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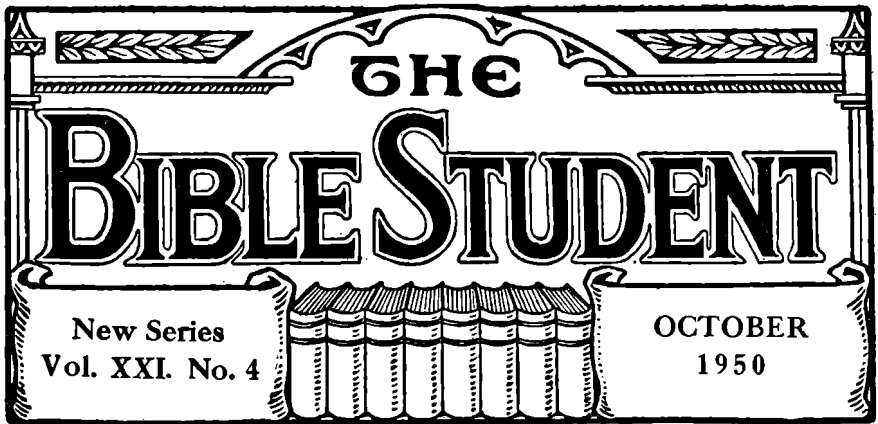
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“ The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light ”

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Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD

Christ is to the Father—His supreme delight and in Whom His soul finds unutterable joy! What satisfaction it affords the Father to have the fragrance of that incense ever before Him! And when we, all our human frailties notwithstanding, rise to the heights of spiritual apprehension of these great verities so that the soul takes hold upon God in a mutual enjoyment of the One Theme of eternal praise—we begin to learn how to fulfil the divine ideal of our priestly service.

It is well to note that the incense was to be "*salted*, pure and holy", implying preservation from possible deterioration, or lack of "freshness" when used. Such exercise of heart and soul in the holiest as we have spoken of needs this safeguard, for there is nothing so quickly mars such heart exercise as "staleness" which easily leads to indifference, unreality, formality, self-centredness in the prayer life. Hence "have salt in yourselves" (read Mark 9:49, 50).

The Psalmist voices the true spirit of the devout worshipper as he offers incense on the golden altar: "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name . . . Honour and majesty are before Him, strength and beauty are in His sanctuary . . . O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." (Ps. 96). "O God thou art my God; early will I seek thee: My soul thirsteth for thee . . . So have I looked upon thee in the sanctuary, to see thy power and thy glory. . . For thy lovingkindness is better than life . . . and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips" (Ps. 63:1-5. See also Ps. 73:28).—A. McD. R.

EXEGETICAL STUDY OF COLOSSIANS

Ch. 3, vs. 5-11

The third main section of the epistle commences here and continues to ch. 4:6. It is distinctively *practical* in character. Spurgeon is said to have remarked in his quaint manner that this chapter begins in heaven and ends in the kitchen. All through it deals with high spiritual things on the level of "the common round and daily task" of life. The apostle now seeks to apply what he has been saying of being dead *with* and yet alive *in* Christ, to various aspects of the Christian's public testimony before the world.

Verse 5

Nekrōsate oun ta melē ta epi tēs gēs (Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth;). It is suggested that in using *nekrōsate* rather than the stronger word *thanatōsate* the death to sin is viewed ideally and not yet complete. Paul could say "I die daily" (1 Cor. 15:31), that is, in daily practice he died to the things of the world, the flesh and the devil. Here, the 'therefore' points back to ch. 2:20 and 3:2, where the principle of our death to sin is stated. Allowing the principle, the practical outcome must follow: "Mortify", or "kill", implies a definite act, made possible in experience because union with Christ is at once our power and our pattern for its accomplishment (Rom. 6:11; 8:13).

"Members" cannot be taken literally (as Meyer and others), and Matt. 5:29 ff. is insufficient surely to support that sense. It appears more natural to view the phrase symbolically, and the members of the body as the instruments of the *carnal mind*; cf. "body of sin" in Rom. 6:6; Gal. 5:24; and the added phrase "upon the earth" would confirm this.

