

Sailed to the Cross

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Nailed to the Cross

foreword

To Joanna Faith,

Asked about a booklet I was reading at home, I said it was about the text, “nailing the handwriting of ordinances to his cross” in Colossians. But when asked to explain the content, I found my spirit troubled and I stumbled in my words, unable to express myself properly to you.

Knowing something was wrong, I looked at the Greek original of the text and found that the text had been mistranslated in the Authorised Version.

Tw Staurw has been translated “his cross” in Colossians 2:14.
It should have been translated “the cross”.

The question is - why was it mistranslated ?

To Faith, here is my answer.

Nigel Johnstone.

Malvern, June 2012.

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The Evidence

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, writing to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse :-

...And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; *and* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

[Quoted from the Authorised Version, Colossians 2:13 - 15.]

...And you, dead being in offences and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he quickened together with him, having forgiven us all the offences; having blotted out the against us handwriting in the decrees, which was adverse to us, also it has he taken out of the midst, having nailed it to the cross; having stripped the principalities and the authorities, he made a show [of them] publicly, leading in triumph them in it.

[Quoted from the Englishman's Greek New Testament, 1877.]

Both of the above translations are made from the Greek text used by Tyndale and Luther. This is the text published by Stephens in 1550. It is called the *Textus Receptus* or "Received Text" because of the words, "Textum...ab omnibus receptum," occurring in the preface of the Elzevir edition of 1624 which has slight variations to the Stephens text.

The Greek text dishonestly introduced by Westcott and Hort - and subsequently approved by the Revising Committee of 1881 - has not and will never be used by myself. The reasons may be plainly seen in Dean Burgon's admirable work, "Revisions Revised". Westcott and Hort's Greek text leaned heavily on corrupt manuscripts, especially the Codex Sinaiticus. Today, at the time of writing, virtually every single commercially available translation of the New Testament scriptures is from this corrupt source. The Authorised Version, presently, whilst not the only faithful rendering, is the most commonly available accurate translation of the Apostles' words to the English speaking peoples.



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"Nailed Triumphant"

*To the Chief Musician,
on my stringed instruments.
An hymn of Nigel.*

And you, once dead in mortal falls,
uncircumcised in flesh,
he quickened, who were joined with Christ,
when he was raised afresh.

Forgiveness having freely giv'n,
and having wiped away
the just decrees which, writ by hand,
to us were contrary.

That writing also he's removed
out from the midst of us;
for it remains where it is nailed -
nailed firmly to the cross.

And having stripped authorities
in highest rule that be,
he made an open show of them
in it, triumphantly.

Colossians 2:13 to 15

[Versed from the Literal Translation]

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing
one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your
hearts to the Lord. Colossians 3:16.*

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The Nails

Let it be quite clear at the outset that there is no biblical record, as such, of Jesus being nailed to the cross.

The relevant verses of four apostolic accounts of the crucifixion of Jesus given by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are listed below and it is immediately evident that the words “nail” or “nailed” are absent from all four accounts. A brief glance at a concordance shows that the word “nail”, and its associated forms, only appears in the apostolic writings three times, twice when used by Thomas in his unbelief in John 20:25 and once in Colossians 2:14 when Paul uses the word *proselwsas*, joining the preposition *pros* to the noun meaning nail, *helos*. The “w” in *proselwsas* represents the Greek letter omega and is pronounced as a long “o” sound, as in the word “more”.

Apart from the bare, historical, narrative fact that Jesus of Nazareth was crucified, there is only one reference to any actual violence committed against his person whilst on the cross. This is the report by John in John 19:34 and 35 of the spear which, thrust into his side, pierced his already dead body - he having expired voluntarily - and forthwith there came out blood and water.

Matthew 27:33 - 37; Mark 25:22 - 28; Luke 23:33 - 38.
John 19:17 - 19. John 19:34, 35

Mention is made, previous to his being taken to Golgotha, of the abuse of the soldiers against Jesus. Mention is made of verbal humiliation whilst he hung on the cross. But there is no mention whatsoever of nails, piercing, bloodletting, the blood from the crown of thorns, bruising or pain. Nothing is told us of his expression, the condition of his body or of his physical attitude.

His words evidently indicate his sufferings, but all that he spoke on the cross clearly relates to what he suffered on the behalf of others. He gives no indication whatsoever of his own physical torment. Even his cry of, “I thirst” is obviously not related to physical thirst but to his inward and spiritual state.

Even after his resurrection, when he appears in the midst of the disciples, the doors being shut, saying to them all - including Thomas - Peace be unto you, still Jesus makes no direct mention of his physical suffering, saying only to the previously unbelieving Thomas, Bring thy finger here and see [or, behold] my hands; and bring thy hand, and put into my side [from the Englishman’s Greek New Testament]. Bring, see, bring, put.

Terrible as that mode of execution is, horrible as such an end to a life appears, humiliating as that means of retribution displays, yet the Holy Spirit draws little attention to the details of what was done to the innocent sufferer on the tree. His sufferings and death are narrated, but not enlarged upon.

Later, in the epistles of Paul, John, Peter, James and Jude, the doctrine of the gospel reveals the spiritual realities of what happened in the three hours of darkness as Jesus Christ hung, fixed to the cross, beyond the sight of men. But of the nails, only one

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single mention occurs. And who was the one who wielded the hammer ?

Clearly the translators have a problem. Because of their problem they have had to torture the Greek language and extract a possession from it. But no possessiveness occurs.

The literal translation of Colossians 2:14 reads :-

And you..... he quickened together with him.....having blotted out the against us handwriting in the decrees which was adverse to us, also it has he taken out of the midst, having nailed it to the cross.

[Quoted from The Englishman's Greek New Testament, 1877.]

It is immediately evident that the AV has "his cross" where the literal translation shows "the cross". The literal rendering is the correct translation of *tw staurw*.

The technicalities of the translation of these words has been removed to an Appendix - Appendix One - at the end of this writing. This is done so that such technical, scientific material does not disturb the sense and the flow of the writing. For it should not do so. However, it is necessary to prove beyond doubt the true meaning of the Apostle's words and it is right that, somewhere, this proof should be displayed. So it is, in Appendix One.

Whence, then, the words in the English of the Authorised, "King James", Version - *his* cross ? Whence, indeed.

The question is -- Why did the translators do it ?

This is schoolboy Greek - the stuff of "O" levels. Second declension nouns and their endings are dealt with in the first few pages of a Greek grammar. This is what Greek teachers teach to little, wide eyed, Greek pupils in primary school. What Greek parents convey to Greek infants barely able to stand upright without falling over again. "No, dear, now say it properly. There's a good boy."

