

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

Ephesians 2:11–18

Ephesians 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

The apostle, in addressing the Ephesians, reminds them of their previous state of being *Gentiles*, separated from God's promises to Israel, evidenced by *Circumcision* which was a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham,¹ extending to Abraham's descendants. An important point for believers to remember in respect to being God's *workmanship*, is that before exposure to God's call in Christ, we were both born into and under the dominion of the *flesh*, in a state of *uncircumcision*, which necessitated being estranged from all things divine and holy. To the Jews circumcision was directly tied

to salvation.² To be uncircumcised was to possess no true relationship with God, nor any right to His promises.³

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Eph. 2:11) *Who are called Uncircumcision* — That is, who are called "the uncircumcised." This was a term similar to that which we use when we speak of "the unbaptized." It meant that they were without the pale of the people of God; that they enjoyed none of the ordinances and privileges of the true religion. (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Sinners in their natural and carnal state are unworthy of either divine generosity

1 Gen. 17:1–14 *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.*

2 Acts 15:1 *And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.*

3 Gen. 17:14 *And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.*

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

or goodness being bestowed upon them. To be blessed by God, demands an act of generosity and charitableness on God's part, simply because all born of the flesh, Gentiles by nature, are deemed as *strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*. To be born *without Christ* and *without God in the world*, is to be earthly born without any hope of eternal life, or future promise of relationship with God. The Greek word for *without God* is #112 *atheos* (AH-thee-ahs). It is the word which our present-day word "atheist" comes from. It is defined by *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* as "without God, knowing and worshipping no God." The word's definition includes the idea of not only separation from the Lord, but also complete and total ignorance of Him. To be naturally born, without any spiritual knowledge of the need to repent, nor any innate desire to search for, and/or make reconciliation with the Father. Ignorance is the main characteristic of the atheist. Because he cannot see an invisible God,⁴ he wrongly assumes that He does not exist. All impious men are at their core spiritually ignorant and blind men. It is this ignorance that contributes to the state of unbelief that sinners by natural birth are born into. To be born of the flesh,

or merely fleshly born, is to be born an atheist, a lost state which without divine intervention would never change.

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

That which had been stated in the previous verse about *having no hope* and being in a state of *without God in the world* is abruptly reversed here. *But now in Christ Jesus*, or in consequence of your faith and union with Him, it is the *blood of Christ* which affords the opportunity to draw *nigh* unto God, and ultimately to have ignorance of Him removed. Not until also sinners have received access to God's presence, which demands being washed from their sin, can they actually come to know God. The *blood of Christ* and its atoning power accomplishes just this.⁵ (Lev. 17:11) *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.* The reason that blood makes atonement for sin, is that blood represents life. So that when life is given for sin, which is its just and righteous judgment, then full and complete atonement is made.

⁴ Col. 1:15 *Who [Jesus Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

I John 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

I Tim. 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

I Tim. 6:16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

John 5:37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

⁵ Rom. 5:9 *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

Eph. 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Rev. 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

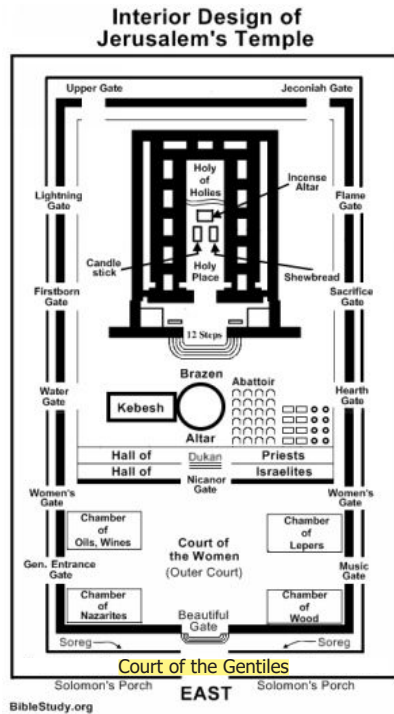
Heb. 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Ephesians 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

To be born a Gentile necessitates being twice removed from God, unable to enter into the inner wall of the sanctuary where the priests alone were allowed to enter,⁶ but also prohibited from entering the Jewish court, to then share with those to whom God's promises were made. All Gentiles, and all uncircumcised were therefore not simply separated from the inner sanctuary,⁷ but also separated from the court of the Jews. If a Gentile entered the temple precinct, and this wall barricade was breached, the punishment became death. It is this balustrade of stone that the *middle wall of partition* is referring to.

