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Editorial

Autumn/Winter 2000

CHRIST IS THE WISDOM OF GOD

We are well and truly into the 3rd millennium. Despite some controversy, about whether there ever was a year zero, there is now no doubt two thousand years have passed since the birth of Christ. There is general agreement among scholars of chronology that Jesus was born in the period between the third and second year before the date calculated by Dionysius Exiguus some five centuries later.

On a recent television documentary we learned of the discovery of the town of Herculaneum, buried under molten ash by the eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79. The discovery was first made when some monks fell through the floor of part of their monastery into a large auditorium. This occurred in the late eighteenth century but after initial exploration nothing further was done on any scale until the late twentieth century.

One of the buildings buried in the eruption was the library of a wealthy person, and it contained a huge amount of paper scrolls. These had been burnt to charcoal and after an initial examination in the eighteenth century scholars had concluded any reading to be impossible. Both ink and paper were charred beyond recognition and no letters at all could be distinguished.

In the eighth decade of the twentieth century a careful examination of the whole site was begun, and only then was the scale of the library apparent. A computer simulation of the building housing the scrolls was shown, and it certainly would not have looked out of place in any modern wealthy suburb. Scholars now had access to modern scientific techniques, (a spin off of the space exploration program), and when these were applied, gradually the scrolls became clearly readable. I was able to read some of the words shown, for they were written in Greek, not Latin.

Only a small number of texts examined were written in Latin, the vast majority were in Greek, and this confirms what has long be suspected —that even in the late first century the educated classes wrote and studied largely in Greek. Critics seeking to detract from the reliability of the Scriptural record have

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in the past insisted that Paul must have written to the Romans in Latin for that would have been the only appropriate language. But it is known that Roman lawyers in the second century A.D. were unable to read a treaty drawn up a hundred years earlier, such was the instability of the language. Paul would not have written to the saints in Rome in a language largely unknown to them, and this find at Herculaneum proves the literate classes understood Greek.

THE CONTENT OF THE SCROLLS

The content of the scrolls also has a bearing on the scriptural records. The vast majority contain the thoughts of Greek philosophers, Stoics, Epicureans and others. Stoicism appealed to the Romans because of the grave earnestness of the national character, yet the library seems to contain mostly Epicurean writings. Paul was no doubt familiar with these thoughts, and had addressed the Athenians in the language of philosophy. Yet no church was founded in Athens, and writings to the Corinthians soon after, he says "I decide to know nothing among you, except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." To the wise of this world, the word of the cross is foolishness. The Epicurean philosophy is summed up in Paul's words of 1 Cor. 15:32—"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die"—they had no place for Christ.

The outcome of philosophy is an altar to an unknown God.

Paul, one of the cleverest men of his generation, could almost certainly have written using the arguments of philosophers to draw conclusions, but he never does so. He warns us against the words of the wise — "Beware that no one be despoiling you through philosophy and empty seduction, in accord with human tradition, in accord with the elements of the world, and not in accord with Christ—for in Him the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily. And you are complete in Him."

After his experience with the Athenians, Paul declares that Christ is the very wisdom of God to us. There are not many wise, not many powerful, not many noble (though there are some). God chooses the weak, the ignoble, the contemptible, "So that no flesh at all shall be boasting in God's sight. Yet you of Him are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance."

God's Love *Satisfies* God's Righteousness

By Jan de Jong.

We often talk about salvation, of escaping the wrath of God, of not coming into judgment etc, and we all feel that God has been very good to us indeed. But it is all the more amazing when we realise that we were called before the foundation (disruption) of the world. We have not any say in it whatsoever! We may well think somehow that we have been 'let off,' but there is still a residual amount of guilt. Christ has paid the "penalty," and we go free. Nevertheless we tend to feel a certain amount of unease, because we do not deserve the favourable treatment we receive.

How do we square us being 'let off,' so to speak, with God's holiness and righteousness? Let us look at what the scriptures have to say about this.

To begin with, we will look at Matthew's account, chapter 3 and verses 11-17. This passage deals with the baptism of our Lord. We are not surprised to find John remonstrating with the Lord, when he says: "I have need to be baptized by Thee, and Thou art coming to me!" It is the answer of Jesus that made me take notice— "By your leave, at present, for thus it is becoming for us to fulfil all righteousness!!

What does this mean ? Basically the theme of the gospel revolves around this very statement. Christ came to fulfil God's righteousness! We are all too accustomed to the saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and that is quite correct and proper. But not many

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people realise that, by doing this, Christ also came to fulfil *God's* righteousness.