So why, I ask.... O why ? did the translators force the interpretation "his cross" on to the simple words *tw staurw* when it is evidently, patently, blatantly *obvious* to anyone with an hour to spare in a reference library, that it is "the cross".

Ah - why, indeed ? For therein lies a lesson to every soul of man, to every son of Adam and to every believer who desires to follow the Lord Jesus Christ out of the first man, out of their first parent and into a new creation through the only door, the only strait gate and upon the only narrow way that leads unto life.

Why should it be so disconcerting to say "the cross" that studious, erudite, skilled, classical scholars would pretend to be dumber than infants, more stupid than primary schoolboys and more incompetent than the worst of "O" level failures ?

The reason lies deep in the heart of mankind where the venom of the Serpent has infected the very life that pulses from the interior parts. The breath of God is inhaled

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through the nostrils of man, but, as this breath is sucked in and mingled with the blood - for the life is in the blood - it is contaminated by that which Adam has passed to all his seed. The very atmosphere which is breathed in is, as it were, the breath of God. The life giving content of that atmosphere is breathed into the nostrils and assimilated into the whole of a man.

But that which is breathed in, all his life long, until his last breath, until he expires, until his breath is released and he returns to his Maker, that which comes even from God himself to the natural man, is fouled by the potency of the Serpent ere ever it pulses to the entire man, contaminating every part of the man with its vileness.

For out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, Matthew 15:19. These are which defile a man. Out of man's heart. Thence to pollute the whole man. And from his own heart come the thoughts that persuade a man to distort the words of God and to write, print and disseminate the phrase "his cross" rather than to correctly and competently convey the proper meaning - "the cross".

Subtle indeed is the distinction. Subtle, therefore, is the reason for changing it. As subtle as the Enchanting Serpent; as sly as Diabolos, the Entangling Accuser; and as malicious as Satan, the Ancient Adversary of God's elect people.

If it is "his cross", then the nailer is supposed to be Christ, contrary to the grammatical construction of the sentence which states, "And you.... He quickened.... Having forgiven....Having blotted out....also has he taken Having nailed it....."

The one who quickened is the one who nailed.
Evidently.

The ones quickened are, firstly, Christ - named at the end of verse eleven, and, secondly, the "you" of verse thirteen, namely the saints and faithful brethren in Christ in Colosse. God quickened Christ and God quickened the saints together with him in his resurrection. In the words of Peter, I Peter 1: 3, The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ according to his great mercy begat us again ...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. There is a subtlety in Peter's words in Greek which we miss in English. *Anagennesas*...through *anastaseos*. Again begotten through again raising.

It is demonstrably, evidentially and actually, God who nailed something to the cross.
God Almighty Himself.
God - verse twelve- who raised Christ from among the dead, is He who nailed.

So why change it ?

Why with subtlety change the wording to "his cross" such that most immediately assume it is Christ nailing something to his own cross, despite that this is patently illogical when one thinks about it. Christ did not nail himself to the cross. Christ was passive in this matter. Christ yielded himself to Providence when he permitted men to do such things to himself as they did. Could he not have commanded legions of angels to his assistance had he so desired ? Did they not, indeed, fall backwards in the garden

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at his words, I am ? Only when he told his would be captors to “let these go their way” and only when he permitted it to be so, could they take him.

Christ did not nail anything to his cross. Others did so.

The Nailer

Christ was the sacrificial lamb who was, as a sheep before its shearers, dumb. He opened not his mouth. He gave his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. They pierced my hands and my feet, saith he, through David, in prophecy, a thousand years before it happened. They parted my garments among them. All they that pass by look on me, saith he.

What nailing did he do, pray tell me ?

Was he not altogether passive in all this thing ? Whence then this desire of the Serpent to influence those in whom his venom flows to make this oh so tiny, oh so apparently insignificant, oh so subtle alteration from “the” to “his” ?

Oh tell me why this slight alteration of two letters - t and e to i and s - should be required by the hissing, glistening, enchanting, captivating, mesmerising, attention absorbing Serpent ? Subtly feinting to the left with his head, he deftly makes a slight flick of his tail to the right to alter something whilst the attention of his prey is hypnotically distracted.

But why ?

Why do it ?

What advantage does it give him ?

Well, consider whom he is.

Consider this enemy of our souls. Consider the one who attacks all that is of God and the Father and his Christ. Ponder the subtlety and meditate on the purpose of him who, though the created being with the highest possible authority of all God given authority, yet desires the place and the power of the uncreated One who was ever to be, in the Purposes of God and the Father, the man through whom God would be manifested.

This is the one who breathes murder against Christ and all who are in him as he labours fervently, diligently, intelligently and venomously, night and day, to bring in his own earthly administration, despite that - now - he has been cast out of heaven and despite that - now - his doom and fate are assured beyond a certainty; who seethes with rage as he hastens to his own destruction and, with the last moments of the time of his authority running out, brings to bear every ounce of his immense strength, every particle of his massive intelligence and every area of his vast power in order to exalt, on earth, a substitute, lawless and illusory kingdom.

Why, pray, would it suit this one to influence a change of two letters ?

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Well, consider what he did in the past.

In beginning was the Word.
And the Word was with the God.
And God was the Word.
He was, in beginning, with the God.

This is the literal translation of the Greek words which John the Apostle gave us in what we call John 1:1-2 and Martin Luther's comments on the absence of the article and the word order are most spiritual and highly perceptive. If men would only read John's words, as they were given to us - and believe them, as John indicated - then the two fundamental heretical errors of the first two centuries of this age would be eradicated.

Thus it was in the beginning.

After the beginning and after the creation of man on the sixth day and after God rested on the seventh day, a Serpent is mentioned to us. The Serpent speaks. He speaks only to Eve, and does not address Adam. Unlike God who addressed Adam and did not make remarks to the woman whom he had given to Adam. God left it to Adam to address the woman who was under his authority. But the Serpent had no regard to the proper order of the creation of Almighty God and he went directly to the woman. He questioned as to what God had spoken to Adam.

Questioned.

The proper response to such a question would be to direct the questioner to Adam, who had received the instruction. Or to simply ignore the questioner, albeit that one's own thoughts are doing the questioning. Or seem to be the source of the question.

An improper question to the wrong person, is how it starts. There was a lack of the acceptance of proper order in the creation. A lawlessness. Yet the one who committed such lawlessness desired to bring the whole of humanity into bondage to law. Thus we see that he, himself, cares nothing for righteousness. He merely uses law in order to further his own purposes. Which is not the same as righteousness.

