

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

by Oliver B. Greene

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CHAPTER SEVEN -

THE METHOD OF GENTILE SALVATION

In this chapter we will see the most wonderful body ever formed. Speaking to the believers at Ephesus, Paul begins chapter two by saying:

Ephesians 2, verse 1

"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."

The word "**quicken**" means "*to make alive*." To these Gentiles at Ephesus Paul is saying, "You have been made alive, you have been resurrected from the dead."

"In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth. I believe this happened six thousand years ago. After GOD had separated the water from the land, and brought the sun, moon, and stars into view, when all the animals had been created and vegetation had appeared . . . when everything was "**good**," GOD climaxed His creative work by saying, "**LET US MAKE MAN.**"

There are varied and sundry teachings concerning man . . . how he came to be, from what he came, how long it has taken man to reach the place where he is today. But unless you are an atheist or an evolutionist, the answer is in Genesis 1:26: "**And God said, LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE, AFTER OUR LIKENESS.**" GOD created man, and man was GOD's own.

GOD planted a magnificent garden and placed Adam in that garden. The first assignment GOD gave to Adam was the naming of all the animals . . . and whatever Adam called them, that is the name GOD gave them. Everything went fine for awhile - and then GOD saw the loneliness of man. Knowing it was not good for man to be alone, GOD created and presented His first gift to man:

It must have been very calm, and quiet in the Garden of Eden. GOD put Adam to sleep, and the Great Surgeon performed His first operation. No doubt all creation waited - wondering, expecting. The trees of the garden provided the shade for GOD's hospital. The HOLY SPIRIT arranged every detail according to GOD's divine instruction. Adam was asleep - the incision was made, a rib was removed. GOD closed the incision and "**the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man.**"

There is no doubt in my mind that Eve was indescribably lovely, and very charming. She was

dignified; she was the queen of all creation. She was as refreshing as the morning dew in May. She was clothed with a snow white garment down to her feet . . . Shekinah glory (GOD's holiness) danced about her body. Perhaps Adam could not believe his own eyes as he looked upon the marvelous helpmate GOD had brought unto him. (GOD is a good GOD - but remember, beloved, He is also "**a consuming fire**" - Hebrews 12:29.)

It is the good pleasure of GOD to bless His children - and Adam was His child by creation. GOD gave Eve to Adam. Eve was the first sweetheart of this earth. In Adam's case, it was love at first sight. The wedding took place in GOD's great open-air cathedral. GOD, who was the father of the bride, gave her away. The royal surgeon stood at the groom's side. The HOLY SPIRIT performed the ceremony and pronounced Adam and Eve man and wife - one flesh. Surely the angels must have sung a song! Adam and Eve did not go anywhere on their honeymoon. They were in the most beautiful spot on this earth - the Garden of Eden. The two lovers, GOD's first man and woman, walked away hand in hand, and the angels must have smiled.

Time passed. How long Adam and Eve lived in the Garden in the peace and quiet of its beauty, I do not know; but tragedy struck. They sinned . . . and by sinning they forfeited their joyous companionship with GOD. Many things have changed in this old world . . . we have the radio, the telephone, color television, space rockets, electronic brains . . . but some things are unaltered.

Man in his need for GOD is the same. Poor Adam! When he sinned, he saw that he was naked - and every unregenerated man today is just as Adam was . . . naked before GOD!

Remember - the devil suggested to Eve that the reason GOD did not want her to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was because GOD knew that the day she ate of the fruit, her eyes would be opened, she would know, and she would become "**as gods**." In other words, she would become a little god.

When Adam and Eve sinned and their eyes were opened, they immediately put their wisdom and knowledge to work. They sewed fig leaves together - and I am sure the garments they made covered the nakedness of their flesh. The green fig leaves, with the frills of the leaves rightly placed, undoubtedly made a very beautiful garment.

Poor Adam! He was covered . . . so far as he knew. His spiritual mind had been darkened - blacked out and blinded by sin. GOD had told Adam that the day he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would surely die. He did die spiritually that moment - and every man and woman born into the world since Adam's fall is dead in trespasses and sin.

Adam thought everything was all right until he heard the voice of GOD. The smile left his face. He looked at Eve . . . they trembled, and ran to hide.

"They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden" (Genesis 3:8).

In the next few moments, Adam learned what many men need to learn today: The labors of man's hands cannot satisfy GOD! What looks good to man does not necessarily look good to GOD.

Adam learned that his garment was inadequate to hide the guilt of his conscience! In GOD's eyes, Adam was still naked. He also learned that he could not hide from GOD. The trees did not separate him from the eyes of his CREATOR. Man needs to learn today that while there are many religions that look good - man cannot hide from GOD under these religious cloaks.

