"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear unto all."

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NOTES ON THE HEBREW VERB *

References to the Hebrew verbal system are not numerous in our two periodicals. Pastor Galstad once ventured some thought-provoking comments in connection with his remarks on the feeling of timelessness we get from the various names of our Savior God, who is always coming to us. On page 4 of the December, 1974, issue of the Lutheran Spokesman (Vol. 17, No. 6), he writes concerning the Hebrew mind and language: "Their language has no clear-cut tenses like ours. Their verbs are in the perfect and the imperfect, and they distinguish only between action which is completed and action which is still going on. A seemingly completed action is never truly completed to the Hebrew mind and imagination. It still lives and moves in the present: 'Abraham is our father.' Realities which made the past, make the present, and will continue to make the future. Accordingly, there is a certain timeless continuity of prophecy and fulfillment."

Then there is E. Schaller's book review of Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible, found in the October, 1970, issue of the Journal of Theology (Vol. 10, No. 4), pp. 36-37. Young was "much preoccupied with the tense values of the Hebrew verb," and some comment was necessary. After expressing some doubt as to the merits of Young's translation, acknowledging the controversy surrounding the Hebrew waw consecutive, and referring those interested to J. Wash Watts and to G. R. Driver's note on p. 252f. of Weingreen's grammar, the writer simply says: "We venture upon no debate of the point here, except to concede that the term 'Conversive' as applied to this Waw is a misnomer."

Without belaboring the matter, we must all concede that this does point up a problem, and that there is no benefit in ignoring it. Just what is the force of the He-

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brew tenses? What is the meaning of the constructions with waw consecutive? Unresolved questions of such import only increase the discouragement of students already on less than friendly terms with what appears to be a rather hostile language; they only increase the rate at which men busy in their field of work drift away from contact with the Hebrew. In pursuing any kind of work in Hebrew, one must sooner or later come to some kind of grips with the problem; it is difficult, if not impossible, to be satisfied unless at least some attempt at a more thorough investigation is made.

There are perhaps two extremes to be avoided. The one is to breathe a long sigh, and put away the Hebrew Bible. The other is to become so engrossed in attempting to master the countless, often exasperating minutiae of an endless area of research (research, too, which sometimes appears to promise precious little by way of assured results to apply in one's exegetical work), that one neglects to study and meditate upon the plain truths of God's saving message to sinners. Somewhere in between there ought to be a middle course to choose and follow.

At a time when there was ready access to library resources, some effort at research in the Hebrew verb was made. The result is these notes. Despite the limitations of the research and the researcher, the following is here-with offered, in the hope that it might nevertheless be of some aid to the brethren.

Sample Quotations

The following are samples of what is being said about the nature of the Hebrew verb.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia has this to say: "There are no tenses in Heb, in our sense of the word. There are two states, usually called tenses, the perfect and the imperfect. In the first the action is regarded as accomplished, whether in the past or future ...; in the second, the action is regarded as uncompleted ..." ¹

Simon Cohen writes in the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia that the two tenses "do not distinguish time as much as complete and incomplete action." ²
Referring to the Hebrew verbal system, the Encyclopedia Judaica says: "It is a moot question whether this system marks aspect (without any notion of time) or rather time." 3

The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible is a little more definite: "The verb has properly nothing to do with time, but with completeness or incompleteness." 4

In the New Catholic Encyclopedia, M. J. Dahood writes: "The function of the Hebrew verb is still a matter of dispute. One view maintains that the perfect form expresses past time and the imperfect form present and future time. A more widely held opinion considers the verb forms as expressing modes of action; the perfect is the mode of completed action, while the imperfect refers to uncompleted action. Neither view can adequately account for all the data, so a less rigid classification seems called for. What has been considered the imperfect form may more fittingly be described as a universal tense because of its possible past, present, or future reference. On the other hand, the perfect form, hitherto regarded as expressing past or completed action, may equally denote present or future action; the context must be the determining factor." 5

The agreement one might look for is not there. Let's step back into history and go into a little more detail.

Before S. R. Driver

The traditional view of the verb, maintained by the older Jewish grammar, had been that the perfect and imperfect tenses represented the past and future respectively. As a result of the influence of the Jewish grammarians, as well as because of the influence of Latin grammar, this became the accepted view among Hebrew scholars. For example, Gesenius (1786-1842) still called the tenses past and future. The idea of aspect had not yet been advanced. 6

During the course of the 19th century, the theory of the Hebrew tenses was completely remodelled. The outstanding name here is that of H. G. A. Ewald (1803-1875). "He is considered the father of the theory of Hebrew syntax." 7
In the preface of *Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew*, S. R. Driver acknowledged his obligations to this grammarian. "Ewald by his originality and penetration was the founder of a new era in the study of Hebrew grammar; and there is probably no modern Hebraist who is not, directly, or indirectly, indebted to him." Driver himself built on the work of Ewald.

A word should be said about the constructions with waw consecutive. Roughly described, one construction is the repeated use of a different form of waw (ד) with the imperfect after the perfect tense in narratives of past events, with the accent frequently drawn back toward the beginning of the word; the other is the use of the ordinary waw (ד) with the perfect after the imperfect in future time, with the accent frequently thrown toward the end of the word. The Jews had called the waw, when used in such constructions, נא תבכ, translated "waw conversive." They thought that under these circumstances the waw had the power to turn the future tense into a past tense, and the past tense into a future tense. Christian grammarians inherited and passed on this idea. When Hebrew syntax was remodelled in the 19th century, however, this term was discarded by many. Already in 1827 a grammarian named Boettcher had suggested the term "waw consecutive." (In explanation of this term, Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar* says: "This name best expresses the prevailing syntactical relation, for by waw consecutive an action is always represented as the direct, or at least temporal consequence of a preceding action.") In 1892 S. R. Driver could write that the term "waw consecutive" had been adopted by Ewald and "most modern grammarians." 9

The stage is set to examine the work of S. R. Driver.

**The Aspect Theory: S. R. Driver**

S. R. Driver was born in 1846 and died in 1914. His importance is indicated by the following quotation: "All of Driver's books were well written and carefully researched and three of them are so basic that for all of the progress that has been made since them the specialist still has occasion to consult his *... Tenses ...*" 11 The work referred to in that quotation is the work we shall examine briefly here: *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in He-*
brew, and Some Other Syntactical Questions. It was originally published in 1874. Some additions were made in the second edition (1881). The third edition (1892), used in the preparation of these notes, did not differ substantially from the second edition. The book had been out of print since 1942, but was reprinted lithographically in Great Britain in 1969, and is still in print. Driver's is indeed a persuasive and articulate presentation of the aspect theory. One might add that not only is the book still a standard reference work, but also, by virtue of a certain effortless elegance of style, it is actually enjoyable reading.

In order to ensure a proper understanding of the fundamental nature of the Hebrew verb, Driver takes pains in the introduction to set forth the distinction (which, he says, "has not, until recent years, obtained from Hebrew grammarians the recognition and prominence which it deserves") between order of time and kind of time. Order of time refers to whether an action takes place before or after some other action; kind of time refers to whether an action is beginning, continuing, or completed. Action in any of the time spheres, then — past, present, or future — can be regarded either as complete or incomplete. In contemplating an action, Driver says, a speaker may, according to his fancy, "lay stress upon the moment at which it begins, or upon the period over which it extends, or upon the fact of its being finished and done." On the next page Driver asserts that whereas Greek recognizes and expresses distinctions both in the order and in the kind of time, nevertheless Hebrew "seems totally to disregard" the differences in order of time which are so important to us. "Now in Hebrew the tenses mark only differences in the kind of time, not differences in the order of time ... the three phases just mentioned, those namely of incipiency, continuance and completion, being represented respectively by the imperfect, the participle, and the perfect."

Although he acknowledges that especially in prose a past event is usually regarded as completed and is therefore expressed by the perfect, and a future as uncompleted and therefore expressed by the imperfect, he warns against assuming that this usage is uniform, and underscores once again what he regards as the fundamental and
primary facts. The whole theory of the tenses, he says, must be constructed on these two facts: "(1) that the Hebrew verb notifies the character without fixing the date of an action, and (2) that, of its two forms with which we have here more particularly to deal, one is calculated to describe an action as nascent and so as imperfect; the other to describe it as completed and so as perfect." 16 A quotation is adduced from a certain Bishop Patteson, a Poly- and Melanesian scholar, who believed that the mode of thought of a Semitic man resembled that of a South Sea islander: "'The Hebrew's mind (and his speech) moved on with his thought, and was present with the whole range of ideas included in the thought.'" 17

The imperfect, then, "indicates action as nascent, as evolving itself actively from its subject, as developing." 18 The idea of reiteration follows closely upon that of incipiency, and is also expressed by the imperfect. In differentiating between the perfect and the imperfect, Driver says that it is the perfect which denotes the mere occurrence of an event. The imperfect, therefore, is "chosen in order to suggest some additional feature characteristic of the occurrence, which, in the case before us, is the fact (or possibility) of its repetition." 19 In the more difficult area of differentiating between the participle and the imperfect, Driver says that it is the participle, not the imperfect, which expresses mere continuance as such. The imperfect expresses what may be termed "progressive continuance." 20 "Thus while the impf. multiplies an action, the participle prolongs it." 21 (In the eyes of some, this last statement evidently expressed quite aptly the difference in force between the two forms: both Harper and Gesenius-Kautzsch refer to it.) 22 The Hebrew imperfect corresponds to a degree with the English present in that it expresses general truths, and also states facts which may occur at any time or which do occur periodical-ly. 23

On the basis of this explanation of the Hebrew tenses, Driver goes on to treat the consecutive constructions with waw. In the chapter entitled, "The Imperfect with Waw Consecutive," Driver offers an explanation of this construction which he says is really nothing more than a slight expansion of the explanation of Ewald. 24 The key sentences are these: "'The principle upon which the imperfect is here
employed will not, after what was said in ##21, 26, be far to seek. The imperfect represents action as nascent: accordingly, when combined with a conjunction connecting the event introduced by it with a point already reached by the narrative, it represents it as the continuation or development of the past which came before it." 25 Thus, the translation of \( \text{ŋ̃可行性} \) which he suggests is proper is not "and he said," but "and he proceeded-to-say." 26 (This is something that will perhaps be familiar to some of us from J. Wash Watts, whose work we will examine later.) It is to be noted that association in thought as well as association in time will result in the construction of the waw consecutive with the imperfect.

That the feature of past events seized upon by a language should be, not the character as past, but the element of development, of progress, of emergence, Driver says, can only be explained by the mode of thought of the people. He also suggests that as this particular construction became common, its real character and original exact sense were lost sight of, or at least receded greatly into the background. 27

The chapter on waw consecutive with the imperfect is the second longest chapter of the book. It is thirty pages long. The chapter on the waw consecutive with the perfect is the longest chapter, filling forty-four pages. The difficulty of the subject is thus indicated. This construction is not easy to explain.

In treating this syntactical construction, Driver is again dependent upon the work of Ewald, and he also refers to the similar ideas of Olshausen and Boettcher. Perhaps the key sentences are these:

"According to Ewald, #234a,b, the construction of the perfect with consecutive (the 'relatively-progressive' perfect ...) was originally evoked by the opposite idiom of the imperfect with 1 consecutive: there are many well-known aspects under which the two tenses stand contrasted, and the use of the one naturally suggests the other as its antithesis, and so in the present case a specific application of the latter generated as its counterpart a corresponding application of the former. Just as before we saw how
sequence in time or association in thought caused an
already completed action to be viewed as passing into
a new phase, assuming a fresh development in the next
act taken up by the narrative, so here it has the
contrary result of occasioning a nascent action to be
viewed as advancing to completion, as no longer re-
mainin in suspension, but as being (so to say) pre-
cipitated." 28

Reference is then made to a suggestion of Olshausen
that this use of the perfect really rests upon "a play of
the imagination": an action is imagined as being actually
completed, because of the character of inevitability which
it assumes when it is related to a previous action as its
consequence. Driver also asserts that the relation of con-
sequence is dependent on the union with waw, and that the
sign which accompanies it, when not otherwise hindered, is
the change of tone. 29 In this construction the first verb
is really the dominant verb. The perfect which follows
"loses its individuality." "It passes under the sway of
the verb to which it is connected," and assumes its char-
acter. 30 "An action described by this construction is re-
garded, it is true, as completed, but only with reference
to the preceding verb, only so far as the preceding action
necessitates or permits. ־י means unreservedly
and unconditionally thou hast fallen: ־י means
'so hast thou fallen' 'so,' namely, confining the possible
occurrence of the event to a particular area previously
implied or defined." 31

Such are the essentials of what is known as the "as-
pect theory," according to which even the consecutive
constructions are explained in terms of a tense system
which is regarded as consistently marking, not the order
of time, but only the kind of time. According to F. R.
Blake, this view of the Hebrew verb "is perhaps best pre-
sented by S. R. Driver in his Hebrew Tenses, and forms
the basis for the treatment in various Hebrew grammars." 32

The Aspect Theory: Other Grammarians

W. R. Harper (1856-1906) — In substance Harper's
treatment, published in 1888, is not significantly dif-
ferent from the foregoing. He repeatedly shows his depend-
ence on Driver. One noteworthy remark is this: "The ease
with which the Hebrew writer passed from one tense to the other is paralleled only by the difficulty which the modern translator finds in expressing the force of the change." 33

In his remarks on the imperfect with waw consecutive, Harper adduces some explanatory remarks from the second edition of Driver, which are worth consideration: "For the explanation of the use of the tense in this connection, Professor Driver says: 'The Imperfect (from the point of view of the spectator) expresses what in German is called Eintritt, and represents action, as eintretend — two terms which may be rendered in English by ingress and ingressive. A succession of events need not invariably be regarded as a mere series of completed and independent wholes: each term may be conceived as having relations with the one preceding it; it may be viewed as stepping in after it, as presenting itself to view though an entrance prepared by its forerunner. The date at which the ingress, or entry, is imagined to take place is determined by the '2', which connects the new event with a point previously assigned in the narrative: the goal at which it sets out, the starting-point from which it takes its origin, and to which therefore it is relative, is fixed at the termination of the action denoted by the preceding verb'." 34

Harper goes on to make comparisons with cognate languages: there are two forms of the imperfect in Assyrian, of which the one represents an action as continuing, the other is the usual narrative tense. In Arabic the imperfect is sometimes used "in the sense of an Aorist." 35

Harper's comments on the perfect with the waw consecutive are also marked by dependence on Driver. He too refers to Olshausen's suggestion that this usage rests upon a "play of the imagination." And he says that nearly all grammarians believe that this idiom "corresponds to and was called forth by the opposite construction of the imperfect with Waw Consecutive." 36

Gesenius-Kautzsch — In this grammar, also, repeated references to Driver will be found. The Gesenius-Kautzsch definitions of the perfect and imperfect show that the aspect theory is accepted by this grammar also.
"The perfect serves to express actions, events, or states, which the speaker wishes to represent from the point of view of completion, whether they belong to a determinate past time, or extend into the present, or while still future, are pictured as in their completed state." 37

"The imperfect, as opposed to the perfect, represents actions, events, or states which are regarded by the speaker at any moment as still continuing, or in process of accomplishment, or even as just taking place." 38

In this section we are introduced very briefly to a grammarian named Knudtzon. For we are informed in a note that the above definition of the perfect is a modification of a previous definition given in this grammar: "... the perfect serves to express completed actions." The above change was made because of the arguments of Knudtzon, whose studies had led him to propose a partial modification of the commonly accepted definition of the Semitic perfect and imperfect. 39 Knudtzon preferred calling the imperfect the "present," because it "expresses what is either actually or mentally present." He argued that the essential difference between the perfect and the imperfect lies in this, that "the perfect simply indicates what is actually complete, while the imperfect places the action, etc., in a more direct relation to the judgement or feeling of the speaker." 40 The same question perhaps occurs to the reader as occurred to this writer: if it is the imperfect which places the action "in a more direct relation to the judgement or feeling of the speaker," whereas the perfect indicates "what is actually complete," how is it that, on the basis of Knudtzon's arguments, the authors modified their definition of the perfect in the direction of allowing more for the point of view of the speaker? Perhaps fuller information would remove what is only an apparent difficulty. Unfortunately, no more information is given.

This grammar also rejects the term "waw conversive," and adopts as most expressive of the syntactical relation, the term "waw consecutive." 41 Its definitions of the imperfect and perfect with waw consecutive may as well be given side by side also. "The imperfect with waw consecutive ... serves to express actions, events, or states,
which are to be regarded as the temporal or logical sequel of actions, events, or states mentioned immediately before."

"The perfect, like the imperfect ... is used with waw consecutive ... to express actions, events, or states, which are to be attached to what precedes, in a more or less close relation, as its temporal or logical consequence." 42

It is then remarked that it is a striking peculiarity of the Hebrew, thus to alternate the perfect and imperfect, and that an expressive variety is thus achieved, "an action conceived as being still in progress (imperfect, etc.,) reaching afterwards in the perfect a calm and settled conclusion, in order to be again exhibited in movement in the imperfect, and vice versa." Depending upon the intention of the speaker, an action is viewed either as the consequence of what has preceded, or as simply coordinate with it. In the latter case, it is placed in the same tense as the previous verb. 43

The difficulty of really explaining all this is frankly conceded in a footnote. If, they say, the idea of a waw consecutive is given up, and if the fact is accepted that the perfect and imperfect consecutives "cannot possibly be used in a way which contradicts their fundamental character," then "it is difficult to give a proper explanation of this phenomenon." 44 So indeed it is. So far Gesenius-Kautzs.

A. B. Davidson (1831-1902) — We close this section with a few quotations from one other grammarian whose name may be familiar to us: A. B. Davidson. We quote from the 19th edition (1914) of his Introductory Hebrew Grammar, originally published in 1874.

"The verb has not Tenses strictly speaking. It has two forms, which express not time but the quality of an action as complete or incomplete; the one expresses a finished action, and is called the perfect, the other an unfinished action, and is called the imperfect." 45

On the consecutive constructions, he writes: "But it must not be supposed — as was implied by the old name waw conversive — that the waw really converts the one tense into the other: that is impossible. Various explanations of this curious phenomenon have been offered, but none will
be probable which contradicts the fundamental character of the perfect and imperfect as already explained." 46 Note that he does not offer his own explanation.

One other interesting statement: "The drawing back of the Tone in waw consec. impf. very well suggests its connexion with what precedes, and the throwing of it forward in waw consec. perf. suggests its connexion with what follows." 47

Hans Bauer

The aspect theory held the field. But it did not pass unchallenged. A grammarian arose named Hans Bauer (1878-1937) who vigorously opposed it. He argued "that the two verb forms of Semitic, as is normally the case in many languages, are primarily employed to denote difference in time point (tense) and not time continuance (aspect, Aktionsart)." 48 Among other writings, he co-authored, with P. Leander, a large work entitled Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments, 1922. That Driver and Bauer were the leading exponents of opposing theories is seen from this quotation, taken from a book review of Brockelmann's Hebräische Syntax: "The author is content to give an outline description of the views of S. R. Driver and H. Bauer, to note the support which Bauer's theory has received from G. Bergstrasser, G. R. Driver, and F. R. Blake, and to indicate his rejection of Bauer's theory and the gist of his own." 49

Understandably, none of Bauer's writings were examined in preparing these notes. But it is important to have some understanding of what Bauer was talking about, and we therefore offer the following summary of his theory, taken from the Encyclopedia Judaica. It is worth careful study.

"He worked on the assumption (which others had made before him) that the imperfect was in the early stages of the language the only defined verbal form (i.e., the all-tempora: Aorist), while the perfect was originally a nominal form (i.e., a type of participle: nominal), and thus close in meaning to the present tense. The nominal participle has two temporal qualities, according to the meaning of each verb: an act done now or continuously; or an act,
completed in the past, whose results are felt in the present. The second quality (*perfectum praesens*) is likely to develop into the *praeteritum*. In each of the Semitic languages, one of these qualities became the primary: in Akkadian, the former (Bauer equates the form *ikasad* with the perfect of the other languages); in Aramaic, Arabic, Ethiopic, and even Phoenician, the latter. As a result the semantic field of the all-tempora form became limited in its meaning. In Akkadian it is used as the perfect, but in the other languages as the present-future. Biblical Hebrew, which Bauer considered a mixed language, in this respect stands midway: the conversive tenses reflect the Akkadian usage, while the regular tenses are comparable to the use in other Semitic languages. His view of the mixed nature of Hebrew ("early Canaanite base," close to Akkadian, with a "late layer" which is closer to the other Semitic languages) derives from certain cases of phonetic inconsistency, such as the vowels after the *Kof* in $\text{נֶפֶשׁ} (\text{kam})$ as opposed to $\text{נֶפֶשׁ} (\text{makom})$ which both are in Arabic $\text{نَمْ} (\text{qām}, \text{maqām})$.  

Thus, we are now confronted with weighty discussions of evidence from the historical development of the Semitic verbal system in the various languages. Such discussions are prominent in the writings of later grammarians, among whom is our next man.

**G. R. Driver**

S. R. Driver had a son named G. R. Driver, born in 1892. The son did not agree with his father. The book with which we are concerned is his *Problems of the Hebrew Verbal System*, published in 1936 (now out of print). We will let the *Encyclopedia Judaica* summarize for us what Driver was doing in this book. In it, "he explained the peculiarities of the Hebrew tense system and other features of Hebrew as resulting from the origin of Hebrew as a mixture of Canaanite and the original language spoken by the Israelites."  

The discussions and arguments of this book are based extensively on phenomena of the cognate languages, Akkadian in particular, and much of the book is therefore beyond
the ability of this writer to understand, much less evaluate. We will try, however, to set forth some of the pertinent points from Chapter IX, entitled "Hebrew Consecutive Constructions."

Driver opens this chapter by advancing various criticisms of the views of other grammarians, particularly those of his father, which were widely accepted. For one thing, he suggests that it may be something of a double standard not only to state that the imperfect, in opposition to the perfect, expresses completed action, but then also to state that the imperfect describes action as nascent or emergent. Furthermore, he claims that the usual theories concerning the Semitic tenses explain only with great difficulty, if at all, a number of idiomatic uses of the two tenses. He regards the purely preterite use of the imperfect to be at times undeniable, especially after the particle ""āz,"" to name but one. Then, after citing the views of a certain Lambert, who had already suggested at the beginning of the 19th century that the ordinary Hebrew perfect and the perfect with waw consecutive were actually totally distinct forms, and that likewise the ordinary Hebrew imperfect and the imperfect with waw consecutive were similarly distinct in their origin, Driver says: "In fact, some such hypothesis alone seems capable of meeting satisfactorily all the difficulties presented by this complex system." 53

If I understand Driver's theory correctly, he says that there was a proto-Semitic verb form, capable of describing action in any period of time: past, present, or future. From this form there evolved the Hebrew perfect, qatal, which became the form describing completed action in past time, but which also retained some of the universal force of the primitive form from which it evolved, and was occasionally used in certain contexts with a present or future sense. Its usage with a future sense occurred "in poetry which is wont to preserve archaistic usages, in the prophetic language which is in its very nature poetical, and in prose when marked by certain safeguards, namely with consecutive waw and certain other particles" 54 (underlining mine).

This development of qatal left an opening for the development of a tense for every kind of incomplete action. "Thus qatal became a pure tense restricted almost entirely
to past time ... Hebrew, then, having a perfect, had no great need of a separate preterite tense but only of one describing the reverse of completed, i.e. incomplete, action." 55 But the form from which the Hebrew imperfect developed was originally used also as a preterite. This preterite usage of the Hebrew imperfect survived "sporadically in poetry and normally also in prose after certain particles." 56 (Among these particles would be the strong form of waw (י'); but note that also other particles are included.)

In the rest of the chapter, Driver supports this position with various interesting considerations concerning accents and conjunctions. Concerning accents he says: "The accentuation of the Hebrew verb, then, in the construction with consecutive waw is that of the primitive Semitic speech as exhibited in the Accadian language and must therefore be regarded not as a peculiarity invented by the Hebrews but as an archaism surviving from the common proto-Semitic speech." 57 He claims that his theory well explains facts accounted for only unsatisfactorily by previous attempts to solve the problems of the Hebrew verbal system. 58

Most of us are familiar with Weingreen's Hebrew Grammar, second edition, 1959. At the end (pp. 252-253) there is a note appended, in which G. R. Driver supplies a succinct explanation of his views regarding the Hebrew consecutive constructions. A good portion of the material in the chapter of Driver's book which we have examined is well summarized there. What is it that Driver has done? He has renounced any attempt to explain on logical grounds these constructions, as well as other idioms which he believes the aspect theory leaves unexplained. Instead, he offers an explanation based on the historical development of the Hebrew language.

R. Wehrwein

FOOTNOTES

13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p. 3.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., p. 5.
19. Ibid., pp. 28-29.
20. Ibid., p. 27.
21. Ibid., p. 36.
22. Harper quotes Driver on p. 60 of his *Elements of Hebrew Syntax by an Inductive Method*, 1888. Referring to pp. 41 and 42 of the 1881 edition, he quotes Driver thus: "While the Imperfect multiplies an action, the Participle prolongs it; the one presents a series of units, the other, a continuous line." On p. 315, Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar* (2nd English edition) cites approvingly Driver's stress upon this distinction between the participle and the imperfect.
24. Ibid., pp. 72-73.
25. Ibid., p. 71.
26. Ibid., p. 72.
27. Ibid., p. 73.
28. Ibid., p. 117.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., p. 118.
31. Ibid.
34. Ibid., pp. 69-70.
35. Ibid., p. 70.
36. Ibid., p. 76.
38. Ibid., p. 313.
39. Ibid., p. 309.
40. Ibid., p. 314.
41. Ibid., p. 133, footnote.
42. Ibid., p. 326, p. 330.
43. Ibid., pp. 330-331.
44. Ibid., p. 330, footnote.
46. Ibid., p. 84.
47. Ibid., p. 86. This statement has elicited criticism, for example from G. R. Driver, who, on p. 85 of his Problems of the Hebrew Verbal System (1936), calls this "a purely superficial observation which does not explain the phenomenon." Note also that Davidson's suggestion is not in harmony with what other aspect theorists have said about the close connection of the waw cons. perf. with what precedes.
51. "Driver, G. R." Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. VI, column 230. As noted before in the section on Bauer, G. R. Driver can be broadly classed as a supporter of Bauer's theory, and an opponent of his father's theory. But
his agreement with Bauer was not complete, either. In this same chapter he writes that Bauer's explanation of the waw consecutive construction with the perfect "is less satisfactory" than his explanation of the consecutive construction with the imperfect (p. 93). On p. 96 he says that Bauer and Leander "are only partly right but also partly wrong in calling the Hebrew perfect and imperfect tenses respectively nominal and aorist; for these terms are applicable only to the archaistic Accadian forms and are entirely unsuitable to describe the proper Hebrew tenses." We need not detain ourselves in trying to pinpoint further differences between them.

53. Ibid., p. 88.
54. Ibid., pp. 88-89.
55. Ibid., p. 83.
56. Ibid., p. 89.
57. Ibid., pp. 89-90.
58. Ibid., p. 94f.

HOMILETICAL HINTS FROM I AND II CORINTHIANS

(Continued)

In the previous article of this series we entered upon a study of Paul's two letters to the Corinthians. We approach these epistles with the purpose of gaining from them practical hints in the carrying-on of our Gospel ministry, and particularly that most important aspect of our calling: the preparation and delivery of sermons. Last time we spoke in some detail of the importance of keeping our call before us at all times, both when we sit down to write a sermon, and when we later step into the pulpit to present it to our people. We spoke of how the apostle Paul was moved, not by some fleshly motive, but by love for Christ who first loved him, to proclaim the Gospel. We now proceed further with our study of these two letters of Paul.
II.

As far as the content of his preaching was concerned, Paul said that Christ had sent him "to preach the Gospel" (I Cor. 1:17). The Gospel is the joyful message of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. One might say that the Gospel was the beginning, middle, and end of his letters. In both epistles he sent the same greetings to the congregation at the very beginning: "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:3; II Cor. 1:2). In both epistles he concludes with the wish that the grace of God in Christ Jesus might be with them (I Cor. 16:23; II Cor. 13:14). Moreover, he sets forth the central sermon theme of all his preaching in the words: "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2). "We preach not ourselves," not our human thoughts and opinions, as though people should believe in us (this is what the false prophets did, II Cor. 10:12), "but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (II Cor. 4:5). Just as God on the very first day of Creation gave the command: "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3), so this same creative God has shined in our hearts "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:6).

Since this was the case, he wanted the Word of the cross to be his only wisdom. He wanted to preach nothing other than Christ, for we have the true knowledge of God only in Christ. In Christ we see the grace of God personified. Paul occupied the office of the New Testament, that office which was established for the specific purpose of proclaiming the reconciliation that Christ had accomplished. He looked upon himself as an ambassador, who invited people to enjoy the benefits of the reconciliation completed by Christ (II Cor. 5:18-21). He calls his preaching simply "the preaching of the cross" (I Cor. 1:18), because Christ's death on the cross was the very heart and core of the entire work which the Son of God came to accomplish on earth. In Paul's preaching, this fact always stood out in clear prominence, that Christ "was made to be sin for us," that God placed the sins of the world upon Him, in order that He might be the atoning sacrifice for all mankind. Therefore, since He died for all, they have all died (II Cor. 5:14). And in this way He has become
the righteousness which avails before God (II Cor. 5:21). This fact is confirmed and revealed by His resurrection, as Paul says: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (I Cor. 15:17). This is the only immovable foundation of our salvation. "Other foundation can no man lay" (I Cor. 3:11). Paul built on this foundation, since he proclaimed the Word of reconciliation.

Paul thus shows us the way. If we wish our preaching to bear rich results, which will be evident also in eternity, then we have no other recourse than to preach Christ. And to preach Christ means to preach the Gospel. The Gospel is in no way a series of rules for living, as is the case with the religious systems promulgated by those who imagine themselves to be wiser than the Holy Spirit. We cherish the warning of a sainted professor, who advised extreme care in the way we use the word "must" in our sermons. "We don't want a lot of musty preachers!" No, the Gospel is the joyful message of Christ, of His person and His work, and especially of His death on the cross as our Substitute. If anything or anyone would tend to remove our eyes from this central kernel of Christian doctrine, causing it to be obscured or displaced, then we should at once tread it under foot. Luther's golden saying should ring forth from each and every one of our sermons: "In my heart there reigns, and shall ever reign, this one article, namely, faith in my dear Lord Christ, which is the sole beginning, middle, and end of all spiritual and godly thoughts which I may have at any time, day or night" (St. L. Ed. IX:9). To the Corinthians Paul wrote: "Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand" (II Cor. 1:24). We are surely to be "helpers of the joy" of our hearers! And the only way in which we can be such helpers is by trying to clear away whatever would hinder and disturb their joy. This would include such things as: sin, fear concerning God's wrath and displeasure, the terror of the Law and its threats, doubt, as well as fear of death and hell. At the same time, we are to preach the "joy of the Holy Ghost" into their hearts (I Thess. 1:6). We are to bring souls to a certainty of the grace of God and of righteousness, and surely also of eternal life. If we are to carry out this huge assignment, there is no other way that it can be done than by preaching Christ "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"
So Christ is to be preached. But let Him be presented for what He is: not merely as another great teacher and philosopher and performer of miracles, nor as a paragon of virtue, nor as a new Law-giver who comes to add new requirements to those which were set forth by Moses. Rather, let Him be preached as Christ the crucified! Oh, the world indeed considers this Gospel to be just so much foolishness! It just doesn't fit in with the wise thoughts of human reason. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). Should we, then, even try to meet reason halfway, and try to make the preaching of the cross more palatable to the world? The Corinthians would have liked it if St. Paul had done this very thing. But the Apostle didn't give in to such desires. He didn't want his knowledge and abilities to be lord over the Gospel, but to be subject to it. In the firmest manner possible, he rejected all human reason as soon as it wanted to be anything but a servant in the proclaiming of the Gospel. "It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent ... For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:19,21). Even though this Gospel cannot be comprehended by the world in its intellectual conceit, and even though the world finds it to be an unsolvable riddle and an irreconcilable contradiction, nevertheless it is still "wisdom among them that are perfect," a wisdom which can be achieved only through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:6ff.). The Gospel comprises a harmonious whole, a unity, for Jesus Christ "was not yea and nay," was not an unreliable wavering to and fro, but "in Him was yea" (II Cor. 1:17-19).

Also in our times it is certainly the case that natural man does not want to endure the "foolish" preaching of the Gospel. People want to change this doctrine, and develop it into some sort of philosophical system. But woe unto us if we try to accommodate the rambling streams of our times. It is useless to think that we must somehow polish and remodel the old truths of God's Word in order to avoid being called fools by this progressive world in
which we live! We would be bitterly deceiving ourselves if we were to imagine that we can in some way prepare the ground for the Gospel by adapting it to some of the prevailing opinions of the world. Our assignment is simply to preach that which God has revealed to us through His Holy Spirit. And as far as our own person is concerned, we are to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," and are to bring our hearers into this same captivity (II Cor. 10:5).

The Apostle says: "We are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God" (II Cor. 2:17). Why does he not wish to be numbered among those who corrupt and falsify the Gospel by human emendations and so-called improvements? The first reason is this, that the Gospel was revealed to him by God through His Holy Spirit. It was not revealed to him merely in a general sort of outline, but also in its individual parts, and even in the very words and phrases with which it is set forth. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Cor. 2:13). "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" (I Cor. 11:23). "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received" (I Cor. 15:3). His conscience was bound to these words of divine revelation, for "we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (II Cor. 13:8). Therefore he could not permit even the smallest dot over an "i" to be changed or removed. We have this same revelation of God in the inspired Word of the prophets and apostles, in the Scriptures which we have before us. When we add to this Word or take away from it, then we violate the sanctuary of God. The Word of Scripture can and should be the only source and judge of our preaching. The work of the preacher is not to produce something new, but he is rather to explain and to make appropriate applications from the heavenly words which lie before us in the Scriptures.

A second reason why St. Paul rejected each and every alteration of the Gospel is this, that he would then be deceiving his hearers in a matter as important as the salvation of their souls. People cannot be saved by any other "gospel" than that which the Apostle had proclaimed. "I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by
which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain" (I Cor. 15:1-2). Our faith is vain and our hope is lost if we give up the Word of the cross. Surely that is a fact which we, too, should always keep in mind. If we permit even the smallest detail to be taken away from the Gospel, then we are giving up the only means we have by which we ourselves together with our hearers can be saved. Then we rob them, as well as ourselves, of the spiritual and heavenly blessings which Christ would give to them through our ministry. The Gospel alone, and that means the entire and complete Gospel, must be the content of our preaching! Here, too, the words stand true: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (I Cor. 16:22).

Therefore Paul distinguished very sharply between Law and Gospel. He set forth the Gospel with great earnestness indeed. To him grace was really grace, and was of such a nature that it could not endure merit and works alongside of itself. The work of Christ was complete and perfect, and could not possibly be made still more perfect by the works of men's hands. The Word of God is actually a Means of Grace. It is the hand of God by which He offers to us the righteousness which Christ has earned. Faith is not a work of the Law. It is not a necessary condition which man must carry out in order that the merit of Christ might become effective for him. Rather, faith is the empty, receiving hand which grasps the righteousness which has already been pronounced by God. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:18-20). Therefore he preached the Gospel in its full purity.

But Paul was surely no Antinomian ("against the Law"). On the contrary, he struck powerful blows with the thundering axe of the Law against sin in every form. He held before the congregation the threat of eternal punishment if they did not repent of their sins. He did not do this in the manner of the false apostles, who indeed spoke much
about God's Law, but who then directed people to their own works, and thereby dulled the cutting edge of the Law's demands. Paul preached the Law in such a way, that the hearts and consciences of the people would be cut to the quick. This was the case, both in the words he wrote when he was absent from them, and also in the words he spoke when he was present with them. "For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end" (II Cor. 1:13). "For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible. Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present. For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (II Cor. 10:10-12).

But Paul did not expect salvation to result from this preaching of the Law. He says: "The letter killeth," the Law only arouses anger and preaches damnation, "but the spirit giveth life," only the Gospel makes alive and gives the Spirit and life and righteousness (II Cor. 3:6-9). The Law must prepare the way for the Gospel. For the Gospel is intended only for sinners troubled by their sins. When the Law has done its work, then the Gospel must follow in all of its sweetness and power, without any conditions and reservations being added, "lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Cor. 2:11).

As evangelical preachers, we are ambassadors who beseech people in Christ's stead: God is reconciled; be ye reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:20). This preaching of the Gospel is our real assignment. And this cannot be done successfully without the preaching of the Law. So the preacher of the Gospel must also preach the Law. It is entirely proper to use that familiar comparison of the pastor's office with that of the physician. A physician's first assignment is to heal. But in order for him to do this, it is often necessary for him to make incisions with his scalpel, and cut away in a seemingly merciless manner. So also the Law knows no mercy. Its very essence is to demand and threaten. And this is how it must be preached.
In his well-known book on *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, Dr. C. F. W. Walther said: "The Law must be preached as though there were no Gospel, and the Gospel must be preached as though there were no Law." Any sweetness that a person brings into the Law weakens it, so that it is no longer able to work with its full power. Sins which may prevail within a congregation, or which may be typical sins of the times, must be exposed in the light of the Law. The natural, in-born corruption of the heart becomes manifest in these sins. The conscience must be sharpened over against such sins, since it may well become dulled through constant exposure to them. But since the Law itself says nothing whatever about grace or mercy, the preacher should use it only to reach his goal, which is, that his hearers be terrified by it. When this has been accomplished, then he comes with the Gospel of the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

And even when the Apostle preached the Law according to its so-called Third Use (as a rule and guide, exhorting his hearers to godliness), he did not forget that the power to do good works and to fight against sin flows only from the Gospel. Therefore he based his exhortations on the reminder that as Christians they should remember their high calling. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. 3:16). "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" (I Cor. 6:2). "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid" (I Cor. 6:15). "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men" (I Cor. 7:23). "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say" (I Cor. 10:15). In many other passages the Apostle Paul thus held out to the Christians their high calling.

In addition, he held before them the blessings which they had received through faith. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (I Cor. 5:7-8). "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in
your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. 6: 20). "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (II Cor. 8:9). "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you" (II Cor. 10:1).

Paul directed his hearers to the love toward God which should be found among Christians. "If any man love God, the same is known of him" (I Cor. 8:3). Neither will we succeed in making Christians more pious through the preaching of the Law. With the Law we can indeed point out to them what truly good works are. But only the Gospel can give either the desire or the ability to do truly good works in the sight of God. The Gospel strengthens the new man, so that its growth becomes ever more evident in every way. Thus Christ the crucified will necessarily be the starting point, the center, and the goal of our preaching.

(To be concluded)

A. Schulz

IN CHRIST JESUS

PERFECT AND COMPLETE IN CHRIST

This is the condition of each believer in Jesus Christ. So Paul wrote to the Colossians. In his letter Paul held aloft the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whose redemption we have the forgiveness of sins; who is the very Image of the invisible God; the Firstborn in relation to all creation, for He is the very Creator of the universe; the eternal One; the Head of the Church; the Firstborn from the dead; the One Person in whom all ful-
ness dwells; the One who brought peace and reconciled all things unto Himself; the Mystery concealing all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; the One in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily. What a heaping up of expressions, phrases, clauses — all exalting our Lord Jesus Christ above everything and everyone in heaven and on earth! Why this paean?

Theology is practical! Jesus Christ is exalted by Paul because in Him all believers are exalted. Col. 2:9 is a memory passage for catechetical students because of its capsulated christological truth: "In him — JESUS CHRIST — dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily!" So what? What benefit is this fact to the common Christian? Paul continued, "And ye are complete in him" — that same JESUS CHRIST.

This is the truth that was being challenged and denied in Colosse, even as in our day. There were those who were peddling a "superior" form of Christianity, which consisted in subservience to the Mosaic law (2:16), worshipping angels (2:18), and saying "No" to certain forms of matter (2:21). It was an effort to attain a superior sanctification and so a higher form of Christianity through legalism, the occult worship of angels, and asceticism. To all these efforts, which were in fact a rejection of Christ, Paul said "No!" He exalted Christ because Christ exalts all believers.

The believer is perfect or mature (τέλεως) and complete (πεπληρωμένος). These are synonymous terms, yet with differing concepts and emphases. A τελεός is a goal. The sinner reaches his goal, his maturity, the highest stage of development possible in this life when he is "in Christ Jesus." He reaches that goal the moment he is brought to faith in Christ, but the word has an eschatological overtone that points to a fuller maturity which shall be manifest when the sinner appears with Christ in glory (3:4). The word "complete" presents the picture of a vessel filled to the brim, with no possible moral or spiritual excellence lacking or capable of being added when he is "in Christ Jesus." "Complete" is a perfect participle, indicating that the moment a sinner is brought to faith in Christ, he is "complete" with this "completeness" continuing on as long as he remains in Christ.
In 1:28 Paul states that the purpose of his Gospel ministry is to "present every man perfect (τέλεων) in Christ Jesus." In 2:9-10 he writes, "In him — Christ Jesus — dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, And ye are complete (filled up — πεπληρωμένον) in him." In 4:12 Paul uses both terms, stating that the efforts of Epaphras, the founder of the congregation, had been directed toward this end, that "ye may stand perfect (τέλεων) and complete (πεπληρωμένον) in all the will of God."

A Christian is perfect, mature, complete, filled up "in Christ Jesus." Outside of Christ he is as a fish lying on the shore or a mammal submerged in the waters — fallen from grace and doomed to death.

Wherein does that perfectness or maturity and completeness consist? In Christ Jesus is all knowledge and wisdom — the key to all theology, the key to understanding God's relations to man and the sinner's relations to God. That knowledge is the personal experience that God loved and loves sinners who stand condemned before the bar of divine holiness and justice, that despite the fact that all sinners are worthy of eternal death God has forgiven all in and through Christ Jesus. Thus the highest and most lofty knowledge available here on earth is the knowledge of the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

In Christ Jesus is righteousness; in man is unrighteousness. The virtues of man apart from Christ, the very best that the noblest of men can produce, praised and rewarded as they may be by men, are nothing more than glittering vices when viewed in the light of God's holiness. No man can stand divine inspection of his works. No man can pass the test or measure up to the divine norm. In Christ Jesus alone is there righteousness that satisfies the demands for unfailing and undiminished love Godward and manward.

In Christ Jesus is sanctification. The believer sins in all his good works; yet he is nonetheless holy in all his works because all his sins of commission and omission that attend upon his good works are forgiven and covered by the righteousness of Christ.

In Christ Jesus we have reached the goal of human ex-
istence, the fulness of human potential here on earth. In Him we are perfect and complete. Apart from Him we are but dust and ashes, the best that we can produce ourselves but filthy rags. In Him we live and shall live forevermore. Apart from Him is only death and eternal separation from God in the midst of indescribable anguish and torment.

**COMPLETE IN CHRIST** Can one be complete in Christ, yet incomplete; perfect or matured, yet maturing? Yes! This is not a contradiction, but a paradox. How so? St. Paul wrote with a present or "now" point of view and with a future or "eschatological" point of view.

"In him — JESUS CHRIST — dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him!" (Col. 2:9-10) That was for the Colossians and is for all Christians the present reality, the "now" of our situation.

But earlier, when speaking of his Gospel ministry, Paul had written, "We preach (Christ), warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that ye may present every man perfect (τελειωμένος) in Christ Jesus," (1:28). What does Paul have in mind when he speaks of "presenting" each and all of the Colossians? A line from his second letter to the Corinthians gives us the proper perspective: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," (II Cor. 5:10). Paul's perspective is eschatological, looking to the end time of final judgment, which likewise marks the time of the entrance into the final goal for the sinner, that of living ἐν δόξῃ, (3:4). So also in the closing remarks of his letter to the Colossians Paul wrote: "Ephphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect (τελειωμένος) and complete in all the will of God," (4:12). Again, the viewpoint is eschatological.

