

Chapter 5

Commentary

1 Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Master Yeshua Messiah

We come, now, to a new section in the epistle based upon the teaching Paul has given in the first four chapters. If we were to sum up the first section (Chapters 1-4) it seems obvious that Paul's main concern is the method or manner by which God brings a sinner into right standing before Him. That is to say, having shown conclusively that all, both Jew and Gentile, are at enmity with God because of their sin, and that no one is capable in and of himself to overcome this enmity, Paul goes on to outline the manner by which God, of His own mercy, reconciles the sinner to Himself, overcoming the utter inability of the sinner.

The opening verse of the new section (cf also v. 11) thus summarizes this "right standing before God" as "peace with God," the concept of *shalom* being grounded in the sense of that which is "complete" or "whole." *Shalom* in the Hebrew envisions things as they ought to be; life as God intends it.

We thus should understand the opening "Therefore having been justified by faith" (Δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως) as gathering together the essential truth of 1:18-4:25, bridging the former section with what follows. And yet even in this summary statement there is an advancement, for Paul has naturally linked "righteousness" with "peace" which has thus further defined "righteousness."

The key thought of the former section has surely been summed up in the single word "justified" (δικαίω, *dikaioo*, on which see comments on 3:24 above), that declaration of the Almighty that an individual is righteous in His eyes. That He could make such a declaration and remain righteous Himself is possible only because of the vicarious sacrifice of the Messiah on behalf of His people. Combining then the substitutionary sacrifice of Yeshua with the declaration of righteousness as regards the sinner, Paul has summarized for us the divine method of bringing sinners into right standing with God.

To add the phrase "by faith" emphasizes the means by which personal right standing before God is obtained, namely, through acceptance of what God has said and commitment to life accordingly. Yet deeds of righteousness come as the fruit of faith, not as the means of it. One therefore obtains right standing before God through faith, not through the works of the Torah.

we have peace with God – The Greek text contains a variant at this point, some manuscripts having ἔχομεν, *echomen* (with *omicron*), the present indicative ("we have peace") while other manuscripts have ἔχομεν, *echomen* (with *omega*), the present subjunctive ("let us have peace"). Interestingly, the weight of manu-

scripts falls to side of the subjunctive reading (ⲥ* A B* C D K 33, 81, 181 etc.), but most translators and compilers opt for the indicative (found in ⲥ^a B³ G^{gr} P Y, etc.). Cranfield explains why:

Though the indicative ἔχομεν is a good deal less strongly attested than the subjunctive ἔχομεν, it is almost certainly to be preferred on the ground of intrinsic probability. It is clear from v. 10f that Paul regards the believers' peace with God as a fact. It would therefore be inconsistent for him to say here "let us have peace," meaning thereby "let us obtain peace" (Paul would anyway hardly think of peace with God as something to be obtained by human endeavor). If the subjunctive is read, we must understand it in some such sense as "let us enjoy the peace we have" or "let us guard the peace we have" (cf. e.g., Origen, Chrysostom). But this is not free from objection; for it would surely be strange for Paul, in such a carefully argued writing as this, to exhort his readers to enjoy or to guard a peace which he has not yet explicitly shown to be possessed by them.¹²⁸

Thus, it seems warranted to take the minority reading at this point and understand Paul to be making a statement of fact that, we have peace with God on the basis of having been declared righteous by Him.

The peace which is the possession of all who have been declared righteous on the basis of faith is not a subjective inner feeling, but an objective state of being at peace instead of being enemies. This is made clear by v. 10 (a summary of the section 5:1-9) in which our status as "enemies" has been done away with through the work of Messiah's "reconciliation." Here this is a most important fact, that God in His declaring the sinner righteous on the basis of his faith also extends Himself in friendship.

Whereas between a human judge and the person who appears before him there may be no really personal meeting at all, no personal hostility if the accused be found guilty, no establishment of friendship if the accused is acquitted, between God and the sinner there is a personal relationship, and God's justification involves a real self-engagement to the sinner on His part.¹²⁹

Thus, for Paul to combine the two concepts of "justified" and "peace" is not merely to employ theological synonyms but to show the logical extension of justification from God's vantage point based upon what He is. Since He is infinite in love, He will always extend Himself in relationship to the one He declares righteous.

128 Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.257, n. 1

129 Ibid., 1.258

through Adonai Yeshua HaMashiach – In the same way that justification is through the Messiah (3:24), so reconciliation is through the Messiah—the two are, in God's plan of redemption, bound together inseparably.

