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*"The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light"*

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took the blood of calves and goats and sprinkled both the Book itself and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you" ("commanded to you-ward," R.V., verses 18 to 20).

The death of these victims, necessary to the old covenant, prefigured the death of Christ as the basis of the new covenant, by which "they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." "They which have been called" are the spiritual seed of Abraham, "even us whom He hath also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:24). "The promise of the inheritance" stands not for the promise itself, which was made long before, but for the subject of the promise, the inheritance. Christ is both the sacrificial Victim and the Mediator. He is the latter in virtue of His sacrifice. Its unique character constituted Him the only possible Mediator through whom the covenant could be promulgated, and such an inheritance could be promised.

*(To be continued)*

## THE HEBREW PSALTER

BY E. W. ROGERS

The N.T. usage of the Psalms (*contd.*)

### Psalm 2

We select this Psalm because as Psalm 1 sets out the two classes of persons in the world, so Psalm 2 visualises the age-long conflict that exists between them. That conflict was seen in full force at Calvary. It will again be seen in a little lesser force at Armageddon. And from time to time it breaks out in lesser ways and becomes evident as history attests.

Psalm 2 may be read in three ways: As demonstrated (*a*) at the cross (cf. vv. 1 and 2 and Acts 4:25, 27; (*b*) at Armageddon; and (*c*) at any time when the wicked seem to be in persecuting power.

The main divisions of the Psalm are indicated in the R.V. (*a*) Vs. 1-3, the revolt of man. (*b*) Vs. 4-6, the intervention of God. (*c*) Vs. 7-9, the announcement of Messiah. (*d*) Vs. 10-12, advice to world rulers.

(a) *The revolt of man* (vs. 1-3). The student should have the R.V. beside him when studying the Scriptures, for important alterations are shewn, which help to a more correct understanding of the text. For example, the word "people" here is pluralised in the R.V. When in the singular "people" usually refers to Israel (sometimes only the Jews) but in the plural it refers to the Gentile nations. The death of the Lord Jesus was not only a Jewish crime, it was also a crime enacted by the Gentile world. Pilate could not wash his hands of responsibility, no matter how much water he may use. "The nations stormed"; "the peoples" schemed; the "kings of the earth" amassed their forces. Their object of attack was "Jehovah and His anointed"; their purpose was to "cast off" restraint. Accordingly the people cried, "Away with Him, we will not have this man to reign over us". Nor could Pilate "let this Man go"; that would have appeared to be treason. Pilate stands for all time guilty of handing over to be crucified unjustly the faultless Christ of God.

Later on, the great Adversary will again "stand up against the Prince of Princes" (Dan. 8:25). War will again be made "against the Lamb" (Rev. 17:14; 19:19) Who, under another figure, is seen riding a white horse. The nations will resist being subjugated to Him. Although they blindly and stupidly will agree to give their power to the Beast (Rev. 17:13) yet they will refuse to cede their power to the Prince of Princes.

This section, therefore, should be read in the light both of history and prophecy. Fallen man is ever opposed to God.

(b) *The intervention of God* (vs. 4-6). The silence of heaven as the events of Calvary were being enacted is a mystery, the full understanding of which we shall never know. The silence of God in this present age is also a divine mystery. But no such silence will characterize the "last days" of the world's history, when God begins to intervene visibly again in this scene. Let the student read Psalm 29 and observe the effectiveness of the "Voice of the Lord"—the "Word of God"—and compare that with v. 5 of Ps. 2. Man cannot upset God's purpose: He has His King; He has His centre of rule ("my holy hill of Zion"). In this is involved all the prophecies concerning the future Millennial kingdom, when "a king shall reign in righteousness" (Is. 32:1) and when Jerusalem shall be a joy of the whole earth; to it the nations shall go up; and in it shall be the place where God's name will

dwell and His Anointed rule. This apparently long period of heaven's silence, of an absent King, and of the non-existence of an earthly kingdom owned of God, will be broken. It will be broken by a universal storm when God's wrath from heaven will be poured out upon the nations gathered in "the valley of Jehoshaphat". Then He will utter His voice and the earth will melt; His King shall come and assert His rights and take His throne. Then the earthly fruits of Calvary will be gathered in. The student should study the later chapters of Zechariah for they relate to this.