When we talk of our Lord becoming in the likeness of a human being, we tend to overlook the fact that Christ did this, not only of His own volition, but in active compliance with His Father's will.

When Christ walked this earth, it was God Who proclaimed the good news. When Christ was crucified and suffered the most terrible death any human has ever inflicted on another, He underwent this suffering as the Head of the human race.

Genesis 1 tells us that God purposed to create Man, in His image, in His likeness. Why? There had been a rebellion in the heavenly spheres, as we read in the Unveiling.¹ There could not be any possibility of redemption without death. So when God created man, He created a being that (1) was capable of having fellowship with Him; (2) had the opportunity to obey or not to obey; (3) was capable of dying.

God knew beforehand that Man and Woman would fall into the trap that Satan had set. But is hard for many of us to swallow that this was precisely God's intention, for it went contrary to His revealed will to Adam.

Romans 9 illustrates this: in verse 19 we read: "You will be protesting to me, then, 'Why, then, is He still blaming? For who has withstood His intention?'"

***“ Pharaoh stubbornly
refused to obey God's will,
but he fulfilled God's
intention to the letter !”***

The common translations read: 'who has withstood His will ?' but are not correct. Romans gives us the illustration of the Pharaoh of Egypt. He stubbornly refused to obey God's will, but he fulfilled God's intention to the letter! Later on, at the eve of the conquest of Canaan, we read of Rahab who told the spies that the fame of the Lord has gone ahead of Israel, because they knew what God had accomplished in this case.

Colossians tells us something more about Christ. In chapter 1 we read (from verse 15) that —“He is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is *all* created, that in the heavens and that on the earth” (read verses 15-21).

¹ Paul also refers to this estrangement.

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Now we begin to see the unique position of Christ. ***He is the Head of all creation!*** And this includes the heavenly hosts as well as those on earth. These spirit beings cannot die, because they do not have a mortal body, as we have. But God would bring them back to Himself, and humanity is the vehicle God uses to accomplish His purpose.

Let us now turn again to Paul's letter to the Romans. From chapter 1 to chapter 3:20, Paul proves that all humanity is subject to the just verdict of God, because *all* have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

In chapter three, from verse 21, the picture changes radically. 'Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets) yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction.'

“ The letter to the Romans is the Magna Charta of the Christian faith. ”

² Sinner, do you want to be justified before God ? Read Romans !
Saint, do you want to lead a life well pleasing to God ? Ponder Romans !
This sentence appears in the introduction to the Concordant Commentary on Romans.

It is important to read the four accounts, or Gospels, of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John recorded in the Scriptures, because you need to know what happened. They detail the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Romans, however, tells you *why* it happened, and explains the counsel of God in His great plan.

You will note that a righteousness of God is revealed, (Ro. 3:22) apart from law, through Jesus Christ's faith. It is translated as such in the authorised version of the Scriptures as well. It was not until Dr. Robert Young started interfering with the translations that this phrase was changed to 'faith in Jesus Christ.' My Brother and Sister, *your* faith accounts for precisely nothing. It is the Grace of God that enabled you to accept the Good News.

This change in translation is rather mischievous. Maybe Dr. Robert Young did not grasp the significance of what he did himself. The correct phrase, 'through Jesus Christ's faith,' is in the genitive case. In the

² The "Magna Charta," is the "great charter" of A.D. 1215 that forms the basis of English law. Some of its provisions have been included in the laws of many other countries.

God's Love Satisfies God's Righteousness

Scriptures a genitive denotes character, a dative (faith in Jesus Christ) usually denotes location.

When Christ, as the Head of Creation, died on our behalf, he **enacted** God's righteousness. That is, He accomplished, through His infinite love for His whole creation, what creation could not do for itself. All we are asked to do is to believe what God has spoken, and done for us. 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness.'

We must realise, once and for all, that nothing of our own effort merits the favour of God. Even the desire to will and to work for His delight³ is given to us. This salvation will eventually be extended to all, be it via different routes.

1 Timothy verses 9-11 brings this out –“Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this we are toiling and being reproached) that we rely on the living God, *Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers*. Timothy is exhorted to charge and teach these truths.

That word “especially” –*malista* in the Greek, is most interesting. It always predicates *inclusiveness*. We are not the only ones to be saved. We have been saved to serve, to proclaim God's love and righteousness far beyond the realms of our imagination. Ephesians 3 verses 10 & 11 *hint* at our future role. Read Ephesians for yourself once again. It is the pinnacle of God's revelation.

