

Helps to the Study of the Epistle to the Romans

PART I.

(Chapters I.—VIII.)

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HELPS TO THE STUDY
OF THE
EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

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SECOND EDITION

“ Jesus answered . . . If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things ? ”

“ Jesus saith . . . I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth shall come, He shall guide you into all the truth.”

“ If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.”

“ Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up.”

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PREFACE.

THE books which have chiefly helped the writer in compiling this little handbook are the works of Moule (Expositor's Bible), Godet, Sanday and Headlam, and Vaughan. The reader may feel fairly safe that he is under their strong guidance. Besides these names must be mentioned that of his friend Mr. W. D. McLaren, who most generously gave him the use of his unpublished MS. notes on chs. i.—viii. To him he owes a clearer sense of the line of thought in that central chapter—the sixth—than even the above works seemed to give.

Do we not notice to-day two extreme ways of regarding the writings of St. Paul, and specially this particular book? Some are yielding them an assent which however is not accompanied by any strong attempt to understand them. Others are turning from them with unconcealed impatience, either to magnify St. John at St. Paul's expense, or to hint that both of them have equally overlaid the simple doctrine of Jesus with doctrines of man. The former bring no fresh thought to the study of St. Paul's Gospel, simply taking over *en masse* the traditional interpretation of it (or the current notion of that interpretation), with the result that the

characteristic phraseology of the Epistles degenerates into catchwords and becomes mere counters, which less and less convey the living reality for which they stand; and the Epistles themselves appear, and are made to appear, as frigid divinity treatises rather than expressions of living experience, passionate yet reasoned—

“Impassion’d logic which outran
The hearer in its fiery course.”

The latter, whether by reaction or for some other cause, revolt from allegiance to the Gospel of St. Paul, and either give up the study of it as hopeless, or practically deny to him any peculiar measure of revelation at all.

Both of these extremes are common in our colleges to-day; perchance we are conscious of both in our own selves. What then is the remedy? Is it not that we need to come *fresh* to the study of these wondrous books: to come with historical sympathy—knowing that it was a living, breathing man who wrote them; to come with open minds—knowing that Jesus Himself denied that the revelation of Christian truth closed with His disappearance from earth; to come with strong faith in the Person of Jesus Christ—remembering the grave words, “*If I told you of earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?*”

Such has been the aim, at least, in the compilation of these Helps to the Study of the Romans. The serious fall beneath this ideal is partly due to the many limitations incidental to the style of the book, partly to other graver limitations. But the writer thought that thus to state the ideal might enable

students to use the book in the spirit of its intention, and thus to some extent make up for deficiencies in execution.

May God, in answer to the prayers of many, overrule all, and bless the study of this divine epistle during this coming autumn : proving, with regard to its old, oft-read, oft-repeated teaching, that He was true Who said—

“ Behold, I make all things new.”

July, 1899.

The Revised Version is used throughout.

The Greek text is that of Westcott and Hort.

The handbook, it is to be feared, will occasionally be found obscure. This obscurity is most frequently the result of the essential difficulty of the subject. In this case one should neither blame the handbook nor the subject, but rather be aware how much of what we thought not fully understood was very imperfectly understood. During the actual time of reading, it is perhaps best not to linger too long over such difficulties. They will be with us during the day, and perhaps light will come during the day. And at the time of the weekly united study, members might do much worse than state and have solved the various problems of the week.

INTRODUCTION TO FIRST SEVEN STUDIES.

BEFORE we even open the first page of Romans, let us reflect on the life of the writer of the Epistle. Is it not the key to the book? How many have been offended at its contents through misunderstanding it—and this, because they persisted in regarding it as some cold and formal treatise instead of something living and breathing, instinct with the experience and the passion of its author?

It is true that there is more here than the merely personal: there are things eternal here. Nevertheless, both in the case of St. Paul and of all other exponents of the truth, God revealed the eternal through the temporal, the universal through the personal. St. Paul came at these things through the medium of his own experience. Therefore, shall not we best come at, and, as it were, re-discover these eternal things by retracing the history of this same experience? If we approach the Epistle soaked with the thoughts and even the emotion of its writer, we shall be more likely to understand and appreciate the universal truths revealed in it.

I.

THE EARLY YEARS OF SAUL OF TARSUS.

1. First of all, two facts which are of importance later on ; we notice them and pass on—

(a) Acts xxii. 28b.

(b) “Saul of Tarsus” : a great Greek colony—hence his knowledge of the Greek language.

[N.B. Tarsus a centre of Stoic philosophy : this apostle to the Gentiles had to know—and truly, did he not know?—all that was best and sincerest in Gentile thought.]

2. The really significant fact : Phil. iii. 5 :—

Picture the life of the little Saul. A typical Hebrew childhood. Were his parents of the sort that “waited for the consolation of Israel” ? We do not know. May we not believe that his birth-connection with the covenant people brought blessing to the boy Saul ? See **from my forefathers** (2 Tim. i. 3).

3. Is there a touch of autobiography in Rom. vii. 9 ? A Hebrew boy was not “delivered unto the law” till his twelfth year. Then he had to set himself to keep the whole law. And Saul had the best possible instruction (Acts xxii. 3). With what outward result ? See Phil. iii. 6 ; Acts xxvi. 4, 5.

4. But even now the worm at the root began to gnaw :

(a) See Phil. iii. 7 (**gain to me**)—whose glory was being sought ? See too Rom. x. 2, 3.

(b) See Rom. vii. 9-11 and 7, 8 (**covet**—the Xth, the most spiritual commandment).

II.

THE MANHOOD OF SAUL OF TARSUS.

1. Let us reflect once more on the results of yesterday's study : . . . the ambitions, the ideals . . . the outward results . . . the inward reality, the inward state of mind of this eager, strange, fiery boy and youth.

2. So manhood found him a typical Jew, with all the Jew's characteristic ideas : Gal. i. 14.—What would then be his ideals—

Concerning the Messiah ;
Concerning the Jewish nation ;
Concerning the Kingdom of Israel ?

For an answer, consider the ideals on these points of the Pharisees at large. In studying St. John we were constantly reminded of them. See Jn. vi. 15 ; Mt. xxiii. 15 ; Lk. xvii. 20, 21. It was glory of a sort that they expected : but what sort of glory ?

III.

SAUL OF TARSUS AND JESUS THE NAZARENE.

1. The ideas of the Pharisees, and Saul most of them all, about the Messiah and His kingdom being so (see yesterday), we can understand the exceeding madness felt by him against this Jesus which was called the Christ (Messiah). Did Saul ever see the Lord in the flesh? We do not know; but see Acts xxvi. 26b—the facts about Him were well-known.

2. Well, then, what characteristic in
this Messiah
this kingdom

maddened Saul?

1 Cor. i. 23 (*margin*) lets us into the secret: see ver. 18 and Gal. v. 11b. We should reflect long on this. We know how the very disciples were stumbled at the Cross (see Mt. xvi. 21, 22); how much more Saul? This symbol (to us) of all that is glorious caused unmitigated horror, wrath, and disgust in that already (see I. § 4) turbid heart of his.

3. The Nazarene was gone, but His misguided sect still lingered: Saul's state of mind at this time is vividly portrayed in Jn. xvi. 2, Acts xxvi. 9-11, Gal. i. 13, 14.

IV.

THE CRISIS.

1. The tempest reached its height at the death of Stephen. Let us picture the tragic scene—Acts vii. 54—viii. 1a ; xxii. 20 : see too vi. 15—Saul saw *that!*

2. Passion-tossed, had his soul any rest? His conduct (ix. 1, 2) may of course lead us to think that he was more convinced in error than ever. But what think you? Is it true to experience to imagine that with all his outrageous plans at this time he was but trying to smother a terrible suspicion—“*he was right and I am wrong*”?

3. Then the journey to Damascus : see ix. 3-5 ; xxii. 5-8 ; xxvi. 12-15.

4. What was *the* disillusionment, then? What one idea above all others must have burned in the mind of Saul during those days when he lay motionless (ix. 9)? “*That crucified one, after all, . . . !*”

V.

ARABIA.

1. Read Gal. i. 15-17 :—a brief—and solitary—notice, but suggestive and impressive to the last degree.

2. **Into Arabia** : the desert : the term is a very wide one. Many believe that it was to Sinai, to Mount Horeb, the Mount of God. And is there not something divinely fitting in this ?—See Ex. xix. 19, 20 ; and 1 Kings xix. 4, 8, 9, etc.

3. But whether it were Sinai or any other part of the desert, we know that Saul was *alone*. And in the intense stillness of that solitude what was his employment—what were his thoughts ?

4. The question is one of greatest importance to us as students of the Romans (**my gospel—ii. 16**). He had quitted Damascus, knowing hardly more than that one central fact (IV. § 4). When he left, he had “ his gospel.”

5. *Why did that Holy One hang on the tree ?—who was He, once on earth and now in divine glory ?—the relation borne by Him to sin, to mankind, to Saul :—the law, the struggles of the past in the light of this new knowledge :—would not these and many other questions necessarily surge into his mind and receive their conclusive answer ?*

6. Such are the very subjects of the Epistle to the Romans.

7. And what was the source, and what the authority, to which Paul at any rate referred this message ? See Gal. i. 11, 12, seqq.

VI.

THE WORK OF ST. PAUL.

1. One of the very first things clearly revealed to Paul was that he was marked out to announce the universal message to the Gentiles—Acts xxvi. 16-18.

2. How much this mission was beyond the natural thought of man in those days we can see in many ways : see the difficulty felt even by the leaders of the Church about admitting Gentiles on even terms—Acts x., xi. (e.g. 12, 17, 18). How Paul himself marvelled at this mission (Eph. iii. 4-7) !

3. We may follow his footsteps in the Acts—the probation at Tarsus, at Antioch : the first missionary journey into Asia : the second, into Europe : the third to Ephesus and again into Greece. And how, at Corinth (Acts xx. 2), he felt his work in the East was done—see Romans **xv. 17-28**. His eyes turned westward—to the great imperial city—and beyond (i. **11-15**). From Corinth then the letter to Rome is written, preparing the way.

VII.

THE CHURCH TO WHICH THE LETTER WAS WRITTEN

1. Such was the man who wrote the letter : but who were those to whom he wrote ? Who founded the Church at Rome ? No one can say. But see Acts ii. 10, xviii. 2 + 18 + Rom. xvi. 3, 4. These give us hints. Moreover, all roads led to Rome ; every sort and condition of man flowed into the great city—would Christians be the only sort and condition unrepresented ? See Rom. xvi. 3, 5b, 7, 8, 9, 11a, 13 ; it is clear that many of Paul's own friends had found their way thither.

2. Was the Church Jew or Gentile ? Glance over ch. xvi., and we shall see from other indications that there were *both* elements ; we need not inquire here into their relative strength.

3. What then was the object of writing ? When we think of (*a*) a community with a history, and with a constitution as suggested above ; (*b*) the forthcoming visit of an apostle of such note, with a message so peculiar—is it difficult to understand why St. Paul sent to this Church an exposition of “ his gospel ” so exhaustive, so profound, and so impassioned ?

For United Study.—I.

In subjects where sympathy and imagination play so important a part as those of this week's study, it is impossible but that every member of the circle has conceived of them to some extent differently. Members might well give the ideas they have formed concerning some of the following subjects :—

Saul's early life—boyhood and manhood :

The precise reasons of his opposition to Jesus Christ :

His mental state just before his conversion :

The supreme idea which possessed him through the vision of Jesus :

The meaning of that sojourn in the desert :

The character of the Church at Rome and the motives that prompted this letter.

VIII.

ROMANS i. 1—4.

If one compares this introductory address with those of the other Epistles, we are struck, are we not?, by its strong peculiarity. If as we read it we bear in mind the relation between Paul and these Romans, and the occasion of writing (VII.), we shall see the meaning of these peculiarities.

1. **ver. 1.** Put yourself in the position of one of these Romans, and see how each clause strikes you.

2. **vers. 2, 3.** How do these verses throw light upon the unique and intimate relation of the Old Testament to God: what is it *in their subject-matter* that constitutes them so uniquely and intimately GOD'S?

3. **vers. 3, 4.** Verses not easy because so profound. Nevertheless much is clear: what is not clear will yield to reflection.—Do you notice those contrasts in the two limbs?

ver. 3.	ver. 4.
born (lit. become)	
seed of David	
according to the flesh. .	

Does this language, or does it not, suggest that Jesus Christ was more than mere man?

The least easy contrast is the third: some take the two words **flesh** and **spirit** as indicating different parts of Christ's nature; others as the whole Man from two different standpoints. See the language of Rom. ix. 3, 5.

This comparison may help:—

Jn. i. 14: The Word . . became (ἐγένετο) . . flesh (σάρξ).

Rom. i. 3, 4: His Son . . born (γενομένου) . . flesh (σάρκα).

See too Phil. ii. 6, 7

See too Phil. ii. 9.

2. ἀφωρισμένος: see Gal. i. 15.—εὐαγγέλιον Θεοῦ (2) γραφαῖς ἁγίας (3): We may remark once and for all that these omissions of the article do not necessarily denote that the objects mentioned are not known; but, far oftener, they call attention to the **character** of the objects. *Assuming* that the objects *are* known, he as it were bids us to make an effort to realize the wonderful meaning of the words. (4) γενομένου, as always, of becoming what one was not before: ὁρισθέντος, either *declared* or *constituted*.

IX.

ROMANS i. 4—7.

1. We have heard of The Son (3); we have heard of His nature and glorious history (3, 4) : now comes "the music of His Name"—JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD—a cadence which we shall remark time after time in this Epistle.

JESUS—The historic, earthly Name : (—why placed first here ?)

CHRIST—The name of the divine office (Messiah) :

OUR—His unique relationship to us and our welfare :

LORD—His rightful supremacy above men, and over men.

A whole Gospel in this phrase ! See, for confirmation, Phil. ii. 9, 10, and cp. 11 ; and Rom. x. 9.

2. **vers. 5, 6.** Again, from the point of view of a Roman Christian, see how *each clause* strikes you.

3. **ver. 5.** HIS NAME'S SAKE. See above : that is, for the sake of all that underlies that Name !

4. **ver. 7.** The end of the address at last. But one feels now it has not been kept over so long for nought.

5, 6, ἐλάβομεν . . . πᾶσιν . . . και υμεῖς . . . delicate and irresistible insinuations. 5. πίστῳς—genitive defining the preceding word.

X.

ROMANS i. 8—13.

Again, let us listen to every single clause with the ears of one of these Roman Christians. Perhaps the letter is being read aloud; and the hearer is trying to picture this great apostle who is coming to visit them—whom he has never seen, but of whom he has heard so much.

