

-PERFECTION-

"And being made perfect, He became the author of aionian salvation unto all them that obey Him." Heb. 5:9. This verse is concerning the Lord. What does it mean here by perfection? Does it mean sinless perfection? That is the common idea of the word PERFECT.

In the taking of a lamb for the sacrifice, it was to be perfect in that it had no blemish. Does this mean that the Lord had to go thru a process of perfecting so that He might have no physical blemish?

Or does it go into the moral realm and mean that our Lord had to use some process by which He could attain to a moral perfection? We know that such a thing is contrary to all Scripture. No fault could be found in Him.

We find several places in the Word where saints are admonished to be perfect. Knowing that the popular idea of the word would make this an absolute impossibility we must seek farther for what it does really mean.

Just an examination of the word itself will tell us something of what it really does mean. The Latin prefix PER may mean THOROUGHLY. The last part comes from the Latin word FACIO, which means to MAKE or DO. Something that is thoroughly made or done we would understand to be FINISHED or COMPLETED.

The Lord was not MADE PERFECT until He had FINISHED HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS. On the tree He said, "It is finished." It was there that He was made perfect.

A saint becomes perfect by accepting by faith the calling that is offered, walking worthy of that calling, and doing the good works whereunto he was created and which were before ordered that he should walk in them. Our perfection consists in taking our place in the great and glorious purpose of God for the ages.

This can never be accomplished without knowledge of God's plan and purpose. There is only one source for this knowledge. That is the Bible, the Word of God.

-ACTS 28:28-

"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

In the Greek the word for SALVATION is SOTERION. We find the same word used in Luke 2:30. There the parents of the Lord presented Him at the temple according to the law. At the temple was a devout old man named Simeon. He had been told by the Spirit that he should not die until he had seen the CONSOLATION of Israel, the Lord's Christ. On this day the Spirit led him to the temple and revealed that this babe was the One he looked for. So taking the babe in his arms he said, "Mine eyes have seen Thy SALVATION."

The angel of the Lord announced the coming birth of Christ to Joseph and added, "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save HIS PEOPLE from their sins." This was Israel's Savior, for His people are Israel.

Later the Lord Himself said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He was making it plain that He was not sent to minister unto the Gentiles.

Likewise He commanded His 12 chosen apostles, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL."

When Peter stood up on the day of Pentecost, he addressed the crowd, "Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem." This crowd was made up of people from 12 nations, "Jews and proselytes." There were no Gentiles in this group. Again Peter addressed the crowd in Acts 2:22 as, "Ye men of Israel."

THE SALVATION OF GOD, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, was proclaimed to none but Jews until Acts 10. There He was preached to Cornelius and his house. This is the only record of any of the 12 ever preaching to Gentiles.

Paul preached to Jews first, and then to Gentiles from Acts 13 to Acts 28:28.

-THE PURPOSE OF IT ALL-

Have you ever wondered just what life means? What is the purpose of all the ups and downs of civilization? Have you ever wondered what you were here for?

Then you may have wondered, too, why God didn't kill the devil and have it all over with. How simple that would make everything.

God has not left us in the dark about His plans and purpose. It is all explained in His Word. It is there ready to be found by those who are interested enough to seek.

It is not possible to live a life that is pleasing to God unless a person knows the will and purpose of God and fits himself in with it.

Many think that all that God requires of a Christian is that he be morally upright. Recently I read in some church literature that to lead a clean life is to live a Christ-like life. That is not true and can be very misleading. A man may be morally pure, but as rebellious as Satan against the will of God.

The ultimate goal of God is very plainly stated in 1 Cor. 15:28, "That God may be all in all."

The creature, standing alone, has in every instance failed. The day will come when God will have His families, both in heaven and on earth, willingly subject to Him, He being their all, and in all.

Not until then will sin be put away, for sin is enmity against God. It is rebellion.

In the new heavens and new earth will be no more remembrance at all of sin and death. The heavens and earth that now are will be so completely purged by fire that not a vestige of the present evil works of man will remain. All unrighteous ones will be destroyed. The devil, the old deceiver will be destroyed. The grave (hell) and death will not even be a memory. The lake of fire will also go up in smoke. Not a trace of any of these can remain if God is to be all and in all.

We must not forget that all this involves both the heavens and the earth. It is our duty to find our part which we are to play and do it with all our might.

-IN THE BEGINNING-

Much is bound up in these three words with which the Word of God begins. BEGINNING, first of all, implies a time element. It indicates that at some time or point time began to be reckoned or in some way counted.

