***Proof of God's Plan
RO49-02***

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Please open your Bibles to Romans 5:6-8. We are moving to a new section. Chapter 5 began a whole new section of the book of Romans.

**The Book of Romans**

Paul began this letter to the Christians in Rome by demonstrating that everyone is lost, and consequently, everyone is headed for an eternity in hell after death, and thus he is urgently in need of salvation. Romans 1:18 through Romans 3:20 explained this in detail. Then the apostle Paul proceeded to show how this vitally needed personal justification before God had been made possible by God Himself. We studied this in Romans 3:21-30. This is a very magnificent area of truth – one in which the majority of the human race is in darkness, and completely oblivious to – how God has made a provision for justification apart from human doing so that a person can solve the problem of the separation from God.

**Salvation by Grace**

I spoke with a Christian worker this week (a lady), and I observed in the conversation that we have been studying the book of Romans, and that in the fourth chapter, and in the explanations of justification, the apostle Paul had made it almost chillingly clear that God not only saves by grace, but that God doesn't save in any other way but grace; and, that certainly he makes it clear that if there are any works involved, there is no grace. And if it's grace, there is no works. It isn't just that God gives us a wonderful gift of salvation. That's not enough. I hope that you have learned by now from this book that He's not going to give you salvation on any other basis except a handout – a handing out to you.

**Salvation by Works**

Then I said to me, "To me, it's been rather shocking to realize that we have huge numbers of people out in the denominational world that interject one kind of work or another. One popular one, of course, is water baptism. And these people are very adamant that without that water baptism, you're not going to heaven." I said, "Isn't it odd to realize (isn't it terrifying to realize) that those very people, by that very act of determined devotion to the involvement of a human work of water baptism in their salvation are sending themselves to hell?" And I could tell that that was such a horrifying fact that I didn't even get a nod of the head. I didn't even get a "Wow." I didn't get a "Say that again?" I just got a stare. And I could tell that the signal that was being told me was, "I don't think I'm prepared to accept that. I'm a Christian worker. I work with people. I don't think I'm prepared to tell people that if they approach God on any other basis but grace, they have doomed themselves to hell. However, you better believe it, friend, because that's exactly what this book has been trying to convey to us.

So, Paul has shown that vital justification has been provided, and he has made it very clear as to how you get it – as a gift. And anytime you contaminate it with some human effort, you've lost it. That is, you won't receive it. Once you get it, you won't lose it.

Then Paul demonstrated divine justification from the experience of Abraham in Romans 4:1-25. There were some people who were doing exactly this that we've been describing to you in Paul's day. They were saying, "You've got to have circumcision to be saved." And Paul went back to show how Abraham was a classic example of justification as a gift from God.

**The Results of Justification in the Believer's Past, Present, and Future**

In the new section, which is Romans 5 to 8, which we are currently studying, Paul discusses some of the results of salvation by grace. We have begun with Romans 5:1-11. These first 11 verses actually summarize for us some of the benefits of justification. And the effects are first summarized in terms of the believers' past, present, and future. We have that in the first 5 verses which we have just completed. The effect on the believers past is his position of justification with God. The effect on the believers present is that he has peace with God about his evil, and he has a permanent possession of justification, or salvation. The effect on the believer’s future is the certainty of experiencing the "Shekinah" glory of God in eternity someday.

**The Believer's Daily Life**

Paul further ties this magnificent future with the believer's daily life now. We've seen that the first step toward the hope of glory is the Christian's time of suffering in his day-by-day experience, Paul shows that there is a chain reaction from suffering now to glory in eternity. The pressures of trials that we experience merely produce, in the divine viewpoint-oriented believer, an attitude of determined spiritual perseverance and his continued combat in the angelic conflict. The Christian soldier who understands divine viewpoint does not crack under pressure. The result of this endurance, in turn, produces a sense of proven or tried Christian character bearing God's stamp of approval. And the Christian is aware of the fact that God has stamped him with approval because of his performance in the angelic conflict. The result of this approved character from God, in turn disturbs in the Christian spirit of certainty about experiencing the glory of God in the future.

