

A

Short Summary

OF THE

**EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS,**

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# A SHORT SUMMARY

OF THE

## EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.



THIS Epistle lays the foundation of Christianity. It does not rise to the height of the Epistle to the Ephesians, where we have union with Christ at God's right hand, but treats of justification by faith, the righteousness of God, and the Christian's position in Christ dead and risen. It is divided into four distinct parts.

PART I. goes down to chap. iii. 20. It treats of the responsibility of man as a sinner, proving both Jew and Gentile under sin, and awaiting the just judgment of God against it; and ending with the whole world brought in guilty before God. It brings out the necessity for the Gospel of God, and His righteousness to be revealed, for man had none.

PART II. goes down to the end of chap viii. It treats of God's remedy for sin and His salvation, which may be divided again into four parts: 1st. Justification from sins, chaps. iii. iv. 2nd. Reconciliation from enmity, chap. v. 1-12. 3rd. Deliverance from the power of sin, as born in that state, chap. v. 12,-viii. 17. 4th. Salvation from the presence of sin when the Lord comes, chap. viii. 18-25. The righteousness of God is manifested, in Christ dead and risen. The believer is first seen forgiven and justi-

fied, through Christ dead and risen for him; secondly, he is seen *in* Christ with whom he has died, in a position where there is no condemnation, and no separation. Up to chap. v. 12, we have what God is for the believer, through Christ; on to the end of chap. viii. what the believer's place is in Christ.

PART III. goes down to chap. xi. end. God's dealings with Jew and Gentile are traced to the end of the age, and are shown to be on the principle of sovereign grace, and God's promises made to the Jewish nation are reconciled with His present dealings to both Jew and Gentile alike.

PART IV., beginning with chap. xii., ends the epistle. It applies the preceding mercies of God to the believer's walk, and is composed of exhortations, and rules which enter into the minutest circumstances of daily life.

## CHAPTER I.

Verses 1-17.—This is the introduction of the epistle. Paul begins it by introducing his apostleship, showing how Christ had called him, and separated him to the Gospel of God (see Acts ix. 15, 16; xxvi. 15-18). He was the apostle of the Gentiles, as Peter was to the Jews (see verse 5; chap. xi. 13; Gal. ii. 8). The gospel was the glad tidings of God, showing forth His character, and His actings towards man, for his salvation. It was a subject of promise in Old Testament times, but now fully revealed in Christ. Its subject was concerning God's Son, Jesus Christ the Lord, made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from among the dead. Son of David was Christ's Jewish title after the

flesh (Matt. i. 1). It was His royal title to the throne of Jerusalem. The Jews had all the privileges as to this title, (see chap. ix. 4, 5), and Jesus Christ became a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers (chap. xv. 8). The Gentiles could claim no blessing under this title (Matt. xv. 22-24). They had no promises in the flesh. But He was also declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from among the dead. As God He overlept all barriers. He was the God not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles (chap. iii. 29). He could sit down on a well, face to face with a poor *Samaritan*; could unveil her heart to herself, and then reveal Himself to her as the Christ. He could say of a *Roman* centurion, "I have not found so great faith no not in Israel." As God also He overcame all obstacles. Satan, sin, death and hell could not stop his victorious progress, and he rose triumphant from the grave, declared by this act, according to the Spirit of holiness to be the Son of God. He thus introduces all believers into a new place, and puts them in a like relationship to God, Jew as well as Gentile, *i. e.*, sons of God. It was under this title that Paul first preached Him in the synagogues at Damascus (Acts ix. 20), for it had pleased God to reveal His *Son* in him at that time (Gal. i. 16). The Son of God had given him his apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations. As Son of David, Christ was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As Son of God the gospel went out to all, Gentiles as well as Jews.

But if Paul was an apostle by call, the Roman saints were also the called of Jesus Christ, and from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, he gives them the usual salutation, Grace and peace. Viewed

as the body of Christ they were perfect and had no need of mercy (see 1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 2; Gal. i. 3; Eph. i. 2; Col. i. 2; Phil. i. 2; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 2); also Philemon, seeing the assembly at his house is addressed. Individuals had need of mercy, and when Paul addresses an individual, the word *mercy* is added (see 1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2; Titus i. 4), owing to the sin and infirmities still in them.

He thanks God that their faith is spoken of throughout the world. God, whom he served in the gospel of His Son, is Witness that he remembers them in prayer unceasingly, making request that he might soon come to them, for mutual comfort and blessing to himself and them. He feels a debtor to them, longing to preach the gospel at Rome, and declares that he is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it was the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. In it the righteousness of God by faith was revealed to faith. Jew and Gentile came in for a share in the blessing alike. It was no longer a question of a nation outwardly separated to God, as the Jewish nation was with the law, who were under it as a measure of their responsibility; but the righteousness of God was unto all, Jew and Gentile alike, though only upon all them that believed. In these two verses we have a summary of the chief part of the epistle. What wonderful words! The Gospel of God is about to be declared. It is the Gospel of God as to its source. It is the Gospel of God's Son, as to its subject and character, it is the Gospel of Christ the anointed One,\* for it is the power of God unto salvation. In it the righteousness of God is revealed. It is for man to stop still, and listen, and see the salvation of God.

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\* Christ is here left out by some of the authorities.

The apostle here quotes from Habakkuk. He contrasts the governmental dealings of God with the Jewish nation with His present dealings under the Gospel. The just Jew of that day was to live by faith in view of the coming judgment of the Chaldeans. The just man now lived by faith in the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel in view of His wrath revealed from heaven against all ungodliness. The former judgment had only to do with time. This with eternity. The apostle now turns away from his subject of God's salvation to show the necessity of it from man's state as a sinner.

From verse 18 to the end of the chapter the state of the Gentile world is described. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. The Gentiles are responsible to God for two reasons: *first*, that which is known of God is manifest in them. They themselves were the proof of the existence of the Creator. God had shown it unto them. The works of creation clearly proved His eternal power and Godhead (verses 19, 20). Who made these things? There could be but one answer, it was God. But, *secondly*, knowing God, they did not glorify Him as God, neither were thankful (ver. 21). The state of their heart is described from verse 21 to 27, and the state of their mind from verse 28 to 33. They had the knowledge of God from Noah, but, alas, as ever with man, declension began. There was no sense of the love of God in their heart; they ceased to worship Him; pride ensued (verse 21), then false worship (verse 23), and finally love turned into lust, as the natural judicial consequence (verse 24). Love which should have been centred on God, was centred on the creature (verse 25), and therefore God gave them up to

vile affections (verse 26). How sad, yet how true! This principle is true always. It is according to our estimate and knowledge of God that our worship will be, and a higher or lower morality will ensue. But not only did their heart go wrong (verse 24), but their mind too. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge (verse 28), and the judicial consequence was a reprobate mind, inventing all kinds of evil and wickedness (ver. 29-31), and although they knew that the judgment of God was against those that committed such things, they not only did the same, but had pleasure in those that did them. We see alas almost the same sins in Christendom in the present day, the state of which in the last days is described in 2 Tim. iii. 1-5; where the Apostle concludes the sad category, with:—"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

## CHAPTER II.

Judgment is the consequence in a twofold sense; *first*, for sins actually committed (See chap. i. 32; ii. 2), and, *secondly*, for despising the riches of God's goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering (verses 4, 5.) No one, Jew, Gentile, or philosopher, has a right to judge; on the contrary he is called to repentance\* in view of the judgment of God who was waiting in goodness, not willing that any should perish. To God alone is committed the right of judgment, who will render to every man according to his deeds (verses 7-10). Here God's immutable dealings toward men are brought out to Jew and

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\* *μετάνοια* means literally "a change of mind," an after-thought on reflection. Repentance is towards God (Acts xx. 21), from sins, and the rejection of Christ (See Matt. iii.; Acts ii). It is produced by believing the various testimonies of God given at various times.

Gentile alike, and as glory, life eternal, and incorruptibility have only been brought to light in the Gospel, those verses which allude to these subjects may well apply to the Christian profession (Compare John v. 29.) The Gentile, without law, should perish without law,—the Jew should be judged by the law; each being judged according to the light they had, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. When the Gentiles who had not the law, did by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience witnessing with them. Conscience is that faculty which God took care man should have after the fall, which gives the knowledge of good and evil.—(Compare Genesis iii. 5–22). Every Gentile has that, besides the light of creation shining upon him, telling him of God.

The double aspect of judgment mentioned in the first four verses of this chapter, is brought out in measure in God's dealings with Gentiles without law as well as the Jews under law. 1st, He judges the whole world for its sins by sending the deluge; 2nd, since the flood, on the ground of sacrifice, He has been bearing with it. Then with the Jew, God first gives the ten commandments at Sinai (Ex. xx.), and the judgment is, Whosoever sinneth against me, him will I blot out of my book. (See Ex. xxxii. 33.) Secondly, on Moses' intercession, the principle of forbearance comes in (Ex. xxxiv. 5-8), not clearing the guilty, however, and under this principle the people are spared, only to aggravate their judgment, however, if they resist. Under the gospel, Christ is presented to the sinner who has committed sins and who awaits God's judgment against him. God forbears, owing to the blood of

Christ shed, as He did in times past. This greatly aggravates God's wrath against him, if he resists. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. He that believeth not is judged already, and shall be damned (John iii. 18-36; Mark xvi. 16.) He is a despiser of the riches of God's grace, but he dies in his sins; he will not choose the way of escape God has provided, he chooses darkness rather than light, and shall therefore also be judged according to his works. Thus in the verses 1-16 God is presented as the Judge going to judge men, first of all, for their sins committed, and secondly for their rejection of His goodness. God *will judge* according to the light men have; in the meantime He is waiting, and that goodness should lead men to repentance.