BEGINNING also implies a purpose on the part of God. As we study the Word we do find some references to time that are very puzzling at first. The kingdom of heaven seems to have its plan set forth since the overthrow of the world. This overthrow is mentioned in Gen. 1:2. The MYSTERY which was revealed to Paul to be preached to all peoples everywhere had its beginning from before the overthrow of the world. (Eph. 1:4)

This MYSTERY had been hid from the ages past. The members of the BODY will continue to be blessed in the ages to come.

We measure time by night and day, by seasons, by death and decay. If man did not die, he would have little interest in his age. Time would mean nothing to him. In view of the fact that every man has the prospect of death, he counts time. If sin had not entered the universe, there would have been no need to measure time.

In the new heaven and the new earth, day and night will cease. Death will be no more. Even the passing of the seasons will not be noted since all will look for the face of the Lord, not celestial bodies marking the seasons.

When the goal of the ages is finally reached, when the Son hands over the kingdom to the Father, and God is all and in all, time will cease.

Our little period of TIME is bounded by a timeless period before its beginning, and by another timeless period after the ages have passed and time is no more.

Our little period of TIME has to do with the former heaven and earth, the present heaven and earth, and the new heaven and earth which are to come. The Bible has given us a history of the generations of the heavens and earth, past, present, and future. Gen. 2:4.

-SOME MARGINAL NOTES-

Some years ago I made some notes in the margins of the pages of an old Bible. I am passing some of these on to you with the hope that they may be of some help.

In Matt. 4:4,6, and 7 we find the expression "It is written." In legal terms this means ATTESTED COPY. The Greek is GEGRAPTAI. It makes this expression much stronger than it appears in the English.

In Matt. 5 we find so often the word "Blessed." It is MAKAROIS in the Greek. In some findings of the archeologist it may mean HE-BE-JOYFUL. In another account it was found to mean "Oh! the happiness of me."

In Matt. 6:25 the expression, "Take no thought," means DO NOT WORRY YOURSELF SICK. It is MERIMNA in the Greek.

In Matt. 28:19 the word NAME (OMAMA) means further in the Greek POSSESSIONS OR PROPERTY OF.

The phrase "Having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first" is expressed by PARAKAKUTHEOANOTHEN which means an EYE WITNESS OR KNOW THOROLY FROM THE START. Luke 1:3.

ALL THE WORLD in Luke 2:1 is the Gr. OIKOUMENE and often meant the Roman Empire.

"Only Begotten" in Jno. 1:14 and 3:16 is MONOGENES and means UNIQUE or ONLY-ONE-OF-ITS-KIND.

In Jno. 14:2 "Mansions" is also translated ABODES in the margin. It is MONE and refers to habitable dwellings which could be put up for bail in court. See verse 23 also.

In Acts 13:22 you find the word "Removed." It is METHISTEMI and in legal terms it is a case where a man is ousted from a house at the owner's desire, having no lease as a renter.

"Commandeth" in Acts 17:30 is PARENGELA and refers to the warrant for the arrest of a law-breaker.

"Preaching" in Acts 28:31 is Prokerusso. A story is told that a young man loved a young lady very much, but she did not seem to respond. So he hired a man to go forth on the street with a trum-

pet and blow it at intervals and then shout that Mr. So-and-so loved Miss What's-her-name. The story goes on to tell that the little scheme worked and things ended up as all such stories should. If you love the Lord, hire a trumpet and spread it.

Notice the significance of the word "changed" in Rom. 1:25. It is METALLASSO and conveys the idea that they left the truth by dying.

In Rom. 5:17 you have the word "abundance" which is PERISSEIA and refers to SURPLUS or LEFTOVER. See also 2 Cor. 8:2,10,15.

Paul did not want to be a CAST-AWAY, 1 Cor. 9:27. The Gr. is ADOKIMOS. In the vernacular of that time it was used to describe a water pot that had been cracked and put on the shelf. It was not thrown away or destroyed, but no longer useful for holding water. It might be used for dried beans or grain.

"Evidently set forth" in Gal. 3:1 is PROGRAPHAMAI. This word was used when something was OFFICIALLY POSTED on the village bulletin board.

In Eph. 2:19 the Gentiles are spoken of as being no longer strangers and foreigners (sojourners). In the Gr. "strangers" is PAPERIDEMOS and was used of tourists.

"Foreigners" in the Gr. is PARIKOS. It was used of settlers of foreign birth having no civil rights. They were sojourners.

"Loss" in Phil. 3:8 is ZEMIA, a garbage pit.

"Conversation" in Phil. 3:20 is POLITEUMA. It is citizenship as used of a colonist.