So, Paul has hooked one link to another from suffering now to that realistic hope of glory in the future. The confident hope of the believer, consequently, is that he will never find himself embarrassed over his expectation of glory; nor will he be disappointed in this hope.

The proof of this is the presence of the mental attitude love of God which is flooding his soul. The Christian is aware of the non-old sin nature love that now functions within himself. It governs his thinking, and it governs his attitudes. He literally can say to himself, "This is not the way I am. I am acting differently than I had before the days of my justification. God has placed something within me that is foreign and alien to me by nature. He has shown that He loves me, and He has put the functioning of that love within me, and I'm aware of it.

**Proof of Justification**

Now the source of this kind of love is God the Holy Spirit, who alone thereby demonstrates the indwelling of the Christian. Because God the Holy Spirit alone can produce this kind of love, it is evident that he is enjoying the believer. And if you have God the Holy Spirit indwelling you, it is the evidence that you are justified, and that your destiny is heaven. So, the presence of the Holy Spirit in a person is proof of justification, and the presence of the Holy Spirit is evidenced by the love of God which functions within us. So, we have the confirmation in this way of the future of God's glory. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is automatic in every believer. It comes at the point of salvation. You cannot receive Him by asking for Him.

Now, moving ahead from that point with further amplification of the benefits and the results of justification, we pick it up in verse 6. In verse 6-8, Paul continues describing the general results of justification by illustrating the nature of God's love for the lost. And that's the point that we have come to now – the issue of God's love for the lost. Verse 6 says, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly." The word "for" that begins this verse in the Greek is actually two words. It's "eti gar." This word "eti" is an adverb in the Greek, and it means "yet" or "still." The word "gar" is a conjunction in Greek, and it means "for." We may translate the two as "for yet." These two words are actually referring back to the declaration that we have in verse 5 of God's love for the believer being poured into the mind of the believer.

The phrase introduces an explanation of how we (those sinners) can believe that we have God's love poured into our souls. It is hard to believe that a holy God could love a sinner, let alone that He does love a sinner. It's just hard to believe that a holy God, in any way, could do anything to make it possible for Himself to love a sinner, let alone to express that love toward the sinner. And that's what verse 5 says – that God's love for us is there, and it is evidenced by the fact that God the Holy Spirit is causing this love of God to pour out from us. A person would say, "That's hard to believe."

So, what Paul does in verse 6, with the introduction of these two words ("for yet"), he says, "Now, I'm going to show you why that's true. I'm going to explain to you how it is actually a fact that God does love you as a sinner, and that God's love is being poured out within your soul even though we are sinners. The Holy Spirit indwelling a sinner indicates in itself that something fantastic has happened to make this kind of love possible pouring out from us.

So, we begin: "For yet when we were." The verb here "we were" is the Greek word "eimi." This introduces a phrase which in the Greek language we call a genitive absolute. This is an important grammatical construction for interpretation. You don't have to remember it, but once you know the interpretation, that's the thing that you need to remember. But the reason we interpret this passage (as we are going to) is because of this particular construction. So, for interpretation, it is important. ... Genitive is one of the cases of the Greek language, and absolute simply means separated. It stands separated from anything else in the sentence. And it's an oddity of construction. We have a variation of that in English. We call it a nominative absolute in English. But here, in the Greek, is a construction. You have an expression that just has no relationship to the rest of the sentence. It's just a statement that's interjected. But it is a statement which is related to the meaning of the sentence, and which expands the meaning of the sentence considerably.

So, what I'm saying is that this verb here is not the main verb of the sentence. It is the verb which introduces this little separate interjection of a thought within the sentence that explains to us something about the natural condition of a human being, and of all mankind, before the cross. The whole phrase is actually: "when we were yet without strength." That whole phrase is just stuck into the sentence unrelated grammatically to the rest of the sentence but which amplifies the understanding of what Paul is saying tremendously.

