

LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

Theological Journal of the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Edited by the faculty of
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary
6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

Editor Pres. Gaylin Schmeling
Managing Editor Pres. Gaylin Schmeling
Book Review Editor Prof. John Moldstad, Jr.
Layout Paul Fries
Printer Corporate Graphics International, North Mankato, MN

Subscription Price: \$8.00 U.S. per year

*Send all subscriptions and other correspondence
to the following address:*

BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
ATTN: LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY
6 BROWNS CT.
MANKATO, MN 56001

Foreword

In modern liberal theology there is a tendency to emphasize diversity in the content of the Holy Scripture. It has become popular to speak of conflicting theologies in the Bible. This supposed dichotomy is particularly evident in modern theologians' approach to the relationship between Testaments. Liberal theologians see no real connection between the Old Testament and the New Testament. They reject any actual fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in the New. The Old Testament is an interesting book about daily life in ancient times, but it is hardly the case that the entire Scripture points to or puts forth Christ (*Die ganze Schrift treibt Christum*) as Luther taught. Confessional Lutherans have always defended Augustine's well-known axiom: "In the Old Testament the New is concealed, in the New the Old is revealed." (*Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet.*)

In harmony with Augustine's axiom the sermon in this issue of the *Quarterly* based on Judges 14:1-9 portrays the life of Samson as a picture or a shadow of Christ. This is an example of biblical typology where certain persons and events in the history of Israel prefigure what God the Father would accomplish in the fullness of time in the person of His only begotten Son.

The exegetical study of Psalm 72 likewise upholds the connection between the Testaments, maintaining that this psalm is a rectilinear or directly messianic prophecy. This means that the prophecy points to Jesus of Nazareth as its one and only fulfillment. The author of this study entitled *The Messiah King and His Kingdom, a Study of Psalm 72*, is Professor Mark Harstad of Bethany Lutheran College.

The Rev. Bruce Wilmot Adams of Glenowrie, South Australia, reminds us of the English connection to the Lutheran Reformation in his essay, *John Rogers: Anglo-Lutheran Confessor*. Through the influence of Martin Luther, Englishmen such as Robert Barnes and John Rogers made their stand on the Gospel of free salvation. Adams states, "It might well be claimed that the Anglo-Lutheran reformers like Robert Barnes and Vicar John Rogers stand in unique succession of the Apostolic Faith reaching back to the first Celtic missionary-bishop to England, St. Aidan of Lindisfarne."

The Rev. Michael Smith of Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Holland, Michigan, has prepared an exegesis of II Thessalonians 2:6-7. This is a portion of the *sedes doctrinae* of the biblical doctrine of the Antichrist. According to Scripture the Antichrist has been revealed in the Roman Papacy.

Gambling has become extremely common in our society. We see its detrimental effect in many areas of life. Professor John Moldstad, Jr. has written a response for the Doctrine Committee to the question, "Is Gambling a Sin?"

In this *Quarterly* there is a review of the book *Predestination: Chosen in Christ*, which is part of the People's Bible Teaching Series. The author of the book is Professor John Moldstad, Jr. of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary.

Contents

Sermon on Judges 14:1-9	186
<i>Gaylin R. Schmeling</i>	
A Study of The Messiah King and His Kingdom	193
A Study of Psalm 72	
<i>Mark O. Harstad</i>	
John Rogers: Anglo-Lutheran Confessor (1500-1555)	235
<i>Bruce Wilmot Adams</i>	
An Exegesis of II Thessalonians 2:6-7	243
<i>Michael K. Smith</i>	
Is Gambling a Sin?	252
<i>John A. Moldstad, Jr.</i>	
Book Review: John A. Moldstad, Jr., <i>Predestination:</i>	257
<i>Chosen in Christ</i>	
<i>Gaylin R. Schmeling</i>	

Sermon on Judges 14: 1-9

by *Gaylin R. Schmeling*

Prayer: O Jesus, Conquerer Divine, we thank you that as Samson of old you tore apart the old lion and then went to take your bride, the church, whom you washed clean with your blood. Now through Word and Sacrament feed us, your church, with the honeycomb from the carcass of the strong. Here there is strengthening for all the problems of life and the power to overcome and obtain the victory. We ask it in your triumphant name. Amen.

Text: Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife." Then his father and mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well." But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD — that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel. So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. After some time, when he returned to get her, he

turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion. He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion. (Judges 14:1-9)

The text which was just read doesn't appear to contain any important doctrine. It is a simple account of Samson going down to Timnah and there seeing a woman whom he desired to be his wife. It seems like a rather insignificant text. How then can one apply the words of St. Paul to this text, "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope?" (Romans 15:5)

We know that Samson was a type or picture of Christ, as were all the Judges of this era. Each of these saviors was to remind Israel of God's full liberation in the promised Messiah. Already in Samson's wonderful birth with the appearance of the Angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Christ, we are reminded of the far greater conception and birth of Jesus Christ. These two were also similar in their lives' purpose. Samson was to defeat the enemies of God's people, while Jesus' purpose was to defeat our greatest enemy, the old evil foe. Finally, they were alike in their death. Concerning Samson it must be said that He accomplished more in his death than he did in his life, for in His death he destroyed the temple of Dagon and thousands of his enemies. Likewise, Christ's death was the purpose of his life. He gave Himself as a ransom for many so that He might conquer hell, as a Bohemian hymnwriter states: "Like Samson, Christ great strength employed and conquered hell, its gates destroyed Hallelujah! Oh, let us sing His praises!" (TLH #211)

Also in our text the actions of Samson point to Christ. We then consider:

SAMSON ON HIS WEDDING JOURNEY A TYPE OF CHRIST

I. First we see a picture of Christ in the obtaining of His bride. Samson was about 20 years old when he went down to Timnah and chose a wife among the Philistines. The Philistines had been oppressing Israel for 40 years. Through Samson God began the liberation of his people which was finally accomplished in the days of David. Samson's parents were not at all pleased that he wanted to marry a Philistine. Old Testament Law expressly forbade intermarriage with the heathen Canaanites. (Deuteronomy 7:3) God, however, had a purpose in this, for through it He would raise Samson as deliverer in Israel. Thus Samson, the chosen of God, took a bride from among the sinful and uncircumcised Philistines.

Now we look at God's Chosen One from all eternity, Jesus Christ. Does He have a bride as Samson did? Yes, indeed, for the Baptizer said, "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled." (John 3:29) His bride is His church which He washed clean with His own blood through the water and the Word. (Ephesians 5:26f)

Samson's bride was not very acceptable to his parents. She was of the heathen uncircumcised Philistines outside the nation of Israel. Likewise, the bride of Christ by nature was not acceptable to the heavenly Father. Again and again the prophets mourned the fact that God's Old Testament people went a whoring after other gods; that they played the harlot; and that the stench of their broth-

els reeked to high heaven. This is the theme of much of the book of Hosea. Is the situation any different today? People often are going a whoring after wealth, power, and pleasure. We bed ourselves down with the gods of this world. So enslaved are we to passions, lust, drugs, alcohol, materialism, hate and envy that we cannot stop doing these things even though we know that these things are going to hurt ourselves and those around us. Humanity by nature is a prostitute on a string completely controlled and used by the evil one, Satan.

Yet the wonderful Prince, the greater Samson, our Lover, our Friend, had compassion. He redeemed the poor wretched harlot with His own blood. Our sins can no longer destroy us, since they were laid on Christ and swallowed up by Him. The church has righteousness in Christ, her husband, which she can confidently display alongside her sins in the face of death and hell and say, "I have sinned, yet my Christ in whom I believe has not sinned and all that is His is mine and all that is mine is His, as the bride says in the Song of Solomon 2:16 'My Beloved is mine and I am His.'" (LW 31:352)

Through the means of grace, Word and Sacrament, this treasure of Christ is brought to us personally and is received by the wedding ring of faith through which we are united to Him as a bride to her bridegroom. He takes upon Himself our suffering, death and hell and gives us His glory, life, and heaven. This is a wonderful and joyful exchange. Who can fully appreciate the treasure of this royal marriage? Who can fully appreciate the love of the Bridegroom? Such a one is my Lover, my Friend.

II. Now we will look at a picture of Christ in the defeat of the Roaring Lion. As Samson went down to Timnah we are told, "Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came

mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand.” (14:5-6) Strange, indeed, is the fact that a young lion would attack a man without any apparent provocation. But stranger by far was the reaction of Samson. He didn’t run and hide. He grabbed the lion and tore its flesh apart as one would pull apart the flesh of a new born goat.

This story of the roaring lion cannot but remind us of St. Peter’s warning in the New Testament, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, walks this earth as a roaring devouring lion.” (1 Peter 5:8) Humanity by nature was no match for this beast. He had attacked us, grabbed us by the neck with his sharp teeth and was dragging us into his den in hell where we would be devoured eternally. Ours was an absolutely wretched lot.

Yet the greater Samson appeared on the way. He seemed no different than any other man, but in Him dwelled the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Colossians 2:9) This One, our valiant Knight, came to our defense. He did battle with Satan throughout His life, from His temptation in the Judean wilderness to that cataclysmic struggle of the battle of the ages on the cross. Here He fought the death struggle with the old lion. In all the dust, rubble, and confusion of that first Good Friday, it appeared as though our champion lost the battle. The old evil foe did not appear to be torn apart as Samson’s lion, for Christ was dragged into his den of death. All was woe and gloom; despair and misery.

The bright and glorious Easter morning, however, removes all doubt and confusion. In death Christ was the Victor divine, the Conqueror of the universe, the Lord of lords and King of kings for he broke forth from the den of death triumphant, raising His sword in victory, dragging the torn and defeated carcass of sin, death and the devil.

His glorious resurrection wasn't a victory only for Christ. His victory is our victory. In His resurrection He offers us the power to live victorious lives free from Satan's tyranny.

III. Finally we will see how this victory power becomes ours as we consider a picture of Christ in the reception of honey from the strong. Sometime later when Samson was returning to Timnah, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion that he tore apart. "And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass. He took some of it in his hand and went along eating." (14:8-9) Amazingly, bees had made a hive in the rib cage of the lion. So much did this event astonish Samson that later he posed this riddle concerning the lion. "Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet." (14:14)

Out of the strong came something sweet. Out of Christ's victory over the old lion there came something sweet, the sweet message of the Gospel. Christ declares: "I have redeemed you from hell and ransomed you from the grave. Death, I am your sting. O hell, I am your pestilence." The sweet message of the Gospel which is found in Word and Sacraments is indeed sweeter than the honeycomb. (Psalm 19:10)

This honeycomb from the carcass of the old lion found in the means of grace indeed gives the Christian the power to resist and overcome all the attacks of the old evil foe. Here there is help and comfort in every need. Even we as Christians face many problems and troubles in life. There are financial difficulties in our home, bitterness in our family, conflicts with our friends, and even the death of those most near and dear. At times we feel that we can't make it another step of the way. We are about to fall under a heavy load. Yet, in every difficulty and problem

The Messiah King and His Kingdom A Study of Psalm 72

Mark O. Harstad

Outline

I. Masoretic Text and Literal Translation

II. Notes on the Text of Psalm 72

III. Translation

IV. Notes on the Translation of Psalm 72

V. Septuaginta

VI. Vulgate

VII. Luther's Translation

VIII. Revised Standard Version

IX. New King James Version

X. New International Version

XI. The Theology of Psalm 72

XII. Form Analysis and Meanings

A Literal Study Translation

Of Solomon.

O God, give to (the) king your judgments,
and your justice to (the) king's son.

He will vindicate your people with justice,
and your afflicted ones with judgment.

Mountains will lift up peace for the people,
and hills with righteousness.

He will judge (the) afflicted of (the) people,
he will save the sons of the needy,
and He will crush the oppressor.

They will fear you with (the) sun,
and before (the) moon
generation of generations.

He will come down like rain on mown grass,
like heavy dew he will water (the) earth.

A righteous one will sprout in his days,
and abundance of peace until there is no moon.

And he will rule from sea to sea,
and from (the) River to (the) ends of the earth.

Before him desert dwellers will bow down,
and his enemies will lick dust.

Kings of Tarshish and islands will bring a gift,
kings of Sheba and Seba will offer tribute.

All kings will prostrate themselves before him, all nations will
serve him.

For he will rescue (the) needy one who cries out,
and (the) afflicted one and him who has no helper.

