

To "... strengthen the things which remain..." Revelation 3:2

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Assembly Features and Functions, pt. 2

Brian Currie, Belfast

2. Gift in the Assembly

1 Corinthians can be divided into two sections. In chapters 1—6 Paul deals with matters that he has heard about from the house of Chloe (1:11), while in chapters 7—16 he deals with matters that he has read about in the letter he received from the Corinthian assembly (7:1). As the apostle deals with these matters he often introduces a new problem using the words "now concerning" (7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1; also 8:4 and 16:12 where the phrases "as concerning" and "as touching" are the same in the original).

This makes it plain that the Corinthians, in common with many today, had a problem in relation to the subject of gifts. Thus we read "*Now concerning spiritual gifts*" (12:1) and Paul's reply to this query fills the following three chapters. While the overriding thought is unity, the main subject in each chapter is

1 Cor. 12 — The Sovereign Appointment of Gift—
by the Spirit, v. 11; by God, vv. 18, 24, 28.

1 Cor. 13 — The Supreme Accompaniment of Gift—love.

1 Cor. 14 — The Solitary Aspiration of Gift —
to edify vv. 3, 4, 5, 12, 17 and 26.

The Sovereign Appointment of Gift

Paul deals with spiritual gifts three times in the New Testament.

(i) Rom. 12:3-8. where they are given by God

(ii) Eph. 4:8-16. where they are given by the ascended Lord

(iii) 1 Cor. 12:4-11. where they are given by the Holy Spirit
The whole of the Godhead is thus involved, clearly implying that distribution of gift is something spiritual and can in no sense be interpreted as a person's natural ability. Matt. 25:15 states that the talents are distributed "*to every man according to his several ability.*" This means that no one is given more than he has the capacity to handle but the distinction remains between the capacity of the man and the gift given by the Lord.

The notion of training people to be preachers and pastors and insisting on an ordained clergy is an attempt to remove from the Lord the sovereign authority to distribute gift as He wills. No amount of training in a Bible College will produce in a man something that God has seen fit to withhold. May the Lord preserve us until He comes from drifting back to that which our forefathers at great cost forsook.

In Corinth there was great emphasis placed on worldly wisdom and great oratory. This led to an exaltation of various men resulting in division and a party spirit in the assembly. This is rebuked in chapters 1-3 where the repetition of the words "wise" and "wisdom" should be noted. Such a condition could have been encouraged by the misuse and abuse of gift. In chapter 12 Paul shows that the proper exercise of gift would lead to unity. This he does by exposition, illustration and application.

The exposition is in vv. 1-14 where the Spirit is emphasized as the One who distributes gift and the argument is: if the Source of gift is united, i.e., from one Person, namely the Spirit, then the use of that gift under the control of that selfsame Spirit cannot bring division. (Note the six references to "the same"). Division is the result of the carnality of man and is not produced by God.

In v. 12 the body, the church, is introduced and we are told that this was formed by the Baptism in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. On that day the church was formed without division and the teaching is clear — that which commenced united should continue united.

The literal, physical body is taken up in vv. 15-26 as an illustration of the interaction and mutual dependence of the

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members of the body. As the members of the physical body all act for the good of the whole, so each member in the assembly should function for the benefit of all. It is important that those with a prominent gift do not despise those who have less prominent gift and the reverse is equally important, that the less prominent do not be envious of the more prominent. The vital thing is that each appreciates the other and all function together for the good of the company as directed by the Holy Spirit. The lesson is drawn in v. 25 *"there should be no schism in the body."*

The application of this truth is made in vv. 27-31 where Paul takes that which was true of the church which is His body (vv. 12-13) and shows that this unity ought to be seen in the local company. In this connection it is important to note that the definite article is omitted in v. 27, "Now ye are body of Christ," clearly showing that the apostle is dealing with what would be characteristically true of the local company. The question asked in v. 29 must all be answered with an emphatic "No!" showing that there is a variety of gift which ought to be used in conjunction, and not in competition, with each other.

The Supreme Accompaniment of Gift

There has always been within man a tendency to boast in his greatness. We are not surprised therefore that some who exercise a prominent gift develop a proud and haughty spirit. A guard needs to be placed against such a tendency and this Paul gives in Chapter 13—love. The chapter may be divided into three sections :

(i) The Necessary, Compliment of Love (vv. 1-3)

There are seven things listed in these verses which are worthless without love — v. 1 tongues, v. 2 prophecy, understanding mysteries, knowledge, outstanding faith, v. 3 giving and martyrdom. Many who rate these things very highly little understand their unprofitableness if not complimented and exercised in love.

(ii) The Noble Character of Love (vv. 4-8)

Little needs to be said upon these verses but much need to be practiced.