This word "eimi" is the Greek word "to be," and it refers to the status that a person has. It is present tense, which tells us that it's the continual status of a sinner. It is active voice, which means that believers personally possess this status. And it is participle, which indicates to us that a spiritual principle is stated. It is also what we call a participle of time or a temporal participle. So, we translate it as "when” or “while we were in this condition." The word "we," of course, refers to all of the lost humanity. It is actually the subject of this particular segment of the sentence. We is the subject of this genitive absolute. It is not the subject of the sentence. As you will see in the moment, what this sentence is talking about is Jesus Christ. But the subject here of this absolute is "we." There is something that is true about us sinners.

Then we have another oddity in this particular verse. This is a hard verse to explain. In fact, it is a hard verse to study. It is a hard verse to exegete because it's got certain peculiarities. You can always tell that you've got a peculiarity in the Greek because the manuscripts go berserk. They get all kinds of variations, and then it is quite a chore to start shaking down, and say, "OK, this is what the original writer put in there, and I can see how this copyist has gotten off here, and gotten off here, and why he got this confused.

However, one of the things that's odd here is that it throws in this word that we began with – "eti" again. That is most unusual. So, you've got "eti" a second time. And again, we can translate it as "yet" or "still." And what this is doing is a repeat in order to stress mankind's condition of total helplessness spiritually at the particular point in time that Paul is discussing. So, what we have here is "For yet, when we were still without strength." And this is the apostle Paul's way of interjecting at that particular point of time that something happened on the part of Jesus Christ that he's going to tell us about. This was our spiritual condition. And it is simply the Greek way of stressing something that is not easy to do in English.

**Man is Absolutely Helpless**

So, we have, again, this little adverb thrown in to stress that he's talking about man's particular condition at the point of time when Jesus Christ appeared on that cross in human history. And what was our condition? It is described as being "without strength." That is the Greek word "asthenes." This is a noun, and this word connotes a lack of strength. Therefore, it has come to be translated by the word "weak" or the word "powerless."

This word is also used to describe the condition of physical illness. In 1 Corinthians 11:30, the apostle Paul describes for us what happens to a person who comes to the Lord's Supper without having confessed all known sins, and does it willfully on a repeated pattern of rebellion. And he uses this word "asthenes" as one of the things that will happen to the person who comes to the Lord's Supper in a status of sinfulness, and in abide status of willful sin that he has not ceased from, and that he has not confessed: "For this cause;" that is, that the previous verse says that many eat and drink the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, and thus they are eating and drinking judgment to themselves because they are ignoring the significance of this very sacred and very holy ceremony in terms of its meaning: "For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep," and there is the word "asthenes" for the word "sick;" that is, physical ailments. And the result is that this sickness may then lead on to where it becomes terminal. Thus he describes that by the word "sleep."

So, the word "asthenes" simply means "weak." "Helpless" is a good translation. Here it means, of course, helpless in a spiritual sense – unable to produce any divine good to meet the standard of God's holiness. A person is spiritually helpless. And at the point of time when Jesus Christ came into the human race, this was the condition of all of humanity – spiritually helpless. And the reason for this spiritual weakness is man's old sin nature. It's a terminal condition of evil.

So, we will translate this as: "For yet when we were *still* helpless" – we were still in this condition of spiritual degeneracy. This refers, of course, specifically to the condition of lacking absolute righteousness; and furthermore, being unable to do a thing about it. That is the problem with most people. Few people would deny that spiritually they are helpless. Few people would deny that spiritually they are certainly not what they ought to be by divine standards. But many of those same people find it hard to admit to themselves that they can't do anything about it. They find it hard to admit to themselves that their helplessness is terminal. They can't solve it. Yet the Bible tries to make that very clear to us again and again.

For example, John 3:3 says, "Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. So, if you're not born-again, and if you do not have justification, the Bible says, "You cannot go to heaven." Man thinks he can somehow make it. The Bible says you cannot just.