. . . One's criticism is disarmed at once! Evidently they have to deal with one who is a true gentleman in courtesy (8): . . . this peculiar earnestness of protestation (9) impresses one strangely, especially when one hears the touching nature of the protestation (10a); . . . truly it is no critic, no mere Mentor, but a *friend*, unknown yet well-known, who desires to visit them (10b): . . . here speaks the pastor, the apostle (11)—yet there is no presumption in his heart,—“*all help is mutual*” is evidently his sincere belief: “**yours and mine**”—*Paul* put himself on their level! (ver. 12). He is anxious to make them understand why he has seemed all these long years to have neglected their Roman Church (13):—well, one feels now that it was from no lack of love or yearning interest in their welfare.

10. There is a peculiar and pathetic interest in this verse, when one reflects what occurred between the writing of it and his actual arrival at Rome. Was not the saving clause borne out by events?

9. πνεύματι: see above, ver. 4: the word invariably indicates that in man which communicates with God. Should one think of it as one component part of man, or, the whole man as turned God-ward?

XI.

ROMANS i. 14—17.

We should notice in these verses how subtly St. Paul effects the transition from personal greeting to the main subject of the letter.

1. **Greek—Barbarian** : as we would say, “ civilized and uncivilized ”—Hindu and Sudanese. **debtor**—Ponder the force of this word.

2. **vers. 15, 16. The Gospel**—The good news :—here is the word that serves as title to what succeeds. **vers. 16, 17**—In reality the whole Epistle is hardly more than an expansion of these two verses. Let us watch them narrowly :—

First the general description (**ver. 16**).

What is this Gospel ?

A power to effect salvation,
planned by God, not man,
universal in scope—for Jew and Gentile
alike ;
conditioned by Faith.

Then a more detailed description (**ver. 17**)
(mark the immense improvement of the
R.V. on the *A.V.*).

for (to what does this word point back ?) this
Gospel is unveiling to the sight of men—

God's righteousness ; **RIGHTEOUSNESS** communi-
cated to those who have Faith ; righteousness
that gives Life—thus fulfilling the word of
Habakkuk the Prophet.

3. Righteousness—its true nature and its acquisition by man—such, then, is the theme. But what exactly does the word mean ? And what is *God's* Righteousness as distinguished from *man's* ? We need not puzzle to answer : for the next seven chapters were written to answer these very questions. See, however, Phil. iii. 9.

4. As for Faith—we studied that word in St. John's Gospel ! Does Paul mean the same thing as St. John by it ? We shall see.

δύναμις Θεοῦ (16) ; *δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ* (17)—the omission of articles does not call attention to the *novelty* of the *δύναμις* and *δικαιοσύνη*, nor yet does it imply that there were more than one such *δύναμις* and *δικαιοσύνη* ; but as it were says : “ this Gospel is *power unto salvation* (not, e.g., a theory), and this power is *God's* ; what is unveiled is *Righteousness* (not, e.g., æsthetic beauty or intellectual knowledge), and this Righteousness is *God's*.”

XII.

ROMANS i. 18—20.

So then *Righteousness*—God's righteousness—is the theme. But did mankind *need* such a revelation? and, had it no passable righteousness of its own?

The mental vision of St. Paul flashes round the Gentile world—he had seen Antioch, and Corinth: he had heard of Neronian Rome. And so he goes on:—

1. **ver. 18.** Notice it contrasts with **ver. 17.** They give the key to the thought of this passage:—

	ver. 18.	ver. 17.
For	wrath	
	God's wrath	
	revealed	
	against all unrighteousness	

What is this **wrath**? We shall understand, God helping us, as we study further.

2. **ver. 19. because**—What is the connection? The language of the former verse appeared to signify wilfulness and culpableness on the part of men.

3. **ver. 20.** How? we say. Paul replies . . . **the invisible things of Him.**—What are these? They are defined lower down—the **everlasting power and divinity** of God. *How* were they **perceived**, and **clearly seen**? The next words give the answer.

4. Thus is opened up a thought intensely suggestive: “the light that lightened” the Heathen World! Perhaps these references will help us to understand the thought:—Jn. i. 3, 4 (margin); Acts xiv. 15, 16, esp. 17; xvii. 26, 27.

The works of His hands, then, enlightened man. We have not heard the last of “the light that lighteth every man.”

5. **that they might be without excuse . . .** this was what actually happened and was intended to happen. No man is condemned in the dark: would you wish him to be so?

18. ὄργη Θεοῦ—no article (see yesterday). τὸ γνωστόν τοῦ Θεοῦ—“that in God which is knowable,” defined by ἡ τε αἰδὸς κ.τ.λ. below. 18. ἀποκαλύπτεται . . . 19. ἐφανερώσεν: different images are suggested: the first word suggests the removal of a dark body from some essentially light-giving object: the second, the shedding of light on something not in itself bright. 20. εἰς τὸ εἶναι—undoubtedly conveys idea of purpose as well as result.

XIII.

ROMANS i. 21—end.

We have come to a very awful passage—the picture of a society that has rejected God. We read it in vain if we do not here discern in the writer indignation, horror, and burning tears. Besides these lines the words of a Cicero, or even a Seneca, are tame and lifeless. For Paul spoke with more authority than they, and his tones are the tones of Christ.

1. Notice the stages of the downward descent—
rejection of light ;
their own light, folly ;
IDOLATRY ;
vice, unnatural and unspeakable ;
multifold sin ;
and lastly, positive exultation in it all.

2. Notice the significance of idolatry : it is both a symptom and a cause of moral disease. Paul had seen this. May not we to-day also see it ?

3. Notice the sins which are classed with the more hideous vices.

4. **God gave them up.** See Jn. iii. 18, 19, xii. 40 : the punishment of sin is—sin ! (cp. **in themselves**, ver. 27). **ver. 32.** Is not *this* the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost ? “ Evil be then niy good.” Such is the *end* of the descent.

32. δικαίωμα. We shall often meet with this word : its root meaning is “ what God pronounces just.”

XIV.

THOUGHTS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF ROMANS.

1. We have sat, then, with the Roman Christians (say) in Priscilla's and Aquila's house (xvi. 5), and listened as the letter is read. With them, we have heard the salutations and formed an inward estimate of the man who wrote it. He has mentioned "his gospel," and in strangely weighty words has stated it in brief. And he has begun to tell us what his gospel is (ver. 18).

2. A strange first paragraph to the "Gospel" (18—end)! The word **for** (18) tells us the secret:—

"A righteousness of God!"

"Is such a revelation needed?"

"Look at the world to-day. There is a revelation there at any rate of wrath, past, present and future."

3. Something in us says: "That is not a complete picture of society now, or even then." But (as we shall see) that is not the point. Is it a true picture of any part of society whatever, past or present? Well then—a world where *that* is possible, unpreventible, unrepentant, needs a righteousness of God. *How* universally it needs that righteousness St. Paul will show us presently.

4. An assent on our part even as qualified as that suggested in § 3 is quite enough. Looking on this dark and terrible picture, in the spirit and with the eyes of Paul, let us make the assent. And we shall see presently where that assent carries us.

For United Study.—II.

1. *Unfold i. 1-7, showing the special suitability of the introduction to their special occasion.*
2. *An interchange of views on i. 3, 4.*
3. *Analyse verses 16, 17: what stages of thought do the three for's (16, 17, 18) mark?*
4. *An interchange of ideas on vers. 19, 20.*
5. *So far, how would one meet the objection: "This is an incomplete view of the state of even some heathen society; incomplete, and therefore false"?*
6. *So far, have we seen much of the frigid treatise writer?*

XV.

ROMANS ii. 1—5.

The audience in that Roman house makes the assent (XIV. § 4) : we make our assent : St. Paul hears every imaginary hearer make his assent. Then, Nathan-like—:—

1. **ver. 1.** Has the world described in ch. i. been unconsciously regarded by some as outside themselves ? With emphasis, therefore, have they passed their judgment. And now *this very judgment* is judge against themselves : **whosoever**—no distinction whatever : **judgest**—For what does the power of judgment imply in him who has it ?

Master the logic of this verse.

2. **ver. 2.** The emphatic word here is **practise. practise**—As opposed to—what ?

3. **ver. 3. thou**—emphatic—“ of all others.” Stated thus nakedly, how inevitably do these words convince ! See esp. Jn. vii. 49. “ I knew ” is man’s *plea* : God makes it man’s sentence.

4. **ver. 4.** The last word is the emphatic word. Here we are told the real end for which light, knowledge, power of judgment are vouchsafed to man. **leadeth thee**—That is its aim and desire and tendency. **to repentance**—*Not* to—what ?

In the O.T. *did the goodness of God* ever succeed in leading men to repentance ?

5. **ver. 5.** The only possible alternative for the character and destiny of the man who *knows*. We should reflect on these two alternatives until we see clearly the meaning of them : and the inevitableness and naturalness of the second if the first is declined.

These passages help us to understand : Mt. vii. 1-5 ; xxv. 26 (“ thou knewest ! ”), 27 (“ therefore ”), 28 (“ therefore ”) ; 1 Cor. xi. 31 ; and 2 Sam. xii. 1-12 ; 13.

8. *σύ*, emph. 4. *χρηστόν*—this word always conveys ideas of kindness, lovable-ness. 5. *ἀποκαλυψέως*, cp. 1. 18.

XVI.

ROMANS ii. 6—II.

1. **ver. 6. works.** Character is the ultimate test ; see Mt. xxv. 31 seq.

2. **ver. 7.** How did these come by their character ? We need not trouble to answer at this moment. St. Paul is speaking of the result, not the process towards the result.

A selfish **glory, honour** ? See St. John's definition of "glory": 1 Jn. iii. 2. See Tennyson's poem "Wages."

3. **ver. 8. who are factious**—Professor Sanday translates—"whose motive is factiousness." The Greek word denotes the spirit of a hireling, or a mere party agent. What motive or spirit is that ? Is such loyalty to party loyalty to king ? Is selfishness or unselfishness at the bottom of it ? **obey not . . . but obey**—Well, by this, at any rate, that spirit is manifested.

4. **ver. 9.** And its doom accords. **wrath (i. 18) and indignation**—The cause: **tribulation and anguish**—The effect.

Jew . . . Greek (and see **ver. 10** and **i. 16**)—To us this absence of distinction causes no surprise ; but it was a very difficult idea to many in St. Paul's day : the principle is summed up in **ver. 10**.

wrath—the *wrath of God*—We shall try to enter into the meaning and truth. Meanwhile we notice that St. Paul seems to regard it as something which is the *natural conclusion* of the sin which runs such lengths (ch. i.), loses all taste for good (i. 32), and *refuses* repentance (ii. 4).

6, 7. ἔργα . . . ἔργου . . . **9, 10.** κατεργαζομένου—**φ. 8.** ἐριθίας—ἐριθός—a day-labourer, a hireling ; so, a man who acts from narrow or interested motives ; see esp. Phil. i. 17.

XVII.

ROMANS ii. 12—16.

1. **ver. 12.** We have seen that knowledge, instead of excusing, accuses—a terrible consideration for those favoured with much knowledge and inclined to build on the fact. Now who specially prided themselves on their complete knowledge of all the requirements of God? St. Paul proceeds to show in detail that such knowledge made no difference—in the way of security at least.

2. **ver. 12. for**—This takes up **ver. 11. without law**—Who did the Jews say had no “law”? We shall see in a moment that no one is “without” *some* law. It is a special sense of law that is here intended, then: “without a divinely-given law.”

2. **ver. 13.** Another statement of the same theme—knowledge (“hearing”) does not save.

3. **ver. 14.** What is the force of this **for**? It might be, “These may even be doing *without* hearing!” or, “Even those who do not hear, as at Sinai, have a law which they hear speaking within.”

4. We saw in **i. 19, 20** evidence of “the light that lighteth every man.” And here (**ii. 14, 15**) we come across deeper evidence still. We should notice—

the heathen are not devoid of moral judgment—
they sin against it, or, less likely (**else—ver. 15**)
obey it—

(and the conclusion is) they are therefore **without excuse** (ch. **i.**), they are as liable to be **judged** (ch. **ii.**) as any others.

Whether Jew or Gentile ever *did* actually follow the light that led him is not quite the point in this particular passage. Yet the language of it helps us to conclusions on this question too.

5. **ver. 16.** St. Paul returns to the starting-point (**vers. 2, 3**), with a searching addition: compare verses **2** and **16**! It is like the comparison of Exodus with the Sermon on the Mount.

6. **my gospel**—It had come to him on the desert-plains as part and parcel of the revelation of God. **by Jesus Christ.** See Acts xvii. 31.

12, 13, 14. νόμος without article (for general principle see XI.)—a definite system of law—generally with special though not exclusive reference to Moses'. **15.** ἢ καὶ—shows that this is considerably less likely.

XVIII.

ROMANS ii. 17—24.

St. Paul had won assent to his words concerning the foul crimes of heathendom (ch. i.): he has rounded on all who assent with the great principle—that knowledge means judgment without distinction, but in proportion to that knowledge (ver. 12). Finally he turns to the section of humanity which, above all, had knowledge.

1. Before we go further let us turn to two passages : Amos iii. 1, 2 ; Lk. xii. 47, 48. The principle, then, is not original in St. Paul. It has very great authority.

2. **ver. 17.** This last and most privileged class of all was hinted at very broadly in **vers. 1-15** : but now Nathan turns on it by name.

3. See the way in which St. Paul leads up to the conviction : enumerates the glorious privileges of which the Jew is so justly proud (**17**) : points to the moral knowledge resulting therefrom (**18**) ; so much so that it overflows to others (**19, 20**)——

4. **vers. 21, 22.** Jews then broke all of these laws. But supposing some individual Jew made the plea of the young man in Mk. x. 19, 20 ? Would he escape the law of the Sermon on the Mount (e.g. Mt. v. 21, 22) ?

5. **ver. 23. the law**—To what law does he allude ? **vers. 23b** and **24** show the aggravation of the Jews' offence.

6. Does not all this square entirely with the words of Jesus Christ to the Jews in the days of His flesh ? See, e.g., Jn. ix. 41.

■ **17.** *σύ*, emph. **22.** *ἱεροσυλεῖς*—see Acts xix. 37—evidently the Jews had some notoriety in this respect.

XIX.

ROMANS ii. 25—29.

1. There was a certain rite which was the symbol of all the Jews' privileges : consequently it was prized proportionately : Gentiles were called in scorn " un-circumcised."

ver. 25. If, behind the symbol, one finds *the reverse* of the thing symbolised, does not the very symbol itself condemn ?

2. **vers. 26, 27.** See above 13-15. Mt. xxi. 28-31 makes a wonderful confirmation of these verses.

3. **ver. 28.** See Phil. iii. 3.—A doctrine easy to-day (yet not received even in the Church without a struggle). *But is this language unparalleled even in the Old Testament?* See Deut. x. 16; cp. Jer. ix. 25, 26; Acts vii. 51.

4. **ver. 29. praise.** There is a play on words here. " Jew " in Hebrew = " praised one."

5. And so the Jews are so far from being the only people exempt from judgment for sin committed, that they most signally of all fall under it. This is the startling conclusion of St. Paul.

26. δικαιώματα—see i. 32 where it meant " righteous sentence": here righteous demands. The root sense is, " that which God judges right."

