unbeliever; and if we resort to the same “treatment” in the former case that is used in the latter, we thereby disregard the plain teaching of God’s Word. The Lord does not discipline the children of wrath; He disciplines only His own children (Amos 3:2; Hebrews 12:6–13). It is evident, therefore, that if a child of God, when thus brought under His chastening hand for his own profit, seeks to escape there from by resort to the medicinal remedies upon which the unbelieving rely, he does but further affront and grieve his Heavenly Father by despising the chastening of the Lord. Therefore God also says, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the neither Lord, nor faint when thou are rebuked of Him.” The discipline is rather to be regarded as a mark of His love, “For whom the Lord LOVETH He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.”

The passage in 1 Corinthians 11 further teaches that different degrees of misconduct among the children of God receive corresponding degrees of chastening. Some of the offending ones at Corinth

were weak, others sick, while still others, who were presumably not amenable to the discipline available in this life, had been taken away.

“There is a sin unto death” (1 John 5:16). This may be one thing or another. In the case of Ananias and Sapphira the “sin unto death” was lying to the Holy Spirit. In the case of the Corinthian assembly it consisted in gross misconduct, utterly unbecoming those who are called upon to show forth the Lord’s death during His absence and rejection, — and in then making a mockery of the ordinance of * commemoration of His death, by participating therein without judging their own misdoings. If we can conceive that any, in such case, recovered health through the aid of medicinal remedies, even supplemented by prayer, the last case of such would be far worse than the first.

Nor should it be expected that healing must always immediately follow penitence, confession, and believing prayer for recovery. It may be needful in God’s wisdom that the sickness be severe and prolonged. Or perhaps He might even grant the healing, if asked for, before the end desired by Himself (which is that we might be “partakers of His holiness”) be fully accomplished. Better it is to endure the chastening patiently, for if ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; and though “no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” It is better, therefore, to pray for the peaceable fruit of righteousness than for the recovery; and we may be sure that, by truly seeking the former, we shall the more speedily obtain the latter.

We wish not to be understood as saying that every sickness overtaking a saint of God is a chastening for some fault. The Scriptures do not so state, but rather indicate that God may permit sickness for other purposes. Thus Paul’s experience mentioned in 2 Corinthians 1 was to teach him not to trust in himself, but in God Who raises the dead. The afflictions of Job, including physical illness, were to teach him that the Lord does not afflict willingly, but is very pitiful and of tender mercy (Job 37:23; James 5:13). Epaphroditus was “*for the work of Christ nigh unto death*, not regarding his life.” “But God had mercy on him,” and healed him (Philippians 2:27–30). David’s child was “very sick” because of the sin of his father (1 Kings 12:15). The man born blind was not thus afflicted for his own sin, nor for sins of his parents, “but that the works of God should be made manifest in him” (John 9:3). All these illustrations point to the conclusion that every case of sickness occurring in a child of God is a case *for God’s dealing alone*. In every case the interference of man and his remedies could only oppose the purpose of God.

The Scriptures bearing on the subject of sickness, some of which we have briefly considered, show that, while Satan is *the agent* by which the affliction is caused, yet in the case of sickness in a child of God, it is *God Himself Who* permits the affliction, giving Satan leave to put forth his power. The case of Job is a conspicuous example of this (Job 2:6–7). It is in accordance with the clearly revealed ways of God thus to use even His enemies in the accomplishment of His gracious purposes. It is most important that we should understand this.

The history of God’s earthly people, as related in Judges, Kings and Chronicles, abounds in instructive incidents in which God suffered His people to be overpowered by their enemies, or to be humbled before them, either as a punishment for their faithlessness, or in order to teach them that it was *for their own good* to look *solely to Him* for defense against, and deliverance from, their foes.

The experience of King Asa is especially pertinent, and we would therefore ask particular attention to 2 Chronicles 14 and 16. When King Asa, of whom God has testified that He did, “that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God,” was assailed by the mighty Ethiopian host of a million men, he cried unto God, saying: “There is none BESIDE THEE to help between the mighty and him that hath no strength. Help us, O Jehovah our God, for WE RELY ON THEE, and in THY NAME are we come upon this multitude” (14:11 *American Revised Version*). When Asa and Judah thus relied upon the LORD alone, *seeking no aid from man*, the result was that “Jehovah smote the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled” (verse 12).