Notice John 8:43: "Why do you not understand my speech (speaking to the Pharisees to whom he's been carrying on this conversation?" Jesus says, "Even because you cannot hear My word." By that He means, "You cannot understand My word." So, God says, concerning the unbeliever, "You cannot understand the Word of God. That's what's so ridiculous about somebody who is not a Christian studying the Bible. One thing that will always happen to a person who studies the Bible, who is not a Christian, is that he becomes bored by it. He's tired. The Bible is a tiresome book. He has no longing to get into it. It's just boring to him. Why? Because he cannot understand the Word of God, because he doesn't have God the Holy Spirit indwelling him as His Teacher. If you sit here today, and you're not a believer, and you're here because of some religious motivation, there'll be very little of this service that you'll understand. You may get the surface information, but the spiritual phenomena will pass you by completely. And the longer the service goes, the more tiresome it will become to you. Why? Because you cannot understand spiritual things until you are born-again, because you have a condition of "asthenes." You have a condition of spiritual helplessness.

Notice John 14:16-17: Jesus says, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth (God the Holy Spirit), whom the world cannot receive because it doesn't see Him, neither does it know Him. But you know Him pretty, for He dwells with you, and shall be in you." God the Holy Spirit is someone that the unbeliever cannot receive. And if you don't have God the Holy Spirit within you, then you cannot learn the Word of God. You can't understand any spiritual phenomena. You're in a helpless and a hopeless condition.

Let's jump ahead to Romans 8:7-8, on the helplessness of the unsaved person: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh (those who are unbelievers) cannot please God." You cannot please God if you are not a believer. And if you are a Christian who is out of the inner circle of temporal fellowship, you cannot please God either, because you have reverted back to the condition of domination under the flesh; that is, under old the sin nature. So, Romans 8:7-8 also make it clear that the natural status of the human heart is helplessness.

1 Corinthians 2:14 reiterates this same principle: "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God (the natural man is the unsaved man), for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." When the unbeliever is confronted with spiritual reality, and with divine viewpoint, he thinks it's wrong. He rejects it. This is the reason why many of your politicians in Washington look at divine viewpoint principles, and they reject them as being wrong. And they turn to the opposite in terms of a human viewpoint principle, and they say, "That's right." Well, why is that? Because these men are unbelievers. They're in public office. They're unbelievers. They do not have the Spirit of God. Therefore, they have no divine viewpoint guidance. Therefore, the only judgments they can come up with are human viewpoint judgments, because no matter how good they may be, and how sincere they may be, they cannot understand spiritual things, and they cannot function on spiritual things.

It was not without reason that our Puritan forefathers were so adamant in the political life of this nation that you could not be a public officeholder if you were not a church member. They were equating church membership to being a believer, and at that time it pretty well did indicate that. You weren't in the church membership unless you were a believer. And they did not permit anybody to hold public office unless he was a believer.

Well, when we have separated church and state to the direction and extent that we have, we can't maintain that line anymore. But it was a good principle while it lasted, because what they were doing was putting them in public office who had a chance to be taught divine viewpoint by God. Therefore, they had a chance to be led in their political decisions by God the Holy Spirit. Would that be fantastic if we had somebody in Washington running this country who was directed by divine viewpoint principles of God the Holy Spirit?

Let's add one more in 2 Peter 2:14: "Having eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin; beguiling, unstable souls; a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children." 2 Peter 2:14 tells us that the unbeliever cannot cease from sinning. He cannot keep from sinning.

**Helpless**

Proverbs 21:4 tells us that the poor guy that's an nonbeliever goes out and plows his field to plant the seed that God has given him, to benefit by the sun and the rain that God will give him to grow the food that God has given him to feed him is sinning when he plows a field, because everything he does, even that which is a good thing (to sow the seed) comes from the old sin nature. And so it's a human good, and with God, it's an evil act. The poor unbeliever is "asthenes." Do you have an appreciation for this word? He is helpless. He can't even go out and plow his field to grow his food to feed his family, and for that to be considered a meritorious thing (a commendable thing). God says, "That's an evil thing you're doing." And I think most of you now have an appreciation for how human good is evil, and that there are many men and women in our society who are influential for evil people who, in the process of what they're doing, think that they are calling for something that is good. But it's human good, and thus evil with God.

So, the helplessness of mankind in his unsaved state is just monumental. And you have to stop and think it through so that you grasp exactly what God is trying to tell us here. And this was the status of all the human race at that particular specific point of time when Jesus Christ appeared.

