

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

February 2007

“Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” (Ephesians 1:2-4) I pray that you are prospering in the Lord. Events in this world indicate that time for this world is just about up. “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” (Revelation 12:12) If there ever was a time to seriously consider our lives and relationships with God, it is now.

Victory Over Sin

by Lynnford Beachy

Is victory over sin possible? Are we in bondage to serve sin with no hope of freedom until the second coming of Jesus? Is it possible to stop sinning before Jesus comes? These questions have been debated by Christians for years. The answers to them are vital and could determine whether you are continually defeated or continually victorious. Many people have failed to begin a task because they thought that it was impossible, while others have accomplished that same task because they were confident that it could be done. If you think it is impossible to gain the victory over sin you are defeated before you begin. The biggest obstacle to gaining the victory over sin is the idea that it is impossible.

There is wonderful and powerful good news in the Scriptures: God “is able to keep you from falling.” (Jude 1:24) “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13) Praise God for His wonderful promises and His power to fulfill them.

Some people, as soon as victory over sin is mentioned, will immediately change the subject and start talking about salvation by works, as if these subjects are one and the same. Nobody has ever been, nor will ever be, saved by keeping the law. We are saved by God’s grace apart from any deeds of the law that we may do. “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:8) Yet, this is not the subject

we would like to discuss today. We would like to see what the Bible says about the possibility of gaining the victory over sin, and whether or not God is able to keep you from falling into sin.

Many think that it is acceptable to continually live in sin, as long as we have faith in the death of Jesus to cover us. Yet, faith is vain if it does not affect the way we live. Paul wrote of those who “profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.” (Titus 1:16) We may profess with our mouths that we believe in Jesus, but if our lives demonstrate that we do not know Him, we are not saved, regardless of how confidently we think that we are. Jesus said, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Meetings in Your Area page 5

The Consecrated Way (Part 11) page 6
by Alonzo T. Jones

Waggoner on Romans (Part 11) page 8
by Ellet J. Waggoner

Health Note page 8
by Lynnford Beachy

will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:21-23)

Do not let yourself be deceived into thinking you can live like a devil and still go to heaven. The Bible tells us that people will try to deceive us on this point, and we are warned against it. “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10) “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” (1 John 3:7, 8)

We are “justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” (Romans 3:28) Yet, that faith is active and produces results in our lives. “Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity [love], I am nothing.” (1 Corinthians 13:2) Faith works. “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” (Galatians 5:6) In a parallel passage, Paul wrote, “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.” (1 Corinthians 7:19) “Faith which worketh by love” results in “keeping of the commandments.” Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” (John 14:15 RSV) Yet, we only keep the commandments by becoming a new creature; hence, Paul wrote, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” (Galatians 6:15) By faith we are born again and become a new creature; then, filled with love for God, we will keep His commandments.

James wrote, “Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” (James 2:17, 18) If a man possesses true faith, it will be evident in his life. As one Christian writer noted, “Obedience is the fruit of faith.” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 61) Free copies of *Steps to Christ* are available upon request.

The main passage used to support the idea that we are doomed to continue in sin is Romans 7:14-25, which says:

“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that

dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” (Romans 7:14-25)

Paul is definitely describing a condition of continual evil doing, as well as a failure to do good. Yet, is this a description of a true Christian experience? If so, why does he plead to God for deliverance from it? Would Paul ask God to deliver him from a true Christian experience?

Two Laws

Paul brings to view two laws that are warring against each other. One he calls “the law of sin” and the other “the law of God” or “the law of my mind.” After describing the battle between these two principles, he finally cries out, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Paul recognized the connection between death and being in “captivity to the law of sin,” for “sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” (James 1:15) When Paul began his description in Romans 7 he said, “I am carnal,” thus the description that followed is of someone who is carnal. In the succeeding chapter, Paul wrote: “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.... For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Romans 8:6, 7, 13) Paul spoke of those who are carnal as in need of a transformation. He wrote to the Corinthians, “For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” (1 Corinthians 3:3)

We can be certain that Paul’s description of a carnal man in Romans 7 was a description of a condition from which we must be changed if we expect to enter into eternal life. This is why he cried out, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:24) Paul does not hesitate to give the answer: “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Jesus Christ is the one who shall deliver us from this wretched condition. After giving this answer, Paul commences to describe the victory provided by Christ in Romans chapter 8.