XX.

ROMANS iii. 1—8.

Ere St. Paul turns from the special case of the Jews, he answers an objection. "Have you not cut away every single claim to distinction on the part of the people whom God Himself chose?"

1. **ver. 1.** Had St. Paul really denied the very existence of advantage or profit, he would have been false to Scripture and to himself. But (**ver. 2**) he has not lost sight of the other side of the matter.

ver. 2. And *is* not this a real glory? We need not be afraid of overstating *this* claim.

2. Now follows a chain of difficulties and answers to them, each arising out of the one before.

3a. First difficulty.—The solid advantage named in **ver. 2** melts away when one considers the perpetual unbelief of the chosen. (*When* did the Jews disbelieve? *When* did their unbelief culminate? See Mt. xxi. 33-45; Acts vii. 51-53.)

3b, 4. Answer.—God's plans not to be judged by the miserable failures of this man or that. **ver. 4** puts the case in its most paradoxical form. The deeper the shadow, the brighter (by contrast) the light.

5. Second difficulty.—If so, why judge the shadow for being so black?

6. Answer.—As Abraham answered:—Gen. xviii. 25b.

7, 8a. Third difficulty.—Make the shadow blacker and blacker, on purpose, so as to set off the light!

Answer.—The very fact that this is so *contrary* to the whole Gospel shows that the difficulty is sophistry: it is apparent but not real.

3. *καταργήσαι*—a very common Pauline word: to destroy by making fruitless or supernumerary. e.g. a new invention *καταργεῖ* the one before it. A fall in demand *καταργεῖ* a plentiful supply.

XXI.

THOUGHTS ON CH. ii.

1. St. Paul's aim is to show the *need* of a Righteousness of God (i. 17)—

by pointing to the sinfulness of the world ;
which sinfulness extends to every class and
nation among men ;
and (if you question narrowly) to every individual
in those classes and nations.

Has he made out his point, do you think ?

2. He does not take up the untenable position that every society and every soul *is actually* like that described in ch. I. His argument "for the Crown" is far more subtle than that. And, in the light of Mt. v. 20-48, would it have been necessary for him to have done so ?

3. Does he assert that this universal sin finally *triumphed* over every individual, Jew or Gentile, before the era of Christ ? Would it have been true if he had asserted this ? *And was it necessary for his argument to assert it ?*

4. **The wrath of God (ver. 9).** Human language, it is true. But is the shadow less or more than the substance ?

Is wrath, generous and unselfish, against some vile act and its vile agent, unknown even among men ?

In some vast, complex machine, suppose *one* part goes hopelessly out of gear : if the machine is not to stop for ever, the part must go, and a new one be put in. In a body, if one limb mortify, the body itself compels the cutting off of that limb. In a society, if one member prove utterly refractory, he must be expelled. In the universe, if its laws are disregarded, either the universe itself or the offender must come to an end. And will it, must it, be more so or less so in the moral universe—the spiritual universe, which is God ?

For United Study.—III.

1. *Get absolutely clear on the train of thought indicated by wherefore . . . for . . . for (ver. 1) . . . practise (ver. 2) . . . repentance . . . (ver. 4) . . . impenitent (ver. 5) . . . righteous judgment (ver 5).*

2. *Unfold vers. 11-16.*

These verses need peculiar care. Let there be free interchange of ideas with regard to them. Check every idea by the thoughts that run through Scripture. We should remember that in this early stage of our study, conclusions can only be provisional.

3. *What was the position of the typical Jew of Paul's day? How would 17-29 come as a shock to him?*

4. *What has been St. Paul's point so far (i. 16—ii. 29)? Has he made it out?*

5. *So far, have we seen much of the frigid treatise-writer (it is well to keep this question well before us)?*

XXII.

ROMANS iii. 9—18.

1. **ver. 9.** St. Paul has gone so far in demonstrating the responsibility of the Jew (ch. ii.), that there is danger of the pendulum swinging to the other extreme—"the Jew is guilty, the Gentile comparatively or wholly guiltless." This verse recalls us to a true view. And see **ii. 9, 11, 12. all** (ver. 9), **no, not one** (ver. 10)—This has been certainly implied in **i.** and **ii.**, but not so categorically stated. But now it is stated—and in its nakedest form.

2. We may consider :—

(a) The fact of *repentance* (admitted fully, is it not ? in **ii.**) does not alter the charge here made (ver. 9b). Do you not see that it rather implies it ?

(b) Keeping this in mind, does one refuse to allow the charge to the full ?

If one admits there never was a person who had "no need of repentance," one has allowed the charge.

3. **vers. 10-18.** If we turn to a reference Bible, we see that this passionate indictment is a sort of tessellation of passages from the O.T. Something within one says, "What, are *all* of this black character ? Abraham—Samuel—the sweet and gentle characters which we find in Scripture and round about us !" Yes, let us state our difficulty as strongly as possible, for we shall then begin to understand the thought. Let us therefore consider :—

(a) Who is not aware of a darker self within himself—perhaps not very far from the surface ?

(b) If this darker self once gets the upper hand, to what lengths may it not run ? Is there a syllable in **vers. 10-18** that would not fit David the saint, in 2 Sam. xi. ?

(c) One sees a simple change of environment—say an African sun—making devils of apparently civilised men. Why ?

(d) Has one any right to disown this dark self, or overlook its possibilities of sin ?

(e) Finally, let us again and again reflect on Mt. v. 22, 28.

Therefore, was St. Paul, looking on mankind with the eyes of God, justified in writing **10-18** ?

XXIII.

ROMANS iii. 19, 20.

1. **ver. 19.** St. Paul brought both Jews and Gentiles together (**ver. 9**), and applied to them both the passage **10-18**. Now, lest the former make one last endeavour to escape from an indictment so terrible, he silences them by an appeal to the very Scripture to which they trusted (**19a**—"to whom certainly does a quotation from the *Old Testament* apply?").

2. **19b, 20.** The final and formal arraignment: the prisoner at the bar must be silenced ere either judgment be passed or *free* pardon begin.

3. **ver. 20.** See Ps. cxliii. 1, 2 (**the works of (the) law**—the bracketed words are not in the Greek. Must not this include the **law** mentioned in **ii. 14**?

JUSTIFIED—Does this word mean *accounted, called, righteous, or, made* righteous? A momentous difference. The most careful and dispassionate commentators say that there is no question at all; it must mean, and always means, the *former*.

4. **ver. 20.** Does this stand to reason? Let us answer these questions: (1) Can we point to a single life which from beginning to end can be pronounced stainless? (2) Can this plain fact be altered by pointing to good deeds in that life? (Whether such deeds are truly good or not we do not consider here.)

There is far more in that expression, by works of law, than the above suggests. But even the above small admissions are enough for the purpose. We shall examine the phrase in ch. **iv**.

5. **ver. 20b. for**—gives reason why law cannot pronounce *guiltless* (whatever else it may do). **knowledge**—*not* the *existence* of sin, but the *knowledge* of sin.

6. The arraignment is closed: there is silence in the court: then after a pause a new voice speaks.

19. ὁ . . . τῷ . . . The articles point to a definite system of law—the Mosaic. πάν, πᾶς emph. 20. ἔργων νόμου—see the principle of omission of the article in VIII. (footnote).

XXV.

ROMANS iii. 24, 25a.

Onward into the Holy of Holies. The righteousness of God came to man through *faith on Christ* (ver. 22) : notice the wonderful accordance with the teaching in St. John's Gospel : but we are permitted to penetrate further into the inner nature of that faith—into what it involved, as it were, in Heaven—; in the very nature of things the Gospels could not more than hint at this.

See V. § 5. We keep imagining Saul and the stillness of the Arabian desert.

1. vers. 24, 25, then, are the unfolding of vers. 21, 22 :—

being justified a righteousness of God
(ver. 20 told us how we were *not* justified : this verse, how we *are* :)

freely apart from the law
by His grace through faith
[through the redemption] in Jesus Christ.
that is] in Jesus Christ

2. The heavenly side (as it were) of earthly **faith in Christ** is, then, a **redemption** in Christ. (What does **redemption** mean literally?) Finally, then, this new idea is unfolded in **vers. 25, 26**—perhaps the profoundest in the Bible.

Cp. John iii. 16a (the heavenly side), 16b (the earthly side).

3. **ver. 25. God**—The word takes us at once into the divine sphere.

set forth—as it were in public, so that men could not choose but look : (Contrast Rev. xiii. 8. last words : and see Rom. xvi. 25, 26).

a propitiation : let us compare 1 John ii. 2. What is the naked meaning of propitiation? Is this a right definition—"something that causes or enables someone to act mercifully or forgivingly" ?

by His blood—Are we not irresistibly reminded of certain Old Testament types? It is necessary (if we are to understand St. Paul) to let these shadows help to interpret their substance.

4. The latter words of **25a** open up yet one more vista. We cannot, however, enter on it to-day.

24. ἀπολυτρώσεως—the literal idea is "paying a ransom" (λύτρον) for someone from (ἀπὸ) something. Comparing 1 Tim. ii. 6 and cp. Mk. x. 45, do you feel the literal meaning is pretty near the true one? 25. ἐν αἵματι—does this go with πίστεως or ἰλαστήριον?

XXVI.

ROMANS iii. 25b.

We have reached now what is absolutely the quick of the whole passage—and Epistle. Righteousness through faith: faith in Jesus Christ: faith in Jesus Christ the Ransom—such were the vistas, each opening out from the other. The “ransom” has been further explained as “a propitiation.” So then the momentous question is, who was propitiated, and why, and how?

1. **ver. 25.** Let us reflect, once more, for a moment on yesterday’s phrase in **His blood**. Blood *in the veins* is the symbol of LIFE (see Gen. ix. 4; Lev. xvii. 11, 14). But blood *out of the veins*, blood *shed*—of what is that the symbol? Is it blood in, or out of, the veins that is here spoken of? We are helped to a conclusion by the word **propitiation**:—in every religion, including the Jews’, was it a living animal or a dead animal that “propitiated”? Further confirmation is found in Mk. x. 45 (“to give His life”), Heb. ix. 15, 16 (“Death”); Rev. v. 6 (“a Lamb . . . slain”).

2. It is the DEATH of Jesus Christ, then, that has to be accounted for. This much is clear. Now at last we come to the reason assigned for that death and the extraordinary results ascribed to it:—

to show His (God’s) righteousness—Why? Did it need demonstrating? Yes, there was something that might have cast grave doubts on it:—

because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God (see the still bolder words in Acts xvii. 30; also Acts xiv. 16). Century after century, it seems to say, men might have got the impression that a careless God reigned in heaven—sin was, as a whole, “passed over.”

3. How does a kingdom maintain its own moral standard, and keep alive in individuals their sense of that standard? By ignoring misdemeanours, or only occasionally recognising them? By suffering the issues of transgression to lapse and be forgotten? What effect would such a course of action have on the state itself, and then on the subjects?

4. How therefore *does* a state “shew its righteousness”? And shall the eternal moral and spiritual kingdom, itself the source of every earthly state that is founded on righteousness, do less? See XXI. § 4.

25. τῆς “that righteousness of His . . . spoken of in ver. 21.” διὰ c. acc. “on account of”—we might almost say “to account for.”

XXVII.

ROMANS iii. 26.

“ One sees the point as regards ‘ demonstrating His righteousness ’ : but what has the historical *Jesus* to do with this ? And what has mankind to do with this ? ”

1. **ver. 26. at this present time**—This demonstration did not only look backward (**ver. 25**) : how otiose it would have been ! Its significance is eternal : past, present, future :—

2. To follow yesterday’s thought, then,—is it plain *how* an earthly state “ shows its righteousness ” ?

3. Why, then, should not God have followed out the natural order ?

Let us answer by another question :

What would then have become of man ?

4. This, then, is why *Jesus* demonstrated the righteousness of God ; why *Jesus*’ “ blood ” was shed : why *Jesus* was the “ ransom.”

What irresistible inference do we draw from this train of thought as regards the Nature of this *Jesus* ? Was it divine, or simply human ? See esp. 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

5. **that he might be just and the justifier !** Ah, the demonstration of His own character would have been indeed a barren act : the last two words have revealed to us the ultimate end : forgiveness was His purpose—aye and more than forgiveness, as we shall see.

6. **of him that hath faith in *Jesus***—This brings us back to where we started—**ver. 22**, “ through faith in *Jesus*.” The intervening verses have shown us, in addition, the accomplishment of this *Jesus*. If a man’s work is inseparable from the man, to have faith on *Jesus* is to possess Him ; both what He is *and what He did*.

Why has faith this power ? It is not very mysterious ; does not an engrafted bough acquire the *whole* nature and character of the stock ?

26. πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν (contrast εἰς ἔνδειξιν above) : the πρὸς implies a nearer, less remote object ; τὴν expresses *the ἔνδειξιν mentioned above*.

XXVIII.

THE ATONEMENT.—ROMANS iii. 21—26.

1. Long though we have been in passing these six crowded verses, we cannot but pause and collect our thoughts. It will be hard to ponder these verses too long ; for we may well believe that they represent the very essence of the secret of Paul,—revealed, perhaps, in long agonies of thought under those Arabian skies.

2. What Saul had to account for (as we saw) was this : the Messiah, the Holy One, the (now) glorified—crucified !

To account for this amazing fact, no ordinary explanation would serve.

It was no mere accident that had set the Holy One of God upon the tree. It was part of some eternal drama, with consequences far-reaching and eternal.

What was the meaning of it all ?

3. Also, the failure of his own righteousness, the reality of his own guilt, was the other thought that filled the soul of Saul in those days.

4. Thus the two were brought into connection, and in these verses we have their relationship stated.

Is it not only earnest thought, in the power of God, that will enable us to re-possess this illumination that thrilled the spirit of Saul ? But must we too not start with the same data—*myself, and Christ—slain ?*

5. “ *Away from that, Christ ! that’s my place :* ” this exclamation, which started from the lips of a Bechuana, marks perhaps the supreme moment of illumination—the solution of the problem with its two sides : of which solution the passage **iii. 21-26** is the full expression.

For United Study.—IV.

1. *What is the place of iii. 9-20 in the whole order of thought ?*

2. *How is the language of 10-18 to be defended and accepted ?*

3. *What new section does ver. 21 begin ? This passage, 21-26, should be gone through by the circle, verse by verse, clause by clause.*

We should try first simply to discern ST. PAUL'S MEANING : secondly, by re-stating it in our own words and illustrating it in every possible way, to make his thought our own : and thus ourselves become the subjects of revelation.

" For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." Gal. i. 12.

XXIX.

ROMANS iii. 27—31.

1. **ver. 27.** *the glorying* — What glorying? Through all the sections **i. 18—iii. 20** there ran, surely, the thought of a glorying which must be destroyed if God's work were to be possible.

Why does "faith" as described above destroy "glorying"?

2. **ver. 28.** Here is the conclusion: see how St. Paul and St. John coincide—Jn. vi. 28, 29.

