

Living Water

If you know of any one who might like to subscribe to "*Living Water*" please write to the address below; their name will be added to the mailing list and they will receive the next few issues of the magazine free of charge.

"*Living Water*" is edited by Mark Lemon & published by Stone Publishing Trust (Registered Charity 1034689) 'The Eagles', Headcorn Road, Staplehurst, Kent, TN12 0BU

Correspondents in the UK are welcome to use the Freepost address:-
Stone Publishing Trust,
FREEPOST TN3448, Staplehurst, TONBRIDGE,
Kent, TN12 0BR

Quotations from the Bible given in "*Living Water*" are normally from the Darby translation or from the Authorised (King James) Version.

Articles are sometimes shortened or otherwise amended.

All articles are Copyright to the Stone Publishing Trust.

Printed by Christian Design & Print,
34, Prior's Way, Coggeshall, Essex. CO6 1TW. UK

Living Water — Issue No 32

	Page
Recent Ministry	
WHAT THE CHURCH IS TO CHRIST	Marcus Chapman 4
THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS PRESENT TIME ...	
THE COMING GLORY ABOUT TO BE REVEALED	Brian Pirie 8
Poetry Selection	
SAMUEL	E. L. Bevir 15
A GREAT CALM	E. L. Bevir 16
THE MANGER	E. L. Bevir 17
Testimony Section	
DARKNESS TO DAWN	M. Nordenburg 18
A Voice from the past	
EXTRACTS FROM 'STREAMS OF LIVING WATER' — PART 3	20
A Dwelling Place for Christ	
A Word for Today	
HOW ARE WE SAVED?	J. N. Darby 22
Concluding the series of preachings from the Evangelical volumes of J. N. Darby.	

WHAT THE CHURCH IS TO CHRIST

Ephesians 5:22 -33

Genesis 2:18-24 -

Ephesians 1:15-23

I trust the Lord will give us this evening a fresh impression of the greatness of His present love and what the assembly (or the church) means to Him. I hope that everyone here knows what it is to belong to the Lord Jesus. That is a most precious thing. Paul could speak to the Galatians of: "the Son of God, who has loved me and given himself for me"; that is the personal love of Christ. How wonderful it is to have come to know the Lord Jesus as Saviour and Lord. We see in the New Testament how the Lord Jesus came here in love for His own. Now I would desire that not only should we know the personal love of the Lord Jesus for us but we should have some sense in our souls of what the assembly means to Christ. We are living in a day when the truth and thoughts of God are being given up on every hand. One of the precious thoughts of God is the love of Christ for the assembly.

In Ephesians 4 we have the unity of the body, the Lord Jesus having ascended up above all the heavens and given gifts to men. How wonderful that men here should be given what is necessary to bring about edification, growth and unity in Christ's body on earth. The apostle Paul had a very real sense of the Head in heaven and the body on earth. I believe he received that right from the moment when the Lord spoke to him from the glory saying: "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me?". Saul replied, "Who art thou Lord?" It became apparent from the moment of the Lord speaking to him that the Lord Jesus, though in heaven, was inseparable from His body on earth.

Through the ages men have brought in their own thoughts bringing discord and disunity amongst believers. Nevertheless, the great thought of God is that there is a Head in heaven, and a body on earth. Ephesians 5, I believe, presents what the church means to Christ and how Christ is united to the church. I would like us to have a fresh touch in our souls tonight as to the love of Christ for the assembly. That will help us individually in our relationships together, husbands and wives, in our family setting and in our local companies too. What we are to

consider tonight is to affect our personal lives and our collective experiences together that what is of Christ may shine out in the assembly on earth.

The Lord is seated above all heavens and is given a name above every name but His body, the church, is still here on earth. You and I, through grace, form part of it. We are "baptised by one Spirit into one body". That is to govern our walk and our gatherings together.

We have in Ephesians 5, I believe, some of the most profound and precious truth and it is illustrated in the relationship of husband and wife. This section we have read (Ephesians 5: 22-33) has its bearing on our natural relationships, on how wives ought to be subject to their husbands and how husbands should love their wives and know how to treat them. But these verses have been penned by the Spirit of God to bring about a knowledge in our souls of the precious relationship of Christ and the assembly.

The section starts with the submission and subjection of the wife to the husband. "As also the Christ is head of the assembly". A knowledge of this most precious and profound truth comes about in our souls by the experience of Christ as Head of the assembly. We will get nothing, I believe, on the spiritual line unless we know what it is to be subject to Christ. The church is seen here as being subject to Christ. We are to derive from Him. In chapter 4 we see that the body derives from Christ. So the influence of Christ is to be known by the assembly. We are to know it, not only individually but in our gatherings.

We do not and cannot claim to be the church but we would desire to walk in the light of it. So may we be encouraged to depend on Christ as our blessed living Head. He has been here, He has been into death, He has been raised and He is the Head of a new order of man pleasing and satisfying to the heart of God. As such, He is Head of the assembly. In order to have that place He had to die. It is very touching what it says here: "even as the Christ also loved the assembly, and has delivered himself up for it". What a precious way of expressing His love!