The combination of the names Lord, Yeshua, and Messiah (in one combination or another) is found also in v. 21 and in 7:25, as well as in 6:23 and 8:39. It seems as though Paul begins and ends major sections in this part of the epistle with this three-name formula.

What are we to make of the use of κύριος, *kurios* (Lord) in combination with Yeshua the Messiah? One cannot escape the emphasis that this combination of words places upon the sovereign, divine nature of the Messiah. To call Him “Lord,” a term repeatedly used by the Lxx to identify יהוה (YHVH) is surely to credit Yeshua as being Immanuel.

2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

“Through whom,” i.e., through Yeshua the Messiah—that we are participants in God's grace is the direct result of Yeshua and His work. Yeshua Himself taught that friendship with the Father was possible only through Him: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me.” (Jn 14:6)

we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand – The verb ἐσχήκαμεν (*eschekamen*, “we have obtained”) is in the perfect tense and may therefore express the idea that having gained access through initial faith/confession of Yeshua, this access remains the possession of all true believers. The concept of “introduction” (προσαγωγή, *prosagoge*) is most likely that of “the privilege of being introduced into the presence of someone in high station.”¹³⁰

Some of the major manuscripts (B D G it Or^{lat}) omit the phrase “by faith” in the verse, though most consider the phrase original. Why it would be omitted in some of the major manuscripts remains a mystery, though its omission would not alter the meaning of the text, for Paul surely teaches that our entrance into God's favor is gained via the avenue of faith.

into this grace – Paul uses the demonstrative “this” (ταύτην, *tauten*) in connection with the word “grace” to indicate a reference to what he has just written. We should most likely, then, consider the term “grace” (χάρις, *charis*) here to have direct reference to the “peace” just spoken of. We find ourselves at peace with God because by faith we have obtained forgiveness and right standing with Him.

in which we stand – The verb ἵστημι, *histemi*, “to stand” (it is in the perfect tense in our verse, ἐστήκαμεν, *estekamen*) can at times be synonymous with the simple verb “to be” (εἶμι, *eimi*) and in this text could thus mean “. . . into the

130 Ibid., 1.259.

grace in which we are.” But Paul’s use of the verb in Romans (3:31; 10:3; 11:20; 14:4) seems rather to be used in the sense of “stand firm” or “abide.”¹³¹ Thus Paul’s emphasis here is, once again, of the abiding position the believer has in his righteous standing before HaShem.

and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God – Our right standing with God considered here as “peace with God” is cause for rejoicing, but so is the prospect of God’s glory being revealed in us at the coming of Messiah. Paul’s use of the phrase “glory of God”¹³² indicates that he sees the revelation of God’s glory in connection with the victorious return of Yeshua and the glorification of the believer at that time. The ability mankind was given to radiate the glory of HaShem was marred by the fall but is restored through the redemptive work of Yeshua and will be fully manifest in those who are His at His return. It is thus the hope of His return and the ultimate completion of our sanctification that is the focal point of our hope. “Hope” here is the confident anticipation of that which we do not yet see (cf. Heb 11:1).

The status of “peace with God” which the believer now enjoys also guarantees his inevitable growth in holiness to the point where he will be perfectly restored as one who bears the very glory of God. This hope of seeing God’s creative act come to its ultimate end is all the more wonderful in light of the fact that Yeshua Himself became man—entered into the realm of humanness—thus showing that mankind, when he realizes his creative purpose, will indeed reflect the very glory of God.

3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

While we rejoice in the hope of what is yet future, by faith we must also rejoice in our sufferings. Note well that Paul does not set this forth as an exhortation but as a mere statement of fact. This is so because of who we are—we are those who rejoice in tribulation because of the faith we have.

Rejoicing in suffering is not a foreign concept in the Rabbinic writings.

Our Rabbis taught: Those who are insulted but do not insult, hear themselves reviled without answering, act through love and rejoice in suffering, of them the Writ saith, But they who love Him are as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.¹³³

To him who gives thanks for his afflictions and rejoices over them,

131 Note the use of ἵστημι (*histemi*) in other Pauline letters: 1Co 7:37; 15:1; 2Co 1:24; Eph 6:11, 13, 14; Col 4:12; 2Tim 2:19; 1Pt 4:12.