And yet, notwithstanding this marvelous deliverance, when subsequently the King of Israel came up against Asa, the latter followed the course dictated by prudence and human wisdom. He sent money to the King of Syria, to buy his assistance. This expedient of calling in the aid of the world power in order to repel an attack permitted by God, was *apparently* successful; for the enemy was compelled, through the activities of the armies of Benhadad, to withdraw (2 Chronicles 16:1–6). Consequently, one who “judged by appearances” would have said that God had “blessed the means.” But the Word of God has revealed to us that Asa, in applying to one of his enemies for aid against another, not only acted foolishly, but that he also incurred the severe displeasure of the Lord, and was accordingly rebuked by the Lord’s messenger, who said, “Because thou hast *relied on the King of Syria*, and hast not relied on Jehovah thy God, therefore is the host of the King of Syria escaped out of thy hand” (verse 7).

In the same manner in this dispensation, God often uses the power of His enemies for the chastening and instruction of His people. The lesson before us is so plain that we cannot miss its meaning unless we willfully close our eyes to it. In the present time, as of old, God’s people often find themselves assailed by mighty foes, against whom they have “no strength”; and often God permits them to fall into the hands of these enemies. The attacks that are the most common are those of physical diseases of various sorts. In every such case the believer has precisely the same choice that King Asa had. He may either rely upon the LORD alone, which in the judgment of the world and of many Christians is folly or fanaticism, or he may pursue the course dictated by prudence and human wisdom, namely, that of buying with money the aid of one of his natural enemies (the world and its “science” *) against another.

Now let it be particularly noted that these incidents in the life of Asa are recorded for the special purpose of teaching the very lesson we are seeking to enforce, namely, that a child of God, when attacked by an enemy, should look to God alone for help and deliverance. For the messenger of the LORD declared to Asa that “the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout THE WHOLE EARTH” — not through Israel only — “to show HIMSELF STRONG in the behalf of them whose HEART IS PERFECT toward Him” (verse 9). A “perfect” heart is an undivided heart; and for the purpose of our present study this means a heart that seeks aid from God alone for deliverance from sickness and other enemies. To do otherwise deprives *us* of the help of God, and (which is far more important) it deprives Him of the opportunity to “show HIMSELF strong.” A “perfect” heart certainly does *not* mean the heart of one who, in time of danger, sends to the world for the aid of its “science,” and asks God to “bless the means” which He has taught His people to shun.

In order to make it impossible for us to miss the application of these incidents, the sequel of Asa’s case is recorded for us; and we earnestly exhort our readers to weigh the whole record carefully, bearing in mind that King Asa was a beloved child of God. The sacred record tells us that Asa was highly incensed by the message of the prophet, and that he did what he could to stifle the voice of the messenger by shutting him up in a prison house. And then another enemy assailed King Asa, even a grievous disease, and “his disease was exceeding great, *and yet*” — that is, notwithstanding the experience he had enjoyed, and the direct message from God explaining that experience — “in his disease he sought not to the LORD but to the physicians.” The consequence is stated with impressive brevity, “And Asa slept with his fathers.”

The writer of these lines has been made of late to feel very keenly that a message, which calls upon the people of God to seek God alone for deliverance from their enemies, is to some of them a most unacceptable message; and that confinement in a prison house is not the only means by which a true believer may attempt to stifle the bearer of an unacceptable message. The reader, however, is responsible to determine whether this message be from God or not; and he must decide this by the test of God’s Word. And if, upon receiving the message, there should arise in the reader’s heart a repugnance to it, with perchance a feeling of hostility to the messenger and a desire to stifle his message, we would most earnestly and affectionately press upon such a reader the solemn warning which Asa’s experience teaches. God has not changed during the intervening centuries. Still do His all-seeing eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, searching for one to whom He can “show

HIMSELF strong”; and still there are agencies available for the chastening of those who having, like Asa, experienced His faithfulness and His power to deliver, and having received instruction in His Ways,” YET in their diseases” resort to the way of the world and “seek not to the LORD but to the physicians.”