Adam learned something else: His excuses did not clear him of his guilt. He put the blame on Eve. Eve passed it on down to the serpent. Nevertheless, GOD cursed the woman and the man. Adam's excuses did not satisfy GOD. Adam discovered that the labor of his hands could not cover his shame before the eyes of GOD; the trees of the garden could not hide him from the presence of GOD; and the excuses he made were not accepted by GOD (there was no excuse). Certainly the children of Adam have not changed. Tens of thousands of men and women are still manufacturing their own coverings, religiously speaking.

Today you can hear the sons and daughters of Adam saying things like this:

"We have such beautiful services at our church, our religion is such a beautiful religion. We have such a dignified preacher and such a dignified program." Beloved, GOD is not looking for beauty or dignity; He is looking for Blood!

GOD condemned the fig-leaf covering, and Himself provided coats of skins. Please notice: GOD provided coats of skins. The innocent animals, at the expense of their life and their Blood, furnished the coats. GOD Himself made the coats, and covered the naked bodies of Adam and Eve. All that Adam did - all that he could do - was yield to GOD's covering.

Man was created to be the joy of GOD's heart; and one glorious day that will be completely and fully realized in the new Heaven and the new earth. In Adam all die - in CHRIST are all made alive.

Verses 2 and 3 - **"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air (the devil) the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience (the spirit of wickedness, lust, and sin): Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past** (Note: ALL . . . all we like sheep have gone astray . . . there is none righteous, no, not one) **in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature** (born in a natural body handed down by our first parents Adam and Eve . . . a body naturally depraved and sinful) **the children of wrath (the devil), even as others (ALL others)."**

What a picture! What a sordid, despicable, ugly picture. Yes, WHAT A PICTURE! Dead, walking according to the course of a world steeped in sin, walking according to the dictates of the devil, following the spirit of disobedience, refusing to obey, always disobeying, having conversation in lust, filth, the gutter of the flesh; practicing what the mind suggests, following the desires of lust and of a mind totally depraved, by nature the children of the devil . . . BUT GOD!

Suppose we return to the Garden of Eden for just a moment. GOD had created only one son and one daughter.

GOD gave that son everything that man has fought and died to gain - but has never gained! Adam was the dictator of the whole universe. He was in charge of the known earth at that time. He had dominion over everything. And then - GOD gave him a perfect wife. GOD requested of him only one thing: "Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

When Adam deliberately disobeyed GOD and did exactly what GOD told him not to do, could not GOD have annihilated Adam and Eve, and kept a clear conscience in so doing? Could not GOD have turned the Garden of Eden over to angels and cherubims? Yes, He could have - but He did not. GOD in His love and mercy provided a covering . . . and in Genesis 3:15 He promised JESUS, His only begotten SON, who would eventually crush the head of the devil, bring order out of chaos, and give to man a new Heaven and a new earth "**wherein dwelleth righteousness**" . . . BUT GOD!

In verses one through three in our present chapter, Paul paints the picture of a sinner; but in spite of our wretchedness, GOD loved us:

Verses 4-10: "**BUT GOD, who is RICH IN MERCY, for His GREAT LOVE wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**"

In chapter two is revealed the truth that by the grace of GOD - (not by works of righteousness which we have done) - we are His workmanship, CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS. The truth revealed in chapter one (that CHRIST is exalted to the position of head over all things to the church which is His body) is unfolded for us in chapter two.

The work of GOD the Father, GOD the Son, and GOD the Spirit continues. As we saw the Trinity working as one in our redemption, just so will we see the continuation of the one-ness of the Trinity in the plan of GOD for the believer.

In chapter one, we saw that the emphasis was placed upon the Father. The Father holds the prominent place in planning redemption for the soul. And of course, "**known unto God are all His works from the beginning.**"

- It was GOD who thought;
- It was GOD who provided;
- It was GOD who loved;
- It was GOD who gave.

GOD sent forth His SON, GOD commended His love toward us, GOD gave JESUS to die for us while we were yet sinners. The Lamb was smitten by GOD, for our transgressions.

In chapter two the emphasis is upon the SON - the Lord JESUS. At Calvary, GOD's best was on

display for man's worst. And through Calvary, GOD provided grace which brings salvation (Titus 2:11). The center and heart of the message of chapter two is the grace GOD provided through the Blood of JESUS CHRIST. Grace IS JESUS . . . **"we beheld His glory . . . FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH"** (John 1:14).

In the first three verses of chapter two, we see the sordid picture of man as a result of sin. In verse four, GOD who is rich in mercy, in His great love quickened us (raised us) from the dead with CHRIST, and has made us to sit together with CHRIST in heavenly places for the singular purpose of displaying the exceeding riches of GOD's grace in the ages that lie ahead. There is no better verse in all the Word of GOD than verse eight to show the way of salvation. We are saved by GOD's grace, through faith. Salvation is the gift of GOD - not of ourselves.

It is very, very important that we keep clearly in mind the connection between chapter one and chapter two of our present study. The key to the connection is the one word **"DEAD."** JESUS our Saviour, JESUS the Grace of GOD, in order to provide salvation, took a body a little lower than the angels, for the specific purpose of suffering and dying. By the grace of GOD, JESUS tasted death for every man (Hebrews 2:9). JESUS CHRIST, our Lord and Saviour, became one with us in death. The life story of JESUS in the body can be summed up as follows:

JESUS became dead - but death could not hold Him. He was quickened, raised from the dead; then He was exalted to His present position at the right hand of GOD in the heavenlies. So - JESUS died, rose again, ascended to the heavenlies. Likewise, WE (those of us who are believers) were dead in trespasses and in sins. As the body of JESUS was quickened from the dead, WE have been raised from the dead (spiritually) and the end of our salvation will be the resurrection of the body, when we will have a body just like JESUS' glorious body (I John 3:1-3).

In our resurrection with JESUS (spiritually speaking) we are now made to sit in the Heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS. Carefully compare Ephesians 1:20-21 with Ephesians 2:1-6. In these first ten verses of chapter two, we learn what we were. We learn that the natural man is totally depraved, his ability to reason concerning spiritual things is entirely blacked out, and apart from the power of GOD to resurrect the spirit, man would be totally and entirely given over to damnation.

If you will carefully study Romans 1:18 through Romans 3:20 - you will find the human race described minutely. Man's sinfulness is laid bare. Anyone who can read need not miss the Bible picture of the unregenerated man.

Man in the beginning knew GOD, but refused to glorify Him AS GOD. Man changed the truth of GOD into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature instead of GOD the Creator. Man did not like to retain GOD in his knowledge. He pushed GOD out of his thinking and planning. He rebelled against the authority of GOD. Therefore, GOD gave man up! Man forsook the glory of GOD (the root nature of all sin). The fruit that naturally follows is the despicable practices described in Romans 1:18 ff.

If you will study Romans 3:21 through Romans 5:21 you will see what GOD has done for man in CHRIST JESUS. You will see the matchless grace, the unsearchable riches of grace whereby

GOD passed judgment over on - or placed upon - His own SON the judgment that should have been placed upon each of us. GOD provided redemption through the Blood of His only begotten SON. We are delivered from judgment and wrath by faith - not upon any merit on our part, or by works of righteousness which we might do. Through faith, we appropriate the righteousness of GOD and the life of GOD in CHRIST.

The sinner is dead in trespasses and sins. The Holy Spirit does not catalog sins, but simply states that unbelievers are dead through trespasses and sins. Through the disobedience of Adam, the father of us all, death moved upon ALL men . . . for all have sinned. Therefore the life-cord is severed. Death is the result. We are dead spiritually, emotionally and mentally so far as the things of GOD are concerned. **"There is none righteous, no, not one!"** We are spiritually dead. **"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God."**

We have a darkened intelligence . . . we do not understand; we have a deadened emotion, we do not seek after GOD. **"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."** All men are in the same category. Therefore - since we are dead in trespasses and sins, since GOD is holy and pure and cannot look on sin, condone sin nor acquit the wicked, it stands to reason that we cannot do the things that please GOD until we are born again. And though it may seem strange to you, GOD cannot do for us the things that will please us until we are born again. When we are born again we become a new creation (II Corinthians 5:17).

The natural man is disobedient to GOD . . . he is not subject to the will of GOD, neither indeed can be. That is the reason so many church members cannot live right - they are up, and then they are down; they are on, and then they are off; they shout during a revival, and then go back to the world when the revival is over. The answer to their problem is that they have never been made new in CHRIST JESUS.

The unregenerate man is separated from GOD. He is sold into slavery. The unregenerate man obeys his master - the devil. In obeying the devil, the unregenerate is naturally disobedient to GOD.

Satan has a three-fold system through which he works:

When JESUS was baptized (Matthew 3) The HOLY GHOST descended and remained upon Him, and GOD the Father said, **"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased!"** Immediately JESUS was led of The HOLY SPIRIT into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Matthew 4). After JESUS had fasted forty days and forty nights, the devil appeared - and the battle began! First, the devil said, **"If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."** JESUS was hungry . . . He had been forty days and forty nights without food or drink; but the devil was tempting Him to major on the minor.

