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**BIBLE STUDY.****LETTER TO THE ROMANS. — NO. 9.**

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"For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Rom. 5:10, 11.

The eleventh verse states one of the fruits that must follow from a knowledge that we are "saved by his life." When men have a well-grounded assurance that they are saved by the life of Jesus Christ, when they realize it is so till it becomes a part of their very being, they will "joy in God" through Jesus Christ their Lord. There can be nothing but joy in the heart of an individual when he knows that he is saved by the life of Christ. That is the secret of joying in tribulation.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

This verse contains a partially stated proposition. You will notice that commencing with the thirteenth verse and *continuing down to the end of the seventeenth*, there is a parenthesis. Then in the eighteenth verse, the proposition is taken up again and completed. The first part of the eighteenth verse is merely an equivalent to the first part of the twelfth; it is the same truth expressed in other words—"Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Then the closing portion of the verse completed the proposition: "Even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

We can notice but briefly the intervening verses. They contain rich truths; but the time allotted for this subject is so limited that our remarks must be confined to the major points of the chapter.

In the fourteenth verse we have reference to the "reign of death." What is the reign of death? What was this passage of death upon all men? The apostle says "death reigned from Adam to Moses." He does not mean by this that it did not reign at any other time, and that it does not reign at the present time. The part of the verse referring to Adam and Moses is a part of a great argument, which has its starting point back in chapter four. It is a part of his argument on Abraham.

The argument in a nutshell is, that the entering in of the law did not in any way interfere with the promise to Abraham. In Rom. 4:13, 14 we are told that the promise "that he should be 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." In these verses the apostle is proving in a practical manner that the law does not enter into man's justification at all; that justification is solely by faith and not by works. Why is it that the law does not enter into the justification of man? "Because the law worketh wrath."

If Abraham had been left to be justified by the law, there would have been nothing to be placed to his account but *wrath*, for that is all that the law can work. But on the other hand, when he is not justified by the law, which could only be the means of imputing wrath to him, and is justified by faith, then there is *life* placed to his account. And *life* is what is wanted, not *wrath*. Life is what all men desire, not wrath. Whoever seeks to be justified by his works will reap only wrath. Abraham will receive the inheritance only by the virtue of the promise, and he will receive his righteousness only by the faith that he had.

Some think that there are two ways of being saved, because the Lord gave the law at Sinai, and death had reigned till that time, so of course that means that the law brought life. It is true that the Lord gave the law at Sinai; but the law was in the world long before it's giving at Sinai. Abraham had the law, and through the righteousness of faith he was able to keep that law. So the entering in of the law at Sinai did not militate against the promise of God to Abraham. There was no different phase of the plan of salvation introduced at Mount Sinai, or at the time of the Exodus. There was no more law after that time than there was before it. Abraham kept the law. If there had not been any law there, Abraham could never have been justified; but he *kept the law by his faith*. Death reigned through sin before the time of Moses, but righteousness was imputed unto life. This shows that the law was all there already, although they did not have it in that written, open form, that they had it afterwards.

In regard to the reign of death, I am persuaded that we lose much of the good and the encouragement that there is in this fifth chapter simply by the misapplying of these words—"death reigned," and also the expression "death passed upon all men, for that all had sinned." Why did death pass upon all men? Because that all *had sinned!* By one man sin came into the world. There are many who will stop at this point, and philosophize and question, as to how this could be, and try to figure out for themselves the justice of it. They will query why it is that we are here in this sinful condition, without having had any choice or say in the matter ourselves. Now we know that there was one

man in the beginning, and he fell. We are his children, and it is impossible for us to be born in any higher condition than he was.

Some will shut themselves out of eternal life because they cannot figure that thing out to a nicety and see the justice of it. The finite mind of man cannot do this, so it is better for him to leave it alone, and devote himself to seeking for the proffered salvation. That is the important point for all to consider. We know that we are in a sinful condition, and that this sinful condition, is a lost condition. Seeing then that we are in a lost condition, is it not best for us to devote our energies to seeking to attain to that state whereby we may be in a saved condition.