We observe also that after stating that the Colossians were complete in Christ, Paul continues in a subsequent section, chapter three, to warn against the lusts of the flesh and to encourage the fruits of faith: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," (3:5), ... "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, meekness ..." (3:12). In 3:10 Paul speaks of the Colossians as people who "have put on
the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." It would appear as though the Colossians possessed all knowledge, but not so, for in the opening section of his letter Paul had told the Colossians that he had not ceased "to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in (or by means of) the knowledge of God." Paul prayed both for an increase of knowledge and for a greater effectiveness of that knowledge in the lives of the Colossians.

How are we to understand this glorious completeness in Christ, yet continuing maturing until that last great day? In this way: We and all believers are complete in Christ now by imputation. All of the gifts of Christ — righteousness and holiness, knowledge and wisdom, and sanctification — are ours, wholly and completely, by imputation, that is, by faith in Christ Jesus now. Yet it has pleased the Lord, in His infinite wisdom, to let remain in each child of God his sinful flesh, indwelling sin, which clings to him and remains stubbornly and unalterably contrary to every Word of God, both Law and Gospel, and persistently and consistently immune to any and every impulse of the Holy Spirit. So it is that we are both presently complete in Christ by imputation, yet presently ever maturing in Christ until the moment of death and/or the coming of our Lord at the end of time.

Consider these parallels: Redemption is complete in Christ, yet we await a final redemption. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," (Rom. 3:24), ... "we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," (Rom. 8:23).

Justification is complete in Christ, yet justifying is on-going. The Gospel is the proclamation and so the offer of "the righteousness of God," (Rom. 1:17), in Christ, but "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," (Rom. 3:28). "Righteousness" and "justify" are a noun and verbal form of the same root in Greek. The justification of the world is complete in Christ (objective justification); it is appropriated by faith in an on-going
action on the part of God (subjective justification), till
the end of time, for we daily sin much and He daily and
richly forgives all our sins.

So also with reconciliation: "God was in Christ re-
conciling the world unto himself," (II Cor. 5:19). Thus
the world was and is objectively reconciled in Christ. Then
follows the appeal, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye
reconciled to God," (II Cor. 5:20). Again, reconciling is
both complete in Christ and an on-going process as each in-
dividual is brought to faith and continues in faith until
the last day.

Paul began his first letter to the Corinthians by tes-
tifying that our sanctification is complete in Christ: "Of
him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us ...sanctification," (I Cor. 1:30). The same Paul concluded
his first letter to the Thessalonians with the wish that
"the very God of peace sanctify you wholly," (I Thess. 5:
23). We are sanctified, yet not wholly. What is lacking
in our sanctification is stated by Luther in his well-known
observation: "A pious man sins in all his good works."
Yet that we are completely sanctified is expressed by Aug-
ustine in this way: "All the commandments of God are ful-
filled when whatever is not done is forgiven." So we are
now sanctified in Christ by faith by which the rightous-
ness of Christ is continually imputed to us. We continue
to be sanctified through the on-going work of the Holy
Spirit who works faith by the Gospel. Yet we await the
time when we shall be sanctified in glory.

All history is complete in Christ, "for all the promis-
es of God in him (Christ) are yea, and in him Amen," (II
Cor. 1:20). Yet those promises are still working them-
sele out historically until the consummation when Christ
comes.

**DISROBING**

What activity is continually charac-

**ENROBING**

teristic of a Christian who is at

once complete in Christ, yet ever

maturing in Christ, who is both justified and sanctified

in Christ, yet ever being justified and sanctified in

Christ? It is a spiritual activity that Scripture de-
scribes as disrobing and enrobing, undressing and dress-
ing, putting off and putting on.
Again, at the beginning of chapter three of his letter to the Colossians St. Paul stresses the tension between the now situation of the Christian and his future situation. Now "ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," (3:3). Now we are dead to the flesh, the world, and the devil, while being alive, righteous, sanctified in Christ. But that condition, which is ours by imputation of all the blessings of Christ to us, is hid from the eyes of the world, frequently from our own eyes! "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," (3:4). That's the future, the last day and forever thereafter. Then, and only then, shall what is hidden be revealed. Then we shall be fully matured, wholly sanctified, and glorified through Christ. What unspeakable glory awaits us!

How are Christians to manifest and give evidence of what is hidden now, but shall one day be revealed? By daily disrobing and enrobing, putting off and putting on. St. Paul carries this out in verse 5 through 15 of Colossians 3, then continuing by applying the activity to specific situations in which there is always a relationship of one to another: wives, husbands, children, fathers, slaves, and masters.

The first disrobing is expressed in a violent manner: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," (3:5). Then follows an enumeration of some of the lusts of the flesh that are to be put to death. In verse 8 the call comes again to "put off all these!" What is to be put off? "Anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another."

Next the entire matter is summed up: "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds," (3:9). The "old man" is the spiritual sickness in which we are born that pollutes our thinking, willing, and feeling.

Disrobing alone would leave us naked. So a complementary activity is necessary: "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him," (3:10).

What does this "putting on the new man" mean or involve or entail? It is the ethical activity of enrobing
or dressing oneself in godly virtues. It is an exhortation to the Spirit-given "heart of flesh," (Ez. 11:19), to enlist the members of the body "as instruments of righteousness," (Rom. 6:13), to the end that the Christian walk according to the law written in his inward parts and in his heart, (Jer. 31:33). St. Paul expresses that exhortation in his letter to the Colossians in these words: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowls of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another ... put on charity ... let the peace of God rule in your hearts ... Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly ... And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him," (3:12-17).

Note carefully that these commands to disrobe and enrobe, to put off and put on, are directed to Christians, who had previously been told and assured that they were and are "complete in him — CHRIST," (2:10). What a gloriously paradoxical truth this is! We live day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute complete in Christ by faith, for His righteousness/forgiveness is constantly imputed to us. So we can live, always ready and prepared to die, so that we may live forevermore. Yet our Lord has not chosen to sanctify us wholly, except by imputation. He has left the cross of the flesh in us with the result that our daily, hourly, minute by minute life is to be a putting off and a putting on until the moment of death when we put off the flesh permanently and the moment of the resurrection when we put on the new man wholly and eternally.

Paul expresses the same truths in the companion letter to the Ephesians, beginning in chapter 4. The Lord of the Church established the public ministry of the Gospel to bring individuals "unto a perfect man" (εις ἄνδρα τελειου). Beginning at verse 17 and continuing to the end of the epistle Paul spells out this maturing in terms of "disrobing and enrobing, putting off and putting on." "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man ... And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," (4:22-24). Specific examples of "putting off" and "putting on" follow, which in turn are followed, as in Colossians, by applications to persons in specific relationships.
A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: CREATION TO RESTORATION "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them," (Gen. 1:27). God wanted man to reflect His nature. Man in his intellectual, volitional, and emotional life was to reflect the holy, moral will of his Creator, and that freely and willingly. In order that it might be evident whether man, who was created with a morally free will, would exercise that freedom of will in a way that reflected his being created in the image of God was the purpose of the test command in the garden. Man failed the test.

Scripture does not say in express words that the image of God was lost to man. It prefers, rather, to outline the degeneration of man over the centuries that led God to the determination that He had to destroy the first world. Having done that, God declared that judgment was no cure, "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," (Gen. 8:21). Judgment could not even begin to enable man again to reflect the moral nature of his Creator.

Yet God was determined that man should fulfill his original intention that man should image or reflect the holy, moral nature of his Creator. The Father, who knew all things, including the tragedy of the fall into sin, predestinated us already from eternity "to be conformed to the image of his Son," (Rom. 8:29).