(Wordpress) Gentiles were allowed to enter the outer temple enclosure in Jerusalem. This large, paved area surrounding the temple and its inner courts was enclosed by a double colonnade of pillars standing 10 m high. The perimeter of this area measured 1,2 km. This outer court was also called the court of the Gentiles.

But Gentiles were physically prevented access to the inner courts of the temple by a 1,4 m high barrier (Paul's "dividing wall of hostility" in Galatians 2:14). The Jewish historian Josephus pointed out that 13 stone slabs with writing in both Greek and Latin were placed at intervals on the barrier, warning Gentiles not to enter. In Josephus' words, "There was a partition made of stone..."



Its construction was very elegant; upon it stood pillars, at equal distances from one another, declaring the law of purity, some in Greek, and some in Roman letters, that "no foreigner should go within that sanctuary" (Wars, 5.5.2). Archaeologists have discovered two of these warning slabs, which state: "No foreigner is allowed to enter within the balustrade surrounding the sanctuary and the court. Whoever is caught will be personally responsible for his ensuing death."

This dividing wall had great significance for Paul, who was arrested in Jerusalem for reportedly bringing a Gentile into the inner court of the temple (see Acts 21:16-30). Paul

6 1 Kgs. 8:10-11 *And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, ¹¹So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.*

7 Ezek. 44:9 *Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel.*

II Chron. 23:19 *And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in.*

Num. 3:10 *And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.*

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

and other Jewish followers of Christ recognized that the God who had previously resided in the temple had entered humanity in the person of Jesus, the Messiah. Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection had in effect broken down the dividing wall, effecting spiritual unity between Jews and Gentiles. As a result, Paul knew, all people have been granted access to God through saving faith in Jesus Christ.⁸ (END QUOTE)

(“Temple Warning Inscription.”) The Temple Warning inscription, also known as the Temple Balustrade inscription or the Soreg inscription, is an inscription that hung along the balustrade outside the Sanctuary of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Two of these tablets have been found. The inscription was a warning to pagan visitors to the temple not to proceed further. Both Greek and Latin inscriptions on the temple's balustrade served as warnings to pagan visitors not to proceed under penalty of death.⁹ (END QUOTE)

Where before all born Gentiles in the flesh, were *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise*, now through Christ Jesus the wall which separated the Gentiles from the Jews has been *broken down*. The worth of Jesus' sacrifice in effect makes Jew and Gentile *one*, whereby all mankind has access to God's promises given through His Son.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Eph. 2:14) *the middle wall of partition*—Greek, “. . . of the partition” or “fence”; the middle wall which parted Jew and Gentile.

There was a balustrade of stone which separated the court of the Gentiles from the holy place, which it was death for a Gentile to pass. But this, though incidentally alluded to, was but a symbol of the partition itself, namely, “the enmity” between “both” and God (Eph 2:15),¹⁰ the real cause of separation from God, and so the mediate cause of their separation from one another. Hence there was a twofold wall of partition, one the inner wall, severing the Jewish people from entrance to the holy part of the temple where the priests officiated, the other the outer wall, separating the Gentile proselytes from access to the court of the Jews (compare Eze 44:7; Ac 21:28).¹¹ Thus this twofold wall represented the Sinaitic law, which both severed all men, even the Jews, from access to God (through sin, which is the violation of the law), and also separated the Gentiles from the Jews. (END QUOTE)

Ultimately, it is the person of Jesus Christ—His blood, His death, and His resurrection—which has removed all barriers between God and man. For this reason the Scripture states, *he is our peace*. It is not simply that Jesus provides peace, but that *he is* peace. Quite probably the *peace* spoken of is that which Isaiah alludes to: (Isa. 57:19) *I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.*

(Benson Commentary, Isa. 57:19) *I create*—I will, by my almighty power, in a wonderful manner produce; *the fruit of the lips*—Praise and thanksgiving, termed the fruit of the lips, Hosea 14:2; Hebrews 13:15.¹² God creates

8 <https://larshaukland.com/bits-pieces/archeology/ephesians/the-dividing-wall-of-the-court-of-the-gentiles-in-herods-temple-ephesians-2/>

9 “Temple Warning Inscription.” Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 26 Aug. 2024, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_Warning_inscription. Accessed 05 Sept. 2024.