These are His unalterable principles of judgment, and it is only those who are born again, whether Gentile or Jew, that fulfil this responsibility to God, that is who patiently continue in well doing, and seek for glory and honour and incorruptibility; and that only is fulfilled in the new nature, or the circumcised heart, as is mentioned at the end of chap. ii. Man for himself needs the gospel both to be saved from his sins and his Adam state, as well as to get heaven as his portion. His original responsibility was only in connection with the earth of which he was created head, and by his sin lost. Of course, being immortal, losing this he would be banished to hell, but grace opens heaven to him.

From verse 16 to end, the state of the Jew is described. They boasted of the law, and of knowing God's will, and yet did exactly the same things as the Gentiles did without law, so that the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles through them. Circumcision profited if they kept the law, otherwise it became uncircumcision, and contrari-

wise; and if the uncircumcised Gentile kept the law, he judged the Jew who transgressed it. Circumcision of the heart after all was the true thing, and that was the true Jew who had such a heart.

### CHAPTER III.

But if circumcision of the heart was the question, and if the uncircumcision keeping the law was counted for circumcision, what advantage then had the Jew, what profit was there in circumcision? They had the oracles of God, and in these oracles special promises given to them, as to Messiah, the land of Canaan, etc., and if some of them did not believe, that would not make the faith of God of none effect which was contained in those oracles. He would be faithful and true in all that He said and did, and the fifty-first Psalm is quoted to show this. But if cavillers would come in and say, "But if our unrighteousness brings out all the more God's righteousness in fulfilling His promises, then how can He punish us," the apostle answers, This will not hinder Him judging the world, however opposers might come in and say, Let us do evil that good may come. If His justice cannot be glorified in saving all through some refusing, His justice will be glorified in their damnation. Here the righteousness of God is displayed, first, in accomplishing His promises to Israel; secondly, in His judgment of the world, further down in the justification of the believer.

The argument is then summed up, in quotations from the Jewish Scriptures. From their own Scriptures, the oracles in which they trusted, the Jews are proved guilty. There is none righteous, no not one; not merely Gentiles, but *none*—Jews too. Man's photograph by nature is held forth to view. His picture is taken

from head to foot! His throat, his lips, his tongue, his mouth, his eyes, and his feet (Compare Isaiah i. 6). An awful picture, but too true. The Jew's mouth is stopped. The Gentiles have been proved guilty; the Jews are now convicted out of their own Scriptures; the whole world is thus guilty before God. The law is no help in this matter to justify. It was not given for that purpose. By the law is the knowledge of sin. The office of the law here then is clearly brought out. How can it justify a sinner? It can prove him guilty. It can stop his mouth, but it cannot justify. It can also do a deeper work than make a man cry, Guilty. By the law is the knowledge of sin. (Compare Rom. vii. as to this.)

Thus we have the state of the Gentiles fully described at the end of chap. i.; God's principles of judgment described up to chap. ii. 16; the state of the Jews brought out at the end of chap. ii. Their advantages would not hinder God's judgment with regard to the unjust amongst them, and their mouth is stopped from their own Scriptures. All the effect of the law was to prove guilt and to give the knowledge of sin. Thus the whole world is proved guilty before God. This takes us down to chap. iii. 18.

We come now to the second part of the epistle. Up to chap. v. 12, we see what God is for the sinner in righteousness and love. The guilty sinner is brought face to face with God, not for condemnation however, but for justification. Jesus and His blood are set before him as the objects of faith (verses 22, 25); and the sinner is justified on his side by faith (verse 28). Chapter iv. presses this side of the sinner's justification by the examples of Abraham and David. Being justified, he has peace, and is sealed by the Holy Ghost, who by bringing

the love of God manifested in the gift of Christ into his heart, enables him to joy in what God is for him through Christ. He is thus reconciled to God from his enmity. From chap. v. 12–viii. to end, we see what the believing sinner's place is in Christ, and his deliverance from his Adam state and condition, first as to his soul, then as to his body.

But let us return to our subject. In the midst of man's desperate need, God meets him. Now the righteousness of God apart from law is manifested. Now, since the death and resurrection of Christ, for without that the justice of God could only be manifested in judgment. Up to the cross man's righteousness, if any, was being manifested, of which the law was the measure, but there was none. Now in the glory the righteousness of God apart from law is manifested; it is divine righteousness as contrasted with human righteousness. The law was the measure of the latter (Lev. xviii. 5). The former could be measured by nothing less than the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. (See this fully brought out in chap. x.) Law-righteousness was what man had to give to God. Christ as man kept it, in His life, but that was perfect human righteousness. Here it is the righteousness of God as contrasted with human righteousness, and that apart from law altogether though witnessed by the law and the prophets. It is the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ, the glorified Man, not confined as law-righteousness would be to the Jew alone, but unto *all* and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference, all have alike sinned and come short of the glory of God.\* God then is looked at here as the source of the sin-

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\* Sin is not measured here by law standard, but by the glory of God. Jesus and His blood alone can meet that claim.

ner's justification. It is the justice of God that is manifested. Jesus and His blood are held before the sinner as the way and ground of his justification. We are justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who carried it out by laying down His life as a ransom to buy every sinner out of slavery, God bringing again from the dead the Man who paid the ransom. Thus redemption is in Christ Jesus and this gives God a righteous ground for justifying, or clearing the sinner from guilt. Now God has set Jesus forth to be a mercy-seat,\* through faith in His blood. This blood has been presented on high, and is for the demonstration of God's justice how He could forbear in times past righteously, and be just in justifying at this time those that believe in Jesus. Thus, through Jesus and His blood, God is righteous in forgiving and justifying every believer.

We have three illustrations of redemption in Israel's history and laws. 1st. They were a nation of slaves themselves under Pharaoh king of Egypt, originally belonging to God, but having forsaken Him, and worshipping idols. To be redeemed from this condition: first, a ransom must be paid to God for their lives, for they were as bad as the Egyptians; we see this in the type of the passover lamb (Ex. xii.); second, they must be brought out from under the dominion of Pharaoh and brought back to Jehovah, which we see fully brought out in Ex. xiv. and xix., in the passage of the Red Sea, and and their being brought to God at Mount Sinai. The blood of the Lamb ransomed them from slav-

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\* *ἱλαστήριον*—mercy-seat—is the Greek word used here (Comp. Lev. xvi. 14, 15). It refers to the figure of the High Priest on the day of atonement after killing the lamb taking the blood into the holiest, and sprinkling it before God.

ery, the Red Sea delivered them from it. We have two other illustrations in their own laws (Lev. xxv. 25, 39), first as to land, and second as to their own persons. If one of the Israelites got poor and had to sell his land, his brother might redeem it. If he got so poor as to be obliged to sell himself to a stranger, his brother might also redeem him. He would first pay the price down, and then restore the land to his brother, or if his brother was a slave, set him free.

Here we have the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and the mercy-seat (verses 24, 25) answering to the combined types of the passover lamb and Red Sea, and the mercy-seat set up after their arrival at Mount Sinai. Through the blood of Christ and His death, resurrection and ascension we have been ransomed, redeemed from the power of Satan and brought to God. God, on the ground of Christ's redemption and what He is as the mercy-seat, displays His justice in justifying every soul that believes in Jesus. All that believe are justified from all things.

Justification is the judicial sentence of the Judge in favor of the criminal. Rom. viii. 33 explains it. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. We have five aspects of it; four in this Epistle. We are first justified by God's grace, or free favor, this is God's side of it, and its source. 2ndly. We are justified by faith (chap. iv., v. 1. This is our side of it. Faith is like the hand that takes it from the free favor of God, who gives it righteously, for it is His righteousness. 3rdly. We are justified by the blood (Rom. v. 9). This is the ground of it. 4thly. It is a justification of life. This is connected with the person of Christ in resurrection, who first communicates life to the soul as a present thing,

connecting us now in spirit with the dead, risen and ascended Christ, and, secondly, communicates it to the body when He comes again; so that we are completely delivered from everything that could be touched by judgment before the day of judgment. This is God's righteous gift also. (See Romans v. 16-21, vi. 23, vii. 24, 25, viii. 23, 24.) 5thly. In James ii. we are justified by works before men and the Church as a proof to them that ours is a living faith. This last is a test to those who say they have faith. Faith and a present salvation are connected together. Works come after as a proof before men of our justification. Before God there is no such thing as justification by works. (See Romans iii. 20, iv. 2, Gal. iii. 11. In Romans iii. and iv. we, however, only have developed to us justification by the blood, clearing us from our sins.

All boasting is now excluded. If justification was by law there might be boasting, for man would have given a righteousness to God, and expected a reward for it, but being guilty and being driven to faith in the blood, all this was at an end. He had to receive righteousness from God, and that divine. Forgiveness of sins was his by faith. This was righteousness on God's part. God was righteous in forgiving him through the blood. On man's part it was on the principle of faith. He took the place of a receiver. This excluded works. He was justified by faith without the deeds of the law. But since this righteousness is divine, God is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. Both are justified by faith, but is this not making void the law through faith? No; if a murderer is hung the authority of the law is established, not thrown away. Christ on the cross establishes the law. Not one jot or tittle of its demands have been lowered. Faith, instead of making it void, establishes it to

the fullest extent, for all its demands against man have been inflicted, and that on Christ, the sinner's Substitute.

Thus the blood of Christ meets all the sins of the sinner, and God's righteousness is displayed in forgiving and justifying every believer in Jesus. The two principles brought out at the end of the chapter are that justification is *by faith*, and that this blessing goes out to the Gentile as well as the Jew, since God is the God of both.