Let us remember always that **justified** means *being pronounced righteous*, or, *acquitted* (pronounced "not guilty"): *not*, being *made* righteous.

It is true that the latter must and will follow, and that immediately. But it *follows*, not *precedes*: it depends, in fact, on the former.

3. **vers. 29, 30.** Are the claims of the Jew to special privilege which were shattered in **ii.** to reappear *now* under the New Covenant? See **ver. 22.** Note the proofs that God's work is accessible to *all* His creatures:—**God is one:** and, **faith** is not peculiar to any nationality.

4. **ver. 31.** The Gospel is **faith apart from works** of the law (**ver. 28**). What then are we to think of law, and especially Moses' law? Something utterly worthless, or worse? This verse gives the answer.

See Rom. xiii. 10; and Mt. v. 17.

27. ἡ "the boasting we know so well." ἐξεκλείσθη—aor., see Jn. xiii. 31: signifies "once and for all." νόμον—"principle" here. 28. ἀνθρώπων—the word itself takes us beyond nationality. χωρίς—lit. "separate from," cp. Jn. xv. 5. ἔργων νόμον—no articles: see VIII., Gk. note. 30. εἴπερ="if, as is certain . . ." τῆς="the same . . ."

XXX.

ROMANS iv. 1—5.

“ We establish the law.” A Jew (and not only a Jew) might well ask Paul, “ Was there no grace or revelation before your Christ ? Is the whole Old Testament to go for nothing ? Or can you find your principle of justification by faith in the Old Testament ? ” A pertinent question !—You observe how the thought is a continuation of the last section of **iii.** See also **iii. 1.**

1. **ver. 1.** Abraham is selected, as it were, by both parties, as *the* test case. Here was a man who came to stand well with God (= “ be justified ”), and who was the first founder of Jewish privilege. The crucial question, therefore, is, “ Did he gain this standing through his own merit or through faith in God ? ”

2. **ver 2. but not before God**—These are the important words : which crush the hypothesis of the first half of the verse.

3. **ver. 3.** Then comes the proof—the all important appeal to Scripture : *Gen. xv. 6.*

Let us ponder these profound words. See the context : the occasion is *not* one of Abraham’s acts of obedience, but simply a time when a bare promise has been made by God and accepted by Abraham.

Wherein, then, lay the strength of Abraham’s position ?—Wherein lies the entire strength of the position of one who holds a Bank of England note ? In himself, the printed piece of paper, or the Bank of England ?

4. **ver. 4.** An illustration from common life. **that worketh**—as opposed to—what ? **reckoned**—echoing the same word in the last verse. **grace**=*gift* (practically).

5. **ver. 5. Ver. 4** has brought out clearer than ever the absurdity of “ works,” which practically make us the creditors of the Almighty ! So **ver. 3** is now re-affirmed with additions. **faith**—emphatic.

4. τῷ ἐργαζομένῳ—contrasted with ἐπίστευσεν (3); both words hold the emphatic position. 5. ἐπί—the word is full of life: lit. “ on to the top of ”: the other usual preposition εἰς conveys also its own picture.

XXXI.

ROMANS iv. 6—12.

The Jew wanted to make out that Abraham's *goodness—man's goodness—* secured his being pronounced good in Heaven. But it is the *ungodly* who need justifying (ver. 5, and see Mt. ix. 12, 13)! Hear the words of the Psalmist:—

1. **ver. 7.** St. Paul asks : Does this not completely bear out what I say ? Here is a man pronounced *blessed* : A flawless man, full of good works ? Why, a chief of *sinners* !

2. **vers. 7, 8.** These verses bring out the negative side of this justifying. This man *had sinned* (ver. 7) ; *but his sins were not being brought up against him.*

Think out what this means : if the accuser is silent, what must the verdict be ?

And, since the man who is guiltless is more than not-guilty—is *righteous*, we see justification has a positive side.

A mystery ? Yes, truly. But accounted for, as we saw in **iii.**, and shall see clearer in **vi.**, by the uniqueness of Christ's Nature, and the unique character of His Death.

3. **vers. 9, 10.** (The reference to the Psalmist is by the way.) The Jews who hoped for salvation simply because they were Abraham's children (Mt. iii. 9) were prone to trust in the fact of *circumcision*. Paul tracks this falsehood also to its source.

4. **ver. 11.** So far from circumcision being a cause, it was a result ! **that believe**—Emphatic.

5. **ver. 12.** Show how this verse proclaims the non-necessity of circumcision without denying its value to the Jew.

The question " Must a man be circumcised to be saved ? " is in the *background* of St. Paul's thought here, evidently, but not in the forefront, as it is in the Ep. to Galatians. The question here is rather, " Must a man who *is* circumcised necessarily be saved ? "

8. λογίσθαι, emph. 9. μακαρισμός (and in 6) = not τὸ μακάριος εἶναι but τὸ μακάριος κληθῆναι.

XXXII.

ROMANS iv. 13—17a.

If the Jew, in virtue of circumcision, were accepted, then the Gentile were rejected. In disproving the former, Paul disproved the latter. Thus vers. 11, 12 bring us round to the conclusion of iii. 29, 30.

1. **ver. 13.** (the) **law**—No article in the Greek. Just as Abraham owed nothing to circumcision, so he owed nothing to obedience to any code of law.

or to his seed—We have settled the isolated question of Abraham—at bottom only important as an instance of a *universal principle*.

heir of the world—We are part of his inheritance : *we* are not owed to Abraham's merit, but to God's promise.

2. **vers. 14, 15.** The proof is what is called a *priori*. It consists in simply contrasting the terms : law—faith, promise, and showing that they are mutually exclusive (like gift, debt). **ver. 15**—All that law can do itself (*human nature being what it is*) is shown in this verse. We have had a hint of this in iii. 20b, and are to hear more still.

3. **ver. 16.** And now the summing up. **faith . . . grace** (gift)—The more one reflects on it, the more one sees that these are simply two sides of the same thing. **16b to the end that . . . all the seed . . . etc.** *All*—Emphatic. This sums up what was said in various ways in iii. 22b, 23-30 ; iv. 11b, 12.

4. **ver. 16** (last words). **us**—i.e., Christians. St. Paul is working towards the conclusion that the children must be identical in nature with the father—i.e., in *faith*.

13. νόμου—no article. "Law" in its broadest sense (considering the Mosaic law had not been promulgated). 15. ὁ—i.e. "as mentioned above." 16. We must supply the verb, as none is expressed : something like "God's plan was . . ."

XXXIII.

ROMANS iv. 17b.

We have seen in this chapter **iv.** that the O.T. way of justification as exemplified in Abraham was by faith; not circumcision nor yet law: and that, therefore, for Jew and Gentile alike the only way was, also, by *faith*. But the whole strength of faith lies *in its object* :—

1. **ver. 17b.** We should imagine, perhaps, a short pause after the words **I have made thee.** Then St. Paul describes in a few pregnant words the character of the God whom Abraham believed (**17b**) and the correspondingly unlimited nature of Abraham's faith (**18-21**).

2. **17b.** Let us ponder well these words. God the Creator: God the re-Creator—which is the greater mystery? It is with *this* conception of God that the great chapter on faith (Heb. xi.) starts (ver. 3). It was *this* that awed the Psalmist (viii., xix.). To *this* Jehovah Himself appeals—Is. xlv. 24-28. In virtue of this the Lord Jesus pled for faith on Father and Son—Jn. v. 21. *Such* was the God on whom Abraham believed.

3. And how? The behind-the-scenes of faith is now described in a few master-strokes. Does it not remind us forcibly of Heb. xi.? See Heb. xi. 11, 12, 17, 19.

4. **ver. 22.** And the result? Not merely attainment of the thing promised (this affected Abraham's posterity almost more than himself), but a result which none could have predicted: **RIGHTEOUSNESS**—the pronouncement not-guilty at the bar of God—the more-than-forgiveness, the obliteration of sins.

19. *κατενόησεν*—calmly took stock of “the mountain” before faith lifted it up. 20. *δοῦς δόξαν*, etc. Truly he “saw the day” of Christ, and fulfilled in advance Mk. xi. 22-24.

XXXIV.

ROMANS iv. 23—25.

The Old Testament is of one piece, then, with the New! There is no cleft between them. St. Paul passed from the New to the Old at the beginning of the chapter. Now he passes back to the New. "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" is "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1. **ver. 23.** See Rom. xv. 4.

2. The extraordinary identity between St. Paul's and St. John's teaching comes out in these verses.—The Incarnation did not alter the character of God! It simply made it more intelligible to men; in fact, completely intelligible. See Jn. i. 14, 18 ("declared").

So here (**ver. 24**): what was a mere shadow to Abraham, comparatively, is a warm breathing reality to us. See Heb. i. 1, 2.

The same God: but in what He did on and in **Jesus our Lord** we know Him finally—fully. Faith at length has a complete object.

3. **ver. 25.** These words, crowded with meaning, *analyse* the Object of Faith on which we children of Abraham have the proud privilege of believing.

Do you see that they are in advance on the section **iii. 21-26**, which we had well-nigh thought final? For what new element is introduced here? **delivered**, etc.—*That* we had in ch. **iii. raised**, etc.—How did the Resurrection consummate justification? Let us reflect now: but we shall see more clearly when we come to ch. **vi.** Meanwhile see Acts ii. 24; Jn. xii. 32; 1 Cor. xv. 20—22; and 1 Pet. i. 3.

24. ἐπὶ τόν . . . cp. ver. **5** (Gk. note): the phrase is intensely personal:—no abstract assent to formulae, but a confiding heart is suggested. **25.** διὰ with acc.: some say this means here as always—"as a result of": others that the second διὰ must mean "in order to effect."

XXXV.

THE WORKS OF THE LAW.

1. We shall not ever truly believe in Justification by Faith, until we really *see* what "works of law" mean, and why they are useless.

4. What was the Fall, in effect? An estrangement from the life of the Whole—which is God. It is not difficult to see how sin and wickedness and corruption set in after that.

3. Now what was the one hope for the separated pieces? Here are the two alternatives:—

to attempt to manufacture a likeness to their con- dition when in God, in hopes of being then taken back into God,	or	simply ask to be taken back "just as they were" (on the almost incredible news that the Holy One would have them).
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Which of these two alternatives remind you of faith, or works?

Would you call one of them not only the worse way, but also downright *impossible*?

4. But further "works" as such are said to be actually *displeasing to God*!

Superficially, this seems hard.

But let us consider—if such "works" are (by hypothesis) done in separation from God, and tend to prolong the state of separation; and if God cannot but be displeased with such separation:—must not such works displease Him? Instead of correcting the Fall they are continuing it.

5. If we add the thought of a *loving* God (Jn. iii. 16a) whose invitation is to the separated ones to come back by the way of Faith on Himself, would not the above attitude be a direct refusal to such an invitation, and therefore very grievous?

6. Therefore, there is not only good theology in Heb. xi. 6a and Rom. xiv. 23b, but also good common sense.

For United Study.—V.

1. *What is the connection of thought between ch. iv. and what has gone before ?*

2. *What two great correlative truths does the chapter establish ?*

3. **vers. 24, 25:** *what new idea do these verses introduce ?*

Is there any difference between Abraham's faith and a Christian's : or between the object of his faith and that of a Christian's ?

If so, what difference ? And we should account for the fact that St. Paul uses Abraham's faith not as a mere illustration of a principle, but an instance (or result) of a privilege. Or is this not so ?

XXXVI.

ROMANS V. 1—5.

From the past, then, a child of faith has nought to fear. What then is to be his mental state with regard to the eternal future? Can we from the former make any *certain* inference as to the latter?

1. **ver. 1a.** Note the connecting word-link between this verse and **v. 25.** The fresh idea comes in the second half of **ver. 1.**

The two ideas of these two halves are echoed and re-echoed throughout this section (**v. 1-11**). To keep this clearly in mind greatly helps. Suppose we call them by the letters (A) and (B).

The past: sin forgiven and forgotten (A)

The future: "peace," and all that that means . . . (B)

2. **ver. 1. peace**—What outlook on the present and the future does this word suggest? **through our Lord Jesus Christ.**—If (A) was through Him (see **iv. 24**), shall (B) come through any other? That is of course just what has to be shown, and is going to be shown in a moment.

3. **ver. 2.** (A): (B). (**the glory of God**—Paul does not here dilate on the nature of this final glory. This comes in **viii.**)

4. **vers. 3-5a.** (B). Another, perhaps very unexpected, experience is to lead up to this final glory, and therefore is to cause joy in those who experience it. What is this (**ver. 3**)?

How far the Christian is from the position of Job! Job actually thought that sufferings were necessarily and always a mark of divine displeasure! See how the apostles taught the exact opposite. *Phil. i. 28*; *Col. i. 24*; *1 Pet. iv. 13*—a perfect commentary.

5. The stages are well marked. (**probation**—This means "a character tested and not found wanting.")

The last stage is **hope**, which brings us back to our starting point (**ver. 2b**). **And hope putteth not to shame**—(B)—Is he not thinking of himself at the last day before the Judge (see **1 Jn. ii. 28b**)? Or is the thought more like **2 Tim. i. 12a**? At any rate the reason assigned (A) in the second half of the verse is exactly **2 Tim. i. 12b**. That verse, in fact, is an epitome of this section.

1. *ἔχωμεν*. A very probable reading is *ἔχομεν*. 2. *καί*—this word brings out the connection between (B) and (A). *τήν*—"the access (implied in justification)."

XXXVII.

ROMANS V. 5—II.

Remember the two ideas—which we note by the letters (A), (B).

1. **ver. 5.** We must look once more at this verse. Does the **love of God** mean God's love for us, or ours for Him? When we think of the order of thought, there is no room for doubt.

through the Spirit—Another instance of the half-unobserved way in which the great leading ideas of St. Paul make their entrance (cp. the introduction of *the resurrection* in **iv. 24, 25**, to be developed in **vi.**). This thought is to be developed in **viii.**

2. **vers. 6-8.** Thought (A) is now *fully* stated. **while . . . yet weak . . . ungodly**—Very emphatic. **ver. 7.** What is the force of the word **for**? The two halves of the verse are in slight contrast: **good** suggests *lovableness*.

Natural heroism will not deliberately give its life for the scum of the gutter. **ver. 8**—The grand contrast: the ineffable nature of GOD'S love: **His own love**—Mark the tenderness in St. Paul's tones. **in that**, etc.—This picks up **ver. 6. while we were yet sinners**—Very emphatic (see **ver. 6**). (N.B. the almost irresistible argument for the Godhead of Christ implied in these verses.)

3. **ver. 9.** Now for the glorious inference—a *fortiori*, as we say. **being now justified**, etc.—(A)—picks up for an instant the first idea: **shall we be saved**—(B)—**from wrath** (the final wrath, see **ii. 8, 9, 16**), **through Him**—Emphatic. See on **ver. 1**, and below **in his life (10), through our Lord . . . (11)**.