10 Eph 2:15 *Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;*

11 Ezek. 44:7 *In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations.*

Acts 21:28 *Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.*

12 Hos. 14:2 *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.*

this fruit of the lips, by giving new subjects and causes of thanksgiving, by his mercies conferred on those among his people, who acknowledge and bewail their transgressions, and return to him. *Peace, peace*, &c. — Here we have the great subject of thanksgiving, reconciliation with God, pardon and peace offered to them that *are nigh*, and to them that are *afar off*; not only to the Jew, but also to the Gentile... (END QUOTE)

The healing spoken of *I will heal him*, has direct relationship to God, and the healing that is produced when sin is removed, and men can draw near unto God. Just as *he is our peace*, so also did *his own self bare our sins*. (I Pet. 2:24) *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed*. Both revelations reveal how it was Jesus personally, Who has saved us. Salvation was wrought in Christ's body, by the sacrifice of it upon the cross. The believer's salvation therefore has its foundation not in written law and/or religious ceremonies, but in the actual body of the Savior.

(Benson Commentary, I Pet. 2:24) *Who his own self* — In his own person, and by the sacrifice of himself, and not of another, (Hebrews 9:28,¹³) *bare our sins* — That is, the punishment due to them; *in his afflicted, torn, dying body on the tree* — The cross, whereon chiefly slaves or servants were wont to suffer.

... *By whose stripes ye were healed* — Of your spiritual disorders: evils infinitely greater than any which the cruelty of the severest masters can bring upon you. See on Isaiah 53:5.¹⁴ “By changing his discourse from the first to the second person, the apostle addressed those slaves who might be beaten unmercifully by cruel masters; because, of all the considerations by which they could be animated to patience, the most powerful was, to put them in mind of the painful stripes with which Christ was beaten, when he was scourged by Pilate's order, (Matthew 27:26,¹⁵) and to tell them, that with these stripes the wounds in their souls, occasioned by sin, were healed; wounds far more painful and deadly than those inflicted on them by their froward masters.” (END QUOTE)

Jesus was crucified and put to death on a tree. It was here that He suffered in the last hours of His life and was numbered with the transgressors, dying and being tortured as servants and slaves were wont to suffer. (Isa. 53:12) *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors*. To reveal the level of humility and disgrace the Lord suffered, as a slave, we need only to remember that Jesus was crucified between two malefactors, beaten as a criminal¹⁶ and mocked as an imposter.¹⁷ He was

Heb. 13:15 *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

13 Heb. 9:28 *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

14 Isa. 53:5 *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

15 Matt. 27:26 *Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.*

16 Matt. 27:26 *Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.*

John 19:1 *Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.*

17 Mark 15:27–31 *And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. ²⁸And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. ²⁹And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, ³⁰Save thyself, and come down from the cross. ³¹Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.*

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

numbered and accounted as a *transgressor*, which is the Hebrew word for “rebel,” #6586 *pasha*, defined by Strong’s as “to rebel, transgress.” What is seen here is how the humiliation, suffering, and death that Jesus endured, as the lowest of sinners, on the cross, and outside of Jerusalem,¹⁸ has produced deliverance from sin. By being crucified and taking on the nature of sin, Jesus actually created access and opportunity for sinners to acquire peace with God.¹⁹ Jesus’ humiliation, turning to our

glorification,²⁰ His death, to our life,²¹ His suffering, to our healing. Because Jesus as a servant, bore His people’s sin, His people have been freed from it, providing for those who possess faith in Him full release from their previous sinful nature. Just as the Savior stated that everyone who *committeth sin is the servant of sin*, and all men fall into this category, so did He as a servant through carrying sin, ultimately free His people from it.²² The irony of this is not accidental, but is