(c) *The announcement of Messiah* (vs. 7-9). In this section the Lord Jesus Christ, God's anointed, recounts what Jehovah has said to Him. "Thou *art* (not 'hast become') My Son: This day have I begotten thee". Let the student examine the usage of this phrase in the N.T. He will find it in Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5, and 5:5. In the Acts passage the Incarnation is referred to. In Heb. 5 it is the Ascension and resultant session at God's right hand which is in view. In Heb. 1:5 His future Kingdom is referred to. Not that we must suppose that the Son was "begotten" in the sense of having had a "beginning of days". He ever was the Son of God: "Thou *art* My Son". He was always "in the bosom of the Father", which implies the Eternal Fatherhood of God and the Eternal Sonship of the Son. But "begotten" denotes His being installed into the position or "office".

In the Prayer of the Lord Jesus uttered in the Upper Room He specifically says "I pray not for the world" (John 17:9). Events having developed as they had, and the King *rejected*, the time was not ripe for Him to ask for the nations as His inheritance. But when the "day of grace" has run its course, the "acceptable year of the Lord" has been finished, and the "day of vengeance of our God" has arrived, He will then "ask of" God and He "will give the nations for His inheritance". Then His Kingdom will not be limited by the geographical sphere defined to Abraham (see Gen. 15:18-21) but it will stretch from "shore to shore" and *embrace all the earth*. Then His rule will be autocratic; He will resist all opposition, visiting it with summary punishment. How expressive is verse 9! The weakness inherent in democratic rule as understood today will not then exist. It was ever God's intention that Christ should rule autocratically and all should be subject to Him; yet His "autocracy" is exercised in

perfect justice and holiness and equity *for all*. Such will be His rule in Millennial days. But it will need to be preceded by the smashing to pieces of the ten brittle toes of the great Image, which implies the ending of the whole system of Gentile (that is, of all types of human) rule.

This leads us to remark that the R.V. makes it plain that the term "heathen" does not mean those countries or peoples which are not predominantly Christian, but means all nations except the Jews, to whom was committed the knowledge of the true God. They are always distinguished in scripture. Not that they are better than the rest, they are indeed rather worse because their privileges have been greater. But all the other nations are dealt with in relation to them. Israel was the centre, but was displaced as such, and later will be restored to its central position, the remaining nations becoming subservient to them (Rev. 21:1, 2).

(d) *Advice to world rulers.* Oh that they had hearkened to the advice here given! How gracious it is! How wise! Alternatives are placed before them. Those who trust in Him are blessed: But for the rest, "wrath" is certain and imminent. "The Son" will be the great Administrator of God's judgment and everything will depend upon the relationship of the individual to Him. To "kiss the Son" is to recognize His royal rights (see 1 Sam. 10:1). To be hostile to Him is to court destruction. Here is the heart of all God's dealings with man. He deals with men and nations through His Son: Their attitude towards Christ reveals their attitude towards God. Though addressed to "kings" and "judges" it applies to all, from the highest to the lowest.

#### Psalm 8

This is an interesting Psalm in many respects. Most likely it is one of David's earliest, representing the thoughts which filled his mind when caring for his father's sheep long before he became the anointed king of God's choice. It does not mention the sun, but speaks of God's care for man as shown by the moon and stars, which filled his vision as he himself watched over and preserved his flocks from the wild beasts in the darkness of night, like the shepherds long centuries after when Christ was born in Bethlehem's manger.

As he thus ponders the greatness and kindness of God's providence as revealed in the heavenly bodies, he is led to exclaim "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" (vs. 3 ff.).

This Psalm can only be understood in the light of the resurrection of Christ. As stated in the title, it is "set to Gittith", and Gittith means the winepress. Only by reason of *the cross* where the "True Vine" was crushed can the crown which the first Adam lost be won back for man.

Verses 1 and 2 form the first section, and the remainder the second.

The great Jehovah God who has stamped His glory upon the heavens, as seen by the sun, moon and stars, is not too great to take note of the "babes and sucklings". They may be the butt of the attacks of the "enemy and the avenger" but they are at the same time the objects of Divine care. This they know, and from their mouth proceed praises appropriate to such a Keeper (see Matt. 21:16). These words are supra-dispensational; applicable at all times; but specially so when the great "Enemy", the Man of Sin, will be in power in a coming day.