For those who claim that Paul was condoning a life of continual bondage to sin in Romans 7, chapters 6 and 8 pose a dilemma, for they speak so boldly of the complete victory provided for us in Christ Jesus. If Paul was trying to set us at ease in a defeated condition of “captivity to the law of sin” in Romans 7 (v. 23), by saying that it is acceptable and expected for us to live this way, he placed it between the two most contradictory chapters in the Bible.

In chapter 6 Paul stated, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?... Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.... Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.... For sin shall not have dominion over you:... But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:1, 2, 6, 12, 14, 22, 23)

Romans 8 begins, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:1, 2) In Romans 7, Paul spoke of “captivity to the law of sin” (v. 23) and here, in chapter 8, he tells us that the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” has made us “free from the law of sin.” (v. 2) This is obviously speaking of two different and contrary experiences: one of victory and one of defeat.

Paul continues, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” (Romans 8:3, 4) Here we are told that the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in us who walk after the Spirit. Paul also wrote, “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” (Galatians 5:16-18) If you follow the leading of God’s Spirit in your life, you will not transgress the law of God and be under its condemnation. Instead, you will live according to the fruit of the Spirit, as Paul goes on to describe, after which he says, “Against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:23) If there is no law against what you are doing, then you are not under the law: you are not under its condemnation.

Praise God that He can deliver us from the law of sin that compels us to do evil. This law of sin was condemned and conquered by our Lord Jesus Christ, and He is able to give us this victory. “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:57)

Can You “go, and sin no more”?

Jesus healed a man by the pool of Bethesda who had been crippled for thirty-eight years. “Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” (John 5:14) Jesus told this man to “sin no more.” Is that possible? Would Jesus ask this man to do something that is impossible? Later, Jesus gave the same instruction to a woman caught in adultery. “Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” (John 8:11) Jesus also said, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5:48) Jesus could not have set a higher standard. Paul also spoke of this high standard. He wrote, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Timothy 2:19)

Right after God spoke the Ten Commandments on Sinai, Moses said, “Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that *ye sin not*.” (Exodus 20:20) King David wrote, “Stand in awe, and *sin not*.” (Psalms 4:4) Paul wrote, “Awake to righteousness, and *sin not*.” (1 Corinthians 15:34) Speaking of the faithful living on earth when Christ comes, the prophet Zephaniah wrote, “The remnant of Israel [God’s people regardless of descent Romans 9:6, 7] shall *not do iniquity*, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.” (Zephaniah 3:13) “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which *keep the commandments of God*, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Revelation 12:17) “Blessed are they that *do his commandments*, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” (Revelation 22:14) John wrote, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that *ye sin not*. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1)

Praise God that He has provided a remedy for us if we fail. But praise Him even more that He has provided a way that we may “sin not.” This is good news, friends. John declared, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9) Notice the two issues that God offers to deal with: forgiveness of our past sins, as well as cleansing from our present unrighteousness. God

earnestly desires to do this for us, but many Christians do not think that it can be done so they do not even seek for it. Others are convicted that they must “sin no more,” but they are too busy trying to do it themselves that they do not allow God to do it. All such attempts are doomed to end in failure.

God has good news for you today. He is able to give you the victory! He is able to keep you from falling! Maybe you are like many people who, when they hear this, are discouraged to realize that there is something lacking in their lives. Don’t be discouraged, friends, be encouraged. Jesus asks you today, “Wilt thou be made whole?” (John 5:6) What is your answer? Do you want to be free from the bondage of sin? Jesus came to set the captives free. Jesus said, “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” (John 8:36) Not free *to* sin, but “free *from* sin.” (Romans 6:18)

Don’t think that you need to have a tremendous amount of faith for this to be accomplished in your life. You can have it right now. “God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” (Romans 12:3) Jesus said, “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” (Matthew 17:20) With simple faith in the Word of God, great things can happen.

Gaining the Victory

As we can see, God desires, and has provided a way, for us to stop sinning. Yet, how can this be accomplished? We were born with a nature that is corrupt and only wants to serve sin. Paul wrote, “The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Romans 8:7, 8) Jeremiah asked, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.” (Jeremiah 13:23) We are helpless to fight against the devil. However, praise God, He has provided a way of escape out of every temptation. It is God’s work to conquer your sins, and sanctify you. “He will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” (Micah 7:19) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:25-27) *He* can do this work; *you* cannot. Yet, God can only do it with your cooperation.