(iii) The Notable Continuance of Love (vv. 9-13)

In this section we are taught that while gifts "shall be done away" vv. 8, 10 and shall "cease" v. 8, love will remain and continue. In the time of the early church when the scriptures were not in the complete form we have now, the sign gifts and those which brought direct revelation from God were in operation. However when the canon of scripture was completed these spectacular gifts were withdrawn. This is illustrated from Paul's own experience, which is common to us all, that the things which occupied us in babyhood have no place when we come to maturity (v. 11).

At the time of Paul's writing, the sign gifts were still operating and the Corinthians were here being taught that for these gifts to function for the glory of God and the benefit of His people they must always have the supreme accompaniment of love which will abide after the gifts have gone.

The Solitary Aspiration of Gift

Those who have been blessed with public gift can be tempted to misuse it. It is not unknown for some to speak publicly in order to flaunt their knowledge or to 'get at' someone present or even to prevent some other brother from speaking. All this displays carnality. The only reason for exercising gift is given in 1 Cor 14.12, *"seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."* The chapter shows that this can best be achieved when the person speaking uses plain simple language which is easily understood. Note the following phrases, v. 2— *"No man understandeth,"* vv. 7, 9— *"how shall it be known?"* v. 9— *"words easy to be understood,"* v. 11 — *"I know not the meaning"* and v. 16— *"he understandeth not."*

Not only do saints receive no benefit from those they cannot understand but it is evident that they cannot listen intelligently to two people speaking at the same time, neither can they retain much if a large number speak in turn at one meeting. God *"who knoweth our frame"* and *"remembereth that we are dust"* (Ps. 103.14), makes provision for such frailty in this chapter. Thus we are warned against over-activity in a meeting (v. 26), and when it comes to prophecy, or in our day, ministry, the scripture is clear *"Let the prophets speak two or three and let the other (prophets) judge."* If this was carried out especially in conference gatherings the saints would be able to carry more spiritual food home. Often a long meeting with a large number of brethren taking part results in weariness. Whereas two shorter meetings with an interval to refresh the mind could accomplish more without losing any available time for ministry. Likewise the passage is clear with respect to more than one speaking at any one time—(v. 31) *"ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn."* The chapter ends by teaching that it is the brethren alone who take public part. Anything contrary to vv. 34-35 is blatant disobedience to God's word and should not be tolerated in any assembly. In fact verse 37 proves that it is the unspiritual who would act in such a fashion.

Our Sole Ambition for Gift

As far as we are concerned it is our responsibility to *"covet earnestly the best gifts"* (12:31); *"neglect not the gift that is in thee"* (1 Tim. 4:14); *"stir up the gift of God which is in thee"* (2 Tim. 1:6); and to exercise such in the fear of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit to edify the saints.

(To be continued)

Isaiah's Song, pt. 2 Isaiah 53:1-6

Robert Surgenor

Stanza Two: (53:1-3). The Pathway of the Servant

Exodus reveals the rejection of Moses by the people. *"This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer"* (Acts 7:35). In like manner, this second stanza describes the rejection of Messiah by the people.

(1) *"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?"*

Thank God, we have believed the report! We also thank God that it was first revealed unto us! The act of believing was on our part. The work of revealing was on God's part. Apart from the Spirit revealing to us our need and God's remedy, and apart from believing that report, there can be no salvation. I am sure that we are all aware of that! The sinner cannot believe something that has not been revealed. Thus we see the necessity of the operation of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's salvation, and also the value of men that can bring the report in the preaching of the gospel. *"How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"* (Rom. 10:14-15).

The first line of the second stanza is quoted in relation to our Lord's ministry in John 12:38. *"That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?"*

Notice, He is described as *"The arm of the Lord."* Many believe this to refer to His unlimited power, but really this is not in the context. True, we read concerning Joseph, *"The arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob"* (Gen. 49:24), and regarding Israel, *"I will redeem you with a stretched out arm"* (Ex. 6:6), but in this second stanza we see no power at all, but rather the opposite. Then what is God saying about His Servant when He mentions Him as His arm? The solution is on the surface. What God is doing is revealing the historical background of the Servant Himself. The root word for arm is "zara," a primitive root; "to sow; figuratively, to disseminate, plant, fructify:— bear, conceive seed, yield." The root of this word is found in Genesis 3:15 and translated "seed." Christ is the promised seed of the woman. Not only this, but this word is very closely related to "zeroah," which is the same word used for the shank bone of lamb found on the Passover Seder Plate today. *"For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us"* (1 Cor. 5:7).

(2) *"For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him."*

As the seed of the woman, we see Him growing up before His God as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. The tender plant is really a sucker sprouting out of a felled tree. When the Servant made His entrance into this world it was through the tribe of Judah, which at that time was at a very low ebb, like a felled tree. Out of that lowly position, all of a sudden a twig, or sprout, shot up from the felled tree. Yes, in spite of the lowly condition of the House of David, and the corrupt state of the nation a sprout (tender plant) grew up. That sprout was the Messiah!