132 Rom 1:23; 3:23; 15:7; 1Co 10:31; 11:7; 2Co 4:6, 15; Phil 1:11; 2:11; 1Ti 1:11; Tit 2:13.

133 b.*Shabbat* 88b.

God grants life in this world and, in the world to come, life without end, “for a lamp are the commandments and the Torah is light” (Prov. 6:23). Why, then, did Moses merit that his countenance should shine, even in this world, with a light destined for the righteous in the next world? Because . . . he was ever striving, yearning, watching to establish peace between Israel and their Father in Heaven.¹³⁴

Truly, God is good to Israel, even to the pure in heart. That is, the sufferings which He has brought upon them are good. For whom are they good? For the pure in heart, to purify the heart of the righteous (Ps 73:1).¹³⁵

Indeed, the Rabbinic teachings are replete with admonitions about receiving suffering as from HaShem and for the good of the one who suffers.

knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance – Several words exist in the Greek to bring forward the idea of “knowing.” The word used here (which is a common word, *εἰδότες*, *eidotes*, is from the root *οἶδα*, *oida*, which means “to perceive,” “to see” (in the sense “understand”).¹³⁶ Here Paul refers to the knowledge which faith brings, a knowledge which claims absolute validity. This knowledge allows the believer to know that the tribulation he may be enduring at any given time is suffering which HaShem has allowed for the believer’s good and His glory. It is not that the believer rejoices in tribulation because he believes that if he does so he will merit God’s favor, but because the believer has come to know that God subjects those He loves to periods of tribulation in order to teach them how to wait patiently for His deliverance.

Now this is true for the believer, but it is not generally true for mankind. As Calvin remarks, tribulation causes “a great part of mankind . . . to murmur against God, and even to curse his name.”¹³⁷

In contrast to the unbeliever, then, when the child of God receives suffering within the context of sustained faith, he receives it as God’s fatherly discipline and rather than producing bitterness or anger it produces patience or perseverance (*ὑπομονή*, *hupomone*). This Greek word is made up of two words, *ὑπο*, *hupo*, “under” and *μένω*, *meno*, “to remain.” It may come from the idea of carrying a load which one is required to remain under it even though it is heavy. As with the athlete who is willing to endure some measure of pain during training in order to condition himself for the competition, so the child of faith can recognize that

134 *Tanchuma*, quoted from Montefiore & Loewe, *Rabbinic Anthology* (Schoken, 1974), p. 543.

135 *Midrash Psalms* on 73:1, p. 167a, §1.

136 cf. Rom 6:9; 13:11; 1Co 15:58; 2Co 4:14; 5:6, 11; Gal 2:16; Eph 6:8, 9; Col 3:24; 4:1; 1Pt 1:18.

137 Calvin, *Commentaries*, 19.191.

tribulation trains for the struggle to be righteous.

4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

The patience or perseverance which tribulation brings yields yet another godly attribute, “proven character” (δοκιμή, *dokime*). This word (and cognates) is grounded in metallurgy in which a metal is heated until molten and the impurities separated in order to refine the metal to its purest state.¹³⁸ Thus the translation “proven character” used in the NASB, which speaks of character which has been refined through suffering.

Furthermore, this proven character is able to produce “hope.” Cranfield writes:

To have one's faith proved by God in the fires of tribulation and sustained by Him so as to stand the test is to have one's hope in Him and in the fulfillment of His promises, one's hope of His glory (v. 2), strengthened and confirmed.¹³⁹

Once again, “hope” is used in the sense of that which is expected by reason of that which is certain. It is therefore “the looking forward to something with some reason for confidence respecting fulfillment; hope, expectation” (*BDAG*, “ἐλπίς”).

5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

The hope that is the result of persevering via faith is a hope that does not put those who cherish it to shame by proving illusory. Paul seems clearly to be relying upon numerous texts in the Psalms which teach that faith in God does not disappoint or cause those who call upon him to be ashamed.¹⁴⁰ When by faith the child of God hopes in Him, this hope will always be shown to be well-founded.

because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts – This is the first occurrence of ἀγάπη (*agape*, “love”) in Romans (a cognate form was used in 1:7). We may question whether the genitive construction (“love of God”) is objective or subjective. Objective genitive would yield the meaning “love to God”

138 Note the use of δοκιμος (*dokimos*) in 1Pt 1:7, “that the proof (refined residue) of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Yeshua the Messiah.”

139 Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.261.