He will have compassion upon (the) helpless and (the) needy,
and the souls of (the) needy he will save.

From oppression and from violence he will redeem their soul,
and precious is their blood in his eyes.

And let him live and let him give to him
from the gold of Sheba,
and let him pray for him always,
all the day let him bless him.

Let there be an abundance of grain in the land,
on top of mountains,
let its fruit wave like Lebanon,
and let them blossom forth from (the) city

like the grass of the earth.
 And let his name be forever,
 let his name sprout forth before the sun,
 let them bless themselves in him,
 let all nations call him blessed.
 Blessed be Yahveh God,
 the God of Israel
 who alone does wonders,
 And blessed be the name of his glory forever,
 and let his glory fill all the earth.
 Amen and Amen!
 The prayers of David son of Jesse are finished.

Psalm 72 from the Masoretic Text

לְשִׁלְמָה
 1 אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לְמֶלֶךְ תָּן
 וצדקתך לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ
 2 יָדִין עַמֶּךָ בְּצֶדֶק וְעֲנִיִּים בְּמִשְׁפָּט
 3 יִשְׂאוּ הַרִים שְׁלוֹם לְעַם וְגִבְעוֹת בְּצֶדֶקְךָ
 4 יִשְׁפֹּט עֲנִיִּים יוֹשִׁיעַ לְבְנֵי אֲבִיוֹן וַיִּדְכֵּא עוֹשֵׂק
 5 וַיִּרְאֶה עַם־שָׁמֶשׁ וּלְפָנָיו יָרַח דָּוָר דְּוָרִים
 6 יִרְדַּ כְּמָטֵר עַל־גֹּז כְּרִבִּיבִים וְרוּיָף אֶרֶץ
 7 יִפְרַח־בְּיָמָיו צַדִּיק וְרַב שְׁלוֹם עַד־בְּלֵי יָרַח
 8 וַיִּרְדֵּ מַיִם עַד־יָם וּמְנַהֵר עַד־אֲפְסַי־אֶרֶץ
 9 לְפָנָיו יִכְרְעוּ צִיִּים וְאִיבֵיו עָפָר יִלְחֲכוּ
 10 מִלְכֵי תַרְשִׁישׁ וְאִיִּים מִנְחָה יִשִּׁיבוּ מִלְכֵי שְׂבָא וְסָבָא
 אֲשֶׁפֶר וְקָרִיבוּ
 11 וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶי־לוּ כָל־מְלָכִים כָּל־גּוֹיִם יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ
 12 כִּי־צִיל אֲבִיוֹן מִשּׁוּעַ וְעָנִי וְאִין־עֹזֵר לוֹ
 13 יָחַס עַל־דָּל וְאֲבִיוֹן וּנְפֹשׁוֹת אֲבִיוֹנִים יוֹשִׁיעַ
 14 מִתּוֹךְ וּמִחַמַּס וּגְאֹל נַפְשָׁם וַיִּיקֶר דָּמָם בְּעֵינָיו
 15 וַיְחִי וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ מִזֶּהָב שְׂבָא וַיִּתְּפֹלֵל בְּעַדוֹ תָּמִיד

כָּל־הַיּוֹם יִבְרַכְנֶהוּ
 16 יְהִי פֶסֶת־בַּר בְּאֶרֶץ בְּרֹאשׁ הַרִים וְרַעַשׁ כָּל־בְּנוֹן
 פָּרִיו וְיִצְיָצוּ מֵעִיר כְּעֹשֵׁב הָאָרֶץ
 17 יְהִי שָׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם לִפְנֵי־שָׁמֶשׁ יָנוֹן שָׁמוֹ
 וַיִּתְבָּרְכוּ בּוֹ כָּל־גּוֹיִם יִאֲשְׁרוּהוּ
 18 בְרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת
 לְבָדוֹ
 19 וּבְרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל
 הָאָרֶץ אָמֵן וְאָמֵן
 20 כָּלוּ תַפְלוֹת דָּוִד בְּיֹשִׁי

Notes on the Text of Psalm 72

The text of this Psalm appears to be in quite good condition. There are not many difficulties here.

Verse 1: A few manuscripts conjoin Psalm 72 with Psalm 71 as one continuous Psalm. A look at the content of the two Psalms reveals that they are quite different. There is no compelling internal evidence for joining the two as one Psalm.

The Title לְשִׁלְמוֹהַ is missing in a few manuscripts.

The Greek and Syriac translations are apparently based on an original Hebrew text which had מִשְׁפָּטָד (singular) instead of מִשְׁפָּטִיךְ (plural).

Verse 2: The LXX reads κρίνειν, *to judge*, apparently

based on לְדִין rather than יִדִין.

Verse 3: The editor of BHS suggests that וּגְבֻעוֹת should perhaps be moved to stand directly after הַרִים. The verse would then read, יִשְׂאוּ הַרִים וּגְבֻעוֹת שְׁלוֹם לְעַם בְּצִדְקָה: *“Mountains and hills will raise up peace for the people with righteousness.”* There is no manuscript evidence to support this suggested emendation.

Several Greek manuscripts, the Syriac and the Vulgate are apparently based on a Hebrew original which omits the ב on בְּצִדְקָה. Many modern translations follow the ancient versions.

Verse 5: At the beginning of this verse the LXX reads καὶ συμπαραμενεῖ τῷ ἡλίῳ, which would apparently be based on a Hebrew reading וַיֵּאָרֶיךָ and he will endure, instead of וַיִּירָאוּךָ, they will fear you. RSV and NIV both follow the וַיֵּאָרֶיךָ emendation.

Verse 6: Several Hebrew manuscripts, the Greek and the Syriac have the conjunction after the atnach.

וַיִּרְזֶיפוּ should probably read וַיִּרְזִיפוּ according to the editor, but no manuscript evidence supports the reading. If the MT reading וַיִּרְזֶיף is the correct reading, it must be some kind of verbal noun from the root רָזַף. The form occurs only here in the OT.

Verse 7: A few Hebrew manuscripts, supported by the Greek, Vulgate and Syriac, read צַדִּיק instead of צֶדֶק. This would make for a better parallelism with שְׁלוֹם. The introduction of a person, צַדִּיק, a righteous one, seems to be an intrusion into the flow of things.

Verse 9: The LXX reads Αἰθίοπες where the MT has צַיִים. The Greek rendering interestingly makes it into

the fourth verse of James Montgomery's hymn based on this Psalm. The Syriac reading is apparently based on Hebrew אִיִּים, "islands", which occurs in the next verse. The editor of BHS, without manuscript support, proposes reading צָרִים, *foes* or *adversaries*, or צָרָיו, *his foes*. The suggested emendations parallel nicely with אִיִּבָּיו, *his enemies*.

צָיִם as it stands in the Hebrew is the plural of צַי, a dweller or demon of צִידָה, *dry country*, *desert place*.

Verse 12: The LXX reads ἐκ χειρὸς δυνάστου *from a strong hand*, for the Hebrew מְשִׁיעַ. This involves revocalizing the consonantal text as מְשִׁיעַ, from שׁוּעַ, *open handed*. The MT pointing makes the form a Piel participle from שׁוּעַ, *to cry for help*. The Vulgate followed the lead of LXX and translated *a potente*. The Syriac rendition also supports the LXX reading. Here it appears quite clear that the MT reading is to be preferred over all other suggestions.

Verse 14: The LXX and Theodotion read τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῶν, *their name*, for the Hebrew דְּמָם, *their blood*. This would be based on Hebrew שְׂמָם.

Verse 15: The LXX and Vulgate have passive verb forms where the Hebrew reads יִתֵּן, apparently based on a Hebrew reading יִתֵּן, a somewhat unusual, apparently Hophal form which does occur a half dozen times in the OT.

Verse 16: For the unexplained Hebrew פִּסְתָּ, the editor of BHS points out the Aramaic word פִּיס *abundance*. The editor does not even attempt to deal with the LXX and Vulgate translations of פִּסְתָּ-בָּר. LXX translates it στήριγμα, *firmness*. The Vulgate has *memorable triticum*, *memorable grain*. This is another instance of an expression which is difficult for us in modern times, and

was difficult for the ancients as well.

For the MT reading **וַיִּצְיָצוּ מֵעִיר כְּעֵשֶׁב הָאָרֶץ פְּרִי וַיִּרְעֹשׂ כַּלְבַּנּוֹן פְּרִי וַעֲמִירוֹ כְּעֵשֶׁב הָאָרֶץ כַּלְבַּנּוֹן פְּרִי וַיִּצְיָץ**, *let its fruit wave like Lebanon and let them blossom forth from (the) city like the grass of the earth, the editor of BHS, without manuscript support, proposes the reading **וַעֲמִירוֹ כְּעֵשֶׁב הָאָרֶץ כַּלְבַּנּוֹן פְּרִי וַיִּצְיָץ**, like Lebanon let his fruit blossom forth and his newly cut grain like the grass of the earth. This reading involves repunctuating the MT and construing **וַיִּרְעֹשׂ** with what has gone before it. There is variety in the translations in the treatment of this verse.*

Verse 17: The beginning of this verse in the LXX reads: *ἔστω τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ εὐλογημένον εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, let his name be praised forever*, where the Hebrew simply reads **יְהִי שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם**, *let his name be forever*. The editor of BHS refers to Psalm 113:2 which reads **מְבָרַךְ יְהוָה שֵׁם יְהוָה**, *let the name of Yahveh be blessed*.

For the **כְּתִיב יִנִּין** form the Masoretic note in the margin of BHS supplies the **יִנִּין קָרִיא** a Niphal from **נָוַן**, used only once in the OT as a verb, apparently meaning *to sprout forth*. Many manuscripts have the **קָרִיא** form in the text proper. Some read **יִנִּין**, apparently a Qal form from the same root. One manuscript reads **יִכּוֹן**, from **כּוֹן**, *to be firm, established, enduring*. This reading apparently underlies the LXX *διαμενεῖ*.

Another way of dealing with this difficult form would be to follow a Jewish tradition, which simply regards it as a proper noun, and to transliterate it as Yinnon. See the note on the translation of this verse.

After **וַיִּתְבְּרָכוּ בּוֹ** the LXX adds *πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς*, *all the families of the earth*, from Genesis 12:3, and 28:14. It is as though the LXX translators wished to make more explicit the connections between this verse and the Genesis passages by importing into this verse the very words of Genesis. These words nicely parallel **גּוֹיִם כָּל** in the last part of the verse.

Verse 18: A few Hebrew manuscripts, the Syriac and the Targum add נְדוּלוֹת after נִפְלְאוֹת, which would mean *great wonders*.

Verse 19: The editor, without manuscript support, suggests reading וַיִּמְלֵא, a Qal, *and let it (his glory) fill*, instead of וַיִּמְלֵא, a Niphal, *and let it be filled*. The context calls for a transitive verb since a direct object follows. The Qal pointing appears preferable.

Verse 20: כָּלוּ at the head of this verse is lacking in a few Hebrew manuscripts and the Syriac version. The form כָּל, as it stands with the dagesh in the ל, was apparently regarded by the Massoretes as a Pual. The editor of BHS on the basis of a few manuscripts and the Syriac suggests reading as a Qal, כָּלוּ. There would be no great difference in meaning.

The LXX reading οἱ ὕμνοι Δαυὶδ is apparently based on תְּפִלוֹת דָּוִד instead of תְּהִלוֹת דָּוִד, *the prayers of David*.

Psalm 72: A Translation

- 1 Of Solomon.
O God, give to the King Your judgments,
and Your justice to the Son of the King.
- 2 He will vindicate your people with justice,
and your afflicted ones with judgment.
- 3 The mountains will bring well-being to the people,
and the hills justice.
- 4 He will get justice for the afflicted among the
people,
he will bring deliverance to the children of the
needy, but he will crush the oppressor.
- 5 And He will endure as long as the sun
and as long as the moon, generation after gen-
eration.
- 6 He will come down like rain upon mown grass,
Like heavy dew watering the earth.
- 7 Justice will sprout forth in his days,
and abundance of well-being until the moon is
no more.
- 8 And He will rule from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.
- 9 Before him desert dwellers will bow down,
and His enemies will lick dust.
- 10 Kings of Tarshish and islands will bring a gift,
kings of Sheba and Seba will offer tribute.
- 11 All kings will prostrate themselves before Him,
all nations will serve Him.
- 12 For He will deliver the needy who cries out,
and the afflicted one, and him who has no
helper.
- 13 He will have compassion on the helpless and the
needy,

- and the souls of the needy he will deliver.
- 14 From oppression and from violence he will redeem their life,
and their blood will be precious in his eyes.
- 15 And long may he live, and let there be given to Him of the gold of Sheba,
and may they pray for him continually,
and may they bless him always.
- 16 Let there be abundance of grain in the land at the top of the mountains,
let its fruit abound like Lebanon,
let them blossom forth from the city like the grass of the earth.
- 17 Let his name be forever,
wherever the sun shines let his name produce offspring;
let them be blessed in Him, let all nations call Him blessed.
- 18 Blessed is the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who alone does wonders,
- 19 And blessed is the Name of His Glory forever,
And His Glory fills all the earth.
Amen and amen.
- 20 The prayers of David son of the Jesse are finished.