(3) *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not."*

However, the eyes of the nation were far different than the eyes of the Father. He had *"no form nor comeliness,"* meaning that He did not fill the criteria of a Messiah in their eyes. Their eyes saw no beauty in His bodily form nor in His countenance. Consequently they had no desire for Him, which means, they found nothing in Him to delight them. Thus they had no regard for Him. He was nothing in their eyes, just a poor carpenter, born out of wedlock, and living in a humble dwelling in the despised city of Nazareth.

Tell me, how does the world look upon Him today? I do not hesitate to say, their eyes and their appraisal of Him are no different.

So intense was their rejection of Him and His claims, that the prophet goes on to write, *"He is despised and rejected of men."* The word men, is "ishim," men of high degree. This refers directly to the leaders of the Nation of Israel. He had nothing of the trappings of wealth. He had no social status, and He had only a handful of attendants. Certainly such a character could not be the coming Messiah. To them it was preposterous to even consider Him at all. He was a nobody in their estimation. *"We hid as it were our faces from Him,"* was the report. That is, they turned their backs on Him and walked away. They didn't cover their face in reverence as seraphim do. Not at all! They simply hid their face by not allowing Him any of their time. They walked away. Is it any wonder that the Lord, who had sacrificed so much in leaving the Father's home above, was broken hearted over their callous response to Himself and His claims? They *"esteemed Him not."* They set no value on Him. In fact, when Judas made his bargain with the leaders of Israel, they offered him only 30 pieces of silver to betray the Lord. That was the price of a helpless slave (Ex. 21:32).

That was their low esteem of Him

Stanza Three: (53:4-6). The Passion of the Servant

(1) *“Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”*

The Book of Leviticus brings us into God’s sanctuary and the offerings connected with it. So, in like manner, this third stanza brings us to the supreme offering of Christ, which affords us liberty into the sanctuary of God.

During the Servant’s sojourn here, as always, there was an abundance of sickness, disease, and anxiety. His tender heart did not overlook the desperate need of humanity. The effects of sin had taken its toll on the human race, and the perfect Servant was very aware of their needs. Thus we read, *“Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.”* Here the Servant is not looking so much on their sins, but rather on their afflictions. He bore them, meaning that He lifted them and carried them as a burden. Their “griefs” (the word means disease) would indicate the problems besetting their bodies, while their “sorrows” (anguish) would relate to their minds. Pentecostalism propagates “faith healing” and takes this verse to mean that if one’s faith is strong enough that the Lord will take that person’s sickness away. However, the context will not bear this interpretation. What the Scripture is telling us is what the poet wrote;

There’s not a burden of the heart,
The Son of God has not a part.
He knows, He loves, He cares,
Nothing this truth can dim,
He gives His very best to those
Who leave the choice with Him.

In Isaiah 63:9, the prophet makes known the heart of God relative to His earthly people. *“In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.”* Hebrews 4:15 relates the same. *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”*

In spite of His tenderness and care for others, we read, *“Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”* So blind were they that they thought the abuse heaped upon the Lord Jesus in Pilate’s judgement hall was righteously administered by God because of His claims of being their Messiah. Looking upon Him as an impostor, they regarded Him as being under divine judgment, that He was being judicially dealt with because of His sins. They did not know what they were doing (Lk. 23:34) for if they had known

who He was, they would have never crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8). The plan was devised in the heart of God before the worlds were made, and nothing could change the plan and purpose of God, that His Son be taken by wicked hands and crucified and slain.

(2) *“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.”*

However, the day is coming when Israel will lament; *“But He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities.”* The word “wounded” indicates a piercing. *“They pierced My hands and My feet”* (Ps. 22:16). *“They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced”* (Zech. 12:10). Jews would like to take this word in a figurative sense to mean “profaning the name of God, or, “wound by insulting,” but the word is “dakar” which without any doubt means “thrust through.” The word “bruised,” is the strongest term to describe a violent and agonizing death. It carries the thought of being “beat to pieces - crushed.” No where in Holy Scripture do we find a more detailed account of our Lord’s death. Reading it should make us weep.

The account continues with the words “chastisement, peace, stripes,” and “healed.” In order for us to have prosperity, rest, happiness, safety, and health, as the word “peace” indicates, there must be a price paid. That price involved being chastened. He bore the inflicted blows of divine wrath that we might have peace, the peace of God that passeth all understanding! (Phil. 4:7).

“His stripes.” Just what is meant? Was it the stripes inflicted by the Roman scourge? Basically the word “stripes” is “bruise, a black and blue mark, a weal.” Peter links the “stripes” to the tree, not to the Roman scourge. *“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed”* (1 Pet. 2:24). Peter answers the question as to the stripes. The stripes were inflicted by God. What amazing grace, that through His wounding, bruising, and stripes, we are “healed,” cured, made whole, and brought into favor with God. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

(3) *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”*

Israel will acknowledge their sinfulness in going astray. Rather than submitting themselves to Jehovah their Shepherd, they left His pasture, and wandered off into the wilderness of sin. They walked in the ways of their own heart and in the sight of their own eyes. However, in a

coming day they will confess that the Lord laid upon Jesus, their Messiah, the iniquity of them all. The marginal rendering is; *“The Lord hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on Him.”* Picture a flock of sheep grazing peacefully in a pasture. All of a sudden a foe rushes in and kills the sheep. In like manner, our sins lay in wait, and at a given point of time they rushed upon us, but the Shepherd stepped in and took our place, allowing our sins to attack Him and overwhelm Him. That is the import of this expression, *“laid upon Him.”* It carries the thought of substitution.