John 19:2–7 *And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, ³And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. ⁴Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. ⁵Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!⁶ When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. ⁷The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.*

18 John 19:16–17 *Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. ¹⁷And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:*

Heb. 13:12 *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*
19 John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

John 16:31–33 *Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? ³²Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. ³³These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

Eph. 2:14–16 *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; ¹⁵Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; ¹⁶And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:*

20 Rom. 8:29–30 *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

Col. 3:4 *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

Phil. 3:20–21 *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: ²¹Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

Heb. 2:10 *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

21 Rom. 5:10 *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

Rom. 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

John 6:35 *And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*

22 Heb. 9:26 *For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

I John 3:5 *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*

Isa. 53:4–6 *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

actually purposeful, in impressing upon those whom Christ has freed and healed from sin, the manner in which it has been accomplished. It was accomplished *in his own body on the tree*.

Jesus' journey to the cross vividly and powerfully exemplifies the continuing pain and suffering carrying the weight sin produces in one's life.²³ By Jesus being too weak to sustain the cross²⁴ this reveals how no human being on their own is able to endure the weight of sin. It is too heavy, and once placed on a man's shoulders, it will inevitably cause him to drop to his knees.²⁵ Men may pride themselves on many things, but none can pride themselves on conquering the sin within them. It is a cruel and unrelenting master which without divine intervention, no one can escape from. It will inevitably weigh all men down, yea break them, and send them to eternal damnation, absent atonement being made for its removal.

All who are servants of sin, are dangerously close, without grace given to them, to be cut off from God forever. Only sons of God are removed from this threat, and

*Isa. 53:11–12 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*¹² *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*
²³ *Deut. 28:28–29 The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart: ²⁹And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.*
Num. 32:23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.

Exod. 20:5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;
²⁴ *Matt. 27:32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.*

²⁵ *Luke 5:8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*

²⁶ *Gal. 4:22–30 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. ²³But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. ²⁴Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. ²⁵For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. ²⁶But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. ²⁷For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. ²⁸Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. ²⁹But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. ³⁰Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her*

only the Son of God, can transform one previously born in bondage and a slave to sin, to become born of God, and freed from the future threat of being both eternally and righteously removed from God's holy presence. (John 8:35–36) *And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

(*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*, John 8:35) *And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth ever*—that is, “And if your connection with the family of God be that of BOND-SERVANTS, ye have no natural tie to the house; your tie is essentially uncertain and precarious. But the Son's relationship to the Father is a natural and essential one; it is an indefeasible tie; His abode in it is perpetual and of right: That is My relationship, My tie: If, then, ye would have your connection with God's family made real, rightful, permanent, ye must by the Son be manumitted and adopted as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.” In this sublime statement there is no doubt a subordinate allusion to Ge 21:10, “Cast out this bondwoman and her son, for the son of this bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, with Isaac.” (Compare Ga 4:22–30²⁶). (END QUOTE)

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

For Jesus, carrying the sin of mankind ended with His being risen from the dead. For us as sinners, our bondage to sin ends with a belief in the risen Christ, and confession of Him as Lord of our life.²⁷

There is no more a clear and succinct record in Scripture which reveals Jesus being both a servant of God, and taking on as a servant the bondage of sin, than that which is recorded in Philippians chapter two.

Philippians 2:6–8 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

⁷But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

⁸And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

It was Jesus Who *took upon him* [Himself] *the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.* Jesus, as a servant to God, Who took on the form of being made in the likeness of man, and then assumed the additional responsibility of carrying both the weight of, and judgment for man's sin. The greatest example of Jesus fulfilling his service to God, and becoming a servant of men, in dying for their sins, is

made manifest at the cross. Here, at the cross, and as a *servant*, Jesus suffered as a sinner, was scorned by the world,²⁸ and died apart from God.²⁹ The cross of Christ, reveals the apex of Jesus' submission to God, and His deep and eternal love for all who are bound by sin. Strikingly, Jesus in the form of a servant, allowed the bondage of sin to be placed on His own life, willingly subjecting Himself³⁰ to the death it produces. It is also the death of our Savior, which reveals the great and intensive degree of His obedience to God. To obey unto death, reveals the breathtaking level of divine submission, subjection, and spiritual obedience which existed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nowhere also is the inner humility and spiritually subject character of our Savior made more visible, than when He *humbled himself, and became obedient unto death.* Whatever any man truly is on the inside, will eventually manifest itself on the outside. For Jesus, enduring the cross, and the death it produced confirms the low and humble position of His person. To properly know Jesus Christ, is to come to know the great degree of humility and subjection that is characteristic of the Savior of the world.³¹

