

THE FIVE MUCH MORES

Romans Five
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"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" -Romans 1:16.

We are again impressed, as we have often been before, with the wonderful doctrinal exegesis of this letter to the Romans. It is surely marvelous when read under the illuminating lens of the Holy Spirit. Paul was mightily moved by the Dynamiter from the skies, as he wrote this epistle. There are depths to this letter that have never been sounded. We touch bottom sometimes for a moment; but, while we are entranced with the deep things opened up, the vision seems to vanish and we have only a faint remembrance of the hidden treasure in the ocean of Truth. We endeavor to speak or write of them; but tongue and pen are inadequate to express the depths which we have plumbed of God's marvelous grace to the people of His choice. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" - Psalm 107:8.

Romans is as the hub to the wheel of the New Testament Truth. It is the necessary basis to all that is afterward most powerfully and pungently expressed by the great master Apostle to the Gentiles. He laid the mighty gibraltar foundations, the pillars of divine testimony for Church doctrine, in this great book to the Romans. We are seeing more and more what a bulwark it is for the Christian's faith. We are surprised that it is not read more and expounded more, in the many Christian magazines which are published today. What interesting reading, yea, what profitable literature it is for anyone. We marvel that the great men, with supposedly mighty brain cells, have not endeavored to dig out its treasures. Probably they have sought to do so, and have found themselves up against rocks upon which their little picks of self-effort made no impression. It must be so; for surely they would not carelessly pass by such literary genius, such logical conclusions, and such marvelous reasonings of subjects that all men in some sense are desirous to understand. It surely is Satan who hinders Christians, and it is Satan who blinds "the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" - II Corinthians 4:4.

All the different phases of the work of our Lord Jesus - the obedience unto death, of which the Cross was the altar, that has made possible the salvation of all men - are held up to our gaze in Romans. We have these various views of the Redeemer and His great atonement, in the four sacrificial offerings of Leviticus - the Burnt, peace, Sin, and Trespass Offerings. There was also a fifth offering, the Meal (Meat Offering, as given in our Authorized Version); but it was not a blood offering. It was simply an appendage to the other offerings. But this is the point that we are emphasizing: Paul, in the book of Romans, shows us the doctrinal setting of these four typical views of Christ's matchless sacrifice on Calvary. We only speak of one of these views now with its five MUCH MORES of compensation.

THE TRESPASS OFFERING

One. "MUCH MORE then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from

wrath through Him." This citation is the first of the five "much mores" which we find in Romans 5:9-21. The two Adams, as the results of their responsibility toward mankind, are herein contrasted. The prominent feature of the Trespass Offering was compensation (Leviticus 6:1-7; Numbers 5:6-10), and that is the phase presented to us of Christ' s work in contrast to Adam' s failure in its manward aspect. Man is seen to be richer, from every point of view, by the sin of Adam. Rather than having lost anything by the first man' s defalcation, he has gained immensely in the reimbursement which the Second Man has brought to him. The Last Adam does not merely lift us up out of our embarrassed condition - the bankruptcy into which we were thrown by the first Adam; but He adds the fifth part more to our standing as redeemed men. Remember, that this is only one phase of the results of Christ' s work for us. It is the least view, we might say, of the glorious possibilities that have been opened up to mankind by the death of the Son of Man on the Cross. It simply shows our compensation as men, not as the sons of God. As identified with the Second Man, we are much more blest than we would have been as identified with the first man even if he had never sinned.

Our identification with the Son of God as sons of God in His high and heavenly state is another matter altogether. It is a far greater view of our wealth and station, and does not come under the Trespass Offering aspect of Calvary. There is no thought of compensation or restitution, in the larger outlook. As identified with the first man, we were simply sons of man. We never could have become sons of God. But, this is another question altogether, which we cannot consider now.

In the first "MUCH MORE," the marked thought is that of salvation from wrath - Romans 5:9. Christ, by His death as the Trespass Offering, has provided a safe and assured shelter for all who believe. We are "justified by His blood"; and this reaches on in its effects to the final judgment of the world and of the wicked, and assures us that "much more then ... we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Some may say, "I thought we were justified by faith" - Romans 5:1. From the side of our experience we are; but from God' s side, or the side of justice, the basis of our justification is in the blood of Jesus. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"; and thus laid the foundation for our faith to build upon - Romans 5:8. Because of this fact - Christ' s death for us - we shall be saved from the judgment of God in every aspect. So Paul logically concludes, and his words agree with the promise of Jesus to the one who believes - "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" - John 5:24. By the next "much more," we are taken a step further.

Two. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, MUCH MORE, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" - Romans 5:10. Man has been reconciled to God, by Christ taking upon Himself the likeness of sinful humanity and dying as the enemy of God. He has put man away forever, as far as the provision is concerned. Man was buried and left in the grave. In Christ' s resurrection. He is the Head of a new creation. Man has been reconciled to God. Christ is the guarantee of his acceptance with God; for, as a Man, He has entered into the very Presence of God. He is even sitting at God' s right hand as the Mediator of all those who trust Him; and, as long

as He abides, they are safe and secure.

Several phases of salvation through the Cross are taught in Scripture. There is a past salvation - from the penalty of sin; a present salvation - from the power of sin; and a future salvation - from the presence of sin when we receive our glorified bodies. We are saved from the wrath of God the moment that we accept Christ as our Saviour. We are saved from the power of sin moment by moment as we count that we died with Christ and rose with Him as a new creation, and depend upon Him to take us through despite the pitfalls of Satan and the allurements of the world and of the flesh. Because of the power of His unchanging life, He is able to take us all the way - from the uttermost depths to the uttermost heights. Then when He comes He will change these bodies of humiliation into the likeness of the body of His glory, and we shall be forever delivered from the presence of sin. The second of these "much mores" deals with the present salvation from the power of sin. The next allusion to the compensating phase of Calvary shows us a further and a fuller thought.

Three. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift (righteousness). For if through the offence of one many be dead (or died), MUCH MORE the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" - Romans 5:15. Herein is a marvelous verse of Scripture. The two Adams are contrasted. The one man brought death to all men; the other Man brought life to all who believe and receive the benefits. The first man brought sin into the world. We had nothing to do with it, as far as our being responsible for its entrance into the world or into our being. The responsibility was upon Adam' s head. We fell heir to his sin and death without being accountable. It was freely given to us from our progenitor Adam. Likewise, in the case of our Second Head - Christ - but adversely. We do not obtain these blessings by any self-effort, any more than we received the curses of sin and death by our own efforts. The blessings are freely given to all men who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Last Adam. The righteousness and life are much more abundantly evident toward us than simply reversal. Calvary' s compensation goes farther, even a fifth more, beyond what man would have possessed if he had never been heir to sin or death. Remember again, this is viewing the gain to man as being a new creation joined to a new Head - Christ. Salvation is far more than simply a reversal of the offense. Grace has done much more than simply put man back in the garden, back to Adamic perfection, to be tested again. It has given him a righteous character which opposes sin, and a holy life which repulses death. This Christ life is out of the realm of law, and above the realm of testing; for it has been tested and proven already. It is not on trial. The next phase of these "much mores" is a greater marvel, if possible, than those which have preceded.

Four. "For if by one man' s offence death reigned by one; MUCH MORE they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ" - Romans 5:17.

Adam set death upon the throne by his one act of disobedience. It ruled and reigned in the human family without hindrance. They could not help themselves. Its rule was inexorable and absolute. It was established, the Word declares. But now there is a change. Another Man comes on the scene and not only dethrones this king, as some would argue, but much more. He introduces another Ruler - the Despotism of life in the place of death. He

crowns life on the throne, and makes believers kings in this great and glorious kingdom of righteousness and truth. There is not only an abundance but a superabundance of grace provided for a full vindication from all guilt, and much more. There is an abundance of grace provided for the overcoming of every circumstance, and for reigning in every way.

The reign of death was irresistible, as is plainly manifest. It went marching on without any cessation. Its advance and reign were supreme over those under law and those without law. There was no way to stop its progress, loose its grasp, or break its power. There was no place in the world where it did not hold the sceptre and challenge all. It abounded to the uttermost, though men of science and sorcery entered the arena against it and sought by their united skill to halt its onward march.

But, this was all in vain, until Christ arrived. He stopped its reign, and put life on the throne. Life abounds now, not only in the same degree as death, but in a far greater measure. That is the marvel of it, for death, is its competitor and rival. It seeks to hinder life from being manifested in our mortal bodies. Observe that the reference here is not only to the victory which we may have over sin, but that which we may have over death - the wages of sin. The apostle not only sets sin and righteousness over against one another with the preponderance of witness in favor of the former, but also death and life. In the same measure that sin has been reigning unto death, so may righteousness now reign unto life. Sin was constantly bringing forth fruit unto death; likewise in the same manner, because grace now triumphs toward the new creation, righteousness brings forth fruit unto life in the very place of death - the body of sin. It is not only possible to negatively refuse to allow sin to reign, but much more - it is possible for righteousness to reign through the overflowing fullness of the gift of grace.

Observe that the apostle is dwelling more upon sin and its results as bringing forth death, than upon sin itself - sin in its deathward aspect having dominion over a man as long as he lives. This death is not only felt physically in pain and sickness in the body, but in every part of man. There is death of the conscience and death of the sensibilities and affections, in relation to God, manifested in every son of Adam' s race. Even in believers, this same deadness is in evidence more or less. There is apathy at times, as well as sluggishness, coldness, and indifference. Death reigns over much of our being, though provision has been made for life to reign in every part; for even the mortal body of believers, as well as the spirit and soul, may have a part now in the quickening by the Holy Spirit. It is an earnest of our full redemption, when He "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory" - Phil. 3:21 R.V. Then comes the final "much more" of the section.

Five. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did MUCH MORE abound"; or, as Coneybeare translates, "grace has overthrown beyond" the fullest outbreak of sin - Romans 5:20.

God' s object in giving the Law is here explained. God wanted man to know that he was a sinner, not only by Adam' s one transgression but a sinner by his own actual transgressions; hence, He gave the Law from Mt. Sinai. Its true character and official place on God' s program are thus stated. "It was ADDED," not to curb or restrain sin as many imagine and foolishly teach; but just the opposite. It was given to make manifest

the sin that was in the human breast, to bring it out and show it forth. It declares the character of sin by making it an offense against the holy God. The Law marks the boundary line between right and wrong, so that men may recognize their inward condition of lawlessness by stepping over the line. Sin thus becomes transgression, and brings the greater condemnation upon the sinner. Furthermore it increases, rather than diminishes, sin in the world. Sin becomes more sinful; but here God overrules.

He makes His grace to superabound and exceed all the sin which His Law exposed and all the guilt which His Law denounced, as well as all the condemnation which His broken Law called down upon the transgressor. His grace overflowed its banks much more beyond the overflowing and breaking forth of sin. The purpose of this prodigal expenditure of grace, as well as the place of its fullest manifestation and its channel, is revealed on the following:

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" - Romans 5:21.

Sin is herein pictured as a despot, a master, holding man in an iron grip from which there was no escape save in death; while the Law only strengthened its power - I Cor. 15:56. But now, because of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, righteousness sits in the place of sin in the new creation and wields its sceptre with the same or mightier force through grace unto life eternal. There is no limit to her power, nor end to her reign. Sin ended in death. Judgment fell upon the sinner to the uttermost, on the Cross. It abounded and overflowed its banks in the death of Christ, the Trespass Offering to God; but here, too, is where grace superabounds. Grace cannot be damned up nor stopped in its rushing onward sweep. It must flow out and over all flesh where sin had reigned supreme; for God' s wrath has been appeased through the wondrous Sacrifice of Calvary, where the transgressor died in his Substitute, Christ.

Therefore, the preponderance of compensation - the "MUCH MORE" - has come to mankind because of the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rather than having lost anything by the robbery from him by the first Adam, man has gained immensely by the reimbursement which the Last Adam has brought to him. He is actually enriched, when he believes the truth of redemption and lays hold of the eternal life which is provided in our Lord Jesus Christ. Under law, one was enriched only one-fifth more. But, under grace, both God and man are enriched five times more. Man finds that he is not only negatively delivered from the guilt of sin, which is justification; but, provision has been made for actual triumph over the power of sin, which is sanctification. We say like David, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" - Psalm 107:8.