(to be concluded)

True confession of Christ will ever be accompanied by denial of self.

Headship, pt. 1

J. C. Campbell

(Read 1 Chronicles 29:11; 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; 5:23)

The doctrine of Headship is clearly taught, both in the Old and New Testaments. It does not suggest superiority on the one hand, or inferiority on the other; namely subjection. It is a matter of Divine appointment for the maintenance of harmony in life, whether natural or spiritual. Certain relationships have been established by God for our good and happiness; for example, that of Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants. If any, or all of these are violated or abandoned, there is an immediate breakdown in society. Here lies the basic cause of so much unrest in our generation. The marriage bond lightly set aside in ready divorce, parental authority flouted in the home, and industrial relationships disrupted when the status of management and staff is in question. Headship is additional to and complementary with these three orders, and applies equally with the Angelic as with their human counterparts. In 1 Chronicles 29:11, David, in his inaugural address to Israel at the commencement of the building of the Temple, addresses God as the exalted Head above all. In the ascending ranks of intelligences from angels, archangel, seraphim, cherubim, to principalities, powers, mights, dominions; the Lord sits exalted above all in Heaven. Headship is acknowledged and exercised; even between intelligences of a higher order than our own. Michael, the Archangel, the highest of the unfallen spiritual Princes, did not dare to rebuke the mighty fallen Prince, the devil, when in dispute about the body of Moses. Headship forbade him. He stands aside, and rightly asserts, *“the Lord rebuke thee.”* Michael may have been equal or inferior in rank with Satan, and must have had authority from the Lord Himself to acquire Moses’ body, even when Satan had territorial rights to it as the God of this world, yet he rebukes him not! In the

Heavenlies, headship cannot be violated, nor the etiquette of protocol even in a single instance, be set aside. This lends emphasis to the petition in what is commonly called “The Lord’s Prayer.” *“Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”* (Matt. 6.10). That the holy region of heaven should become the first casualty through Satan (then Lucifer) by sin’s entrance, is startling. God now has forever secured the sanctity of His dwelling place, by the angelic orders passing from a state where they could sin, and some did; and were expelled, to one where they now cannot, and are called, the “Elect Angels.” Headship is associated with the entrance of sin, not only in the heavenly sphere; but also the earthly.

When the great God of Creation gathered the dust of the ground and from it formed man; when the same God breathed the breath of life into man’s nostrils; when man stood in all his solitary, pristine dignity, in innocency, without a companion; as yet there was no need for Headship. He found no corresponding helpmeet and helpmate in the animal kingdom. Nor even when His Creator builded a woman to stand with him in innocency, is Headship mentioned; they were equally responsible before their God. But, immediately sin gained an entrance, through Satanic, serpent means; God pronounces on Eve, because of her disobedience, a new order of relationship between her and Adam, and that Headship. *“He shall rule over thee.”*

While God places humanity generally in stated relationships for their mutual benefit and well being, such as children and parents, husband and wife, also masters and servants; He has as clearly specified areas of Headship and Subjection; because sin has disrupted that Edenic order; and hostility instead of harmony with God now marks humanity. Thus, sin’s entrance explains the **NEED** for Headship.

We now examine the **NATURE** of Headship. It does not invest the one in whom headship is deposited with arrogance or a sense of superiority: to Lord it over his partner; nor does it humiliate the subjected one to a state of inferiority and abject slavery. In no way does it suggest a condition of autocracy. Spirituality is evidenced in a humble acceptance and submission to the particular sphere allocated.

Its **NEWNESS** has already been explained. It was intended to bring harmony out of the discord sin had introduced, between partners in a Divine relationship. Thus we are brought to consider the **NOBILITY** of Headship. In the sanctified sphere of matrimony, the wife is referred to as the “weaker vessel.” This cannot in all instances be interpreted in the physical sense. Many a wife is more robust than the husband. It implies a weakness in the female which is to be recognized by the male. She is to be held in honor, and worthy of respect and esteem, hence nobility.

The **NOMINEES** for headship fall into three groups. They are:

- Christ and men
- Man and woman
- God and Christ (Explanation will follow).

These form four partnerships or **NOTABILITIES** for Headship, namely:—

- Christ and the Church
- Christ and the Man
- Man and the Woman
- God and the Christ.