May God help us to see that the Good News is for all mankind, and that is why we preach the Gospel. We are not to know whom the Lord will call, but I am sure of one thing: that one day, at the conclusion of time, *God will be All in all*. The work of Christ on Calvary will let Him see of the travail of His soul and He will be satisfied.

I am equally sure that the Son of God will be satisfied with nothing less than *the whole lot!* God's love satisfies God's righteousness, and all the glory goes to Him and to our wonderful Saviour. We give thanks for so great a salvation, and for such a marvellous God.

³ Philippians 2:

Letters

From our "In" and "Out" Trays.

Dear Sirs, —I'm Writing to you because I recently came across a tract of yours entitled "The Reconciliation of All to God" which I found very strange and even contradictory (Rev. 20:14,15 etc P3) and very selective in its (mis)use of scripture.

However, may I request from you further information, particularly on who you are and what you believe (a la statement of doctrinal stance). In your reply I would appreciate honesty without generalizations or evasive language which I'm sure you'll agree is not asking too much .I thus look forward to your prompt reply and thank you in advance for your response.

Most Sincerely P. M.J.M..

Our Reply

Dear Philip, Brother in the Lord,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Do we need anything more?

Thank you for your letter of 24th inst, and for your enquiry. It appears that, though you do not make a direct statement, you have an attitude that is hostile to us. You seem to infer that we will not be honest unless asked. Your language could be taken as offensive by anyone who reads: "without generalizations or evasive language." Have you already assumed that we will be evasive, thus questioning our honesty ? Shame! May our God grant to all of us to "Humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God !"

You ask who we are: in a few words, we are sinners saved by grace.

It is most distasteful to have to reply to such a question, but to satisfy your curiosity, the writer was brought up in a well known orthodox evangelical denomination, and still worships with them.

In what was probably his last letter, Paul admonishes Timothy to "Stand by the Word." It seems you think that "Grace and Truth" is the organ of some religious body. Not so. You ask for a statement of our 'doctrinal

stance.' Probably you mean an approved form of words, such as is issued by some religious sects. We hope you will not consider us 'evasive' if we state this in the words of scripture.

Quotations are from the Revised Version. If you consider the words of scripture do not adequately express God's truth, then read no further.

"There is one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we exist." (1 Cor. 8)

". . . . His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in him all things were created. . . . in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace through the blood of his cross." (Col. 1:13-16; 19-20).

"I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith." (Rom.1:17).

"For from him and through him and to him are all things. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Rom. 11:36).

"None is righteous, no not one" (Rom. 3:9) "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23).

"While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom.5:6). "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (5:8).

"If because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace, and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Then, as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous."(Ro.5:17-19).

"We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called in accord with his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first born among many brethren. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to this?" (Rom.8:28-31).

"You are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (Eph.1:13).

"If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (1Cor.15:17 18)

"We have our hope set on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe." (1 Tim.4:10).

"For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15: 22)
"The last enemy to be destroyed is death." (15:26) "That God may be everything to everyone" (15:28). . . "Then shall come to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'" (15:54)

"As a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."

"At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven, and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil.2: 10-11).

These scriptures were chosen after only a moment's thought. Perhaps a better selection could be given, but you asked for a prompt response to your letter. No scripture is withheld except for lack of space. If anyone has a belief that forces them to ignore parts of scripture, they ought to be uneasy about it. We have quoted from the R.V. not because it is preferable, but because it is well known and widely accepted.

Note: Doctrine must be expressed in the actual words of revelation, consistently translated and concordantly expressed. It should be taken from passages which are clearly teaching that subject and not be inferred from casual texts and historical incidents. Further, that which is unclear should be understood in the light of what is clear. Inference cannot stand against doctrinal statement.

What troubles you ? Would you rather not believe God's word when it tells us that God will be All in all ? Is the caprice of the human will able to thwart the purpose of God, or do you believe in a purposeless universe where there is a constant struggle between good and evil ? Have we deceived ourselves and are thinking better thoughts than God has expressed in His word ?

If you care to consult a Greek concordance (Young's, Strong's or Wigram's) you will notice that the word chosen by the translators in Rev. 20 is also translated as age; ever; never; course; world and several other words. Thus they obscured the fact that Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 takes us far beyond the end of Revelation.

If you know of something better than God being All in all, and the ultimate reconciliation of all to Him, please write and tell us, in order that

we may rejoice with you. If not, we entreat you, please consider it possible you may be mistaken.

