



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 38  
Issue 937

# "The God of All Comfort"

## Part 6

by — Hannah Whitall Smith (1832–1911)

### Key Points:

God declares that the salvation He has provided is "much more" than our need..... 7913  
"Much less" is the language of the seen, while "much more" is the language of the unseen..... 7913

God cares for us "much more" than he does for the universe..... 7917  
We can never exhaust the "much mores" of God!..... 7917

### "Much More" vs. "Much Less"

But where sin abounded grace did **much more** abound (Romans 5:20).



In our preceding chapters we have been trying to learn something about the Lord and His great salvation; and now the vital point is, what view do we take of it all?

A very great deal of the comfort or discomfort depends on the view we take of things. I do not mean of course that our view of things affects their reality in any way, but what I do mean is that our view makes all the difference in our apprehension of this reality; and while our safety comes from what things really are, our comfort comes from what we suppose them to be.

There is an expression used over and over again in the Bible to describe the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ, which gives a view of that salvation so amazing and so perfectly satisfying, that I cannot help wondering whether any of us have ever yet grasped its full meaning. One thing is certain, that no one who grasps it could ever be uncomfortable or miserable for long.

It is the expression "much more," but we are continually tempted to think that "much less" would be a

truer term; and that, so far from this salvation being "much more," it turns out in actual experience to be "much less." And this "much less" view, if I may so express it, is in danger of making our lives a misery to us.

But since there are some who seem by their thoughts and their actions to declare that they consider the language of "much less" to be the only prudent language for "poor sinners," I want us carefully to consider the matter in the light of what the Bible tells us, and discover whether we are really justified in saying *much more*.

It is a far more vital question for each one of us than may appear at first sight. For if **God declares that the salvation He has provided is "much more" than our need**, and if we insist on declaring in our secret thoughts that it is "much less," we are casting discredit on His trustworthiness, and are storing up for ourselves untold discomfort and misery.

"Much less" is the language of the *seen*, while "much more" is the language of the *unseen*. "Much less" seems on the surface to be far more reasonable than "much more," because everything seen confirms it. Our

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### Bible Student's Notebook™

*Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal*

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*Scripture education in a weekly format!*

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- 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 and ascended seated position among the celestials (Romans 6; Ephesians 2:6);
- adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

*We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneidar*

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weakness and foolishness are visible; God's strength and wisdom are invisible. Our need is clear before our very eyes; God's supply is hidden in the secret of His presence, and can only be realized by faith.

It seems a paradox to tell us that we must see unseen things. How can it be possible? But there are other things to see than those which appear on surfaces, and other eyes to look through than those we generally use.

To see unseen things requires us to have our interior eye opened, which is able to see below surfaces, and which can pierce through the outer appearance of things into their inner realities. This interior eye looks not at the seen things, which are temporal, but at the things that are not seen, which are lasting;<sup>1</sup> and the vital question for each one of us is whether that interior eye has been opened in us yet, and whether we can see the things that are lasting, or whether our vision is limited to the things that are temporal only.

Can and do we say of the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ that it is "much more" than our need, or that it is "much less"?

There is a wonderful instance in the history of the children of Israel when they saw the unseen things with such clearness of vision that the "much less" of their enemy, and of the seen things around them, was powerless to disturb them.

The story is told in II Chronicles 32:1-15. An enemy had come up against Judah, and had threatened to overwhelm them. This enemy had been so universal-

1. II Corinthians 4:18.

ly successful hitherto in all his wars with the nations round about that he had no doubt he would be able to conquer the Israelites also. But Hezekiah, the king of Israel, looked not at the seen enemy, but at the unseen God, and he saw that God was the strongest; and he spoke comfort to the people, and said,

*Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him; for there be more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our battles.*

What a tremendous contrast: on one side an arm of flesh; on the other, the Lord our God! No wonder the people "rested themselves" upon a declaration such as this.

When Sennacherib saw their faith, he was enraged, and upbraided them with this folly in being persuaded by Hezekiah to expose themselves to the risk of death by thirst and famine in the vain hope that the Lord would deliver them. And then comes the taunt of the "much less": he said,

*Know you not, what I and my father have done unto all the people of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands in any way able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? Who was there among all the gods of those nations that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God shall be able to deliver you out of mine hand? Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him; for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, how much less shall your God deliver you*

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out of mine hand.