We read in the gospels of the merchant man seeking beautiful pearls, "and having found one pearl of great value, he went and sold all whatever he had and bought it" (Matthew 13:46). The Lord gave all that He had to secure the assembly. How precious His love! Now, it does not stop there; the Lord has not only died

to secure the church but His love is presently active towards it. This is a great encouragement for today. Just as we can see in chapter 4 that the gifts given by the ascended Christ are to bring about unity, growth and knowledge so His present love is to sanctify and purify.

The Lord Jesus has loved the church so much He has given Himself for it that He might sanctify it. He has not sanctified it first so that He might secure it; it is the other way round. There is divine wisdom and order in this. Those who form the assembly are to have a touch of His present love in the service He renders in purifying and sanctifying. "In order that he might sanctify it, purifying it by the washing of water by the word". This is what is currently going on so that the assembly might correspond to Christ. The love of Christ is towards the assembly to remove anything that might prevent His delight in His assembly. There is a tendency today amongst believers to make everything centre around themselves but the great object in Christ giving Himself is to have the church in relationship to Himself.

I read in Genesis chapter 2 because there we get an illustration in type of God's great thought and purpose. Adam found no helpmate, his like (or as the note in the Darby Translation says, 'no counterpart, his like'). How wonderful that a vessel has been provided in the wisdom of God for Christ as Man, that is His counterpart. These are thoughts that were conceived in purpose in eternity and are set forth right at the beginning of God's dealings with man even before sin came in. Adam in innocence found no helpmate, his like, but God had the answer. He caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; He took one of his ribs and built it into a woman and brought her to Adam. Eve was taken from Adam; the assembly is of Christ. It is heavenly in origin and destiny. Only what is of Christ will enter in to heaven. Things that are not of Him are being removed by the present, loving service of Christ. He serves to remove anything in His assembly which is not according to His mind and the end result is: "That he might present the assembly to himself glorious". Now is the time that the work of preparation is going on. It will very soon be complete.

It greatly facilitates the service of Christ if we are subject to Him. The church is called upon to be subject, to come under His influence. May we experience it in our local companies. How important this is. The passage goes on to speak of Christ nourishing and cherishing the assembly: "For no one has ever hated his

own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as also the Christ the assembly". The Lord Jesus nourishes His church. All the time He is feeding it. We need to be edified and built up by spiritual food from heaven. These verses present the service of Christ in an especially precious way.

Returning to Genesis 2 again we read: "because of this a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be united to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh". Natural things are used to illustrate the spiritual. I believe there is a touch here of Christ leaving Israel, all that belonged to Him by nature, and giving Himself to secure the assembly that He might present it to Himself. How wonderful the coming moment when the assembly will be presented to Christ, perfectly united in holiness, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.

I would like to close with a touch of this fulness. It is His fulness being expressed in a creature vessel. How great the power of God to bring this about. No one could conceive of such a grand, elevated thought, that Christ should have a bride, a wife, that which is suited to His state in manhood.

May the effect of the love of Christ be known more in our souls so that we may be the more suited and prepared for the coming day. The church is to be presented to Christ in affection. That work of preparation is going on now. May it go on in our hearts, that we may, each of us individually and collectively, be more reflecting Christ. The assembly is here in this world to reflect Christ. How sad is the public ruin of the church and how it detracts from the testimony to the perfection and glory of Christ. Yet despite this being so, we can still enjoy these thoughts of God.

Think of that great vessel that is to come down out of heaven "having the glory of God". That day is coming soon. We shall soon see the Lord; we shall soon be like Him and a thousand years of display will soon burst upon this world when Christ and the assembly will be displayed for a wondering universe to see. May the Lord Jesus give us a touch in our souls of His present real living love that will draw us from the world, cleanse us from everything that may hinder, and secure us more for His praise and glory. The assembly is to be the vessel of praise. "In the midst of the assembly", Christ says, "will I sing thy praises" (Hebrews 2:12). What praise there will be eternally for our God and Father.

May there be a rich and real outflowing of love and response from our hearts to the One who has given Himself for us. O how great is our precious living Lord. May we have a sense of it in our souls tonight, for His name's sake.

Marcus Chapman

Address at Sidcup, August 1998

**THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS PRESENT TIME ...
THE COMING GLORY ABOUT TO BE REVEALED**

Psalm 31:1-3 & 9-15
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Revelation 19:6-9

I want to speak tonight about encouragement. There is a verse in Romans 8 which says, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us" (Romans 8:18). The time of suffering is the area where encouragement is needed and in that context I have read Psalm 31. The glory about to be revealed is to bring encouragement and in that context I have read from 1 Thessalonians and Revelation.

The sufferings of this present time include the sufferings of the church. There are believers today who are persecuted, who are in prison. Recently I received a newsletter, and on the front page there was a photograph of a young mother with her little boy. She was the widow of a christian bookseller who was murdered in Kurdistan in northern Iraq earlier this year. Scripture tells us to remember such.

In our part of the world conditions are different, but none the less the concerns and the distresses of life affect us. For some of us these things come and go and there are periods of respite. For others the distress and the concern seem continuous. It affects all of us at some time in our pathway here and therefore all

of us need encouragement. But sometimes when encouragement is most needed it can seem to be the scarcest commodity around. I trust that there might be something from the scriptures read to encourage us all.

