

## **The Corinthian Repository (Nos. 9 – 20)**

9. A Brief Statement on the Glory of Christ – From the Second Epistle to the Corinthians
10. ‘The god of this world’
11. Christian in the face of Satanic Wiles, Death and the Judgment Seat.
12. A Brief note on 2 Corinthians 12:12
13. New Covenant, New Creation and the Reconciliation
14. A Brief Observation on 2 Corinthians 4:7
15. On the Churches of Galatia and Macedonia
16. ‘Dying together and Living together’
17. Motives of Christian Giving (Romans 15:27 and 2 Corinthians 8:8,9)
18. Unbelievers
19. The Apostle’s Beseeching
20. Compromise – Within and Without (1 Corinthians 5:2 and 2 Corinthians 11:4)

---

### **(9) A Brief Statement on the Glory of Christ – From the Second Epistle to the Corinthians**

P.B (04/23)

The Second Epistle of Corinthians deals with the two-fold glories of Christ. One is expressed in Chapter 3 and the other in Chapter 4. We shall briefly consider them:

In Chapter 3, the new covenant is disclosed. Lord Jesus appears as the One – who has accomplished the glory of God’s righteousness, after having settled the question of man’s responsibility and sin on the cross. Under the law, Moses had to veil his face, for the brightness of his face only had expressed the majesty of God’s claims on man in responsibility – and it only brought in condemnation and death. But, the brightness of the glory on Christ, the Lord signifies the elevation of man’s position in grace before God, for man (believer) in Christ – judicially gains acceptance and divine approval before God, for the question of his sin has been settled by the blood of Christ, and by His resurrection. The apostle says: ‘we use much boldness’ (v12). There was no boldness for man under the law to stand before God – but now, we see our position

raised to the highest position of heavenly excellence in Christ, even as He had gone to the depths of death and agony in order to answer to our condemnation and curse, on Himself – the vicarious sacrifice. Christ now in glory becomes the focus of the believer – the believer is identified with that glory, and his life here below is animated by tastes and thoughts in conjunction to that heavenly position and glory in which Christ is now entered – the place that discloses the righteousness of God by faith. The apostle says: ‘but we all looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face, are transformed to the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit’ (v18). Christ, here becomes the image of our new redeemed position before God – it is our new position before God, not under law and responsibility on earth, but in heavenly glory according to grace. We are transformed into that image by the power and enablement of the Spirit.

But in Chapter 4 – a different orb of glory is revealed about our Lord. Here, He is presented not just as the image of our redemptive place before God, that has been established owing to the glory of His obedience to die even the death of the cross, wherewith the New Covenant is sealed – but rather, here, He is the very expression of God’s image: ‘... so that the radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ, who is the image of God’ (v4). He is the very expression of all that is God in Himself – the image of God. In time – Christ, the Image of God is revealed to men and this is God revealing Himself to man. Chapter 3 is different, as it is Christ placed before God on our behalf – the image of the righteousness of God, in response to the judicial question of sin and transgression – it is the image that we appropriate by grace and through the Spirit, as to our position before God in Christ. In Chapter 4, it is God revealing Himself to us in Christ – the completeness of all divine revelation, and not just our position before God in Christ.

## **(10) ‘The god of this world’**

P.B (04/23)

The Gospel truth is simple – it is the wisdom and power of God to those who believe. It presents two things (2 Corinthians 4:4): ‘glad tidings of the glory of the Christ, who is the image of God’ – one, is the glad tidings with reference to the new position that man (believer) can possess before with respect to the righteousness of God through Christ’s redemptive work, and the second being the original display of what Christ is – the image of God. It is in one measure, man’s transition from the place of condemnation to the place of divine acceptance, even the imposition of God’s righteousness on him (the believer) by faith in Christ, and on the other measure – it is God’s fulness revealed in Christ to man. One is to do with our access before God’s presence in Christ, while in the other, it is to do with God’s coming to us, and revealing Himself to us in Christ.