We have endeavoured to write in a gracious spirit. Please forgive us if we have mistaken the tone of your letter, or appear in any way presumptuous or arrogant.

May our God and Father grant to all of us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realisation of Himself.

Yours in His grace, most sincerely,

Andrew Maclarty.

"HIS ACHIEVEMENT ARE WE"

Newsdesk

America The full programme of meetings for 2001 is not yet to hand, but meetings have been arranged in the following places.

April 28th	Almont MI.	Call Dean Hough on 810-798-8131
May 12th	Kitchener Ontario	Call Harry Watts on 519-745-3154
June 8-10th	Willard OH	Call Jeff Priddy on 419-752-7383

England Blackheath, Birmingham. The May meeting has been booked for Sunday, May 13th at the Bible Hall in Park Street. **Annual Concordant Conference.** Once again the annual conference will be held at Bawtry Hall, Bawtry, Retford, Notts. This year times are from 4 P.M. Friday August 17th – Sunday 19th. Please call David Osgood to make your reservation. 01708 449 461

OBITUARIES

Herbert Simpson, Mansfield, Notts. Sept. 2000 For more than half a century Herbert bore witness to God's grace in the evangel, and left an outstanding testimony. A man of calm disposition who had the assurance of understanding, he was characterized by "words fitly spoken." He has now entered the sleep without a dream, to await the call to meet his Lord in the air. We extend our sympathy to his wife and family and all who are bereaved of his wise counsel.

Kevin J. Berry of Williamson, MI fell asleep in Jesus at the early age of 46. A man of cheerful disposition in spite of severe physical afflictions, Kevin rejoiced that the momentary sufferings do not deserve to be compared with the glory about to be revealed. God's word was his most precious possession and shaped his character and outlook. Asleep "till He come"

The Disruption

—Its Place in God’s Ways

By Andrew Maclarty

FOUNDATION

The term ‘*foundation*’ is found in all versions of the Bible. In the Concordant Version it is used just 16 times, but in most versions it occurs around 28 times. A reader of any other version might assume this to be an accurate translation of a single Greek word—meaning *foundation* in all 28 places.

Readers new to the Concordant Version may at first find the language a little strange. Why are there so many unfamiliar words?⁴ Could not more ‘user friendly’ terms be employed? It almost seems as if the translators tried to use strange and obscure terms. One such word is the subject of this article: it is ‘disruption’. Though this term is not uncommon in everyday affairs, when we look at other versions (translations) of the Bible we do not find the term ‘disruption’ at all. It is rendered almost universally by the English word ‘foundation.’

⁴ There are only a few unusual words that occur with any frequency. The principle of fixing exclusive meanings requires a slightly larger vocabulary to take account of idiom.

The Disruption —Its Place in God’s Ways

As we read *foundation* in its various occurrences we find it used in a parable where two men built houses, one founded on a rock, and the other without a foundation. When Paul and Silas are in prison in Philippi, the foundations of the prison are shaken by an earthquake. A further instance is where Paul says, in 1 Corinthians 3:10-12 “Other foundation can no man lay beside that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone is building . . .” It is obvious that, whatever the Greek word may be, it is correctly translated *foundation* in these scriptures, for there is a reference to building on it.

In each of the above scriptures the Greek term rendered *foundation* is *THEMELIOS*, a compound word made up of two parts: *thenos* meaning place, and *melios* meaning care. So *THEMELIOS* means place-care.

An early Greek thinker pointed out that gravity stands at a right angle to the horizon. When we lay the foundation for a house, it must be placed very carefully indeed. If it is not level the walls of the building will not be vertical. The windows will not fit properly, the doors will not close. A foundation must be ‘placed care’-fully.

This expression occurs some 16 times in the New Testament (the Greek scriptures), and in every place it is used as a basis for building, either literally (the foundation of a house), or figuratively (Christ is the one foundation). We can be certain that *THEMELIOS* is correctly translated *foundation*.

THE MISSING TWELVE WORDS —DISRUPTION

DISRUPTION

We noted that ‘foundation’ occurs 28 times in most versions. Why can we only account for 16 in the Concordant Version? What about the other 12 —where do they fit in ?

The Disruption —Its Place in God’s Ways

They do not fit in at all ! Only one Greek word means ‘foundation’ and it occurs 16 times —no more. In the other 12 scriptures where various versions have ‘foundation,’ it is a rendering of a different Greek word —KATABOLE, and it means something quite different from the other word also translated ‘foundation.’