(Barnes Notes on the Bible, Phil. 2:8) He humbled himself— Even then, when he appeared as a man. He had not only laid aside the

son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

²⁷ Rom. 10:9–10 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* ¹⁰For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

²⁸ Matt. 27:22–25 *Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.* ²³And the governor said, *Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.* ²⁴When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, *I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.* ²⁵Then answered all the people, and said, *His blood be on us, and on our children.*

²⁹ Matt. 27:46 *And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

³⁰ John 10:15 *As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.* Gal. 1:4 *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:*

³¹ I John 4:14 *And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* John 4:42 *And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*

symbols of his glory Philippians 2:7,³² and become a man; but when he was a man, he humbled himself. Humiliation was a constant characteristic of him as a man. He did not aspire to high honors; he did not affect pomp and parade; he did not demand the service of a train of menials; but he condescended to the lowest conditions of life; Luke 22:27.³³ (END QUOTE)

(Benson Commentary, Phil. 2:8) *He humbled himself* — ... “The reasoning in this passage is beautiful. The Son of God did not proudly continue in his high station, but descended from it for a while, and placed himself in the lowest condition among men, serving every one with the humility and assiduity of a servant, or bondman, as δούλος (doulos) signifies. Then, in obedience to his Father, (John 6:38,³⁴) he finished his services by suffering the painful and ignominious death of the cross as a malefactor, for the salvation of the world. (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

As revealed here, Jesus was not merely a Teacher of divine law, but rather *abolished in his [own] flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Eph. 2:15) *In his flesh* — By the sacrifice of his body on the cross. It was not by instruction merely; it was not by communicating the knowledge of God; it was not as a teacher; it was not by the mere exertion of power; it was

by his flesh—his human nature—and this can mean only that he did it by his sacrifice of himself. (END QUOTE)

The Greek word for *abolish* is #2673 *katargeó* (cott-arr-GAY-oh). The word is defined by *Strong's* as “to render inoperative, abolish.” Its usage is “(a) I make idle (inactive), make of no effect, annul, abolish, bring to naught, (b) I discharge, sever, separate from.” *HELPS Word-studies* defines *katargeó* (cott-arr-GAY-oh) “(from 2596 /*katá*, (cott-AH) ‘down to a point,’ intensifying 691 /*argéō* (arr-GAY-oh), ‘inactive, idle’) – properly, idle down, rendering something inert (‘completely inoperative’); i.e. being of no effect (totally without force, completely brought down); done away with, cause to cease and therefore abolish; make invalid, abrogate (bring to nought); ‘to make idle or inactive.’” The means by which Jesus abolished the law, was His death on the cross, fulfilling its judgment for sin, and then ultimately creating *one new man, so making peace.*

To make in himself of twain one new man. The *new man* spoken of is that new nature which Christ's baptizes his people with, i.e. the Holy Spirit.³⁵ This new spiritual and holy nature, which is spoken of as the *new man* is also defined in Scripture, as the Spirit of God's Son. (Gal. 4:6) *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* It is by the impartation of this divine and holy nature, whose source is God's Son, that Jew and Gentile