One night a church leader came to talk with Jesus. This man was a Pharisee, expert in the art of cleaning the outside of the cup, making everything in his life appear clean to others while the inside was still dirty. (Matthew 23:25-28) Jesus said to him, “Ye must be born again.” (John 3:7) He also said, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3) As long as we have a carnal mind, we cannot obey God, we “cannot please God.” (Romans 8:7, 8)

The carnal mind has to go. David recognized this, as demonstrated by his prayer after he sinned with Bathsheba. David asked God to create in him a “clean heart.” (Psalm 51:10) David understood that he had a problem. He had a carnal mind that led him into sin; he had a heart problem. He needed a change, so he asked God to give him a new heart.

In Ezekiel 36:26, 27, God promises, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh. and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” This is a bold promise that God makes to you. He says He will cause you to walk in His ways. He does not do this by forcing you to do something that you do not want to do but by giving you a heart that delights to do God’s will.

Whose heart does God offer to give us, whose spirit? It’s His Spirit. If it was anything less or anything other than that, it wouldn’t do any good. He offers to give each one of us a new heart and we need it. Without this transformation, without this *heart transplant*, we are never going to obey God. We can try, but the carnal mind is enmity against God and cannot be subject to the law of God, no matter how hard you try to make it happen.

We need a new heart. That’s why Jesus said “ye must be born again.” Without that you will not see the kingdom of heaven. When you are born again, God takes away the old stony heart out of your flesh and gives you a new heart: a heart that loves righteousness and hates iniquity. (Hebrews 1:9)


David wrote, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Psalms 40:8) When God’s law is within our hearts, we will delight to do God’s will just as Jesus does. And this is precisely what God promised to do for us. This is the new covenant. “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” (Hebrews 10:16) This is powerful good news, friends. God is able to give you a new heart, a heart that delights to do God’s will. This is how He is able to “cause you to walk” in God’s will.

(Ezekiel 36:27) He gives us a willing heart that delights to do God's will. That is wonderful news. He promises to give us the Spirit of His Son. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Galatians 4:6) All this can be yours if you ask God for it, and believe that you receive it because He promised.

There is a wonderful promise in 1 John 3 which many are almost afraid to read because it is so pointed; yet, it is one of the most precious promises in the Bible. God says, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1 John 3:6-9) "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." (1 John 5:18) This is the new birth that is promised to us, and the seed that remains in us is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27) If He remains in you, the Bible says, "you cannot sin." So, if you sin the answer to your problem is to let Christ in. To all who have shut Jesus out, He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20)

Let Him in, friends, and trust in the "exceeding great and precious promises" in His Word, for it is "by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Peter 1:4) "I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." (Colossians 1:29) "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13) "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all

filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Corinthians 7:1)

Beloved, there are great resources and power available to us that many of us have not tapped into because we did not know they are available to us. We are like a homeless man who has inherited great riches, but, not realizing it, we walk around destitute, unaware of the great treasure that is ours for the taking. As you open the Scriptures and dig as for hidden treasure, gleaning the exceeding great and precious promises and claiming them in your life, you will see a great change take place. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Psalms 119:11) 

(For deeper study on how to gain the victory over sin, please request the April, August, and December 2006 issues of *Present Truth*.
Editor)

Upcoming Meetings in Your Area

Here is the currently-planned 2007 itinerary for Lynnford Beachy:

Feb. 16, 17 . . . Dallas, Texas, contact John Fibrantz, 817-380-3000.


Feb. 23, 24 . . . Pensacola, Florida, contact Chaplain Jack VanOrd, 850-458-5549.

Feb. 28-Mar. 4 . . . Florida Camp Meeting near Orlando, contact Jim or Jerri Raymond, 407-291-9565.

June 12-16 . . . West Virginia Camp Meeting at Smyrna, 304-732-9204

July 11-15 . . . Northwestern Pennsylvania Camp Meeting, contact Calvin and Paula Bickel, 814-676-8660.

Between these meetings we will be available to visit people in their homes and to have additional meetings. Check upcoming issues of *Present Truth* (available on our website) to keep informed about these meetings and others in your area. If you would like to host meetings in your area, please contact us. (See contact information on page 12).