DISRUPTION

‘Disruption’ is an accurate translation of the Greek *katabole*. It occurs twelve times, and only the Concordant Version has this term. All others have translated *katabole* as ‘foundation.’ Without a Concordant Version we would conclude that all occurrences of foundation represent the same Greek word. According to them, *katabole* also means ‘foundation.’

KATABOLE sounds similar to some other words we already know well, such as ‘catastrophe’ and ‘cataclysm’: in fact, it is already in use in our language as katabolism. It also is made of two parts, kata, meaning down, and bole meaning cast.

If we look it up katabolism in a dictionary we will find it defined as “the disruptive process of chemical change in organisms; destructive metabolism.”⁵ It is also used in metallurgy, and also to describe the breaking down of food in digestion.

Disruption is never used of a constructive process.

⁵ Chambers 20th Century Dictionary.

SUMMARY

Two words are translated *foundation*. They are not similar in meaning. They have no common elements. One means *place-care* and the other means *down-cast*. The Concordant Version renders *place-care* as *foundation*, and *down-cast* as *disruption*. *Foundation* is always a basis for building. **Nothing is ever built on the *disruption*.**

FOUNDATION = <i>THEMELIOS</i> (PLACE-CARE)	DISRUPTION = <i>KATABOLE</i> (DOWN -CAST)
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What caused the disruption ?

No immediate explanation is offered as to the cause of the disruption, other than to require it to be an intended feature in God's ways. The suggestion is sometimes offered that it was the result of a judging. Could this be so ? Was the disruption brought about by a judgment ?

The main feature of a judgment is a setting right—a restoration of equity—a fairness to both sides. When two parties have a dispute and take the matter to court, the judgment is between them. Each receives that to which his legal rights entitle him. In a criminal case, the judge has to be fair to the individual, and fair to the law. The usual outcome is that, if a person has infringed the law's rights, these must be restored, and the person is given a penalty.

A further point is that there is the feature of correcting in a judgment. It must correct that which is wrong. This feature of correction is absent from the disruption, for we

The Disruption —Its Place in God’s Ways

have following from the disruption, not only the history of that event, but also a *state* of disruption. This has continued and will continue until the heading up of all in Christ. When we consider these matters, it is clear that the disruption was not the result of a judgment. **Nothing was corrected or restored by the disruption.**

The Scriptures tell us that the saints were chosen before the disruption of the world. Why are we told this? And would it make any difference if it was before the *foundation*, rather than before the *disruption* of the world? Why in any case are we told this ? The critical point is that by examining all the contexts of this word, we learn that the disruption was a pivotal point in God’s ways:—

Before the disruption there was no sin. No enmity. No estrangement. No darkness. Before the disruption there existed only good. There was no evil.

We learn that we were chosen in Christ before that event, in order that we might know there existed no reason for the choice, other than God’s counsels. These were God’s Own counsels, and no one was consulted, for all is out of God.

SUMMARY

“ Here is an ominous event of which we previously knew nothing. It is given no place in translations, other than in the Concordant Version. ”

From the disruption there has come sin and suffering, opposition and estrangement. From that point the death of God’s Son was a certainty. God cannot now be approached by the creature. The headship of Christ is denied by creation. There is now not only an event, but also a *state* of disruption.

The Disruption —Its Place in God's Ways

The following list of Scriptures shows all the occurrences of disruption when it refers to the disruption of the world. Note the distinction between 'before' and 'from' the disruption.

Before the disruption:

1. John 17:24. "Thou lovest Me before the disruption of the world."
2. Eph. 1:4 "He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world."
3. 1 Peter 1:20 "The precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world."

From the disruption:

4. Matt. 13:35 "I shall be opening My mouth in parables, I shall be emitting what is hid from the disruption of the world."
5. Matt.25:34 "The kingdom made ready for you from the disruption of the world."
6. Luke 11:50 "The blood of all the prophets which is shed from the disruption of the world."
7. Heb. 4:3 "Although the works occur from the disruption of the world."
8. Heb. 9:26 "He must be suffering often from the disruption of the world."
9. Rev. 13:8 "The Lambkin, slain from the disruption of the world."
10. Rev. 17:8 "The scroll of life, from the disruption of the world."

We can see there are three things stated to have been "before the disruption," and seven things which are "from the disruption." One of the outstanding occurrences of 'disruption' is in Ephesians One, verse four. There we read, the saints were chosen in Christ "before the disruption of the world," C.V.

