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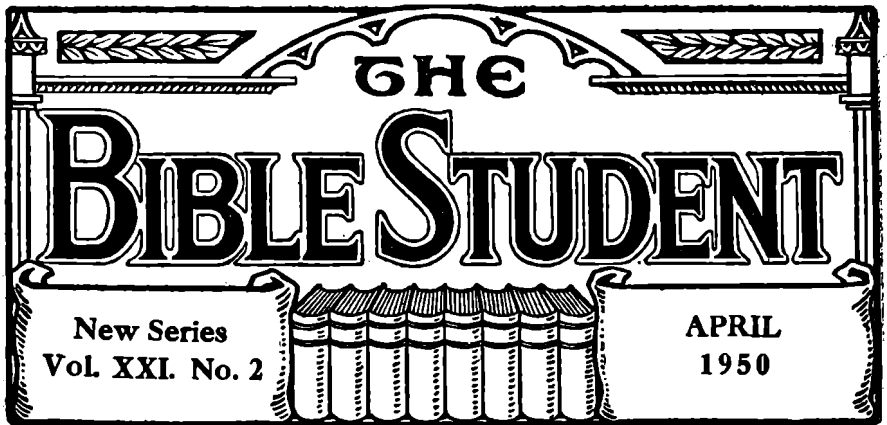
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"The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light"

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Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD

Furthermore, be alert for any possible *theological bias* in a translation. As we have pointed out, there are instances where liberal writers have wrongfully permitted liberal ideas to affect their translations. Moffatt and Goodspeed are the outstanding examples. Another we might mention in this connection is the translation of Knoch, *The Concordant Version*, in which basic laws of translation have been laid aside, and which sets forth Knoch's own heretical ideas.

One other suggestion may be made: modern translations should be chosen with a view as to whether they are to be used for general reading or for meticulous study. For all around use, the writer considers Montgomery's and Williams' translations as two of the best.*

“ACCESS”

A Word Study

BY W. WILCOX

We are constantly reminded of the enrichments resulting to the believer by his being saved of God. In the vocabulary of the New Testament, words with common meanings transfigured by new spiritual content are employed to bring home to us the fulness of that which God has done for us in Christ. Such words may not occur often, but they come into sentences pregnant with meaning and lighting up with new ideas the context in which they are found. Such words provide a fascinating study to the Bible Student.

We have such a word in that rendered “access”, found in the New Testament in the noun form three times, Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; 3:12. Of this word Wuest, in one of his inimitable word pictures, says that in the papyri the word has been found used in a technical sense of a landing stage. It is thought that it was used as a nautical term of the approach of a ship to a haven or harbour where it could land. Thus the total idea would be “access into and rest in a haven or harbour.”

In Rom. 5:2, the R.V. shows the force of the perfect tense

* Apropos to the above article it will be of practical interest to read our reference to the “Students’ Guide to the Versions of the New Testament” in NOTES OF NEW BOOKS on page 4 of cover in this issue.—Ed. “B.S.”

—“we have had our access,” showing the act in the past but the result remaining. This speaks then of our having found a permanent haven of the soul. The verbal form is used in 1 Peter 3:18, where it is said of our Lord that “He died the just for the unjust that He might *bring us to God*”. The word here has the force of the French term, *entree*. Jesus gives us an *entree* into the presence of God, the right to enter in and find ourselves at home there.

In each of the three passages where the noun is formed we find it connected in different ways.

Let us examine them.

1. *The Ground of our Approach*, Rom. 5:2, is by and in grace for “we have had our access by faith *into the grace* wherein we stand.” It is like a haven into which we come and find rest. The Apostle has proved that all men are without excuse before God, that while law could show us how far we were wrong, it could not enable us to go right, that the only ground on which relations could be established and maintained between God and the sinner, was the free unmerited favour of God. And now he has rest in the thought that all other meritorious cause is removed as a means whereby entry into the realm of the justified is to be secured; grace only stands as the means.

Into that grace we have had our access—*by faith*. Faith takes what grace has given, faith applies what grace has provided, faith enables us to step into the place that grace has made ready.

In that grace we stand. Jew and Gentile find themselves on equal footing. So that our acceptance before God, now and always, is conditioned only by His grace and by our act of faith in stepping into it. “We stand”, and “continue to stand”—there will not be now, nor in the coming years, any *other* ground of our acceptance with God.

2. *The Welcome in our Approach is to the Father*, Eph. 2:18. We come unto the Father who welcomes us as we come through the Son. The stranger may be kept outside, but he who comes introduced by the Son is assured of a welcome. This is made realizable to our consciousness in the one Spirit. There is rest in this thought that our access is not only to the Father’s home but to the Father Himself, not merely to God of Whom He has spoken so frequently earlier in the chapter, but to God as Father. What a wealth of blessedness there is in such a thought—children coming home! But once we were not the children of

God and could not speak of Him as Father, or of His heaven as our home. But now in Christ Jesus we enter, with no bar of hindrance preventing our approach, with no law saying, "Thou shalt not enter", with no uncircumcision declaring us as outside the covenant, and with no wicked past proclaiming our unfitness. All such hindrances are swept aside, and a full entry, a free welcome, and a loving Father are ours, and no one can say us nay.

It is well to notice the Apostle's assurance in the matter, "we both *have*." Here is not a matter of *hoping* it is rather a matter of present possession, of present experience, of present enjoyment. The divine word loves to deal in certainties, uncertainties belong to the unspiritual life. "We have", and its guarantee is found in the Persons Who are its Guarantors, for the Apostle ever reminds us that Father, Son and Holy Spirit stand related to our salvation and to that which follows from that salvation. These repeated references in these early chapters of Ephesians to three Persons of the blessed Trinity are full of interest. Another occurs in vv. 21, 22, "a holy temple in the Lord . . . builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."