However, the solemnity of this profound gospel truth is lost to men’s comprehension – since there is built a barricade of demonic superstructure of blinding power, that prevents man to

comprehend the saving power of the gospel: ‘in whom the god of this world has blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving, so that the radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine forth for them’ (2 Cor 4:4).

In 1st Corinthians – the unbelieving world treats the gospel as foolishness by its own hurtful ignorance and volitions. However, in 2nd Corinthians, a deeper root of iniquity is disclosed – the world rejects the gospel because of demonic wiles. This, as we shall see is the nature of the 2nd epistle to the Corinthians – it discloses the roots. In the 1st epistle of Corinthians, the apostle’s credentials were questioned, and had to be defended by the apostle. In the 2nd epistle, however, the apostle discloses the root of this acrimony – and that was the presence of the false prophets and apostles, that poisoned the Corinthian assembly against the apostle.

But coming back to our subject – the world is blinded by the power of Satan in rejecting the gospel truth – the blessedness of God’s revelation through Christ, and man’s place of acceptance before God by Christ. However – divine sovereignty shines through – God commanded light out of darkness (2 Cor 4:6). It was a divine fiat, that light must come from the very thing, that opposes it – darkness. And so it is with human nature – rebellious as it is, hardened as it is by the power of demonic hold – God’s sovereign grace in Christ breaks through the hardened barriers of our heart, and bestows upon us ‘the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ’ (2 Cor 4:6). In Christ, we see God’s glory to be not just saving grace, but that it is irresistible grace. We are the specimens of God’s sovereign grace in Christ that has torn down the assault of demonic power over our mind. By disobedience, Adam had known the knowledge of good and evil, and by law, Israel had known the knowledge of sin – but for us, it was by an act of divine sovereignty that we were allowed to have this knowledge of God’s glory. It was not necessary for divine sovereignty to shine for man to discover sin, but it needed the fathomless power of God’s infinite love and sovereignty in grace, to help us discover glory – the knowledge of God’s glory in Christ.

## **(11) Christian in the face of Satanic Wiles, Death and the Judgment Seat.**

P.B (04/23)

The inspired apostle discloses the privileged position of the Christian in 2 Corinthians 3 – he is positionally represented by the glory of God’s righteousness (not legal righteousness), that is become available in Christ, and the Spirit bears witness of this heavenly position in a Christian’s life. The heavenly glory of Christ becomes the focal point of reality for a Christian transforming him into that same image: ‘but we all looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit’ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

But in Chapter 4 and 5, the apostle draws the attention to the challenges surrounding a Christian. There is satanic power to be contended in the world, the response to death and the Judgment

Seat. We shall see the veil drawn, and the Christian emphatically victorious above all these things. Let us briefly consider them one by one:

Firstly, with reference to satanic wiles – the apostle discloses divine grace and sovereignty in our election (the believers). If Satan – as the god of this world has blinded the world, he could not prevent divine power entering the believers' lives, since God commanded light where there was only darkness. God has brought us to the knowledge of His grace in Christ against despite all the odds and satanic deception: 'God who spoke that out of darkness light should shine who has shone in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' (2 Cor 4:4). The power resident in a Christian's life is drawn from the limitless resources of Christ's glory – and wiles and deceptions have no power over us.

Secondly, with reference to death – the apostle refers to two distinct things: one, the hope of rapture at the Lord's coming to take the church, which is the distinct privilege of the church and second, the comfort of being with the Lord when dying before the Lord comes to take the church. Let us consider both of these things briefly:

(a) Firstly, with regards to the hope of rapture – the apostle says: 'for indeed we who are in the tabernacle groan, being burdened; while yet we do not wish to be unclothed, but clothed that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life' (2 Cor 5:4). The unclothing is death where the body is left behind, but the clothing refers to the new body, a believer has in glory. Observe. It is not just death swallowed up by life – for this was a hope with regards to resurrection found even revealed in the Old Testament (Isaiah). But here, it is 'mortal may be swallowed up by life' – the living saints at the time of rapture with mortal life in them, will be transformed into glory. Of course, the dead saints – their bodies will be raised incorruptible, but more so glorious is the distinct hope of the rapture for the church, where saints alive in mortal flesh shall be transformed into glorious bodies.

(b) Secondly, the situation of saints who have died before the Lord comes – they shall be for the meantime be with the Lord: 'we are confident, I say, and pleased rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord'. When the Lord comes, the dead bodies will be resurrected.

In the epistle to the Philippians – the apostle is seen to be desiring to be with the Lord (Philippians 1:23): 'but I am pressed by both, having the desire for departure and being with Christ, for it is very much better'. But in 2 Corinthians 5 – the apostle is seen to desire (even groan) for the distinct hope of the church, the rapture.

The third – which is to do with Christian facing the Judgment Seat, as I fear, will need an entire article, and therefore I shall end here, hoping the Lord will lead us to contemplate on the extensions later.

## **(12) A Brief note on 2 Corinthians 12:12**

The apostle while defending His apostleship to the Corinthians, makes a claim of apostolic signs and wonders. But the first voucher is patience, and only next comes signs and wonders. How precious and valuable is patience!

## **(13) New Covenant, New Creation and the Reconciliation**

P.B (04/23)

The apostle by the inspiration of the Spirit of God brings out the glories of Christ with respect to our redemption through the cross and the justification wrought by Christ's resurrection and exaltation. But there is an order that we may observe in which these glorious things are presented to us from the epistle of 2nd Corinthians. The same may be briefly dealt as under:

Firstly – with respect to what has already been held out as a promise to the nation of Israel, that is, the new covenant. In connection with this, we (the believers in Christ) receive the blessings of the new covenant, while its corporate application with the nation of Israel is still reserved to be fulfilled yet in the future according to the counsels of God. The apostle says: 'who has also made us competent (as) ministers of the new covenant, not of letter, but of spirit' (2 Cor 3:6). Here, in contradistinction to where man stood in relation to God under the curse of the law – now, by the revelation of the righteousness of God by faith, he stands justified and accepted in Christ, who is revealed to faith, as seated at the right of God in glory. The immediate consequence is the shedding of the Spirit – the blessing of the new covenant. The church, meanwhile appropriates the immense privilege and blessing in response to Christ's position and excellence before God – while the new covenant is still to be applied for the nation of Israel in the forthcoming apocalypse.

Secondly – the apostle presents Christ in a new way, beyond the circle of Jewish promises and Messianic blessings: the world assumes focus in responsibility, and God deals with the world in judgment, where by the stamp of divine righteousness, the old world with its federal head of Adam is set aside as a consequence of this judgment at the cross. Christ appears not just as the Messiah – but as the risen Head who leads the new order: 'so that we henceforth know no one according to flesh; but if even we have known Christ according to flesh, yet now we know him thus no longer' (2 Cor 5:16). This is most emphatic declaration of the new change – not that the Messianic promises have lapsed, (for they shall be fulfilled in its time) but that there is a new order introduced. God begins this new order – the new creation where man in response to responsibility is set aside, for the Man (Christ) becomes the new federal Head. Christ inaugurates this new creation by virtue of His own obedience unto death – the glory of God declared with the question of man's sin settled. Everything will be changed into this new order of creation in the forthcoming times – but, the church already enters into this experience by the power of the Spirit in relationship with Christ, the new Head as risen from among the dead: 'so if any one be in

Christ, there is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold all things have become new' (2 Cor 5:16).

Thirdly, the apostle speaks about reconciliation – a thing that comes after justification: 'and all things are of the God who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and given to us the ministry of that reconciliation' (2 Cor 5:18). In Colossians 1:20 – the things on earth and the things in the heavens are reconciled. This is still in the future – but now, we (believers) are already reconciled. This reconciliation, the cost of which was the cross – became God's grace towards a lost world. This was affected in two phases – the apostle says: 'how that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not reckoning to them their offences; and putting in us the word of that reconciliation'. The first phase is – God was in Christ – the manifestation of Christ's grace in the flesh before man's responsibility had ended with Christ's rejection and death on the cross. Now – God has charged this message of reconciliation to the apostles – this is the second phase – a solemn declaration.