Notes on the Translation of Psalm 72

Verse 1: How should “of Solomon” be understood? It seems best to understand this title to mean that the Psalm is a composition of Solomon, not a Psalm about Solomon. This is the way the preposition is understood in Psalm titles throughout the Book of Psalms.

Verse 2: Arriving at adequate translations of מִשְׁפָּט, on the one hand, and צְדָקָה and צְדָק on the other hand, is difficult. After much rumination I decided to stick with *judgment* for מִשְׁפָּט and *justice* for צְדָקָה and צְדָק. Here I am following the lead of Martin Chemnitz who comments on the two words:

When judgment and justice are joined in Scripture, judgment as the first-mentioned signifies the power to drive away the enemy from the oppressed and to put him to flight, to defend the needy, and to free them from oppression. But the second term ‘justice’ indicates that he governs the oppressed with mildness, tranquillity, peace, and glory and blesses them with salvation. (*The Two Natures in Christ*, pp. 336-337.)

Note the understanding of justice here. It refers not to the quality within God whereby He Himself is just, nor does it refer to any quality in man which God demands or expects on the basis of the Law, but rather it refers to the saving acts of God whereby he delivers the poor and needy. Koehler in his *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* distinguishes eight shades of meaning for צְדָקָה. Near the end of his entry on this word he adds the *caveat*: “In many cases it is doubtful and controversial which special meaning is intended by צְדָקָה.” (P. 795.)

מִשְׁפָּט is to be associated with the Law exercised by God against the enemies of His people, and צְדָקָה with the Gospel applied for the benefit of God’s people.

Note Luther’s characteristically bold theology in his translation of v. 2: “Dasz er dein Volk bringe zur Gerechtigkeit, und deine Elenden rette.”

The most difficult translation decision to make in connection with this Psalm is how to handle the imperfect

verb forms. Should they be translated as indicatives expressing fact, or should they be translated as jussives expressing volition or hope? A glance at various translations reveals big differences on the indicative versus jussive issue. Except for those cases where a shortened form of the imperfect exists, there is no difference in appearance between a regular imperfect and a jussive. Therefore the translator has to make the decision on the basis of his *Zusammenhangsgefuehl*. The NIV even has a footnote that indicates that either a jussive or indicative translation is possible for large parts of the Psalm.

I have worked here with the following principle: an imperfect verb form is translated as indicative unless it is the shortened form of the imperfect, in which case I have employed the jussive translation; or in the case of a verb for which no shortened form of the imperfect exists, if it stands in a context which is introduced by a verb which is clearly jussive in form, then I have translated it as a jussive.

One of the easily demonstrable characteristics of the Psalms is that they tend to group together verbs of specific types: imperatives, indicatives, and jussives tend to come in clusters or bunches. Psalm 25 supplies an excellent example of this. Psalm 80 is another. I believe that this is the case in this Psalm as well. The Psalm begins with one imperative verb from which everything else depends. Then follow many verses of indicative statements describing the King Messiah and his Kingdom. Then in verses 15 through 17 we have a series of jussive statements. The Psalm proper concludes with a doxology, verses 18 and 19, which could be translated either as indicative or jussive. I have opted for indicative.

Verse 3: It is difficult to find the perfect translation for **שְׁלוֹם**. *Peace* is too narrow. It refers to a condition in which all is well in the Kingdom. That includes the concepts of peace, prosperity, justice, truth and beauty. Per-

haps the expression *well-being* comes closest to capturing the fullness of the meaning.

I have followed the lead of the ancient versions in omitting the ב on **בְּצִדְקָהּ**.

Verse 4: **שפט** is clearly used here in sense which has the outcome of the judging in mind, namely, *to get justice*.

Verse 5: I have chosen to follow the emendation here and read **וַיֵּאָרֶךְ** instead of **וַיֵּאָרֶךְ**. This reading has the support of LXX, and is gaining acceptance among modern translators. See RSV and NIV.

The expression **דֹּר וְדֹרִים**, *generation of generations*, is a good example of how Hebrew uses a construct relationship to express a superlative or ultimate degree.

Verse 7: The reading **צִדִּיק**, supported by a few manuscripts, LXX and the Syriac, seems preferable to **צִדְיִיק**. The introduction of a person here, *a righteous one*, seems intrusive to the flow of things.

Verses 1-14: All imperfects have been translated as indicative statements throughout this section.

Verses 15-17: The presence of clearly identifiable jussive forms in these verses is the basis for translating all the verbs in these verses as jussives.

Verse 16: I have stayed with the Masoretic punctuation and grouping of words in this verse, which the editor of BHS encourages us to abandon by the manner in which he sets up the text. I have avoided following suggested emendations here because I became convinced that this verse is a reference to the city of Jerusalem as it stands in the MT.

Verse 17: I have taken **לְפָנַי־שֶׁשׁ־שָׁמַשׁ** spatially, *wherever the sun shines*, rather than temporally, as most translations have it.

The translation of the once-occurring and difficult verb form **יָנַן** connects with the noun **יָנַן**, *offspring, posterity*, which occurs a half dozen times in the OT and the Hebrew version of Sirach.

The Soncino *Psalms* calls attention to a Talmudic tradition which simply regards **יָנַן** as a proper noun, one of the names of the Messiah, like Immanuel, Prince of Peace, etc. The translation would then be, *let his name be Yinnon*. The meaning of the name would probably be connected with the noun mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Psalm 72 **Septuaginta**

1 εἰς Σαλωμων ὁ θεός τὸ κρίμα σου τῷ βασιλεῖ δὸς καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην σου τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ βασιλέως

2 κρίνειν τὸν λαόν σου ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ τοὺς πτωχοὺς σου ἐν κρίσει

3 ἀναλαβέτω τὰ ὄρη εἰρήνην τῷ λαῷ σου καὶ οἱ βουνοὶ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ

4 κρινεῖ τοὺς πτωχοὺς τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ σώσει τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν πενήτων καὶ ταπεινώσει συκοφάντην

5 καὶ συμπαραμενεῖ τῷ ἡλίῳ καὶ πρὸ τῆς σελήνης γενεὰς γενεῶν

6 καὶ καταβήσεται ὡς ἕτερος ἐπὶ πόκον καὶ ὥσει σταγόνες στάζουσαι ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν

7 ἀνατελεῖ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ δικαιοσύνη καὶ πλήθος εἰρήνης ἕως οὗ ἀνταναιρεθῇ ἡ σελήνη

8 καὶ κατακυριεύσει ἀπὸ θαλάσσης ἕως θαλάσσης καὶ ἀπὸ ποταμοῦ ἕως περάτων τῆς οἰκουμένης

9 ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ προπεσοῦνται Αἰθίοπες καὶ οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτοῦ χοῦν λείξουσιν

10 βασιλεῖς Θαρσῖς καὶ αἱ νῆσοι δῶρα προσοίσουσιν
βασιλεῖς Ἀράβων καὶ Σαβα δῶρα προσάξουσιν

11 καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν αὐτῷ πάντες οἱ βασιλεῖς πάντα
τὰ ἔθνη δουλεύουσιν αὐτῷ

12 ὅτι ἐρρύσατο πτωχὸν ἐκ χειρὸς δυνάστου καὶ πένητα
ὧ οὐχ ὑπῆρχεν βοηθός

13 φείσεται πτωχοῦ καὶ πένητος καὶ ψυχὰς πενήτων
σώσει

14 ἐκ τόκου καὶ ἐξ ἀδικίας λυτρώσεται τὰς ψυχὰς
αὐτῶν καὶ ἔντιμον τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῶν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ

15 καὶ ζήσεται καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ χρυσίου τῆς
Ἀραβίας καὶ προσεύξονται περὶ αὐτοῦ διὰ παντός ὅλην
τὴν ἡμέραν εὐλογήσουσιν αὐτόν

16 ἔσται στήριγμα ἐν τῇ γῆ ἐπ' ἄκρων τῶν ὀρέων
ὑπεραρθήσεται ὑπὲρ τὸν Λίβανον ὁ καρπὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ
ἐξανθήσουσιν ἐκ πόλεως ὡσεὶ χόρτος τῆς γῆς

17 ἔστω τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ εὐλογημένον εἰς τοὺς
αἰῶνας πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου διαμενεῖ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ
εὐλογηθήσονται ἐν αὐτῷ πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς πάντα
τὰ ἔθνη μακαριοῦσιν αὐτόν

18 εὐλογητὸς κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ποιῶν
θαυμάσια μόνος

19 καὶ εὐλογητὸν τὸ ὄνομα τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν
αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ πληρωθήσεται
τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ γένοιτο γένοιτο

20 ἐξέλιπον οἱ ὕμνοι Δαυὶδ τοῦ υἱοῦ Ἰεσσαί.

Psalm 72 Vulgate

1 in Salomonem

2 Deus iudicium tuum regi da et iustitiam tuam filio regis
iudicare populum tuum in iustitia et pauperes tuos in
iudicio

3 suscipiant montes pacem populo et colles iustitiam

4 iudicabit pauperes populi et salvos faciet filios pauperum

et humiliabit calumniatorem

5 et permanebit cum sole et ante lunam generationes
generationum

6 descendet sicut pluvia in vellus et sicut stillicidia
stillantia super terram

7 orietur in diebus eius iustitia et abundantia pacis donec
auferatur luna

8 et dominabitur a mari usque ad mare et a flumine usque
ad terminos orbis terrarum

9 coram illo procident Aethiopes et inimici eius terram
lingent

10 reges Tharsis et insulae munera offerent reges Arabum
et Saba dona adducent

11 et adorabunt eum omnes reges omnes gentes servient
ei

12 quia liberavit pauperem a potente et pauperem cui non
erat adiutor

13 parcat pauperi et inopi et animas pauperum salvas faciet

14 ex usuris et iniquitate redimet animas eorum et
honorabile nomen eorum coram illo

15 et vivet et dabitur ei de auro Arabiae et orabunt de ipso
semper tota die benedicent ei

16 erit firmamentum in terra in summis montium
superextolletur super Libanum fructus eius et florebut
de civitate sicut faenum terrae

17 sit nomen eius benedictum in saecula ante solem
permanet nomen eius et benedicentur in ipso omnes tribus
terrae omnes gentes beatificabunt eum

18 benedictus Dominus Deus Deus Israhel qui facit
mirabilia solus

19 et benedictum nomen maiestatis eius in aeternum et
replebitur maiestate eius omnis terra fiat fiat

20 defecerunt laudes David filii Iesse

Psalm 72 Luther Bibel

1 Des Salomo. Gott, gib dein Gericht dem Könige und deine Gerechtigkeit des Königs Sohne,

2 daß er dein Volk bringe zur Gerechtigkeit und deine Elenden rette.

3 Laß die Berge den Frieden bringen unter das Volk und die Hügel die Gerechtigkeit.

4 Er wird das elende Volk bei Recht erhalten und den Armen helfen und die Lästerer zermalmen.

5 Man wird dich fürchten, solange die Sonne und der Mond währt, von Kind zu Kindeskindern.

6 Er wird herabfahren wie der Regen auf die Aue, wie die Tropfen, die das Land feuchten.

7 Zu seinen Zeiten wird erblühen der Gerechte, und großer Friede, bis daß der Mond nimmer sei.

8 Er wird herrschen von einem Meer bis ans andere und von dem Strom an bis zu der Welt Enden.

9 Vor ihm werden sich neigen die in der Wüste, und seine Feinde werden Staub lecken.

10 Die Könige zu Tharsis und auf den Inseln werden Geschenke bringen; die Könige aus Reicharabien und Seba werden Gaben zuführen.