Finally, there are the **NUMBER** of Headships. They are seven, which brings us to our subject. The Headship of:

God Over Creation	Absolute	1 Chron. 29:12
God and Christ	Positionally	1 Cor. 11:3
Christ and Men	Absolute	1 Cor. 11:3
Christ and Church	Absolute	Eph. 5:23
Man and Creation	Delegated	Psa. 8:6
Man and Woman	Absolute	1 Cor. 11:3
Husband and Wife	Selective	Eph. 5:23

Headship, God and Creation (Absolute)

(1 Chronicles 29)

God is Head over all in Heaven because of:

The Possessions He Has. These are detailed in verse 11.

1. Greatness. Which is unsearchable. Psa. 145:3.
2. Power. Omnipotent. All powerful. Pantokrator=Rev. 19:6.
3. Glory. A. Celestial. Hab. 3:3.
B. Terrestrial. Num. 14:21.
C. Personal. Zech. 6:13.
D. Indivisible. Isa. 48:11.
4. Victory. Divine Title = Strength of Israel. 1 Sam. 15:29.
5. Majesty. Dignity and Honour. Psa. 21:9.
6. Kingdom. Area of Rule.
7. Heaven and Earth. Angelic and Human.

The Preeminence He Enjoys, v. 11

1. Exalted. Takes His place of unchallenged elevation.
2. As Head. Indicating Rank and authority.
3. Above All. All creatures subservient to Him.

The Position He Fills, v. 12

1. Riches. He possesses all.
2. Honor. He surpasses all.
3. Reign. He rules all.
4. Power. He controls all.
5. Might. He surpasses all.

6. Promotion. He elevates all.
7. Strength. He equips all.

The Power He Displays, v. 12

1. The Means of it. Hand.
2. The Measure of it. Humanity, all.

The Promotion He Bestows, v. 12

His Ability to make great. (Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon).
His Ability to give strength. (Samson with Philistines).

The Praise He Merits, v. 13

Thanksgiving, for what we receive.
Praise for what He is.

The Palace He Indwells, v. 16. Ch. 22.14 : Ch. 29.2.

Preparation David Made.
Profusion David Provided.
Pleasure God Received.

Thus we learn that God is Head over all in Heaven and over Creation.

Headship: God and Christ. (Positional)

Here we attempt to explain the unexplainable. This headship can only be positional, and does not place the Christ inferior to the Father. If that were so, then the doctrine of the Trinity would be in dispute. In His humanity, Christ never surrendered His Deity. He became for a little while, lower than, but never inferior to angels, with a view to the sufferings of death. Likewise, He accepted the limitations humanity involved. Wrong thoughts on Headship produce wrong conclusions on its nature. As a man, walking for God on alien soil, He received instructions from His God, morning by morning, even as a father would counsel his son on setting out from home on family business. The picture always breaks down when attempting to illustrate the actions of Divine Beings by human standards.

If we accept, and I trust we do, that the head of every man is Christ, that the head of the woman is the man, then we are at least prepared in spirit to examine the headship of God with Christ.

1 Cor. 11:3, does not say, "The head of the Son is the Father"; but "*the head of Christ is God.*" This statement can be understood when we view the Lord Jesus as a man, in subordination to His Father as God; as a servant doing the will of His Master in loyal service, and as a sacrifice on the altar, satisfying the demands of God. We will note the scriptures "*nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done,*" "*I delight to do Thy will*" and also "*That the world may know I love the Father*": Headship is love expressed in unquestioning obedience, and is the acceptance of a

position of subjection. Thus God is the Head of Christ in subordination as a Man, and in supremacy as God in Heaven with Christ on Earth, and in substitution as providing an acceptable sacrifice relative to the violated Throne of God.

It is clearly asserted in 1 Cor. 15:28, that *“when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”* This defines the period of Christ’s subjection to God as being associated with the end of the Millennium and into the Eternal state. Thus God, Who is exalted above all, will forever be “all in all”: that is all things in every respect, both in Heaven and in earth! Well might we exclaim, *“Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God,”* (Romans 11.33). *“How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!”* The unexplainable has become intelligible by revelation.

(to be continued)

The discipline to which you are subjected in your life is the discipline you need to bring out the beauties of true spiritual character.

What is His Name? Jehovah-jireh

Joel Portman

Compound Names of Jehovah

There is a large group of names in which “Jehovah” is linked with other words that describe distinctive aspects of His person and work. These are called the “compound names” of Jehovah in the Old Testament. If every name of God reveals something of His greatness and glory, these are very instructive to the souls of the Lord’s people. In most cases, they are linked with some great event or condition by which God revealed further truth of His character and work to meet the needs of men. Some have said that there are 13 of these compound names, but of this number, 9 seem to be more clearly evident. These also comprise a kind of progressive revelation of the benevolent and unlimited sufficiency of God to meet the needs of His people. We learn in Genesis 22, that He is Jehovah-jireh, the One who sees and provides. In Exodus 15, He heals His redeemed people as Jehovah-ropheca and in ch. 17, He is seen as the banner leading His people in victory over their enemies in warfare as Jehovah-nissi. They are set apart to Him as Jehovah-m’kaddesh, who is the Lord who sanctifies. He sends peace in Judges 6 as Jehovah-shalom, and in 1 Samuel