#### CHAPTER IV.

This chapter takes the Jew back to the two great roots of blessing—Abraham and David—to prove these two points. Abraham was justified *by faith* before God, not by works (Gen. xv.)\* If it was by works man might expect a reward for it, but to him that worketh not, but *believeth* on Him that justifieth the ungodly, *his faith* is counted for righteousness. What does David say? He describes God's imputation of righteousness without works, in the words, "Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." I lay hold on God's righteousness in justifying the ungodly. Righteousness is imputed to me; my iniquities are forgiven; my sins are covered; sin is no longer imputed. Here righteousness applied, is identical with forgiveness of sins, the covering of iniquities, and the non-imputation of sin, as the quotation shows. It is applied to an ungodly believing sinner by the righteousness of God. The ground of it is the blood as we have seen in chap. iii.; my sins are forgiven as a present thing, my

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\*Before men he was justified by works (Comp. James ii. 21).

iniquities are covered, and as to the future sin will never be imputed. Oh, dear reader, do take hold of this, for God says it!

But then, secondly, if Abraham and David were both justified on the principle of faith, does this extend to the Gentiles? When was Abraham justified, before circumcision or after circumcision? He was justified at least thirteen years before his circumcision took place (See Gen. xv., xvii.) The circumcision was but a seal of the righteousness which he had, yet being uncircumcised; so that he was the father of all that believe though they be not circumcised, and the father of circumcision not merely to those who were outwardly circumcised (*i. e.*, the Jews) but who also walked in the steps of Abraham, as having faith. Thus Abraham was a believer before he was circumcised, God was his God then, why then should not the Gentile have the blessing; and what had the law to do with it? The promise that he should be the heir of the world was even before circumcision.

Promises were what specially characterised God's dealings with Abraham and this was a directly opposite principle to law. If they of the law be heirs, faith is made void, the promise made of none effect, because the law works wrath, for where no law is there is no transgression; there was sin but not transgression. I must have a rule to transgress it, and if I transgress it I must bear the wrath of him who imposes the rule. Therefore, it is of faith that it might be by grace, so that the promise might go to all the seed, not merely to those under the law, *viz.*, the Jew, but to all believers alike, quoting Gen. xvii. 5. In Abraham's faith, too, another principle comes in: it is not simply a question of forgiveness, and non-imputation of sin, but of heirship and of a God that quick-

ens the dead. Abraham believed in a God of resurrection, who said to him, pointing to the heavens, "So shall thy seed be." He did not consider his own body dead, though one hundred years old, nor the deadness of Sarah's womb, but was fully persuaded that a living Isaac would be raised out of Sarah's dead womb, because God had promised it. Righteousness was imputed to him. Here God is righteous in fulfilling His promises, but this righteousness is imputed to us if we believe on God that raised up Jesus from the dead, who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. Christ is the Seed of promise. He having met all God's claims against man's sins, God is satisfied. God, true to His word, raises Him from the dead that our faith and hope may be in God. We have not even to look to the future as Abraham; we believe in a God that has raised Jesus from the dead. How marvellous! How gracious! Our God is the Actor throughout. It is the Gospel of God, the righteousness of God: Christ was delivered by God for our offences—Christ was raised again by God for our justification. God being satisfied with His work, all is at rest. I see in the Judge opening the prison doors to my Substitute, that the full penalty of my sins has been borne, and not only that, but that I am as clear from guilt as He is.

I would like to say here that all this part of the Romans is almost purely objective. I mean that an object is put before our souls outside ourselves for us to believe in. God is the justifier, that is an object outside myself; the blood of Christ is what satisfies His justice in regard to my sins, but that is objective, Christ did the work outside myself. God is satisfied, and according to promise, raises Christ from the dead for my justification, but that

is an act of His righteousness also done outside myself. True I believe, and faith is counted to me for righteousness, and this involves that I am born again, but it is not counted to me on account of the intrinsic value of my faith, but on account of faith taking hold of that which is of intrinsic value in God's sight, that is the blood of Christ, and the Heir raised from the dead. God imputes all the value of what He has done, and what He is to the believer, and the result is that he is justified from all things, as clear from charge as Christ is Himself; also getting a new place of a son, but that is opened up afterwards in the Epistle. The ground of it however is laid in Christ the Heir having been raised from the dead.

## CHAPTER V.

God having raised Christ from the dead, I rest in the Judge Himself, and am justified by faith. Justification divides itself in this chapter into two parts: First, justification in His blood (verse 9), the fruit of which is, I have peace, with and am reconciled to God (verses 6-11); Secondly, justification of life in the Person of Christ (verse 18), the fruit of which is we stand in grace before God in a new position. The final result is the resurrection of the body. We have now got to the resurrection side of the cross, and Christ risen says to us, as it were, as He did to the disciples, in John xx., Peace be unto you; behold my hands and my feet. Peace is the blessed result of justification through a risen Christ; Christ having made it through the blood of His cross. He is our peace as well as our righteousness, and we see through Him our peace with God made. He who knew no sin was made sin for us, and thus the root and cause of our enmity to God was condemned and put away. Peace is that

condition which is the opposite to trouble and enmity.

I would say here, to help souls, that there are five different aspects of peace, as far as I know, in the Scriptures. Three are connected with the believer's standing in Christ, and therefore when once apprehended can never be lost. The two last aspects depend on the believer's walk.

1st. Peace with God, as is mentioned here, is founded on the fact that Christ was delivered up to death for my offences and raised for my justification. Thus I find that God, who I thought was against me, has put away all my sins and my enmity by the blood of His Son, thus making peace, and has raised Him from the dead in perfect acceptance (comp. John xx. 19, 20); my enmity is gone, all trouble resulting from my sins is gone, they are no longer imputed; Christ is for me in the presence of God accepted for me. How can I be anything else now than reconciled to God if I believe this, but it is through what Christ has done and is to God, not what I am for Him, for if it was a feeling that gave peace my feelings would change tomorrow; but it is a settled state of peace towards God through knowing His love and righteousness in having settled the whole question of my sins and accepted Christ for me. I no longer hate God as an enemy; I am reconciled with Him, have peace towards Him through the Lord Jesus Christ.

2nd. Peace, as connected with the possession and mind of the Spirit, which is life and peace (Rom. viii. 6.) This is connected with the communication of Christ's own spirit of life, delivering from the Adam state through His death, giving us our present place *in Him*, peace being the character of the new life communicated. (Comp. John xx. 21, 22.)

3rd. Christ Himself is our peace (Ephesians ii. 13-18). This is connected with our standing in Him as members of His body, all enmity between Jew and Gentile having been taken away by the cross. He is the head of the body—the Peace. These three aspects are connected with three parts of our standing.

4th. Phil. iv. 6, 7. Here we have the peace of God. Its keeping our hearts is dependent on our following the directions of verse 6. But this is in regard to the circumstances of this life, not to our salvation for eternity.

5th. Phil. iv. 8, 9. The God of peace shall be with you. This is also dependent on our following the directions of verses 8 and 9.

(But here in Rom. v. we have only the first aspect of peace.)

But not only have we peace through Him as to the past, we have also access through Him, the risen Saviour, into a new place entirely. We stand in grace in this risen Christ. When Christ rose, He stood with death and judgment behind Him, and glory in front of Him. Such is the position in which grace has set us; blessed be His Name! and we too rejoice in hope of the glory of God. This is developed from chap. v. 12 to viii. Grace gives us the second man to be connected with instead of the first. It is God's favor we stand in as our present and unalterable place, and His glory is our hope. It is God's glory as it is God's righteousness, and God's love further on. In this new creation all things are of God, and the glory is His. In chapter viii. 18, where we get the full results of our introduction into this new place, it is the glory to be revealed *in us*. This is in the future however; now we boast in tribulation; but what is that if the glory is certain, and Christ is

ours? The trial of our faith, too, works patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Thus the presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul is the source of the Christian's boasting in hope of God's glory. This is more than justification by faith in Christ. Not only is Christ made unto us righteousness before God, but the Holy Ghost has come down, and brings all the effects of redemption into our hearts. He sheds abroad the love of God into the heart. He dwells there. Here is another gift of God flowing down to us. Christ is the gift of God. He came down from heaven, died and rose for us, and we are justified and have life through Him. But He having gone up to heaven, the Holy Ghost came down, and He also is given to us. He sheds abroad God's love into our hearts, and is the earnest to us of the glory. Hence, hope does not make us ashamed. But the apostle cannot have done with this love of God. He must go back to its source, and let us know all about it. It flowed down in the gift of Christ to those who were without strength, ungodly, sinners, enemies (verses 6, 8, 10). With men, scarcely for a righteous man would one die; perhaps in extreme cases, for a good man, some would even dare to die, but God commends His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. It is God's nature to love sinners!

Oh, my reader, do you believe this? Before ever man had done anything to save himself, after he had gone through a 4000 years' test, to see if there were any that would understand and seek after God, God came down in the Person of His Son, to reconcile the world to Himself. He came to seek

and to save the lost! How then could He ever give up the objects of His love? That love was the source of the blood of Christ, which was shed to satisfy Divine justice, so that we might be justified. So that if we were justified by this blood, when we were sinners, how much more shall we not be saved from coming wrath through that same risen Jesus. And if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, how much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. Oh, my reader, consider this! Never argue from your side up to God, but argue as the apostle did, from God down to yourself. Think, if God loved me as an ungodly one and a sinner, and I was justified and reconciled in that state, how can He ever cease to love me when I am justified and reconciled! Notice the same order in verses 9 and 10 as in verse 1. First, justification, then peace and reconciliation. A criminal needs justification from his judge. An enemy must be reconciled. We are not only guilty, but the enemies of God.