In the next verse "change" is METASCHEMATIZO in the Gr. and is used sometimes as REMODEL.

In 1 Thess. 1:3; Love is because of a past work, Patience is present task, and Hope is our future expectation. Patience is HUPOMONE and means grit and determination to win.

"Comfort" in 1 Thess. 4:18 is PARAMUTHEOMAI meaning comfort by expecting arrival of somebody.

In 1 Tim. 1:5 "Mediator" is MESITES. It means a RECEIVER who must pay every penny, even if he

must pay it out of his own property.

"Committed" in 2 Tim. 1:12 is PANATHEKE which refers to putting on deposit in a bank.

2 Tim. 2:15 uses the word "dividing." This is a stone mason's term and means to hew straight to fit.

Going on to the 19th verse we find the word "nameth." It is OMAMAZO and means ELECTED.

In Heb. 2:4 we find the word "gifts." It is MERISMOS and often referred to extra taxes levied because the poor could not pay. It here means that the Holy Spirit is taxed for the believers. They could not pay.

In Heb. 11:1 "substance" and "evidence" are both the same word in the Gr. It is HUPOSTASIS. In legal language it was TITLE DEED, and a recorded one at that.

In Heb. 12:23 the word ASSEMBLY is PANEGYRIA instead of the usual ECCLESIA for church or assembly. It has to do with a festal gathering for fun and happiness.

"Victory" in 1 Jno. 5:4 is NIKE and means a victory as the result of a well-planned campaign.

Write these notes in the margin of your Bible. They are helpful when you refer to the passages in question.

It is a good habit to make such notes. In your reading you will find many interesting little items about words in the Word. You will not remember them if you do not preserve them in some way.

In my own pocket Bible, which is one of the ultra-thin variety, I have shaded many verses with a mechanical pencil loaded with a red lead. As I read and study, I so mark the verses which I want to remember so that I can find them more readily later when I want to refer to them.

In writing on thin India paper, you will have to use India ink and a fine pen. Get the waterproof India Ink. Then it will stay clear and not rub off or blur.

It is also profitable to underline and connect repeated words or those closely related. It will help clarify their meanings.

-MORALITY VS. CHRISTIANITY-

Not every man that puts on a uniform is a soldier. It takes more than putting on a uniform to make him a soldier. He also might be able to be a soldier without a uniform. It is ordinarily expected that a soldier wear a uniform.

Not every man that puts on morality is a Christian. It takes more than putting on morality to make a Christian. He might be able to be a Christian without much morality. It is ordinarily expected that a Christian be morally good.

Obedience to the will of God is more important than morality. It was said of Abraham that he was the friend of God. But some of Abraham's heathen contemporaries put him to shame when it came to a question of morality. The great thing about Abraham was that he believed God. That belief was counted for righteousness.

We have too much church literature nowadays which sets before the young people the idea that living the Christ life is to be morally upright. There is no hint of the necessity of becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus. There is no message about eternal life. But reformation is not enough for one who is dead in trespasses and sins. There is no amount of effort on our part that can quicken us. That is a work of God.

Today we have on every hand great multitudes of church members who have no knowledge, no certainty of salvation. They belong to the church, attend when it is convenient, support it from a sense of duty, and hope they will make the grade when they die. They have no idea or realization that they are hopelessly lost. They trust in their works and morality to save them. They never dream that God might have ONE WAY of salvation and that they must go His way or else.

These unfortunates are the ones who never read the Word. They have no interest in spiritual things. They have to be entertained and fed all the time. They have no testimony before their fellow-men. It is this group that keeps so many others from receiving Christ.

-ACTS 13:2-

"The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

Altho most of Christendom has placed the beginning of the church at the cross or at Pentecost, some few have tried to place its beginning at Acts 13.

It is true that a new thing was begun at this point. But it was not unknown. It was promised to Abraham that in his seed (Israel) all nations should be blest. The kingdom was first opened to the Gentiles by Peter in Acts 10. This is the first and last time that any of the 12 ever preached to Gentiles anywhere.

That Paul was preaching the MYSTERY hid from ages and generations here in Acts 13 is impossible. In Acts 26:22 Paul declared that he had said none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. So as late as Acts 26 the MYSTERY had not been revealed.

The relationship of the Jew and Gentile during Acts also precludes any chance that the present dispensation began before Acts 28:28. To the 12 was given the gospel of the Circumcision. To Paul was given the gospel of the Uncircumcision. There were two gospel at the same time. Now there is just one faith. Eph. 4:5.