11 Alle Könige werden ihn anbeten; alle Heiden werden ihm dienen.

12 Denn er wird den Armen erretten, der da schreit, und den Elenden, der keinen Helfer hat.

13 Er wird gnädig sein den Geringen und Armen, und den Seelen der Armen wird er helfen.

14 Er wird ihre Seele aus dem Trug und Frevel erlösen, und ihr Blut wird teuer geachtet werden vor ihm.

15 Er wird leben, und man wird ihm vom Gold aus Reicharabien geben. Und man wird immerdar vor ihm beten; täglich wird man ihn loben.

16 Auf Erden, oben auf den Bergen, wird das Getreide

dick stehen; seine Frucht wird beben wie Libanon, und wird grünen in den Städten, wie das Gras auf Erden.

17 Sein Name wird ewiglich bleiben; solange die Sonne währt, wird sein Name auf die Nachkommen reichen, und sie werden durch denselben gesegnet sein; alle Heiden werden ihn preisen.

18 Gelobet sei Gott der HERR, der Gott Israels, der allein Wunder tut;

19 und gelobet sei sein herrlicher Name ewiglich; und alle Lande müssen seiner Ehre voll werden! Amen, amen.

20 Ein Ende haben die Gebete Davids, des Sohnes Isaïs.

Psalm 72 RSV

A Psalm of Solomon.

1 Give the king thy justice, O God, and thy righteousness to the royal son!

2 May he judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with justice!

3 Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness!

4 May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor!

5 May he live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!

6 May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth!

7 In his days may righteousness flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more!

8 May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!

9 May his foes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust!

10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute, may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts!

11 May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him!

12 For he delivers the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper.

13 He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.

14 From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight.

15 Long may he live, may gold of Sheba be given to him! May prayer be made for him continually, and blessings invoked for him all the day!

16 May there be abundance of grain in the land; on the tops of the mountains may it wave; may its fruit be like Lebanon; and may men blossom forth from the cities like the grass of the field!

17 May his name endure for ever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May men bless themselves by him, all nations call him blessed!

18 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

19 Blessed be his glorious name for ever; may his glory fill the whole earth! Amen and Amen!

20 The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.

Psalm 72 NKJV

A Psalm of Solomon.

1 Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son.

2 He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice.

3 The mountains will bring peace to the people, And the little hills, by righteousness.

4 He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor.

5 They shall fear You As long as the sun and moon endure, Throughout all generations.

6 He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, Like showers *that* water the earth.

7 In His days the righteous shall flourish, And abundance of peace, Until the moon is no more.

8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.

9 Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, And His enemies will lick the dust.

10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles Will bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba Will offer gifts.

11 Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.

12 For He will deliver the needy when he cries, The poor also, and *him* who has no helper.

13 He will spare the poor and needy, And will save the souls of the needy.

14 He will redeem their life from oppression and violence; And precious shall be their blood in His sight.

15 And He shall live; And the gold of Sheba will be given to Him; Prayer also will be made for Him continually, *And* daily He shall be praised.

16 There will be an abundance of grain in the earth, On the top of the mountains; Its fruit shall wave like Lebanon; And *those* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

17 His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And *men* shall be blessed in Him; All nations shall call Him blessed.

18 Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who only does wondrous things!

19 And blessed *be* His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled *with* His glory. Amen and Amen.

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

Psalm 72 NIV

Of Solomon.

1 Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.

2 He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.

3 The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.

4 He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor.

5 He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

6 He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.

7 In his days the righteous will flourish; prosperity will abound till the moon is no more.

8 He will rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

9 The desert tribes will bow before him and his enemies will lick the dust.

10 The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him; the kings of Sheba and Seba will present him gifts.

11 All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him.

12 For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help.

13 He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save

the needy from death.

14 He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.

15 Long may he live! May gold from Sheba be given him. May people ever pray for him and bless him all day long.

16 Let grain abound throughout the land; on the tops of the hills may it sway. Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon; let it thrive like the grass of the field.

17 May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.

18 Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds.

19 Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.

20 This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse.

The Theology of Psalm 72

The Psalm describes the person of a King and His reign in His Kingdom. Everything flows from the meaning of verse one. The Psalm writer petitions God that the judgments and justice of God would be given to the King. The rest of the Psalm describes what eventuates in the reign of that King who possesses the judgments and justice of God.

There is only one King who fits the description given here, the Messiah King. The Psalm is a prophecy concerning the Christ, His Kingly Office, and His Kingdom. It belongs to the category of Royal Psalms, or Kingly Psalms, Psalms which celebrate the kingship of the Messiah. Other outstanding examples of Psalms in this category would be Psalms 2, 24, 45, and 110. In style and language these Psalms, no doubt, follow forms of expres-

sion and structure employed to celebrate secular royal power in the ancient world. But their content is clearly Messianic. Some of these royal Psalms are quoted in the NT and applied to Christ. Psalm 72 is not specifically quoted, but in my mind it is clearly alluded to in the NT. Jewish tradition, both Targumic and Talmudic, indicates clearly a Messianic understanding of this Psalm.

The Psalm can be outlined as follows:

I. A Prayer for the Gift of Divine Judgment and Justice to the King, Verse 1

II. A Description of the King's Reign and Kingdom: Manner of His Reign, Dimensions and Duration of His Kingdom, His Subjects, His Enemies, etc., Verses 2-14

III. Acknowledgment of the King's Reign and Expressions of Good Will Toward Him, Verses 15-17

IV. Doxology, Verses 18 & 19

V. Concluding Statement Regarding the End of the Collection of David's Psalms, Verse 20

**Verse 1: O God, give to the King Your judgments,
and Your justice to the Son of the King.**

The answer to the prayer of v. 1 is nothing other than the incarnation of the Son of God. When Jesus says, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and earth," He proclaims the application of this verse to Himself. Likewise when He says: "[The Father] has committed all judgment to the Son, . . . and has given Him authority to

execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.” (John 5:22 & 27) In the minds of the first hearers of these words of Jesus, I am sure that these connections with the OT were quickly and easily made.

The giving of divine authority to the Messiah connects with the Genus Majesticum of the Communication of Attributes. As a result of the Personal Union, the attributes of God are communicated to, and exercised in and through the human nature of the Messiah. In *The Two Natures in Christ* Martin Chemnitz makes extensive use of Psalm 72 in his chapter entitled, “Scripture Passages on Communication of the Majesty.” The following quotation grasps the essence of Chemnitz’s use of the Psalm:

Likewise, also the duties of the kingdom of Christ, to which also Christ’s human nature has been exalted (that is, because His divine power operates through the assumed nature), are beautifully described in Ps. 72:1, where the king asks that God would give His power of judgment and His justice to the king and to the son of the king. However, it is not necessary to ask that judgment and justice be given to the divine nature of the Logos, for this nature has possessed these gifts from eternity; but it is necessary that they be communicated to the assumed nature, as to the son of David. (Chemnitz, *The Two Natures in Christ*, p. 336)

**Verse 2: He will vindicate your people with justice,
and Your afflicted ones with judgment.**

Verse two clarifies the essential work of the Messiah

King: He provides His people with justice, which a Lutheran expositor understands as the saving *justitia Dei*, the righteousness which God provides for His people. Note again Luther's bold translation of the first part of verse 2: "Dasz er dein Volk bringe zur Gerechtigkeit." The second half of verse 2 brings in the frequent companion of justice, namely judgment. Recall again Chemnitz's discussion of the two concepts, justice and judgment:

When judgment and justice are joined in Scripture, judgment as the first-mentioned signifies the power to drive away the enemy from the oppressed and to put him to flight, to defend the needy, and to free them from oppression. But the second term 'justice' indicates that he governs the oppressed with mildness, tranquillity, peace, and glory and blesses them with salvation. (*The Two Natures in Christ*, pp. 336-337.)

Note the guiding function of the Law/Gospel distinction here in Chemnitz's exegetical approach. When God acts for the salvation of His people, that includes the exercise of the Law to crush and break the enemies of His people, and the application of the Gospel to bless His people with salvation.

Verse 3: The mountains will bring well-being to the people, and the hills justice.

The Kingdom of the Messiah is a realm in which **ALL** is well. It is as though the very geography of the land exudes the qualities of a perfect state. A state of well-being and justice, or peace and righteousness—these are the essential characteristics of the Messiah's Kingdom.

All the effects of sin have been done away with.

Verse 4: He will get justice for the afflicted among the people, he will bring deliverance to the children of the needy, but he will crush the oppressor.

This verse clarifies who the beneficiaries of the gracious acts of God are, and who the objects of His wrath are when He acts in judgment. The afflicted and the needy benefit from His saving grace, but the oppressor feels the crushing effect of the Law.

Verse 5: He will endure as long as the sun, and as long as the moon, generation after generation.

The expressions point to the eternal nature of the Kingdom. The Psalmist employs expressions from experience of things in creation to convey the meaning. The sun and moon represent permanence. Endless generations represent a future which stretches into eternity.

Verse 6: He will come down like rain upon mown grass, Like heavy dew watering the earth.

The similes effectively convey the vivifying, re-creating power of God when He acts according to His grace. The manner of His gracious coming is effectively illustrated by the action of gentle rain and dew upon a thirsty landscape.

Verse 7: Justice will sprout forth in his days, and abundance of well-being until the moon is no more.

Note again the combination of justice and well-being (or righteousness and peace). These two concepts sum-

marize the “all is well” character of the Messiah’s Kingdom. The horticultural image (justice and well-being “sprout forth”) again affirms the inseparable connection of these two ideas with the Kingdom. The expression at the end of this verse takes us a step beyond the imagery of verse 5. The proliferation of the justice and well-being of the Kingdom will outlast even the great symbol of earthly permanence, the great heavenly body, the moon.

**Verse 8: And He will rule from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

The traditional boundaries of the Land of Israel were from the Great Sea, the Mediterranean, to the Salt Sea, the Dead Sea; and from the (Great) River, the Euphrates, to the River of Egypt, a wadi in the Sinai Peninsula. The Psalm writer plays on the first three of these boundaries, and then substitutes an interesting twist at the end: the ends of the earth, instead of the River of Egypt. Just as the temporal boundaries of the Kingdom, described previously, extend beyond those of secular kingdoms, so also the spatial boundaries extend beyond the normal limits of kingdoms to include all the world. The vision of Biblical theology is truly global and universal. The Great Commission connects directly to this verse and the following verses: The discipling of the nations and the presence of the Messiah King with His faithful to the ends of the earth—this is the scope of the Biblical vision.

**Verse 9: Before him desert dwellers will bow down,
and His enemies will lick dust.**

**Verse 10: Kings of Tarshish and islands will bring a
gift, kings of Sheba and Seba will offer tribute.**

Verse 11: All kings will prostrate themselves before

Him, all nations will serve Him.

Not only does the Kingdom encompass all of creation, but all its peoples as well. They will ultimately be drawn into willing submission to the reign of the Messiah King by His saving righteousness (the Gospel) , or they will be compelled to acknowledge His rule against their will by His judgment (the Law).

The references to specific places, Tarshish, islands, Sheba and Seba, are simply used here to refer to far off places. Mention of Tarshish and islands refer in general to remote regions to the West and North; references to Sheba and Seba, to the South and East. The Messiah King is not only the glory of His people Israel; he is also the light who lightens the Gentiles. The universality of Biblical religion could hardly be made clearer than this.

These verses, in combination with Isaiah 60 and the account of the visit of the Magi in Matthew 2, are the basis for the old tradition that the Magi were kings. The association of this Psalm with the Epiphany Festival is of long standing.

Verse 12: For He will deliver the needy who cries out, and the afflicted one, and him who has no helper.

Verse 13: He will have compassion on the helpless and the needy, and the souls of the needy he will deliver.

Verse 14: From oppression and from violence he will redeem their life, and their blood will be precious in his eyes.

Here is an inviting picture of the Messiah in his com-

passion for sinners. The same meaning which verses 6 and 7 express metaphorically, these verses express more directly. His acts of deliverance, compassion and redemption are the gentle rain and dew which refresh the land and cause the justice of the Messiah to proliferate.

Verses 2-7 constitute a paragraph; likewise verses 8-14. The content of both paragraphs is essentially the same. The difference is in the use of figures of speech. Verses 2-7 are rich in metaphor and simile. Verses 8-14 employ a less metaphorical and more direct manner of communication. This is typical of the rhetoric of the Psalms that we find a highly metaphorical section followed by a more direct statement of essentially the same content.