But what is this life in which we shall be saved? It is the life of the risen Saviour, whom a God of righteousness and love has raised from among the dead. It is a life which will carry us right into the glory and which cannot be touched by wrath. It is eternal life which is given to us by the love of God. Thus we do not rest on experiences going on inside ourselves, though they be all the Holy Ghost's work, and we may glory in them all, but for peace we rest on God's love towards us outside of ourselves, and in a life which has been raised out of death, which is ours for ever. And besides this we boast in God Himself. We have received the reconciliation. God has given His Son, who has died and risen again, through whom we have peace and

are reconciled to God ; but not only so, the Holy Ghost has come down, and dwells in our hearts, shedding abroad His love there, so that we can boast in what God is for us, through the Lord Jesus Christ. All the effects of redemption, justification and peace are enjoyed in the heart, and God is fully known in righteousness and love. By his righteousness we are justified. By His love we are reconciled. Oh, what a God we know ! May the reader rest in Him ! We not only rejoice in hope of future glory, but now we rejoice in God Himself, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom now we have received the reconciliation. Joy in tribulation down here, and joy in God Himself, is the Christian's present portion, with joy in hope of the glory to fill the cup of blessing. What a salvation ! To take us right out of ourselves, to make us see that there is nothing but evil down here, and to centre our joys on God Himself. A God of righteousness and love has done this ; to Him be all the glory. We rest in Him. We joy\* in Him. Up to this point in the Epistle from chap. iii. 21 we have had two great points brought out in regard to our salvation : 1st, we have been justified from all our sins, and their consequences ; 2nd, we

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\* Joy here is literally boast. It is connected with the knowledge of what God is for us through Christ, with the hope of the glory in front of us, and with tribulations here. So in Phil. iii. 3 we rejoice, we boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, as giving the marks of a true Christian. But in Phil. iii. 1 and iv. 4 the word is different. It is our privilege to rejoice in the Lord alway, but then we have to be above circumstances, as realizing that the Lord was above them. So in John xv. 11, 1 John i. 1-4 joy is the consequence of obedience, and unbroken fellowship with the Father. In Rom. v. 1-11 it, meaning boast, depends on nothing but the possession of the Holy Ghost and the knowledge of our standing and hope. We boast or joy in God ; it is an unalterable state, just like peace and the portion of all the justified who are sealed by the Holy Ghost.

have peace and are reconciled with God from our enmity. In the former His relation towards us is that of Justifier, in the second that of Reconciler.

From chap. v. 12 to end of chap. viii., we have a third and fourth point brought out, that God is also our Deliverer from the power of sin, or the state and condition in which we were born, and the Giver of a new standing and place before Him in Christ, who is to us His gift of positive righteousness and eternal life. This connects itself first as a present thing with the soul, and as a future thing with the body.

In v. 12 we see that by Adam sin entered into the world and death by sin, and we are connected with him by birth and condition. But we also inherit death in consequence of our own personal sins. Now from Adam to Moses sin, as a principle, was in the world, and death's presence proved it; still it was not put to the account of a man where there was no law. Man was under its power, but unconscious of its presence in him as a distinct thing till law came in, for by the law is the knowledge of sin, not sins. The Apostle is speaking all through here of our natural state as connected with Adam. The character of sin was not transgression before law. Adam transgressed a given law, so did the children of Israel after the law was given, but between that time there was no transgression; still there was sin, and death reigned over all them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who was the figure of Him that was to come. All this proves that man was born in sin and under its consequences—death—independently of law and transgression.

Here Adam and Christ are compared as the Heads of two races (verses 15–19), then law came in by-the-by that the offence might abound (verse 20),

and the superiority of grace to meet all the consequences of Adam's transgression is brought out. Verse 15—Not as the offence, so also is the free gift? For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift in grace, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Verses 16 and 17—Nor was it as by one having sinned so is the gift; for the act of judgment was of one offence to condemnation, but the act of grace was of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by the one man, much more they that had received the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Here we have a threefold comparing of the consequences of Adam's transgression and of God's grace. The consequences of Adam's transgression were: 1st, the many have died; 2nd, the act of judgment was of one offence to condemnation; 3rd, death reigned over all his descendants. The consequences of the grace of God on the other hand were, first, that through the man Christ Jesus it hath abounded to many; 2nd, justification from many offences; 3rdly, they that received abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

Verses 18, 19 is the summing up. Therefore as by one offence the consequences of that offence went out toward all men to condemnation, so by one act of righteousness, Christ's death, the consequences of that act went out unto all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience the many were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of one shall the many be constituted righteous. The consequences of Adam's transgression and disobedience

were temporal death, eternal condemnation, and death reigning as a present thing over their whole moral condition. The consequence of the grace of God and Christ's death, which met all the threefold consequences of Adam's sin, are the present gift of righteousness and eternal life to the soul, and the full result of justification of life and being made righteous, body as well as soul when the Lord Jesus returns again.

Now the law entered, by the bye, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, whether before or after law, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

At the beginning of the chapter; then, we had justification by blood meeting all the sins of the old man; at the end of the chapter, we have not only this, but positive justification of life in the risen Christ. Christ's act of righteousness on the cross having put an end to the history of the old man itself, we have righteousness and eternal life in the New Man—Jesus Christ the Lord, whom God has raised from the dead; on the ground of His one whole obedience, even unto death, and as a final result the resurrection of the body, (Phil. iii. 8,9). What a marvellous summary of the history of man up to the cross! At the fall sin enters the world, and death by sin. These two principles are personified in these verses, and are said to reign over man (verses 14–21). Until the law sin was in the world, man was lawless (comp. 1 John iii. 4), doing his own will, and death reigned over him. Then in Moses' time, the law entered, sin was now imputed, for by the law is the knowledge of sin (ver. 20), and became the husband of the Jew, and exer-

cised dominion over him (comp. chap. vii. 1, 2). But this marriage, instead of checking the dominion of sin, caused the offence to abound (ver. 20, comp. chap. vii. 5, 8). But now the conscientious Jew was in a most miserable plight. Sin exercising dominion one way, the law the other, by forbidding even the first motions of sin in the heart. Hence the spirit of bondage and fear. But, thanks be to God, grace has entered the world by Jesus Christ (chap. v. 15; John i. 17); has met the power of sin and death on the cross; through righteousness has condemned it and put it away, and has reigned victorious unto eternal life in the risen Son of God. All that accept this grace not only are forgiven and justified, but are delivered from the dominion and power of sin by the reception of this gift of eternal life in Christ risen, which enables them to reckon the whole Adam life or the flesh as dead. This latter part however is enlarged upon in chap. vi. The death of Christ in chap. v. 18, is rather looked at as the burnt offering, the peculiarity of which was that the whole animal underwent the judgment of God, but it was for the offerer's acceptance, not for the pardon of his sins, (comp. Lev. i. 1-9). At the cross not only the justice of God was satisfied as to the sins committed by man, as in the sin offering (Lev. iv.), but God was glorified in His character in the very place where sin was condemned. His love and righteousness were fully manifested, and that by an obedient Man, so that God gave Christ the glory, in answer to it, and we are accepted in the Beloved. Adam and Christ are here looked at as the Representatives and Heads of two races. Adam became head of a fallen race, after his disobedience (see Gen. iv. 1). Christ becomes head of a new creation family after His obedience unto death. By His death and resurrection, and by the

Spirit identifying us with Him, we are delivered from our Adam state (chap. vi.), and introduced into our Christ state (chap. viii).

## CHAPTER VI.

But if the more sin abounds the more grace abounds, the question comes in, Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Let it not be thought so for one moment. How can we that have died to sin, live any longer therein? We have seen before how Christ's great act of righteousness on the cross closed the history of the old man in death. Thus the death and resurrection of Christ not only are the means of our full justification, but through them also we get the deliverance from the power of sin itself. Baptism is the sign of it. We are baptized into Christ's death, and buried under the water in token of our death and burial with Christ. Are we to raise the flesh out of the waters of death? Nay; as Christ was raised up by the glory of the Father, or by the honour the Father put upon Him, for accomplishing His will in redemption, even we also should walk in newness of life. Planting is another symbol. The position of the old man is now a position of crucifixion that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we should not serve it. A dead man is discharged from sin. When a murderer is hung, nothing more can be required by the law of the land against him, and also all danger of his nature making him commit murder again is over. He is dead.\* But if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with Him; Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. Did He die to sin once? we

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\* This is of course only true by faith now; actually the old nature of sin is still there.

reckon ourselves to have died to it; does He live to God? we reckon ourselves to be alive to God in Him. Thus we see our deliverance, in this chapter, from the dominion and power of sin and death itself; not only are our sins pardoned, but death closes the history of our old man, and we are brought into a new place before God altogether in the risen Christ, outside of the dominion of sin and death altogether. This truth is now applied to our walk, from verses 13 to 23. Let not sin reign in our mortal bodies; you are dead. Yield yourselves unto God; you are alive from the dead. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace." Law was the perfect rule of life for a child of Adam. We shall see in chap. vii. how it applies to this life. To put a child of God under law in any way, and here it is a rule of life, is to put him under the power of sin. The strength of sin is the law (see 1 Cor. xv. 56). The power to overcome it is grace. Thank God our position is at a throne of grace (Heb. iv. 16). But, some one says, I may then sin, because I am not under law. God forbid. Sin is a master; if you obey that master, you show yourself to be the slave of that master, and his end is death; but you have been set free from that master, to be the slave of that righteousness which has delivered you. And the end of that is eternal life, as to the body. It is true I have it in the risen Christ, but I look forward to the full consummation, when the life of Christ has fully developed in me, that is, eternal life, as to my body as well. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ the Lord.

Sin is always looked at in these chapters as a master reigning over man, as Pharaoh over Israel in Egypt. It entered the world by Adam (chap. v.

12). It hath reigned unto death (chap. v. 21). It exercises dominion (chap. vi. 14), and pays wages to its slaves (chap. vi. 21). Death alone can close its reign. Thus what the soul looks for here is deliverance from its power and empire! as Israel from Pharaoh at the Red Sea. That deliverance is effected through the death and resurrection of Christ, of which the Red Sea is a type. But we are in spirit identified with Him in that death and resurrection, for the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who has been given to us (chap. v. 5). In this chapter, however, I believe we are more judicially reckoned dead. How blessed! to be able to anticipate death by faith, and to look back at the cross of Christ and see our death there. Thus the Christian is not only a justified man, but he is a dead and risen man, for the Life of the dead and risen man has been communicated to his soul, (v. 23, John xx. 22). He is set free from the dominion of sin, to be brought under the blessed empire of Christ risen, who is God's righteousness. He is now a servant of righteousness and of God (verses 18, 22). The fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, as to the body. In chap. vi. the Christian *reckons* himself dead to sin and alive unto God by faith, Christ having died to sin, and risen outside its dominion. In chap. viii. the Holy Ghost's presence is added.