Now it might seem to us that there is no great difference in the meaning of the text whichever word we use, for if we understand that God chooses us in Christ before the foundation of the world, it means

The Disruption —Its Place in God’s Ways

just as much to us. We might think that whichever word we choose to represent the Greek, it means the same, for it does not alter God’s choosing of us. In either case it was long before we were born. Someone might even argue that it makes no real difference to the meaning of any sentence in the list quoted.

But there are several very real differences, and one of them is critical. These two Greek words have no similarity of meaning, no common elements, and we lose value from each if we make one term to represent both. Yet if we are reading the Concordant Version, where each word has its exclusive English equivalent, by examining every occurrence of foundation and of disruption, we have a clearness of thought not otherwise possible. Each word is a subject for consideration. These are things any reader can easily check by using a concordance of Greek, such as Young’s, Strong’s or Wigram’s.

It is possible to research this subject without a Concordant Version, but *you would not do so unless you knew what you were looking for*. So to make real progress in understanding God’s word, a Concordant Version is the ideal tool.

Sometimes people object to our enthusiasm for the C.V. We reply, “We are not ‘into the Concordant Version’ —we are ‘into the Scriptures,’ and use the Concordant Version to gain better understanding. If something better came along, I pray we would have the wisdom and humility to adopt that —***but it also would need to have a consistent vocabulary —a pattern of sound words.*** We should not go back to a discordant vocabulary, for in the original Scriptures, the vocabulary was already consistent. Discordances came only with translations.”

The Disruption —Its Place in God's Ways

What are the differences we spoke of —one of them critical?

In some aspects 'disruption' means almost the opposite of foundation, for the result of *katabole*—that is, **disruption** —excludes the feature of planning, of place care. We began by noting that some things were stated to have been 'before the disruption,' and some 'from the disruption.' Let us now look at some of the instances quoted in our introduction.

The Lamb was slain (9) *from* the disruption—yet was foreknown (3) *before the disruption*. This tells us there was no requirement for the death of Christ *before* the disruption. Sin had not made its appearance *before* the disruption. The harmony of creation was unbroken. Yet *from* the disruption (8) Christ must be suffering often.

The blood of Christ was foreknown (3) *before* the disruption. Here we learn that, before the entrance of sin, God has planned for its removal. This also tells us that God was not overtaken by events —that the death of His Son was not to rectify something that had appeared without His foreknowledge.

The saints who comprise the ecclesia, the body of Christ, were chosen (2) *before* that event, yet the scroll of life, for God's saints in Israel, was (10) *from* that event. Israel's ministry was to be a testimony to the nations, yet in God's intention, it demonstrated the failure of human endeavour, and the weakness of the flesh.

“ The critical matter is the death of God's Son. Following the disruption it became a certainty.”

The Disruption —Its Place in God's Ways

Before the disruption God made the secret of His will, as we read in verse 9 of Ephesians 1. The secret of His will was made by the counsel of His will. And what did this secret require ? It required the cross !

We have waited many centuries before the scriptures speak of the secret of God's will. Why is it not mentioned in Matthew, Mark or Luke ? Why not in Isaiah ? —Because Ephesians is speaking of the counsel of God's will, and Isaiah was not. Nor was Moses, nor the Psalmist, nor any of the minor prophets. Yet we learn from Proverbs that God ways were begun in wisdom. Wisdom, when personified, says she had being before God began his works. Therefore—

Wisdom preceded God's ways with creation

God made the secret of His will. But why was there the need for a secret? Why did matters have to be kept secret ? Because estrangement was to enter the universe, and estrangement was to be dispelled —was to be removed altogether, so that all might come to realise the love of the Father. It was not something which occurred without God's wisdom and knowledge, coming along to be the eternal nightmare !

***“ In the wisdom of God,
the world through wisdom
knew not God! ”***

Before the disruption, God made the secret of His will. This secret required the cross, and was maintained down the centuries. Even though the conduct of humanity was pressing for something better, it remained a secret. The failure of the law, due to the weakness of the flesh, demonstrated the need for something better. And even though it has been revealed to us, those who are the body of Christ, it remains secret from the world. This we learn as we ponder the other instances of disruption. The Lambkin was slain from the disruption of the world ! Yet,

The Disruption —Its Place in God's Ways

together with this, God's wisdom is hid from the disruption of the world.

Much religion teaches that Satan caused the 'fall' of humanity in Genesis 3, yet nowhere in Scripture is Adam's transgression referred to as the 'fall'. We are learning here is that nothing happens outside God's specific counsel and intention.