All the Jews were subject to the law during the whole Acts period. Acts. 21:20. The Gentile believers of the same period were subject to only 4 points of the law. Acts 20:25. This shows that the Jews were still under the law and so still in covenant relationship to God. The Gentiles, not being under the law at any time, were saved by the grace of God. So during Acts the gospel of grace was to Gentiles, not to Jews. But after Acts, the Jew being set aside and numbered among the nations again, needs the gospel of grace too. He no longer has any covenant.

As late as Acts 28:20 Paul declared himself to be bound for the hope of Israel. But after Acts he makes it known that he is a prisoner for the Gentiles. Eph. 3:1.

Most folks do not seem to be able to grasp the fact that Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, had a two-fold ministry. During Acts his message was concerned with grafting in Gentiles where Jewish branches had been cut off. At that time Gentiles were blest only so that Israel might be blest. This was to be accomplished by provoking them to bear fruit thru envy. All blessing came thru Israel. They were blest with faithful Abraham. During this time the message was always to Jew first, then if he rejected the gospel, he was cut off as a branch, and Paul turned to the Gentiles. They then would be grafted in to take the place of the Jewish branch.

But after Acts, Paul had the same message for both Jew and Gentile. They had been reconciled to each other and the both as one body reconciled to God.

The hope of the believers of the Acts period was the King and the kingdom. He was to come to the earth where He would set up the kingdom. His coming was their hope. 1 Cor. 15 and 1 Thess. 4.

Since the Church which is His Body is not in any way connected with any earthly program, they do not expect or await His coming to earth. Rather, they will be waiting in heaven for His appearing there when the time comes for His manifestation. Phil. 3:20.

Each calling in the Scriptures has its own separate resurrection. Such as Job, the malefactor on Calvary, and Gentile nations have a resurrection at the judgement of the great white throne. At the APOKALUPSIS will be raised earthly Israel. The scene is on the earth. Immediately preceding will be the PAROUSIA as recorded in 1 Thess. 4. The scene is in the clouds and in the air. But the EPIPHANEIA, the hope of the Church which is His Body, is never set forth as a hope until after Acts 28. That makes it highly improbable that anything was known of the MYSTERY during Acts.

This study is not exhaustive, but it should spur the lovers of truth to further study and search in the Word. Let us be sure we have all the evidence.

-THE EDITOR'S DESK-

The days are beginning to lengthen a little, but it still takes nearly all day to get the chores done. Just too many hungry mouths to feed, I guess. The wet weather has made it hard to keep animal quarters as they should be. The laying house is the worst.

A Holstein heifer arrived Jan. 16. Name is Beauty the Second.

The two Brown Swiss heifers are growing nicely. There is nothing wrong with their appetites.

A letter from a friend was post-marked Birmingham, Eng., Jan. 21 and I received it Jan. 24. That is certainly fast service.

We would like to have a meeting place in Warsaw. If you have any suggestions, we would appreciate them.

The class still meets at my home each Tuesday night. The time is 7:45. You are welcome to come and join us in the study of the greatest book ever written. We are now working on Exodus and Romans.

You could help me select material for the paper if you would write asking me any questions you might have. It is hard to write unless I know what your problems are. This paper is my letter to you. Won't you please reply?

At first I thought I would not say anything about contributions to the ministry, but some folks said that they would like to know. I guess they are right. If you contribute

to the work, you have a right to know that it has been received and put to a good use. All gifts have been voluntary. They have not been asked for in any way.

Receipts for Dec. are; A18 \$25., A19 \$5., A20 \$2., A21 \$5., A22 \$2., A23 \$1., A24 \$5., A25 \$5. On Jan. 1, 1950, all bills were paid and a balance of \$35.04 remained on hand. The radio expense for 1949 was \$416.16 and the paper, TRUTH FOR TODAY, ran about \$125. I mislaid some of the figures and was a little careless about the latter.

If you have some relatives or friends that you would like to have on our mailing list for the paper, send in the names and addresses. Glad to have them.

We printed 575 copies of the last issue, No. 17.

TRUTH FOR TODAY is broadcasted every Tuesday night at 7 over station WRSW, FM, channel 107.3.

If you do not have a FM radio and would like to hear these programs, let me know. I have a little surprising news for you.

I wish you could read all the fine letters I have received recently. Of course once in a while somebody gets offended and asks that the paper be discontinued, but those are few.

I live on the Harrison Center Rd. 4 miles south of Atwood and 6 miles west of Warsaw. Tel. Atwood 394. Address mail to; Oscar M. Baker, R 2, Warsaw, Ind.

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