At the end of time the lawless will rise above the whole creation in his last writhings. Ungovernable, untameable, contrary to every other person above and in the creation. That wicked one will be revealed in manhood. And then, even the elect would be deceived if the days were not shortened. Even the elect themselves would go after that which shall be revealed by the wicked in the last days.

Fallen from a place which was above every other created being, still possessed of unimaginable power and authority over myriad spirits, he will use everything, but everything, at his disposal to deceive the nations and to attempt to deceive the very elect into worshipping the image of the beast that rises up out of the sea.

His kingdom will, at that time, culminate in a means of rule not yet seen upon earth. A way of governing that has, hitherto, not been possible. Drawing on the vast resources

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of the entire globe, and using the whole of humanity under his authority, he will erect a pinnacle at the top of which he will place that which will draw all humanity.

Only, for a time, will the elect remain undeceived and, for a time, they shall not be drawn.

Thus shall they be revealed as distinct.

And, for their sakes, God shall end time and bring all to a close.

This one has been cast out of heaven. And is beneath the feet of those who are raised with Christ and seated in heavenly places.

His realm is the earth.

Only.

'Twas so, in time past, that the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan came also with them, Job 1:6. But no longer. For Michael and his angels fought against him, Revelation 12:7. And prevailed against him and his angels. Now, cast out, he writhes around the globe, the great red dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil - *Diabolos* - and Satan. He deceiveth the whole world. Principally, these days, he deceiveth them into thinking he does not exist. And into thinking that the surges and influences visible in humanity are of humanitarian origin.

But for those who have eyes to see it and for those to whom God sends visions in the night, and visions in the daytime, the workings of this one are evident.

The apostle John has, if I may be indulged in so saying, as it were, taken a giant spray can of red paint and sprayed it across an apparently empty sky. To those who are obedient to the word of the apostle, there thence appears what is actually there - a great red dragon.

John's words paint imagery for us that convey to our faith the reality of the spiritual things which we cannot observe with our natural sight. Revealed in the visions given to the apostle, there appears to our faith the truth of what is behind the movings on earth that we can observe with our eyes. The question is, What is the explanation of these movements in history and these surges in humanity at the present time ? The answer ? A great red dragon.

But the Lord has redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand of stronger than he.

Jeremiah 31:11.

Vast though this being is, beyond the comprehension of man; unimaginable his powers; incomprehensible his immense authority over the unseen aspects of the workings of creation, the structure of matter, the construct of what we refer to as "space", the administration of layers of spiritual authorities responsible for the immaterial control of material things - vast though he is, yet this one, incalculably stronger than those to whom the Lord is, already, a near kinsman, cannot prevent God Almighty from redeeming and ransoming his own people out from under his power.

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“Redeemed” here is *padah*. “Ransomed” here is *gaal*. Usually the Hebrew word *gaal* is also translated “redeem” but the translators have indicated the problem of two “redeem” words by the use, in this place, of the word “ransom”. Thus they have shown that a problem exists, but they have not solved the problem. Care is needed in the handling of these words, but this can, briefly, be said - that redemption is a matter of a kinsman. Only a kinsman can redeem or avenge. There must be a prior, familial, relationship. That being given, then redemption is a matter of ownership and release; a matter of acquiring by lawful means, publicly, and thence ownership of the righteously released possession.

Although money is used, in figure - in the foreshadowing of redemption - as a means of release, the means of release in the fulfilment of the figure is, clearly, not financial and is nothing like financial. As like as Christ, himself, is to an ark made of shittim wood overlaid with gold, by so much does redemption resemble financial transactions. These are hugely inadequate representations of spiritualities. Redemption is a matter of satisfying and obtaining righteousness. Explains Paul, Being justified freely by God’s grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Romans 3: 24.

It is high time that we rid ourselves of the mentality of barter and traffic in our understanding of the sufferings and death of Christ.

Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, writes Isaiah in chapter sixty three and verse sixteen. Thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer [*gaal*] ; thy name is from everlasting.

A kinsman from eternity is the Lord, our father. Before ever the incarnation is the father a near kinsman.

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee [*gaal*], I have called thee by name; thou art mine.

Isaiah 43: 1.

God reveals himself to his own people as their originator, their creator and their redeemer. Redeemed, they are his own possession and he calls them by name.

They have ever been his.

Brought into existence in a creation that is adverse, however, they were far from him.

By redemption, he has lawfully and righteously acquired them.

Now, they are altogether his.

Sin could not hold them.

Death could not overcome them.

Diabolos in all his names and activities could not retain them.

The Law, itself, was unable to hold them.

For God himself nailed the handwriting to the cross of Christ.

The Nailing

In 1643, the English Parliament called upon "learned, godly and judicious Divines", to meet at Westminster Abbey in order to provide advice on issues of worship, doctrine, government and discipline of the Church of England. Their meetings, over a period of five years, produced the so-called Westminster Confession, supposedly a confession of "faith", as well as a Larger Catechism and a Shorter Catechism.

Witness their words in Chapter XIX - "Of the Law of God" :-

1. God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience, promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.

If the mouth of the reader of such words does not drop open, aghast at the display of utter incompetence in these sayings, then it is quite possible that the reader of them has been deceived by the Serpent whose breath is upon every single phrase.

Witness their words in the first question and answer of the Shorter Catechism :-

What is man's chief end ?

Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever.

Yet again, these men have mangled all that is sensible, displaying their misunderstanding of the purposes of God in Christ. The stench of the Serpent pervades their words.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

It is an utter slander to say that "God gave to Adam a law as a covenant of works".

Far from it, God warned Adam NOT to partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God never "bound" Adam at all. God warned Adam NOT to enter into bondage.

God never "promised life" to Adam via a covenant of works. God warned Adam NOT to enter into death through partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God never "endued him with power and ability to keep the law". God warned Adam NOT to partake and warned Adam what would happen if he did partake, namely that he would die in that very same day.

What breathtaking slanders are here made against the goodness of the Lord !

And what did God ultimately do with the handwriting of ordinances ?

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Why, he nailed them to the cross of Christ.

He nailed them to the cross, and there did his own beloved Son hang and give up his life. Thence was Christ's dead body removed and placed in a sepulchre out of sight. And on the third day did God raise up Jesus Christ from the dead.

And where, pray tell, is the handwriting of ordinances ?

I will tell you.

It is still nailed to the cross, where God left it.

God's people are quickened with Christ - begotten again in the resurrection of Christ - raised up from the dead with Christ.

Leaving the handwriting of ordinances still nailed to the cross -

On the other side of death !

The handwriting of ordinances is the other side of the grave, back in the realm of the Serpent, back in the world which is crucified to every believer in Christ, back in the arena of the flesh, back under the curse, back in the darkness, back under the authority of the Prince of this world, the realm of Beelzebul - Baal Zebul - the Prince of Demons.

Back where "learned divines" muddle in conference, concocting a vicious system of religion that will keep the people in bondage; back where speakers stand up to exalt themselves above an audience and make confusion worse confounded; back where the flesh ever attempts to justify itself instead of believably submitting to the death of Christ; back where man in his vaunted self esteem still pretends that there is anything in him other than wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; back where man carries on a religion without the utter, frank and total admission that what he needs is for God Almighty to create in him a clean heart.

Back where Satan still labours with intensity and zeal and ferocious energy, asserting his influence over all the nations and in every realm of the world, chiefly amongst the highest ruling authorities in the structures of, firstly, government, and, secondly, religious administration. Back where the Dragon and the beast and the false prophet urge humanity to worship the image of the beast. Back where they have set up, again, the stalls which Jesus overturned, that they might continue to make coinage out of religion. Back where, still, contrary to Jesus' words, they persist in the wearing of distinctive dress and persist in receiving honour one of another and persist in accepting greetings in the place of concourse.

Back where it is all, still, business as usual.

For Christ is risen, don't you see. And so are his people. Risen, ascended and seated in the heavenlies with Christ.

Leaving a disbelieving world to its unbelieving activities.

And leaving them with the handwriting of ordinances.

Nailed to the cross, where God left it.

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For not long before he was crucified; not long before he left this world, Jesus called it “your law”.

The Handwriting

“Your law,” ?

Was this not the law of God ?

Surely the law is that which men speak of - “God’s just and holy law,” as they say.

This must be the law which is thundered from pulpits when men, usually in some distinctive kind of clothing, crash a fist down on the lectern, glare at the assembled congregation, and demand “personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience” to what they often refer to as “God’s” holy law.

But if it be possible for men to be able to offer such “personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience” to this law, then why, pray why, did Christ suffer and die ?

Has he suffered in order to satisfy this law, initially, thence to place us back underneath it that we might, afterwards, fulfil its demands ?

If so, then, please tell me, why did he then expire ?

Why did he have to give up his life ?

Should he not just have suffered the penalties of acts committed under the law ?

Why, tell me - yes, please tell me - why did the Saviour breathe out his last breath, hang his head and expire ?

What was the point of that, could you kindly tell me ?

If salvation were merely a matter of correcting what had been done under the law so that men could be permitted, with a clean record, a cleansed conscience and with God now supposedly amenable to receiving them back again, restored to a position where they might now take up the responsibility of maintaining “personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience” then why, O why, O tell me why, did Christ, having cried out in triumph, “It is finished !” not then, with the assistance of legions of angels, descend from the cross.

Why must he give up his life ?

And if a speaker or preacher or minister shake his jowls at the audience, growling out demands upon the people for “personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience” to the law, then, please, let us, first, observe his - I say not her, for it is insufferable enough that a man should do such things - let us observe his own life and deeds and words. Particularly let us examine his tendency to wrath and irritation and bad temper. For I have noticed that they who are under the law and they that demand obedience to it from others manifest in their own behaviour that “the law worketh wrath,” as it is written. Romans 4:15.

The servant of the Lord must not strive, saith the scripture, II Timothy 2:24, but if a man set himself up to be a teacher of the law, demanding and overseeing “personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience” to it, he shall have plenty of strife on his hands and I shall be interested indeed to observe the state of his temper in the midst of it.

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And if such a man claim to be, himself, offering such “personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience” to the law - in whatsoever shape or form he professes it - then I shall watch his walk with a keen eye to see how he copes with the task and how well his composure is held together under it.

I believe that those who profess such things from a pulpit or platform should shut their mouths for they are either novices who know not their right hand from their left or they are hardened hypocrites who wish to force people to do what they have no intention of doing themselves. As to their behaviour, let them examine their own consciences in secret. As to their doctrine, let them be quiet and let them learn the doctrine of the gospel from those whom Christ has sent to teach it.

“Your law”

The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John tells us in chapter one and verse seventeen of his account. I say not “gospel” for there is but one evangel and the four writers - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - wrote what I refer to as “accounts”. Matthew wrote the book of the generation of Jesus Christ. Mark wrote the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Luke set forth in order a declaration. John wrote of seven signs that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Collectively, I refer to them as “accounts”, not “gospels”, of which there is but one.

So if we wish to receive grace and truth, it is to Jesus Christ we must go. Not Moses.

But Moses wrote of Jesus Christ, two millenia before he was born in Bethlehem. Two walked on the road to Emmaus, which was about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem - that is ten times six - and a man joined them who, after hearing them, expounded to them, beginning at Moses, and then from all the prophets, things concerning Christ and how he ought to have suffered. Luke 24.

For Moses in the law, and in the prophets, did write of Jesus of Nazareth, as Philip said to Nathaniel when he had found him, after seeking him, after Jesus had found Philip and commanded him to, Follow me. And as Jesus had found Philip, so Philip, following Jesus’ example, found Nathaniel. John 1.

Christ is the fulfilment of all that Moses and the prophets uttered.

Had ye believed Moses, said Jesus, John 5:46, ye would have believed me; for Moses wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words ?

Moses prophesied of Jesus Christ.

Moses also received the handwriting of ordinances. They were written on tables of stone by the finger of God himself. And Moses brake them beneath Mount Sinai, ere ever he delivered the writing to the children of Israel for, even as the finger of God was writing on the stone, they were set on mischief, demanding their priest to make them gods.

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In Exodus 34:1 we read that God told Moses to hew two more tables of stone like unto the first. And God said, I will write upon tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.

Now the translators of the Authorised version have inserted "*these*" in italics, putting a word into God's mouth which he never spoke. God promised he would write his laws on tables. But he did *not* say "these tables".

Exodus 34:27 reports that God told Moses to write certain words, for "after the tenor of those words, I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel," saith God. Which covenant was already made. And which covenant was already broken, along with the broken tables at the bottom of the mount.

God would never again write in covenant with man. Once, he did so. And that covenant was broken as soon as it was writ.

Saith God, Exodus 34:1, I will write upon tables the words that were in the first tables. But when he kept that promise, he wrote not on tables of stone. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second, Hebrews 8:8. But fault was found, for, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Jacob.

Now Israel and Jacob are one and the same person, so why name him twice ? Surely this covenant is made with both those who come from the loins of Israel after the flesh, but also with those who are dealt with by God as he dealt with Jacob, the seed which, though not of his loins after the flesh are, nevertheless, of Jacob and of his house by faith.

And what is this covenant ? And upon what "tables" did God write it ?
Oh the wisdom of God ! Oh, will you not hear his wondrous speech !
For he speaks in a mystery and hides himself.
Oh wondrous God !

