



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

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Divine Lockup

Part 4

Corruption (Decay, Humiliation and Death)

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Romans 8:21, KJV).

Before leaving this series on Divine Lockup,¹ we want to take a look at one more “bondage” – our bondage to death. We speak here not merely of its culmination, but also of its process in our lives: “corruption,” and “decay” (Rotherham).



translations:

dying thou dost die (Young);

dying you shall die (Green);

to die shall you be dying (Concordant);

to die you will die (Dabhar);

in dying, you die (ExeGesis).

When Adam sinned, all humanity was thrust under the bondage of death. The condition was not simply, as translations such as the *King James Version* portray, that,

In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die (Genesis 2:17).

The Hebrew word for “die” here is מוֹת (mûth).² Interestingly it is used twice in this verse – mûth mûth (die die) – which is confusing to some English translators. They then assume that its double use was intended for emphasis, so they translate the first occurrence as “surely”:

“thou shalt surely [mûth] die [mûth].”

However, death was NOT being emphasized as just a single event that would end life. Instead, it was being described as an insidious *process of dying* that would end in the *state of death*, as can be seen in literal

Death was the process of “corruption” and “decay” resulting, not with life in another place or in another form, but rather the decaying process ending in the very cessation of life itself. Death is the end of life, not the beginning.

Paul speaks of this process of “corruption” and “decay” as “bondage”:

the bondage of corruption (Romans 8:21).

The Greek word for “bondage” here is δουλεία (douleia)³ meaning “slavery” (*Concordant, Strong*), or “the condition of a slave” (*Thayer*).

1. For parts 1-3, see BSNs 587, 588, 589.

2. *Strong's* H4191.

3. *Strong's* G1397.



HUMILIATION

All humanity is humbled under the slavery of dying and death. Thus, associated with our “*corruption*” and “*decay*” is what Paul termed,

the body of our humiliation (Philippians 3:21).

“*The body of our humiliation*” is the literal translation found in *Concordant, Young, Diaglott, Green*, as well as in *Darby, Weymouth* and the *American Standard Version*.

“*Humiliation*” is the Greek word ταπεινώσις (*tapeinōsis*),⁴ defined as “depression (in rank or feeling): humiliation, be made low” (*Strong*).

The translation of *tapeinōsis* as “*vile*” in the *King James Version* and other translations distorts the picture.

Our current English word *vile* is defined as:

- morally despicable or abhorrent (*Webster*);
- morally bad; wicked (*Oxford*);
- morally depraved (*American Heritage*).

These definitions, as related to our bodies, reflect a Gnostic view. Our bodies are not “*vile*,” which can be seen especially in the fact that they are God’s temple (I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Ephesians 2:21). They are, however, very humiliating; and this humiliation accelerates with the process of time and decay. A visit to any nursing home will confirm an advanced state of humiliation.

All slavery is humbling; our body, under the slavery of dying, is no exception. Our current bodies consistently humble us. The process of death in our bodies is a mortifying experience – but this is not to be our final end.

While we are now in *the process of death* and will, like our ancestors before us, enter *the state of death* (where there is not life), there is something far greater on the horizon – *the rest of the story!*

THE LAST MAN STANDING

Therefore as by the offence of one [Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One [Christ] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life (Romans 5:18).

For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. ... The first man, Adam, became a living soul: the last [man], Adam, [became] a vivifying Spirit (I Corinthians 15:22, 45).

The “*first man, Adam*” is by no means the end of our story; for it is another Man that is the last Man standing!

There are truly only two “men” in all of humanity: Adam and Christ. All men are headed up in these two men. These two men are the heads of united humanity, not concurrently, but in succession.

First is the headship of the first man – Adam with his corresponding sin, condemnation and death. The second is the headship of the last Man, the second Adam – Christ, with his corresponding righteousness, justification and life. All of humanity finds its identity, existence and experience tied up in these two men.

Simply stated, Adam is the head of “*the old humanity*” (Romans 6:6; Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9, *Concordant*), while Christ is the head of “*the new humanity*” (Ephesians 2:15; 4:24, *Concordant*). So, there is coming a day when “*the former things are passed away*” and He will make “*all things new*” (Revelation 21:4-5).

All at first are identified and exist in Adam, and experiences the full condition of his headship. In the end, *all* in consummation are identified and exist in Christ, thus experiencing the full condition of *His* headship. There are no exceptions; “*all*” of those headed up “*in Adam*” will be headed up “*in Christ*,” Christ being *the last Man standing!*

4. *Strong's G5014.*

CHRIST IS GREATER THAN ADAM

The act of Adam brought about the current condition. Christ not merely undoes this work of Adam – bringing “all” into a state prior to Adam’s “fall” – but rather, through His act of righteousness, He brings “all” into a far superior place than ever could have been imagined in Eden’s garden.

God has a grander plan than the mere undoing of Adam. Let’s read carefully more of the context of I Corinthians 15:

For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. ... Thus also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is roused in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is roused in glory. It is sown in infirmity; it is roused in power. It is sown a soulish body; it is roused a spiritual body. If there is a soulish body, there is a spiritual also. ... The first man, Adam, became a living soul: the last Adam a vivifying Spirit (:21-22, 42-45, Concordant).