140 Ps 22:5; 25:3, 20; 119:116 (Lxx= 21:6; 24:3; 118:116) all of which contain the verb καταισχύνη (*kataischune*) preceded by the negative: “not ashamed,” the exact construction found here. Cf. Is 28:16 as well.

(where God is the object of the love) while a subjective genitive would yield “God’s love to us,” i.e., God is the subject Who acts in love. Is the hope we have of an enduring nature because we love God or because He loves us? It seems to me that a statement of God’s love for us is a much greater proof of why our hope does not disappoint than an argument based upon our love for Him. Furthermore, our ability to persevere in tribulation is better formulated on the basis of God’s love for us than upon our love for Him, because in the midst of suffering when we find our strength gone, and thus our ability to love diminished, God’s love for us remains as firm as always and thus forms a foundation upon which we may rest in hope.

Thus, the fact of God’s love for us has been “poured out within our hearts.” Paul uses the metaphor of “pouring” (ἐκχεῖν, *ekchein*) as fitting when speaking of the giving of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2:17ff and the report by Peter in Acts 10:45, the Spirit is spoken of as “poured out,” no doubt based upon the metaphor of water in the act of cleansing such as that given by Ezekiel in his prophecy.¹⁴¹ The metaphor of “pouring” is also used of God’s wrath, mercy, and blessing. That Paul should thus combine the love of God with the giving of the Spirit in the metaphor of “pouring” is very natural.

The meaning, then, is that God has lavished upon us His love (spelled out more specifically in the following verses) and made us to know it absolutely and actually by giving us the Spirit Who dwells within us, and Who, therefore, communicates to our very souls this love that otherwise we would not comprehend. The ultimate proof that our hope in God will not disappoint us is in the manner in which we have come to know God’s actions toward us in redemption and salvation. The fact that God has graciously given us the Spirit to dwell within us is a guarantee (עֲרָבוֹן, *‘erabon*, ἀρραβών, *arrabon*, “pledge, down payment” cf. Eph 1:14) that He will maintain His faithfulness in every way, even to bringing us to be with Him, face-to-face, as it were. It is thus by the very work of the Spirit in illuminating our minds that we are able to comprehend the love of God which has been poured out in our hearts.

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Messiah died for the ungodly.

The verse begins ἐτι γὰρ (*eti, gar*, “For still”) and is then followed by a second ἐτι at the beginning of the second clause.¹⁴² This construction is a little

141 cf. 36:25ff; Joel 2:28 [Heb. 3:1]

142 The textual variants substitute a number of different readings since this is a less than common Greek construction. Alford opted for εἰ γε (*ei ge*) which is read by B and the Coptic, though he suggests a possible confusion with a liturgical phrase χριστὸς ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν ἐτι (“Christ, when we were weak, still . . .”); Henry Alford, *The Greek Testament*. 5 vols. (Moody, 1958) 2.357.

unusual, though it is possible that ἔτι was placed at the beginning of the sentence for emphasis, and then repeated after the genitive absolute for the sake of clarity. We might thus translate, “For still, while ourselves being dead, still at that very time Messiah died on behalf of the ungodly.”

Surely this verse dispels the notion of Poor Richard that “God helps them that helps themselves”! Paul has already shown that Scripture teaches the utter helplessness of the sinner when confronted with the need to atone for one's sin. Since mankind is incapable of beginning the process, the only hope he has is that God Himself might step in and accomplish what would otherwise be impossible. The metaphors of “death,” “birth,” and “creation,” used of the event of regeneration, all speak to this issue of inability. For the one who is dead is unable to bring himself to life; the one who is unborn is unable to affect his birth; and the one who is uncreated is unable to bring about his own creation.

The word translated “helpless” (NASB), “powerless” (NIV) is ἀσθενής, *asthe-es*, meaning “weak,” “powerless,” “feeble,” “sick.” This word is used of “weak faith” (1Co 9:22), of those who were sick (Ac 4:9), as well as those who were physically weak (1Co 11:30). Here it speaks about the inability to gain right standing before God on one's own efforts.

at the right time – The death of Messiah was not determined by man, but by God. The Scriptures are clear on this matter: Mk 1:15; Lk 22:22; Ac 2:23; Gal 4:4. While the events leading up to the crucifixion may have appeared to some as though they were random and the result of unforeseen calamity, the truth of the matter is that God determined from all eternity (Rev 13:8) that His own Son should take upon Himself the sins of all His chosen ones.