Part 2 gives us the thoughts of David as he contemplates the heavens by night. Limitless as they appear, awe-inspiring as they are, they demonstrate the power, wisdom, provision and care of God. His *power* is shown, for they are the work of "His fingers". Although it required the "*arm* of Jehovah" to effect redemption from sin, it took but His *fingers* to make the universe. But what power was in those fingers! His *wisdom* is shown in the fact that the universe is "ordained" as it is. The movement and orbits of the heavenly bodies and their regularity of procession and phases tell of a wisdom far exceeding that of the greatest of men, causing scientists to stand in amazement as they make discovery after discovery even today, revealing a superintending and designing Mind far excelling any other. His *provision* for the needs of the chiefest of His earthly creation, namely man, is proven by God's mindfulness of man: The fruit of the trees, the meat of the herds, the fish of the sea, the corn of the field, all show how creation was designed to furnish the table of man. All this proves the *care* that God had for man. To "visit" a person in need proves that the visitor cares for the one visited. It cannot be gainsaid that God cares for man; all creation utters this truth; the lights of the heavens and the fruits of the earth; all were put there by God for the benefit of man. But what is man (*enosh*—weak, frail, mortal man), and what is the son of Adam that God should so act on his behalf?

From verses 5 to 8 the Psalmist recounts man's original Edenic

and sinless state. All on earth, the birds of the air, the creatures of the sea, the trees and fruits of the fields, were put under the authority of the first Adam. He stood as vice-regent in God's creation. He alone was subordinate to God. That is what it *was*. In David's day it was not so. In his day, as in the day when the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews lived, things were different, man had lost his crown; he had lost his authority. His fall had entailed the fall of the creation and the eagle became a menace, the wild beasts took their prey, and the great fish swallowed Jonah! Sin had come in. Man had fallen, and in fallen man there was no hope.

The student should read Psalm 8 in the light of Hebrews 2. The writer there faces the problem of fallen man and fallen creation. While he owns the universal nature of his original rule (for he observes that the "all things" admits of no exception)—yet he draws comfort from the fact that a second Man, (called elsewhere the "last Adam") has restored that which the first man had lost. Jesus, Man here, had authority over all creation. The fish brought up the *stater* at His bidding. He was "with the wild beasts in the wilderness" but they were as tame animals, not one lifted its fangs against Him. He wore the crown which Adam had lost. But He came into that position *in order to die*, in order to put away the sin introduced into the world by the first Adam, and to undo the damage that was done thereby. He died "to put away sin", and He rose from the dead because it had been put away. Therefore, while "we do not yet see all things put under" man, "we *do see Jesus*, who for a little time and to a little degree was made lower than angels, on account of the sufferings of death (i.e. He became man in order to die) crowned as a Victor with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He should taste death for *everything*". Note that word "everything". The object here in view is *far wider* than merely man. It is man and the creation over which he was once head. The creation itself will be delivered from the bondage of corruption and brought into the liberty that attaches to the glory of the children of God (read Rom. 8:20-21).

Heb. 2:9 is so worded that it would appear to be capable of being read both ways: First He became Man, crowned here on earth as Lord in all God's creation; in order that He might taste death for everything and thus restore the creation. Or, secondly,



He became man, in order that He might taste death for everything, and having died was raised and then crowned as a victor, having achieved His object and laid the foundation for creation's *ultimate* restoration. The student will decide for himself which of the two senses to accept; or he may elect to hold both. For both are true.

As these outlines are intended merely to act as guides, little more need be said as to Psalm 8. But the student should exercise great care in reading Hebrews 2 to identify the pronouns properly. Sometimes "him" refers to the first Adam; sometimes "him" refers to the Lord Jesus. From v. 5 to the end of v. 8 the "him" refers to the first Adam; but in v. 9 the "him" (see R.V.) refers to the second, i.e., Christ.

The damage wrought by sin in man can be undone by faith in the Saviour of sinners, but it yet does not affect his body. It will do that only when he is raised from among the dead in a coming day; when Christ comes back again a second time. Creation itself awaits the *material* benefits of the work of the cross; but the sinner may even *now* receive its *spiritual* blessings in salvation from sin.

## HOW TO STUDY AND UNDER- STAND THE BIBLE

A Study of Proverbs 2: 1-5

BY I. M. HALDEMAN, D.D.

### 1. *The Bible must be accepted as the Word of God*

"My son, if thou wilt receive *My* words" (v. 1). Do not try to prove it first and then accept it. Accept it first and allow it to prove itself.

There is no better way to test the truth or falsity of a thing than to give yourself up to it. This was the attitude of the Thessalonian Christians; as it is written: "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13).