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“The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light”

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NOTES ON HEBREWS

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Notes on Chap. 2: 5-9¹

Verse 5 introduces negatively, by contrasting the angels, the subject of the predetermined authority of Christ over the world in future.

The quotation in *verses 6 to 8a* is from the 8th Psalm and refers primarily to Adam. Having created him, God placed him in dominion over the lower creation. "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hand: Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet."

Man's First Dominion

In his first estate, man, having been made in the image of God, held unbroken fellowship with Him. The fact of man's position is mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis. The subject is expanded in the second chapter, where his position and dominion over the creation are illustrated in the 19th verse. God brought unto man all the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air to see what he would call them, and whatever he called each creature that was the name thereof. This indicates how intimate was the fellowship between God and man. Adam stood in God's counsels and shared his thoughts. The names he gave to the creatures were undoubtedly not only such as were appropriate to them but such as exhibited the glory of their Creator. "For in that He subjected all things unto him, He left nothing that is not subject to him." That position was, however, marred by sin. Adam belied the trust imposed upon him and lost dominion over creation. God removed him from his position. Cherubim were sent to keep him from seeking to regain it. Sin and death had entered and man had become a servant to the arch-foe of God.

¹ See Analysis in last issue

God's Unthwarted Plan

This did not mean a cancellation of the title to dominion. God's purposes are not to be frustrated. He has still determined that man shall have the dominion. The forfeited place of authority could only be restored through redemption, and to this end Christ identified Himself with man, sin apart. Whatever dominion is to be enjoyed hereafter by man it can only be in subordination to Christ. The authority mentioned in Psalm 8 finds its fuller expression in regard to Christ in Psalm 2, Dan. 7:27, and Rev. 5: 12, 13: "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing," and then by the whole creation, who ascribe to Him that sitteth upon the Throne and unto the Lamb, "the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever."

This is yet to be brought to its consummation, and the saints, who are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ of all His inheritance of glory, are yet to be associated with Him in the dominion. The pledge of that lies in the fact that Christ is at the right hand of God already crowned with glory, and honour. "But now we see not yet all things subjected to Him. But we behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, *even* Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour" (*verses 8b and 9*).

God's Actings of Grace

In *verse 9*, the order of clauses is to be carefully regarded. The middle of the verse is in parenthesis. The word rendered "because of" ("for" in A.V.) indicates, not a purpose in view, but something that has already taken place as the ground of another fact. Accordingly, the clauses are to be connected as follows:—"But we behold Him, *even* Jesus (who hath been made a little lower than the angels, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man), because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." That it to say, He was made a little lower than the angels that He might taste death for all men, and, because of His having suffered death, He is now crowned with glory and honour, and we behold Him in

that position. He has been exalted because He has humbled Himself.

This is the first occasion in the Epistle in which the single name "Jesus" occurs, and it is appropriate here where the thought is directed to the restoration under Christ of the dominion which man had lost. For this purpose the Son of God tasted death for every man, and thus Jehovah is salvation.

An Intimation of the Great Theme

The terms "glory and honour" are the same in the Septuagint as those which describe Aaron's garments of glory and beauty (Ex. 28:2). Accordingly, here there is given a preliminary intimation of what is to be the main subject of his Epistle, namely the High Priesthood of Christ. The clause "that by the grace of God He should taste death for all men" is purposely put last in verse 9 because it is immediately connected and introduces what follows, which explains the object for which Christ tasted death. He was made lower than the angels for a little time in order to taste death. The tasting is to be distinguished from the idea of having a taste of death. It instead describes what is slow and painful.

CHRIST THE AUTHOR OF SALVATION

Chapter 2: 10-18, Analysis

- | | |
|---|----------|
| (A) The meaning and purpose of His death. | v.10 |
| 1. Perfected through sufferings. | |
| 2. to bring many sons to glory. | |
| (B) His relationship to the sons; | vs.11-13 |
| 1. the Sanctifier, the fact of His relationship
with the sanctified; | v.11 |
| 2. they are His brethren. | v.11 |
| (a) His joy in calling them such. | v.12 |
| (b) His revelation of the Father to them. | v.12 |
| (c) His pre-eminence in praise. | v.12 |
| (d) His pre-eminence in trust. | v.12 |
| (e) His portion in them as God's
children. | v.13 |

- (C) His Incarnation the means of His relationship with the Sanctified—
1. the cause. v.14^a
 2. the manner. v.14^b
 3. the objects. v.14^c, 15
 - (a) the destruction of Satan.
 - (b) the deliverance of his captives.
 4. the means. v.16
- (D) His Priesthood—His ministry to the Sanctified—
1. its basis.
 - (a) His humanity. vs.17, 18
 - (b) His temptations.
 - (c) His propitiatory sacrifice.
 2. its character.
 - (a) manward—merciful.
 - (b) Godward—faithful.
 3. its ministry, the succouring of the tempted.