The result is that the status of everyone is to be under the wrath of God. Why? Because we are condemned by the holiness of God. The lost sinner can operate only out of his old sin nature. So, everything he's doing is evil, whether it's human good or sins. And he is powerless, the Scriptures declare, to do otherwise.

Now, the sinner's status is one, therefore, of total spiritual bankruptcy, and that's what this word is conveying to us – total spiritual bankruptcy. He is completely helpless before God. But human viewpoint is always making that mistake of thinking that something good in man can be credited to him before God. And God condemns the whole thing. The sinner is totally at odds with the holiness of God. Therefore, there is absolutely nothing within him to commend him for heaven.

So, the word "asthenes" describes the condition of people, which makes it necessary for God to come in with grace. This word is the word above all words that makes it clear to us that if this is true of us, if this is true of mankind, then there's only one answer to this helplessness, and that is God by grace doing something about it. If you can't plow your field without it being evil, you certainly can't do anything at all that's good, relative to gaining merit before God in reference to your sin. You can't make up for anything. It's all evil. You're helpless. Therefore, grace has to come in. If you learn this word, and you learn this concept, then you will understand how really pathetic the idea that once you are saved, you can lose your salvation is, because that suggests that man is not entirely helpless, and that man can secure salvation, and that man can do something to keep it. And God says, "You're so helpless, you can't even keep salvation after you have it. That's how helpless you are. It has to be a grace function all the way.

So, I'm sorry for the people who may be shocked by the concept that some of the people who are close to them, and some of the people they know well, and vast numbers of people who are running churches and doing some wonderful things for God, that they're headed straight for hell. And if they have interjected anything, and if they have violated the helpless condition, then that's where they're going.

This morning, President Carter's sister is in Irving. She's preaching here at one of the churches – Mrs. Stapleton. Now that should tell you something about where she's preaching to begin with. Paul says, "Let the women be silent in church." This church says, "Let her stand up and preach from the pulpit." That is human viewpoint vs. divine viewpoint. There's a big crowd there today. A couple of weeks ago, this preacher took everybody in buses out to a piece of land they wanted, that the people won't sell them for the price they wanted (about half the price they wanted for it). He walked them all over the land, and he said, "The book of Joshua says, 'Wherever your foot steps, that's going to be your territory.'" Let them tell that to the man who owns it. Let him tell it to the banker that has a mortgage on it. That's such a distortion of Scripture.

God said, "I'm going to give you this land within here. Look at it. It's big. Wherever you want to walk, that's yours." God wasn't telling them that every place they put their foot down, that gave them title deed to that territory. Yet this twisting of the Word of God just to make an emotional pitch tells you what goes on in that church. I happen to know that that congregation believes that they can go to hell tomorrow just as quickly as they can go to heaven today. For some of them, I probably understand why they think that. But the point is that the sad part about all that is that here's a congregation that's going to have a lot of publicity today, and we may even see them on television before the day is over. But how many of them have not learned the precious truth of helplessness so that their confidence is in what God gives them, and not something that they're contaminated evil hands are going to offer back to him? And that is exactly what emotionally oriented people always try to do. They always try to hand back something to God out of their evil, contaminated hands.

So, Paul says, "For yet when we were yet (or still) without strength (when we were spiritually helpless), in due time." The word "in" is the Greek word "kata." It's not our usual word "en." "Kata" It's a preposition indicating a standard, or we would say "according to:" "According to a certain time." The word for "time" is the Greek word "kairos." "Kairos" is a noun. This is the word for time that the Greek uses when it wants to talk about a specific time, or a moment which is opportune or seasonable. This is the word that makes some emphasis upon what is happening within that specific segment of time. It is time in terms of a box of time. It is time in terms of a certain specific place of time, with emphasis upon what's in that point of time, and emphasis upon what is within that segment of time.

We have another Greek word that is not used here. It's "chronos," from which we get our English word "chronology." "Chronos" just means "time in duration" of any length, and it pays no attention to what's inside the time. It has no relationship to the content.