1, He is the Lord of Hosts, Jehovah-tsebahoth, who controls and directs the armies of heaven with all under His command. David rejoiced to know that He was Jehovah-rohi in Psalm 23, “the Lord my shepherd.” We learn in Jeremiah 23:6 that He is Jehovah-tsidkenu, the Lord our righteousness and ultimately, in Ezekiel 48, He is the Lord who is there, Jehovah-shammah. So we learn that every need of His people is fully met in who He is and what He can do. To think of these expressions should cause our hearts to trust Him more and to thank Him profusely for the infinite supply that we have in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Conditions of this Revelation

Abraham’s life had been marked by spiritual progress, with every stage of that progress tested in some way to prove its reality and to draw him along the pathway of faith. Faith that one professes to have will always be tested, not to determine if it exists or not, but to prove its character and to probe its expression, as well as to demonstrate its preciousness to God (1 Peter 1:7). Abraham was justified when he believed God’s promise concerning the seed in Genesis 15. His was faith in an unseen, unrealized promise that God made to him which was not fulfilled until many years later when Isaac was born. It is worth noting that in Rom. 4:17-22, it is his faith that God emphasizes, whereas in Heb. 11:11, it is Sarah’s faith that is linked with this miraculous event. This represented a radical change in her heart that brought her from the condition of incredulity in Gen. 18 to faith in Gen. 21. In both cases, they only had the Word of God to depend on, and that is, after all, what faith is. It is not seeing, yet believing and knowing that HE is faithful, and that HE would fulfill His word.

Now having realized the result of that promise and Isaac having come to a grown age, Abraham likely felt that now he would relax and enjoy the remainder of his old age. God had blessed him in every possible way; he was rich, increased with goods, knowing God’s presence, and living in the good of God’s promises. It must have been startling to him to receive this command from God in the night, *“Take now thy son, thine only (son) Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”* (Gen. 22:2). Is it not true that God’s ways are past finding out, and there are times when He moves to disrupt our contentment and ruin our best-laid plans? Startling as the command was, we note that Abraham hesitated not, but obeyed the voice of God. As one has said, “This is true religion, to obey, no matter how you feel. When a brave and faithful man knows God’s requirements, he does not reason or reply; he gives himself no time for reflection; he knows that first thoughts are best; he makes haste and delays not to keep God’s commandments.” (James Strahan, *Hebrew Ideals in*

Genesis). Again, he says, “He did not defer obedience till he should understand God’s secret counsels. He knew that God desired, not his comprehension, but his confidence.”

Isaac was literally a son of resurrection, since he was born at a time when both parents were past the age of normally possessing any life-ability to conceive a child. Isaac was a display of the miraculous power of God, and having been received from God literally as a gift, Abraham was going to be tested on that very point. Was his faith resting in the son, or was it in the God who had given him? One has said that God didn’t want Isaac, nor did he expect to receive a human victim as a burnt sacrifice upon an altar. Rather, God wanted Abraham and through this event, He would prove beyond doubt that Abraham’s faith rested, not in the blessings received but in the Blessor who had given him. It is futile to ask what would or might have happened if Abraham had actually killed and offered Isaac on the altar. God knew that Abraham would, if he received no divine intervention; God also knew that He would intervene at that point to stop the actual act from taking place. However, on Abraham’s part, we know that he reckoned that “*God was able to raise him up, even from the dead,*” (Heb. 11:19), and his words to the young men indicate clearly that he expected that they would both return (Gen. 22:5). His confident faith was in God, and He knew that, despite the apparent contradiction between God’s promises that centered in Isaac and His present demand for Isaac as a burnt sacrifice, God could and would reconcile both in His own power and will.

We read in Heb. 11:17 that Abraham “*when he was (being) tried, (had) offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered (was offering) up his only son.*” During that trial, Abraham’s response from its inception was to obey; he “had offered” Isaac (perf act ind, showing that it was a completed act in his mind) so that he was actually in the act of offering up Isaac with that confidence in God alone. Would that we had that same assurance of faith that would cause us to depend consciously and assuredly on God to work in His way!

His conscious obedience to God’s command was not the act of an impulse; he had three days of the journey in which to consider what was involved in his carrying out this deed. Yet we never read of any wavering on his part, nor was there any outward indication or expression of his emotions. He went quietly forward, retaining mastery over his own feelings, not those of a stoic, but rather expressing a delightful, God-honoring confidence. His response to Isaac seems to plumb the depth of his assurance in his God: “*my son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering*” (Gen. 22:8). This response seems to anticipate the name that he attached to the place, Jehovah-jireh, God will see or provide. His attitude of faith in God paved the way for this

fuller revelation of God to his soul.