Note the rich vocabulary here for those whom the Messiah serves: the needy, the afflicted, the helpless. "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:31, 32.)

Note also the verbs which describe His work: deliver, have compassion, redeem. Note the clarity with which the redemption of individual lives, yes, souls, is brought out here. Are these OT concepts? Most definitely. The Messiah King delivers His subjects from all evil.

V 15: And long may he live, and let there be given to Him of the gold of Sheba, and may they pray for him continually, and may they bless him always.

V 16: Let there be abundance of grain in the land at the top of the mountains, let its fruit abound like Lebanon, let them blossom forth from the city like the grass of the earth.

V 17: Let his name be forever, wherever the sun shines let his name produce offspring; let them be

blessed in Him, let all nations call Him blessed.

All the verbs in this paragraph have been translated as jussives because each verse is introduced by a verb which is clearly jussive in form. Verse 15 begins with **יְהִי**, and verses 16 and 17 with **יְהִי**.

These verses are the response of faith to what has gone before. “Thy Kingdom come!” might serve well as appropriate heading. They constitute an acknowledgment of the King’s reign, an embracing of it, and expression of good will toward it. These verses may therefore be regarded as *credo* in relation to the preceding revelation. The faithful willingly place themselves under the reign of the Messiah King and pray that His Kingdom may flourish everywhere, forever and for all. The universality of the vision is underscored here.

Verse 16 was one of the more difficult verses in this Psalm to translate. The references to the top of the mountains and the city, if the MT reading is correct, may be references to the city of Jerusalem as the capital of the Kingdom. In Isaiah 2 the expression “top of the mountains” stands parallel to the expressions “mountain of the Lord,” “mountain of the Lord’s house,” Mt. Zion, and Jerusalem.

The last line of verse 17 is a clear reference to the promises given to the Patriarchs. In this King and in His Kingdom, blessing will come to all nations of the earth. To be blessed in Him and to call Him blessed—this is the relationship of faith.

**V 18: Blessed is the LORD God, the God of Israel,
Who alone does wonders,**

**V 19: And blessed is the Name of His Glory forever,
And His Glory fills all the earth. Amen and amen.**

**V 20: The prayers of David son of the Jesse are
finished.**

Verses 18 and 19 are a concluding doxology. The Psalm proceeds from proclamation (vs 1-14) to creed (vs 15-17) to hymn of praise (vs 18 & 19). Here we see one of the underlying structures of all of Biblical theology.

Would it be too bold to suggest a Trinitarian formula in the structuring of this doxology? I become more and more convinced that the concept of the “Three-ness” of God is woven into the very fabric of the OT in many more places than we have traditionally identified it.

Verse 20 may not be a part of this Psalm strictly speaking. It was probably a note regarding the end of one of the collections of David’s Psalms. The Psalms, as we know them, were composed over the period of a millennium, from the time of Moses to the Post-Exilic Age. Throughout that time they were, no doubt, collected and grouped together in various ways. Verse 20 apparently comes from one of those collecting efforts specifically applied to the Psalms of David.

We conclude with the *Nutzenwendung*, application, from the Weimar Bible of 1768. At the end of each of the Psalms in this Bible-plus-commentary, which C. F. W. Walther called the “quintessence of Lutheran theology,” there are short summary statements of the essential points of the Psalm. The following are the *Nutzenwendungen* for Psalm 72:

1. Christ is our divinely ordained King of Grace.
2. This King of ours gives righteousness, peace, and help to the penitent, but condemns the impenitent.
3. The Church of Christ, gathered from all nations, will continue to the end of the world, even in the midst of persecutions.

4. We should at all times praise and glorify God on account of His wonderful deeds.

5. The greatest comfort in Christ is that not only will His Church remain forever, but also that the poor in spirit are dearest to him.

Psalm 72 Form Analysis and Meanings

Pss. 72:1

מִשְׁפָּטִים מִשְׁפָּט NOUN common masculine plural,
justice, judgment SUFFIX second masculine singular

נָתַן נָתַן VERB qal imperative masculine singular, *to give*

צְדָקָה צְדָקָה NOUN common feminine singular
construct, *justice, righteousness* SUFFIX second
masculine singular

Pss. 72:2

דִּין דִּין VERB qal imperfect third masculine
singular, *to plead the cause of, vindicate*

עַם עַם NOUN common masculine singular con-
struct, *people*

SUFFIX second masculine singular

צְדָק צְדָק NOUN common masculine singular,
justice, righteousness

עֲנִיָּיִךְ אֲנִי ADJECTIVE masculine plural construct,
afflicted

SUFFIX second masculine singular

Pss. 72:3

נִשְׂאוּ יְשָׁאוּ VERB qal imperfect third masculine
plural, *to lift up*

הַר הַרִים NOUN common masculine plural, *moun-
tain*

גְּבֻעוֹת גְּבֻעָה NOUN common feminine plural, *hill*

צְדָקָה NOUN common feminine singular,
justice, righteousness

Pss. 72:4

שֹׁפֵט יִשְׁפֹּט VERB qal imperfect third masculine
singular, *to judge*

עֲנִיָּיִךְ אֲנִי ADJECTIVE masculine plural construct,
afflicted

יִוָּשֶׁעַ יִשְׁעַי VERB hifil imperfect third masculine
singular, *rescue, deliver, save*

אֲבִיוֹן אֲבִיוֹן ADJECTIVE masculine singular,
needy

וַיִּדְכֵּא דָכָא VERB piel imperfect third masculine
singular, *to crush*

עֹשֶׂק עֹשֶׂק VERB qal participle masculine singu-
lar, *to oppress*

Pss. 72:5

יִרְאוּ יְרֵא VERB qal imperfect third masculine plural, *to fear*

SUFFIX second masculine singular
See note on the text of this verse for possible variant reading.

שֶׁשֶׁשׁ NOUN common singular in pause, *sun*

לְפָנָי *to the face of*

יָרֵחַ NOUN common masculine singular, *moon*

דּוֹר NOUN common masculine singular, *generation*

דּוֹרִים NOUN common masculine plural, *generations*

Pss. 72:6

יֵרֵד יֵרֵד VERB qal imperfect third masculine singular, *to go down*

מָטָר מָטָר NOUN common masculine singular, *rain*

גֵּז NOUN common masculine singular, *mown grass*

רְבִיבִים רְבִיבִים NOUN common masculine plural, *heavy dew*

זְרִיזֵי NOUN common masculine singular construct, *watering*

See note on the text of this verse for possible variant reading.

Pss. 72:7

יִפְרַח יִפְרַח VERB qal imperfect third masculine

singular, *to sprout*

יָמִיו יום NOUN common masculine plural construct
SUFFIX third masculine singular

צַדִּיק צַדִּיק ADJECTIVE masculine singular,
righteous (one) (but see textual note)

רב רב NOUN common masculine singular, *abun-*
dance

עַד-בְּלִי PREPOSITION and negative ADVERB,
until (there is) no(t)

יָרַח NOUN common masculine singular, *moon*

Pss. 72:8

וְיָרַד רָדָה VERB qal imperfect with conj, third
masculine singular, *to rule, dominate*

ים NOUN common masculine singular, *sea*

נָהָר NOUN common masculine singular, *river*

עַד- PARTICLE preposition, *unto*

אֶפְסֵי-אֶפֶס NOUN masculine plural construct,
end

Pss. 72:9

יִכְרְעוּ כָרַע VERB qal imperfect third masculine
plural, *to bow down*

צִי צַיִם NOUN common masculine plural, *desert*
dweller

אִיבֵּי אִיב VERB qal participle masculine plural,
enemy

SUFFIX third masculine singular

עָפָר NOUN common masculine singular, *dust*

לִּחַךְ יִלְחֹכוּ VERB piel imperfect third masculine
plural, *to lick*

Pss. 72:10

מִלְכֵי מֶלֶךְ NOUN common masculine plural con-
struct

תְּרַשִׁישׁ תְּרַשִׁישׁ NOUN proper name, used in OT
apparently to mean remote places to the west

אֵי אֵי NOUN common masculine plural, *island*;
plural is used to refer to distant places

מִנְחָה מִנְחָה NOUN common feminine singular,
gift

יָשִׁיבוּ שׁוּב VERB hifil imperfect third masculine
plural, *to bring*

שֶׁבָּא NOUN proper name, commonly associated with
the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, *Sheba*

סְבָא NOUN proper name, used to refer to remote
regions to the south and east, *Seba*

אֲשַׁכֵּר NOUN common masculine singular, *tribute*,
used only here and in Ezek. 27:15

יִקְרִיבוּ קָרַב VERB hifil imperfect third masculine
plural, *to bring near, to offer*

Pss. 72:11

יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ- שֶׁהוּהָ VERB hitpael imperfect third
masculine plural, *to prostrate oneself*

כָּל- NOUN common masculine singular construct,
all

גוֹיִם גוֹי NOUN common masculine plural, *nation*

יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ עֶבֶד VERB qal imperfect third mascu-
line plural, *to serve*

SUFFIX third masculine singular

Pss. 72:12

נִצֵּל יִצִּיל VERB hifil imperfect third masculine
singular, *to rescue, deliver*

אֶבְיוֹן ADJECTIVE masculine singular, *needy*

שׁוֹעַ מִשׁוֹעַ VERB piel participle masculine singular,
to cry out See note on the text of this verse for possible
variant reading.

עָנִי ADJECTIVE masculine singular, *afflicted*

אֵין *there is no*

עֲזַר עֲזַר VERB qal participle masculine singular,
to help

Pss. 72:13

יָחַס הוּם VERB qal imperfect third masculine

singular, *to be sorry, compassionate for*

דָּל ADJECTIVE masculine singular construct, *helpless*

אֲבִיּוֹן ADJECTIVE masculine singular, *needy*

נֶפֶשׁ נַפְשׁוֹת NOUN common feminine plural construct, *soul, life*

אֲבִיּוֹנִים אֲבִיּוֹן NOUN common masculine plural, *needy*

יִשַׁע יֹשִׁיעַ VERB hifil imperfect third masculine singular, *rescue, save, deliver*

Pss. 72:14

תָּךְ תֹּדָה NOUN common masculine singular, *oppression*, Only 4 occurrences in OT.

חָמָס NOUN common masculine singular, *violence*

יִגְאֹל גָּאֹל VERB qal imperfect third masculine singular, *to redeem*

נֶפֶשׁ נַפְשָׁם NOUN common feminine singular, *soul, life*

SUFFIX third masculine plural

יִקָּר יִקֵּר VERB qal imperfect third masculine singular, *to be precious*

דָּם דָּמָם NOUN common masculine singular construct, *blood*

SUFFIX third masculine plural

עֵינַי עֵין NOUN common feminine dual, *eye*
SUFFIX third masculine singular

Pss. 72:15

וַיְחִי חַיֵּה VERB qal jussive masculine singular, *to live*

וַיִּתֵּן נָתַן VERB qal jussive masculine singular, *to give*

זָהָב זֶהָב NOUN common masculine singular construct, *gold*

שֶׁבַע NOUN proper Name, *Sheba*

יִתְפַּלֵּל פָּלַל VERB hitpael jussive masculine singular, *to pray*

בְּ עַד + בּ PARTICLE preposition

SUFFIX third masculine singular, *for him*

תָּמִיד PARTICLE adverb, *always, continually*

יּוֹם NOUN common masculine singular, *day*

יְבָרֶכְנָהוּ בָרַךְ VERB piel jussive masculine singular, *to bless*

SUFFIX third masculine singular

Pss. 72:16

יְהִי הִיָּה VERB qal jussive masculine singular, *to be*

פְּסֵתָהּ פָּסָה NOUN common feminine singular construct, *abundance*

Unexplained on the basis of Hebrew.

Meaning derived from an Aramaic word.

בֶּרֶךְ NOUN common masculine singular, *grain*

ראש NOUN common masculine singular, *head, top*

הַר הַרִים NOUN common masculine plural,
mountain

רעש ירעש VERB qal jussive masculine singular,
*to quake, shake, or, according to Koehler, based on
another etymology connected with an Arabic root, to be
abundant*

לְבָנוֹן NOUN proper name, *Lebanon*

פְּרִי NOUN common masculine singular construct,
fruit

SUFFIX third masculine singular

צִיָּצוּ צוץ VERB qal imperfect third masculine
plural, *to blossom*

עִיר NOUN common feminine singular, *city*

עֵשֶׂב NOUN common masculine singular, *grass*

Pss. 72:17

יְהִי הִיא VERB qal jussive masculine singular, *to be*

שְׁמוֹ שֵׁם NOUN common masculine singular
construct, *name*

SUFFIX third masculine singular

לְעוֹלָם *forever*

לְפָנַי *to the face of, before*

שֶׁשׁ NOUN common both singular, *sun*

נִיץ נִיץ or נִיץ VERB qal imperfect third mascu-
line singular, *to sprout forth*

נתן or נין VERB nifal imperfect third masculine singular, *to sprout forth*

As a verb this root occurs only here.

A noun נין, *offspring, posterity*, occurs a half dozen times in the OT and the Hebrew of Sirach.

שם NOUN common masculine singular construct, *name*

יתברכו VERB hitpael jussive masculine plural, *to bless*

גוי NOUN common masculine plural, *nation*

יאשרוהו VERB piel jussive masculine plural, *to call blessed*

SUFFIX third masculine singular

Pss. 72:18

ברך ברוך VERB qal passive participle masculine singular, *to bless*

עשה VERB qal participle masculine singular, *to do*

נפלאות פלא VERB nifal participle feminine plural, *wonders* (participle used as noun)

ל + בדר לברו *for his part, he alone*

Pss. 72:19

ברך ברוך VERB qal passive participle masculine

singular, *to bless*

שֵׁם שֵׁם NOUN common masculine singular construct, *name*

כְּבוֹד כְּבוֹד NOUN common masculine singular construct, *glory*

SUFFIX third masculine singular

וַיִּמְלֵא מִלֵּא VERB nifal jussive masculine singular, *to fill*

See note on the text of this verse for possible variant pointing as Qal.

אָמֵן אָמֵן ADVERB *Amen*

Pss. 72:20

כָּלָה כָּלָה VERB pual perfect third common plural, *to be finished*

See note on the text of this verse for possible variant pointing as Qal.

תְּפִלּוֹת תְּפִלָּה NOUN common feminine plural construct, *prayer*

דָּוִד NOUN proper name, *David*

בֶּן בֶּן NOUN common masculine singular construct, *son*

יֵשׁוּעַ NOUN proper Name, *Jesse*

John Rogers: Anglo-Lutheran Confessor (1500-1555)

by Bruce Wilmot Adams

So intense was the influence of Dr. Martin Luther upon the reformation in England that it stirred a group of young scholars in Cambridge to study prudently his *Works* in the White Horse Inn in the 1520s; acquired an advocate of the Word in Dr. Robert Barnes in the 1530s; and gave to the Church in England a fearless teacher in the reign of King Edward VI (1547-1553). The name of the confessor, teacher, and translator was John Rogers.

Rogers the Scholar

In the sixteenth century Deritend was a quiet hamlet in the parish of Aston, in what today is Birmingham. Bearing his father's name, John Rogers was baptized in the parish church soon after his birth in 1500. His mother's name was Margery nee Wyatt. Of John's early life little is known, except that he was studiously inclined. Entering Pembroke Hall in Cambridge in 1521, he graduated later with a Bachelor of Arts Degree. It seems likely that after graduation Rogers proceeded to Oxford University as a junior canon of Cardinal Wolsey's College. Whilst in Oxford he took out his Master's Degree.

After a brief ministry as Rector of Holy Trinity the Less in London, John was chosen and called to be chaplain and priest for the Company of the Merchant Adventurers in Antwerp. Until this point in time Father Rogers was an obedient priest of the Roman Catholic Church.

But God was about to make his move. Forthcoming contacts in Antwerp were to spark off a spiritual crisis in the life of this gifted young scholar. Whilst in Antwerp, Rogers met William Tyndale, as well as Miles Coverdale, formerly a student of Dr. Robert Barnes in Cambridge. That meeting between Rogers and Tyndale in October 1534 was to prove decisive in the pilgrimage and ministry of John Rogers.

While working in the company of William Tyndale, that great master and translator of the Scriptures from the Hebrew and Greek into the English language, Rogers came to know the sweet gospel of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. Serving such an apprenticeship under Tyndale molded Rogers into becoming a veritable trustee of the Bible in the English tongue.

Already, in England, Robert Barnes and Thomas Garret had busily occupied themselves in the distribution of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament. As the curate of All Hallows church, Honey Lane, in London, Dr. Garret had stretched his parish duties to include his former university in Oxford. Such was his courage, that Oxford witnessed the formation of a Lutheran cell making itself responsible for the assignment of Bibles and Luther's books.

The cruel imprisonment and strangulation of William Tyndale in 1536 inspired Rogers to save Tyndale's works from oblivion. Faithful to the original Hebrew and Greek text, yet drawing on Latin, German and English sources, Rogers worked on a translation faithful to his mentor. By 1537 under the pseudonym, Thomas Matthew, Rogers' "Matthew Bible" rolled off the press of Matthew Cron in Antwerp. Both the preface and the glosses of the English Bible owed a debt to Luther himself. Sir Marcus Loane believes that the Matthew Bible "preserved Tyndale's work in its full integrity." Rogers proved to be no mean

Rogers the Superintendent

Though an ordained priest of the Church, John Rogers met and married an Antwerp girl, Adriana de Weyden. With his young bride, Rogers set off on a lengthy trek across Europe to Wittenberg in 1538. On November 25, 1540, he matriculated in the University of Wittenberg, along with John Maccabaeus of Scotland. Whilst in Wittenberg the English scholar became a close friend of Philip Melanchthon. Such was Melanchthon's esteem for Rogers that in a letter dated September 18, 1543, he recommended John Rogers to John Schneck, pastor of the church in Heide, Ditmarsch:

Therefore we pray you most earnestly for the sake of Christ, the Son of God, that you will receive this stranger lovingly and commend him to your citizens, that they may entrust to him the ecclesiastical office.

In this new environment and pastoral challenge, Rogers proved himself to be a devoted Lutheran pastor, excelling both in preaching and the care of his people in Meldorf of the archdiocese of Bremen. Foxe points out that while in Meldorf he became a Superintendent of the Church. Not only did Melanchthon express his personal admiration for John Rogers for his skill in the ancient languages, as well as his ability to converse in Flemish and low German, but also for his faithfulness to sound doctrine. The English pastor proved himself to be a man of prayer and concern for God's people.

During his incumbency in Meldorf forty pastors of Ditmarsch forwarded a letter of protest to the civic au-

thorities on the question of the administration of justice. The clergy wanted banns to be read in the churches on three consecutive Sundays and the sacrament of holy baptism administered in the churches rather than the homes. Rogers spoke of perilous times. In those ragings of the Devil he interceded: "May God excite in all of us through His Spirit frequent and ardent prayers, sighings and lamentations for the Church." Such expressed his pastoral involvement and concern for his pastors and people.

When Rogers left Meldorf the tears of many accompanied his departure. A third and final stage of his life was about to begin.

Rogers the Confessor

The accession to the throne of England of King Edward VI in 1547 sparked new hopes for the advocates of reform within the English Church. Those exiled for the cause of conscience began to return to their homeland. The arrivals in July 1548 included John and Adriana Rogers with their eight children. With the appointment of a former "Pembroke man," Nicholas Ridley, to the see of London a mixture of relief and joy revived all who treasured the authority of the inspired Bible, in addition to those who adhered to the ancient and apostolic faith of the church fathers. Rogers was inducted to the rectory of St. Margaret's Moyse and to the vicarage of St. Sepulchre in the heart of London. Fresh opportunities for the teaching of the Word opened for the Vicar of St. Sepulchre's church when the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, elected him as "the reader of the Divinity lesson" in the famous cathedral church. Bishop Ridley noted: "And yet again I bless God in our dear brother...Rogers, that he was also one of my calling to be

prebendary preacher of London.” Vicar John worked along with other preachers of the calibre of John Bradford, Edmund Grindal (chaplain to Bishop Ridley), and Thomas Lever (subsequently master of St. John’s College, Cambridge). A new era of reformation dawned upon England under such faithful men of God who loved the Holy Scriptures and were well versed in the whole counsel of God. Whatever is found in Scripture, affirmed Archbishop Cranmer, “must be taken for a most sure ground and an infallible truth.”

Among the literary achievements of the Prebend of St. Paul’s Cathedral was his translation and distribution of Lutheran writings into English, for the people to read for themselves. Rogers translated sermons by his colleague Melancthon, along with his commentary on Daniel. In fact, Roger’s friend John Bradford translated parts of Melancthon’s *Loci*.

All too soon the brightening dawn instigated during the brief reign of Edward VI passed into a bleak sunset when the king died on July 6, 1553. Mary Tudor was crowned Queen at the Westminster on November 30, 1553. With her reign commenced the suppression of the evangelicals and Lutherans within the realm of England. Courageous as ever, Vicar John Rogers delivered his final sermon at St. Paul’s Cross only three days before the Queen’s return to London. Without equivocation he boldly asserted “such true doctrine as he and others had taught in King Edward’s day.” Arrests soon followed, including those of John Rogers and John Bradford. Incarcerated for their faith in the Gospel of God’s free grace in Christ the seven friends – Rogers, Bradford, Ferrar, Taylor, Philpot, Sanders and Hooper, prepared a petition requesting an opportunity to be publicly heard. They pleaded their faithfulness to Christian doctrine and membership in the true catholic universal church of Christ. But Queen

Mary was determined to silence these reformers. She remained a fervent Roman Catholic.

During his trial, Rogers was questioned as to whether he acknowledged the pope as the supreme head of the church in England. In his reply to the Lord Chancellor, Rogers confessed: "I know no other head but Christ of his catholic Church." The Chancellor then asked Rogers as to his acknowledgment of Henry VIII to be the supreme head of the Church. Again he denied granting the Tudor despot any supremacy in spiritual things, or any authority "to be judge above the Word of God."

Though scant, evidence suggests that John Rogers remained faithful to the teaching of the Augsburg Confession (Article X) on the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and in this conviction he differed from most of his suffering brethren. Under direct pressure from the Chancellor and Bishop Stephen Gardiner, Rogers refused to assent to transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the Mass. The Word of God, not man's sophistry, was always his basis of authority and appeal throughout his trial.

Consigned to Newgate on the charge of heresy he awaited calmly the death sentence. Bishop John Hooper was extradited to his see of Gloucester to suffer death by fire. Despite a strongly worded plea from the Overseers of Ditmarsh to reprieve the sentence of their former bishop, no mercy was granted. Early on Monday morning of February 4, 1555, the English Lutheran reformer was taken to the prison chapel, where he was divested of his canonical attire by Bishop Bonner of London. The prisoner refused to recant: "That which I have preached I will seal with my blood." That same day John Rogers, the Lutheran confessor, died at Smithfield within sight of the church of St. Sepulchre. By the wayside watched his beloved wife and eleven children.

After his father's confession and noble martyrdom,

Daniel Rogers the eldest son, returned to study in Wittenberg. Following the years of suppression under Oliver Cromwell, with the restoration of the monarchy, King Charles II granted permission for the erection of the first Anglo-Lutheran church in London in 1672. Trinity or Hamburg Lutheran Church arose over the ashes of the former Holy Trinity the Less Anglican church and was dedicated in 1673. It might well be claimed that the Anglo-Lutheran reformers like Robert Barnes and Vicar John Rogers stand in unique succession of the Apostolic Faith reaching back to the first Celtic missionary-bishop to England, St. Aidan of Lindisfarne.

Soli Deo Gloria

Works Cited

J. H. d'Aubigne, *The Reformation in England*, (Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1963)

James Atkinson, *The Great Light-Luther and Reformation*, (The Paternoster Press, 1968)

David Daniell, *William Tyndale – A Biography*, (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1994)

A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, (Collins, The Fontana Library, 1970)

G. E. Duffield, *The Work of Thomas Cranmer*, (The Sutton Courtenay Press, Berkshire, England, 1964)

Fox's Book of Martyrs, (Fleming H. Revell Co. N.J., 1977)

Marcus Loane, *Pioneers of the Reformation in England*, (Church Bookroom Press, London, 1973)

Carl S. Meyer, John Rogers, *Melanchton's English Friend*, (The Springfielder-Summer 1969, published by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Illinois, LCMS)

Gordon Rupp, *Six Makers of English Religion*, (Hodder and Stoughton, Britain, 1964)

An Exegesis of 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7

by Michael K. Smith

Introduction

In the second chapter of his second letter to the Christians at Thessalonica, Paul began to offer words of encouragement and instruction concerning the last times, especially concerning the coming of the Antichrist. This flowed naturally from chapter one, since there he had offered further comfort for the Thessalonians as they underwent persecution for their faith.