## CHAPTER VII.

In this chapter the Christian's deliverance from law is described. I speak to them that know the law, says Paul. There were many in the Church at Rome, at that time, that would not know about the law. They were Gentiles. The law was given to the Jew. To the Gentile deliverance from sin would have been enough, as described in chap. vi.

But Jews were there also. The law was given to the latter, as a husband to a woman during the time of her slavery. Her master, sin, wants her to go one way. Her husband, the law, forbids her doing so. Hence the struggles and experiences of this chapter. The Apostle uses the figure of a husband here. This chapter is practically true of many in the present day, in fact of all who are brought up under law. It was quite plain that the law applied to a man as long as he lived. A Canadian is born, he is under the laws of his country as long as he lives. When he dies he ceases to be under the laws of his country. So with the law of Moses. It does not apply to a dead man. As in the case of marriage, a woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives, but after he is dead she is loosed from the law, and is free to marry another man. If it were possible that she could die and rise again, it would be the same thing. The law and Christ are here compared to two husbands, and by the body of Christ, which was put to death, we are become dead to the law, to be married to another, even to Him whom God hath raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, looking to a past time, the motions of sins which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth *fruit unto death*. Notice, law, owing to the fact of sin being there, sets in motion sins instead of checking them, and the fruit is unto death. The new nature, on the contrary, without wanting the law to guide it, brings forth fruit unto God. It has a common nature with its new husband, Christ, and obeys Him willingly (see 1 Cor. vi. 16, 17). But if law sets in motion sins in the old nature, which is still in the Christian, it is a good thing to be delivered from it. We are delivered from the law, having died to that

wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

But you seem to make the law sin, for you say that it is as good to be delivered from it as from sin. God forbid! The law made me know sin. I would not have known sin unless the law had said, You shall not lust. But sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of lust. Without the law sin was dead, lay dormant in the man. The schoolboy cut the table, the master not having forbidden him to do so; but presently the master issues a command that the boys are not to cut the table. This immediately discovers the *naughty will* in the boys. It stirs up in their hearts a desire to do it. This is lust. The next hour at school a boy is found cutting his name. Lust when it hath conceived bringeth forth sin. The boy is flogged. Sin bringeth forth death.\* The master issued the order, and it would have prevented the flogging, but owing to the *evil propensity* of the boy the commandment which was ordained to life was found to be unto death. Therefore before the law comes to the conscience, and forbids lust, the man is alive, has no conscience as to it, but the moment it comes and forbids lust, the monster sin revives, and the man dies morally. The law is nothing then but a ministry of death to man, for it forbids lust under the penalty of death; but every man lusts, and thus the sentence of death is written in him. Thus Paul found that the commandment which was ordained unto life, was unto death to him, and sin taking advantage used the holy com-

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\* This is a quotation from James i. 18. The reader must not confound the fruits of sin with sin itself. Paul speaks of sin here as the root; James of the fruit or the acts of sin. In consequence, in the latter passage, lust precedes sin.

mandment first to deceive him and then to slay him. Thus the law was not sin, it made Paul know sin, it was holy, just and good; it forbids lust, and condemns to death the man that does lust. Its great object as brought out in this chapter is to show the horrible nature of sin, its power over man, and its relentless will to drag him down to death and ruin—even using the law to do so. But if the law was good, was that which was good made death to Paul? Nay, but to bring out the horrible nature of sin, which worked death in him, using the commandment to do it. The object of the law was that sin might become exceeding sinful, and that man, looking away to Christ, might be delivered from its power.

The law, thus applied to man in the flesh, gives the knowledge of sin, (verse 7); owing to sin being there, it rather excites lust (verse 8), and condemns the man to death who lusts; thus it was ordained unto life but was found to be unto death (verse 10). It also causes sin to become exceeding sinful (verse 13). From the 14th to the 25th verse Paul fully argues out the powerlessness of the law to effect deliverance.

We know that the law is spiritual, as Christians, but I am fleshly—a slave of sin. The experience at the end of the chapter shows what a quickened soul really goes through, in order to get to the knowledge of deliverance from the power of sin. That which it does it allows not, the good it would do it does not, the evil it would not do that it does. But then, if this is so, if the will is right, it consents to the law that it is good. And again, if the will is right, it is not the renewed man that does the evil, but this sin that dwells in him. This is a great advance in the soul. Now there is the knowledge that the evil principle of sin is distinct

from the man who wills to do right. In the flesh, the old man, on the contrary, there dwells no good thing.

Here I think again there is advance in knowledge. In verse 14 there is confusion between the natures. I am fleshly, in verse 18 there is the flesh, and sin in it, distinct from the renewed man. Another thing is found, how there is no power to perform what is good; he repeats what he said above, but verses 15, 16 is to show that he is fleshly (ver. 14), whereas (ver. 19) he explains that he has *no power* to perform, for the good he would he does not, and the evil he would not this he does. Thus a soul merely quickened is virtually under the power of sin. It is remarkable that neither Christ or the Holy Ghost is mentioned in all these verses. The soul is evidently born again, but, like a godly Jew before Christ, learning itself under the law, and finding no power over sin, though the will is right. The apostle repeats, if my will is right it is not I that do the sin, but sin that dwells in me. He finds then a law that when he would do good, evil is present with him, but he delights in the law of God after the inward man. Thus he is really born again; but he finds another law, his flesh warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin that is in his members. This is insupportable! Born again, he must be free, but that very light he has got shows him that his whole Adam nature is sinful, so that he cries out, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The whole natural man is seen sinful. He must be delivered! How get deliverance? He looks up, without strength, to God, and finds Him a Deliverer through Christ dead and risen. In himself he finds no good; and no strength even with a new nature, but in God

he finds a Deliverer, who has already opened the path through death for him by Jesus, and has given Him as His gift of eternal life, the Life that has gained the victory and conquered. Note, he gets deliverance by seeing himself as already born of God, connected with Christ in glory as his life, whom God, as Deliverer, has given him. He is a dead and risen man, not only born of God. The experience of the chapter has taught him this great lesson, that he has two distinct natures now in him. He himself, now identified with the new nature, serves the law of God; whilst the flesh serves the law of sin.

Such is the teaching of this much-debated chapter. It might be divided into three parts; 1st, verses 1 to 6, the deliverance from law is stated. 2nd, verses 5 to 13, man's former state in the flesh is alluded to and the law's action upon it giving the knowledge of sin, and condemning him to death; the law is holy therefore; sin, exceedingly sinful. 3rd, verses 14 to 25, the man quickened learns what he is, and that he is without strength, and comes to the knowledge of deliverance through Christ. The eighth chapter shows the reality and power of the deliverance itself; first, as to the soul; second, as to the body. The teaching of the seventh of Romans must not be confounded with the teaching of the third and fourth. There the law proves guilty; it condemns the evil things done. Here it shows the wretchedness of man himself under the power and dominion of sin. It is not the things he has done wrong, and from which the Judge justifies him. That is the teaching of Romans iii., iv. It is his natural state he learns, from which he seeks deliverance; and finds it in the Saviour-God through Jesus. We see this taught in type in the history of Israel in Egypt. They were sinners as much as the Egyptians (see Ezek. xx.),

hence their need of the blood of the lamb (Exodus xii.) to shelter them from the judgment coming on the Egyptians for their sins. But besides that, they were born in Egypt under the dominion of Pharaoh. It was their state. Exodus xii. only begins their deliverance, but Pharaoh pursued them to the Red Sea. It was at this latter point they were fully delivered, and Jehovah was their Deliverer and Salvation, as well as their Justifier. The law likewise made them know their state practically in the wilderness, and the Jordan taught death to the law, and introduction into the heavenly places. The deliverance will be effected when we get bodies exactly like Jesus in glory (comp. chap. viii.) We have it now by faith and in Spirit. Reader, have you learned this deliverance from the power of sin?\*

## CHAPTER VIII.

The full deliverance is summed up in the first three verses of the eighth chapter; and in this we are landed on the top stair of the edifice of doctrine—brought forward. To stop short in Romans vii. is to stop short of full deliverance. That it can be proper Christian experience is impossible. From the seventh verse to the end of chapter vii., the words *I*, and *me*, and *my*, are mentioned near fifty times. Where is the need of deliverance, if Christian experience? What is the meaning of the cry, Who shall deliver me? Besides, there is no mention of Christ or the Spirit once till he thanks God (verse 25.) It is occupation with self, seeing the holiness of the law in its demands, and finding his

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\* We have in these verses and in the first few verses of chap. viii. Four laws,—First, the law of God, (chap. vii. 22); secondly, the law of the mind (chap. vii. 23); thirdly, the law of sin (chap. vii. 24); fourthly, the law of the Spirit of life (chap. viii. 2.)

utter powerlessness to do good, though he wishes to do it. That it is the experience of an unconverted soul, dead in trespasses and sins, is also impossible, for there is the will to do good; he delights in the law of God after the inward man, and with the mind he himself serves the law of God. We are therefore left to the conclusion that it is the experience of a new-born soul, with the will and mind right, yet occupied with self, and not seeing full deliverance from law. Directly it looks away from self to the dead and risen Christ, it bursts out in songs of praise, and concludes—There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are *in Christ Jesus*, \* for the law of the Spirit of life *in Christ Jesus* hath made me free from the law of sin and death.† First, there is deliverance entirely from condemnation; secondly, there is positive possession of life, and deliverance from the law of sin and death; Christ is the life of the believer; thirdly, what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God has done. These three verses are a beautiful summary of chap. v. 12 to end, chap. vi. and chap. vii. Chap. v. 12 to end shows deliverance from condemnation. Chap. vi., deliverance from sin's power. Chap. vii., shows the inability of the law to deliver or to produce power to fulfil the righteous requirements of God, but what the law could not do, God has done. He has judged sin in the flesh, by sending His own Son, and making Him a sacrifice for sin, and the law's righteous requirement is ful-

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\* The last clause of the first verse is not in the three most ancient manuscripts.