“How much less” – what a temptation to unbelief was contained in those words! All of the seen things were on that side; and it did look impossible in the face of the fact that all the nations round about had been defeated, that the nation of Israel, no stronger, and no better equipped than the others, should find deliverance. But Hezekiah kept his eyes and the eyes of the people fixed on the unseen things, and their faith stood firm; and the Lord in whom they trusted did not fail them, but sent them a grand deliverance. The “much less” of the enemy was turned for the Israelites into a “much more” of victory. The man who had promised them defeat and death was himself defeated; he was obliged to return to his own land with “shame of face” (:21) and was there slain by his disappointed relatives.

Is there nothing comparable to this story in our own personal history? Have we never been taunted with the discouraging thought that God is “much less” than He would lead us to expect when we have looked at the formidable *seen* things?

To come to the point of having nothing left to trust in but the Lord has, I am afraid, seemed to us at times a desperate condition of things. Yet His “much mores” of grace are abundantly equal to the task. Paul tells us that God is able to do “*exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think,*”<sup>2</sup> and this describes what His “much mores” mean.

Do we really believe that God is able and willing to do for us “*exceeding abundantly*” above all that we

can ask or think? Is the language of our hearts “*much more*” or “*much less*”?

*For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God and the gift by grace which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.*<sup>3</sup>

This “*much more*” reaches, if only we could understand it, into the deepest depth of human need. There is no question in our minds as to the fact that “*many be dead,*” but how is it with the “*much more*” of grace that is to abound unto many? Are we sure of the grace that is to abound unto many? Are we as sure of the grace as we are of the death?

Do we really believe that the remedy is “*much more*” than the disease? Does the salvation seem to us “*much more*” than the need? Or do we believe in our hearts that it is “*much less*”? Which does God’s Word declare?

*But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*<sup>4</sup>

The question of salvation is absolutely settled by these “*much mores.*” Since Christ has died for us, and has thereby reconciled us to God (not God to us, He did not need reconciling), there can be no question as to whether He will save us. There can be no ques-

2. Ephesians 3:20.

3. Romans 5:15.

4. Romans 5:8-10.

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tion as to whether He will or will not, for the greater must necessarily include the lesser, and, having done the greater, “*much more*” will He do the lesser. None of us doubt that He did the greater, and, in the face of these “*much mores*,” we dare not doubt that He will do the lesser. God has given us a most triumphant “*much more*.”

*For, if by one man's offense, death reigned by one, **much more** they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life (Romans 5:17-18).*

It is promised that we shall be “*more than conquerors*” over the very things that once conquered us. We have been reigned over by thousands of things, by the fear of man, by our peculiar temperaments, by our outward circumstances, by our irritable tempers, even by bad weather, by our environment of every kind.

However, even where we have fully recognized that the Universe is altogether in God's care, we have failed to see that we also are there too. We have never dreamed that it could be true that “*much more*” than He cares for the Universe He cares for us.

We have looked at the seen things of our circumstances and our surroundings, and at the greatness of our need and our own helplessness, and have been anxious and afraid. We have burdened ourselves with

5. Romans 8:37.

the care of ourselves, feeling in our unbelief that, instead of being of “*much more*” value than the fowls of the air, or the lilies of the field, we are in reality of infinitely “*much less*”; and it seems to us that the God Who cares for them is not at all likely to care for us. We say with the psalmist,

*When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visited him?<sup>6</sup>*

Man, so puny, so insignificant, of so little account when compared with the great, wide Universe, what is he, we ask, that God should care for him? And yet God declares that He does care for him, and that He even cares for him “*much more*” than He cares for the Universe. “*Much more*,” remember, and not “*much less*.” Thus, anxious thoughts about ourselves are crushed by faith.

We have only touched upon the wonders of grace hidden in these “*much mores*” of God. We can never exhaust their meaning in this life.

*But where sin abounded grace did **much more** abound (Romans 5:20).*

(to be continued)

For a short biographical sketch of Hannah Whitall Smith, see: – Editor's Desk, [Bible Student's Notebook #921](#).