3. *The Intimacy of our Approach*, Eph. 3:12. "Boldness," "freedom of speech," *i.e.* the boldness of intimate intercourse compare the use of the word in Heb. 4:16, where "the saint" comes with free utterance to the throne of Grace, "to *speak* a child's every thought, desire and fear" (Moule). There is no restraint imposed upon the saint as he enters the Father's presence. There is rest in this thought also that, with complete freedom and full confidence, he can come and hold holy intercourse with his God. As we read through the writings of these early apostles we see how real was that intimate intercourse with God. It was not merely the utterance of a few hastily worded prayers nor even of spasmodic bursting forth into praise, but it was the life of abiding communion which found outward expression in every utterance and in every act. It is this that we covet for the children of God today. May we enter in and find our rest in His presence.

Three results follow on our access:—

(a) *Fulness of Joy in Hope*. Rom. 5:3. Our standing in Grace opens to us a wide vista, "hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:2). The past has been settled, we are justified; the present is assured, we have access into the grace wherein we

stand; and now the future is provided for, we have hope of the glory of God.

Hope changes the whole aspect of life. It fills the life with a new content, opens up a new joy, and gives a glory to life such as can be possessed in no other way.

This hope does this in a marked way, for it is the hope of the Glory of God, the hope of seeing and sharing in the Glory of God. What higher honour could be given to the believer?

Are we here to understand the phrase as (1) the glory God bestows on us, or (2) the sharing in the Glory which belongs to God? Probably the latter more nearly approaches the thought of the Apostle, but both meet in one reality, for when that hope is realized we shall be with our Lord, and behold His glory, and being like Him, shall also be sharers in that glory.

To that hope of glory, the present access to the Father gives a foretaste; for, introduced to His Presence by the Son of His love, by the eye of faith, we behold His glory, and, in measure, become reflectors of that glory, as in moral and spiritual stature we manifest our union with Him.

(b) *Fellowship of Saints.* Eph. 2:19. The liberty to come unto the Father, also gives us a liberty to have fellowship with all the saints, who are also children of the Father. To the saints belongs a new relationship. They are fellow-citizens of the heavenly commonwealth. There is an inter-relation which suffers no impeding barriers to their full fellowship with each other, and, as "citizens"—they share common privileges and common responsibilities, and acknowledge common ideals, all of which bind them together as members of the heavenly kingdom. This "togetherness" is also figured as a "home"; they are members of the "household of God," not as servants, but as children of the family. Our access to the Father gives us access to the family.

(c) *Freedom from fainting under Tribulation.* Eph. 3:13. Their access unto the Father, gave them a spiritual strength that enabled them to rise superior over tribulations whether their own (as in Rom. 5:3), or in those of another who suffered because of his labour on their behalf (Eph. 3:13). In either case they would find an occasion wherein to glory. In their access they enjoyed three freedoms; freedom of utterance in the Presence; freedom of entrance to and rest in the Presence; freedom from fear (or confidence) in the Presence. These have a response in their souls so that when they meet the hard things of life, or

when they see them met by another in the course of his activity on their behalf, they do not faint, but, encouraging their souls in the Lord, go on still in His Name to do exploits for Him.

Ever in this thought of our access to God, we are reminded that "the rendering 'access' is inadequate, as it leaves out of sight the fact that we do not come in our own strength, but we need an Introducer—Christ" (Sandy and Headlam). So even in the joy of our access, and in the prospect opened in hope to which this access has given us a right, and in the enlarged fellowship of which we have been made fellow-members we still have our eyes turned to the Christ Who leads us into these blessings, Who introduces us to the Father, and in Whom our salvation is complete.

Thus while we enjoy the fruits of our wondrous "introduction", we ever are reminded of our "Introducer", and with adoring love, and deep devotion turn to Him with praise and thanksgiving, giving thanks unto Him Who, having introduced us to the Father's presence, has made us abide there in the delights of spiritual intimacy and in the joys that belong to the eternal home of the soul.

DANIEL'S FIRST VERSE

BY F. F. BRUCE, M.A.

[No serious student of the Old Testament can afford to neglect any fresh light thrown on the problems of the Book of Daniel. If the old "battle of the critics" over this book has ceased to "rage" as it did, at least the ground has yet to be cleared of the remaining problems in the growing light of a better day for all concerned. In *The Evangelical Quarterly* (October 1949) Mr. Bruce states: "The Book of Daniel is much to the fore in Old Testament studies at the moment, if one may judge by recent and forthcoming work on it." He adds: "The remarkable news that the recently discovered MSS in Palestine include fragments from two scrolls of Daniel (exhibiting portions of ch. i: 10-18; ii: 2-6; 3: 23-30) in Hebrew and Aramaic, possibly belonging to the late second or early first century B.C., gives hope of fresh light on the book from an unexpected source." Then he closes with this statement: "It must be gratifying to all students of the O.T., of whatever school, to see that the defence of the conservative view of Daniel shows no signs now of going by default (although only a few years ago this might have been feared)." Splendid! Now you will read this article (kindly supplied by Mr. Bruce) with all the keener interest, even if you have not before been actually aware of the problem it helps to light up from recent archaeological discoveries.—Editor.]

The book of Daniel opens with the words (R.V.): "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebu-