

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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IN LIFE
OVER
SATAN, SIN,
AND DEATH

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Living Stream Ministry

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God's intention in His creation of man was that man would express Him in His image and represent Him with His dominion or authority. This means that God intends that man enjoy Him as life and reign in this life. According to [Genesis 1](#), man is to reign over the earth and especially over the creeping things, over the serpent in particular. [Genesis 1:28](#) says that God commissioned man to subdue the earth, to conquer it. To conquer something involves defeating an enemy and seizing his possessions. By defeating the enemy and taking his possessions, we reign over him. Therefore, in the beginning, God intended man to be a king in His life over Satan, the creeping one.

GRACE AND SIN

Satan once was God's unique enemy. At a certain point, this enemy injected himself as sin into man in an illegal and evil way. When Satan injected his evil nature into man, Satan became sin. Sin is something originated by Satan. It is

actually Satan himself injected into man and incarnated in man.

It is helpful to see the difference between sin and evil, both of which are mentioned in [Romans 7](#). In [7:20](#) Paul says, “But if what I do not will, this I do, it is no longer I that do it but sin that dwells in me.” In our flesh something called sin is dwelling. In [verse 21](#) Paul says, “I find then the law that, at my willing to do the good, the evil is present with me.” In [verse 20](#) Paul speaks of sin, but in [verse 21](#), of evil.

To understand the difference between sin and evil, we need to see that before the creation of man God had a unique enemy, Satan, the Devil. Then God created man. At the time of creation, man was pure, clean, and innocent. Then Satan injected himself into man and became sin in man. As we have pointed out, sin is Satan incarnated in man.

[Romans 5:21](#) speaks of sin, grace, death, and life: “That as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” According to this verse, sin reigns in death and grace reigns unto eternal life. Here we see a vivid contrast between the reigning of sin and the reigning of grace. There is also a contrast here between death and life. Just as sin is Satan incarnated, so grace

is God incarnated. This is proved by [John 1:14](#), which says that the Word, which is God, became flesh, full of grace and reality. Hence, grace is God incarnated in us. Grace is God coming into man. If God remains outside of man, there is no grace. Although other divine attributes exist apart from God's coming into man, there is no grace apart from God's being incarnated in man. When God and man come together in the way of mingling, there is grace. Although it is difficult to find a verse in the Bible which speaks of grace apart from the relationship between God and man, there are many verses in the Bible that show that grace is a matter of God's relationship with man.

In the same principle, when Satan is separate from man, there is no sin. But once Satan comes into us, there is sin in us. Therefore, sin is Satan related to man subjectively. How precious is this understanding of grace and sin!

SIN AND EVIL

If we have this understanding, we shall be able to see the difference between sin and evil. When sin lies dormant within us, it is merely sin. But whenever we make up our mind to do good by keeping the law in order to please God, sin is aroused and becomes evil. Evil is sin acting within

us. Whenever the indwelling sin becomes active, sin becomes the evil that is present with us. Sin is the indwelling one, but evil is the present, active one. Sin is Satan dwelling in us, but evil is Satan acting in us. Therefore, both sin and evil are Satan himself. Dwelling in us, Satan is sin, and acting in us, Satan is evil. Satan, sin, and evil denote one thing in three stages.

GOD'S THREE ENEMIES

[Romans 5:12](#) says, “Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin; and so death passed to all men because all have sinned.” This verse reveals that sin has brought in death. According to [Hebrews 2:14](#), the one who has the power of death is the Devil. These two verses indicate that sin and death are related to Satan. Satan, sin, and death are God's three enemies. [First Corinthians 15:26](#) speaks of death being the last enemy. In [Genesis 1](#) God had a unique enemy, Satan. But after man's fall, sin and death became His enemies also.

When I was a young Christian, I considered death something in the future; I did not regard it as something present today. But as [1 John 3:14](#) makes clear, we can be in death today: “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” This

verse does not say that he who does not love his brother *will* die; it says that he who does not love his brother abides in death even now. If we are not in life, then we are surely in death. [Romans 8:6](#) also proves that we can be in death today: “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.”

THE SPIRIT—GOD LIVING IN US

[Romans 8:2](#) says, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed me from the law of sin and of death.” In this verse we have law, sin, and death in contrast to law, Spirit, and life. Life is opposed to death, and the Spirit is opposed to sin. Sin is Satan embodied in us, and the Spirit is God living in us. God embodied in us is grace, but God living in us is the Spirit. Thus, the grace in [Romans 5](#) is the very Spirit in [Romans 8](#). In [chapter five](#) it is a matter of grace versus sin, but in [chapter eight](#), of the Spirit versus sin. [Romans 8:2](#) does not speak of the law of the grace of life but of the law of the Spirit of life. When God is embodied in us, He is our grace. When He lives in us, He is the Spirit. In [Hebrews 10:29](#) the Spirit is called the Spirit of grace. The Spirit is the very God embodied in us as grace living and acting in us.

THE WORK OF GOD'S ENEMY

In the book of Romans we cannot find that God has any other enemies in addition to Satan, sin, and death. [Romans 16:20](#) says, “Now the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” After speaking of Satan being crushed under our feet by the God of peace, Paul immediately says in the very same verse, “The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.” When Satan is crushed, grace is with us.

In a sense, God's enemy, Satan, is prevailing today as sin and as evil to bring people into death and to keep them there. This is the evil work of God's enemy. Satan is not content merely to provoke us in such matters as losing our temper. His intention is to bring us into death. But God is working as life to defeat sin, death, and Satan. The result of God defeating these three enemies is that we reign in life.