32 Phil. 2:7 *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

33 Luke 22:27 *For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.*

34 John 6:38 *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

35 John 20:22 *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

Acts 2:33 *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

are united to each other,³⁶ and together become united to God. It is also this bearing of the image of the heavenly,³⁷ through receiving the same holy nature as God, which transcends the law of sin and death.³⁸ Through being born of God³⁹ sinners are lifted from all things earthly and carnal including all the sin in their previous life. To become a child of God, transcends all previous relationship with God, including being the Lord's servant, as Israel was revealed to be in God's eyes.⁴⁰ What can also be observed is the close proximity that the Savior plays in His people's deliverance. Where both Christ's personal death, and then Christ's spiritual resurrected life is transmitted to the saved. Like with Moses, where the Lord took the Spirit which was upon him, and gave it to the seventy,⁴¹ so has God taken the Spirit of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, and imparted it to those who have placed their faith and trust in Him. All therefore is centered upon Jesus—first His earthly death, and then His resurrected life—revealing the special role the Lord has displayed in saving His people. Christ's people's salvation is secure,

because it is His own bodily death, and then resurrected life, that actually saves them. It is also Christ's death, and then His life, that ultimately produces the one body of Christ. From then the body and Spirit of the Savior, is the body of His redeemed formed.

Ephesians 2:16 *And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:*

It is in Christ, God's Son alone, that sinners can find true reconciliation with God. All salvation, and reconciliation with God must originate in Him, and there is no true salvation apart from Him.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, Eph. 2:16) Translate, "might altogether reconcile them both in one body (the Church, Col 3:15⁴²) unto God through His cross." The Greek for "reconcile" (*apocatalaxe*) (*apocott-ah-locks*), found only here and in Col 1:20,⁴³ expresses not only a return to favor with one (*catallage*)(*cott-ah-lodge*), but so to lay aside enmity that complete amity follows; to pass from enmity to complete reconciliation [Tittmann]. (END QUOTE)

36 1 Cor. 12:13 *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

Eph. 4:5-6 *One Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

37 1 Cor. 15:48-49 *As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. ⁴⁹And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

38 Rom. 8:2 *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

39 John 3:3 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

1 Pet. 1:23 *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

1 John 3:9 *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

40 Isa. 41:8 *But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.*

Isa. 44:1 *Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen:*

Isa. 45:4 *For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.*

Luke 1:54 *He hath helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;*

41 Num. 11:25 *And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.*

42 Col. 3:15 *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*

43 Col 1:20 *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

The Greek word for *reconcile* is #604 *apokatallassó* (appo-COTT-AH-loss-oh). The word is defined by *Strong's*, “to reconcile completely.” Its usage is “I reconcile, change from one state of feeling to another.” The origin of the word is #575 *apo*, (appo) “from, away from” and # 2644 *katallassó* (COTT-AH-loss-oh), “to reconcile.” From these definitions it can be seen that Christ’s reconciliation of the saved, involved transforming the state of those separated and estranged from God, to being joined to God. Sin separates man from the Lord, Christ removes sin, so that he might be one together again with Him.

(*Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 2:16) *Having slain the enmity* — Not only the enmity between Jews and Gentiles, but the enmity between the sinner and God. He has by that death removed all the obstacles to reconciliation on the part of God and on the part of man. It is made efficacious in removing the enmity of the sinner against God, and producing peace.

Thereby — Margin, “in himself.” The meaning is, in his cross, or by means of his cross. (END QUOTE)

Just as Jesus was slain on a tree, so did Jesus “slay” (using the same terminology) both sin and law, which separated the sinner from God. In reality, Christ’s death on the cross is the death of everything that has separated men from their Creator, and so much so, that those things are now considered dead, and of no effect. This includes the sin which separated man from God, and the law which brought judgment upon man for it.

(*Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers* Eph. 2:16) **By the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.**—In this verse (in accordance with the context) “the enmity,” which by His death He “slew,” is the barrier between God

and man, created by sin, but brought out by the Law, as hard and rigid law, “in ordinances” of which St. Paul does not hesitate to say that “sin took occasion by it,” and “by it slew” man (Romans 7:11). This is illustrated by the cognate, though different, metaphor of Colossians 2:14, where it is said of Christ that He “blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, which was contrary unto us, and took it out of the way, *nauling it to His cross.*” Compare also, in Galatians 2:19-20, the connection of spiritual “death to the Law” with our partaking of our Lord’s crucifixion: “I, through the Law, am dead to the Law, that I might live unto God. *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. . . . by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*” By His death Christ has both redeemed us from sin, and also “redeemed (properly, *bought*) us from the curse of the Law” (Galatians 3:13). (END QUOTE)