† We are now placed entirely in a new creation. Not only do we see Christ for us, but His life is brought into the soul by the Holy Ghost, and we are identified with Christ—in a new life to which no condemnation is attached, and over which sin and death hath no power.

filled in those who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. It is practically fulfilled in those who are not under law but under grace. Love, which is the character of the new nature, is the fulfilling of the law (chap. xiii. 10.)

We are now landed on the top stair of this beautiful edifice of doctrine, and this lovely chapter brings out all the consequences. First, the Christian is in Christ at the beginning of the chapter, in possession of the Spirit of life. Secondly, the Spirit of God also dwells in Him as a Person (verse 9), bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God (verse 16), and makes intercession for him with groanings which cannot be uttered (verse 26.) Thirdly, God is for him (verse 31 to end). What a chapter! May the Lord give the reader sweet thoughts on it. The character of the flesh is contrasted with the Spirit of life (verses 5-8). (Verse 6) The mind of the flesh is death.\* It is the character of the old man. The mind of the Spirit is life and peace.\* The mind of the flesh is enmity to God.\* We cannot please God in the flesh.

But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in us. The presence of the Spirit of God in the believer, puts him into a new state, and gives him a new character, for it is the Spirit of Christ, bringing Christ as life into the soul, so that henceforth he is identified with Christ and no longer with Adam. He is not in the flesh. The flesh remains, but if Christ is in the Christian, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of

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Literally *φρόνημα σαρκός*, *φρόνημα πνεύματος*. It is not carnal mind, spiritual mind; but the mind of the flesh, the mind of the Spirit.

righteousness. The Christ with whom he is one is a Christ that died; hence death is written on the old Adam body, which henceforth, as reckoned dead, becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost. The life of Christ fills it, and the Holy Ghost indwells it; and more than this, if the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ dwells there, our mortal bodies will finally be quickened when Christ comes again. Here is the full answer to the question put in chap. vii. 24. Thus the presence of the Spirit of God in the body fixes the Christian state, as not being in the flesh, brings Christ as life into the soul, so that the old nature can be reckoned dead, and is the earnest of the future resurrection of the body. Besides this (verse 16), He dwells there as a Person. But if we are indebted to Christ and the Spirit for all this, we are not debtors to the flesh for anything. If we live after the flesh we are about to die, but if we through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body we shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God. Here the Spirit of God is the power for practice every day. By the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body, by the Spirit the sons are led. They have not the spirit of bondage again to fear. They had that whilst under law, but now they have the Spirit of adoption, calling, Abba, Father.

Here we come to the second aspect of the Spirit in this chapter. He first brings Christ as life unto the soul, so that the Christian is in Christ (verses 1, 2), and Christ in him (verses 9–11); but secondly, He Himself dwells in the Christian as God, and bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. But if a son, then an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, suffering indeed with Him, with glory in the future. But what are present sufferings to future glory. Even the creature waits for the

manifestation of the sons of God. It groans and travails: not only every creature, but we ourselves who are linked to the creature still by our bodies but having the first-fruits of the Spirit, we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies. Salvation, in this aspect, is future; it is by hope. This groaning is a different groaning from that of chap. vii. 24, though we get the full answer here to the question asked there. There it was, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? with regard to the soul not seeing full salvation as to that. Here it is groaning as Christ groaned at the grave of Lazarus, only with the addition that our bodies are still more or less linked with sin and not fully redeemed. It is the groaning of an undelivered soul in chap. vii. Here it is the groaning of an undelivered body. The presence of the Spirit within makes us groan. The Spirit has hardly been mentioned up to chap. vii. 25. But the Spirit not only makes us groan in the midst of a groaning creation, but He also helps our infirmities, and makes groanings within us that cannot be uttered. God knows what is the mind of the Spirit because He makes intercession for the saints according to God.

Then comes the summing up: All things work for good to them that love God. Then comes a golden chain with five links:—Foreknowledge,—Predestination,—Calling,—Justification,—Glory. Predestination is founded on foreknowledge, it is not the same as it (see John vi. 64, 65). For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given him of the Father. But oh, what infinite grace! Every dear Christian is predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's

Son! God's grace has never done with us till we are exactly like Christ, and in the glory with Him. Who is He? The eldest Son of the family—God's Son!—the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

From verse 31 to the end, we have God for us. This is manifested in three ways: First, He has not spared His Son (verse 32); secondly, He has justified us (verse 33); thirdly, Nothing can separate us from His love as displayed in Christ, who died, rose again, and makes intercession (verses 35–39). The apostle, as he always does, argues down from what God is for us. He has not spared His Son; He has delivered Him up to death for us all; how shall He not with Him then freely give us all things? But, secondly, Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? Christ died, yea rather, is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? That love was tested by tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword, and nothing stopped its flow. It has gained the victory, and has been brought into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and having conquered we are made more than conquerors through Him that loved us, though for His sake we are killed all the day long. Hence, the apostle's confidence for the future, and knowledge that nothing could separate him and the saints from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. What a chapter! The Christian is seen in Christ at the beginning (verses 1, 2). Secondly, the Spirit of God is in him (verse 9)—First, bringing Christ as life into the soul; and secondly, indwelling the Christian as God (verses 10, 16); thirdly, God is for him (verse 31–end).

The Spirit also intercedes for him on earth, and will finally raise up his body; whilst Christ intercedes for him in heaven, and nothing therefore can separate him from His love, till He comes again to receive him to be with Himself. I am lost in wonder, love and praise.

The Second Part is done. From chapter iii. 22-26 we have seen the blood of Christ meeting the sins of the flesh. Justification is by faith, not of works, as Abraham's and David's examples show. David's example showing the negative side: sins forgiven, iniquities covered, sin not imputed; Abraham's showing the positive side: it was a faith resting in a God of resurrection, raising a living Isaac out of Sarah's dead womb. In the one case it was a righteous God forgiving sins; in the other case a righteous God fulfilling His promise, which came before law and circumcision, and went out to the Gentiles through Christ. This ends chap. iv. It is a present blessing to us, for we believe on a God that has raised up Jesus from the dead; that is the difference in our case. Peace, grace, glory ensue; we enjoy present tribulation, with hope of glory in front, by the Holy Ghost, who also makes us joy in God Himself, at the present moment. This introduces God as a Reconciler as well as a Justifier. Up to this point sins are treated of. Christ was delivered for our offences; was raised again for our justification.

From chap. v. 12 to end, Adam and Christ are compared. Adam bringing in sin, death and condemnation to all his descendants by his one offence; Christ bringing in grace, righteousness and eternal life by His one obedience unto death. This gives the believer a present standing in Him as righteous and having eternal life as to his soul, with the assurance of its future application to the body when

the Lord comes again. It is a justification of life, not merely justification from sins. Chapter vi. applies Christ's death as present deliverance to the man from sin, which, received by faith, he reckons himself dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ. He has died with Christ out of his first Adam state. Chapter vii. shows him his present deliverance from the law likewise: and chapter viii. shows him his full standing in Christ, not in the flesh but in the Spirit, the Holy Ghost indwelling him as a present thing, making him know his place as a son, and being the earnest and pledge, and giving him the desire for the redemption of his body, which will take place when the Lord comes. Lastly, God is for him, and nothing can separate him from His love:

May the Lord bless this to the help of the reader, is the prayer of the writer.

### PART III.—CHAPTERS IX.—XI.

The apostle now turns back to the subject of Israel and the Gentiles. He has taken up the question of law, and has shown how the righteousness of God by faith was for Jew and Gentile alike, but this does not touch the question of promise. The promises were given to the Jew. How is it that the Gentiles have the blessing? Has God cast out His people for ever? The apostle answers such questions from chap. ix. to chap. xi. He has a great affection for his people; he could even wish himself accursed from Christ for them, like Moses. He confesses they have the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. Theirs were the fathers; of them, after the flesh, Christ came; who is over all God blessed for ever. Not as though

the Word of God had none effect, for he proves, from Israel's own history, that they were not all Israel who are of Israel, neither because they were of the seed of Abraham were they all children, otherwise Ishmael would have come in for a share of the promises as well as Isaac. But the promise was to Isaac: the same thing took place with regard to Esau and Jacob. The truth was, God was a Sovereign, so He could let in the Gentiles, and this was thus manifested in Israel's history. They were themselves saved from ruin, on one occasion, by God's sovereignty, in the case of the golden calf, on which occasion God had said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." God was a Sovereign. He had mercy on whom He would; He hardened whom He would, as in the case of Pharaoh, Israel's enemy. So that Israel had themselves to own that they owed everything to the sovereignty of God. They could not claim a right, exclusively, in anything. It was no use arguing against God. The clay has no right to say of him who formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? God could therefore show mercy on whom He would, on both Jew and Gentile alike. (See Hosea ii. 23; i. 10). In the case of Israel but a remnant should be saved, otherwise they would be like Sodom, (Isaiah i. 9).

What then is the present state of things? The Gentiles have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; but Israel, who followed after the law of righteousness, have failed; and the reason was, they sought it by law and not by faith, as it was written, (Psalm cxviii. 22).

The apostle's desire after Israel breaks out again. He confesses to their having a zeal of God, but not after knowledge. They are ignorant of God's

righteousness, and they go about to establish their own righteousness, not submitting to the righteousness of God; for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. The two righteousnesses are then contrasted. Moses describes the one, saying, The man that doeth these things shall live by them. The law was man's righteousness; it was God's perfect rule for a creature. It required man to give a righteousness to God; if he did, he lived by it.