It may not be out of place at this point to remark that the practice of the writer and his family which they have followed for the past seven years has consisted in the very simple plan of committing every case of sickness (some have been chronic, some acute, and some very severe) into the Lord’s hands and *leaving it there*. “Commit your way unto the Lord, *trust also in Him*, and He will bring it to pass.” He has done so in every case to His own glory, and to our unspeakable profit. We have gained by the sickness, and gained again by the restoration, and can praise Him for both. But, it is said, people sometimes die who decline medical aid; and this argument against trusting the Lord in sickness is actually advanced by those who also say that for the believer to depart and to be with Christ is “far better.” It is, however, better to die trusting God than trusting man. But with a child of God it should be not a matter of living or of dying, but of *walking in the ways of God*; and it seems to me that He has made His way in sickness plain enough for those who are willing to walk in it, and who can trust Him in the face of human opposition.

The writer has further discussed this important and practical subject in two pamphlets entitled, respectively, *Sickness among Saints*, and *Trusting God in Sickness*, which maybe had of the publisher of this volume. The latter discusses the principal objections that have been raised to the doctrine that God’s children when sick should look to Him alone, and use only the means prescribed by Him — the Great Physician.¹

1 For proof that the modern sciences, which are the boast and confidence of the world, are the enemies of God and His people, see *The Number of Man* by same author, chapter on *Latter-Day Idols*; also his pamphlet *The Foundations of Faith*.

NINETEEN

LIVING WITH CHRIST (ROMANS 6:8)

Where doctrine is given which is intended not merely for imparting information, but rather for leading us into an experimental knowledge of Christ and of what is available to us in Him during this present life, the Apostle Paul frequently brings forward his own experience as that of one who not only taught these things but also *lived* them. Among doctrines of this sort the one that is pre-eminent and fundamental is the doctrine of *present participation* in the death and resurrection of Christ. To know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, was to Paul an object so desirable that all earthly advantages were in comparison as “refuse.” The object which God puts before the believer the moment he has learned of his justification from sins, and his liberation from the despotism of sin, is that he should walk, from that very moment, in the newness of the resurrection life of Jesus Christ, being conjoined in the likeness of His resurrection, and reckoning himself alive to God *in* Christ. For “if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also LIVE WITH Him” (Romans 6:8). It is for this that we were baptized into the death of Christ, being buried out of sight by means of this baptism — into — death, and thus conjoined in the likeness of His death. It is for this that our old man was crucified with Him and the body of sin thereby undone or annulled, and that we are to reckon ourselves, as far as sin is concerned, to be dead indeed.

The Apostle gives us his own experience in the practical application of this teaching, telling us how, in all his walk throughout the incessant labors of his active ministry, while encountering the extremes of physical exertion and physical exposure, hardship, and suffering, he always bore about in the body the dying (or rather the *deadness*) of the Lord Jesus, in order that the *life also* of Jesus might be manifested in his (Paul’s) body (2 Corinthians 4:10). The word here rendered “dying” is the same word which in Romans 4:19 is rendered “deadness.” The idea conveyed by the expression is the absolute severance of the Lord, when crucified, from everything that pertains to the natural man — that is from all the things which constitute his life. To carry about with us wherever we may go, the deadness of the Lord Jesus is to bring the power of the Cross to bear upon everything that is of the flesh, and which ministers in any way to the desires of the flesh. The object to be attained in thus bringing to an end all the interests, gratifications, and affections which constituted our “life” when we were in the flesh, is to remove that which would impede the development and free action of the life of the Risen Christ in us. In the words of the text, the object is “that the LIFE ALSO OF JESUS may be manifest in our body.” “For,” says the Apostle, “we who live” that is who are alive unto God in Christ — “are always delivered to death, on account of Jesus, in order that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh” (verse 11). This passage illustrates what the Apostle means by saying that “death” is one of the “all things” that belong to the child of God (1 Corinthians 3:22). Death is the agency to which all that is of the “old man” in the believer is given over for destruction, in order that the way may be cleared for the free and abundant inflow of the life of the Risen Jesus. To manifest *that* life in our mortal flesh is the present calling of those who are conjoined in the likeness of His resurrection; and the extent to which we do this depends upon the extent to which we are made conformable to His *death*, by delivering over to death everything that is inconsistent with the manifestation of the life of His glorified humanity.

The words “mortal flesh” in this passage, connect it with Romans 8:11, and confirm the explanation we have given of the phrase “shall quicken your mortal body.” It is by the quickening of the mortal body, as a present operation of the indwelling Spirit of God, that the life of Him Whom God raised from the dead is manifested in that body.