NOTES

The Author of Salvation

Verse 10. Those for whom Christ tasted death are described here as the “many sons”, and this is the only way by which they could be brought to glory and thus made to share the sovereign power of Him who is the Son of man: “For it became Him (that is, it was in accordance with the perfections of the character of God), for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” The “all things” is intentionally repeated from verse 8, which speaks of the Divine counsel in putting all things in subjection under the Son of Man. Again, the description “the Author of their salvation” is in itself an explanation of the name “Jesus” (Jehovah is salvation).

Marvellously does the grace of God shine out in all this. Unfathomable wonders of Divine love, that the Father should be willing to send His beloved Son to pass through such unspeakable sufferings, to drink the cup of Divine judgment, in order to accomplish the salvation of fallen and rebellious man! Yet herein is the heart of God revealed: “It became Him,” and thus in His

infinitely wise counsels He made His Son, as the Author of their salvation "perfect," not of course morally perfect, for that He ever was, but officially perfect, able to fulfil, in His High priestly power and glory, all that was necessary for the children of God.

Verse 11 states in a brief but comprehensive manner the identification of the Son of God with those who through faith in Him become God's children. "For both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one," that is, are all of one Father. The Apostle does not advance into the subject of sanctification. He takes it for granted that there cannot be glory for the redeemed without sanctification. Later on in the Epistle he amplifies the part that the Son took in this, when He says, "Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered without the gate" (13:12), but here the special point in view is the Divine parentage and the Lord's relationship. His Kingship, as implied in the mention of His Throne and Sceptre, is associated with righteousness. This combination is anticipatory of the name "Melchizedek," by which the Priesthood of Christ is afterwards characterized. Melchizedek means "king of righteousness."

All being of one Father, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Those who are spoken of here as the brethren of the Lord are not those who were related to Him naturally as belonging to the nation of Israel, but those who whether Jew or Gentile, believed upon Him and were thereby of the number of the justified.

Three quotations follow which confirm the statement in verse 11. The first one is from Psalm 22:22, which begins the second part of the Psalm and predictively states the utterances of the Lord in view of His sufferings on the Cross.

The first quotation, vs. 12, is "I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee." The first part of this the Lord Himself stated as partly accomplished already, and yet to be fulfilled, when He said in the closing words of His prayer in the upper room, "I made known unto them Thy Name, and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou lovedst Me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:26). Here too He began to fulfil the other part of the prophecy in the Psalm, for before they went out to the Mount of Olives He led the

praises of His disciples in the singing of the Hallel (Matt. 26:30). The Hallel sung upon that occasion consisted of Psalms 113 to 118, but, as with the first part of the quotation, the full accomplishment will yet take place when the Church is complete, and is associated with Christ in resurrection glory.

The second quotation (verse 13), "I will put My trust in Him," is from Isa. 8:17, as also is the third, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given Me." The former expresses His perfect confidence in, and dependence upon, the Father in the days of His flesh, and forcibly indicates His identification with those who, as children of God, would be brought into the path of faith. "Since then the children are sharing in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same" (verse 14). It is noticeable that the order in the original is "blood and flesh" and not "flesh and blood." His blood, shed on the Cross, is that which forms the basis of their redemption. The fact that He took a human body and thus lived on the earth, could not itself accomplish anything by way of atonement. Nor could even the suffering of death in His flesh. Only by the expiatory shedding of His blood could any become the children of God. Hence, though the particular subject of the passage is His Incarnation, the prominence in this immediate connection is given to the blood.

A MODEL SERMON

Peter's address on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-47) was a model one.

- I. It was full of Scripture.
- II. The sermon was an unfolding of the person of Christ.
- III. The results that followed were remarkable.

There was *conviction of sin*, for men were pricked in their hearts, and said, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). There was *conversion to Christ*, for "they received his word" (v. 41). There was *confession of Christ*, for they were baptized (v. 41). There was *communion with the Lord's people*, for they that believed were together, as the words "together"—"all"—"with one accord," in verses 41-46 plainly tell. There was *continuance*—no flash-in-the-pan conversions—"they continued *steadfastly* in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (v. 42). There was *consecration* for they sold their possessions, and parted to all as every man had need (v. 45). And then there was a fourfold *consequence* (v. 47): 1. Godward—they were "praising" Him. 2. Manward—"having favor with all the people." 3. Churchward—"the Lord added to the church." 4. Selfward—"they were being saved" (R.V.).—F. E. Marsh.