Discouragement takes many forms and many effects. It may cause some of us to hide away. Maybe you feel that you are stumbling and weak and you feel like giving up. There are those moments when no one sees you, when there is grief, tears and even anger and frustration. Maybe today you have come to the point when you are no longer saying, 'When will encouragement come', but asking yourself, 'Will it ever come at all?'

There are times in life when circumstances seem to be overwhelming, if you are ill in hospital, or when you face some of those problems where there seems to be no solution, when you feel, to put it into the language of today, shattered. I want you to look with me at Psalm 31. What does it say in the last phrase of verse 12? "I am become like a broken vessel." My friend, take courage. These words were uttered by a king. King David has been where you may be now.

Let us look at some of the other things that he endured. Do they relate to you? In verse 9 he says: "I am in trouble: mine eye wasteth away with vexation". He speaks about his "soul" and his "belly". He had that feeling that you and I can have; we are so overcome that we do not want to eat. He says later: "my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing". There seems no let up, no way out, no change in the circumstance.

In verse 11 he goes on, "I am become exceedingly a reproach, even to my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance". Have you ever been in that situation? Are you in it now? Do your neighbours keep away from you? Your friends do not want to know you any longer. If you were to go into the town they would cross the street and turn the corner rather than meet you. We sometime find ourselves in lonely situations but this was the experience of David and I want you to find encouragement from the same source.

David says. 'I trusted in the Lord'. He tells us that the Lord was his rock and fortress; the Lord was his house of defence. David also says, "my times are in Thy hand". When you are down and depressed and everything seems hopeless,

what is it you need? My friend, I want to introduce you to the only One who can help you.

If you are an unbeliever in this room tonight and you want encouragement, the first step you must take is to give your soul and your life and your all to Christ. He is the One above all others to whom you are most valuable. You are a soul that He died to save. At the cost of His life and His precious blood He can offer you redemption tonight. He can offer you peace, redemption, salvation and forgiveness that is eternal. Therefore if you want encouragement take the first step and accept the Lord Jesus into your heart tonight. Become a believer.

Some time ago an aircraft was coming in to make an emergency landing at an airport. Just a few minutes before it was to crash land on the runway, the pilot made an announcement. He said, 'According to international aviation rules, established at Geneva, I am instructed to ask you, if you believe in God, to commence prayer now...' Do not leave turning to the Lord as your last option. Jesus is available now to help you. He can provide everything that you need. I commend David's refuge to you that it might be your refuge too.

Believers are not immune from the distresses of life and believers need encouragement. We need encouragement from One who is greater than ourselves. We need a refuge, a shelter, a hiding place from the storm. The One in whom we have trusted lives in heaven and all power is in His hand. His heart is full of love. When you look to Him you find in Him One who is able to understand, to sympathise and to come into your circumstance and provide what is needed. It is a blessed thing to know Jesus as your Saviour and your Friend.

Then, as Christians we have a responsibility to encourage one another. One of the best ways to encourage someone is to speak to them, not to speak about them to others. It can be a great encouragement to tell someone that you are thinking and praying for them. I remember when I was ill a few years ago an elderly sister in the Lord contacted me and said, 'I hear that you are not having good nights. I want to tell you that I do not sleep much at night and when I am not asleep I am praying for you.' If you are praying for someone let them know.

Ways of encouragement are many. It may be that you can cross the road to help a wounded believer. The good Samaritan did it Himself. But today, maybe, He is

asking you to do it. You may say that that believer should not have gone down that road in the first place. But perhaps the Lord would use you or me to bring in help, encouragement and recovery, to pour in some oil and wine. Perhaps you may be able to provide an inn on the Jericho road of life. It might be your house. But there is someone who needs sympathy, comfort, help and encouragement and what a privilege if you and I can serve the Lord in bringing it in. Paul encouraged the Thessalonians; he nursed them. What a privilege it is to follow in the steps of the apostles and of the Lord Jesus Himself by bringing it in.

Encouragement needs commitment. As I thought about saying these things I asked myself the question, 'How often have I said to someone: 'I will pray for you', and then forgotten to do so? How often have I said, 'I will help you' and then when the time came not been there?' The great example of commitment is seen in our Lord Jesus Himself; He said: "I am with you all the days, until the completion of the age" (Matthew 28:20). That includes the good days and the bad ones. The Saviour was forsaken that you and I might never have to endure a circumstance alone. He is always there able to support His own. His commitment is absolute.

Encouragement also involves trust. You do not want your problem to be the gossip of the town. Are we each able to be like the Lord and be a confidant and an encourager to those who need it?

Jesus said in John 14, "In my Father's house there are many abodes; were it not so, I had told you: for I go to prepare you a place; and if I go and shall prepare you a place, I am coming again and shall receive you to myself, that where I am ye also may be" (John 14:2,3). In the light of that we have the section we read in 1 Thessalonians 4. It speaks of a moment like no other, a time that believers have looked for with expectation down through the ages, the moment that thrilled their hearts and souls, and maybe changed the direction of their lives as they thought of the coming of the Lord.

