

THE HEART OF GOD REVEALED

Romans 8:31-32

Jelšava, 25 December 2019

Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν πρὸς ταῦτα; εἰ ὁ θεὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, τίς καθ' ἡμῶν; ³² ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτόν, πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται

Rom 8:31-32 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.

Mt 1:23 Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us)

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0. INTRODUCTION

- hearing the same message again? → if we are hungry for God’s love, we are eager to hear about it again and again → the bread of life; the living water...

0.1 ATTITUDES AT CHRISTMAS

- Incarnation wrapped in the accoutrements of Christmas →
- (1) naïveté? → lack of deeper/critical thinking? (glamour; glittering lights; the spell of music...)
- (2) superficiality? → just having holidays/free time with family/friends?
- (3) formalism (religious or cultural)? → carnal satisfaction? (customs; special foods; music’ rituals... superstitions...)
- (5) consumerism? → pleasure/profit idolatry?
- (4) cynicism? → seeing through? (it is nothing, but...)

0.2 GOD UNDER SUSPICION

- “humanity’s hobby” → suspecting God (**Gn 3:4-5** But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows [כִּי יִדַע אֱלֹהִים] – but he did not tell you – that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

- **Job 10:12-13** You have granted me life and steadfast love (חיים וחסד עשית עמדי), and your care has preserved my spirit. ¹³ Yet these things you hid in your heart (ואלה צפנת בלבבך); I know that this was your purpose (נדעתי כיוזאת עמך).

- **Ps 13:1(2)** O LORD? Will you forget me forever (תשכחני נצח)?

0.3 THE GREAT METANARRATIVE

[TORRANCE *Incarnation*, p. 6-7] So far as this event is a fact of nature it can be observed, and so far as it is historical in the sense that other natural events are historical, it can be appreciated as such; but the essential becoming behind it cannot be directly perceived except by an act of perception appropriate to the eternal event. That act of perception appropriate to the eternal event is faith, which is an enabling of reason given to it in the very act of receiving revelation.

- STAGES of the great overarching
- the Divine plan → Creation → Fall → Incarnation → the Cross → Resurrection → Parousia → Eternal glory

0.4 GOD WITH US AND GOD FOR US

- What to we desire to get from God?
- the argument: *a maiore ad minus*...
[CHRYSOSTOM *Homilies on Romans XV*] Why, it may be said, who is there that is not against us? Why the world is against us, both kings and peoples, both relations and countrymen. Yet these that be against us, so far are they from thwarting us at all, that even without their will they become to us the causes of crowns, and procurers of countless blessings, in that God's wisdom turneth their plots unto our salvation and glory. See how really no one is against us!
- some gifts more than others reveal the heart of the giver...
- Immanuel: Isa 7:14; 8:8; **Matt 1:23** (Ἐμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύομενον μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.)
Rom 8:32 ...ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτόν...
- **Rom 8:31** If God is for us, who can be against us?
[LLOYD-JONES *Romans*] In asking 'Who can be against us?' the Apostle is not, as is the fashion of the modern cults, saying in a glib and superficial way that all is well. His is not a shallow, easy optimism; it is indeed the exact opposite. The Apostle reminds us repeatedly that there are terrible forces against us, and their might and malignity is almost indescribable. But taking them as they are, and at their worst, he asks, 'What are the forces against us if the power of this God is for us?' The New Testament never claims that the Christian life is an easy life; and a teaching that maintains that the Christian can never be in a position in which he has no struggle, no fight, no difficulty at all, and that all he has to do is to sit back passively, is sheer heresy. There are terrible forces against us - the world, the flesh, and the devil. As Paul says in Ephesians 6: 12
- **Isa 8:10** Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us (כי עמנו אל)
- **Jos 5:13** Joshua ... "Are you for us, or for our adversaries (ה'לנו אתה אם-לצרינו)?"
- **Ps 118:6** The LORD is on my side (יהוה לי); I will not fear. What can man do to me?
 - **Lk 12:4** ...I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do.
- **Ps 46:7 (8)** The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress (יהוה צבאות עמנו מושב-לנו אלהי יעקב)