4. **ver. 10.** St. Paul seems simply to revel in this irresistible and assuring sequence. He re-states it again—(A) (B)—with amplifications. And finally, in **ver. 11**—(B) (A)—returns to the two-fold point of departure (**v. 2b**; **v. 1a**).

5. Can we too deeply ponder the rich thought of this section? It is an overwhelming *a fortiori* argument (**much more then!**). See the ignoble and repulsive picture suggested by the artist-strokes in **vers. 6, 8, 10**—**weak, ungodly, sinners, enemies!** *These* the objects of God's love unto death! Can such ever fear again? Jesus is still Jesus.

6. *εἰ γὰρ*—Not the reading of the R.V. you observe. It makes very good sense. 7. Contrast *δικαίον—ἀγαθόν: μόλις—τάχα*.

XXXVIII.

ROMANS V. 11, 12, 14.

Sin forgiven and forgotten for the past : sin forgiven and forgotten at the awful day ! To the latter thought faith has leapt, clearing at a bound, as it were, all that intervenes : Paul has, in this sense, reached the end ; and now turns to compare and contrast the two lines of sin and of grace which he had successively traced : **i. 18—iii. 20 ; iii. 21—v. 11.**

1. In the dark section **i. 18—iii. 20** it was strange that we heard nothing of the origin of all the darkness. *Was it a mere coincidence that "all sinned and came short" (iii. 23),* instead of, say, a very large proportion ? Or was there an underlying *cause*, which would make the above fact a principle, not merely an accidental coincidence ?

2. **ver. 12** returns the answer, full and clear. To understand, let us turn at once to the passage which St. Paul has in mind :—Gen. ii. 16, 17. The history of the first man :—a commandment ; disobedience ; *death. and so . . . passed . . .* Here we see the working of the cause.

3. Evidently St. Paul is saying that there is a *causal connection (and so)* between the first man's sin and death and universal sin and death. But the precise connection is not quite so clear :—

either, the race hid in Adam sinned, and so, when its members successively came to birth, died :
or, the members of the race, as they successively came to birth, revealed the hereditary taint of sin, and so died.

But is the difference really large ? Are there not two different ways of saying exactly the same thing ? To take a *fair* though not complete parallel :—if you taint a fountain-head, it makes little difference whether you regard the waters while still in the fountain-head or further down stream.

4. **as**—You observe the parallel is not stated. One can easily mentally supply it. The incompleted sense is completed in **ver. 18.**

XXXIX.

ROMANS V. 13, 14.

Ver. 12 made the startling statement that the world owes both its guilt and penalty to its first father. These two verses support that statement.

1. **ver. 13a.** the law—Moses' law is meant (see next verse, **from Adam to Moses. sin was in the world**—No one will dispute *this*.)

2. **ver. 13b.** On earth a penalty is not exacted for an offence when there is no distinct code laying down that penalty for that offence. Now, in those days before Moses (and, for the matter of that, as far as heathens are concerned, in these days since Moses), was there any known code attaching the *death* penalty to the multifarious offences of men ?

3. **ver. 14.** There was no such code. *And yet—death* (the penalty of *Adam's sin*—Gen. ii. 16, 17) attached to the *sins of other men*.

4. Don't you see the irresistible conclusion ?
 Crime and penalty go together :
 men owed the *penalty* to their first ancestor.
 . . . ?

[Note that this verse (14) fixes the sense of death for this passage to be the physical death of the body. Any inferences from this are only inferences, and go outside the sphere of Paul's thought at the present moment.]

5. Let us reflect to-day on something that may perhaps perplex us.

St. Paul clearly says that physical death for men entered first through sin. Science appears to say that death was inevitable in virtue of the very structure of our organism.

But who knows the might-have-been ? or the power of spirit over so-called matter ? Think of the Transfiguration and the Resurrection of the Man Christ Jesus ; and of the promises to the saints at His appearing. 1 Thess. iv. 17 ; 1 Cor. xv. 50-57, a passage well worth meditation in this connection. So, had sainthood been the rule from the first, would not rapture rather than death have been the gate into God's glory ?

12. εφ' ᾧ = because. 13. ἐλλογᾶται = "entered into the account book" —i.e. with the idea of receiving due payment. νόμου—no article: "for until a system of law appeared prescribing due penalties . . . : but sin . . . , unless there is such a system."

XL.

ROMANS V. 15—17.

St. Paul drew a parallel between the first representative man and The Second. But this comparison, unqualified, seems to place a poor value on the Son of God. In eager haste the writer goes on to show how the comparison is also a contrast :—

1. **ver. 15.** **not . . . so . . .** “ There is no comparison ! . . . ” **much more** (the key-word)—more in quantity, or quality, or certainty ? Perhaps all three ! —**grace . . . God . . . gift . . . Jesus Christ**—Every word is eagerly emphatic. “ Compare GOD in CHRIST with *man* ! God’s *love* with man’s *folly* ! Are we wrong in saying **much more** ? ” Cp. Mt. vii. 11— the argument is precisely the same.

2. **vers. 16, 17.** Another contrast. The first half of the verse, which is very condensed, is explained by the second half (**for**). Godet’s brilliant illustration helps one greatly to see the point :—

“ What a difference between the power of the spark which sets fire to the forest by lighting a withered branch, and the power of the instrument which extinguishes the conflagration at the moment when every tree is on fire. . . . ”

ver. 17. Some take this verse as a fresh contrast : others hold that the **for** shows that the verse proves **16b.** St. Paul had said,

“ *Adam’s work* : one act of sin . . . evil result ;
Christ’s work : many (individual) acts of sin . . .
 good result ” :

Then he seems to feel it is a little startling and paradoxical to say that many sins issue in a glorious result, so he writes **17** as the proof : “ **they that receive** ” (—*conscious acceptance* contrasted with what ?) “ . . . overflowing **grace . . . gift . . . Jesus Christ** :—contrast all of these with Adam, and tell me if I am wrong in saying the results of Christ’s work will be **much more** than those of Adam ! ”

3. As for the words **reign in life** as far as the logic goes, he need only have repeated “ be justified ” from **ver. 16.** But as he is showing the immeasurable superiority of The Second Man’s work in everything, he drops that word, and (as in v. 1-11) leaps at one bound to the glorious end of justification : all the more because he had used the language of **ver. 14a.**

XLI.

ROMANS v. 18—21.

St. Paul has now sufficiently warned us against making Christ and His work completely on a par with Adam and his. He can therefore now proceed to the grand contrast. Like some etcher of genius he makes as it were six strokes of the pen, and we have a picture.

1. **ver. 18.** One sin—all men—deathwards : one atonement—all men—lifewards.

all men—In what sense are we to understand this **all** :

First, can we give the word any sense in one limb of the sentence that we deny it in the other ?

Secondly, can the **all** refer to final destiny ? Certainly not in the first limb ! **All men** are *not* finally to come to condemnation.

In fact, we here have *tendencies* affecting **all**, but not finally mastering all : only those who . . .—see **ver. 17** that receive, and Mt. vii. 13, 14 ; Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

2. **ver. 19**—Adds further colour to the contrast above.

3. **ver. 20.** An appendix, as it were : this idea has come in this appendix-like fashion before—**iii. 20.** (last clause) : also it was suggested in **ver. 13b.** We shall hear much more of it in **ch. vii.**

4. **the law**—What law ? **came in beside**—It was a mere intensifier of something already existing.

We should notice St. Paul's matured estimate of the Mosaic dispensation and its place in history. It was not in the highest sense epoch-making. **that the trespass might abound**—We need not blink at this. Yes, this was positively the purpose of God ! *But*, did this aggravation increase the guilt of sin or even the sum of sin ? To draw out is not to create. And then see **20b**, to which St. Paul hurries. Try as sin might, the love of God beggared it : **ver. 21**—**that**—ah, here was the true, final, ultimate purpose !

The thought of the parable of the Prodigal Son will surely help us to see fully the justice and beauty of the thought *in* **vers. 19, 20.**

XLII.

THOUGHTS ON ROMANS V. 12—21.

1. An absolutely *invariable* phenomenon irresistibly suggests a *law* behind it. What St. Paul wishes the Romans to understand and believe is that a million men's sins are not a million totally unconnected phenomena, but that they are so many results of a single principle.

2. Is this such a hard saying? Let us consider:

(a) The organic oneness of the race is a thought on which, in other respects, we rightly love to dwell. Is it natural to suddenly drop it when we come to consider sin? And, are a million falls a more reassuring thought than one?

No man liveth unto himself.

(b) But there is a far more serious thought than this. Why could an atonement be made *for a whole race, once for all*? Do we delight in, and lean on that thought? Well, then, it depends on the other. If a million men's sins were truly a million unconnected phenomena, how could the *one* death avail? The more one thinks of it the more do these two ideas seem to hang together. And the reality of the one alone accounts for the reality of the other.

(c) This by no means says that the two are on the same footing (*οὐχ ὡς . . . οὕτως . . . !*). The representativeness of the first man is in virtue of the law of organism, under which all self-reproductive creatures fall, from vegetables to mankind: the representativeness of the Second Man . . . well, let us think on Jn. i. 1-4, 9: Col. i. 15, 16, 17, and then 14, and we shall see the utterly superior nature of *His* representativeness. The two are contrasted in 1 Cor. xv. 45, etc.

Another reason for rejecting the idea hinted in § 2 (a):—hand in hand with the idea that the sins of different persons are not traceable to one cause, is the idea that the sins of the same person are severally distinct things, utterly unrelated to one another! Alas! we know that no one sin "liveth unto itself."

Gk. notes on vv. 15-21. 15, etc. τοῦ ἐνός—οἱ πολλοί—notice these very idiomatic articles. They idealise, or lay emphasis on the ideas of, "one," "many." 16. δικαίωμα, the sense of the word is fixed by the antithetic κατάκριμα. Similarly surely in 18: παράπτωμα—δικαίωμα, κατάκριμα—δικαίωσιν ζωῆς. 17. λαμβάνοντες—N.B. tense: "those who from time to time accept." 19. κατεστηθῆσαν—were constituted: the word suggests certainity, and also external agency. 20. πλεονασμ—might be filled to the brim. ἢ ἐρεπερίσειεν—(much stronger) flow over the brim. 21. Mark the cadence of The Name, once more.

For United Study.—VI.

1. *What is the place of v. 1-11 in the general course of the argument? And what are the two ideas that together make up this section?*
2. *A general effort should be made to thoroughly clear up the somewhat intricate arguments of v. 12-14; 15; 16, 17.*
3. *What is the point of those contrasts?*
4. *And what is the real point of the comparison between the first man and the Second Man, and the respective works?*

XLIV.

ROMANS vi. 3, 4.

"We died unto sin? How—when—why?"

1. **baptized into Christ**—Let us *picture* and ponder this expression *into Christ*. There are other expressions that help us to realise the crowded meaning of the words:—

Acts xix. 5—"baptized *into the Name of the Lord Jesus.*"

Gal. iii. 27—"as many as were baptized into Christ did *put on Christ.*"

I Cor. xii. 13—" . . . all we were baptized *into one body.*"

And, once again, we saw all through St. John's Gospel, that the fullest meaning of the word "believe" or "have faith" was found in the expression "to *believe into Christ.*" (*eis c. acc.*).

See XXVII. § 6, and **xi. 24**—"grafted **into.**"

It is important to get clear on this conception, as on it depends this whole argument.

As to the precise meaning of *baptism* itself, its relation to faith, etc., important though these questions are, they are not the centre of the logic of this passage. Let us keep in mind, however, the *imagery* of baptism.

2. **into His death were baptized.** Why *death*? Well, first of all, why *not*? For if one appropriates a person, one appropriates all and each of his acts: since a man's acts are himself.

But the singling out of this one act of Christ's undoubtedly indicates its unique importance and significance: what that significance was we have seen in **iii.**

3. **ver. 4.** Not only dead, but **buried, with Him**—Not in our own right. The next four words go all together (a glance at **ver. 3.** shows this).

that like as . . . etc. Here is the climax to which we have been leading up. Notice **iv. 25** is beginning to open up. **in newness of life**—Emphatic, for it directly meets the question of **ver. 1**: *oldness* of life was **sin**.

St. Paul has not yet finished unfolding his theme. But let us ponder what we have got so far: appropriation of Christ means appropriation of all that He did or had done to Him; but death and resurrection were two of His acts: therefore they are two of mine. But what do they mean for me? Well—what did they mean for Him?

4. ὡςπερ . . . οὕτως. But the context shows that the words convey more than the mere idea of *illustration*.

XLV.

ROMANS vi. 5—7.

1. **ver. 5. united with**—The Greek means “*made one organism with*”: see yesterday, § 1,—were we wrong in grouping that quotation from **xi. 4** with the expression **baptized into**? Once more let us picture vividly the salient idea of these expressions. **for**—What does this explain? You see this verse re-states **ver. 4** a little more emphatically, by showing more clearly the *necessary connection* between its two ideas. And why a *necessary connection*? Because one cannot divide the actions of the person whom one appropriates.

2. **ver. 6. knowing**—We might say *realising*. These facts of the heavenly drama were given to be realised and to influence conduct.

our old man = *our former self*. **crucified**—This word does not carry us beyond **His death** (ver. 5), but it serves to remind us forcibly of the shameful and accursed nature of that death. **that**—Cp. **ver. 4**: here is the end of it all. **the body of sin**—Some take this as “the weight of sin”: others, “the body which was specially open to sin.” **done away**—This word in the Greek is that which we saw (**iii. 3**, Greek note) conveyed the notion of *destroying by substituting a new one*. **so**—Get the logic clear: is this **we** the old *we*? What has happened to the old *we*?

3. **ver. 7.** Mark this verse; it is the keystone of the argument. Why is **he that died, justified**? To answer this, compare **died, ver. 7**; **was crucified, ver. 6**; the comparison shows us that **died** really = *was put to death* (the Greek makes this rendering quite likely): *and take a forward glance at vi. 21, 23a.*

If **iii. 25, 26** was not fully clear before, it is surely clear to us now.

from sin—Very strong phrase and very emphatic. It explains the assertion of **ver. 2.**

5. **σύνφυτοι**—“become one plant with”—a most profoundly suggestive word: Vaughan supplies “with Him” after **σύνφυτοι**, and paraphrases **ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ** thus: “United with Him in His death so as to be like Him in it.” 6. **γινώσκοντες**—The word suggests gradual illumination. **συνεσταυρώθη**—Mark the aorists throughout: they suggest an act *past*, done once and for all. 7. **δεδικαίωται**—the perfect suggests continuance of the state when once initiated. **ἀπὸ**—*right away from*.

XLVI.

ROMANS vi. 8—14.

1. **ver. 8.** Reiterates the irrefragable sequence that we have had above—vers. 4, 5.

2. **vers. 9, 10.** But (*a*) does that *death* (ver. 8) preclude a return to that which caused it? And (*b*) what has the consequent *life* to do with Holiness? These verses answer both questions: (*a*) . . . **once**—But why should not Christ come and die again?—Do men pay debts twice? (*b*)—**lives to God**—And God is *Holy, Holy, Holy*.