Maybe with some, as with us, the coming of the Lord was not always foremost in their minds, but when it is, then the reality dawns on you that the Lord's coming could happen within a heartbeat, in "the twinkling of an eye" (1 Corinthians 15:52). As the reality dawns on you it makes you more guarded in your life, that little bit more prepared for the Lord to come. Believers will be "caught up

together to meet the Lord in the air". Those who sleep in Jesus will arise first and with the believers living at that time will be caught up together to meet the Lord.

I want you to fasten your mind on that word "together". What encouragement we should find in it. You can look back over a year; think of those who fell asleep in Jesus in 1997. They will be together with us if the Lord came tonight. You can go back five years, or ten, or one hundred, or back to Pentecost; there are those who sleep in Jesus and together with them we shall meet the Lord in the air. What an encouragement! What a rising it will be. The hymn says:

*On that bright and cloudless morning, when the dead in Christ shall rise,
And the glory of His resurrection share;
When His chosen ones shall gather to their home beyond the skies,
And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there!*

Paul speaks of it as the "blessed hope" of the believer (Titus 2:13). What a moment of blessing it will be for every believer. We shall see Him face to face. There was a woman rescued from a canal and when she regained her composure she said, 'I want to see the person who saved me'. That will be the moment, my friend. We shall see the One who saved us, the centre of the assembled throng.

Christ will bring us into the Father's house. We shall see Him as the blessed Head of the Church, the Bridegroom, around Him assembled a vast and glorious company of believers, the bride. You and I will be among them. Blessed hope. How great the prospect is. He presents the church to Himself without spot or wrinkle, all glorious. The time of waiting and patience will be over. The suffering time will be over; each saint will get his reward. As Christ looks upon us He sees "the fruit of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11). Think of that scene! There assembled will be the results of all the years of the love of Christ, the work of God, the adornment of the Holy Spirit. It is all gathered together for that glorious moment. What a prospect for us who believe. The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory (Romans 8:18).

Then we are told in Revelation 19 not only that the marriage of the Lamb has come but that His wife has made herself ready; she is clothed in fine linen which

is the righteousnesses of the saints. "And he says to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb." Who are they? They are "blessed". They are the Old Testament saints, assembled there to see the product of this dispensation, the church.

I want you to ponder this scene with me, just to see a few of the people who comprise the church, persons who knew what it was to be encouraged and to encourage others.

Take Paul the apostle. He would be able to show you someone who encouraged him—Phoebe! She was a "helper of many, and of myself" (Romans 16:2). It does not matter how great you are in the testimony—you still need encouragement. Phoebe's service will not be forgotten.

Take Mark who wrote the gospel. Perhaps many of us would like to thank Mark for his gospel because we have been so encouraged by it. But Mark might say, 'There was a time in my life when I needed encouragement'. Everywhere there will be trophies of encouragement.

Then there is Mary who brought those most wonderful words of encouragement on the resurrection morning and they will be more fresh and more real in that day even than they were then. "I ascend to my Father and your Father" (John 20:17). It has come to pass; the promise has been kept; it has become an actuality.

And, yes, there will be that elderly sister in the Lord who as I mentioned earlier prayed for me at night, and many, many others.

Maybe we can look too at some of those invited to the marriage of the Lamb. Let us think of some of the Old Testament saints for they will all be there. Perhaps the first one that should take our attention is John the Baptist. He said when he was here, 'I rejoice at the voice of the Bridegroom' (John 3:29). How blessedly he will see his words fulfilled. Then what an encourager John was. How many he encouraged by those blessed words: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world". The Lamb of God! That is a title that is never to be forgotten. Even here, in the account in Revelation He is still the "Lamb".

Then there is Habakkuk, a man who found encouragement when in his time in the testimony it seemed as if nothing would ever improve. He says: 'I started out with a prayer but I finished with a song because I found in my prayer my encouragement from God'. He said, "I will joy in the God of my salvation" and I will sing of Him (Habakkuk 3:18). He finished off his prayer and song "To the chief Musician. On my stringed instruments". He might say in that day: 'There He is, the Chief Musician—Jesus Himself in all His glory'.

We might think of David; his Psalms are a great encouragement to us but when he was distressed and was weeping because of the rebellion of Absalom, Hushai met him and encouraged him. He was one who encouraged in a day of adversity (see 2 Samuel 15).

It is wonderful how the thread of encouragement is woven through the scripture. There is Job. What an encouragement Job has been to many. Those words he uttered, "I know that my Redeemer liveth" have encouraged the heart of myriads. In the book of Job you see a man who clung to his God and proved Him in a way he that never known before. Another who brings encouragement is Enoch. Jude tells us of his prophecy, that the Lord would come amongst His holy myriads. What an encouragement the glory of the Lord's appearing is to be to us.

There are a few lines that were written long ago and have been precious to many. I close with them:

*'Not till the loom is silent, and the shuttle cease to fly,
Will God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why
The dark threads are as needful, in the Weaver's skilful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned.'*

May we be encouraged, for His name's sake.

Brian Pirie

Peterhead, November 1997

SAMUEL

“Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth”

Dim the glimmering flame in Shiloh,
Low the lamp of God hath waned,
Blind the priesthood, and the altar
Desecrated and profaned.
Soft and low the accents fell
On the ears of Samuel.