Many of these meetings will be broadcast live over the Internet and by telephone conference. To listen to these sermons go to www.skype.com, download and install the free software, then click on the "Explore the skypecasts directory" link on the Skype homepage. You will see a list of all of the skypecasts available at that particular time. You can also check those "Starting soon," in case you arrive early. Look for the broadcast entitled "God's Love on Trial." Often we will be broadcasting at seven o'clock Friday evening, eleven o'clock Sabbath morning, and Sabbath afternoon and evening at three and seven o'clock. (These are local times for wherever I am scheduled to speak, currently mountain time. You can also call from any phone (long distance charges may apply). **In the US call: 712-432-4000**, in Austria call: 0820 400 01562, in Belgium call: 0703 59 984, in France call: 0826 100 266, in Germany call: 01805 00 7620, and in the UK call: 0870 119 2350. You will be prompted to dial this room number: **5225823**. You can dial directly from Skype at: +99008275225823. (When you use Skype, it is a free call from anywhere in the world.) I often will be broadcasting using my cell phone, and while I am still able to broadcast our meetings over the Internet, they will not be listed in the Skype directory. **If you have a highspeed Internet connection, and would like to help with these broadcasts, please let me know.** You can call me at 304-633-5411. 

The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection

by Alonzo T. Jones

(Part 11)

(We are continuing a series of studies on God's plan of salvation as revealed in the sanctuary. We pray they will be a blessing to you. *Editor*)

Chapter 15—The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

The cleansing of the sanctuary and the finishing of the mystery of God are identical as to time and are also so closely related as to be practically identical in character and event.

In the “figure of the true” in the sanctuary service made visible, the round of service was completed annually, and the cleansing of the sanctuary was the finishing of that figurative and annual service. And this cleansing of the sanctuary was the taking out of and away from the sanctuary all “the uncleanness of the children of Israel” “because of their transgression in all their sins,” which, by the ministry of the priesthood in the sanctuary, had been brought into the sanctuary during the service of the year.

The finishing of this work of the sanctuary and for the sanctuary was, likewise, the finishing of the work for the people. For in that day of the cleansing of the sanctuary, which was the Day of Atonement, whosoever of the people did not by searching of heart, confession, and putting away of sin take part in the service of the cleansing of the sanctuary was cut off forever. Thus the cleansing of the sanctuary extended to the people and included the people as truly as it did the sanctuary itself. And whosoever of the people was not included in the cleansing of the sanctuary and was not himself cleansed, equally with the sanctuary, from all iniquity and transgression and sin was cut off forever. Lev. 16:15-19, 29-34; 23:27-32.

And this was all “a figure for the time then present.” That sanctuary, sacrifice, priesthood, and ministry was a figure of the true, which is the sanctuary, sacrifice, priesthood, and ministry of Christ. And that cleansing of the sanctuary was a figure of the true, which is the cleansing of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, from all the uncleanness of the believers in Jesus because of all their transgression in all their sins. And the time of this cleansing of the true is declared in the words of the Wonderful Numberer to be “unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” which is the sanctuary of Christ in A.D. 1844.

And, indeed, the sanctuary of which Christ is the High Priest is the only one that could possibly be cleansed in 1844, because it is the only one that there is. The sanctuary that was a figure for the time then present was destroyed

by the army of the Romans who came and destroyed that city (Dan. 9:26) and that sanctuary and even its place was to be desolate “even until the consummation.” Therefore the only sanctuary that could possibly be cleansed at the time referred to by the Wonderful Numberer, at the end of the two thousand and three hundred days, was alone the sanctuary of Christ—the sanctuary of which Christ is High Priest and Minister; the sanctuary and the true tabernacle of which Christ, at the right hand of God, is true Priest and Minister; the sanctuary and true tabernacle “which the Lord pitched and not man.”

What this cleansing means is plainly declared in the very scripture which we are now studying—Daniel 9:24-28. For the angel of God, in telling to Daniel the truth concerning the two thousand and three hundred days, tells also the great object of the Lord in this time as it relates to both the Jews and the Gentiles. The seventy weeks or four hundred and ninety years of the limitation upon the Jews and Jerusalem is definitely declared to be “to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” Daniel 9:24.

That is the true purpose of God in the sanctuary and its service in all time: whether in the figure or in the true, whether for Jews or for Gentiles, whether on earth or in heaven. Seventy weeks or four hundred and ninety years, was the limitation set for the Jews to have this accomplished for and in themselves. To accomplish this, to that people, of all people, Christ Himself came in person to show to them the Way and to lead them in this Way. But they would not have it. Instead of seeing in Him the gracious One who would finish transgression and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness to every soul, they saw in Him only “Beelzebub the prince of the devils”; only One instead of whom they would readily choose a murderer; only One who as King they would openly repudiate and choose a Roman Caesar as their only king; only One whom they counted as fit only to be crucified out of the world. For such a people as that and in such a people as that, could He finish transgression and make an end of sins and make reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness?—Impossible. Impossible by their own persistent rebellion. Instead of His being allowed by them to do such a gracious and wonderful work for them, from the depths of divine pity and sorrow He was compelled to say to them: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are

sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” Matt. 23:37, 38; 21:43.