It is the body of Jesus Christ that establishes peace between Jew and Gentile, and brings both together, resulting in the creation of the mystical body of Christ. Through Christ’s sacrifice for sin, a heavenly body, a heavenly congregation has been created, in whom all sin has been removed and complete and thorough reconciliation with God has been made. Because also the body of Christ has its origination in the Savior, He righteously and by divine decree has been made its Head. (Col. 1:18–20) *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.* Christ’s own body is the genesis of the creation of the body of Christ.⁴⁴ It is this church, this assembly, which is re-

⁴⁴ Rom. 12:4–5 *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

ferred to as a *glorious church*, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27b). The Greek word that describes this heavenly congregation is ἐκκλησίαν (ek-LEE-see-on)#1577 HELPS Word-studies defines the word as:

“properly, people called out from the world and to God, the outcome being the *Church* (the mystical *body of Christ*) – i.e. the universal (total) body of believers whom God calls out from the world and into His eternal kingdom.

[The English word “church” comes from the Greek word *kyriakos*, (cure-ee-AH-kohs). “belonging to the Lord” (kyrios) (cure-ee-OHS).” (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 2:17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

The *peace* which Jesus preached both upon the earth⁴⁵ and to those He has called to God through Himself, is the zenith of what Christ’s death has accomplished for the redeemed. It is for this reason that every church epistle opens with the accomplishments of our Lord’s ministry,⁴⁶ introducing the *grace* and *peace* produced through His redemptive work. This is why all those troubled by sin, can immediately and without delay, experience peace with God, through belief in God’s Son. The degree of a man’s sin before Christ matters not, only that he places his faith in the One Who is fully able and willing to completely deliver him from it.⁴⁷ In the end both the pagan and the pious needed peace to be established between them and the Lord. Simply because it is not a man’s piety that saves him, rather the piety of He, Whom he has believed upon. It is also this peace that is to be preached today, and which the apostle desired to

Col. 3:15 *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*

Eph. 4:10 *He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

I Cor 12:18–20 *But now hath God set the members every one of hem in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.*

45 Luke 24:36 *And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*

John 20:19, 21, 26 *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. ... Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. ... And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.*

46 Rom. 1:7 *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Cor. 1:3 *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

II Cor. 1:2 *Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Gal. 1:3 *Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Eph. 1:2 *Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Phil. 1:2 *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Col. 1:2 *To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Thess. 1:1 *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

II Thess. 1:2 *Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

47 Matt. 1:21 *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

Rom. 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

I John 2:2 *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

I Pet. 2:24 *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*

be made known, revealed, and ultimately trusted in by the Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, Eph. 2:18) The unity of the whole Church, as united “to the Father,” “through the Son,” and “in the Spirit,” is here summed up in one sentence, but with as much perfection and clearness as even when it is unfolded in the great passage below (Ephesians 4:4–6).⁴⁸ (END QUOTE)

It is *through him*, the Son of God, that those born in sin *have access by one Spirit unto the Father*. Undoubtedly this includes both Jew and Gentile. The means by which access to the Father is given, is through Christ, and the possession of the Holy Spirit, which He imparts to the saved. Through the sending forth of this divine Spirit,⁴⁹ circumcised Jew and uncircumcised Gentile are united, and both

are provided access to the Father. Yet, this is also why if a man has not the Spirit of Christ, then God considers him none of His own. (Rom. 8:9) *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* To enter God's presence, one must possess His Holy Spirit. To think that we could enter into heaven otherwise, absent this Spirit, is to be ignorant of the plan of salvation itself. Thus, where the saint has reason to rejoice that through Christ, the Spirit has been given to him, the sinner should fear, that without possession of the Holy Spirit, God is not his, and he is not God's. To therefore be counted a true son of God, a man must be born again,⁵⁰ and given the same nature as God. It is this Holy Spirit, which has been produced through the death and resurrection of God's only begotten Son, that establishes true relationship with the Father, and eternal access to His holy presence.

⁴⁸ Eph. 4:4–6 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; ⁵One Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

⁴⁹ Eph. 4:4 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

⁵⁰ John 3:3–7 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ⁴Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? ⁵Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

I Pet. 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

I Pet. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,