Hebrews 8:10, This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord :-

I will put my laws *into their mind*.
And write them *in their hearts*.
And I will be to them a God.
And they shall be to me a people.

This covenant is not at all about what man will do. It is a covenant in which God does things to his own people. For he will be to them a God.

As to the second tables of stone ? Where are they ?

They were put in the ark, out of sight. God hid it from view.

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God told Adam not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Note, not the fruit. For that tree never bore any fruit, ever. Only fig leaves. And after it furnished Adam and Eve with fig leaves, then was it dried up at the roots, and no man would, ever, eat of it thereafter.

God wrote upon tables of stone, which were broken.

Thence, God commanded that the copy was to be hidden in the ark.

And God, Himself, nailed the handwriting of ordinances to the cross of His own Son.

God commanded Adam not to eat. Touch, yes. Understand, yes. But not partake.

Adam disobeyed, in unbelief, and God banished him from the garden and cursed him and his seed, even unto death. Eve, then Adam, entered voluntarily, despite warning, into a covenant which inevitably and irrevocably resulted in death.

God made a covenant with the children of Israel after he brought them out of Egypt. Broken, that covenant was nevertheless recorded, retrospectively, on tables of stone. But it had already been broken and was already in disrepute. Repeatedly demonstrating that they had no regard for God and no intention of repentance, God caused them to wander in the wilderness until that generation - all but two men of faith - were dead.

Afterwards, God gave the leader, Joshua, and further deliverers, the Judges, but Israel wanted a king and they chose Saul. After Saul's just demise, God gave them David, a man after his own heart, but they wanted Absalom who persecuted his father, David.

And which of the prophets have they not stoned and beaten and killed and rejected ?

Last of all, they said, Come this is the heir, let us kill him. And so they did.

It seems hardly credible, so much so that it pains me to write the words on to the page - but now, after all this, after millenia of proof that man fails of all covenants, spurns all grace, rejects all that is promised by God, seizes and misuses anything and everything that God gives him and that God properly withholds from him - after all this, a group of men congregate in Westminster to, yet again, attempt to make a covenant with God based upon their own righteousness and to enforce this covenant upon both the populace and upon God's chosen people.

Have they not listened to a single word that God has spoken ?

And this is the reason that they are unable to write the words down, nailed to the cross. This is why they are moved to deliberately falsify what is evident upon the page - *tw staurw* - because they wish to make a covenant with God.

The trouble is, if God nailed the handwriting of ordinances to the cross, then it would be abundantly clear that God, himself, wished no such covenants with man, ever again. So men must ever so slyly make it look as though God is still open to negotiations about re-instating mankind to a position where man could make another covenant with his Creator.

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As if history were not enough, as if the Deluge were not enough, as if the painful record of Israel and the harrowing documentation of Judah's sad following of Israel were insufficient, as if the resultant millenia of mankind's ghastly ways and doings in every nation across the entire globe were not enough - this, this above all, is not enough - that God sent His Own Son and condemned his own Son for sin, in the likeness of sinful flesh.

No, it's just not enough for men, is it ?

Nothing is ever enough for mankind in Adam. Nothing will stop him. Nothing will divert him. Nothing will just make him *cease*.

In order to slyly open the possibility of re-negotiating with God about a covenant of works, man must attempt to cause a disunity in the Deity and must try to tempt God Almighty into unrighteousness.

For they slide the word 'his' cross into Colossians 2:14, in an attempt to make it look as though it is Christ, not God, who has nailed the handwriting of ordinances to the cross. The allusion is inescapable. Witness those men, supreme in doctrine, superlative in their understanding of scripture, admirable in their labours, deserving of reverence for their attainments, yet they, even they, mistake the fact that God, not Christ, nailed something to the cross.

Against all logic, despite every rule of grammar, in the face of the very Greek words themselves, the translators have just not been able to stomach the fact that God Almighty has nailed the handwriting to the cross.

So they change it.

They change it in 1611 so that, later, in convocation in Westminster in 1643 they can have a cosy committee together in which they decide, in God's absence - for God was definitely absent from what went on there - they decide to make a covenant with their Creator on the basis of creation. They slander God by saying that it was his fault that Adam entered into a covenant of death, claiming God put Adam under it - when God did no such thing.

They try to disunite the Deity by accepting the sufferings of Christ for their guilty sins but then they rebel against the death of Christ and attempt to remain in the flesh that they may have yet another attempt at manufacturing a righteousness for themselves on the basis of the relationship of the Creator to the creature.

Deciding to gratuitously accept the sufferings of Christ for their guilty deeds, they choose - so they think - to retain their status as men that they might, yet again, dishonour God by desiring to be as gods knowing good and evil.

In order to do this, they must disunite God from the death of his own Son. So it was 'his' cross, Christ's cross, therefore Christ himself who nailed the handwriting. Thus God was not involved in this, therefore God must still be open to negotiations about a fresh covenant with man.

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But this they forget. That God is righteous.

They are unrighteous for they think that the Creator will just ignore what mankind has done to the creation and now, to his own Son.

But God is not unrighteous.

And God will not be disunited from either the Person or the Work of his Son.

The unity of the Father and the Son, in the Spirit, is such that we call Him - God.

O man of earth, let that sink down in your ears.

And understand this, that man is forever banished from the garden of Eden.

There is no 'Paradise Regained' for man.

Even the very heavens are not clean in the sight of Almighty God, who made them. Neither in the sight of God, nor in the sight of the Word who was in the beginning, who made all things and without whom was not anything made that was made. Who, in the beginning, was with God and God was the Word. The same was, in the beginning, with God.

No, God will have no covenant with man.

He is finished with making covenants with the seed of Adam.

Righteously, properly, lawfully, justly, honestly, fairly and blamelessly is the LORD finished covenanting with all that are of the earth, earthy.

Long hath he suffered it all, as he waited - and as his people waited - for all that he ever purposed, all that he ever longed for, all that he desired.

Now, the gospel goes forth to every creature under heaven. Now that Christ hath suffered, now that Christ hath died, now that Christ hath risen again, now that Christ hath ascended and the Holy Ghost been given, now that Christ sends gifts unto men - even the gift of those who come, skipping upon the mountains, bearing the glad tidings of peace.

Now, to every one who has learned under this yoke, to everyone to whom the law has been nothing but a schoolmaster, to every broken sinner, to every backslidden believer, to every polluted servant, to every priest dressed in filthy garments, to every prophet with unclean lips - now, now, now is a fountain opened in the house of David for sin and for all uncleanness.