Messiah died for the ungodly – Messiah's death on behalf of sinners is spoken of throughout the epistle (3:25; 4:25; 6:10; 7:4; 8:32; 14:15) and surely is one of the primary refrains of the Apostle. Here, in our text, as well as 8:32 and 14:15, the preposition ὑπέρ, *huper*, is used, translated “for,” or better “on behalf of.” The emphasis is upon substitution of a vicarious nature, one on the behalf of another, but especially one who is innocent on the behalf of one who is ungodly. The Greek ἀσεβής (“helpless”) describes the impious person, the one who is without any connection to God, who is rightly condemned by his deeds. This forms one of the truly amazing aspects of God's grace, as Paul now goes on to show.

7-8 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us.

The amazing aspect that Paul here highlights is that the righteous God should ever want anything to do with unrighteous sinners, not to mention laying down the life of His beloved Son for them!

While it is clear that these verses are given to clarify and amplify the meaning of the former “Messiah died for the ungodly,” it has not always been agreed upon as to how this verse should be understood. Is the “righteous man” of the first clause simply clarified by the “good man” of the next clause, or is the “good man” a better prospect for self-sacrificing love than the “righteous man?” Still others have suggested that we’re not talking here about laying down one’s life for a person, but for a cause (taking the word “righteous” and “good” as neuter). Another option is that “righteous” refers to any person of upstanding character, while “good” refers to one’s own benefactor.¹⁴³

Whatever the exact meaning of the terms, the general meaning is clear: we might be able to understand why a person would give up his life for the sake of a righteous or good man, but, in fact, the Messiah gave up His life for neither—not a righteous nor a good person, but instead He gave up His life for the ungodly. This truly is the mystery of God’s love!

But God demonstrates His own love toward us – This contrast of God loving the ungodly is surely a demonstration of the greatest of love! The verb *συνιστάναι* (*sunistanai*, from *συνίστημι*, *sunistemi*), “to demonstrate,” “to prove,” was used in 3:5 but most likely should be understood here in the sense of “prove.” Most interesting in this regard is that Paul uses the present tense, “God demonstrates,” even though the cross is past. The very fact that the death of Messiah occurred remains a proof in the present of God’s love; so does the fact that the historical event of the cross continues to bear present reality in redeeming sinners and reconciling them to God. Though Messiah died nearly 2000 years ago, the reality is that this event continues to be the greatest demonstration of God’s love for the ungodly.

Note that God’s love is contrasted with that of man’s by the emphatic “His own love” (*τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην*). God is able to love in an infinite way, with an infinite capacity. As such, His love forms the model for all genuine love.

We may rightly ask how God’s love is demonstrated by giving Messiah to die for the ungodly. Would it not be more natural to say that Messiah’s love was demonstrated? But here we have, as often, the accepted theological axiom of the Apostle, that the Father and the Messiah are one, so that what the Messiah does can be rightly accredited to the Father, and *vice versa*. It is for this very reason that the Apostle can say, without hesitation or explanation, that God purchased the church “with His own blood” (Acts 20:28).¹⁴⁴ Thus, as far as the Apostle is concerned, the pain and suffering which the Messiah underwent on behalf of

143 since the term was used in this way and the presence of the article before *ἀγαθοῦ*, *agathou*, might suggest this usage.

144 I am aware of the textual variants in this verse, some of the Byzantine manuscripts having *κύριος* (*kurios*, “Lord”) rather than *θεός* (*theos*, “God”) but the clear weight of manuscript evidence is on the side of reading *θεός*, and in addition, this is surely the more difficult reading.

those for whom He died was no less the pain and suffering of the Father, and that in the death of the Messiah the Father's love is surely demonstrated as is the love of Yeshua for His own.

while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us – This is parallel to the former “while we were still helpless.” Thus, our helplessness is the result of our sin. Yet God did not wait for us to respond to Him, for we were unable. He forgave us while we still clung to our sin—while our lives were characterized by it. Here, the designation “sinners” refers to the primary characteristic of the unregenerate life. We may rightly extrapolate from this that once a person is born from above, this prime characteristic of being “sinner” changes. Even though we all sin and continue to battle against the flesh, the primary or most obvious attribute of a child of God is not that of “sinner” but of “holy one” (ἅγιος, *hagios*, often in the plural and translated “saints,” meaning “holy ones”). Passing from darkness to light is an actual passage that results in a changed life and an ongoing process of being conformed to the image of Yeshua.