At the ultimate moment, with the sacrificial knife upraised over the bound Isaac on the altar, the voice of the angel of Jehovah rent the air. He had obeyed the word of the Lord and offered his son (though not literally sacrificed), the knife was arrested, and Isaac was released. The ram caught in the thicket by its horns was placed on the altar so that, in this case, there was a burnt sacrifice offered upon Moriah. However, the typical picture as it as regards the Father offering His only Son at Calvary was ended before the ram was offered. All pointed forward to what God would do, much more than (yet typified by) what Abraham was called upon by Jehovah to do with Isaac.

James 2:21 tells us “*Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?*” This has caused some confusion in the minds of many, thinking that James contradicts the apostle Paul, when we read in Rom. 4:3 that “*Abraham believed God and it was counted unto Him for righteousness.*” It is not so, for, as C. H. McIntosh writes in *Notes on the Pentateuch*, “St. Paul gives us the inward principle; St. James, the outward development of that principle. The former presents the hidden life; the latter, the manifested life: the former looks at man in relation to God; the latter looks at him in his relation to man. . . There was no voice from heaven when “Abraham believed God,” though in God’s view he was there, then, and thus “counted righteous”; but “when he had offered his son upon the altar,” God could say, “Now I know,” and all the world had a powerful and unanswerable proof of the fact that Abraham was a justified man.”

Abraham called the name of that place “Jehovah-jireh.” We should note that the name was first associated with a place, but that place revealed further truth about the character and purposes of Jehovah through the act expressing Abraham’s faith in God. It was also not a name by which God identified Himself, but rather, the name that Abraham attached to that place. It seems to indicate that he had come, through this event, to realize this aspect of God’s character and something of God’s ultimate purposes that were foreshadowed at Moriah. We read in John 8:56, “*Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.*” This seems to suggest that Abraham entered into the antitype of what had been commanded by God, and that it was pointing forward to what God Himself would do at the place, possibly the same, called Calvary.

Meaning of Jehovah-jireh

This name is a combination of “Jehovah” and a very common verb that is usually translated “to see, discern, or appear.” So that the primary thought is that Jehovah sees,

and certainly there is much linked with this name that has to do with what He saw. We find it used with regard to a “seer,” who was one who saw what God revealed to him and told it to the people. That function could be directed toward the future, or it could also see and reveal what was present. In this sense, Abraham was anticipating what God would do in the future, not what He had done to that point. It is also translated in a few other places as “provide, provided.” For example, in this same chapter, Abraham told Isaac, “*My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering*” using the same word. Saul said to his servants, “*Provide me now a man who can play well and bring him to me,*” (1 Sam. 16:17). Previously, in the same chapter, the Lord told Samuel that He had provided a king for Himself among Jesse’s sons, (v 1). In Moses’ prophecy (Deut. 33:21) concerning Gad, he said, “*And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated. . .*” So the Hebrew word is used in this way as well.

It should not be difficult to reconcile the two thoughts when considering the character of Jehovah. What He sees, He also can provide. One has said that “provision, after all, is merely a compound of two Latin words meaning “to see beforehand.” And we may learn from a dictionary that provide is simply the verb and prevision the noun of seeing beforehand. Thus to God prevision is necessarily followed by provision, for He certainly will provide for that need which His foreseeing shows him to exist.” (Nathan Stone, *Names of God*). God’s provision would be seen in the mount, so that we learn that this was an anticipation of what He would do. Keil and Delitzsch indicate that it carries the meaning ““on the mountain where Jehovah appears,” from which the name Moriah arose. . . in this case the medium of God’s seeing or interposition was His appearing.”

Implications of this Name

If this were in the past tense, it would certainly teach us that Jehovah had seen all that Abraham expressed in his obedient response to God. He had seen his faith demonstrated, his obedience to God’s command, his steadfast response that took him along the way to Moriah with steadfast tread. We know that this is true, for in Gen. 16:13, Hagar called the name of the place “*Thou God seest me*” which is a variation of the same Hebrew word. All is known to and seen clearly by God, and we do well to consciously recognize His eye upon us at all times. The psalmist was overwhelmed with this truth in Ps. 139:1-6.

The expression is in the future, i.e., “Jehovah shall see, or provide” so that it anticipated that great event of which this was only a typical picture. This being identified with a place, it pointed forward to that greater sacrifice that would be consummated at the Cross. Whether or not this location is exactly the same physically as Golgotha, it is certainly identical spiritually with that greatest of all events when

“The Father gives His only Son,
The Lord of Glory dies;
For us, the guilty and undone,
A spotless sacrifice.” (R. C. Chapman)

Even the demand of God for Abraham to take his only son Isaac and offer him up, though not indicating that God desired human sacrifice from men, was an indication of what would truly take place when a perfect Man, the “Lamb of God” would bow to the burden of the cross and take upon Himself the sin of the world to bear it away and in so doing, to express His complete obedience and devotion to His God. That tremendous moment with all its importance to God was ever in His mind and was being anticipated by all the sacrificial offerings on the altars of the Old Testament period. He was “*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” (1 Pet. 1:19-20, Rev. 13:8).

