

# Where Does the Gospel of God Begin?

*PART IV.*

---

"I WILL COME AGAIN, AND RECEIVE YOU UNTO  
MYSELF."

"WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN YE LOVE."

"BE PATIENT THEREFORE, BRETHREN."

"WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS."

---

LONDON: JAMES CARTER,  
ALDINE CHAMBERS, 13, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

# WHERE DOES THE GOSPEL OF GOD BEGIN ?

## PART IV.

---

**H**AVING, in three previous articles under this title, endeavoured to show the point of contact with man upon earth, even with David son of Jesse,—a man after God's heart according to God's own declaration by the Holy Spirit (Acts xiii. 22), "I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who shall do all My will,"—let us go on in the succeeding words of the same scripture to show how, and after what fashion, "Of this man's seed, according to promise, has God brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus."

We, who *were* sinners of the Gentiles, have got, in the Gospel of God, by Israel's default, what they despised (Acts xxviii. 28). Just as Esau despised his birthright, and a worm Jacob (Is. xli. 14) supplanted him in what Esau set light value on, so we, worms (Job xxv. 6), have "obtained mercy" through Him who in astounding grace took that place of worm (Ps. xxii. 6). It is true "worm Jacob" will never be as Esau; for the latter found no place for repentance, although he sought it earnestly with tears (Heb. xii. 17); but, in the future, Jacob shall take root (Is. xxvii. 6), and his iniquity shall be purged (verse 9), for Jehovah hath redeemed His servant Jacob (Is. xlix. 20), "and all flesh shall know that I, Jehovah, am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob" (verse 26).

Quite true also it is, that no one could have supposed that God had, in His counsels, a heavenly people in

view ; for He had not intended to disclose them to any one till His polished Shaft had come forth from His hidden quiver. That sharp sword so skilfully concealed under the shadow of Jehovah's hand (Is. xlix. 2), had not yet spoken openly to the world (John xviii. 20). And when He did speak, it seemed as if He had laboured in vain, and spent His strength for nought and in vain ; but blessed, dependent, obedient Man as He was, He, as ever, committed Himself into the hands of Him who judges righteously (1 Peter ii. 23), saying, " My judgment is with Jehovah, and My work with My God " (Is. xlix. 4).

And what was Jehovah's reply ? It was to this effect. " I formed Thee from the womb to be My Servant to bring Jacob again to Me." Ah, replies our adorable Lord and Master, " Though Israel [then] be not gathered, yet shall I be glorified in the eyes of Jehovah, and My God shall be My

strength." To which Jehovah gives the gracious answer, "It is a small thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I have given Thee for a Light of the nations that Thou mayest be My Salvation to the end of the earth. Thus saith Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, his [Israel's] Holy One: To him whom man despiseth: To him whom the nation abhorreth: To the servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall worship; because of Jehovah who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who hath chosen thee [Israel]. Thus saith Jehovah, In a time of acceptance have I answered thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee" (Is. xlix. 5-8).

Now, see all these precious title-deeds of Israel pass over to the Gentiles—Greeks, Corinthians—blessed be God! not lost for ever to Israel, as

Esau lost his ; but lost for a time—to provoke to jealousy. O Israel, how we long after you ! How earnestly do we entreat for you ! We Gentiles who have entered in and spoiled you ! Nebuchadnezzar took your land. Pontius Pilate slew your King, and now Corinthians are having your glad tidings preached to them ! “For He says, I have listened to thee in an accepted time, and I have helped thee in a day of salvation :” “Behold, now [is] the well-accepted time ; behold, now [the] day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2). It is no mere coincidence. Let us give you another verse of that foundation chapter of Isaiah, xlix. verse 9 : “Saying to the prisoners, Go forth ; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves.” Do you not compare it with what we told you last week about the prisoners being loosed, and even the jailor himself asking for light ? It was God who dictated both scriptures. It was God making known

at Philippi what the son of Amoz was commissioned to declare while Sennacherib was seated before the holy city, over seven hundred years before.

And thus, God does not qualify or abate any item of those deep eternal counsels made in respect to a heavenly race before the world's foundation, and yet, so wonderful is His wisdom, that He has, in the most pressing and urgent manner, offered it to those beloved for the father's sakes, and by them it has been thoroughly and definitively declined. Paul, indeed, saw what his brethren according to the flesh were losing and casting off from them, and it was for their sakes that he put himself in that strange path which began in Acts xx., but, as he says to Timothy, when his loving service to them as well as to us was drawing to its close, "I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they *also* may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with *eternal glory*" (2 Tim. ii. 10).

God then, had accomplished all He graciously purposed in respect to Israel, and Israel had as pertinaciously resisted it.

We cannot help asking ourselves the question, Why was there this determined resistance on the part of Israel? and how was it that man being of the same rebellious character wherever he is found on the face of the earth, Gentiles should receive, what a favoured and enlightened and intelligent nation like the Jews would have nothing to do with? The answer is unquestionably to be found in the fact we are endeavouring to place on the surface in these papers, namely, that God had got something to *give*. Man, to whom this *gift* is offered, shrinks back with the thought, Surely this is not after the manner of men! Surely I have got to be something—to do something—to bring something! Now the Jew, owing to the fact of his having a divine religion, was constantly in the habit of looking

at that religion as something which he was bringing to God. It was all a mistake. Not a mistake that the law made requirement, but a mistake in supposing that what the offerer brought, could, in any sense meet that requirement. Here was the grand error. Man brought what he deemed good enough for God, utterly ignorant of his condition. This is what constitutes the difference between the prayer of the Pharisee, and the prayer of the publican. The Pharisee was thankful that he was not as bad as others he knew, but really, only making a distinction between vile, and less vile. The publican took the ground of vile at once. "I am a sinner and need mercy." Justified, *rather* than the other, if comparison be made; but no difference in reality, for a holy God can look upon *nothing vile*—little, or much—both are shut out of His presence. Now, the Gentile was not under the disadvantage of having a supposed righteousness to