9-10 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

This *kal v'chomer* (light and heavy) argument is a favorite one of the Sages. If something is true for the greater, then it surely is true for the lessor. Thus, in this case, if the act of reconciliation of sinners to God required the very death of the Son (the greater case), surely it is true that maintaining our lives through His living must be true. Or to say it another way, if the greater task is loving the ungodly, then surely we can expect God to love those who are holy.

The participle “having been justified” (δικαιωθέντες, *dikaiothentes*) picks up the theme of v. 1, which is itself a concluding summary of 1:18-4:25. Paul is linking together “how one gets in” with “how one stays in.” In both cases, coming into the family of God and staying in the family of God are the result of God's omnipotent and eternal love and grace whereby He reconciles the sinner to Himself and provides for his eternal salvation. If our “getting in” was the result of God reconciling us to Himself through the death of His Messiah, then we may well reason that He will also “keep us in” through His life. The object reconciled is far too valuable to ever be lost.

We are justified “by His blood” (ἐν αἱματι αὐτοῦ,¹⁴⁵ *en haimati autou*), that is, by His death (v. 10). The shedding of blood, so well portrayed in the sacrifices of the Tabernacle and Temple, depicts a violent death—a death of a victim, not death by natural means. Whenever we encounter this sacrificial language applied to the work of Messiah we must gather together all we know of the sacrificial

145 The ἐν (en) most likely denotes “by means of” or “by virtue of,” not sphere.

ritual as foreshadowing His ultimate sacrifice.

we shall be saved – The future tense emphasizes a very real aspect of salvation, namely, that ultimately we are saved from the fury of God's wrath in the final day of judgment. Thus, at times the words "saved" or "salvation" refer to our final rescue from the sentence of "guilty" to be uttered by the Judge of all the earth. Yet this salvation is not only future, but has present realities (note the use of "now" [νῦν, *nun*] in v. 11). Indeed, the Apostle has already told us that God's wrath "is being revealed against all ungodliness" (1:18). So while there is a clear future reality to our salvation, there is, nonetheless, a present and real salvation for all who believe.

We should be careful to gather all of Paul's words together and not try, based upon this verse, to make a rigid distinction between the efficacy of Yeshua's death (blood) and His resurrection (life). Granted, Paul says we have been justified by His blood and that we are saved by His life, but in 4:25 he teaches that we were justified as a result of His resurrection. The point is that Paul does not envision a separation between the death and resurrection of the Messiah, for surely one without the other is either impossible or worthless. Rather, the work of the Messiah in all aspects is the fountain from which our salvation flows.

For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God – Here we have, for the first time in this epistle, the use of the word "reconcile" (καταλλάσσειν, *katallassein*). The verb is found only in Pauline epistles (1Co 7:11; 2Co 5:18, 19, 20) and the same is true of the noun (καταλλάγη, *katallage*). The definition of this word has already been described in the opening phrase "we have peace with God" (5:1).

When definitions are sought in the Greek of the 1st Century for this word group, it is hardly surprising that one finds no use of it in a religious sense. In Hellenistic religion the relation between deity and man was not conceived of as the deeply personal thing that it is in the Bible. In the salvation described by God in the Scriptures, reconciliation to Him is the essential element. Sin has brought enmity between the Creator and His creation, but in the outworking of salvation this enmity is removed. This enmity involves both God's hostility toward the sinner (His wrath) and the sinner's hostility toward God (enemies). But there is a great difference in how this hostility is done away with, for with man the removal of hostility is tied to a dramatic change within him, while the removal of God's hostility involves no change in His character at all. Rather, God's hostility toward the sinner is the direct outworking of His righteous character which demands that justice be served and therefore that sin be punished.

But reconciliation is the direct outflowing of God's character as well, for it comes from His infinite love. It is interesting to note that in all of the uses of the verb καταλλάσσειν, every time God is the subject the verb is in the active voice, while those occurrences which have man as subject are in the passive. Thus "God reconciles" but "man is reconciled." God is therefore always the initiator—never

man. This harkens back to the quote from Psalm 14 or Psalm 53 (Rom 3:10-11) in which Paul emphasizes “there is none who seek for God.” Thus, if reconciliation is to occur, it must be as the result of God’s initiative toward the sinner.