Porneian w̄katharsian, pathos, epithumian kakē, kai tēn pleonexian hētis estin eidōlolatreia; (fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, the which is idolatry;). The first four sins may be included in the one term licentiousness, which with covetousness "may be said to divide between them nearly the whole domain of human selfishness and vice" (Lftt.). Similar lists of sensual vices are mentioned in Eph. 5:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:26; 1 Thess. 4:5. They reflect the moral condition of the heathen world in which the early church was born and lived in for centuries. But the cultured paganism prevailing today, even in lands of so-called enlightenment, has little better to boast of. These terms include the evil act, the vile lust, and the terrible results on the life and character of those who practice them. But it was just for such that the Gospel of Christ was made available, and which alone can give the needed complete deliverance. The word for covetousness is not necessarily sensual evil, but as Moule points out, "it lends itself to a connexion with sensual ideas, just as our word 'greed' lends itself to a connexion with avarice." It really means depriving God of His place in our life as the Object of our worship and devotion. Concerning such Paul avers, "no covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" (Eph. 5:5).

Verse 6

di ho erchetai hē orgē tou theou epi tous huious tēs apeitheias; (for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience;). See Eph. 5:6 for almost a verbal parallel. R.V. margin indicates that some versions omit the last five words. Abbott cites strong evidence for its inclusion. Moule is of the opinion it is "possibly an early insertion from Ephesians." *Erchetai*, present tense="is coming". Even now there is a 'foretaste' in the soul and conscience, and often in the physical and mental conditions induced by sin; but finally, "in the day of wrath" (Rom. 2:5; 5:9; 9:22). It is a *righteous* wrath, vindicating the holiness of divine law which the sinner has defied.

Verse 7

En hois kai humeis periepatēsate pote, hote ezēte en toutois (in the which ye also walked aforesaid, when ye lived in these things). *En hois*=either "in these things", or "amongst whom" (R.V. marg.), i.e. amongst "the children of disobedience." If "sons of disobedience" in v. 6 is omitted then of course the former sense holds. Meyer, Ellicott and a few others take *hois* as masculine (R.V. marg.), and *toutois* as neuter, according to the partial parallel of Eph. 2:2, 3. But Alford and Lightfoot argue, that apart from the rejection of the doubtful words, it is better to take *hois* as neuter, for the verb *peripatein en* is most commonly used of things, not persons, especially in this and the companion epistle (see ch. 4:5; also Eph. 2:2, 10; 4:17; 5:2). 2 Thess. 3:11 appears to be the only exception.

Note the two verbs 'walked' and 'lived': The first is aorist, denoting single acts in practice and behaviour; the other, *ezēte*, imperfect tense, expressing the continuing state of their life and surroundings—they lived in such a life; and "from the 'life' issues the 'walk'" (Lftt), as cause and effect. For the distinction in the sense of the two words see Gal. 5:25, which refers to the true Christian life.

Verse 8

Nuni de apothesthe kai humeis ta panta (But now ye also put off all these;). *Nuni de* is stronger and more demonstrative than *nun*="as things are now"; an "oral note of contrast" to what once had been their state. *Apothesthe*, aorist imperative middle, implying there must be no hesitancy in decision, they *must act now*,

for they were already ideally and potentially rid of sin in Christ: It is the same word as in Rom. 13:12; cf. Eph. 4:22, 25; Heb. 12:1; James 1:21; 1 Pet. 2:1. *Ta panta*=all things, not merely the vices named in v. 5, but everything that belongs to the old life and is contrary to God.

Orgēn, thumon, kakian, blasphemian, aischrologian ek tou stomatos humōn (anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth). These accusatives are explanatory of *panta*, above. In the previous list of vices the common element was sensuality; in this it is unholy speech arising from an evil disposition. Anger is the chronic settled feeling of hatred; wrath, the sudden outburst of passion; malice, or 'malignity', a evil habit of mind, "the vicious nature which is bent on doing harm to others" (Lft). Blasphemy (better, "railing") can be either against God or man or both (Eph. 4:31). "Shameful speaking" may be unclean talk (Eph. 5:4), or abusive language. "Out of your mouth", marks, as it were their *final* stage (Eph. 4:29), but their "origin" or "source" is in the heart (Gen. 6:5), alienated from God. Hence it is in the heart, where the real work has to begin of cleansing by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 9