Sleeping in Jehovah's temple,
Where His oracles were known,
Where His ark stood fair and golden,
Lay the child, with God alone.
Broken was the dreary spell
When the Voice cried, “Samuel!”

What though Israel's ear must tingle?
What though fire and sword must rage?
What though Philistines should plunder
And devour God's heritage?
With the faithful all is well
In the place of Samuel.

To the heart subdued and lowly,
God His mighty grace shall bring;
Shiloh's prophet, patient, waiting,
But precedes Jehovah's King;
Yes, His ways our hopes excel,
David follows Samuel!

Lord, in days more dark and sombre
Than in Eli's time of yore,
Give us, as we wait Thy glory,
Hearts to listen ever more,
Nor against Thy mind rebel;
Give us ears like Samuel!

EL Bevir

"A GREAT CALM"

Mark 4:39

Fierce rushed the winds in sudden blast
Down from the hills of Naphtali;
The twilight sky was overcast,
With foaming crest arose the sea:

'Master awakel We perish all!
To Him, who calmly sleeping lies;
As louder shrieked the mountain squall,
And darker seemed the lowering skies.

He spoke—and the shrill piping gale
The Master's voice divine obeyed,
Subsiding to a feeble wail—
And the proud billows low were laid.

Then o'er the lake, from East to West,
The last faint ripple softly dies,
The winds sink, whispering, to rest,
And smooth as glass the water lies.

"Where is your faith?" we seem to hear,
As heard that trembling crew of yore;
One word—and all is calm and clear,
Where all was rage and doubt before!

E L Bevir

THE MANGER

Lying in the manger
Of the rustic stall,
See the newborn Stranger,
'Tis the Lord of all!

Shepherds bow before Him
From the country nigh;
Angel hosts adore Him
From the glowing sky.

God of light most holy,
David's root and stem;
Hail! O Babe so lowly,
Born in Bethlehem!

Thou who lowly liest
Thou art life and love;
Glory in the highest
Courts of joy above.

Love the tribute raises,
Son of God to Thee;
Loud shall ring Thy praises
Through eternity!

E. L. Bevir

DARKNESS TO DAWN

I offered my services to the government and was appointed an officer in General Mannerheim's army. It was a terrible time. We besieged a town that had been taken by the Communists and retook it. A number of Russian prisoners were under my guard and seven of them were to be shot at dawn on Monday.

I will never forget the preceding Sunday. The seven men were kept in the basement of the Town Hall, and in the passage my men stood with their rifles. The atmosphere was filled with hatred. My soldiers were drunk with their success and taunted their prisoners, who swore and beat on the walls. Some called for their wives and families who were far away. At dawn they were all to die.

We had the victory, that was true enough, but somehow the value of this seemed to diminish as the night wore on. Then something extraordinary happened. One of the doomed men began to sing! 'He must be mad' was everyone's first thought; but I had noticed this man, Koskinen, had not raved and cursed along with the others that night: he sat on the bench a picture of utter despair. Nobody had said anything to him; each was carrying his burden in his own way.

Koskinen sang, rather waveringly at first, but then his voice grew stronger and became more natural and free. All the prisoners gazed at him as he sang:

*'Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'er shaded,
Sweetly my soul shall rest.
Hark! 'tis the voice of angels
Borne in a song to me,
Over the fields of glory,
Over the jasper sea.'*

When he had finished everyone was quiet for a few seconds, then one of the prisoners cried out. 'Where did you get that, you fool. Are you trying to make us religious?'

Koskinen looked around and said quietly, 'Will you listen to me for a few minutes? You asked me where I got that song: I heard it three weeks ago; my mother sang about Jesus and prayed to Him.' He paused for a moment but no one interrupted. Koskinen went on: 'It is cowardly to hide your beliefs. The God my mother believed in is now my God. I cannot tell how it happened. I lay awake last night and remembered that song. I felt that I had to find the Saviour and hide in Him. Then I prayed like the thief on the cross that Christ would forgive me and cleanse my sinful soul and make me ready to stand before Him whom I should meet so soon.'

'It was a strange night. Verses I had long forgotten from the Bible and the song book came into my mind. They brought messages of the crucified Saviour and the blood that cleanses from sin, and of the home that He has prepared for us. I thanked Him, accepted Him and since then this verse has been sounding inside me. It is God's answer to my prayer. I could no longer keep it to myself. Within a few hours I shall be with the Lord, saved by His grace'.

Koskinen stopped and after a little pause one of his comrades said: 'You are right. I wish that there was mercy for me too, but I have shed blood and often blasphemed. Now I know that there is a hell and it is the proper place for me. Pray for me Koskinen, for tomorrow I shall die and my soul will be in the hands of the devil!' Then both those soldiers went on their knees and prayed together. It was no long prayer, but it was heard in heaven for here was a man seeking reconciliation with God. As we listened to those prayers a door leading into the invisible stood ajar. By four in the morning all of Koskinen's comrades had followed his example and had begun to pray. The change in the atmosphere was indescribable. None of us had a Bible but the Spirit of God spoke to us all.