Our next matter for consideration therefore is, what was God doing at the disruption ? What place does it have in His purpose ?

We might ask the question: Does religion find any accommodation for the salvation of Satan? No indeed! They cannot—for they are thoroughly unable to account for his existence ! They see him as a creature who appeared—from nowhere—and brought about the entrance of sin into the universe, and has caused estrangement between man and his Maker, Who was unable to prevent it happening.

But that is not the God of the scriptures. Out of Him, and through Him and for Him is all. And He is love, and planned all before any part of His purpose was put into execution.

As we have been saying, the disruption was a pivotal point in God's ways. It is synonymous with the setting up of the office of the Adversary, for at that point sin entered the universe, and from that point God required the cross. There now existed a creature who did not accept the glory of Him Who was the Image of the invisible God. He was opposed—he did not accept the headship of the Firstborn of creation. His office was the jurisdiction of darkness !

“The disruption ushered in the jurisdiction of darknes!”

Let us now look at another matter. In verse 4 of this first chapter of Ephesians one, we have reference made to the disruption, the down-casting—and in verse 10 reference is being made to the heading up. Must there

The Disruption —Its Place in God’s Ways

not be a definite connection between the two, the one reversing the other ? The origin confirms the outcome, and the outcome confirms the origin. This is a piece of simple logic, the one reverses the other. We cannot return without first having set out. We cannot arrive without having departed. The origin confirms the consummation, and the consummation confirms the origin. And if it does not, we are thinking nonsense.

HEADED-UP

Here is an unique term, without equivalent in human affairs. The meaning of this word takes in the abolition of sin, the reconciliation of all to the Father, and the consummation of God’s purpose to be All in all. The glory of God’s Son has ever been to glorify His Father, out of Whom all is. This is accomplished when He heads up all —Eph. 1:10, 1 Cor. 15:28, Phil. 2:11.

We have in some ways noted the effects of the disruption. It caused a crisis of the utmost magnitude in the universe, for the previous unbroken harmony of creation existed no longer. Now we can no longer speak of the headship of Christ, for alongside that there is the jurisdiction of darkness that denies His headship. But in this jurisdiction of darkness God operates the secret of His will. He will call out a body of believers who will acknowledge that Christ is the Head.

“THE TOTAL REVERSAL OF ‘DOWN-CASTING.’ —ALL WILL BE ‘HEADED UP’ IN CHRIST ”

Note the term HEAD. In a college, the head boy or girl is the first among equals. We are not inferring that we are the equal of Christ, but that He is operating as Head of the ecclesia (church), in anticipation of that day when He will be head of the universe. As Head, He will **lead** a reconciled and glorified universe back to the Father, out of Whom all is.

As Head, He leads. We are not here thinking of discipline or rule, or of subjugation. Lord and Ruler and King are terms that agree with these words, but as Head He leads. Only a reconciled universe will follow. Only thus can creation come to realise the glory of the Father’s love, revealed in the Son of His love.

Truly, then, by His obedient leading, all the effects of disruption will be reversed.

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ROMANS

Study No. 11. Chapter 2:17 – 3:20

No Partiality with God.

This section does not go into new truth, but, rooting itself in the previous verses, it takes the phrase “no partiality with God”, 2:11, and explains it by applying it to a particular case. Failure to recognise this has led to much difficulty in understanding God's word, and has even led to bringing in matters that have clouded rather than clarified what is here taught.

The facts of “the just judgment of God” (2:6) have been set forth. These show that the judgment is *all embracing*, for it includes Jew and Greek. Its fundamental and inviolable principle is that *not the listeners to law are just with God, but the doers of law will be justified*, and the judgment is *impartial*.

These statements are perfectly clear and should occasion no difficulty to anyone, yet humans are so perverse they will find reasons for applying this judgment to others and exemption to themselves. This clashes with the impartiality of the judgment. Anyone who thinks that he will have partial treatment should pay careful attention to what is said, for this section deals most thoroughly with that question.

“Lo! You are being denominated a Jew,” focuses attention on the most vital spot in this discussion, for, are not the Jews God's chosen people? If there is partiality in the judgment, then they, out of all mankind are the ones to whom it should go. For the Jew, the case is particular and direct, yet it is also an exposition of principles that cover all possible cases and is therefore a guide and a warning to all who would grant to themselves exemption from the judgment.

God's Love Satisfies God's Righteousness

“Lo! You are being denominated a Jew, and are resting on law, and are boasting in God, and know the will, and are testing what things are of consequence, being instructed out of the law.