me pseudesthe eis allēlous apekdusamēnoi ton palaion anthrōpon sun tais praxēs autou; (lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds). *Pseudesthe*, present tense, denotes a continuous rule for daily life. The exhortation occurs only once again in the N.T. in Eph. 4:25, where the verb is in the aorist, implying immediate action to cut out the habit, and then the positive side is added, "speak truth one with his neighbour", and the reason follows. The ideas of "putting off" and "putting on" are also found in 1 Thess. 5:8; Rom. 13:12; Eph. 6:11, 14. The participle *apekdusamēnoi* may be read in two ways: (a) Either as providing the *motive* for not lying—"seeing that ye have put off"; or (b) as forming part of the whole exhortation, i.e. "put off the old man and lie no more". Lightfoot and Olshausen favour the latter, but others (Radford, L. Williams, Moule) are opposed, preferring the former, as implied in both A.V., and R.V. "Did put off" is more exact than "have put off". See further note on next verse. "The old man" is the old unregenerate state, that which morally was slave to sin, but it is not identical with "the flesh" which is an abiding element (Gal. 5:

16, 17)—“*though it need never be the ruling element*” (Moule), in any true believer. In Rom. 6:6 it is regarded as also ideally dead; crucified with Christ, and that provides the incentive to “keep it in that place”. Note, “*with his deeds*” refers to the practices and evil habits of the old self-life, which by the Spirit we are to “make to die” (cf. Rom. 8:13).

Verse 10

kai endusamenoī ton neon ton anakainoumenon eis epignōsin kat' eikōna tou ktisantos auton, (and have put on the new man which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him). In continuation of the note above it is well to observe that the two participles *apekδusamenoī* (“put off”) and *endusamenoī* (“put on”) are in the aorist because ideally they are accomplished facts, and in experience the related sins of omission and commission are to be “put away” in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The “new man” is the regenerate man formed after Christ, the new life that results from union with Christ—we are “in Christ”; possessed not only of a new life but of new propensities and a disposition capable of moral effort and accomplishment in the power of that life. The word “new” in Eph. 4:24 (“the new man”) is different in the Greek to the word here = *neos*. The former (*kainos*) means new in itself, different, fresh. Here, *neon* = new in time, young, recent. “With the lapse of time the new man ceases to be *neos*, a new experience, but it is always *kainos*, a new character” (Radford). Yet we may also say that both ideas are present in the verse, since the *second* sense is resident in the derived verb *anakainoō* used here. The tense of the verb is present = “*is being renewed*” continually, by growth and development in spiritual insight and experience, i.e. “unto knowledge” (*epignosis*).

Epignosis is “full knowledge” in contrast to the so-called *gnosis* of the false teachers. The object of the renewal is the knowledge of God, and this includes knowledge of His will and His ways in reference to His purpose for our Christian life in its every aspect.—A.McD.R.

BELIEVE YOUR BIBLE: IT IS TRUE

For many years the Modernists have not been prepared to accept the Mosaic authorship of chapters 17 to 26 of the Book of Leviticus. According to the findings of higher criticism this portion of the Old Testament (given the title of "Law of Holiness" by A. Klostermann in 1877) was compiled during the sixth century B.C. Many critics consider that the "Holiness Code" or "Law of Holiness" was formulated under Ezekiel's supervision just before the return of the Jews to Jerusalem in 536 B.C. This view has recently been challenged by Père de Vaux (of the Ecole Biblique et Archeologique Francaise of Jerusalem), who assisted Mr. G. Lankester Harding in the excavation of the Ain Feshkha Cava in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947. Fragments of the "Law of Holiness," written in archaic Hebrew script, were found in this cave, and have been examined by Père de Vaux. He maintains that Chapters 17 to 26 of Leviticus existed independently before Ezekiel and before the Exile. The present trend of archæological research must give many a Modernist just cause to feel crestfallen. Post-war archæology has done much to confirm the traditional rather than the modernistic view of the Bible.

* * * * *

The Department of Archæology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem has recently discovered the earliest known record of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The record was written by an unknown follower of His in A.D. 50—less than twenty years after the death of Christ. The discovery was made by Dr. Sukenik, a Jewish scholar of the Hebrew University at Jerusalem.



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