Yet though the active voice is always used of God when the verb *καταλλάσσειν* comes into play, 2Co 5:20 shows us that from Paul’s perspective there was still the necessity of man to respond to God’s call for reconciliation: “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Messiah, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Messiah, be reconciled to God.” Surely, while God must be the initiator in the whole reconciliation process, the very fact that a term like “reconciliation” is used indicates strongly that man does not play a purely passive role. Quickened by the inner work of the Spirit, the soul pressed upon by God responds from the gift of faith which he has been given. And in that response of faith, the sinner lays hold of the eternal reconciliation which has been purchased for him by the blood of the Messiah.

much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. – This parallels the *kal v'chomer* argument already given in v. 9. If the love of God demonstrated in the death of the Messiah is able to overcome the enmity which existed between Himself and those who were ungodly, then surely this same love will extend itself to maintain and guard those who are now reconciled.

11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Yeshua Messiah, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

What does the opening “not only this” refer to? Most commentators supply the idea of reconciliation, so that they take the meaning to be, “And not only are we reconciled to God. . . .” However, it may well be that the primary theme in mind in this paragraph is that of “salvation” in general, and specifically being saved from the wrath of God, a theme which has been picked up again in the previous clause (“we shall be saved through His life”). The point, then, is to stress the tense of the verb (future) and contrast it with the present: not only shall we be saved in the world to come, but we already exult now. The *eschaton* has broken into the present by the coming of Messiah.

we exult in God (*καυχώμενοι ἐν τῷ θεῷ*) – “we exult” is a present participle which may well indicate continuous action: “we keep on exulting.” This is a bit of a paradox, for Paul himself informs us that we also “groan within ourselves” (8:23) as we await our final redemption. How is it, then, that we continually rejoice while at the same time we groan? The answer comes enwrapped in the element of faith, for faith brings into the present what, in reality, awaits the future. The very knowing that God will maintain His promise to bring us to Himself does, even in the midst of our groaning, cause us to exult. Thus, our exultation is “through Adoneinu Yeshua HaMashiach,” for it is in His finished work that we are able to possess this abiding faith. It is through the finished work of Yeshua on

our behalf (death, resurrection, ascension, intercession) that we are able to look beyond the groaning of this sphere to the joy of the עוֹלָם הַבָּא, 'olam haba', the world to come.

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Paul begins this section with “Therefore” (Διὰ τοῦτο, *dia touto*) and it seems most likely, both on the basis of the Greek grammar as well as the context, that he intends his readers to understand that what follows is the inevitable result of the truth stated in the previous section (vv. 1-11). The fact that reconciliation exists between sinners and a just God is the result of the application of Messiah's work to the sinner via faith. Thus, those who have right standing with God do so as a matter of God's undeserved love by which they have been transformed from enemies of the Most High into His dearest friends. But what Paul now goes on to teach us is that this undeserved love of God whereby He brings into right standing those who otherwise would be condemned, goes well beyond the individual—it has an effect as wide as the effect of Adam's sin. For if the sin of Adam cast its effect upon all mankind, then in like manner the existence and work of Yeshua HaMashiach affects all. Adam condemned all who would come through him—Yeshua redeems all who would come to Him. The parallels between Adam and Messiah are thus close and direct.

just as through one man sin entered into the world – Paul uses “just as” (ὥσπερ, *osper*; the protasis) but does not follow it with the expected “so also” (the apodasis). In fact, he enters into an explanation (vv. 13-15) and a kind of long parentheses (vv. 16-17), and only in v. 18 comes back to the original theme. Apparently the parenthesis became so long that he is compelled, in v. 18, to repeat his “just as” and follow it immediately with the expected “so also.”

With this in mind, we must understand that throughout this section it is Paul's intention to show the parallels (some in similarity, others in contrast) between Adam and Yeshua. Though he does not state it explicitly until v. 18, it is clear from the structure of the section as well as the content that this is the Apostle's intention.

through one man – Sin is almost personified or at least quantified, for it comes “through one man,” i.e., as the result of one man. It is surely to be noted that the avenue for sin into the world is considered as Adam, not Eve, even though she was the first to disobey. The *Apocalypse of Moses* 32 has Eve declaring “. . . all sin is come into the creation through me.”¹⁴⁶ b. *Yevamot* 103b shows that at least some of the rabbinic authorities of the Talmudic period believed that sin was passed on to Eve's children:

146 quoted from Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.274.