It appears that some among the Thessalonians were concerned that they had missed out on Christ's return. Apparently a rumor circulated among them to that effect, to which credence was added in that the message, "The Day of the Lord has already come!" (2:2) was purportedly from Paul himself. Had they indeed been left behind? Were they to fret and worry that the object of their hope, their Lord, had come and not taken them to be with him?

Paul addresses these concerns in chapter two in order to allay the fears and misguided notions of the Thessalonians. He assures them that, indeed, the Lord is going to return and they would be gathered with Him (along with all Christians - v.1; cf. also 1 Thess. 4:14-17). This has not taken place as of yet, and they are not to believe reports to the contrary (v.2). Prior to the Lord's coming the "man of sin" will be revealed (v.3), who will actually go so far as to proclaim he is God (v.4). Paul then reminds the Thessalonians in v.5 that he has already

told them these things: “Do you not remember that when we were still with you we were speaking these things to you?” In asking that question, the expected answer was, “Yes, Paul, we do remember these things. We haven’t forgotten them.” Verses 6 & 7, the narrower subject of this exegesis, furnish additional detail concerning what Paul had told them previously.

2 Thessalonians 2:6-7

Verse 6 καὶ νῦν τὸ κατέχον οἴδατε = And you certainly know the thing which is now holding (him) back

With the use of an exegetical καὶ, Paul indicates that he is going to focus on a previous idea. What he focuses on is the thought in v.5: that the Thessalonians certainly remembered what Paul had taught them concerning this subject of “the man of sin” when he was with them. Even though they remembered what Paul had told them, he wanted them to understand it in more detail and to concentrate particularly on what follows.

This topic was one Paul covered when he was with the Thessalonians; thus he tells them, “you know” (οἴδατε). This word connotes a thorough knowledge, not just a passing knowledge, not a mere “knowing about.” Paul had not just mentioned the Lord’s teaching regarding this Antichrist as a footnote and then moved on to other more “important” teachings. Rather, they had been instructed well by Paul concerning this entire matter of the Antichrist’s coming. It was, for them, a matter of common knowledge. (The specific knowledge which was common to them will be seen in the following.)

The specific aspect in this verse concerning what he taught them (and thus what they know) about the Anti-

christ Paul expands on with the substantival participle, τὸ κατέχον: "the thing which is holding (him) back." Since this is an adjectival substantival participle, Paul wants his readers to forget for the moment everything else they know about this "thing" which is holding back the Antichrist and focus on its "holding back" characteristic. Right now, he says (present tense, intensified with the use of νῦν), this "thing" is holding back the Antichrist. κατέχω literally means "to prevent someone from doing something by restraining or hindering" (Louw-Nida). This "thing" (neuter participle) is effectively holding the Antichrist at bay, not allowing him to do as he pleases. This "thing," therefore, is controlling the Antichrist, keeping him in check. (It is understood that the recipient of the action of this "thing" is the Antichrist, using as the antecedent what Paul stated in vv. 3-4, and what he will state in the second portion of this verse. Thus the "him" is supplied.)

What is the "thing" which is holding back the Antichrist? This is the subject of much debate and disagreement among the commentators. It is not a person, since Paul uses the neuter gender. Thus it must be a powerful entity, one which would have the supernatural power to perform such a daunting task continually. It is therefore best taken as God's Word and, especially as it applies specifically to the Thessalonians, the believers' love for that Word. (Cf. Kuske's *People's Bible* commentary. This is the most plausible explanation, especially after reading some of the far-fetched ideas, such as the Roman government!) They had already seen the power of God's Word in action as it changed their lifeless hearts to hearts filled with eternal life (1 Thess. 1:4-7; 2:13). There was no reason for them to doubt that this same Word which was at work in them could restrain the Antichrist.

Verse 6 εἰς τὸ ἀποκαλυφθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ καιρῷ = in order that he may be revealed at his own set time

After telling them again that God's Word was holding back the Antichrist, Paul with a purpose clause gives the reason why the Word was holding the Antichrist back: εἰς τὸ ἀποκαλυφθῆναι. The preposition εἰς with the neuter article τὸ simply introduces this infinitive purpose clause. The revealing of the Antichrist will definitely happen, emphasized by Paul's use of the aorist tense of ἀποκαλύπτω. The agent behind the passive voice will become evident in v.7. The root meaning of ἀποκαλύπτω is "to make something fully known, to reveal" (ἀπό = away from + καλύπτω = to cover, hide); thus, to unveil. A picture of this verb is that of a curtain being drawn to show what is concealed, thus revealing what is hidden. The Thessalonians could not *see* the Antichrist himself (αὐτὸν) at work (even though they could see the effects of his work — vss.3-4), because he had not yet been revealed.

The Antichrist was not going to be revealed at just any time. Rather, Paul tells the Thessalonians that God had a definite time in mind for his revelation: ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ καιρῷ. The word Paul uses for "time" is καιρῷ, which refers to a specific time, a set time, much like that of an appointment. It is a time to which particular significance has been attached. The specific nature of this time is strengthened with the definite article τῷ. It could therefore also be termed a "proper" time. Paul modifies that set time with ἑαυτοῦ, a reflexive pronoun meaning "his own, his very own." This pronoun refers to the Antichrist's time, since the pronoun αὐτὸν (referring to the Antichrist) is in close proximity. This set time, of course, is "his" only because it has been given him, or set *for* him, by God.

Paraphrase of v.6: Part of what I told you before I will emphasize again: you certainly know the identity of the thing which is keeping the Antichrist at bay. But I will tell you more details about this. God's Word, which is working in you, which you love and hold dear, is keeping him in check. God's Word is holding him back now so that, when the time comes, the time that God Himself has set, the Antichrist will be fully uncovered and known to all.

Verse 7 τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας· = For this mysterious thing of this lawlessness is already working.

Paul begins verse 7 with an exegetical conjunction γὰρ (as he had done in v.6). Here Paul gives even more detail about the hidden thing which has not yet been revealed (which revelation will be described in v.8). τὸ μυστήριον is the subject of the clause. This is not just any "mystery" but a specific one, as he indicates with the neuter article τὸ. *This* mystery, therefore, refers to what he wrote in v.6. By describing the "thing" of v.6 with μυστήριον (not the "thing holding [him] back," but the hidden-ness of the Antichrist), Paul emphasizes that its identity is unknown to most people. The word also connotes that the revelation of this mystery has been made known to "an in-group or a restricted constituency" (Louw-Nida). The Thessalonians knew more about the mystery than non-believers, because God had revealed it to them through Paul. Again, this mystery would become known to all as described in v.8, at a particular time chosen by God (v.6).

This mystery is also described as τῆς ἀνομίας, literally "of the lawlessness." By employing this descriptive

genitive, Paul thereby describes the type of mystery of which he writes. It is not just any lawlessness, because of the definite article τῆς. Thus, the phrase is literally translated “this mysterious thing of *this* lawlessness.” The specific lawlessness to which Paul refers has been described by him in vss. 3-4, in which he details what lawless things (all the things that are completely antithetical to God’s law) the Antichrist does. (Even if one does not prefer the variant reading of ἀμαρτίας to ἀνομίας in v.3, the actions described by Paul in vss. 3-4 still constitute lawlessness.) Everything about this mysterious thing exudes lawlessness.

This mysterious thing of lawlessness ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται, Paul writes. It is not known to most people, but that does not mean it is not hard at work. ἤδη looks back to what Paul described in v.6, where he emphasized that God had a specific time chosen for his revelation, and forward to v.8, where Paul says that after the events of v. 7b take place the mysterious thing will be revealed. Both vss. 6 & 8 look to the future; thus Paul emphasizes that this mysterious thing of lawlessness is *already* at work, even as he penned the words to the Thessalonians. We also know from history that this was the case, since false teachings quickly arose in the fledgling Church. Paul already mentioned in 2:2 one incident of false teaching (the letter supposedly from Paul). He wrote to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 11:13) about false prophets who masquerade as apostles. St. John wrote in his letters concerning what we believe to be an early form of Gnosticism. The Antichrist was already hard at work!

The mysterious thing of lawlessness is not simply attempting to be active, because Paul describes his actions using ἐνεργεῖται. This word emphasizes an effectual working, one which produces tangible results. This effectual working Paul has already described in vss. 3-4,

the effectual working of all the lawless deeds which emanate from the essence of the Antichrist.

Verse 7 μόνον ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται
= only until the One now holding (him) back steps out
of the way

This mysterious thing of lawlessness will not remain hidden forever. Paul uses μόνον as an adversative adverb to stress this fact, bolstered in its adversative force with the conjunction ἕως. This mysterious thing is hidden now, but an event at a particular point in time is approaching when it will cease to be hidden.

In v.6 Paul had written about the “thing” which was holding the Antichrist back (τὸ κατέχον), and here he switches to the masculine form of the article and participle: ὁ κατέχων — “the One holding back,” or “He who is holding back.” Thus Paul is no longer speaking about the Word as he did in v.6. He now refers to a person. Paul especially wants to emphasize this person, as seen by the manner in which he switches the position of ὁ κατέχων with the conjunction ἕως. That is, one would expect the conjunction to follow immediately the adverb μόνον. Emphasis is also placed on this participial phrase with the adjectival substantival participle. Again, it carries the force of emphasizing the key characteristic of “holding back.” That is the particular characteristic upon which Paul wants the Thessalonians to focus. The identity of this person is best seen in Christ Jesus. Many possibilities have been proffered for the identity of this one who “holds back” the Antichrist, such as Christians themselves, the apostle Paul, an angelic power, the rule of law (1st use), and the Holy Spirit. Lenski seems to prefer to understand the neuter in v.6 and the masculine in v.7 as referring to a unit, someone (v.7) working with a specific

power (v.6). Such an interpretation does not differ radically from understanding the ὁ κατέχων to be Jesus working through His Word, τὸ κατέχον of v.6. Because Scripture teaches us that Jesus, since His ascension, rules all things (Matt. 22:44; Rom. 14:9; Eph. 1:20; Heb. 2:8), it is proper to understand that Jesus is the one holding the Antichrist at bay (keeping him in check), through the means of His Word. He is doing this ἄρτι, Paul writes. Again, even as he writes the words to the Thessalonians the all-powerful Jesus carries out His work of holding back the mysterious thing of lawlessness (the Antichrist).

Recall that Paul has stated that Jesus (ὁ κατέχων) is holding back the mysterious thing of lawlessness μόνον...ἕως. Only until what? Only until the One holding (him) back ἐκ μέσου γένηται. ἐκ μέσου literally means “out of middle,” expressing the idea that the One holding the mysterious thing of lawlessness back is in his way, i.e., blocking his path. The subjunctive γένηται indicates an action in the future, an action that is pending. Literally this phrase is translated “steps/moves out of the way.” In order for this mysterious thing of lawlessness to be revealed (v.8), it is necessary for the One holding him back to step aside, to *stop* holding him back, so that everyone will see clearly what is the mystery. Wallace (p. 479) states that ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται is an indefinite temporal clause; that it expresses a future contingency from the perspective of the time of the main verb. According to this understanding, the mysterious thing of lawlessness is at work *now*, and since this is the case, at sometime in the future the One holding him back will step out of his way (and it will be revealed — v.8). Thus, the time will come, says Paul, when the One holding the mysterious thing of lawlessness back will no longer do so.

Paraphrase of v.7: I told you about this mysterious thing, the mysterious thing characterized by lawlessness. I am going to give you more detail about it. This thing, which is unknown to most, is hard at work (as you have seen from what I wrote and said earlier). But it will not always be working as it is now. When the time comes (v.6), Jesus, who is holding him back, who is keeping him in check, will step aside so that everyone will know what/who it/he is. The mystery will be no more!

Conclusion

In these two verses Paul gives the Thessalonians the assurance that the mystery of the Antichrist will not always be so mysterious! Through His Word Jesus keeps the Antichrist in check. That same Word the Thessalonians held in their hearts by faith. These words had to have served as an encouragement to the Thessalonians, showing that they would not be surprised at the revelation of the Antichrist.