So, the idea here is: "at the right time," or "at the proper time." It means that Christ came to die for the sins of the world at just the right time in terms of human helplessness. The phrase should be connected to the spiritually helpless condition. At just the specific point in time of man's history of spiritual helplessness, along came the Son of God with the provision for the sins of the world. It was a fitting point in the helplessness of mankind in coping with the consequences of sin.

We can't go into the details of describing the New Testament world as it existed when Jesus Christ appeared, but it was a world which had run its course. It was a world which was rapidly running out of steam. It was a world that had passed its heyday and its moments of glory. It was a world which was deteriorating into an abyss. It was a world of complete hopelessness. It was a world of disease, and of sin, and of tyranny, and of indolence. It was just a world that could produce nothing. It was a totally unproductive world system. It was a totally unproductive society. Things were indeed in very bad shape.

At that point in time, at just the right time, in man's desperation for where we are going to go from here, on the scene of history comes Jesus Christ. That is why, when the message of salvation and the message of a relationship to a holy God of the universe, which would be a lasting relationship, and the consequences of divine viewpoint information that was brought by the leaders of Christianity – that is why the known world exploded in time with accepting the Christian faith, and why it revived the whole earth, in effect. All of civilization was revived by Christianity, and it moved forward to the greatest heights that it had ever experienced up to that time. But up to now, it was on a dead-center position. It was the specifically right time.

The same idea is referred to in Galatians 4:4, where the apostle Paul says this: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman made under the Law." "In the fullness of time" means at the opportune moment in history for God to demonstrate His wisdom in dealing with human sin, and to demonstrate as well His love for the sinner. Christ died at the extremity of human helplessness, and at the consummation of a variety of divine forces which were leading to His execution.

And of this was done by the Father's plan. That is the critical point about "kata chronos." "Kata chronos" should shout out to you: "plan." This was a plan of God. It was a specific, orderly, scheduled event.

**God's Plan**

Peter try to make that clear on the day of Pentecost when he preached that sermon in Acts 2:22-23: "You men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know; him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (that is, by the predetermined plan of God), you have taken, and by wicked hands, have crucified and slain." So, here, Peter says, "You have fulfilled a plan that God made in eternity past. You have murdered our Messiah, but you did not interrupt the plan of God. It happened at a divinely controlled point in time."

Notice also 1 Peter 1:18-24: "Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold from your vain manner of life, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." This was foreordained. This was a plan. So, all that was involved in God's timing, relative to human helplessness, is not known. But we do know that what He did in the plan was perfect, because God is perfect.

So, Isaiah 55:8-9 tells us that God has thoughts that are far beyond our ability to comprehend.

So, the implications of "kata chronos," according to a certain specific time, is that with the death of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world was planned in eternity past; that is, it was agreed upon in the councils of the Godhead. The Father and the Holy Spirit agreed that God the Son would assume human form, and that God the Father would pour out the sins of the world upon the Son, and that He would die for the evil of all mankind. The human instruments would be the agents of executing this divine plan established by the Godhead in eternity past. The sins of the world poured out upon the sinless Son of God to satisfy the justice of God.

**The Justice of God**

Again, I cannot stress to you that at the heart of the plan of God is the justice of God. At the heart of the plan of God is not the love of God. The holiness of God is the first problem. And the death of Christ was a benefit to God the Father first, the Bible tells us. *Then, secondarily*, it became important for the rest of humanity. But first of all, God, who had not judged an Abraham and sent him to hell; God who had not devastated a David with eternal death; and, God who had passed over the sins of people in the Old Testament for centuries, now was on the spot, so to speak, relative to His own holiness. So, the death of Christ met the justice of God which should have been executed against sin, but which God was simply delaying. Others may have thought He was ignoring it, but He was not. So, at the plan of God was this principle that the sins of the world would be poured out upon Jesus Christ to satisfy the justice of God.

So, 2 Corinthians 5:21 tells us that He became sin Who knew no sin, in order that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. In Acts 2:23, that we already read, Peter tells us that he was placed by God's determined council to resolve the problem of God's justice.

So, the death of the Son was the payments by the love of the Father, to the justice of the Father. God the Father's love was paying God the Father's justice. Now the problem was removed.