The nation to whom the kingdom of God was given, upon its rejection by the Jews, was the Gentiles. And that which was to be done for the Jews in the four hundred and ninety years which were limited to them, but which they would not at all allow to be done for them—that is the identical thing to be done for the Gentiles, to whom the kingdom of God is given, in the eighteen hundred and ten years allotted to them. And that work is “to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” This can be done alone in the finishing of the mystery of God in the cleansing of the true Christian sanctuary. And this is done in the cleansing of the true sanctuary, only in the finishing of transgression and making an end of sins in the perfecting of the believers in Jesus, on the one hand, and on the other hand in the finishing of transgression and making an end of sins in the destruction of the wicked and the cleansing of the universe from all taint of sin that has ever been upon it.

The finishing of the mystery of God is the ending of the work of the gospel. And the ending of the work of the gospel is, first, the taking away of all vestige of sin and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness—Christ fully formed—within each believer, God alone manifest in the flesh of each believer in Jesus, and, secondly, on the other hand, the work of the gospel being finished means only the destruction of all who then shall not have received the gospel (2 Thess. 1:7-10), for it is not the way of the Lord to continue men in life when the only possible use they will make of life is to heap up more misery for themselves.

Again, in the service of the earthly sanctuary, we have seen that when the work of the gospel in the annual course was finished in behalf of those who had taken part in it, then all those who had taken no part in it were cut off. “Which was a figure for the time then present” and which plainly teaches that in the service of the true sanctuary when the work of the gospel shall have been finished for all those who have a part in it, then all those who do not have a part in it will be cut off. Thus, in both respects, the finishing of the mystery of God is the final ending of sin.

The service in the earthly sanctuary shows also that in order for the sanctuary to be cleansed and the course of the gospel service there to be finished, it must first be finished in the people who have a part in the service. That is to say: In the sanctuary itself, transgression could not be finished,

an end of sins and reconciliation for iniquity could not be made, and everlasting righteousness could not be brought in, until all this had been accomplished in each person who had a part in the service of the sanctuary. The sanctuary itself could not be cleansed until each of the worshipers had been cleansed. The sanctuary itself could not be cleansed so long as, by the confessions of the people and the intercessions of the priests, there was pouring into the sanctuary a stream of iniquities, transgression, and sins. The cleansing of the sanctuary, as to the sanctuary itself, was the taking out of and away from the sanctuary all the transgression of the people which, by the service of the priests, had been taken into the sanctuary during the service of the year. And this stream must be stopped at its fountain in the hearts and lives of the worshipers, before the sanctuary itself could possibly be cleansed.

Therefore the very first work in the cleansing of the sanctuary was the cleansing of the people. That which was preliminary and essential to the cleansing of the sanctuary itself, to the finishing of the transgression and bringing in everlasting righteousness, there, was the finishing of transgression, and the making an end of sins, and making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness in the heart and life of each one of the people themselves. When the stream that flowed into the sanctuary was thus stopped at its source, then, and then alone, could the sanctuary itself be cleansed from the sins and transgression which, from the people, by the intercession of the priests, had flowed into the sanctuary.

And all that “was a figure for the time then present”—a “figure of the true.” Therefore by this we are plainly taught that the service of our great High Priest in the cleansing of the true sanctuary must be preceded by the cleansing of each one of the believers, the cleansing of each one who has a part in that service of the true High Priest in the true sanctuary. It is plain that transgression must be finished, an end of sins and reconciliation for all iniquity must be made, and everlasting righteousness must be brought in, in the heart’s experience of every believer in Jesus, before the cleansing of the true sanctuary can be accomplished.

And this is the very object of the true priesthood in the true sanctuary. The sacrifices, the priesthood, and the ministry in the sanctuary which was but a figure for the time then present, could not really take away sin, could not make the comers thereunto perfect, whereas the sacrifice, the priesthood, and the ministry of Christ in the true sanctuary does take away sins forever, does make the comers thereunto perfect, does perfect “forever them that are sanctified.”