We see that while our bodies are “sown in corruption” they will be “roused in incorruption.”

While they will be “sown in dishonor” they will be “roused in glory.”

Though they will be “sown in infirmity” they will be “roused in power.”

This is the foundation of God’s grand plan in Christ.

“ALL,” NOT “SOME”

This is not His plan just for some, but for “ALL.” Note that Paul said,

*For as in Adam **all** die, even so in Christ shall **all** be made alive.*

The exact same “all” who “die” “in Adam” are the exact same “all” who are “made alive” “in Christ.” It is the exact same “all,” with no exception and no quali-

fication. This is stressed to us by the words in bold type:

***For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive** (:22, KJV).*

I grew up highly acquainted with this verse, or so I thought. I used to hear preachers use it to plead with men to “get out of Adam and into Christ.” I myself even parroted such terminology in years past, but no such plea exists here or elsewhere in Scripture. The reality is that I was indoctrinated to read the verse – and yet hear it this way:

All those who are in Adam die, even so all those who are in Christ shall all be made alive.

However, this is *not* what this passage says! No one is asked to do anything in this verse: it is stated as divine fact, awaiting fruition.

TWO UNIVERSAL FACTS TWO UNIVERSAL HEADSHIPS TWO UNIVERSAL RESULTS

No one asked to be “in Adam,” no one asked to be “in Christ.” These conditions are assigned to us as creatures by the Creator.

No one needs to “believe” for it to be true that they are “in Adam.” No one needs to “believe” for it to be true that they are “in Christ.” These are simply two universal facts tied to two universal headships, with two universal results. We are all merely the creatures of God’s grand designations.

NOT OUT OF US

*For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and **this is not out of you**; it is God’s Approach Present (Ephesians 2:8, Concordant).*

What enlightening and liberating words,

*this is **NOT** out of you.*

The entire process of salvation is out of God. After all, we remember, that *ALL is out of God, ALL is* ►

For even as, in Adam, **all are dying**, thus also, in Christ, **shall all be vivified** (Concordant).

How much plainer could Paul have been in his declaration “this is NOT out of you”?

NOT of yourselves (KJV);

NOT from you (Rotherham);

NOT of you (Young);

NOT due to yourselves (20th Century);

NOT your doing (Moffatt);

Neither the “grace” nor the “faith” originated in us. Not one single element of salvation is out of us. The grace and faith are both gifts, granted to us in Christ Jesus as God’s “approach present.”⁵

VIVIFICATION

Now, as we return to I Corinthians 15:22, let’s look at a more literal translation of this verse and see even more imposing truths.

First, note that “all are dying,” which is in agreement with the process of death. Then, more importantly, notice carefully that “all” shall be “vivified.” There is a stark difference between mere “resurrection” and “vivification.”

The Concordant Version uses the word “vivified” to alert the student of Scripture that there is something greater than mere “resurrection.” “Vivified” is the translation of the Greek word ζωοποιέω (zōopoieō)⁶ and is “used in a special sense ... [of] giving life beyond the reach of death, conferring immortality” (Concordant Keyword Concordance, page 320).

A FAR GREATER STATE

Adam was obviously not immortal (i.e., beyond the reach of death) before his sin. Christ thus is greater than Adam in that He not merely resurrects all, but takes them to a permanently safe place beyond the reach of death – to the state of immortality.

Note the rest of the story in Philippians 3:21, that our Lord Jesus Christ,

Will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to

5. For more on this glorious Approach Present see:
– [Article:] *The Approach Present*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student’s Notebook #436](#);
– [Video:] *The Approach Present*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [StudyShelf Videos](#).

6. Strong’s G2227.



Daily Gleanings – 365 Selections on Scriptural Truths

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Editor

This book contains a collection of gleanings from some 200 different authors. These excerpts are intended to be an encouragement to those who are walking on a different path with the Lord – a journey that is “outside of the camp.”

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These gleanings are so encouraging! – Kenya

conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject **all** to Himself (Concordant).

THE ORDER OF VIVIFICATION

Paul explains that there is a specific “order” in vivification; not all will be vivified at the same time.

Each in his own order: *Christ the Firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then the end, when He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power* (I Corinthians 15:23-24).

There is a basic threefold order:

1. *Christ, the Firstfruits;*⁷

7. Please note that the word “Firstfruits” is plural. Not all versions recognize this importance, even prominent “literal” translations. The oversight is made in an attempt to match “Firstfruits” (in the plural) with what is thought to be “Christ” (in the singular). This would seem to make sense. However, other English versions keep it plural, consistent with its usage in the Greek Scriptures (KJV, ASV, Darby, Geneva, Holman, 20th Century, Worsley, Lamsa, Montgomery, Webster, ExeGesis, etc.).