For the law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Have I been so long time with you, and yet has thou not known me, Philip ? saith Jesus. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Is the Father not as the Son ? Having received grace from the Son, why go ye about to have a different relationship with the Father ? Why attempt to re-establish a relationship with the Father on the basis of law ?

Do you attempt a relationship with the Father based on abiding by the prime

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commandment, Thou shalt love ? By keeping this commandment, shall you enter into a covenant with the Father ? Shall you now establish a new relationship based on your capacity to love ? And will *that* be your law ? And, if so, wherewith do ye draw the capacity to love from, O man ? From the flesh, would it be ?

Or will you establish a covenant of works with any other form of law with Almighty God, after accepting - as it were - the forgiveness of past sins by the shedding of blood ? And how shall you keep such a law ? By the flesh ?

Know ye not that we which are dead with Christ are dead indeed ? With what life, therefore, do ye intend doing anything ?

But what saith the scripture ?

What are the commandments of him, that is, of God ? I John 3:23.

That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another.

Not that we should love the Lord our God, whom we cannot see.

But love one another, whom we can see.

In whom God, who cannot be seen, dwells.

And not believe on the Son, as unmanifest, but believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, as manifested.

Believe on him who is manifested. Love whom ye can see, in whom God dwells.

And no more attempt to covenant with the invisible Deity.

This is my beloved Son, saith God of Jesus Christ, as he ascended from the water, baptised of John; and as transfigured on the mount. This is his Son. Believe on his name.

Now faith works by love, Galatians 5:6.

And the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Romans 5:5.

And the Holy Ghost is given to us, Romans 5:5 again.

And the Holy Ghost is he who writes God's laws in our hearts and minds.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people.... For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

This is a new covenant, Hebrews 8:13, and he hath thus made the first old.

All this is gratuitous. Nothing is done by, or required of, the flesh.

Boasting is excluded.

Which is why the seed of the Serpent will oppose it. For it leaves them nothing to do.

For they that after the flesh need to work in the flesh.

They are not able to do anything in the Spirit, for they have not the Spirit. But they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit.

They that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh. Such as the handwriting of ordinances which tells the flesh what it should do. And in order to consult the

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handwriting of ordinances the man of flesh will have to go to Golgotha and inspect the empty cross of Christ. Where he will find nothing at all for the handwriting has been wiped away.

God has no instructions to give to man, save one thing.

Repent.

For God commandeth all men - that is, every single soul of man without exception - everywhere - that is, everywhere and anywhere they may be found without exception - to repent.

That is, have a changed mind about who God is and what his purposes are.

To those who receive this message, shall another message be given.

But first, repent.

Man failed of the first covenant as soon as it was instituted with mankind's representatives - Israel - in the desert. Thus were the first tables of stone broken at the foot of the mount. God told Moses to place the copy, out of sight, in the ark.

Once broken - and it was, immediately - God hid the copy in the ark.
Where man could not read it.

Then he nailed it to the cross of his Son, but not before he wiped it clean.

Can you not yet understand that it is called 'your law' ?

Can you not yet understand that he never, ever, put mankind under it, but that they, themselves, voluntarily put themselves under it ?

Do you not yet understand ?

He's not that kind of god !

He is the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

From everlasting his purposes were in his Son.

The Son in whom he always delighted.

Do you not yet understand ?

He delights in his Son.

Not in your law, O man !

And where are God's people, they in whom is the Holy Ghost, that freely given Comforter ? Why, they follow, voluntarily, the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth. They follow him down into death, willingly admitting that their sin deserves the utmost condemnation and gladly being united to Christ in his death. They give up all and follow him out of this present evil world, out of the old man, out of the first creation. They strive to enter the strait gate which takes them out of their first existence and

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brings them into life. It is no longer I that live, they cry, but Christ that liveth in me !

They want none of the first man. They groan in this present body.

Blessed are these that mourn; blessed are these poor.

The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, Lord Jesus.

Then shall these inherit the world to come, who have first received the earnest of their inheritance, even the Holy Spirit who resides in them and fills them and leads them into all truth.

The Triumph

Oh, glory be to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ who has triumphed over principalities and nailed the handwriting of ordinances to the cross of Christ.

But was it not Roman soldiers whose hands actually held the implements ?

It was the Roman occupying power which authorised soldiers to crucify Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter. This is a matter of documented record; a matter of evidence and witness. Once sentence was carried out, the dead body was committed into the hands of Joseph of Arimathaea by Pontius Pilate, the Governor, during the rule of Caesar. To be more precise, Pilate was the Procurator under Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus, who was the step-son of Octavian, "Augustus" being a title - meaning Venerable - not a personal name.

It is also a matter of record, evidence and witness that a man called Simon, a Cyrenian, was compelled to carry the cross of Jesus of Nazareth and it is carefully recorded that the man had two sons, Alexander and Rufus. It is also carefully recorded that events during the crucifixion were witnessed by John the Apostle, by Mary Magdalene, by Mary - the mother of both James the less and Joses - and by Salome.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ, named both Lord and Christ after he rose from the dead - for God declared Jesus to be his Son by the resurrection from the dead - was also a matter of witness, fact, evidence and record. For he first appeared to Mary Magdalene out of whom he cast seven devils, then in another form to two on the road to Emmaus, and afterward to the eleven.

Of the crucifixion in particular there is specific evidence and documentation - the recorded activities of the authorised soldiery of the occupying Roman force in Israel.

But it is also most evident that another was active in two ways so apparent that the names Diabolos - *dia bolos*, Entangler (by false accusation and slander) and Satan - the ancient Hebrew name of Adversary - are used of him in his observable activity within Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Jesus.

Most evident, too, is the motivation of the Chief Priests, Elders, Scribes and Pharisees, particularly, together with the response of the multitude of the Jews, generally, in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover.

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Just as we are permitted to see, by prophetic vision, the energetic, intelligent, perceptive, powerful and ferocious activity of the Great Red Dragon, called Diabolos and Satan, in the Revelation of Jesus Christ given to the angel of Jesus Christ to give to his servant, John, so we are shown, by recorded statement, this one's activity at the time of the Passover.

With authority and power over a host of demonic spirits, he moves within men, influencing individuals who are in a position to be of use to his purposes - an unrepentant thief who knows the whereabouts and habits of Jesus; men in high religious office with the position and ability to influence a mob; a Governor more interested in self preservation than in righteousness.

With seven heads of perfect intelligence and ten horns of total power, he surges within the spirits of men, unresisted, urging them to do as he wills, controlling their desires so that they move as he wishes. One head here, a horn over there, two heads combined at another juncture, then pushing with another horn at just the right moment, he moves men at his will as though they were mere figures on a chess board, step by planned step. Following a strategy of brilliance that will accomplish his aims, he sees many steps ahead to counter all opposition and overwhelm any resistance to his game plan.

And God watches - unmoved, patient, expectant.

The Ancient of Days knows all that this one will do, for he has observed him from the beginning to be a liar and a murderer.

Sending his Son into the world, he knew exactly what would be done to his only beloved.

It was evident from the beginning. Nor did God offer any resistance.

This is my beloved Son.

Driven out into the wilderness, Jesus was exposed, vulnerable, a target.

Came the Devil and did his worst.

But must needs retire, for a season.

Only to return, now, as events in Israel reached a climax.

Now, he would strike. Now he had the upper hand. Now was his opportunity.

Now he moved upon Judas, the one who had always had a diabolos in him. This one had been baptised in Jordan, as had Jesus. Apparently repentant, but not actually, Judas was in a prime position to be used to maximum advantage. He that dippeth with me in the dish, said Jesus. Literally, he that is baptised with me in the communal basin. And what was in the communal basin? It was the slain passover lamb whose meat would mingle with the bread of the sop.

Out into the night he went, and it was dark. Thence to the congregated religious leaders who were ready to receive him, having gathered their officers and men to capture the one they envied and hated. Come, this is the heir, let us kill him.

Kissed, betrayed, captured, bound, Jesus is led to the Chief Priests and condemned for

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being - I am - whom he is, by his very existence.
Because he is, he must die.

The night is full of activity as the Wicked One moves within authoritative men in both religion and state to rid the earth of the One who, by his very existence, poses a threat to the Dragon's *raison d'être*.

As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so Jesus opens not his mouth. Neither attempting to be a martyr, nor trying to avoid death, he answers every question with the wisdom of a serpent and with the harmlessness of a dove. He invites neither enmity nor flattery; neither opposition nor collusion.

He just is.

And being whom he is, he must be killed. For the assumption is that life in this world is everything. That this world is all that a man could want. That this present arrangement is the only arena of human existence. That all that is seen is all that matters. That all the kingdoms of this world are all that is of value.

For the one who has chosen to resist the goodness of God in sending his Son resists all that is holy in spiritual things. He resists salvation, influencing men, instead, to partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, not because he loved good but because he desires an earthly kingdom. He resists faith and seeks to turn men to a way of works, not that he loves righteousness but so that he may be the god of a present world in a creation where sin dwells. He resists the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and moves men to choose a way of religion in which another spirit inhabits the souls of men, so that he may reign over a humanity that is unholy, unjustified and - though religious - ungodly.

From the beginning, Lucifer, the son of the morning, desired to be as the most high; envying and lusting after the place that only the uncreated One could ever have. For this cause did he avoid the man and tempt the woman. He was aware of what existed as soon as an intelligent creature was created. His brilliant, created mind perceived a way to wrest the creation from the very Creator; to hold it in thrall in an attempt to lock it up for ever; to ensnare the very Deity with an insoluble situation that prevented God from bringing in his real purposes in his own Son.

This supreme principality, this archon - the prime appointment under which other appointments were made - this chief authority under whom were other authorities, used all the abilities which God had given him - intelligence, spiritual power, spiritual authority, hosts of spirits to do his bidding - which were given to oversee creation and to rule the spiritual realm, he used all this to fight against the Creator thence to obstruct the Creator from bringing in the ultimate purpose of all creation.

Fallen from his original state, this wicked one, now the Ponerous - malicious, miserable, oppressive in his rebellion, drawing others into his own wretched state of evil - drew away hosts of spirits to facilitate his own selfish and self-destructive ends. The world his realm, he still had a place in heaven and still used it, the adversary of such men as Job and Daniel. Job, whoever he was and wherever on earth he may have

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lived, knew not anything of the heavenly negotiations which resulted in his own chastenings. But all was turned to good in the wisdom of God, for Job obtained righteousness by faith, scourged from his own self justification into a better knowledge of his Maker.

But as the age rolled on, as century succeeded century, the battle for heaven and earth moved forward. Resistance is seen from heavenly beings to the outrage of Satan's rebellion. One whose face is as the appearance of lightning and his eyes as lamps of fire comes to Daniel. For Michael, one of the chief princes, had given him help.

O see the righteousness of God, who will only ever do justly and will not do anything that is not perfectly equitable ! He whose voice is like the voice of a multitude does nothing that is improper. And Michael gives that proper aid from an authoritative source.

Rolls time on and a babe is born who shall rule his people in righteousness.

Writhes the Dragon and Herod slaughters children throughout his kingdom, moved with demonic malice against the King of the Jews.

But, This is my beloved Son, and the desert witnesses the battle as it rages - All the kingdoms of this earth will I give thee, if thou fall down and worship me !

Get thee hence, Satan.

And, Get thee behind me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

So, This is my beloved Son, again.

Then come, this is heir, let us kill him.

At any time, could Jesus have diverted from his course. No law could ever oblige him to do as he would do. None could ever expect what he had set his face to do. Only the Father, who had sent him. Thy will be done.

For love of the Father, for love of the sheep, for everlasting love alone did he pursue a course that would bring him to Golgotha, bring his body to the sepulchre, bring his soul down to hades.

O see if there be any suffering like unto his suffering !

This man of sorrows, acquainted with grief.

We hid, as it were, our faces from him.

All forsook him and fled.

They pierced my hands and my feet.

I looked, and there was no man.

Be not far from me, O my strength !

My God, my God - why hast *thou* forsaken me ?

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Forsaken of his own, crucified by men, lifted up, like the brazen serpent in the wilderness, cursed, this one, who hangeth on a tree.

Made sin, he who knew no sin.

Laden with sins not his own, he was numbered with the transgressors. He bare the sin of many.

My iniquities are gone over my head !

I sink in deep mire where there is no standing !

O see this one - see - for when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see of the travail of his soul.

And be satisfied.

Yet pleased the LORD was, him to bruise;
him put to grief did he:
when thou dost offer up his soul
he satisfied will be.

When thou, for sin, shalt make his soul
an offering, he'll see
his seed, he shall prolong his days;
he satisfied will be.

Offered up, the Son of God who alone could reach to the infinities required, who alone could ever span the distance between men and God, who alone could ever close the gulf between sin and righteousness, who alone could ever answer the transgressions under the first covenant, the Son of God hung, nailed, fixed, unmoving as the vials of God's wrath were poured upon him.

Our God is a consuming fire, saith the apostle.

Provoked beyond endurance by hard, unrelenting, stubborn self righteousness; resisted beyond all reason by flintlike self preservation; contemptuously rebelled against by oceans of transgressions; selfishly disregarded in all his grace and goodness; mocked in blasphemy; dishonoured continuously; offended beyond all offence; revolted by the stink of death emanating from the creatures he had made; long, long had the Almighty suffered the continuance of humanity in general and the daily life of each individual in particular.