This death of Jesus Christ was foretold in the Old Testament from the promise to Adam and Eve and Genesis 3:15 of a Savior to the animal sacrifices of the Mosaic system. They all spoke about the fact that God had a plan to meet what His own justice demanded. This plant was to remove the penalty of death upon all mankind. God said, "I'm going to send somebody who's going to fulfill this death for the sins of the world." He was identified by His birthplace in Micah 5:2. He was identified by a supernatural virgin birth in Isaiah 7:14. He was identified by a method of crucifixion in Psalm 22, which was not in existence when the psalm was written. Christ's Death describes the substitutionary bearing of the sinner's guilt. That's what the plan of God was all about.

Therefore, we read in the Old Testament (which laid this out very clearly) Isaiah 53:5-6: "But He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him. And with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Furthermore, God revealed to Daniel that the death of Christ was scheduled for a specific time: according to a specific time; and, according to a plan. This was clearly demonstrated by the fact that the death of Christ was agreed upon in eternity past. It was foretold in the Old Testament.

Number 3: a specific schedule was given to Daniel. Daniel was told that from the year 445 BCE, which was the year in which Persian King Artaxerxes issued the decree for the Jews to go back to rebuild Jerusalem; restore the city; and, rebuild the walls, to the point of the death of Christ was going to be 483 years. Therefore, it was a specific time. That's what Paul is referring to – a very pointed, exact, specific point in time. When we sit down with a calendar, and we add up the days, lo and behold, what do we find? It was predicted precisely to the year? It was predicted precisely to the date? Palm Sunday, as it's called, was the day of final national rejection. And that's what Daniel means by the cutting off of the missile from His legitimate kingdom claims. And the result was 483 years had passed, and the specific point in time had been reached. In keeping with that schedule, Jesus Christ went to his death.

**Edmond Halley and Sir Isaac Newton**

This is important. Specific points of time are important in the Word of God. Seven more years are to come. That's the tribulation of Israel's history. That's coming ahead. This kind of marvelous precision on the divine side is admired even in the human realm. There was a British astronomer named Edmond Halley. At the time that Edmond Halley lived, another scientist named Newton propounded the laws of gravity. This was a whole new discovery. It gave a whole new dimension to physics, and it gave a whole new dimension to mathematics. In 1682, a tremendous comet came streaking across the skies. It was a brilliant comet with a long tail. Everybody looked up, and everybody saw it, and it just illuminated the sky. It was a breathtaking sight.

**Halley's Comet**

Edmond Halley sat down with Newton's newly propounded laws of gravity, and he said, "This comet is going to reappear in 1757." And the reason he said that was because he had decided, on the basis of Newton's laws, that that comet was going to reappear every 75 years. So, he said, "In 1757, that comet is going to be here again." And Haley died 15 years before the year 1757. But in 1757, there came blazing across the sky, that same comet.

**Proof of God's Plan**

What did that tell us? That proved that Newton's laws of gravity were true. This is as we find that in the case of Daniel's timetable – that 483 years went by, and at that specific point of time (at that specific "kairos" moment), along came Jesus Christ and died for the sins of the world. That confirms to us that God is working by a plan. It's structured. It's not just an accident. And if God is working by a plan that brings about the death of His Son, you may be confident that the purpose of that plan (which he says is to take you to heaven) is also going to be executed.

On the basis of these principles that Hayley has established, such that they named the comet after him (Halley's Comet), I know you want to know when you're going to see it again. So, here it is. 1982. Hang around for a few years, folks, and you should see Halley's Comet come streaking across the sky again, if the timetable holds, and it should.

Hebrews 11 lists many who look down to a specific point of time when God would provide a Savior. So, finally, the anticipated Savior arrived, and died according to schedule, so that ancient hopes, which had been placed in Him, such as these in Hebrews 11, were fully vindicated.

I think it's a great comfort for us to realize that the God who works by a planned schedule which cannot be frustrated is realizing His goal of making it possible for us to enter His eternal glory.

We will continue for 6 next time. Rejoice in the fact that God is working by a plan which in time has never failed of being absolutely executed. You're safe in your confidence and your trust of what you expect in eternity.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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