The night had almost gone. 'Sing the song once more for us, Koskinen,' said one of them. You should have heard them sing, not just that song but others long forgotten. The guards joined with them. The power of God had touched all. Everything had changed and the town hall basement resounded with songs of the blood of the Lamb.

The clock struck six. How I wished that I could exercise mercy for those men but it was impossible. They were marched out between two lines of soldiers to the place of execution. They asked to be allowed to sing Koskinen's song once

again and permission was granted. As the last line died away the commanding officer gave the command to fire and seven soldiers fought their last fight. We inclined our heads in silent prayer.

What had happened in the hearts of the others I do not know, but as far as I was concerned I was a new man from that hour. I had met Christ in one of His lowliest disciples and I had seen enough to realise that I too could be His.

You were not there but the One who was, and who made it possible for those seven men to face death freed from the guilt of their sin, and therefore having peace with God, waits to make their experience yours.

“God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 6:8). “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation” (Hebrews 2:3).

M. Nordenberg

A DWELLING PLACE FOR CHRIST

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith”

(Ephesians 3:17)

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love”

(John 15:9)

The testimony of old, that is, the law, with its requirements of God from man, was put into an ark, a box overlaid with gold; but with christians the Christ is to dwell in our hearts by faith. The ark was the depository of the will of God for Israel but the church is not a mere depository where the truth is held. Man has tried to make it so, and hence there are articles of faith and systems of doctrine, and the attempt to reduce christianity to a religious system.

But what we have really is Christ dwelling in the heart. It is not any longer a box overlaid with gold, but the hearts of the saints which become a dwelling-place for Christ. A dwelling-place is for that which is living—Christ dwelling in the heart by faith.

T. H. Reynolds

If I want a clear full idea of grace, I see it when it first came out with respect to the thief on the cross, under the penalty of a broken law, and when there was no other prospect before him but the terrible and eternal doom of the transgressor. The Saviour is seen alongside, the just for the unjust to bring us to God, and in the answer to his prayer, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom", he was given Christ's word of being that day with Him in paradise. A divine contrast indeed to the misery of the place and position in which grace had reached him!

Anon.

The reward which God offers to man is the knowledge of Himself. He could not give anything greater or better than that. He said to Abram, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (Genesis 15:1). "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). He rewards them by giving them what they seek—the knowledge of Himself. We grow by the true knowledge of God and all things which relate to life and godliness are given to us through the knowledge of Him (Colossians 1:10; 2 Peter 1:3).

Our desire should be to increase in the knowledge of God. It is the great reward which divine love sets before us, and nothing could be more attractive to the spiritual mind. "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Psalm 37:4).

C. A. Coates

In most cases failure occurs, not because souls are not reading and praying, but because they are not watching. They are caught when they did not fear any harm. "Happy is the man that feareth always" (Proverbs 28:14). Be like a little child holding tight to its mother's hand.

J. B. Stoney

HOW ARE WE SAVED?

Romans 1-8

I should like to go a little into the question, How are we saved? In the first eight chapters of Romans we get the gospel fully brought out. It is just the answer to the question, How can a man be just with God? This is the great question of the whole epistle. We do not get resurrection with Christ in this epistle, nor is there union. It is death with Christ, and life through Him. When you get resurrection with Christ taught in scripture, you are associated with Him in life; and when union is taught, you never find justification; for a new creation clearly does not want justifying. This is the teaching of Ephesians, where you get nothing about justification, but all the privileges and duties of the new creation. In Romans we get sinners, and they want justification.

There are two parts of justification, "from sins", and "of life". The first, the clearing me of my old state; and the second, putting me into a new place before God. These two parts are treated of distinctly in chapters 1 to 8 of this epistle. Dividing them into two parts, the first part ends at chapter 5: 11.

In chapter 1 we see the ground that called for justification, "The wrath of God revealed against all ungodliness", and "all have sinned, and come short"—of what we ought to be? of the law? No—the word says, "short of the glory of God". The whole dealings of christianity are on the ground of that. You must either walk in the light, or have nothing to do with God. It is not God hidden behind a veil, and setting up a law as to what you ought to be but you are to walk in the light, as He is in the light.

We are taught this in that verse of Colossians 1, "Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light". A man's being born again does not fit us for that portion; being quickened makes us feel the need of being fitted for that place but there is another thing needed that fits you for glory and that is Christ's work in grace. The first thing we get about the gospel is that it is "concerning his Son Jesus Christ"; it is not about ourselves first. People have lost sight of the claims of Christ. He is become the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him, that answer to His claim.

There are two things found here (Chapter 1: 2-4) in the Person of Christ. First, He is seen in connection with the promises. The promises are fulfilled by Him and in Him. Christ is Himself the accomplishment of the promises. "For all the promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us". This was by means of His incarnation, and sufferings, and death: "come of the seed of David according to flesh". He fulfilled the promises. I do not mean to deny that we have precious promises to help us on the way, but there is another thing shown us in verse 17: "Therein," (in the gospel) "is the righteousness of God revealed". Faith receives God's righteousness, in contrast with the law which claimed righteousness from man. Then he goes on to show why there must be a righteousness of God; because there is no righteousness in man. The reason I am so bold about the gospel is because it is the righteousness of God.