Now, upon his own beloved Son, he poured out his pent up fury upon one man.

O see, if there any be suffering like unto his suffering !

What tongue can tell, what poet can write, what orator do justice to this ?

None can.

Only darkness can reign from the sixth hour unto the ninth hour as he suffers there,

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unseen.

Nailed, while Deity is satisfied upon Deity.

And who, pray tell, did the nailing ?

Roman hands, yes. Soldier's rough fingers, yes.

A hammer held in the hand of one authorised by Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus, of course.

An officer authorised, locally, by the Procurator Pontius Pilate, without doubt.

The nails driven in after the provocation of a Jewish multitude, it is true.

Crucifixion at the instigation of Chief Priests, elders, scribes and Pharisees, indeed.

But behind all this, the seething, writhing, energetic activity of a Dragon whose brilliant and unimaginably forceful presence covered the globe, instantly, marshalling his hosts of spirits to move within men in the accomplishment of his own ferocious desires.

So did he hammer the nails ?

Oh, nay. Draw near and I will whisper it to thine ear, this awesome wonder.

~~ The One who held the hammer was the Father. He nailed his Own Son to the tree.~~

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man, my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts !

By sending his Son, by permitting men and devils to do what they, themselves, could not stop themselves from doing, by allowing the ravages of sin to boil inside men, stirred up by the hot breath of Satan himself, by allowing all this, the Father, himself, drove in the nails to the wood.

And in so doing, he nailed the handwriting to it, also.

Had the rulers of this world - the unseen principalities and powers who dominate the spiritual realm - had they known what they were doing, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

For in doing what they did, they brought about their own downfall.

They ensured their own destruction.

And they released their own prisoners, long held captive.

For not by might, nor by power, but, in the weakness of God, did he defeat all his enemies.

By wisdom, by righteousness, by utter equanimity, by all that is good and by all that is holy has God brought in all his purposes that he ever purposed from everlasting.

And made a mockery of all his enemies, triumphing over them in the cross of His own dear Son, having nailed, to that cross, the handwriting of ordinances that was against

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us, that was contrary to us, taking it out of the midst of us and wiping it away.

Stripped of their armour, naked and shamed, does God lead his enemies, publicly, triumphing, as David danced before the ark, with shouting and the sound of a trumpet, with leaping and dancing. See his shamed foes ! See their misery !

Laugh at them together with me, for they are made ridiculous by the Lord in his wisdom and righteousness ! Point the finger and make mockery at the enemies of the Lord who thought to crucify his Son ! Join with me in rejoicing at those who plotted against the Lord of hosts, who unrighteously afflicted his people and brought them into bondage and captivity !

But one looked out of a window and despised.
And David promised that he would yet be more vile and be base in his own sight.
And she was without child until she died.

Not barren, I notice.
But without union.

Those who despise the triumph of David shall never enter into union with him and shall die, alone, without fruit.

But for every poor creature who groans in an existence that is trapped in a creation that is utterly unsuitable for their true expression; for every poor, condemned captive, bound helplessly in a dungeon which they, themselves, have voluntarily entered; for every soul who craves release from a body of sin and death and owns that salvation is, utterly, of the Lord alone; for every sinner who feels the absolute necessity of a Saviour from outside of this doomed creation; for every such a one is captivity led captive by Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come. Amen.

Nigel Johnstone,
Malvern, June 2012.

Appendix - Tw Staurw

The relevant wording in Colossians 2:14 regarding the translation of what the Authorised Version has as “his cross” and what the Englishman’s Greek New Testament renders as “the cross” in The Received Text, the text of Tyndale, Luther, Stephens and Elzevir, The *Textus Receptus*, is *tw staurw*.

Tw staurw means “the cross” or “the stake”. It can only mean “the cross” or “the stake”.

These words simply cannot be made to mean anything else.

Tw is the definite article, there being no indefinite article in Greek. *Staurw* is the dative form of *stauros*. That is, *stauros* is the indirect object of the sentence, hence it takes the dative case ending, which, being a second declension, masculine, singular noun is *-w*-. There is no genitive case here. No possession is in view.

“To the cross” or “to the stake” is the only correct rendering of the words *tw staurw*.

In order to see what would be the situation if a possessive were involved, let us look at Mark 6:1 which reads, in English, “Jesus came into his own country”.

The wording in Greek is :-

Eis.....ten..... Patrida..... autou.

Into.....the.....country.....of him.

Literally, “into the country of him“, “him” being a translation of the Greek personal pronoun *autos* used in reference to that which has gone before. *Autos* may be masculine, as it is here, or it may be feminine or neuter, written in slightly different forms. It may be singular, again as it is here, or it may be plural, again in slightly different forms. But the context will always clearly indicate what is meant by the *autos* reference. Here, clearly, the “of him” refers to Jesus who was last mentioned in verse 36 of the previous chapter and has been the only active subject in the narrative since then.

Thus, in this case, *autou* is the form of *autos* written with its second declension masculine, singular, genitive ending.

Autou is the form which *autos* takes in its genitive (or possessive) case and is translated “of him”. Or, as we say it in more colloquial English - “his”. In Mark 6:1, the ending is the genitive, or possessive, ending *-ou*. The words are thus to be translated, “the country of him”. The translators, here, have correctly rendered the Greek into English as, “into his [own] country”.

But such is not the case in Colossians 2:14 where we read the Greek words :-

.... *proselwsas.....auto..... tw.....staurw.*

.... having nailed..... it.... [to]....the.....cross.

Nailed to the Cross

Here the word *auto* is not the genitive (possessive) form of the personal pronoun which would indicate “of him”. Here, the word *auto* clearly refers to the handwriting of ordinances. And it should be translated “it” in reference to the handwriting. The word *auto* is used previously in the verse, “took *it* out of the way”, and is then used again, “nailing *it*”.

Had Paul meant to write “his cross” he would have written the Greek word *auto* after the words “the cross” and made it genitive, thus reading....”the cross of him”.

Paul would have written the genitive, singular, masculine form of the word which is *autou*. And he would have put it after *tw staurw*, making it clear that “it” referred to “the cross”.

Then we would have the ridiculous words, “and took it out of the way, having nailed the cross of him”.

But Paul evidently did not have such nonsense in mind. Paul had something logical, sensible and supremely wonderful to express, which he competently and pertinently uttered as follows :-

...*proselwsas auto tw staurw*.... ...having nailed it to the cross.

It is the translators who have made nonsense out of sense.

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