The righteousness of faith, on the other hand, brings a righteousness to man. A man has not to ascend up to heaven, to bring Christ down from above; He has come down, even to death. A man has not to go down into the deep, to bring Christ up from the dead; He has risen: God has raised Him. A dead and risen Christ are set forth as the display of God's righteousness, in direct contrast to human righteousness, which would be keeping the law. We have seen what the righteousness of faith does not say; now let us see what it does say: The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach, That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. With the heart man believes unto righteousness; with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, as scripture says. The righteousness of God, as taught in this epistle, is applied to the soul as a present thing in two ways. 1st, the believer is completely cleared from all his sins and sin as to the past. 2nd, he gets a present place as righteous in Christ. It will be applied to the body as a future thing when the Lord comes, (comp. 2 Cor. iii.-v.; Phil. iii. 8, 9).

Man confounds human and divine righteousness

together; God distinctly divides them. We have seen man's righteousness is,—The man that doeth these things shall live by them. Christ, as man, fulfilled it; but that is not the righteousness of God. The righteousness of God, or the justice of God (for it is the same word), is His own character as such, displayed in His own acts, viz., the death and resurrection of Christ (see also Psalm lxxi. 19, 20), and handed over in Christ to the sinner who lays hold of it by faith, and is justified by it. Truly, O God, Thy righteousness is very high, as high as heaven, no one can reach it! But God Himself has come down to settle His own claim: Christ has been delivered for our offences, and God has Himself judged sin itself, in the Person of His Son, on the cross. He has shown Him great and sore troubles on account of man's sin. I look at sin; I look at the dread darkness; I hear the bitter cry, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? I see the blood gush forth; I ask, Why is this? The only answer is, Sin is the cause. God there judged sin in the flesh on the sinless One. I say, That is righteousness! It is the Judge passing judgment. God's righteousness against sin is displayed. I look again: I hear a great earthquake; the stone is rolled away from the sepulchre; the guards become as dead men: I see a holy spotless One—holy and spotless as ever He was—rising from the dead. I ask, Why is this? I hear the answer, Righteousness requires that that Man who has glorified God in every way, whether in life or death, should be given the first place in the glory. Who is that Man? It is Christ, the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven. He of God is made unto us righteousness. God and man are linked together in one Person, even in the Person of the Christ. They were ever together from the incarnation, but

in one Man. There is no such place for us except in resurrection (John xii. 24). On the cross I see the sinner's Substitute—marvel of marvels!—forsaken of God. The veil is rent, and access is given to every sinner who believes in Jesus, into the very holiest. The believer's position is now Christ before God. Thus God is for us, as revealed in His own acts in Christ. Faith appropriates it all, and gets Christ's position before God. Is Christ dead—the believer is dead; is Christ risen—the believer is risen; is Christ the righteousness of God—the believer is made the righteousness of God in Him. With his heart he believes unto righteousness; with his mouth confession is made unto salvation. He believes, he is not ashamed; he calls on the Name of the Lord, he is saved.

It is to Jew and Gentile alike; but how can the latter call on Him on whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them who preach the Gospel of Peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! It was the purpose of God that Israel, converted themselves by the gospel, were to be the heralds of salvation to the ends of the earth (see Isaiah lii. 7). But, alas, all they themselves had not obeyed the gospel, as Esaias said, in the following chapter (liii.) Still the great point was established, that faith came by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Besides, had not even the Gentiles heard? Yes, for the Scriptures said that the testimony of creation had gone forth into all lands, so Israel ought to have known by that even God's purpose to bless the Gentiles (Ps. xix). But ought they not to have known God's purpose from their own

Scriptures? Moses said, I will provoke them to jealousy by those that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you (Deut. xxxii. 21). Esaias, also, prophesying, said, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me: Whereas, to Israel He said, in regard to their disobedience and unbelief, All the day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people (Isa. lxxv. 1, 2). Thus Israel ought to have known about God's purposes to bless the Gentiles, as well as of their own rejection. Thus the present position of Israel and the Gentiles was established from the Jews' own Scriptures.

But some one would then say, Has God cast away His people? Nay, verily, for there remains an election according to grace, of which Paul was one. In this chapter the question is answered by three strong reasons: First, Israel was not cast away as a nation, because an election remained (verse 5); secondly, because salvation had come to the Gentiles in order that they might provoke the Jews to jealousy (verse 11); thirdly, because the Redeemer should return to Zion, and would turn away ungodliness from Jacob (verse 26), as also He would make the new covenant with them. Thus Israel were dependent entirely on the same sovereign grace which let in the Gentiles for their not being cast away, finally. But if it is of grace, then it is not of works. It is a totally opposite principle. The present conclusion is, Israel has not obtained what he sought for, but an election has, and the rest were blinded. He quotes Isaiiah to show this with regard to all but the election. David also says, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, etc. But then the question comes in, in regard to the mass who have

been cast off, Have they stumbled that they should fall altogether? Nay, but through their offence, salvation is come to the Gentiles, for *to provoke them to jealousy*. Thus Israel is not cast away for this second reason. The Jew still remains in the world, though cast out for a while, and the remnant received into the Church. What God is now doing is that He is showing mercy to the Gentile, and by that dealing provoking the Jew to jealousy.

But here is a wonderful thing. The fall of the Jews is the riches of the world; what then will be the receiving of them back, but life from the dead? The apostle then gives a lovely sketch of the ways of God from Abraham downwards. To Abraham and to his seed were the promises made; but if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so also are the branches. The Jewish branches were taken off, and the Gentiles—being a wild olive tree—were grafted in. Well, boast not against the branches. For unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Be not high-minded but fear. If God spared not the natural branches, viz., the Jews, take heed lest He also spare not thee. The goodness and severity of God is manifested: to them that fell, severity; but to you Gentiles, goodness, if you continue in His goodness; otherwise you also will be cut off. You were grafted contrary to nature, with no claim to the promises, into the Jewish olive tree of promise; how much more shall the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree. Then he closes up the argument by unveiling the purposes of God: blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved, as Isaiah says. Thus God is true to His promises. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. They are

still beloved for the fathers' sakes, and will finally be grafted in again. The Gentiles could only claim the position they now occupy through mercy. Israel will finally get the blessing on the same ground. They originally had the promises. God will fulfil His promises. Thus we have a beautiful summing up of the ways of God. Israel first growing out of the original stock of promise, on account of unbelief some branches cut off; the Gentiles—a wild olive tree—grafted in; then Israel finally again on Gentile apostacy, grafted into their own olive tree. Well might the apostle burst out in his song of praise as he grasps hold of God's wonderful ways. Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. This is true both as to our personal salvation, as described in chaps. i.—viii., as well as to the ways of God in regard to Israel and the Gentiles, chaps. ix.—xi. God is the source of our salvation, Christ is the workman, and the result is that through Him we are brought to God,—so God is sovereign, in calling and finally blessing Israel and the nations. Thus in chap. ix. we have Israel, the chosen nation, and then God's sovereignty letting the Gentiles in; chap. x., with end of chap. ix., we have the present position of Israel and the Gentiles set forth; telling the reason why, and showing that God was found of them that sought Him not, whilst, with regard to Israel, He had all the day long been stretching forth his hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people; and in chap. xi. he shows that, notwithstanding this, God will be faithful to His word, and that all Israel will be restored and saved, at the appearing of the Lord from heaven. The reader will observe that chap. xi. to verse 26 refers entirely to Jew and Gentile. It has nothing to do with the position of the body of Christ, or Church, as such. It is wholly a profession of faith in both cases:

Israel failing through unbelief, and the Gentiles standing by faith. The principle is the same in John xv. 1-7.\* It is not union with Christ. Union with Christ is by the Holy Ghost (see 1 Cor. vi. 17; Eph. iv. 4; 1 Cor. xii. 13). This is something more than faith which is always connected in scripture with life (see John i. 12; iii. 16, 36; v. 24). The Holy Ghost seals believers, (Eph. i. 13; 2 Cor. i. 22; Gal. iv. 6). Life is given to sinners.

Thus Part iii. is ended. Paul ends by applying the truth already brought out to practice.

#### PART IV.—CHAPTERS XII.—XVI.

The practical part of the Epistle begins now. If the Gentile Christians at Rome were justified, and saved, it was through the mercy of God (see chap. xi. 30). It was so likewise with any Jews there. It was all the mercy of God. The nation would finally be received back again on the ground of mercy, after Gentile apostacy. It is on account of the tender mercies of God that our bodies are to be given up a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. What different morality to that under law! Under the former, man in the flesh had to obey given commands, and so give righteousness to God; here the flesh is given up; I am laid on the altar of God, and my body is presented a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God (comp. 2 Cor. iv. 10). It is as we bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus will be manifested in our mortal bodies. The

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\* I think that John xv. 1-7 goes further than mere faith. It is the profession of being one with the vine. The vine is the fruit-bearing circle of profession on the earth. Israel was it. Christ was the true vine whilst on earth, taking Israel's place with the disciples. The professing church is now, with the Holy Ghost in the midst.

ministry of righteousness has written Christ on our hearts, and it is as the death has power over the old nature that the life will flow out. Christ hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour (Eph. v. 1, 2). We are called to be imitators of God as dear children. We are identified with Christ, dead and risen: let our walk be worthy of this position and flowing from it. This is Christian morality. But if I am dead and risen, what have I to do with the world? Conformity to the world is a shame for a Christian. It is linked with the flesh, on which the ministry of the Spirit writes Death.\* If I let the Spirit work, I am transformed by the renewing of my mind, I am practically now learning what good and evil are. I prove daily what is the will of God. Thus the body presented a living sacrifice to God, non-conformity to the world, and transforming by the renewing of the mind, fill up the Christian morality in this passage. When we are thus devoted to the Lord, we find ourselves amongst a new set of people, unknown before, but now known to us. They are members of the body of Christ. Are we to seek high things for ourselves here, like we did when in the world? No; just the contrary. We are not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. The truth of the body of Christ is here brought in to show the relative bearing of Christians one to the other. All members have not the same office. We