(To be continued)

(This article was taken from pages 113-119 of the book, *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection*, by Alonzo T. Jones. Some editing has been done for this publication. *Editor*)

WAGGONER ON ROMANS — THE GOSPEL IN PAUL'S GREAT LETTER (PART 11)

by Ellet J. Waggoner

(We are continuing a series of articles commenting on Paul's epistle to the Romans. We pray that they will be a blessing to you. *Editor*)

The Inheritance and the Heirs—Romans 4:13-15

For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

Where Is the Promise?—A very natural inquiry upon reading the thirteenth verse would be, Where is there any promise that Abraham and his seed should be heirs of the world? Many think that no such promise is contained in the Old Testament. But there can be no doubt about the matter, for the apostle says that there was such a promise. If we have not found it, it is because we have read the Old Testament too superficially, or with minds biased by preconceived opinions. If we consider the connection, we shall have no difficulty in locating the promise.

Of what is the apostle speaking in this connection? Of an inheritance through the righteousness of faith, and also of the fact that circumcision was given to Abraham as a seal of this righteousness which he had by faith, and therefore as the seal of the inheritance which was to come thereby.

Where in the Old Testament do we find the account of the giving of circumcision, and of a promise in connection therewith? In the seventeenth chapter of Genesis. Then that must be the place for us to look for the promise that Abraham should be the heir of the world. Let us turn and read:

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.... And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. (Genesis 17:7-11)

The reader will at once say: "Yes; it is plain enough that there is a promise here; but what we are looking for is the promise that Abraham and his seed should inherit the earth; and I do not see that here. All that I can see is a promise that they should inherit the land of Canaan."

But it is certain from the connection in Romans that we are on the right track, and we shall soon see that this is indeed the promise that Abraham and his seed should be heirs of the world. We must study the details of this promise. And first let us note the fact that the inheritance promised is an everlasting inheritance.

Abraham himself is to have it for an everlasting possession. But the only way in which both Abraham and his seed may have everlasting possession of an inheritance is by having everlasting life. Therefore we see that in this promise to Abraham we have the assurance of everlasting life in which to enjoy the possession.

This will appear still more clearly when we consider that the inheritance is an inheritance of righteousness: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but

Health Note

by Lynnford Beachy

Aluminum

Perhaps you have heard of some of the negative effects of aluminum in your body. Scientific studies have linked the amounts of aluminum in the brain with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. I have talked with people who have decreased their intake of aluminum and their memory and overall brain functions increased.

You may be surprised how often you are exposed to aluminum. It is used in antacids, anti-perspirants, cheese, cookware, soda cans, and even in processing drinking water in municipal water supplies. "Due to certain additives, processed cheese and cornbread are two major contributors to high aluminum exposures in the American diet. With regard to pharmaceuticals, some common over-the-counter medications such as antacids and buffered aspirin contain aluminum to increase the daily intake significantly." (<http://ehso.com/ehshome/alzheimers.htm>) If you read the ingredients in most table salt, you will find that it contains aluminum.

There is controversy over whether or not aluminum really causes Alzheimer's disease or if it is just a coincidence that Alzheimer's patients have a very high amount of aluminum in their brains. To be on the safe side it would be a good idea to limit, as much as possible, your intake of aluminum. You can buy deodorants without aluminum, and sea salt usually does not contain aluminum. Also stainless steel or glass cookware can be used instead of aluminum. Especially avoid cooking tomatoes in aluminum pans, as they increase the amount of leached aluminum in food.



through the righteousness of faith.” (Romans 4:13) That is just what we have in the promise recorded in the seventeenth of Genesis. For that covenant was sealed by circumcision (see verse 11), and circumcision was the seal of righteousness by faith. (See Romans 4:11.)

Someone may say that this does not appear from the Old Testament itself, and that therefore the Jews could not be expected to have understood it; we have the New Testament to enlighten us. It is true that in studying the Old Testament we owe much to the New Testament, but it is also a fact that there is no new revelation in it. One may see from the Old Testament alone that the inheritance promised to Abraham and to his seed was only on the condition of righteousness by faith.

This is the natural conclusion from the fact that the inheritance is to be an everlasting possession. Now the Jews well knew that everlasting life belongs to the righteous alone. “The righteous shall never be removed; but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.” (Proverbs 10:30) “For evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.” (Psalm 37:9) “For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.” (Verse 22)

The fifth commandment reads, “Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” (Exodus 20:12) The keeping of the commandments has never made any difference in the length of men’s lives in this present world. But the inheritance which God promised to Abraham is one that will be everlasting because of the righteousness of its possessors.

The Promise and the Resurrection—Another point from the promise is recorded in Genesis, if we read carefully. The promise was to Abraham and to his seed. Now Stephen stated as a well-known fact that Abraham did not have so much of the promised land as he could set his foot on. (Acts 7:5) We may learn this from the Old Testament record, because we are told that he had to buy from the Canaanites, whom God had promised to drive out, a spot of land in which to bury his wife. As for his immediate descendants, we know that they dwelt in tents, wandering from place to place, and that Jacob died in the land of Egypt.