Then in the fulness of the time "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," (Gal. 4:4). In so living under the law, which is the verbalization of the eternal, immutable, moral will of God, the Son reflected in every relationship with His heavenly Father and His earthly family, with men and women, friends and enemies the moral will of His Father. As a man among men, subject to the temptations common to man, He lived as "the image of the invisible God," (Col. 1:15). Jesus lived freely and fully as God wanted Adam and Eve to live, as He wants all men to live, and as all the inhabitants of heaven shall live.

Man, however, is born to live in a way that does not reflect the image of God. Something that was once man's in the garden of Eden, but that has been lost, must be re-
stored. The prophets indicated the need: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," (Ps. 110:3). "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts," (Jer. 31:33). Our Lord made rebirth a prerequisite for entrance into the Kingdom of God, (John 3:5).

The moment the Spirit of God creates faith in Jesus Christ, that gives the sinner pardon from his sins and covers him with the protective shield of the righteousness of Christ, He simultaneously makes the sinner a new creature, (II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15).

That which is new, completely different from the old, lives to do its work of reflecting the moral will of God in an environment of the old, which continues to oppose the moral will of God at every point. The result is that the life of a child of God is characterized by unceasing struggle, (Gal. 5:17). The new creation, the restored image, the inward man, the new man — however he is called in Scripture — is to reflect the holy, moral will of God in the entire intellectual, volitional, and emotional life of the child of God. Though this is impossible as long as the flesh remains, the Christian is to pursue this goal with unflagging zeal.

Because the Christian cannot and does not completely reflect the holy will of God in his life, Scripture speaks as it does. It exhorts the Christian, who is completely and perfectly justified and sanctified in Christ, decisively to put on the new man, who is already on but in a manner that needs continual renewing. Though he has been put on, he never succeeds in reflecting perfectly the will of his holy Creator. As long as the Christian remains in faith in Christ Jesus, he is covered with the protective shield of Christ's righteousness which grants him perfect sanctification. Yet during this same time, yea until death, he is exhorted daily to put on the new man and put off the old, that is, live a life of daily repentance, until he loses his flesh in death and is granted the resurrection body in life hereafter henceforth to reflect completely and fully the holy moral will of his Creator.

Until then the Christian at times cries out in anguish with St. Paul: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). At times
he talks to himself and exhorts himself as did the psalmist: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God!" (Ps. 42:11). So we live from day to day, ever and always complete in Christ, yet ever and always maturing until that day when we shall wholly, fully, perfectly, freely reflect the holiness of our God in an untarnished environment of love.

Paul F. Nolting

THE LCMS — STILL A DIVIDED BODY

The extensive efforts of a formerly orthodox church body to return to its former doctrinal purity and spiritual strength has made the news over and over again. In many respects it is a pathetic struggle, not only because of its organizational overtones, its constitution and handbook approaches to the internal upheavals, but also because the original problem which started the whole trouble has not been squarely faced and brought into focus. The fruit and results of a loose and unscriptural fellowship principle and practice are all too apparent in the festering growth of liberalism which has fastened itself on the body. This has in recent times been reflected in a very tangible and concrete way, for instance, in the counting of votes on every crucial issue in convention sessions. For every six votes for the more conservative stand, four votes have been registered on the liberal side of the question.
It is quite evident to the discriminating observer that despite all the protestations of the administration to the contrary, this body is deeply divided and the lines are becoming more solidly drawn. There is even now talk of clusters of congregations gathering for the purpose of providing asylum for those who feel undue administrative pressures to get them back in line or suffer the consequences. Organizations formed in protest to synodical resolutions exist and meet regularly and even siphon off money that would normally flow into the synod's treasury. District presidents are being told that their offices are in jeopardy if they continue to ordain and install synodically-uncertified men in congregations that have called them. The former president of the synod's largest seminary who was charged with false doctrine has been declared cleared of the charge through a designated synodical channel, but the guilty one continues to be charged while serving 400 seminarians who severed themselves from the parent seminary at 801 De Mun, St. Louis, Missouri. It was reliably reported that the synodical president who initiated the proceedings against him during his original seminary incumbency, communed with him, using as a defense that the communion during a convocation was under the auspices of a local congregation with which, of course, both of them were in fellowship.

On both sides candidates for office have been openly promoted in a power struggle which has tended to sidetrack the main doctrinal issue. The latest report from the desk of the synodical president to the constituency tells the members that he is moving to the middle, avoiding what he calls the two extremes. Meanwhile, the conservative side has strongly urged the liberals to leave the church body, thus, of course, relieving the officials of the God-given responsibility of exercising doctrinal discipline by excluding the false teachers.

There is an inconsistency in all of this which seems to be disregarded. If the "conservative" majority should succeed in eliminating the extreme liberal element, the church body would still be in fellowship with the ALC, which defends the very views which those LCMS liberals espouse. The problem would still be there, and it will remain as long as the original fellowship question which brought about the rift in the Synodical Conference is
not faced and settled in a God-pleasing manner. As long as the administration plays on the string of synodical loyalty as one of the factors that will hold the body together (cf. Christianity Today, Oct. 25, 1974, p. 11), there can be little hope of a return to the old paths.

From all of this there is something to be learned. The Church, in the true sense of the word, consists of believers who have their life from the Word. Consequently, any rejuvenation or reconstruction cannot take place through external means, neither through resolutions, constitutions, handbooks, laws or ordinances, nor through the election of officers, the appointment of committees, reshuffling of boards, convening of convocations, and the like. The outward complexion may thus be changed, but as long as the spirit is untouched the problem will remain. Indeed, it is only through the revealed Word of God that there can be any hope of reconstruction. Through the holy evangelist John we have these words of Jesus recorded: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). It can be said, as a fact, of any group of confessing Christians that strength may be measured by faithful adherence to the infallible Word of God. As one of our revered fathers said: The Church, the spiritual communion, has its life from the Word; that is, it draws its spiritual life, its spiritual attitude, completely and alone from the revealed Word of God, even the Gospel. Indeed, when that Word is corrupted in any part, weakness sets in and death may follow.

There is a lesson to be learned from all of this, and if we don't take it to heart, then any rehearsal of the sad events taking place in the LCMS will have been in vain. There is nothing to be gained simply by passing on information to satisfy the curious and inquiring minds if we don't profit from it for ourselves, and if we don't accompany it with a fervent prayer to God that the erring may be brought to repentance and return to the old paths.

C. M. Gullerud
BRIEF BOOK NOTICES


A valuable addition to the pastor's book shelves, the present volume is another in the series of "classics" reprinted by Baker Book House. Alexander's purpose in this book was to "make Hengstenberg's Commentary on the Psalms ... more acceptable and useful to the English reader."


Typology is not a well-known or widely-practiced branch of theology in our circles. However, in view of the ever-increasing interest in eschatological studies, a survey of dispensationalism may not be amiss, at least to obtain a working knowledge of what is involved. This standard volume would serve in good stead in such study.

John Lau

AN ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT A PRICE INCREASE

When the Journal of Theology began its first volume in 1961, the subscription rate was $2.00 per year. This lasted for only two years, for the rate was raised to $3.00 per year beginning with the December, 1962, issue. The next change occurred with the issue of March, 1967, when the offer to furnish a two-year subscription for $5.50 was made for the first time.

The time has now come when another increase in the subscription rate has become necessary. The cost of printing our journal has increased approximately 40% over the cost two years ago. We are, therefore, increasing the yearly subscription rate to $4.00; we will offer a two-year subscription for $7.50. The new rate will go into effect with renewals and subscriptions entered after December 31, 1975.

John Lau, Managing Editor