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\* With Israel in the flesh there was no world, except the nations outside, with whom they were forbidden to have intercourse. Godly and ungodly were all mixed up together, and there was no separation. They had an outward religion suitable to the flesh, of which godly and ungodly all partook. The sin of Christendom is, going back to this state of things.

are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. The members of our bodies, though many, do not interfere with one another: so it is in the Church of God. There are different gifts; let each one use his gift according to his faith, in responsibility to the Lord. Here perfect liberty of ministry is brought out. There is no such thing mentioned here as setting apart by man. Every one, if he has a gift, is responsible to the Lord to use it. This is not the license of the flesh, but the liberty of the Spirit. Notice also, these gifts flow out from the one body, not from many bodies: We being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Exhortations follow which enter into the minutest concerns of daily life. Do I really love a person? let not shyness, conventional usages, or selfishness, hinder me showing it. Do I love my brother? let me in honour prefer him: In earnest application, not idle, but fervent in spirit serving the Lord. Is a saint in need? help him. Is a saint passing by the road, open thy house to him. Are you persecuted? bless them that curse you. Do any rejoice? rejoice with them. Do any weep? weep with them. Do you love the company of the rich? walk with men of low estate. Everything is summed up in the little verse, Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. If I am insulted, trampled upon, spitted upon, like the Lord, what matters it? He gives His power. When He was reviled He reviled not again, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. He overcame evil with good in life,—He overcame it in death, and rose Conqueror out of it all. Having been made partakers of His victorious life, let us be followers of Him.

Subjection to the higher powers, owing nothing

to any man but loving one another, and watchfulness in the anticipation of our full salvation, fill up chapter xiii. (1) Rulers and magistrates are the ministers of God in temporal matters for good. If I resist them, I resist the ordinance of God. (2) We are to owe no man anything but to love one another. He that loveth another, has fulfilled the law. All the commandments mentioned are summed up in, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love is the fulfilling of the law. It is the character of the new nature; it fulfils it by the power of the Spirit, without being under it. (3) There is not much time left; if I owe anything but love, it is high time to awake out of sleep. Salvation is nearer every day than when we believed. We are to put off what is evil, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ. *Evil* appertains to the flesh, *good* to the Spirit. Practical Christian life is to starve the flesh, and put on more of Christ every day. Paul exhibits himself here as the servant waking up the household of God in view of the coming of the Lord. Wake up, put off your night clothes, put on your day clothes, for the Lord is coming.

One more thing remained, and that was a matter between Jew and Gentile. There were questions about meats, and observing days, which brought out the need of forbearance one with another (chapter xiv). The Jews, coming out of Judaism, had especially difficulties about these matters. Those who saw their liberty were exhorted to forbearance, and to receive the weak brother. Jesus was their Lord, and who were they therefore to judge another man's servant? The Lordship of Christ is pressed here (verses 4-12). They were not to judge one another: everything would be settled at the judgment seat of Christ. Everyone there would have to give an account of himself to God. This is entirely a

question of brethren. The judgment of the wicked is not touched on here. That will not take place till more than one thousand years after, (see Rev. xx).

If I stumble my brother by eating meat, or drinking wine, I give it up rather than offend him. The general rule for each one is, in these minor matters, Whatsoever is not of faith is sin; and the general rule for receiving brethren is, Receive one another as Christ also hath received us, to the glory of God. The strong should bear the infirmities of the weak and not please themselves. They should seek to please their neighbour for his good to edification, by the example of Christ; who, to please others, brought Himself under the reproach of them that reproached God (Psalm lxix. 9). A quotation of the Scriptures is here brought in, and they are connected with the God of the Scriptures, for in them we learn what a God we have to do with,—a God who bears with us and comforts us, and through those Scriptures causes us to be likeminded, that we might, though differing on minor things, with one heart and one mouth glorify God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this spirit of forbearance the Christians were to receive one another, even the weakest, as Christ also received them, to the glory of God.

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The general subject of the Epistle here closes. The apostle just gives a summing up of what he had said before as to the ministry of Jesus Christ. He was a Minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers (comp. Acts xiii.) The Gentiles only had a part through mercy: and through Israel (see Psalm xviii. 49; Deut. xxxii. 42; Psalm cxvii. 1; Isaiah xi. 1-10). The apostle looks on here to the millennial day, and

the God of hope is brought in, in connection with it, to cheer the believers.

From ver. 14 to ver. 21 he excuses his writing to them by setting before them his own ministry. God had called him by His grace to be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. He likens himself to a priest offering up the Gentiles to God (verse 16), as an acceptable offering, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

He tells them about his future plans by the will of God, and prays to be delivered from them in Judæa, where he is going before he comes to them; ending up with the salutation, Now the God of peace be with you. He is a God of patience and consolation, if there be any difficulties between brethren (chap. xv. 5); He is a God of hope when a coming Christ, and the future blessing of Jew and Gentile, are looked for (verse 13); and a God of peace (verse 33) when he looks for turmoil and trouble in Judæa.

Salutations to various saints, and exhortations to beware of those who cause divisions, close the Epistle. A blessed ending! We are introduced into the family circle, and shown God's delight in His people. The earthly kings of Israel and Judah had Chronicles written for them: God writes Chronicles of His heavenly saints. Every one of their characters and deeds is written down in heaven. The sisters are especially mentioned here. They all have their little service to do for the Lord. They may be servants of the Church, like Phœbe, succourers of many; helpers in Christ Jesus, like Priscilla, willing to lay down their necks for a Paul, for whom the whole Church give thanks; they may bestow much labour on the servants—may labour much in the Lord, like the beloved Persis; and may suffer and be prisoners for the Lord's sake, like

Junia. Nothing is too little to be put down. Epænetus is the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ. Amplias is his beloved in the Lord. Apelles is approved in Christ. What a bond! The little words, *in the Lord, in Christ*, are mentioned ten times in the first sixteen verses. They are the secret of all union and blessing amongst the saints. Christ is in them all; they are in Christ. The Spirit unites them to Him and one another. The world has no part in this holy circle. They are outside it all. They are in Christ.

But if they are in Christ, and thus separated, men causing trouble may still come in. He exhorts the saints to beware of those causing divisions and contentions, contrary to the doctrine they had learnt. They were expected to know that doctrine, and thus to test these teachers by it. What is it my reader, as set forth in this blessed Epistle? Can you tell me? If not, let us quietly recapitulate. 1st, chap. i. 18–iii. 20, man, Jew or Gentile, is looked at as guilty of his sins, and God is Judge, going to judge him. 2ndly, chap. iii. to viii, God is revealed as Justifier, Reconciler and Deliverer, through Jesus and His blood; 1st, up to chap. v. 12, justifying the believer from his sins, and bringing him nigh at peace with Himself; 2nd, from v. 12 to viii. delivering from the power of sin, (man being there looked at as born in sin), and giving him a new standing in Christ before Him, Christ in glory being God's positive gift of righteousness and eternal life to the believer. The Holy Ghost seals faith in the death and resurrection of Christ for justification in chap. v. 5, and gives deliverance and new standing in Christ in chap. viii. 2, 9. 3rdly, chaps. ix.–xi., Israel as a nation had the place of privilege and the promises, but they had failed in responsibility and were now for a time set aside, the Gentiles

taking their place, to be finally restored on the ground of God's sovereign grace at the second coming of the Lord. God had all through saved a remnant on this ground. 4thly, The mercies of God in regard to the believer individually, as justifying him from his sins and giving him a place in Christ before God, as having died with Christ in His death, are now applied to the believer's walk. On the ground of death and resurrection, his body is to be presented to God a living sacrifice. The world is left behind; he is no longer to be conformed to it, but Christ being his present object, he is to be transformed by the renewing of his mind. He has got a new corporate place, too, outside the world, as a member of the body of Christ, and he is to realize his place in it and act it out, as in relationship to Christ and all the members of the body. He is to be subject to the powers that be, owing no man anything but love, watching for the coming of the Lord, tender to and receiving his weak brethren, and respecting their consciences in view of the judgment-seat of Christ. Such, in short summary, is the doctrine of the Epistle. If teachers, as tested by this doctrine, did not bring it, they were to be avoided as causing division. They might belong to the saints themselves, and even arise from the elders (see Acts xx. 30). They were to be avoided. No office or gift was to hinder the saints in carrying out this rule. A great sign to find them out is, they serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly. In the midst of divisions, the saints are thrown on the God of peace. He will bruise Satan—the author of divisions—under their feet shortly. Different salutations ensue, which close the Epistle (chap. xvi. 24).

A little appendix is added, in which the mystery of the Church is alluded to, (Eph. iii. 3.-11; v. 32;

Col. ii. 2). The Apostle desires the establishment of the saints, 1st, according to his Gospel; 2nd, according to the mystery.

The general subject of the Epistle has been to individuals. Their corporate relationships have hardly been touched. These, however, are founded on the truths brought out in this Epistle. The doctrine of the Church is fully brought out in the Epistle to the Ephesians. The mystery had been hid up to this time, but was now made manifest in the prophetic Scriptures. Up to Christ, God had been dealing with a nation—good and evil all mixed up together, and shut out from the Gentiles by their legal system. Now the Gospel went out to Jew and Gentile alike, and those who received it were gathered out of the world, and out of their human systems,\* and united to Christ in heaven by the Holy Ghost, in which unity they formed one body, to be manifested in the world. Such was the mystery which was unknown in Old Testament times. It was now revealed: and all nations were required to obey. God was to have all the glory.

Now to Him that is able to establish you according to my gospel, says the Apostle, and the preaching of Jesus Christ; 2nd, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret before the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, to God only be glory through Christ Jesus for ever. Amen.

May the reader be led to see the beauties of this mystery, and to learn all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places he has in Christ.

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\* The Jewish system had ceased to be God's system at the cross (see Eph. ii.)

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