Besides, you have confidence in yourself to be a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness, a discipliner of the imprudent, a teacher of minors, having the form of knowledge and the truth in the law.

“You, then who are teaching another, you are not teaching yourself! Who are heralding not to be stealing, you are stealing! Who are saying not to be committing adultery, you are committing adultery! Who are abominating idols, you are despoiling the sanctuary! Who are boasting in a law, through the transgression of the law you are dishonouring God! For because of you the name of God is being blasphemed among the nations, according as it is written . . .”

Having established the general position, the apostle now turns to deal with the case of the Jews. In doing so he does not seek to minimise the strength of their case. Faithfully he lays out their claim, and what a glorious claim it is! Who would not be proud to be able to claim all this? Has any nation in the whole world had anything like it? The nations have their own great men, and they have developed their own kind of wisdom; yet they have no real knowledge of God!

“ After all these centuries, all men really know about God has come through the Jews.”

Without them and the literature God gave them the world would be a dark place indeed. Truly they have a wonderful and privileged position.

Now the apostle turns, and, drawing attention from their favoured position, he makes them examine themselves so that *they will know what they are*. (This should be compared with 2:1-3; for that position is very similar to this. There men are shown that the proper use of the critical faculty is in self-examination.) It is all very

God's Love Satisfies God's Righteousness

well to be resting on law, to be boasting in God, etc; yet this demands that they themselves should be living expressions of the truth committed to them and which they taught to others. Yet here, in this vital matter, they failed.

In consequence, they are in the same deplorable condition as those they claim to teach. The nations who had not this favoured position, dishonoured God, 1:22-23; and the Jews in spite of their favours, were dishonouring God. The Jews, then, are in no better position than the nations, for the judgment calls for deeds, not a rehearsal of privilege. The judgment of God will be a great leveller of humanity. Truly it is impartial and just.

2:25-29

“For circumcision, indeed, is benefiting if you should be putting law into practice, yet if you should be a transgressor of law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. If the Uncircumcision, then, should be maintaining the just requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And the Uncircumcision who, by nature, are discharging the law's demands, shall be judging you, who through letter and circumcision, are a transgressor of law.”

“For not that which is apparent is the Jew, nor yet that which is apparent in flesh is circumcision; but that which is hidden is the Jew, and circumcision is of the heart⁶, in spirit, not in letter, whose applause is not of men, but of God.”

Jews and Greeks are guilty of dishonouring God, and therefore are in danger of indignation and fury according to 2:8-9. Yet with the Jew, the case is not so simple as with the Greek, for the Jew has a covenant relationship to God, Gen. 17:9-14: thus it becomes necessary to define the judgment in relation to circumcision.

This should be kept in mind, for verses 25-29 are not seeking a class of people who are superior to another class; they are seeking for an answer to the problem raised by Jewish misconduct and the circumcision covenant.

In this discussion, *circumcision, uncircumcision* and *law keeping* are thrown together from various angles, and it is shown that one of them (the law's demands) is invariable, and is always called for.

⁶Deuteronomy 10:16-17. A.V.; Jeremiah 4:4. A.V.; Jeremiah 9:26. A.V.; Acts. 7:51. C.V.

God's Love Satisfies God's Righteousness

In all the positions reviewed it is the inviolable principle of the judgment that is maintained. To use circumcision to condition the judgment is really to have matters in reverse for, in truth, it is circumcision and uncircumcision that are conditioned by whether the law is or is not maintained. There is only one way to escape indignation and that is by doing the law, for "not the listeners to law are just with God, but the doers of law will be justified". The practice of circumcision, though expressing the covenant relationship, does not absolve anyone from that obligation.

In verses 28-29 the discussion is carried forward and the error of the Jews in relation to circumcision is dealt with.

“ The Jew had been enthralled by the glamour of the covenant and had failed to see the truth that the rite represented. In its inception, it was not merely a sign of the covenant, but a “seal of the righteousness of the faith” which Abraham had in uncircumcision, 4:11. ”

That they were not in line with God's thoughts on this subject was continually pressed home on them, as shown in the following Scriptures referred to in footnote 1 on the preceding page.

Thus it is that the Jews are not only guilty of the same deplorable conduct as the rest of humanity, but they have the same sickness. The conduct of humanity arises from the fact that the heart is unintelligent, darkened and lustful 1:21-24: and the Jews by their failure around circumcision have retained in themselves the same kind of heart.