3. **ver. 11.** The conclusion stated once more, very concisely: **ver. 2** is now fully interpreted, and **iv. 25** unfolded. **reckon**—This does not mean “believe that that which is not, is”: but “realise that that which *is*, is.” It is not a pious fiction that those who are grafted into Christ were put to death and now live, but a fact: **in Christ Jesus**. This goes equally with either half of the verse: and alone makes either half true.

4. **vers. 12 14.** The true *I*, the new *I*, is therefore as *Christ*! (“As I am, so are ye in the world”). Therefore it bears the same relation to sin as Christ did in the world! What is that?—See Mt. viii. 29a, Jn. xiv. 30b. It is plain therefore that the commands of these verses are not a new law, but simply “Be thyself.” The *why* to be good is the *how* to be good.

Do we now understand what is the meaning of—

“crucified
put to death” } *with Christ,*”

“*Christ* died unto sin” (whose? see **iv. 25**),

“he that was put to death has been justified”?

There is one link, and one alone, that makes a true logic out of all these: and that is the connection between **SIN** and **DEATH**. Ch. **iii. 25** hinted the meaning of this connection; **v. 12** shadowed it; **vi. 21-23** proclaims it aloud.

9. ἀποθνήσκει—a characteristic Greek present: “hath, or shall have, anything to do with death.” 9 and 14. κυριεύειν—a lordship implies rightful authority (ἐξουσία)—see Lk. xxii. 25. This idea, when pondered on (see above, § 4), greatly aids our understanding of the passage. 11. λογίζεσθε—A continual act: “moment by moment”: 13. παριστάετε, παραστήσατε give the two sides—an act once for all, a lifelong act.

XLVII.

ROMANS vi. 15—20.

The secret is now fully unveiled. In the remainder of the chapter St. Paul labours to make the meaning of his great revelation more clear by another illustration.

1. **ver. 15.** Suggested by the words of **ver. 14**, but the full unfolding of the clause comes in **ch. vii.**

The question is, Is the man who has escaped from the yoke of law to become "unprincipled," "lawless"—in short, vicious? Does this free grace make any demand on its subjects?

2. **ver. 16.** **servants** (slaves) **obedience**—See above, **dominion** (lordship), **ver. 14**; **reign** (be king), **ver. 12.** Every one of these words bring in the idea of *right*, rightful ownership. **sin unto death**—What does this mean?

righteousness—The Greek word is that which has so far always meant *justification*.

3. **ver. 17.** In this verse we have a beautiful definition of Faith. **ver. 18.** **made free**—How? Who "paid the price of sin"? For slaves are not freed without a price to their master.

righteousness—Again, this is the word that has all along denoted the *justified or reconciled state*.

4. **ver. 19.** The first clause is parenthetical: we shall see reasons presently for heeding its caution, and not pressing the simile of this section too far. In the second clause the exhortation is given again.

Let us look especially at that last clause. Does it not show clearly that **righteousness** (*justification*) and **sanctification** (*holiness*) are not the same thing, but rather two things related as cause to effect. The former is the attitude described in **ver. 11**; the latter is the fruit that must, should, and will inevitably result. Cp. Jn. xv. 3, 4—a passage very suggestive in this context.

If **righteousness** does thus mean *the state of acceptance*, what must its correlative **sin** mean? Not wickedness, but the cause of wickedness, namely—what?

5. **ver. 20.** If we still think that **sin** and **righteousness** = good and bad conduct, read "good conduct" and "bad conduct" here, and see what sense comes out. In reality the meaning is far deeper.

15. ὑπὸ νόμον—The accusatives mark motion from one state into another
16. δικαιοσύνη; see i. 17. The sense has been uniform throughout.

XLVIII.

ROMANS vi. 21—23.

1. **ver. 21.** St. Paul finally bids them look first at the past with redeemed eyes—spontaneous feeling itself will give the answer to **vi. 1**—and then at the corresponding future, which—thank God—they had avoided.

N.B.—Another system of stopping in the Greek gives the following: "What fruit had ye then? Things whercof ye are now ashamed!" etc.

2. **ver. 22.** The converse. **ye have**—The Greek might be the imperative. If there is simply the calm statement, what does this show as to the absolute *necessity* of true forgiven-ness producing holiness, even as "the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself"?

Nevertheless, the imperatives above give us the other side—freewill is not lost sight of: A man must "yield" himself to the influences under which he has come. He has the *right* to do so!

3. vi. 22. freed from sin sanctification	... the end, eternal life.
v. 1, 2. justified by faith glory of God.
v. 9. justified by His blood saved.
v. 10. reconciled through the death of His son	} saved.
cp. viii. 3.	viii. 4.	viii. 11, 18, 19, etc.
and 1 Cor. i. 31. righteousness.	sanctification.	redemption.

Thus in **vi. 22** are we reminded of the three great epochs of the Christian life.

4. **ver. 23.** **For**—What does this explain? We should scrutinise every word of this pregnant verse. Contrast **wages** with **free gift** (cp. **vi. 4**).

We have noticed before the first clause: it is most significant. Look at **iii. 25, 26, iv. 25, vi. 7** again and again in the light of it. The penalties of God are of the nature of inevitable results. Is not this the principle that works throughout nature? Is it possible for conscience or reason to revolt?

5. As for the words **death, life** in this verse, chapter, and book—and indeed throughout the Bible—the meaning of them, in regard to the eternal future, can only be fixed by finding what meaning, if any, suits all the contexts.

XLIX.

THOUGHTS ON ROMANS vi.

1. There are two passages in which the same deep truths as are found in this chapter are enunciated. Let us look at them :—

2 Cor. v. 14-21,
Col. iii. 1-5, 9, 10.

Especially is the keynote of the chapter—viz., the death of the Word made flesh, and man's real appropriation of that death in appropriating Him—brought out in 2 Cor. v. 14 (where **therefore** = "in that death") and 17; and Col. iii. 3 + 2.

The spontaneous effects, in the new life by resurrection, are equally clearly shown, 2 Cor. v. 15, Col. iii. 1, 2 (ver. 5 contains an idea we shall find in Rom. viii.).

2. As for the great question—*Why* did the Word made flesh die? and *what* is this death in which man by faith comes to share?—nothing in the Romans goes further than the astonishingly bold words of 2 Cor. v. 21.

3. There is just one thing of which we should beware (see vi. 19a). St. Paul personifies sin, calling it a master; hinting that a price was paid by God in Christ to *it* to buy back its slaves.

But *is* sin a Person: or is even Satan a rival potentate equal with God and exacting terms from Him? Perish the thought!

Such expressions in ch. vi. must be balanced by the less figurative words in iii. 25, 26, and by viii. 3 (last clause, cp. Jn. xvi. 11; xii. 31), where it is plain that the powers of evil got but little "satisfaction" out of the Atoning Death, and that the only "right" that was demonstrated was that of the Majesty of the all-embracing God—the right, nay the duty, to maintain the equilibrium of a universe dependent for its very existence on moral laws.

4. And since neither man nor angel could thus demonstrate His righteousness, *God demonstrated it in Himself*—2 Cor. v. 19.

For United Study.—VII.

1. *St. Paul having in v. conducted his hearers in thought to the final glory, what remains? What is the bearing of ch. vi. on the course of the argument?*

2. *Let us unfold slowly and with the utmost care vi. 1-11.*

3. *What then is the true root-appeal to Christians to lead a life of holiness?*

4. *Does vi. add anything to iii. that shows yet more clearly WHY CHRIST DIED?*

L.

ROMANS vii. 1--4.

Holiness (sanctification)! Thus the new note was struck in **vi. 22**; in that chapter we saw the ground of Holiness—"your old self died: be your rightful self." But is this "the law" back again? Can the law which failed to procure our acceptance procure our holiness? St. Paul in **ch. vii.** shows that the law cannot do this either; and, in **viii.**, that the new commandment is very far from being the old law dressed up anew.

1. **ver. 1.** There is really next to no pause between the two chapters. What verse in **vi.** is St. Paul picking up now? **law . . . dominion**—Both these words are in that verse.

a man = A human being (*ἀνθρώπου* not *ἀνδρός*).

The last clause of the verse is the emphatic one.

2. **vers. 2, 3.** St. Paul now gives us an illustration from common life. *Death* makes a thorough readjustment of ties and rights possible, and even necessary. **from the law of her husband**—The last three words are important.

3. **ver. 4.** It is a little doubtful whether we can make a thorough identification between all the details of the simile (**2, 3**) and the reality (**4**). At first sight it looks, does it not, as if the parallel were irregular:—in the simile, it seems to be the husband that dies; in the application, the soul, the bride herself.

If so, the lesson of the simile is the general one noted in § 2.

But others make the following identification:—

the husband	the old self (ye, ver. 4a):
the wife	the new self (ye, ver. 4b):
the law of the husband .	the law condemning the old state.

See **vi. 6, 8, 11 . . .** It is well worth thinking the matter out; but it is seldom wise or fair to press parables too far.

4. **ver. 4. dead to the law**—Must this not, and can this not, be interpreted in precisely the same way as **dead to sin**—**ch. vi.**? In fact, it is the same event that is spoken of here as there. What! is the law the same as sin? We shall see the connection in a moment—perhaps it is already fairly clear. **through the body of Christ**—Again **ch. vi.** explains. **4b** = **vi. 22.**

1. *κυριεύει*—conveys idea of *rightful* lordship. 2. *ἡ . . . τῶ . . .* denote typical instances. 4. *ἐθανατώθητε*—the comparison of this with *ἀπεθάνομεν* (**vi. 2**) makes us feel we were not wrong in translating the latter, "put to death": we might say, "executed."

LI.

ROMANS vii. 5, 6.

1. **ver. 5. in the flesh**—The first introduction of an idea that will assume great importance soon. It is a great point of contact with Jn. **iii.** The meaning is fixed by reference to **vi. which were through the law!**—truly a startling announcement. It is explained presently : just now, let us refer back to **iii. 20b, v. 20.**

2. **ver. 5b.** — Cp. **vi. 21.**

3. **ver. 6.**—Ch. **vi.** alone can interpret.

The last part of the verse introduces, after that quiet manner to which we have grown accustomed, a momentous word—**spirit.** Ch. **viii.** develops this word. Contrast **flesh ver. 5. of the letter**—what manner of keeping the law does this suggest ?

4. What was its cardinal principle ? **x. 5** and *Gal. iii.* 10 is the answer to the question.

5. We should read this section **vii. 1-6** and also ch. **vi.** with the idea of **RIGHT** (*ἐξουσία*) in our mind. There is

the *right* of sin over the wilfully separate from God :

the *right* of those in Christ to be holy (see Jn. i. 12) :

the dissolution of rights by death :

and, above all, the connection between *sense of right* and *power.* The latter is the secret of ch. **vi.**

6. *κατηργήθημεν*—Vide Gk. note in XX. *δουλεύειν*—characteristic word in **vi.**—*καινότητι . . . παλαιότητι* see **vi. 6** and 2 Cor. v. 17. *πνεύματος*—characteristic word of **viii.**

LII.

ROMANS vii. 7—12.

We must keep in mind that the question before us is—Has law the power to make men holy? We now come to one of the most striking passages in the Epistle. If there is still one who thinks and feels this Epistle to be a cold and formal treatise, this chapter will undeceive him. We have here profoundest depths of emotion. There is a personal ring through all. Yet, as we shall find, this, the most autobiographical chapter in the New Testament is the one which it is at least easy to use in detail as biographical.—Let us approach this unbaring of a soul with all sympathy and reverence.

1. **ver. 7.** The inevitable question, *invited* (one feels) by the intentionally bold language of St. Paul (**through the law ver. 5**), comes at last.

God forbid—St. Paul's passionate No! **Howbeit**—Concedes that the notion denied is founded on a certain true idea: there *is* an intimate connection between **sin** and **law**.

2. **7b.** We have had this before in a parenthetical remark in **iii.**

I—St. Paul strangely rarely gives his “experience”: (see the extraordinary reticence of 2 Cor. xii. 2). This seemingly autobiographical **I** is what gives profound interest and vivid colouring to the chapter. Let us keep Saul, youth and boy, before our mind's eyes. **coveting**—Which law said **thou shalt not covet?** What strikes you about this commandment as compared with the rest?

2. **vers. 7, 8.** Not the law's *fault* therefore. Whose fault?

3. **ver. 9.** Intense sadness and pathos mark these words. Yet how hard it is to determine of what epoch in his life Paul is speaking! In every century men are divided. Every man must decide as God leads him.

4. **ver. 10. which was unto life**—An ample vindication of the apparently much-abused law, indeed. Cp. Gal. iii. 21. And was not the primal command to Adam intended for life? **I found**—Again whose fault? **Ver. 11** restates **vers. 7, 8.** **ver. 12**—A *lavish* vindication! **good**—Even includes the idea of *kindly*—see **v. 7.**

7. ἔγνω I did not get to recognise (sin, as such). ἔλεγον Note tense.
8. ἀφορμὴ—A base of operations. χωρὶς, etc., sin depends for existence in the presence of law. 9. ἐγὼ emph. 10. ἀπέθανον—aor. Contrast the impf ἀπέκτεινεν (11).

LIII.

ROMANS vii. 13—20.

To the two ideas, the goodness of the law, and the badness of self, this section, we shall see, adds two others. We should notice the weary monotony of these verses, as they helplessly turn back and back upon themselves, as though in a circle from which there is no exit.

1. **ver. 13. good** (*ἀγαθόν*)—We saw in **v. 7** that this contains the idea of *benevolent*. The law even benevolent!

The verse is parallel to **7**; but contrast **sin (7)** . . . **death (13)**. And **13b** is a clearer statement : cp. **v. 20**.

2. **ver. 14.** We should notice that the tenses suddenly change : henceforth they are *present*. **spiritual**. In this word the vindication reaches its climax : **carnal = in the flesh** (ver. 5). **sold**—Word of ignominy! **ver. 15**—Now comes the third idea. **know not**—That is, *recognise*, as one recognises a friend in the street. The third idea, “a house divided against itself.”

3. **vers. 16, 17.** The fourth idea, “a defeated self.”

I consent—Not only is the law not sin; but it is positively recognised as good. **ver. 17. now**—Not temporal : the word = *therefore*.

4. **ver. 18. in me that is my flesh**—Important words. If *spirit* means *the whole man turned Godward*, **flesh** means *the whole man averted from God*. See Study XXXV.

5. **vers. 18-20.** The weary round again.

13. *φανῆ*—suggests light thrown on something secretly existent. 15. *θέλω*—hardly so strong as *I will*: parallel with *μισῶ*: seems therefore to = *I like*. 17. *νυῖ*—inferential. 18. *παρὰχειρα*—lies to hand, within reach.

LIV.

ROMANS vii. 21—25.

The plaintive voice speaks its grievance once more, in still clearer words.

1. **ver. 21.** The summing up : this is not mere chance ; there is a **law** or *principle* underlying all.