#### **(14) A brief observation on 2 Corinthians 4:7**

A treasure must be sealed safely in a trunk of iron, and not in any fragile store. But God has placed His treasure of knowledge and power in Christ in us – the weak clay jar sort of breakable bodies that we have. And then He guards this treasure in us through faith by His own sustaining power - a unique print of God's design for every Christian!

#### **(15) On the Churches of Galatia and Macedonia**

The churches of Galatia set the precedent when it comes to the procedure in which offerings are to be given: the Sunday morning collection. The churches of Macedonia indicate the spirit behind all giving – despite restraint they gave in abundance. They defined the attitude in giving.

#### **(16) 'Dying together and Living together'**

The most famous Latin quote from Horace describing the intensity of human friendship: 'with you I would love to live, with you I would be willing to die'. But the apostle writes to Corinthians (2 Corinthians 7:3), that Christian love begins in dying together and then living together. Observe – it is first 'to die together' and then 'to live together' unlike that of the heathen idea of friendship that begins with life and ends in death. Death is the beginning for a Christian fraternity when it is but the end of the heathen.

#### **(17) Motives of Christian Giving (Romans 15:27 and 2 Corinthians 8:8,9)**

The first motive for the Gentile churches to financially support the Jerusalem church is given in Romans. It was based on the principle of spiritual reciprocation. After all they owe the Jerusalem saints for sharing with them the goodness of the Gospel. The second motive to financially support the Jerusalem saints is given in 2 Corinthians. It was because of the agape principle –

Christ loved us. No other reasons are necessary in order to prompt the voluntary giving of love on the part of gentile churches. Christ's example suffices.

### **(18) Unbelievers**

2 Corinthians 6: 14-16 gives us three reasons why we should restrain from mentally involving ourselves with unbelievers: (a) principles are different – righteousness with unrighteousness and light with darkness (b) Representative heads are different – Christ and Belial (c) Worship ends (systems) are different – Temple of God and idols

### **(19) The Apostle's Beseeching**

The first time (2 Corinthians 5:20) Paul is seen to beg was when he recounted his message to a lost world: he begs the world to see the glory of the Lord Jesus, who has become the only way for reconciling people to God, by paying the heavy cost of being judged on the cross. He is telling the brethren about his message to the world.

The second time (2 Corinthians 6:1-2), Paul begs and urges – is in connection with his message to the brethren (believers) and not to the world. He wants the believers to know that God's grace for them is meant to make them realize His power in the present – not just for the future. He quotes an Old Testament reference, that reveals God's present power of grace for His people in the present scenario.

### **(20) Compromise – within and without (1 Corinthians 5:2 and 2 Corinthians 11:4)**

In 1 Corinthians, the apostle indicates to the Corinthians' compromise in not keeping themselves with the honour of their own redeemed and sanctified position in Christ. Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us – but the old leaven was to be purged. They have to preserve being unleavened – for that is their new position in Christ. By tolerating the fornicator – they are not keeping themselves pure in accordance with the position that Christ has brought them into. This is the first failure.

In 2 Corinthians, the apostle indicates the Corinthians' compromise in allowing false teachers to present a different version of Christ – here, the point of compromise is not about our position in Christ being diluted by our slackness as in 1 Corinthians, but instead here – it is our comprehension of Christ's position as a risen, and an exalted Saviour is itself attacked by false teachers. The position of Christ Himself is being counterfeited by alternative versions brought about by a pseudo priesthood where Satan himself has transformed into an angel of light (v14,15) - the most dangerous pretensions and temptation. By tolerating the false teachers – they are basically allowing the entire doctrine and power of Christianity to be attacked. This is the second failure and the most injurious one.

Tolerating the fornicator and the false teachers is not the same thing. In the first, it is to the erosion of Corinthians' spiritual position and power of testimony in Christ. While in the latter, is the erosion of what Christ is to the Corinthians – it is Christ's own position assailed.