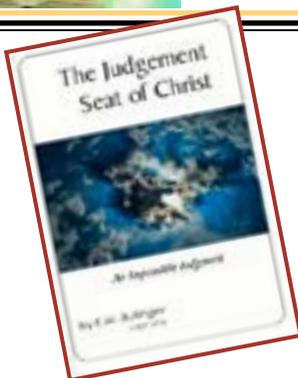
**TOPICS:**

**Major:** Faith; Realization

**Minor:** Salvation; Sovereignty

6. Psalm 8:3-4.

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## The Judgement Seat of Christ

*An Impossible Judgment*

by — E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

(along with Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. and David R. Hettema)

What is the true meaning of the “*Judgment Seat of Christ*,” and will the members of Christ's One Body be a part of it?

32 pages

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## Tidbits of Truth #45

“Tidbits” is a column dedicated to short comments, thoughts, studies and excerpts.

### Separation from God?

*If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there (Psalm 139:8, KJV).*

You know, it is interesting that the *King James Version* has “**hell**” here in this verse, where the *Concordant Version* has “**unseen**,” and others may have “**sheol**.” Yet regular hell-believing Christians don’t read this and realize the glaring inconsistency, asking,

“Wait, God is with those who are in Hell? Aren’t we told that Hell is where God abandons and turns His back on unbelievers? I mean, don’t they call it ‘separation from God’ when someone is in hell?”

— James Fine

### The Nature of Science and other Fields of Human Study

[*To: D.R.:*] Science, as with *all* of man’s endeavors of investigation and study, is flawed. We take what we can from it, but we must always hold it loosely for what it is: man’s opinions, observations and conclu-

sions. There is simply so much that man does not know, that it skews his perception of reality. What we think is true is always a mixture of facts and human error.

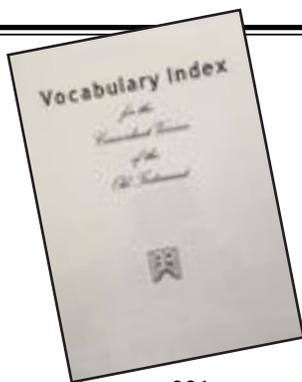
If we precisely followed all the science of 50 years ago, we would be in error. Not to mention if we embraced the scientific understanding of 100, 200, 500 years ago. I have no doubt that *much* of what is embraced as science today, will likewise easily be repudiated 100 years from now. So, always keep that in mind. As with any field of human study, it is not God or His Word that needs reconciling to science, but rather the reverse: it is science that is in need of reconciliation to God and His Word.

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

### Before Adam and Eve

[*To: D.R.:*] You write “... Adam and Eve came first.” I am sure that many would agree with that statement, accepting it at face value as plain truth. But in what *sense* did they come first? How sure are we that nothing came before them?

Adam was the first man. Eve was the first woman.



321 pages

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## Vocabulary Index for the Concordant Version of the Old Testament

This index is an attempt to provide users of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament. It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the *Keyword Concordance* published with the New Testament, but until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute. This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT. The list is keyed to *Englishman’s Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance* (5<sup>th</sup> edition).



But this is not to say that there was not life on Earth before them and their creation. In fact, the Scriptures are clear that there was an age prior to Adam. How long that age lasted, or how old the Earth is from its formation, is anything but a guess. Thousands of years? Millions of years? Billions of years? The length of the prehistoric age is not a subject of Scripture revelation. Any attempts at addressing the length of this period are simply futile. However, the fact of that early age is clearly established by Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

There are a total of five ages (or eons) in God's revealed plan. We currently live in the third "evil age." For a further look at God's plan of the Ages (or Eons), follow these links:

Video: "[The Five Ages](#)," *Bible Basics* #6;  
Article: "The Five Ages," *Bible Basics* #6, [Bible Student's Notebook #852](#);  
Book: [The Ages: A Comprehensive Compilation](#).

Genesis 1:1 speaks of the original creation.

Genesis 1:2 speaks of a disruption of God's original creation (known elsewhere in Scripture as "the disruption of the world").

Genesis 1:3 and what follows speaks of a re-creation

1. [Editor:] We can't say for sure that time was measured in the first age in what we think of as hours/days/years, or that they even existed as such. It may be possible that time as we know it and have been experiencing it since Genesis 1:3 is a construct created by God for us as a limitation (*i.e.*, bondage). Although the first period of creation is recognized by the time qualification of "age," we have no concept at all of the conditions that existed prior to Genesis 1:3. Additionally, the "Big Bang" that evolutionists make such a fuss about may have nothing to do with evolution whatsoever, but rather with the "disruption of the world." — André Sneidar

of the Earth and the subsequent creation of humanity.