erect as a barrier to salvation. His idea of righteousness was a very restricted one, and, according to the dictum of one of his wise men (Patagoras), "Man is the measure of all things." Anything divine in the word "righteousness" did not enter into his thoughts. The Gentile, therefore, was in a better position to *take* what God had to offer, seeing that he had no conception of anything of a like character to *offer* to God. His idea of a deity never went beyond averting his anger on the one hand, or asking his protection on the other. If we keep this thought before our minds, we see plainly, that what hindered the Jew,—what hinders anybody,—was the *supposed* possession of a righteousness to *offer* to God; whereas that possession, *had it been real*, would not have brought him within the scope of God's gospel, in which God is a *Giver*, and only a *Giver*, and that according to God's *Righteousness* set forth

by Himself, in Christ. Not that this righteousness was handed over to man wherewith to justify himself in God's sight,—for this subtle idea of modern times, does but wrap the corpse of the old Adam in a supposed divine mantle to make it a presentable thing—a thought more hateful even than that of Israel's supposed righteousness by the law. The imputed righteousness of Christ, as people talk, is but the subtlety of Satan to falsify the Gospel of God, using Christ as a cloke to the natural man.

No, the Gospel of God is *wholly* of God. God is just, and God is the justifier. Man is nowhere, if not a believer on Jesus; and if a believer on Jesus, he is justified by what God has seen in Jesus, and not by what God has seen in the believer on Jesus. Jesus, therefore, is the pivot, and the only pivot, on which the Gospel of God plays. The *effect* of this is God's glory, Christ's glory, man's glory; because the whole

*cause* is God, and of God by Christ. Man has no part whatever in the *cause*. He has part in the *effect*, by the obedience of faith that lays hold (by the grace of God) of the *cause*.

The reader will remember that, at the end of Part ii., we pointed out seven characteristics of the Gospel of God. (1) Remission of sins. (2) Justification. (3) God's grace. (4) God's word. (5) Eternal life. (6) Salvation. (7) Joy in the Holy Ghost.

Our remarks above on justification, if laid hold of, furnish the key to all the other items in this wonderful Gospel of God. Let God be seen in all points as the cause—the only cause—made good in, through, and by Christ,—and all the other items are found to be on the same principle. Man has no part in the *cause*. He is partaker of the *effect*. Remission? God has settled the question of sin with Christ. Justification? God can be just to Himself and yet justify His creature through Christ.

Grace? God can extend His favour to any extent, in Christ. The word?—it is God's word, and Christ is the living expression of it. Eternal life? God *promised it*, and Christ *is it*. Salvation (spirit, soul and body, 1 Thess. v. 23)? God has set us to obtain it through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us that we might live together with Him (1 Thess. v. 9). Joy in the Holy Ghost? It is God's spirit testifying to Christ in our hearts, and giving *us* to experience God's delight in His beloved; so, causing the delight to thrill our hearts in its passage through us, back to God again.

Once the nature of God's gospel is perceived,—and mark well, it is not perceived by nature—only those called by God—*saints by calling*—can perceive it—once, we repeat, the nature of God's gospel is perceived, none other will be received—none tolerated for an instant by the side of it. As well suppose that dull and lustreless lead would be preferred to shining gold, as that

all the magnificence and splendour of God's provision in grace for man, in Christ, could be set aside for the wretched deformity of man's best efforts,—only tolerated and hugged up so long and so pertinaciously because God's gold and fine linen, have never been seen and known. God never created man to wear filthy garments or to be filthy in his person. “Now, are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John xv. 3). “Twenty-four elders, sitting, clothed with white garments and on their heads golden crowns” (Rev. iv. 4). Thus, does God cleanse and clothe His called ones. They are suitable to Himself, they are suitable to His Christ, they are led by the Spirit of God, they have received the spirit of adoption, they know the mind of the Spirit, they are filled with one Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is seen in them—love, joy, peace. And the fruit of the light too, in goodness, and right-

eousness, and truth. Their beauty, as seen up above, differs nothing in its reality from what they are possessed of here below. Here, they are His witnesses, and have a body of humiliation suited to that precious privilege; there, they have a body like unto His body of glory, suitable for the glories of His presence; but the *quality* of their personality, or the *quality* of their attire, has been settled at the cross and at Pentecost. The Father has sent the Son, the Son has revealed the Father; then, the Father sends the Spirit to reveal the Son in them,—taking up His abode in them for ever as the specimens of God's workmanship; and thus, new creation has done its work, and God looks upon it with,—not complacency as on the first creation but,—love, and affection, and delight. "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" is twice repeated in each gospel of His presentation as Man. Now, heaven is open, and the

angels of God are seen ascending and descending on the beloved One. But the Gospel of God has given Him companions,—suitable companions,—bone of His bone—flesh of His flesh. Heaven is now open on them also. It sees them “graced in the beloved” (Eph. i.). They, with Him, say, “Abba.”—They, have received authority to become children of God. His heart’s delight,—His soul’s desire,—is fulfilled in them. “In the midst of the Church I will sing praise unto Thee” (Hebrews ii. 10). “Behold Me, and the children which God has given me”.—“All of one”! (Heb. ii. 11). Oh! wondrous fact!




---

JAMES CARTER, 18, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

*Sold only in assorted packets (760 pages),*

*One Shilling, post free.*

*Single copy gratis. Send stamped and directed envelope.*