Well might we lift our hearts to behold the perfect Substitute that God has provided, knowing the utter need of the human heart and for the honor of His own Name. We do well to rejoice and sing, “Hallelujah, what a Savior.”

In the catacombs of Rome there are enough Scripture texts carved out of solid rock to save the world if all Bibles were destroyed. The persecuted Christians carved it there where it could not be burned.

Worship

T. D. W. Muir

Genesis 22:4-5. In this portion we have the first mention of the word “worship” in the Scriptures, and it is connected with the giving up of Abraham’s son. In Matthew 2:8 we have the first mention of worship in the New Testament.

Abraham believed that God was able to give him back his son from the dead, and God loved us so that He was willing to give up His only Son. It is a trial to any one to give up his only son by sickness and death, but Abraham calls that supreme sacrifice an act of worship. This gives us a clue to what worship is. Worship is not merely singing or praying, although these may be in it. Worship is giving. Now we may sometimes give things that cost nothing, as we give to a man at the door an old pair of pants, but Abraham gives everything and calls it an act of worship.

“And we will come again to you.” And so it is with the gifts that we give to God. We never give anything to God but

what we get it back again with increase. Abraham gave up Isaac and God gave him a seed in number more than the stars of heaven and the sand of the seashore.

And then we have in the New Testament a sample of what worship is. They are called “wise men,” and so they were. They did not know the Scriptures for they went to Jerusalem instead of to Bethlehem; but it was natural that they should seek Him in Jerusalem for they were looking for a King. “Where is He?” Not an “it” but “He.” Then Herod called some that knew the Scriptures, but they had no heart to take a step to find Him. They could give chapter and verse, but they had no heart for Him of whom they spake, just as many today who have prophecy have no heart for Christ.

And when the wise men got to Him, others were there—Joseph and Mary—but they had eyes only for the Lord Jesus. What they gave was “all for Jesus,” not a portion for Joseph and Mary. But when Christ gets His due others are not the losers.

These two Scriptures give us the two-fold aspect of worship—the gift of the Father of His Son and our gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

If we are one with Christ, we shall love what He loves, even holiness; we shall hate what He hates, all sin; and we shall seek what He seeks, His Father's glory. How then does the matter stand with us this moment?

Salvation

W. W. Fereday

Salvation is only needed by those who are in distress or danger. It is not too much to say that the whole human family is in deadly peril through sin. Every member of our race enters the world morally poisoned; for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not only this, but at the earliest possible stage each one enters upon a career of active transgression against God. Yet, though sin is exceedingly hateful in the eyes of God, the condition of the sinner does not excite His aversion, but rather His deep compassion and love. Hence Paul speaks repeatedly of Him as “God our Saviour.” In His great mind a plan of salvation was formed even before sin made its appearance in this world.

As in creation, so in the matter of salvation, the Son is the person Who works out the Divine purpose to its appointed

end. He came into the world to save sinners; yet men are not saved by His incarnation, but by His atoning death. The death of Christ has furnished God with an imperishable ground of righteousness on which to act in His grace towards perishing men. Nothing is demanded from men but faith—simple confidence in God and His beloved Son. He who in his deep need turns his eye in faith to God and Christ becomes at once entitled to all the advantages of Christ's most costly sacrifice.

Salvation is presented in the New Testament in a threefold way.

(1) It is a **Present** thing, in the sense of acceptance with God. The Christian is now “in Christ,” and is consequently beyond condemnation, justified and reconciled. He stands in the Divine favor now and for ever, and is loved as Christ is loved. So we read in Eph. 2:8, “*By grace ye are saved through faith.*” In 2 Tim. 1:9 also : “*God Who hath saved us.*” The Spirit's use of the present tense in these passages should dissipate every unbelieving doubt and fear. Doubts and fears are an insult to the love of God and a dishonor to the work of the Lord Jesus.

(2) Salvation is also a **Progressive** thing, but in this aspect it is not acceptance with God (that is in view) but the difficulties of the daily path. These are very many, and often very serious. The power of Satan, the allurements of the world, and the treachery of the heart within are a trinity of opponents not to be treated lightly by the devout. But Christ is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, “seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). This is an effectual guarantee that every saint, however harassed, will reach the destined goal. Christ's present ministry of intercession is the assurance that not one of His own will be suffered to perish on the road.

(3) Salvation is, moreover, a **Future** thing; in this sense it includes the body as well as the soul. Though free and happy in spirit in the consciousness of the love of God, the believer is frequently constrained to groan by reason of his unchanged body. His body is a link with the yet undelivered creation, and in sympathy with it his groan ascends to God. This will cease at Christ's return. “*Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, apart from sin unto salvation*” (Heb. 9:28). The first coming of Christ met the need of the soul; His second coming in glory will meet the need of the body.

What anguish men will experience who place themselves entirely outside of this great salvation by their rejection of the Savior—Son of God!