What would you think of a man drowning in the ocean, who, when someone throws him a rope, looks at it, and then says: "I know that I am drowning, and that the only hope I have lies in my getting hold of that rope; but I will not take hold of it unless I know that it has really been my own fault that I fell into the water. If it was my own fault, then I will take it, because I am the only one who is to blame for my being in this condition. But if, on the other hand, someone pushed me into the water, and I could not help myself, then I will have nothing to do with that rope." Such a man would be considered devoid of common sense. Then, acknowledging that we are sinners, and in a lost condition, let us take hold of the salvation that is offered to us.

"Death reigned," it "passed upon all men." The twelfth and eighteenth verses tell us what this death is. Why did it pass? Because that "all have sinned." "Judgment came upon all!" What for? What to?—Condemnation. We are familiar with death; we see people being placed in their graves every day. But is that the death referred to? Good men die; with only two exceptions, all the good men that have ever lived upon the earth have died. Do they die under condemnation? No, certainly not. Do they die because they are sinners? No, if they were sinners, they were not good men. There has been no man in this world upon whom the death sentence has not passed, for there never was a man in this world that was not a sinner, and if he became a good man so that he walked with God as Enoch did, it was by faith.

If we say that the death which comes to all men—good and bad, old and young alike—is the carrying out of that judgment which "came upon all men to condemnation," then we take the position that there is no hope for anyone who has died. For there is no such thing as probation after death, and therefore the man who dies in sin can never be accounted righteous. If it is said that the good do not die in sin, but only because of sins previously committed, the justice of God is impugned, and his imputed righteousness denied. For when God declares his righteousness upon the one who believes, that man stands as clear as though he had never sinned, and cannot be punished as a sinner, unless he denies the faith. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24.

When Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, the Lord told him, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." That does not mean, "dying thou shalt die," as the marginal reading has it. That expression is neither Hebrew nor English. It means

just what it says, that in the day that Adam ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in that day he died. In the very day that Adam ate of the fruit, he fell, and the death sentence was passed upon him, and he was a dead man. Sentence was not executed at that moment, and for that matter we know that Adam was a good man, and that the sentence never was executed upon him. Christ died for him. But he was in the same condition, after he had eaten of the fruit of the tree, that Pharaoh was in, after the first-born of all the Egyptians had been killed, when he arose by night, and said, "We are all dead men."

When sentence has been passed upon a murderer, he is to all intents and purposes a dead man. But it was more than that in the case of Adam; he was dead, and the Son of God was to make him alive. It was only a matter of time till he should be blotted out of existence. But Christ comes in to give man probation, and to lift him up. All that Christ has to give to man is summed up in that one word,—LIFE. Everything is comprised in that. This fact shows that without him men *have no life*. Said Christ to the unbelieving Jews, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Probably they replied, "We do not need to come, because we have life already."

In Eze. 13:22 we read: "Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life." There is no life to the wicked; they have no life; they are dead. Said Christ: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Christ, came to give life to the dead. He gives life only to those who conscientiously lay hold of that life, who bring his life into their lives, so that it takes the place of their forfeited lives. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. He is dead.

So Adam died; and because of that, every man born into the world is a sinner, and the sentence of death is passed upon him. Judgment has passed upon all men to condemnation, and there is not a man in this world but has been under the condemnation of death. The only way that he can get free from that condemnation and that death, is through Christ, who died for him, and who, in his own body, bore our sins upon the cross. He bore the penalty of the law, and suffered the condemnation of the law, *for us*, not for himself, for he was sinless.

"As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; . . . even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." What is the free gift? It is the free gift by grace, and it appertaineth unto many. The work of Adam plunged man into sin; the work of Christ brings men out of sin. One man's single offense plunged many into many offenses; but the one man's obedience gathers the many offenses of many men, and brings them out from beneath the condemnation of those offenses.

Then the free gift is the righteousness of Christ. How do we get the righteousness of Christ? We cannot separate the righteousness of Christ from Christ himself. Therefore in order for men to get the righteousness of Christ, they must have the life of Christ. So the free gift comes upon all men who are justified by the life of Christ. Justification is

life. It is the life of Christ. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, even so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous." These are simple and positive statements. No good can come to man by questioning them. He only reaps barrenness to his soul. Let us accept them and believe them.