1. "GAVE" ⇒ "GAVE HIM UP"

- [παρέδωκεν αὐτόν] → Isa 53:10 [יְהוָה חָפֵץ דָּבַחַת הַחַלְלִי]

[HEIDEGGER *Being and Time* ...we call it the "thrownness" of this entity into its "there"; indeed, it is thrown in such a way that, as Being-in-the-world, it is the "there". The expression "thrownness" is meant to suggest the facticity of its being delivered over (*Faktizität der Überantwortung*).]

- **Phil 2:7-8** ...made himself nothing (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν), taking the form of a servant (μορφὴν δούλου λαβών), being born in the likeness of men (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος). And being found in human form (σχήματι εὐρεθείς ὡς ἄνθρωπος), ⁸ he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (ἑταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ)

- **Acts 2:23** Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (τῆ ὀρισμένη βουλῇ καὶ προγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ ἔκδοτον), ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain

1.1 JESUS "GIVEN" IN LIFE

- "Silent night" → was actually a "dangerous" night
- parents
 - **Mark 3:20-21** Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹ And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind." (ἔλεγον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξέστη)
 - **John 7:5** For not even his brothers believed in him
 - **Lk 4:28-29 [Nazareth]** When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. ²⁹ And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff.

1.2 JESUS "GIVEN" IN DEATH

- the cross → **2Cor 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God
- **2Cor 5:14** ...the love of Christ controls us (συνέχει ἡμᾶς), because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died

2. WHAT IT MEANS: "ALL"?

- What are our (secret?) complaints against God?
- **1Cor 3:21-23** So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, ²² whether (1) Paul or Apollos or Cephas or (2) the **world** or (3) **life** or (4) **death** or (5) the **present** or (6) the **future** – all are yours, ²³ and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's (ὥστε μηδεὶς καυχάσθω ἐν ἀνθρώποις· πάντα γὰρ ὑμῶν ἐστίν, ²² εἴτε Παῦλος εἴτε Ἀπολλῶς εἴτε Κηφᾶς, εἴτε κόσμος εἴτε ζωὴ εἴτε θάνατος, εἴτε ἐνεστῶτα εἴτε μέλλοντα· πάντα ὑμῶν, ²³ ὑμεῖς δὲ Χριστοῦ, Χριστὸς δὲ θεοῦ)
- **Heb 2:8-9** ...At present, **we do not yet see everything in subjection to him**. ⁹ But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

2.1 SAFETY

- **Ps 46:1-3** God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, ³ though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.
 - → climate change?

2.2 KINGDOM

- **Eph 2:4-6** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ- by grace you have been saved- ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him (συνεκάθισεν) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
- **Rev 5:9-10** And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.

2.3 MYSTICAL UNION

- **John 17:21** ...that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us...
- **2 Peter 1:4** ...partakers of the divine nature... (θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως)

3. "WITH HIM"

- What do we see in the cradle?

- **Rom 8:32 [God]** who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
- → WHO IS JESUS? (remember the disciples in the storm!) **Mt 8:27** "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?" (ποταπός ἐστιν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν;)

3.1 JESUS – THE SON OF GOD

- → Incarnation
- **Lk 1:31-33** And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

3.2 JESUS – THE OFFSPRING OF THE WOMAN

- → the Messiah
- **Gn 3:15** will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

3.3 JESUS – OUR SUBSTITUTE

- → my Saviour
- **2Cor 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν) who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God

3.4 JESUS – OUR HEAD

- → my King; Commander; Ruler;
- **Eph 1:22-23** And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all

4. TO REMEMBER

- Gifts tend to reveal the heart of the giver.
- The greatest gift humanity can ever receive is the life and death of the Son of God.
- Let us use this against our doubts, complaints