2. **ver. 22.** **delight in**—Even stronger than *gladly consent* of **ver. 16.** **the inward man**—Is this identical with *the new man* ? We must not be too sure.

ver. 3. Each of these warring selves has its own **law** or principle of action, and gives its own imperative ; let us notice the extreme vividness of the metaphors. There is *civil war* going on.

It is plain that we cannot give a uniform sense to the word **law** in this chapter : least of all does it merely mean *Mosaic law*.

3. **ver. 24.** Through the forced calm of this self-analysis breaks the loud and bitter cry of the wounded soul. It was no mere pathologist who wrote this chapter, with a purely scientific interest. **the body of this death** (vide margin). See **vi. 6**, and the two explanations there suggested for **body of sin**.

4. **ver. 25a.** But at the very climax of the wretched story, the loud and bitter cry has to give place to a cry of joy, forestalling the second and joyful voice that speaks in **ch. viii.** **through Jesus Christ our Lord**—The cadence again ! Cp. **iv. 24**, **v. 21**, **vi. 23**.

5. **ver. 26b.** And after this, the conclusion is calmly stated. We must remember that the question was—Can the law make a man positively holy ? Here, then, is the answer.

23. *voús*—N.B. *not πνεύματος*. *voús*=the *reason*, whether the intellectual or the practical, with which intelligent man is endowed.

LV.

THOUGHTS ON ROMANS vii.

We have beyond doubt felt the difficulty of this chapter. Is Paul speaking wholly of his own experience? Can you apply it all universally? Is he alluding to the regenerated or unregenerated man?

There is unparalleled disagreement on these points. It is impossible therefore for this handbook to decide on, or even recommend, any one solution. Every reader must form his own conclusions, which will depend, indeed, upon the views he ultimately takes concerning the ultimate problems of existence.

Still one or two thoughts may be suggested here—prolegomena, as it were, of this chapter:—

(1). “Can law make a man *good*, since it cannot make him *acceptable*?” This, it is allowed on all hands, is the subject of the chapter.

(2). Any one can see that the asking of such a question is quite justified when the *regenerate* man is intended. “We quite allow,” objectors might say, “that the works of the law cannot in themselves secure forgiveness, acceptance and life. But once justified by grace, shall he not become holy by devotion to the law?” See Gal. iii. 3.

(3). But is there any sense in asking: “Can the law make an *unregenerated* man holy? sanctify him before he has acceptance with God?” One would think not, but that there are Christians who think this very thing.

(4). This chapter describes the discovery of a man who *gives law a fair chance*, i.e. makes it his *whole object* and *sole rule*, and takes *no ally* to help him to keep it. This is what such an one finds: this what Paul found. But is it not plain that the number of men who do this is limited? What a commentary the chapter is on the easy-going and the frivolous!

(5). Whatever be the solution of the minor difficulties, we are safe in saying that the main conclusion is: given the best chance in the world, *law of itself is powerless*; in fact, *the better the chance the deeper the failure*.

LVI.

LAW.

And what is this "law" of which we have heard so much? Certainly one ought to get clear notions about this, otherwise one runs the risk of talking much about what conveys but little meaning to oneself.

It is clear that **law** does *not* mean the Mosaic law simply: see **ii. 14, 15**. All allow that Paul regarded Moses' law as simply the most perfect and authoritative example of something possessed by all men and all nations. Ch. **vii.** therefore, even if Paul of Tarsus was thinking chiefly of his experience of Moses' law, is of immeasurably wider interest than that. It is a philosophy of morals and of history.

Neither is law something different from or hostile to God. Paul calls it spiritual (**vii. 14**). And see what Ps. xix. says of it. In short, it is *God's* law.

Why then is it variously represented in the Bible itself now as something sweet and gentle; now as something stern and inexorable: as bringing blessing to men; and bringing cursing: as easy of fulfilment, as impossible of fulfilment: as drawing to God and alienating from God: as sin's worse foe and sin's best friend?

The question is the same as the question, why is the world to some men the very glory of God, to others "the world," the very realm of Satan?

Does it not depend on the attitude of the man in question towards God and towards self? See Study XXXV. There is the Godward man (Ps. cxxiii. 2); and the self-ward man (Phil. iii. 7—"gain to me"). Is it not the *latter*, however violent his efforts, who finds the law as Paul continually represents it—hard, inexorable, damnatory, and painfully unsatisfactory and disappointing?

And, thus understood, is the experience of anyone who is capable of self-analysis one whit different from his?

For United Study.—VIII.

1. How is **vii.** led up to—what is the connection between it and **vi.**?

2. Should it not be the object of members of the circle this week to get clear the various possible interpretations of **vers. 7-25** rather than finally select any one as authoritative? To this end, perhaps each should give the solution (if any) that commends itself at present to him—together with the difficulties he realises that militate against it. If, at the end, an interpretation satisfying all demands and meeting all objections dawns out of the collection, so much the better. If not, not much the worse: the main thing being to get the main issues clear.

3. What, at any rate, is the clear conclusion of this chapter: with what clear notion do you pass to **viii.**?

4. What do you think was in the mind of St. Paul when he thought, wrote, or spoke, the word **LAW**?

LVII.

A RETROSPECT BEFORE ENTERING ON CH. viii.

Let us spend to-day in taking stock of our position, ere we come to the great culminating eighth chapter. For this chapter picks up and finishes off, and weaves together many strands of thought which have come down from preceding chapters.

1. Chapter **v.**, we remember, showed us that *the Same Lord* who was the guarantee of a man's salvation at the first, would be the guarantee of that man's salvation at the last; and the glory of this final salvation was just hinted (**v. 2b**).

2. But what of the intervening years of pilgrimage? Who is guarantee for *them*? And of what nature are they to be? Ch. **vi.** answers this latter question:—the very essential nature of the first stage of a man's salvation determines, as a cause determines an effect, that these years shall be marked by *holiness*.

The key-note word is **present**, A.V. **yield**. “Holiness is now yours by right: take it.”

3. And who guarantees these years of holiness? *Not law!*—that commenced *from the outside*: and this very outsideness is the proof of a rebelling will within (**vii. 1-6**. See esp. ver. **6** and *Jer. xxxi.* 31-34—“in their inward parts, in their hearts”).

4. And then followed that mournful passage **vii. 7-25**—a sort of parenthesis, proving how law, with the best chance in the world, is useless, because it presupposes a God-separated will.

No; law, as such, is useless, and to slip back to it (as the Galatians found) is to slip back to **condemnation**.

5. Who then guarantees these intermediate years of pilgrimage? To whom are we to **present** our **bodies** (ch. **vi.**)? What takes the place of **law** (ch. **vii.**)? Who will conduct us by natural steps to the final glory hinted at in **v.** and **vi. 22**? And what *is* this glory?

6. To all these questions ch. **viii.** replies, though the answer has already been hinted in **vi. 23**, **vii. 6b**, **25a**.

LVIII.

ROMANS viii. 1, 2.

There are many strands then to pick up and weave together. We shall not, therefore, be surprised to find this chapter recapitulating, while adding features of its own.

1. **ver. 1. therefore . . . no condemnation**—The words reach far back, but they also are influenced by what immediately precedes. Calm succeeds a storm, and the depth of its calmness is measured by the wildness of the storm. What that has gone before now compels Paul to reassert *no condemnation*? To what does **therefore** refer? **to them that are in Christ Jesus**—Very emphatic: “them who have come into (vi. 3) and abide in (vi. 11) CHRIST.” **now**—Emphatic. “Neither in the past nor in the future,” said ch. v.; “but in the present—*yes!*” suggested vii. 7-25; “nor yet in the present,” says viii. 1.

2. **ver. 2.** See above vii. 23: ah, now the stronger man has entered (Mt. xii. 29), and turned the scale. This life of freedom is the *sign (for)* of the reality of forgiveness.

This way of taking the verse makes **law = principle** as in vii. 23. But if one takes **law = commandment, moral imperative**, then **for explains ver. 1.** The external command imposed on a rebelling will (vii. 7, 8) has become the internal command adopted by the surrendered will. And this makes *all the difference in the world*, as Jeremiah prophesied—*Jer. xxxi. 31-34.* Is not this reconciliation just another way of saying “*no condemnation*”?

We should think out the connection of vers. 1 and 2 for ourselves.

3. **ver. 2. spirit**—Where did we first meet this momentous word? See vii. 6. Perhaps this reference helps us to interpret the verse.

Notice the silence about this Spirit hitherto. This chapter is full of the Spirit.

What is the work of the Spirit? Those of us who studied the second half of St. John seemed to find clearly that it was—to make Christ, and Christ’s work, ours.

If so, has the Epistle so far been *really* silent about Him, even though His name *has not* been mentioned? See, e.g., vi. 5.

1. ἐν χριστῷ—see v. 1, 11; vi. 11. 2. ἡλευθέρωσεν. Note tense, *once* and for good. σε—*v.l.* με: possibly the object was originally unexpressed.

LIX.

ROMANS viii. 3, 4.

1. **ver. 3.** Why must "I" be set free from all necessity to consider this latter law (ver. 2)? This verse gives the answer.

The verse takes us back to the very beginning of the heavenly drama: to ch. iii. We have seen, fully seen, why it was the "weakness of the flesh" that paralysed the law (see vii. 12, 13).

2. **God** must do all (2 Cor. v. 18), *all*.

Compare closely Rom. viii. 3 and Gal. iv. 4, 5. The two passages help to explain each other: see also iii. 24-26—the great passage, of which this is a sort of restatement.

3. **his own son**—A son, though subordinate to his father, is equal in nature.

in the likeness of sinful flesh—Jesus was not only *like*, but even *one with us* in all things—one thing only excepted. What was that? See Heb. iv. 15. This explains the language here.

and (as an offering) for sin—chs. iii. and vi. have shown us how this was. Heb. ix. 28 is exceedingly illuminating here.

condemned sin in the flesh—The law only did this *on paper* (Godet). No doubt the sinless life of Jesus condemned sin by contrast; but this passage and ch. vi. make us to know that it was not the *life* of Jesus that effectually condemned sin for us—but what? If certain expressions in vi. made it seem as if sin derived some satisfaction from the death of the Son of God, this passage shows us how much satisfaction it got! Strange, yet profoundly true, that the hour of its triumph was the hour of its deadly wounding! See Jn. xii. 31-33; xvi. 11; Lk. xxii. 53b.

4. **ver. 4. that . . .** At once the purpose and the result (ch. vi.), **the ordinance of the law . . . in us**—Not by a renewed slavish attention to it (ch. vii.), but . . . **4b.**

3. τὸ ἀδύνατον τοῦ ν.—in apposition to the rest of **vv. 3, 4.** τῆς (our) σαρκὸς . . . σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας. περὶ ἁμαρτίας. A well-known sacrificial formula.

LX.

ROMANS viii. 4—8.

1. Ere we leave **ver. 4**, let us notice that it repeats but also completes the secret of holiness as given in **vi.** "Sin has lost its rights, the flesh has lost its rights"—that is pretty much the same in **vi.** and **viii.** (e.g. **vi. 12**, and here **viii. 4**). But **after the Spirit** is more definite than the vaguer language of **v. 13**: how much more we shall see.

the Spirit—Does it mean the Spirit of *God*, or the spirit of man? We shall find it sometimes impossible to decide, so indissoluble is the connection in the redeemed. See *ver. 9*.

2. Why are the walk after the flesh and the walk after the spirit so mutually exclusive as **ver. 4** makes out? **Ver. 5** answers.

mind—The Greek word is far more expressive: "thinks and wills." Well, no man can serve two masters.

3. **ver. 6.** Another reason for impossibility to serve these two masters.

4. **ver. 7.** But *does* the **mind of the flesh** mean **death**? This verse explains this hard saying.

neither indeed can it be—That is the root of the matter. For the flesh, by itself, just *means* the lower life—the self-pleasing life—the brute-life—the conceited life: it just *means* the God-blind life.

Is not this, then, **death**? Is not this **enmity to God**? Don't we see that **they that are in the flesh cannot please God** (**ver. 8**, cp. XXXV. § 4, and **vii. 18**)?

5. But, we say, is the flesh which was made by God evil? Of course **the flesh** means much more than physical flesh. But, even in that case, suppose a man whose *sole guide* in life was the dictates of his own desires (natural desires, if we like)—would that man's life please God and be a thing of beauty?

6. Have we not simply to understand St. Paul to accept his words?

5, 6. φρονούσιν—φρόνημα. The word includes ideas of *willing* as well as of *thinking*. 8. δέ—"and, on the other hand."

LXI.

ROMANS viii. 9—11.

Ver. 9 picks up **4b**.

1. We should not fail with the utmost care to compare with this whole passage Jn. iii. 3-6—a passage which equally illumines and is illumined by this one. **if so be that the Spirit of God . . . etc.** (ver 9). Cp. St. John's **born of the Spirit**.

2. This ninth verse shows us clearly the connection, yet contrast, between our spirit and God's : they are quite distinct ; yet ours is quite dependent on God's. **Spirit of God . . Spirit of Christ . . .** a deeply significant repetition ! What do you glean from this repetition ? Cp. Jn. xiv. 26, xv. 26.

3. **vers. 9, 10. Spirit of God. in you . . Christ . . in you**—Another marvellously significant connection, full of illumination. Let us see too and admire the identity of St. Paul's revelation with St. John's—Jn. xiv. 17, 18 (*the Spirit of truth . . I*).

Is it not opening up now—the reason why *the Spirit* is the secret of holiness ; why we should yield to *the Spirit* ? **Christ in you!**—cp. Jn. xvii. 26b, Col. i. 27b—the Spirit knits to Christ.

4. **the body is dead because of sin**—Ch. v. showed us how physical death had come upon the race. And upon the race shall it be till the end.

righteousness—According to uniform usage, this = *justification* : “because of our having been justified”—exactly the argument of **v. 1-11**, cp. **v. 18b**.

5. And now watch St. Paul's pace quickening eagerly towards the final goal :—**ver. 11**, “one day *even* our bodies shall partake in the life at present denied them . . through **His Spirit dwelling in you**—and the agent once more is *His Spirit*.”

And what day shall that be ? The day spoken of in 1 Cor. xv. 26, 51-54 (**then**) ; the day of glory.

9. εἴπερ—“if, as I know He does, . . .” **10.** μέν concedes something : δέ takes away the force of the concession, and δέ (ver. 11) takes away the concession itself. **10, 11**—νεκρόν . . . θνητά.

LXII.

ROMANS viii. 12—14.

Already has the eager spirit of Paul strained to get away and speak freely about the final glory: in **v.** we saw this; again in **vi. 22**; again, and in clear accents, in yesterday's passage—**viii. 11**. Yet once again he reins himself back, and speaks yet once more of the "little while between."

1. **ver. 12. So then**—The inference has grown not a little in force, has it not? since last we had this great thought—**vi. 11** and **vi. 18**. And a great thought it is: let us ponder it this once again:—

not debtors to the flesh . . . It has lost its *rights*, its prerogative, its possession! It has been *bought out*: we owe it no allegiance, no service, no duty! Our *right* is to disown it, to repudiate it.

debtors to the spirit—We have the *right* to be holy: all the rights of the old life have passed over to the new.