The words on which we have been commenting, viz., “that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body” (verse 10), and “that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh” (verse 11) have been variously interpreted. Some have explained them as signifying merely the manifestation of the moral excellence of the Lord Jesus in His Saints. But this explanation is inadmissible. The word here translated “life” means *life*, and is so understood in every other of its numerous occurrences. Particularly must it be so understood when (as here) it is placed in direct antithesis with death.” Manifestly it would not do to translate John 5:24, “is passed from death into moral excellence.” Furthermore, all the conditions referred to in the context are *physical* conditions which tend to exhaust the natural vital energy. Moral excellence would not meet the need which this emergency creates. What is needed is a replenishment of *life*; and the Apostle here declares that, in his unparalleled exertions, exposures, and hardships, his exhausted vitality was replenished from Him Who said, “I am come that they might have *life*, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

Others have construed the passage as signifying the manifestation of unusual physical vigor. But this explanation appears to be equally inadmissible. The statements of the context show that Paul was not endowed with physical vigor, but just the reverse. Elsewhere (Chapter 10:10) it is said that his bodily presence was weak or feeble; and in Chapter 12:9–10, he glories in his infirmities or weaknesses, in order that the *power of Christ* might rest upon him.

Careful consideration of all these Scriptures leads to the conclusion that Paul, in his arduous and hazardous ministry, manifested the life of the Risen Jesus in that he accomplished in a weak and infirm body, prodigies of endurance and sufferings under which the most vigorous physical constitution would have broken down. And this is by no means an unusual experience; for many of the Lord’s servants have been, in times of great physical weakness, sustained in their ministry — being lifted, as it were, above the physical plane and thus, while being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, that is to say, while enduring conditions which ordinarily would have killed them, have manifested the life *also* of Jesus in their mortal or infirm flesh. The physical weakness was there all the time, and very apparent, but along with it was a supernatural vital energy, in the power of which the service was accomplished. That supernatural energy is the LIFE of the Risen Man, Jesus, communicated to a member of His Body by the Spirit of Life.

TWENTY

“YOUR LOGICAL SERVICE”

The mortal body is referred to once again in Chapter 12, and once more a reference to the “mind” is coupled with it. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your BODIES a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God (which is) your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world (or age); but be ye transformed by the renewing of your MIND.” For the believer to present his body to God is, in view of all that has been revealed in the preceding chapters of the Epistle, a “reasonable,” or literally a *logical*, service.

This is also a “*sacrifice*” in the sense of being an offering to God, but not in the sense that the believer sacrifices anything by so doing. And this sacrifice which we are called upon to offer is not, as in the case of a victim offered under the old Jewish ritual, a *dying* sacrifice, but a *living* sacrifice. (The word here rendered “living” is derived from the noun signifying Divine life). The sacrifice is also “holy,” that is to say it is *set apart to God*; and it is “well-pleasing” to Him in contrast to the burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin in which He had “no pleasure” (Hebrews 10:6).

Believers, moreover, are not to conform themselves to this age, but on the contrary are to be transformed by the renewing of their *minds (nous)*, in order that they may prove,— that is, may have experimental knowledge of — the good and well-pleasing and perfect will of God. Such is the experience which God desires for, and puts within the reach of, His children while they yet remain in the mortal body. The renewing of the mind is to be such as to effect a complete *transformation* or “metamorphosis” of the man. The old habits of thought are to be laid aside, and the mind is to be occupied with new subjects, namely, with those things that are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God (Colossians 3:2). This “change of mind” is not the work of a moment. It proceeds gradually, being effected by the power of the Spirit of God while we are contemplating the things of Christ which the Spirit puts before us. We, with unveiled face “beholding,” “are changed” (2 Corinthians 3:18). Before we knew Christ, before He became the Object of our faith, and hope, and love, the contents of our minds revolved around self, the “old man,” as their center. But our old man has been crucified with Christ, and in his place has come the New Man Whom God has raised from the dead. *Every thought* is now to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. This is a great demand that is made upon us; but our God is a great God, and shall He demand anything less than the whole of our ransomed beings? Would we be satisfied to offer anything less?

Let us then with purpose of heart present our bodies unto God, to the end that He may be glorified by the service of our physical members, and that we may enjoy the experience of proving what is the good, and acceptable and perfect will of God.