In chapter 1 the fact is first stated that the righteousness of God is revealed; in chapter 2 there is the proof of this and of the condition of man. In chapter 3 the apostle gives us first the privileges of the Jew and then he says that the very thing they boast of is that which condemns them. Then he turns (v. 21) to the question of righteousness. What is wanted is fitness to stand in God's presence and not come short of His glory. It was "witnessed by the law and the prophets". The Lord our righteousness was witnessed in the prophets, but manifested now. Now it is without law. Though he speaks of righteousness, he does not go beyond faith in His blood.

Justification or righteousness does not go farther than forgiveness here (chap. 4: 3-5). There is a great deal more in justification, but we are not come to that yet. The "accounted righteous" in this part of the epistle is the same as forgiveness. What is a propitiation for? Is it not for sin? God sitting as a Judge, and man brought before Him guilty? The death of Christ glorifies God Himself. It is of immense importance to see the way God takes to put away the sins of the old man; there can be no peace without it. It is another thing to see how God makes a new man.

We get two distinct characters of blessedness in these chapters: the first, chapter 5:1-11; the second, chapter 8. In chapter 5, I find what God is to the sinner; in chapter 8 it is what He is to the new man in Christ Jesus. God is more fully revealed in the absolute goodness of His character in chapter 5, because there it is His dealings with the sinner, as guilty before Him, and having come short of

His glory. But the saint is in a higher place in chapter 8 where I see that God is for me. In the first place (chap. 5), God is known as the Justifier; in the second (chap. 8), as Abba, Father. Part one ends at chapter 5:11; that is the way God deals with a sinner about his sins.

Now we come to part two. Part one has nothing to do with experience; there I get my debts paid; this may produce very happy feelings, as we see in chapter 5. Part two has everything to do with experience.

In chapter 4 we read: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin". A man in that sense is faultless before God. Christ has made an atonement, and if you believe in Him, no sin will be imputed to you. Part one has to do with sins and the remedy:—Christ dying for our sins.

In part two it is sin (singular) and the remedy, my dying with Christ. The whole work was settled on the cross, but it is presented in resurrection. We must have resurrection to make it complete. It must be complete to be presented. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and present us with yours" (2 Corinthians 5: 14). Sanctification comes before justification when they are spoken of together. "Ye are washed, sanctified, justified."

It is the fruit, and not the tree, that is judged in part one. The tree itself is judged in part two. In chapter 3 we get faith in the blood of Christ. In chapter 4 it is faith in the God of resurrection: "if we believe in him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead". I find the sinner in his sins, Christ dying, and the sins not imputed to him. Here is a man who has done this, that, and the other, and Christ died for him. God has raised up Christ; I believe in Him, and am justified. It is ratified. Justification was not completed on the cross, the work by which we are justified was: but I do not get the assurance of it until I see Christ in resurrection. "If Christ is not risen, ye are yet in your sins." If my surety is not out of prison, I cannot say I am justified. There are the two things necessary, not only the mortgage paid, but also the deed signed. The work on the cross is that by which I am justified: He was raised again in order to our justifying. He was delivered, our offences being before His mind; He was raised, our justifying being before His mind.

Chapter 5 begins, "Having been justified, we have peace." Here we get the whole past, present, and future: justified as to the past; having peace with God, and standing in the favour of God, as to the present; and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, as to the future. Peace, favour, glory, what more can you want? We may get all sorts of troubles here, but what a mercy God sees me righteous! He never withdraws His eyes from the righteous. I am a righteous man; now I can glory in tribulation, etc. I have learnt by all this process not only what I am, but what He is. I have the Holy Ghost in me, as a consequence of justification, shedding abroad the love of God in my heart. I can joy, too, in God Himself (before whom; in chapter 3, I was guilty, and my mouth stopped), not only that I know myself, but I know God in His own absolute goodness.

Peace is a fuller deeper thing than joy; when I know that all is settled, and that I am reconciled, then I have peace. A person may have joy, and not yet know himself reconciled. The prodigal may have had a measure of joy in leaving the far country, but he has not peace till he has met the Father, and learns what is the Father's heart toward him. This is all individual. I have got my sins, my peace, my joy. You have got yours.

But when you come to chapter 5:12, we find that all are ruined in one man. Adam ruined us all. We have had a man's actions first; now we come to man's condition. It is the state of the race, and not of the individual. I get entirely away from God, and I have a nature away from God. If this be known without any knowledge of the grace of God, it must drive a man to despair, but God never allows it to be so quite. Grace has put away your sin.

In chapter 5:12 and onwards I get more troubled about sin in me than by my past sins. But here we find the remedy too; not that Christ has died for my sins, but that I died with Christ to sin. The doctrine is: "By one man's obedience," and "by one man's disobedience." Then, if by the obedience of one I am made righteous, I can live on as I like? No! The apostle says: "You have died". How can I live on if I am dead? This is justification of life here. We have now the positive side of justification: "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." As we see in the first eleven verses of chapter 5 the blessedness of the believer as the result of what the apostle had been bringing out in the previous part of the epistle, Christ dying for our sins, so in chapter 8 we have the blessedness

which is the result of what the apostle had brought out from chapter 5:12 to the end of chapter 7.