2. **ver. 13.** The old self has lost its *rights* rather than its *powers* completely (else why not perfection at one stroke). This verse shows the course that progress in holiness will take.

"The old self *has been* put to death (**vi. 6**)—why then **mortify** (put to death)?"

Is not the rest of our life to work out what faith has already done? See Col. iii. 3, 5—"ye were put to death . . . put to death therefore . . ."

3. **ye shall live**—He is hasting once more to that eternal life of glory.

4. **ver. 14.** What is the force of this **for**?

sons of God. A new vista opens out with these words—a vista made familiar to us by Jesus Christ. See, too, Jn. i. 12.

12. *Αρα οὖν*—very strong inference. 13. *μέλλετε*—of sure, certain result.

LXIII.

ROMANS viii. 15—17.

1. **ver. 15. Sons of God** has introduced a new and perhaps strange thought to his hearers. He explains it in this verse, by showing the opposite thought and making them feel that only the former is true. **again**—That is what you *had*—unwilling slavery; and the opposite of that . . . see Jn. viii. 31—36.

2. **Abba Father.** The Spirit knits to Christ: Christ in us (ver. 10), the perfect SON, cries His own familiar cry in us.

3. **ver. 16.** And thus it is no mere fancy, or self-arrogation that makes us feel children.

We should meditate on all that this verse means . . . on the reality which it authorises us to ascribe to the testimony of the heart . . .

4. And now the rein is loosened, and at length the eager spirit of Paul leaps unrestrainedly to dilate upon the final glory.

This idea of *sonship* has been the point of departure.

ver. 17. children—The oneness in nature brings a oneness in privilege—**heirs**. What new idea does this suggest? **joint-heirs with Christ**—For the limb is glorified with the Head. **if so be**—This practically means in the Greek—*because it is a fact that*. The next words go closely together . . . “because of the fact that we are suffering so as to be glorified with Him.”

glorified—see ver. 11; and v. 2b.

15, 17. *νιοί* emphasises the dignity of sonship: *τέκνα* the community of nature. **17.** *εἴπερ*—see LXI., Greek note.

For United Study.—IX.

1. *What is the immediate connection between ch. viii. and what has preceded, as indicated by viii. 1?*

2. *Members might co-operate in unfolding viii. 1-4.*

3. *What does **spirit** mean in these verses? What is the connection between our spirit and the Holy Spirit of God? What is the work of the latter as revealed in these verses?*

Those who have studied the subject of the HOLY SPIRIT in other books, especially St. John, should by all means contribute their knowledge to illumine this passage.

4. *What is the root-meaning of the word **flesh**?*

Is flesh essentially sinful? or why is it so often connected with sin?

LXIV.

ROMANS viii. 18, 19.

St. Paul has at length reached, and rested on, the word **glorified** (ver. 17). How are we to conceive of this final state? What are the evidences of it here below?

1. ver. 18. **for**—To what does this call attention in 17? **revealed = unveiled.**

2. ver. 19. **for**—This verse intensifies both the correlative ideas of ver. 18. Let us be aware that these two verses are throbbing with life and ecstasy: picture every word (for the words are indeed pictures) —**glory . . . unveiled . . .** like some dazzling radiance breaking through the dark covering that has long pent it up. But lo! not merely from the heaven of heavens is the irradiance to burst out (ver. 19); hidden still, but glowing none the less, it burns within millions here on earth (**the sons of God**); from whom the wrappings shall be torn (**revealing**), in the great day.

Compare this great idea with ii. 5-11, 16. The two passages illumine each other.

Does not all this greatly help our conception as to the great Day—its use and its work?

3. But we have not yet finished with the pictures of ver. 19. **creation**—We cannot limit the word (except, perhaps, by the word here contrasted with it): what does creation include? **earnest expectation**—The Greek word is highly picturesque—it suggests a person with head intently turned in one direction, eyes straining towards some distant point—a monument of *waiting*: **waiteth for**—the Greek word adds fresh details to the picture forming in our minds:—the Figure's arms are stretched out towards the distant object of its desire.

4. An unheard-of idea! we say:—dumb creation awaiting this revelation. Why? The next verses partially supply the answer.

18. ἀποκαλυφθῆναι—ἀπο, off καλυπτω veil. 19. ἀποκαρᾶδοκία = ἀπο—“off” (i.e. in some other than a normal direction), κᾶρα—head, δοκ—glance, or watch, or spy. ἀπεκδέχεται—ἀπο (as before)—ἐκδέχομαι—to receive, or prepare to receive, something from some one.

LXV.

ROMANS viii. 20—25.

1. **vers. 20, 21.** Ver. 19 has suggested that creation is in a certain state of unsatisfied longing at this present time. These verses reassert this more strongly, and suggest the mysterious reason. What do they tell us

(a) as to the dependence of creation in the past upon an event uncontrolled by itself; and the nature of the event:

(b) as to untoward results of this dependence:

(c) as to the dependence of creation in the future upon an event uncontrolled by itself; and the nature of that event:

(d) as to the glorious results of this dependence..? **by reason of him**, etc. = God (Gen. iii. 14-19)? or man? **vanity**—(Cp. Eccl. i. 2, etc.)—"Disappointment, frailty, emptiness, nothingness" (Vaughan). **in hope** . . . At the very outset the subjection was only temporary—a prelude to a more glorious morrow. See how soon the hope was given—Gen. iii. 15!

2. **ver 22**—Appeals to the general recognition of a fact to support these strange assertions.

We see from this and following verses that St. Paul conceives of an entire universe, spiritual as well as physical, in a state of conscious incompleteness, limitedness, "divine discontent," full of the pain which comes of a longing for the

one far-off, divine event
To which the whole creation moves.

Such are **the sufferings of the present time** (18a).

3. **Ver. 22** shows the first of the persons of this tragic drama.

Ver. 23 shows the second. **the adoption**—It is a great day when the "heir" comes of age. **redemption** (mark the word; see 1 Cor. i. 30) **of the body**—See **ver. 11**. *With all their exuberance, have not even these chapters of sanctification made us feel that the fight is still bitter and terrible?*

vers. 24, 25. Or do some feel that the end is come already, and that no "better thing" remains? A great mistake! The existence of **hope** disproves it. **were we saved**—Note tense and contrast **v. 9, 10**: the comparison illumines our notions of what salvation is.

20. *δία* c. acc. *seems* to favour referring the phrases to *man* (see above). But perhaps not necessarily. 21. *τῆς φθορᾶς*—the article practically identifies *φθορᾶς* with *τῆ ματαιότητι* of ver. 20.

LXVI.

ROMANS viii. 26—28.

We have been told two of the persons of this *divina tragedia*. The third is none other than the indwelling Spirit of God Himself!

1. **ver. 26.** In like manner the Spirit . . . To find the likeness, compare this verse and **vv. 22, 23.**

A sigh can help a sigh! If the human soul in itself is

An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry:

He knows well for what He is sighing. **ver. 27.**
And *such* prayer cannot fail of an answer.

2. We can hardly ponder too long or too deeply the bearing of this verse upon the subject of *prayer*. It helps us too to understand more fully verses like Mt. xviii. 19, 20; Jn. xiv. 13, 14 + 16; for the work of the Spirit is to knit us into CHRIST.

Rich though this topic is, let us for the present keep in mind the immediate context: the Spirit Himself vouchsafes to play a part in this vast, cosmic movement Heavenward.

3. **ver. 28.** With this verse cp. **17b.** We suffer with Him, but we now (**vers. 18—27**) know the *meaning* of the suffering, and whither it leads: cp. **v. 3, 4,** of which this passage has been an expansion, and this verse (**28**) a re-statement.

In short, this verse gathers up **vers. 18—27.** But before we pass on, is there *limitation* suggested by this verse? Are there not those for whom even good seems to work together for ill (Jer. xvii. 5, 6)?

4. The final words of **ver. 28** lead Paul to place the coping-stone on his edifice. He looks back, he looks forward, and sees the strength of the position of the redeemed, and the certainty of good being the goal of their ills: for God Himself was the Author of their weal.

26. *συναντιλαμβάνεται*—another picture-word: as of a man half sharing, half bearing another's burden. *τί*—not merely the manner, but the true *object* of prayer is unknown to us. *ὑπερευλογάνει*—as of a man meeting another in the way on behalf of a friend. 27. *ὅτι*—might = “that” (after *οἶδεν*) or “because.” 28. *δέ*—*but*.

LXVII.

ROMANS viii. 29—39.

God began the work : will not He finish, and will not all things therefore work together for good ? (See Phil. i. 6.)

ver. 29. For—Expands **ver. 28.** St. Paul now places himself at the viewpoint of Eternity and of God, the Alpha and Omega, and surveys on their Godward side the stages of the Christian life which he has been displaying :—**foreknew—foreordained** (to holiness)—**called—justified—glorified.**

foreknew—This *knowledge* in Old Testament and New Testament always includes the idea of approving or sympathetic or familiar knowledge. **foreordained**—N.B. to *what!* (**many**—emphatic).

Thus much in eternity : and, in time, **called, justified, glorified**—he comes to a full close in the word which fell from his lips as it were prematurely in **v. 2**, and again in **viii. 17, 18, 21** : but now, not prematurely, for the tale is all unfolded. Let us notice the tense of **glorified**. So sure does he feel !

The impassioned but subdued tones of **18-30**, which succeeded the calm logic of **1-17**, now pass into a sort of lyric outburst, which quickens and swells to its magnificent climax.

We shall recognise in every part of it elements that have occurred before : indeed it is a more ecstatic version of **v. 1-11**.

We read it to-day, and it is easy to understand. But only life itself can be its commentary.

in Christ Jesus our Lord—The music of this cadence has greeted us before in **vii. 24, vi. 23, v. 21** ; also **v. 11, iv. 24, iii. 26, i. 7, 6, 4**. Is it not exceeding fitting that we should meet it in this place ?

29. προέγνω—γινώσκω = to know as a friend—almost always in St. John : e.g. viii. 55, xiv. 17. συμμόρφους—μορφή is the outward form that is the essential expression of inward nature.

LXVIII.

THOUGHTS ON ROMANS viii. : THE THREE STAGES.

1. Let us turn again to 1 Cor. i. 30, where we see the three stages of the heavenward life clearly marked.

Righteousness (justification), **Sanctification**, **Redemption**. In this chapter viii. these three strands are found (in XLVIII. § 3 we saw how they were found in the Epistle as a whole). But the chapter is not symmetrically divided into the three corresponding sections. Rather do they run into each other: St. Paul passes from one to another, and then back again.

I.	II.	III.
vers. 1-3	vers. 4	
	9, 10	11
	12-17	17
		18, 19, 21
	23	23
	26, 27	
29 . . .	29	
30 . . .	30	30

2. As for the final stage—we can gather the nature of it from the rich variety of names by which it is characterised throughout the N.T. St. Paul is his own commentary, and all the writers of the N.T. are commentaries the one on the other. Does not this lay on us the absolute duty, and the pleasure, of “examining the Scriptures daily whether these things are so”?

In this very chapter, this final state is called by five names! Other passages are vi. 22b; 1 Cor. xv. ; 2 Cor. v. 1-10; Phil. iii. 21; and Heb. ix. 28 + Rom. xiii. 11.

3. These last two passages remind us of the complex meaning assigned to **saved, salvation** in the N.T. The word is used in three tenses, past, present and future, evidently corresponding to the three stages of the heavenward life: e.g. Rom. viii. 24, 1 Cor. i. 18, Rom. v. 9. The thought of this would prevent many contentions and misunderstandings.

LXIX.

THOUGHTS ON CH. viii. :—VERS. 29, 30.

1. It is idle to conceal that these verses raise questionings in every heart. It is equally idle to deny that the best of men have interpreted them differently from earliest times. It would be wrong therefore for the writer to lay down his view (if he has one) as the right one, or to suggest it as the only one.

What the different possible interpretations are will suggest themselves inevitably.

2. Let us to-day therefore simply consider certain prolegomena—things which ought to be borne in mind whatever conclusion one at last adopts.

(a) The course of the argument is leading St. Paul to emphasise exclusively the DIVINE WORK that has effected salvation. He sees in the whole course of a heavenward life nothing that has originated apart from GOD.

Does not this thought give at once confidence and humility in those who feel within them the stirring of diviner things ?

(b) If one is going outside this particular context and thinking out a complete philosophy of God and man, the rest of Scripture must be considered. St. Paul is not even intending to be exhaustive here.

(c) We here penetrate into the very springs of Being ; but in this ultimate sphere of thought we become aware, and ought to become aware, that something baffles thought. The infinite baffles us, as it always must, whether in number, or in space, or in time. It is our weakness therefore that forces us to speak of the infinite and eternal GOD in terms and in figures of finite time : and the very words *foreknew*, *foreordained*, show that they but half convey an idea which we can never wholly express.

(d) This being so—and this much *is* absolutely certain—are not subjects which trench directly on this mysterious reality of the eternal absolute and infinite, *the* subjects of all others on which we should refrain from dogmatising : *the* subjects on which it is almost criminal to force on others the conclusions which commend themselves to our dim sight ?

LXX.

THOUGHTS ON CH. viii. :—VERS. 19—22.

This is one of the profoundest passages in St. Paul's writings. Does it puzzle us? Small wonder if it does; for the sweep of his thought is taking in the universal frame of things: and who, unaided, is sufficient for these things?

Perhaps life and experience and length of years and they alone can supply the light sufficient for a worthy commentary on these verses.

Without suggesting any particular interpretation, it is possible to form some general ideas about this great matter:—

(a) Nature, and the universe, is *one*. Science and philosophy have increasingly witnessed to this fact. Science, philosophy and religion unite in testifying that what affects a part, affects the whole.

(b) Science, philosophy and religion unite in contemplating man as the crown and goal of created things.

(c) Those two events—sin and redemption—that influenced in an extraordinary way the entire race of man—is it strange that they should *in some way* have affected the entire framework of things?

(d) What that way was may be difficult to conceive—impossible to conceive fully. The clearness of our conception will depend entirely on how clearly we realise the oneness of the universe, and the nature of that oneness.

(e) Would not some such thought quicken our sympathy and intimacy with nature, and our sense of the presence of God throughout it?

(f) And is such a sense of the *mystery* of things wholesome or the reverse? to know that—

There are more things in heaven and earth
Than are dream'd of in our philosophy?

For United Study.—X.

1. *How does the section viii. 18-30 grow out of and expand viii. 17? Unfold these verses.*

2. *What can one glean as to the nature of the final glory from these and other verses? and as to its connection with a holy life on earth?*

3. *If one accused Christianity of offering a selfish salvation, how might we meet him? And if one asked us what bearing these remote, mysterious and recondite truths had on daily life, what would one say?*

4. *How does viii. 30-39 repeat v. 1-11, and what have the intervening chapters added?*

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