The analogy of “Firstfruits” is not a single piece of fruit, but rather a small group that forms the initial harvest. Attempting to match a singular “Firstfruit” with a singular “Christ” is an oversight, for “Christ” is NOT singular, but plural – a unit comprised of Head and Body (i.e., “the Body of Christ”):

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: SO ALSO IS CHRIST (I Corinthians 12:12).

In this verse, one would have expected Paul to say, “so also is the Body of Christ.” Notice, however, that Paul uses simply “Christ” (in the singular) to refer to the many-membered *Body of Christ* (as a singular unit). So, the apparently singular “Christ” here in chapter 12, as a few chapters later (15), is actually a plurality of members finding their identity and union directly in their Head, Christ Himself.

Paul would later reveal – in his Perfection Epistles – that we who are members of His Body have as our hope (confident expectation) not merely to be “Christ's at His coming [i.e., earthly appearing]” (I Corinthians 15:23), but rather to “appear with Him in Glory” (Colossians 3:4). Since we are reckoned as being raised with Christ (Ephesians 2:6), it's easy to see how we are included with Christ as the firstfruit in resurrection order. Our order, in accord with the Secret Administration, is a union with Christ in the FIRST CLASS, “Christ, the Firstfruits” (I Corinthians 15:23). Thus, we see our transcendent enrichment in “the sacred secret of the Christ” (Colossians 4:3, Rotherham):

Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His Glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself (Philippians 3:21, Concordant).

Those of us granted the distinct privilege of being members of His Body (God calling those things that are [apparently] not, as though they were), have suffered *with Him* (Romans 8:17), been

2. *they that are Christ's at His coming;*

3. *the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God.*

This “order” is the Greek word τάγμα (*tagma*),⁸ “something orderly in arrangement (a troop) ... a series or succession” (*Strong*). It is thus alternately translated:

class (Concordant);
rank (Rotherham);
division (Moffatt);
turn (Message);
band (Diaglott).

NOT ONLY ALL HUMANITY, BUT ALL CREATURES AS WELL

Notice carefully *the rest of the story* in our main text:

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Romans 8:21).

“Delivered” is the Greek word ἐλευθερώω (*eleutheroō*)⁹ meaning “to liberate, that is, (figuratively) to exempt” (*Strong*), “to make free” (*Thayer*). It is translated “freed” by Rotherham, Concordant, Young, etc.

This deliverance from death is extended far beyond humanity to *all creatures*; for the “*whole creation*” (:22) became subject to the death of Adam's headship, and are now “*awaiting*” our manifestation (:19).

crucified *with Him* (Romans 6:6), died *with Him* (Romans 6:8), been buried *with Him* (Romans 6:4), been risen *with Him* (Colossians 2:12), been vivified *with Him* (Colossians 2:13), been hidden *with Him* (Colossians 3:3), and will appear *with Him* (Colossians 3:4), be joint-heirs *with Him* (Romans 8:17) and reign *with Him* (II Timothy 2:12).

These superior truths of our identity with Christ take us not only back into living union with Him at Calvary, but far beyond – “*before the foundation* [or disruption] *of the world*” where He was already the “*Lamb slain*.”

Note with care how Paul's Preparatory Epistles (early letters) lay the foundation of the even more glorious expansions of his Perfection Epistles (latter letters). Little wonder that Paul wrote,

Whereby, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in THE SECRET OF THE CHRIST (Ephesians 3:4).

8. *Strong's* G5001.

9. *Strong's* G1659.

Just as the whole creation fully participated in Adam's humiliating "fall," so they shall also fully participate in the same "glorious liberty" that is ours in Christ.

Adam was given,

dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth (Genesis 1:28).

All creatures partake in the process of dying and death under Adam's headship and dominion. Consequently, all creatures will partake in immortality under Christ's far superior headship and dominion.

After all, the message that one day will go forth throughout the whole earth will be not merely to humanity, but indeed to "every creature" (Mark 16:15). For, Christ Himself, "Who is the Image of the invisible God" has now become "the Firstborn of every creature" (Colossians 1:15).

ALL IN DUE COURSE

In due course all creation will participate in our "glorious liberty" as "the children of God" (Romans 8:21), and even now have been given a divine premo-

tion¹⁰ of such hope.

For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God (Concordant).

Among all creation God has instilled an instinct – an impression, a sense, a notion, a hunch – that there is something far better awaiting them.¹¹

They are awaiting the *start* of something, the *first stage* of the best that is to come *for all of the rest*. **WE** (Christ as Head, with His Body) are that *start*!

For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God.

Remember, *the best is yet to come.* ■

TOPICS:

Major: Free Will; Sovereignty; Death and Dying; Humiliation; Bondage; Adam; Christ; Resurrection; Vile; Vivification; Headship; Salvation of All
Minor: Premonition; Animals; Creation

10. For a further look at premonition see:

The Premonition: The Best is Yet to Come, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #597](#).

11. For a comprehensive study of the many inner-connected doctrines in this article, read the author's work, *The Salvation of All*, Bible Student's Press™ (see order form).

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- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
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- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
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- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:

- total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
- union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
- adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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