"The disruption of the world" (CV: Matthew 25:34; Luke 11:50; John 17:24; Ephesians 1:4; Hebrew 4:3; 9:26; I Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8; 17:8), mistakenly referred to as "the foundation of the world," was the catastrophic overthrow of God's original creation.

John Essex wrote,

A whole eon (age) had gone by before humanity came into being, and all the events of that eon, whatever they were, had terminated in "the disruption of the world," that is, the disruption of the society as it existed at that time. That society was clearly a Celestial one, for it was in being before the Earth was even founded, as Job 38:4-7 makes plain. — "The Vessel of Humanity," *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 73 (1982).

For more information about "the disruption," I would suggest these two linked books:

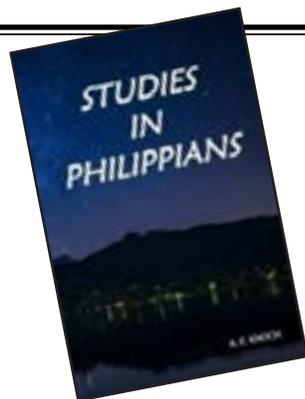
– [The Disruption of the World: A Compilation](#);  
– [Without Form and Void: A Study of the Meaning of Genesis 1:2](#), Arthur C. Custance

I hope that you find these thoughts and suggestions helpful.

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

## God's Grace

[Excerpt:] God's grace is unmerited, undeserved,



## Studies in Philippians

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

"Philippians, almost more than any other epistle, must be considered as a unit. Its truth is so little known or practiced, and so distinctive in character, that a passage outside its context, or severed from the main theme, may suggest a thought quite contradictory to its message." — Knoch

116 pp., PB

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unelicited, uncalled-for, unsought, unforced, unaided, unassisted, unearned, undiluted, unadulterated, sovereign, and despotic.

— F.H. Robison (1885-1932)

[Are Bride and Body Identical?](#)<sup>2</sup>

### Creation Comes from Chaos

[**Excerpt:**] Pain does not have the final say. It ain't over 'til it's over. ... The darkness does not, in the end, overcome the light. Life is stronger than death. The mess is blessed. Love wins. Creation comes from chaos.

— Patricia Livingston

*Bless this Mess* (2000)

### Anxiety's Affliction

[**Excerpt:**] Some people feel guilty about their anxieties and regard them as a defect of faith. I don't agree at all. They are afflictions, not sins. Like all afflictions, they are, if we can so take them, our share in the Passion of Christ [*i.e.*, our Gethsemane].

— C.S. Lewis (1898-1963)

*Letters to Malcolm*

### An Exemplary Attitude of Grace

Addressing the character of the publication, *Unsearchable Riches*, Vladimir Gelesnoff (1877-1921), in volume 1, wrote that, while their (his and A.E.

Knoch's) aim was the "recovery of truth," they were seeking "to state the truth as God gives it to us, without wounding the feelings of those who may hold differing views."

Speaking of fellowship he wrote, "We seek to cultivate fellowship, irrespective of denominational affiliations."

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

### The Final Crisis at Rome

[**Excerpt:**] The ministry among the Dispersion ended in the imprisonment of Paul. ... The final crisis is at Rome. On an appointed day the representative Jews come to Paul in great number. Another appeal is made and scorned. The sentence of rejection spoken *secretly* in Matthew is now *publicly* pronounced. Israel is shut up in disobedience. A monument is erected on the site. On one side thereof are written Isaiah's fearful words. On the other, "*The salvation of God is sent to the Nations.*"

— A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

*Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 2, page 34

**BSN**

#### TOPICS:

**Major:** [Separation from God?:] Hell; Separation [*The Nature of Science and other Fields of Human Study:*] Science [*Before Adam and Eve:*] Disruption [God's Grace:] Grace [*Creation Comes from Chaos:*] Chaos; Death; Pain [*Anxiety's Affliction:*] Anxiety [*An Exemplary Attitude of Grace:*] Attitude; Fellowship; Grace [*The Final Crisis at Rome:*] Acts 28

2. See the [order form](#) under "Robison."



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## Prehistoric Creatures:

*Chosen in Christ Before the Disruption of the World*

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

This is a brief look at our place in God's plan: one that pre-dates "*the disruption of the world*" (Ephesians 1:4).

37 pages

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