VICTORY AND REIGNING

In [chapter five of Romans](#) we have an introduction to the matter of reigning in life. As [verse 17](#) points out, we who receive an abundance of grace shall reign in life. [Chapters six through sixteen](#) define for us the meaning of reigning in

life. To reign in life is to walk in newness of life (6:4). In [chapter seven](#) we see a picture of one troubled by sin and evil and a captive in death. This one cries in desperation, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death?” (v. 24). But in [chapter eight](#) this one is set free from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of life. In [chapter seven](#) there is warfare, but in [chapter eight](#) there is both victory and reigning. Even in [6:14](#) we are told that sin should not lord it over us, for we are not under law but under grace. Because we are under grace, sin should no longer reign as a king over us. Sin should not lord it over us now that God has come into us as grace.

THE PROCESS OF BECOMING KINGS

Today we are in the process of becoming kings. Sanctification is part of this process. This process also includes transformation, conformation, and glorification. Today, we are on our way toward kingship. Eventually, the kingship will saturate our entire being and be manifested. At that time, we shall reign in life in a full way.

To reign in life does not mean to exercise control over your wife or children. You may rule over your children, yet you may not be a king. Ruling

over others is a human concept of kingship. The proper understanding of reigning in life is that we reign in the divine life over sin, death, and Satan, who eventually will be crushed under our feet. In order to reign in life in this way, we need to be sanctified, transformed, conformed, and glorified. We have the reigning life within us, but this life has not yet been released in us. Rather, it has been confined in our spirit. Our outer man has not yet been sanctified. In order to be sanctified, we need to be saturated with the reigning life that is now in our spirit. The only way for our soul and our body to be sanctified is for us to be fully saturated with this inner, reigning life. This reigning life not only sanctifies us but also conforms us to the very image of the firstborn Son of God. This is conformation. Furthermore, as we are being saturated with the reigning life, we are also being transformed. Transformation is another way of speaking about sanctification. Eventually, our vile body will be transfigured, that is, it will be fully saturated and permeated with the glory of God's reigning life. Then our whole being will be saturated and permeated with the reigning life. This reigning life will be fully expressed when we are manifested as the sons of God. At that time, we

shall reign not only by the inward life, but also by the outward glory.

RELATED TO ONENESS

Reigning in life is also related to our oneness with the saints. Oneness is not merely a matter of coming together a few times a week and declaring that we are one. The tabernacle in the Old Testament is a picture of the genuine oneness for which the Lord Jesus prayed in [John 17](#). The tabernacle was built with forty-eight boards that were overlaid with gold. These boards were held together by golden bars that ran through golden rings attached to the boards. In this way the forty-eight boards became one. This is the building, the building of humanity in divinity. The wooden boards signify humanity, and the gold overlaying the boards signifies divinity. All the boards were overlaid with gold and connected by gold. This is genuine oneness.

If Christians are to be truly one, they should not only come together, but also be built up together in the divine life. Real oneness is the building. It is something far more than simply loving one another. To be one, we need not only to love one another, but also to be overlaid with gold and held together by golden bars. We all need

to be built together in the gold, in the nature of God. This is the oneness for which the Lord Jesus prayed in [John 17](#).

It is also the oneness in [Romans 12 through 16](#). In [12:5](#) Paul says, “So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another.” The boards in the tabernacle also illustrate how we are members one of another. The width of each board was one and a half cubits. In the Bible three is a basic number in God’s building. For example, in the dimensions of the ark built by Noah, the number three is found. The ark had three stories, and it was three hundred cubits long. Since three is a basic unit in God’s building, one and a half cubits denotes half a unit. This means that in God’s building we are not complete units by ourselves. Each of us is just a half. This means that you need someone else and that someone else needs you. If we are truly members of one another, then we shall be like the boards joined together. No matter how we may feel at times about a “board” with which we are connected, we should not separate ourselves from him. If we separate ourselves, it indicates that we have never truly been built into the church. If we have been built in, it will not be possible to take ourselves out.

To be one with the saints in the building is an aspect of reigning in life. It is difficult to overcome our temper, but it is more difficult to overcome our divisive nature. Many years ago I realized that as a man I have to be a Christian and as a Christian I need to be in the church. This is simply the best way for me to go on in the Lord. Therefore, I have made a strong decision that, although I am not always happy with the way things are in the church life, I shall stay in the church life and be one with the saints. To keep the oneness is to reign in life. Only in the divine life, not in our human nature, can we keep the genuine oneness. In the divine life we have grace, God embodied in us, and also the living Spirit. In this Spirit we live and reign in life.

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Life-study of Romans

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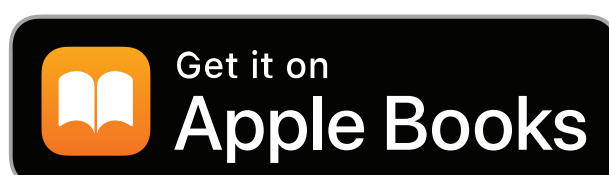
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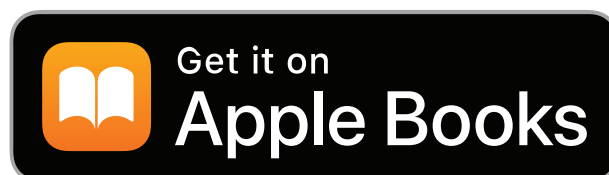
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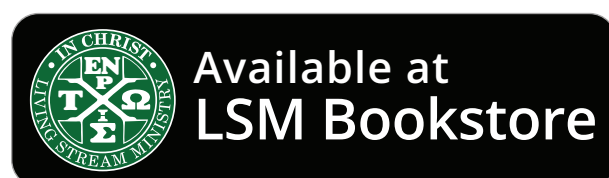
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