"The free gift came upon all men to justification of life." Are all men going to be justified? All men might if they would; but says Christ: "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." All are dead in trespasses and sins. The grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared unto all men. It comes right within the reach of all men, and those who do not get it are those who do not want it.

"As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous." That settles the whole question, as to whether you and I can do works that will make us righteous. It is by the obedience of *one* man. Now which man shall that be? Can I do righteousness that will do you any good?—No. Can you do righteousness that will do me any good?—No. Suppose that one man could do righteous works that would be set to his account as making him righteous—who shall he be? I cannot do it for you, and you cannot do it for me. Then who is the man? Jesus Christ of Nazareth!

This settles the question as to whether justification by faith comes by the law. By the obedience of Christ are many made righteous or obedient. Righteousness is obedience to the law. Did you ever read or hear of any human being who kept the law perfectly? Or did you ever hear of anyone, however high his standard was set, who did not find something beyond, that he had not attained to? Even worldly men often have an ideal of their own; but the nearer they can come to that ideal, the greater lack they see in themselves. Anyone who is sincere in trying to reach a high standard, when he gets there, will see something beyond it.

There is one spotless life. There is one man, the man Christ Jesus, who resisted successfully all the powers of sin, when he was here upon earth. He was the Word made flesh. God in Christ reconciled the world to himself. He could stand before the world, and challenge any to convict him of sin. No guile was found in his mouth. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;" and by his obedience shall many be made righteous.

Then comes the question, how can this be? It is the same question that the Jews propounded to Christ, when he said, "Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you." Said they, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" There are many to-day who may be found asking the same question when they say how can I have his life or his righteousness? Could Jesus explain to them how he could give them his flesh? He could not do it except by the words He spake unto them,—They are spirit and they are life. The plan of salvation cannot be explained to man. It was made by an infinite being, and we cannot understand it. As to how it takes place we are ignorant. Through all eternity we will not understand how it was done. It is only infinite power that can or could do it; it is only infinite wisdom that can understand it.

If we will eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood, we will have the life of Christ. If we have his life, we have a righteous life; his obedience works in us and that makes us righteous. This does not leave any room for the statement that Christ obeyed for us, and that therefore we can do as we please, and his righteousness will be accounted unto us just the same. His obedience must be manifested in us day by day. It is not our obedience, but the obedience of Christ working in us. By those "exceeding great and precious promises," we take the divine life into us. The life we live is the life of the Son of God. He died for us, and loved us with a love that we cannot fathom. The righteousness that we have is his. THANKS BE TO GOD FOR THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT. He lets us get all the benefit of that obedience, because we have shown our intense desire for obedience. That is why He gives it to us.

When you go to God, take these Scriptures on your lips: "We shall be saved by his life." "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Take them to God in prayer. They are true, for the Lord himself has said so. How can these blessings be obtained? By faith! Take it by faith, and it is yours, and no one can take it from you. Then you will have it, although you do not understand how it can be done. When you have it, you have life. What life? The divine life. Then when you come up to the time of temptation, the time when you have usually fallen, you can tell Satan that he has no power to make you fall beneath that temptation, for it is not you, *but Christ that dwelleth in you.*

There never was a time in the life of any man when of himself he had power to resist temptation. We cannot do it. That proves that we must have a life different from our natural life in order to resist sin at all. That must be a life that sin has never touched and can never touch. Repeat the glorious words over and over again, "His life is mine, I cannot be touched by sin. His strength is my strength; his obedience is my obedience, and his life is my life. That was a sinless life, and by faith I have it. I hold to it because it is mine, and sin cannot touch it." That is the only way to resist them, and that will be successful every time.

"Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

The time of the entering in of the law was the time when it was spoken from Sinai. It entered that the offense, or sin, might abound. But where *that sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* There was sin in the world before that law was proclaimed from Sinai. Therefore the law was there before it was proclaimed from Sinai. But God spoke it in that awful way, and in those thunder tones from the mount, for the purpose that sin might seem to be a greater sin. It was done that the people might see sin more as God saw it.

These things were written for our benefit. The speaking of that law in thunder tones, with such a solemn scene of grandeur all around it, is to have the same effect on us that it had on the children of Israel. We are to see the thunderclouds and the lightning, and they are to strike terror into our hearts.