Chapter 5: 15. We see that the grace must have an aspect as large as the sin. The presentation of grace is to the whole world, but its application is only to those who receive the gift. Verse 18: "As by one offence towards all unto condemnation, so by one righteousness towards all unto justification of life". The one righteousness, as God's gift, is unto all, but it is only upon all them that believe; (Chapter 3:22). The gift of righteousness is unto all: just as the sin of Adam addresses itself to the whole race, so does the one righteousness.

Here I get justification not only from my sins but connected with life (verse 20). The law required man to make out a righteousness. "The law entered that the offence might abound." It is not that sin might abound, but "the offence". God never made sin abound. Sin abounded over the whole race, and there grace much more abounds. The law not only made sin more manifest, but also aggravated its character. The authority of God has been brought in and despised. A child might do wrong without knowing it but when the father gives him a command about it, it becomes disobedience. In chapter 2:12, what is translated sinned "without law," is the same word as in 1 John 3: 4 (sin is the "transgression of the law"), which should be, "sin is lawlessness."

What is the meaning of Hebrews 9:26, "Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?" I believe it extends to the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. So also "the Lamb of God which beareth away the sin of the world". The work that accomplishes it is done but the power is not yet put forth; (1 John 2:2). Atonement has been made, and the blood is on the mercy-seat, so that all hindrance is removed. In Hebrews 9: 26, 28 we get the two things, "to put away sin", and "sins borne" just as we get the sin-offering and the scape-goat on the day of atonement.

The blood of the sin-offering was first sprinkled on and before the mercy-seat and then the sins of Israel were confessed over the head of the scape-goat; (Leviticus 16). The blood on the mercy-seat now is the ground of invitation to the sinner. I say now to the sinner, Christ has died, and the blood is on the mercy-seat, and you will be received if you come to Him. When the sinner accepts the invitation, I can tell him more.

Not only has the Lord Jesus put away sin, but He has borne all your sins, and confessed them as if they were His own and they are all gone. It is never said Christ died for the sins of the world. In Romans 6 and 7, I am dead and justified from sin. Now I can reckon myself dead. If I am alive through Christ, I died through Christ. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

In Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians we see three stages of advance: in Romans, dead with Christ and alive in Christ; in Colossians, dead with Him and risen with Him; in Ephesians, dead in trespasses and sins, now quickened together, raised up together, made to sit together in Him in heavenly places. In Romans the individual is cleared from what he was as a child of Adam, and gets the privileges of a child of God.

Chapter 6: 16. Now you are perfectly free: what are you going to do with yourself? You were a slave to sin: now yield yourself to God. In chapter 7 we have the same principle applied to law. Verse 4, having died to the law by the body of Christ, now I am connected with Christ, Him who is raised from the dead. The deduction is, you cannot have both the law and Christ. Verse 6 should be, "having died in that wherein we were held." It is not the law that is dead, but I am dead. The law is the jailer, I am the prisoner. The mistake people are making is that they are killing the jailer instead of the thief. The jailer is not dead, the thief is. Now, if you look back, you will see the condition of a man under law. It is the experience of a quickened soul under law. Experience comes in here, and not in the first part of the epistle. If a man is not absolutely lawless, conscience puts him under law. He says, I ought to do this, and I ought to do that.

The regular Hyper-Calvinists put a man in Romans 7, and keep him there. They put him in the seventh before he gets to the third. In chapters 2 and 3 it is what a man has done. In chapter 7 it is what he is in himself. It is not that I have done bad things, but "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing". This must be learnt experimentally, and not merely known as a doctrine. The soul here learns three things; first, that in himself that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing; secondly, he sees that the flesh is not himself, for he hates it; thirdly, that it is too strong for him, and he cries out for deliverance. It is God bringing a man to the full knowledge of himself; then he says, "O wretched man that I

am, who shall deliver?" etc., when Christ comes in, and we have the full deliverance of chapter 8.

"When I was in the flesh," chap. 7:5. Many christians would not know what that means at all. It is the state of the past. This chapter is experimental, and the truth must be learned, not merely as a theory, but experimentally. To say my sins are forgiven is not experience; but if you tell me something about myself, my experience answers to it, or it does not. We never give up the flesh till we have learned how thoroughly bad it is. I must learn to say, "It is not I," though not to say it lightly, because as a child of Adam responsible, it is I; but I have found out another I. As to the flesh, there is no question of forgiveness. I do not forgive an offending power, I want deliverance from it. In Romans, my being alive in Christ is stated as a fact; but the doctrine is not brought out as in Ephesians. The more spiritual we are, the more we shall see the infinite value of the cross. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," etc. (2 Corinthians 4); always keeping it before my faith; holding the cross to the flesh, because I am not in the flesh (otherwise I could not do it).

People talk of whether future sins are forgiven. All my sins were future when Christ died for them. But I ought not to talk of future sins; there is grace enough to keep me from them, and I must not excuse them. Souls have to learn what sin is. Christ, having met the consequences of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, becomes the tree of life to me; and then I learn.

Romans 5: 1-11 is what God was in love to the sinner. Chapter 8 is the condition of the believer with God.

J. N. Darby

This concludes the series of extracts from the Evangelical Volumes of the 'Collected Writings of J.N.Darby'