Further than this, we read the words of David, whose reign was at the time of the highest prosperity of the children of Israel in the land of Canaan: “Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears; for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.” (Psalm 39:12) See also his prayer at the consecration of the gifts to the temple, when Solomon was made king. (1 Chronicles 29:15)

Still further, and this is most positive of all, we have the words of God to Abraham when he made the promise. After telling him that he would give the land of Canaan to him and to his seed, the Lord said that his seed should first be slaves in a strange land. “And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again.” (Genesis 15:7, 13-16) Thus we see that Abraham was plainly told that he should die before he had any inheritance in the land, and that it would be at least four hundred years before any of his seed could inherit it.

But Abraham died in faith, and so did his seed. “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” (Hebrews 11:13) They died in faith, because they knew that God could not lie. But since God’s promise must be fulfilled, and they did not receive the promised inheritance in this present life, we are shut up to the conclusion that it can be obtained only through the resurrection from the dead.

This was the hope that sustained the faithful Israelites. Abraham had faith to offer Isaac upon the altar because his faith was in God’s power to raise the dead. When Paul was a prisoner on account of “the hope and resurrection of the dead” (Acts 23:6), he said, “And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.” And then, to show the reasonableness of this hope, he asked, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” (Acts 26:6-8)

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the pledge and surety of the resurrection of those who believe on him. (See 1 Corinthians 15:13-20) The apostles “preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” (Acts 4:2) And one of them says for our benefit, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5)

And then he adds that this faith is tried that it may “be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 1:7) And this brings us to the conclusion of the matter, namely, that the promise to Abraham and to his seed that they should be heirs of the world, is the promise of Christ’s coming.

The apostle Peter says that it is necessary to remind us of the words that were spoken by the holy prophets because “there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” (2 Peter 3:4) Therefore they do not believe in the promise at all.

But they do not reason well, “for this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” (2 Peter 3:5-7)

Take notice that not only has the promise something to do with the fathers, but it concerns the whole earth. The complaint of the scoffers is that since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. But the apostle shows that when they say so they shut their eyes to the fact that the same word that in the beginning made the heavens and the earth, also destroyed the earth by the flood. Also the earth is by the same word now preserved until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, when it will be destroyed by fire. “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Peter 3:13)

According to What Promise?— Why, according to the promise to the fathers, which was that Abraham and his seed should inherit the earth. It has been a long time, as men count, since that promise was made, but “the Lord is not slack concerning his promise.” It has not been so long since it was made that he has forgotten it; for “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” The reason why he has waited this long is that he is not willing that any should perish in the fires that will renew the earth, but he desires that all should come to repentance.

And so we find that we have as great an interest in the promise to Abraham as he himself had. That promise is still open for all to accept. It embraces nothing less than an eternal life of righteousness in the earth made new as it was in the beginning. The hope of the promise of God unto the fathers was the hope of the coming of the Lord to raise the dead, and thus to bestow the inheritance.

Christ was once here on the earth, but then he did not have any more of the inheritance than Abraham had. He had not where to lay his head. God is now sending his Holy Spirit to seal the believers for the inheritance, even

as he did to Abraham; and when all the faithful shall have been sealed by the Spirit, “he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:20, 21)

We have learned what Abraham found, and how he found it. At the same time we have learned what God has promised us as well as Abraham, if we believe his word. God has promised to every man who believes him nothing less than the freedom of the world. This is not an arbitrary thing. God has not said that if we will believe certain statements and dogmas, he will in return give us an everlasting inheritance. The inheritance is one of righteousness; and since faith means the reception of the life of Christ into the heart, together with God’s righteousness, it is evident that there is no other way in which the inheritance can be received. This is further made clear by a statement in the last section, which was not noted, that “the law worketh wrath.” (Romans 4:15)

Therefore whoever thinks to get righteousness by the law is putting his trust in that which will destroy him. God has promised a grant of land to every one who will accept it on his conditions, namely, that he shall also accept the righteousness which goes with it, because righteousness is the characteristic of the land. Righteousness is to “dwell” in it. But this righteousness can be found only in the life of God, which is manifested in Christ.