Still further: Whoever touched the mount was to die. What is meant by that? All that was intended to show the awfulness of the law. It was given in that way that the people might see the wonderful majesty that it had, and that by it no man could get life. It was so great that no man could keep it. Everything connected with its giving, conspired to show man that *the only thing he could get by it was death*. It was so great, so inexpressibly great, that they never could reach to the heights of it. It was given in that way to show the people that there was only death and condemnation to them in it.

Then was not the law just given to put discouragement into the hearts of the people? No; go back to Abraham, and we shall see what else was taught by the giving of the law. There was a promise to Abraham and to his righteous seed, of a righteous inheritance. That promise was sworn to Abraham and to his seed by God himself. God had pledged *his own existence that there should be righteous men*,—men whose righteousness should be equal to the righteousness of the law. But here was the law in such awful majesty that there could be no righteousness gotten out of it. It was to be the sole standard. Now put two things together: The law is so holy in its claims that no man can get any righteousness out of it, as was shown in the giving of it; but God had sworn that there should be men who would have all the righteousness that it demands; therefore the very giving of the law served to show the people that there must be and was another way of getting that same righteousness.

So in giving the law, he was giving the gospel in thunder tones. Righteousness and peace dwell together in fullness in Christ. So in him is life. Condemnation is in the law, but the law is in Christ; and in Christ is also LIFE. In Christ we get the righteousness of the law by his life. The voice that declared the law from Sinai, was the voice of Christ, the voice of the very one who has this righteousness to bestow.

Now see the force of the words of Moses in Deut. 33:2, 3. "And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of his saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. YEA, HE LOVED THE PEOPLE."

The giving of that law was one of the highest manifestations of love that could be; because it preached to the people in the strongest tones that there was life in Christ. The one who gave the law, was the one who brought them out of Egypt. He was the one who swore to Abraham that he and his seed should be righteous, and this showed to them that they could not get righteousness in the law; but that they could get it through Christ. So there was a superabundance of grace; for where sin, by the giving of the law did abound, there grace did much more abound. That thing is acted out every time that there is a sinner converted. Before his conversion he does not realize the sinfulness of his sins. Then the law comes in and shows him how awful those sins are; but with it comes the gentle voice of Christ in whom there is grace and life.

How precious it is to have that conviction of sin sent to our hearts, for we know that it is a part of the work of the comforter which God sends into the world to convict of sin. It is a part of the comfort of God to convict of sin; because the same hand that convicts of sin holds the pardon, that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign

through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. In this grace we have again those precious words,—*much more*. Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds.

The Lord searches the heart, and he knows our sins. Shall we go about mourning and sighing, and saying our sins are so great, that God cannot forgive such sinners as we are? Some people seem to fancy that God never knew that they had any sins. Then they say that they are not worthy that he should take their sins away. They cannot see how he can save them. Who is it that makes us feel sinful? Who shows us our unworthiness? How do we come to find out that we have sinned? It is God that shows us our sins. He had known them all the time. We do not consider this,—that God has known all our sins beforehand, and that he it is who shows them to us for the first time, when we are convicted of sin by him.

When God made the plan of salvation, he knew what he was doing. He knew the human heart. He knew the depth of degradation to which humanity would fall, as no man has ever known it. Now, by his law he drives the sins home to our hearts, and then that sin abounds in the proportion that it should. It was small in our eyes before, but he makes us see it as he sees it.

Remember it is the COMFORTER that convicts. Remember that where sin abounds in your heart, or in your mind, that there grace does much more abound. It is your firm belief of that that makes the grace effective in taking away the sin. Christ is able to save to the uttermost him that cometh to God by him. You cannot ask anything of him so good or so great, but what he is able to do it and—

MUCH MORE.

God does not have to take the measure of grace, and look over the world to see how many there are among whom it will need to be divided, and then go to work to portion it out so that there will be enough to go round. He gives us scripture measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. No matter how great are the sins to be covered up, *there is grace much more than enough to do it*. Mortal man may be covered with the righteousness of Christ as with a garment. Then let us take the life of Christ by faith, and live a new life.

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