JESUS did not come into this world to feed the body - He came to save the soul; and if He had turned those stones into bread He would have been kept so busy making bread He would never have had time to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and save sinners! JESUS of course knew the devil's scheme, and that from the human standpoint Satan attacked first at the weakest point - hunger.

You know, beloved, hunger will drive the natural man to beg, borrow, steal and kill to acquire food to ward off starvation. The devil attacked JESUS at the weakest point - the lust of the flesh. JESUS said, "**Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**"

Satan did not give up. He took JESUS into the Holy City, placed Him on the pinnacle, and said to Him, "**It is written** (it is recorded in the Psalms) **[GOD] shall give His angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up . . . Cast thyself down . . . it will not hurt you . . . that is, IF thou be the SON of GOD!**"

JESUS answered, "**Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.**"

There is the temptation through the pride of Life. If JESUS had jumped from the pinnacle and escaped without injury, He would have been considered an outstanding person . . . He would have performed a very spectacular act.

But Satan did not give up. He took JESUS up into "**an exceeding high mountain**" and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and said, "Look! These are mine to give to whomsoever I will. **All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me!**" Thus JESUS could by-pass the Cross and still become king of the whole earth. But with JESUS there was no short cut. Therefore He said, "**Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.**" When JESUS said this, Satan departed. You will find the story in Matthew, chapters three and four, and in Luke chapter four. Read and study these accounts carefully.

John the beloved, in I John (the Joy Book) commands: "**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. FOR ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD (1) the lust of the flesh, and (2) the lust of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever**" (I John 2:15-17). So the devil works through three avenues. We have pointed out the threefold system of sin's enslavement.

We are given solemn warning concerning this system:

1. The World - we "**walked according to the course of this world.**" The natural man walks in the way of the world because his nature responds to the desires of the world. The world has what the natural man craves.

2. We walked according to the dictates of Satan . . . "**according to the prince of the power of the air.**" This statement reveals to us that Satan has his kingdom in the air just above us, and he is the prince of that kingdom. In II Corinthians 4:3-4 we are enlightened that Satan is the "**god of this world.**"

The unregenerate follows the flesh. "**We all had our conversation** (manner of life) **in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.**" Here is a clear picture of the unregenerate . . . controlled by a sin-prompted, a sin-propelled and a sin-

responsive nature, thereby yielding to degraded, unrighteous, ungodly lust and filthy desires.

The last part of verse three in our chapter describes the unregenerate as **"by nature the children of wrath."** We find in Deuteronomy 25:2 the same Hebrew word that is used here in the Greek - and literally translated it would read "SON OF STROKES" . . . or, "WORTHY TO BE BEATEN." The natural man is dead in sins, of his own free will disobedient to a holy GOD, therefore he deserves to be beaten . . . he is worthy of stripes. But GOD put the stripes on JESUS, His only begotten Son; and all you need do to burn in hell is to neglect so great salvation!

Because of the spiritual condition of the natural man, the remedy for sin must go much deeper than conduct or character. It must begin by setting right the source of life . . . the heart, from which proceed the issues of life.

The first two words in verse four - **"BUT GOD"** - announce the turning point of the destiny of the unregenerate. Poor lost man could not help himself. Adam tried - but he failed. Cain thought he was doing fine - but GOD rejected his beautiful fruit-offering. Man before the flood was progressing, building cities, raising cattle, making music, going in business. There were men of renown - giants; but GOD repented that he had made man, and declared that He would destroy man. He would have destroyed every single solitary soul on this earth- **"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord"** (Genesis 6:8) and **"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith"** (Hebrews 11:7).

Left to his own ability, his own provision, his own thinking, man cannot repair the damage done by sin. Salvation is not repairing the old man; salvation is the creation of a new man.

What GOD did for hell-deserving sinners is the result of what GOD IS. GOD is rich in mercy . . . but His riches, His resources, are GOD HIMSELF. GOD IS LOVE - and it is only because of His great love toward us that GOD by His grace permitted JESUS to taste death for every one of us. Had it not been for the exceeding riches of GOD's love and grace, you and I would burn in hell. What GOD did for us He did because of what He is. GOD IS love!

Adam and Eve must have been sick at heart when they realized what a horrible thing they had done. They had been dressed in Shekinah glory - but when they ate the forbidden fruit their covering departed and they gazed upon the shame of their nakedness! What a sad, sordid, despicable sight! Man had lost his holy, pure estate with his CREATOR. Death had moved in. **"BUT GOD"** - intervened. GOD turned death into life. GOD turned despair into hope. And in the fulness of time hope, redemption, salvation, righteousness was born (Galatians 4:4).

~ end of chapter 7 ~

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