Now the man who thinks that he himself can get righteousness out of the law is in reality trying to substitute his own righteousness for God’s righteousness. In other words, he is trying to get the land by fraud. Therefore when he comes in the court to prove his claim to the land, it appears that there is a criminal charge against him; and he finds “wrath” instead of blessing. “Where no law is, there is no transgression” (Romans 4:15); but there is law everywhere, and therefore transgression. All have sinned, so that the inheritance can not be by the law.

The Great Joy of Believing the Promise—Romans 4:16-25

Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of

Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Sure to All—Since the inheritance is through the righteousness of faith, it is equally sure to all the seed, and equally within the reach of all. Faith gives all an equal chance, because faith is just as easy for one person as for another. God has dealt to every man a measure of faith, and to all the same measure, for the measure of grace is the measure of faith, and “unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:7) Christ is given without reserve to every man. (Hebrews 2:9) Therefore, as the same measure of faith and grace is given to all men, all have an equal opportunity to gain the inheritance.

Jesus Is the Surety—Faith makes the promise sure to all the seed, because it has Christ alone for its object, and he is the surety of the promises of God. (2 Corinthians 1:20) We read also of the oath of God, by which Jesus was made high priest, that “by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament,” or covenant. (Hebrews 7:22) Now Jesus was not given for a certain class, but for all without distinction. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) Jesus by the grace of God tasted death for every man. (Hebrews 2:9) He says, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37) Christ dwells in the heart by faith. (Ephesians 3:17) Therefore, since Christ is the surety of the promise, it must be sure to every one who believes.

The Oath of God—It may seem to some a little far-fetched to say that the oath by which Jesus was made priest is the surety of the promise to Abraham. But a little consideration will enable any one to see that it can be no other way. In the sixth chapter of Hebrews we read:

When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee.... God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is

for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (Hebrews 6:13, 17-20)

It's All For Our Sakes—Why did God confirm his promise to Abraham by an oath? That we might have a strong consolation. It was not for Abraham's sake, because Abraham believed fully without the oath. His faith was shown to be perfect before the oath was given. It was altogether for our sakes.

When does that oath give us strong consolation? When we flee for refuge to Christ as priest in the most holy place. Within the veil he ministers as high priest; and it is the oath of God that gives us courage to believe that his priesthood will save us. Then our consolation comes from Christ's priesthood, and so from the oath which made him priest.

Therefore the oath of God to Abraham was identical with the oath that made Christ high priest. This shows most plainly that the promise of God to Abraham is as wide as the gospel of Christ. And so our text, speaking of the righteousness that was imputed to Abraham, says, “Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.” (Romans 4:23, 24)

The Power of God's Word—God “callesth those things which be not as though they were.” (Romans 4:17) Sometimes men do the same thing, but we soon lose confidence in them. When men speak of things that are not as though they were, there is only one proper name for it. It is a lie. But God calls those things that be not as though they were, and it is the truth. What makes the difference? Simply this: Man's word has no power to make a thing exist when it does not exist. He may say that it does, but that does not make it so. But when God names a thing, the very thing itself is in the word that names it. He speaks, and it is. It was by this power of God that Abraham was made the father of many nations, even of us, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again.

Quickening [Making Alive] the Dead—It is by the power of God's word which can speak of those things that be not as though they were and have it true, that the dead are raised. His word makes them live. It was Abraham's faith in the resurrection of the dead that made him the father of many nations. God's oath to Abraham was on the occasion of his offering Isaac. (Genesis 22:15-18) And “by faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son, of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.” (Hebrews 11:17-19)

Righteousness and the Resurrection of Jesus—The righteousness which was imputed to Abraham will be

imputed to us also if we believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Therefore it follows that righteousness was imputed to Abraham because of his faith in the resurrection of the dead, which comes only through Jesus. (Acts 4:2) That was what the apostles preached the promises to the fathers. The power by which a man is made righteous is the power of the resurrection. (See Philippians 3:9-11.) This power of the resurrection, which works righteousness in a man, is the surety of the final resurrection to immortality at the last day by which he enters upon his inheritance.

Not Weakened in Faith—Some versions of Romans 4:19 give the idea, “Without being weakened in faith, he considered his own body now as good as dead.” That is to say, after God had made the promise to him, a full consciousness of his weakness and of all the difficulties and seeming impossibilities in the way did not have any effect

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in weakening his faith. Nothing is impossible with God, and there are no difficulties for him. Whenever a person is inclined to doubt the possibility of his salvation, let him stop and consider that God made the world by his word, and that he raises the dead, and that it is by that same power that God will save him if he is willing. To doubt God's promise to deliver us from all evil is to doubt the fact that he created all things by his word, and that he is able to raise the dead. (To be continued)

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