Is Gambling a Sin?

A response of the ELS Doctrine Committee to a question posed by the ELS Great Lakes Pastoral Conference

John Moldstad, Jr.

One finds no passage in Scripture which plainly states: "Gambling is sin." The question in the title therefore apparently demands more than simply a "yes" or "no" answer. But one can draw clear inferences from a number of key principles set forth in God's holy Word that are pertinent to the discussion.

Then, also, one must ask what kinds of practices and games should be included in the definition of "gambling"? Are the current practices labeled "gambling" - whether or not they are civilly legal - in violation of the overarching biblical principles governing Christians' attitudes and lifestyles in the use of money?

The following Scriptural principles are pertinent to the issue:

1. Scripture warns against greed and avarice. *"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil..."* (1 Timothy 6: 9, 10). *"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions"* (Luke 12:15). *"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry"* (Colossians 3:5). See also the ninth and tenth commandments on coveting; also the first, to which Luther gave the explanation: "We should fear, love and trust in God above all

things.”

2. We are to be good managers or stewards of all that God has given us. *“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work”* (2 Corinthians 8:6-8). *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”* (Colossians 3:17).

3. God’s Word promotes the work ethic for obtaining the necessities of life. *“If a man will not work, he shall not eat”* (2 Thessalonians 3:10). *“Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order that they may provide for daily necessities and not live unproductive lives”* (Titus 3:14). *“He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need”* (Ephesians 4:28).

4. Stealing is forbidden. Note the 7th commandment. This includes “getting” our neighbor’s money “in a dishonest way.” In our ELS Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther’s Small Catechism we find this comment: “We get our neighbor’s money or goods in a dishonest way by such sins as cheating, gambling, bribing, overcharging, giving false measure, and filing false tax returns” (question #70).

Attention must also be drawn to a comment in our Lutheran Confessions. In his introduction to the Smalcald Articles, Dr. Luther lists many sins common to his day which need to be checked. Gambling (German: Spielen; Latin: alea) is among those enumerated. See paragraph

12 on page 459 in the *Concordia Triglotta*.

What is included in the definition of “gambling”? We may find a wide range of opinions among our ELS members. Some speak of “recreational gambling.” This expression is used to differentiate between those who gamble strictly for the money, and those who play games of chance purely for the “sport” of it, usually on an infrequent basis. But whatever gaming practice is the subject of inquiry, three questions are begging to be asked by every Christian personally:

1. “Can I be involved in gambling without violating the Scriptural principles set forth above?” [*For whatsoever is not of faith (that is, whatsoever is not done with a clear conscience) is Sin*” (Romans 14:23).]
2. *Should* I do this even if it were in the realm of adiaphora? [*But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people*” (Ephesians 5:3).]
3. Am I led by this to be discontented and filled with a desire to get rich quick?

Here we might also cite some other passages for further consideration: “*Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.*” (I Timothy 6:6-8). “*He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty. A faithful man will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished*” (Proverbs 28:19, 20). “*Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you*

and say, 'Who is the Lord?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God" (Proverbs 30:8, 9).

Without judging each individual heart, pastors need to warn their parishioners against the many dangers – yes, *sinful* attitudes and habits – associated with games of chance. Akin to the way in which health warnings against smoking must be given in light of the Fifth Commandment, so warnings against avarice and poor stewardship in connection with “legally acceptable” games of chance must be given in light of the Seventh, Ninth and Tenth Commandments.

The subject of gambling is similar to the following analogy of a three-year-old child holding a match in its hand. The fact that a three-year old child is holding a match in its hand is not in itself sinful. But what adult would ever suggest or encourage that a three-year-old be given such a match to hold, especially without careful supervision? Devastating results very likely could and would ensue. So also the act of a person pulling a lever on a slot machine is not wrong *per se*. Yet, what Christian unreservedly would advise people to do it, knowing how easily the sin of greed is prone to arise and take over the heart? *That* kind of burning has spiritual and eternal consequences. Didn't Jesus say, “*It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God*”? (Luke 18:25)

Back to the original question: Is gambling a sin? Our answer: Scripture, although not employing the term “gambling,” has issued strong statements against the sins readily associated with and also resulting from gambling.

In ministering to Christian people who acknowledge the problem of gambling in their personal and family lives, pastors especially need to draw attention to the Gospel of Christ. Only the gracious forgiveness of God shown in

his Son is the power that will liberate people from the temptations so commonly associated with gambling. All sins are forgiven in Christ, including greed, lovelessness toward others and careless use of resources. When counselees focus on the new life in Christ and what he has attained in the place of and for the benefit of all sinners, the intense desire to accumulate material wealth in this life is checked by the realization of the great spiritual wealth believers in the Savior already possess and will enjoy immeasurably in eternity. *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich”* (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Book Review:

Predestination: Chosen in Christ

by Gaylin Schmeling

John Moldstad, Jr. *Predestination: Chosen in Christ*. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1997. 125 pages.

Order from our Bethany College Bookstore at
1-800-944-1722 Price \$8.99

The doctrine of predestination or eternal election is not a common topic of sermons and Bible study. In some catechism courses election is not even mentioned. When teaching an adult information class there is a temptation for the instructor to gloss over this doctrine in the rush to finish the course in the allotted time. In spite of this general neglect, Professor Moldstad points out the importance of this doctrine in the plan of salvation. It gives great comfort for the Christian life.

The cause of error in the doctrine of divine election is the attempt to unravel a mystery in this life the solution of which we can only expect in the eternal. The question that arises is this: With the same divine grace for all and the same total depravity in all people, why are only some and not all saved? The attempt to solve this mystery has given birth, on the one hand, to Calvinism (denying *universalis gratia*), and, on the other hand, to synergism (denying *sola gratia*). The Calvinist agrees that there is no difference, that all are by nature dead in trespasses and sin as Scripture teaches. Therefore he follows the conclusions of his human reason and teaches that God chose

some to be saved and some to be damned. There is no difference in man, so it must be God who chooses one to be damned and another to be saved. His conclusion results in a rejection of universal grace and the false concept of double predestination.

The synergist agrees that God desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Therefore he follows his human logic and teaches that God sees something in man that causes his election. Both the Calvinist and the synergist use human logic to unravel the mystery which the Scripture leaves in the hands of the Lord. On the basis of God's Word the Evangelical Lutheran Church teaches that a man is saved alone by God's grace, and that if he is lost it is entirely his own fault. This important truth Professor Moldstad aptly presents in his book.

To our human reason there certainly seems to be a contradiction between universal grace (God wants all people to be saved and Christ died to redeem all people) and particular election (God has elected only particular individuals to eternal salvation.) We do not try to solve the apparent contradiction; rather, we let stand the clear truths of Scripture without trying to reconcile them to human reason. God sincerely wants all people to be saved. God gets all the credit for those who are saved. Our Lutheran Confessions state: The reason why "many are called and few are chosen" is not that in his call, which takes place through the Word, God intended to say: "Externally I do indeed through the Word call all of you, to whom I give my Word, into my kingdom, but down in my heart I am not thinking of all, but only of a certain few." (pp. 61-62)

The doctrine of election should not be seen as a bare decree of God separated from His gracious plan of salvation for sinners. Election is properly understood in the context of the way of salvation. For this reason the author has a considerable introductory section that summarizes the basic plan of salvation. In this section he presents nine basic scriptural truths concerning salvation.

Professor Moldstad emphasizes that our election is through the Holy Spirit and the means of grace. God chose us as His own before the world began. In the fullness of time He sent His Son as the redemptive sacrifice for our sin. That treasure of full forgiveness the Holy Spirit presents to us in the means of grace, the Word and Sacraments. Through these means of grace He works in our hearts faith in Jesus as the Savior. Through these same means of grace He strengthens and preserves us in the true faith unto our end. Thus our election and salvation is entirely the work of the holy and blessed Trinity.

In this book one finds many useful illustrations which will be a benefit in teaching the plan of salvation and the doctrine of election. The following is an example of such a useful illustration:

Imagine the following scenario: You receive a check in the mail for one million dollars. The explanation given is that this gift has been intended for you even before the time you were born. Amazingly, nothing was demanded of you in order to have this gift. To receive its benefits you were to go to the bank and cash the check. No doubt you would have questions: Is it really genuine and legitimate? Is it a mistake—a gift meant for someone else? Is it backed by the necessary funds and authority? But you go to the bank and cash it. You find out it is indeed a genuine gift, and

the money is placed into your account!

Would it be proper for you to think later, "I received the money because I did not treat the check as junk mail but willingly went to the bank and cashed it"? The check was a gift from start to finish. You received the benefit of the gift through making the trip to the bank. Nothing on your part caused the generous benefactor to make the gift. You just cashed in on it!

We might speak of faith in Christ as the way to cash in on the inheritance check of our eternal election. Oh, someone might say: "Well, *we* are the ones who believe, aren't we? If the person in the illustration had to go to the bank and cash the check in order for the gift to be effective, can't we say the same about faith in Christ?"

The difference is this: God himself is the one who drives us to the bank! God himself is the one who has us cash in on his gift! God's plan of salvation for individual people is from start to finish all his work. Whether we speak of his electing us, his bringing us to faith by the means of grace, our continuing in the faith until death, or our departing from this world to heaven, we believers know each phase along the way is due completely to the efforts of our divine benefactor. (pp. 44-45)

This book contains an excellent history of the doctrine of election in the life of the church. Of special interest to the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod is the history of election in American Lutheranism. The elec-

tion controversy had a devastating effect on the “old” Norwegian Synod. One-third of the synod’s membership was lost in the controversy and in the merger of 1917 almost the entire organization succumbed to compromise on this important doctrine. Only a small remnant remained to reorganize in 1918 at Lime Creek, Iowa. This history is presented in a clear and interesting manner. The author is able to provide graphic detail of the conflict because he has been a lifelong member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and was raised in a second-generation clergy household. He adds an interesting aside to the controversy handed down in his family: “The controversy became so heated in the Norwegian Synod that on Good Friday, 1883, President H.A. Preus, a formidable opponent of Schmidt, was carried physically out of his own church at Norway Grove (near DeForest, Wisconsin) by members who expressed loyalty to Schmidt. (This writer’s grandfather had to witness that despicable event as a nine-year-old.)” (p. 87)

Much of the controversy in the Norwegian Synod had to do with the terminology “in view of faith.” This terminology was understood by some to mean that God elected men to salvation because of faith, implying that something in man caused his salvation. Concerning the terminology “in view of faith” Professor Moldstad writes: “In retrospect, the ‘in view of faith’ expression used by Gerhard in the 1600s was inappropriate, no matter how much of an orthodox spin was assigned to it. Look at the misunderstanding it created some two hundred years later!” (p. 91) It is true that the terminology resulted in much confusion. However, this terminology can be understood correctly. Concerning Gerhard’s use of this phrase, Rev. Theodore Aaberg states, “Its purpose was to ward off Calvinism by stressing that the elect are saved alone through Christ, received by faith. In his use of this

expression John Gerhard did not teach that faith was the cause of one's election, nor did he ascribe to natural man any responsibility for coming to faith, thus steering clear of synergism." (T. Aaberg, *A City Set On A Hill*, p. 17) This terminology can be understood correctly if one accepts the fact that faith is a work of God and not in any way dependent on man. Still it can easily be understood in a synergistic way and therefore it is better not to employ it.

In Chapter 9 of the book the author speaks of the comfort found for Christians in the doctrine of election. This is one of the most important aspects of the book. In times of problems and conflicts the believer has the certainty that he has been chosen as God's own from all eternity and He will never let him go. He will comfort and protect him all the way. The author illustrates this truth with a beautiful picture of the Good Shepherd in John 10.

When Jesus speaks of his sheep being so firmly in the hands of his Father that no one—not even Satan—can snatch them away, he is drawing our thoughts to election. Because we have been *chosen* by God—a fact realized by faith in the Good Shepherd—we can always trust he is watching over us, protecting our faith for the time he brings us to heaven.

Listen to our Lord's familiar words: "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one." ([verses 27-30] [pp. 97-98])

We would recommend purchasing a copy of *Predestination: Chosen in Christ*. It will serve as a fine addition to church libraries and can easily be utilized for a Bible study concerning this important doctrine of Scripture. Here we put all human reason aside and confess the comforting biblical truth. Our salvation does not depend on anything in us, therefore it is absolutely certain. The Father holds us secure and no one can snatch us out of His hands.