

EPHESIANS 2:15-18

January 27, 1982

We're still in the Book of Ephesians, you know...chapter two, and tonight we begin with verse 15. "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity..." this is King James. (Thanks honey, sit, sit, right there. Did they turn the air conditioner off? All it takes is a switch back there. It'll help you; back there too, I suppose, huh? Good, you fellas figure it out. My girls are putting their coats on, biting their fingernails {girls laugh}, freezing. Can't have that happening to our girls.) I'm in verse 15.

Ephesians 2:15

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;

The Research Department gave me a tremendous piece of work on the words "enmity" and "ordinances" in here of verse 15. The word "ordinances" they said is an interesting term. In the Greek it is the word *dogma*, ordinances. It's only used five times in the New Testament. The question arises as to whether the word "ordinances" refers to God's law in the Old Testament or if it refers to legal precepts which were added to the law. And of course, those legal precepts were included in what is known as the Talmud. But I do not believe that this is true in this section that it was the Old Testament law that Jesus Christ dealt with on the cross.

These...this word "enmity," the enmity by his flesh—they're the first words in verse 15 according to the Greek and Aramaic, and they are set in opposition with the middle wall of partition, the middle wall of partition of verse 14 that I taught you in our last session about. Christ broke down the middle wall which made Judean and Gentile enemies. That middle wall is what made them enemies. Christ broke it down. Similarly the veil in the Temple separated both groups, both Gentiles and Judeans, from God but very specifically Israel. "By his flesh" Christ abolished that which made them enemies. In verse 16 the idea is going to be repeated, by the cross, the words: "...by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Jesus Christ slew the enmity by the cross. And the "cross" stands for the death of Christ. It's a figure of speech the word "cross," *Metalepsis*, m-e-t-a-l-e-p-s-i... e-p-s-i-s. It accentuates the accomplishments and atoning merits of Christ's death.

If you'll take a look at Colossians 2:14, there it talks about the "handwriting of ordinances." That again is the word *dogma*, was nailed to the cross. You see, Corps, our sins were doubled according to Oriental custom, and the ordinance nailed to the city gate publicized all a man's debts until the benefactor paid the debts. Thus the benefactor could fold or "double" the decree or ordinance, marking it "paid in full." That's why the use of the word *dogma* in Colossians 2:14 clarifies its usage in Ephesians 2:15 and adds just real solidarity to it.

The law of commandments in decrees or ordinances (*dogma*) made the Old Testament law a personal debt for each individual, but Christ "doubled" it, blotted it out, nailing it to

his cross. We no longer have the law of commandments posted against us. They have been abolished by Christ, our benefactor.

The law of commandments and ordinances can be compared to our legal system. The Law of Moses was the constitution for Israel as the federal Constitution is to us. The specific commandments contained in the Law of Moses compare with special phrases in the Constitution. The personal ordinances posted against individuals for violation of these commandments compare with indictments handed down against individuals in our legal system.

The word “enmity” is the figure of speech, *Metonymy of Effect* in which a noun is replaced by a second noun, which has some relation to the replaced noun. The separation between the Gentiles and Israel was more than just a legality of uncircumcision; it evoked an enmity, a hostility, between the two groups. The law, which is the stated context of this section, is replaced by the word “enmity,” which is the emotional barrier of the law between Gentile and Israel. The Temple wall replaced the legal barrier of the law between them.

So this whole section here is really interesting. That’s why it’s “commandments” referring to the law. So one translation of this passage could be “and he ended the law of commandments and its commandments.” And I think that is absolutely accurate. He, Jesus Christ, ended the law of commandments and its commandments.

The words “having abolished” in the Aramaic literally mean “brought to an end,” unproductive, no affect, having brought to an end. Having abolished, having brought to an end, in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, laws that are made up of commandments contained in ordinances, just shared that with you.

Then “for to make” is to create; that he would create; it’s not the word “make.” The Greek is the word *hina* (h-i-n-a) that precedes this; it gives it a purpose clause or a result clause, that he would create. The “for to make” in King James is not sharp enough. In order that he might create, that he would create. That’s the intent, the purpose of it. This is the first clause that opens with the Greek word *hina* (h-i-n-a). In verse 16 it’ll come up again, but the remarkable thing in here again that strikes me so forcefully all the time is the absolute accuracy of the usage of words. To make is not to create. That’s why to create is to bring into existence that which has never been before. And the accuracy here is again just fantastic. To create in himself of twain, both Judean and Gentile, one new man.

And that to us of course is readily understandable because we understand body, soul, spirit; formed, made and created. And the natural man of body and soul has no spirit until he’s born again. And to be born again, not having not ever had it before, only one thing could occur, and that is the word “create.” The new birth has to be a creation of God in Christ in you the hope of glory.

This “one new man”—the word “new man” of course is a figure of speech, because man’s already been there but he’s going to be a new man, and that newness of course is the new birth. *Hypocatastasis* is the figure. See the Gentiles were the same men now as they were before, so with Israel. But they’re brought into the body of Christ, and that gives you the new man, the great theme of Ephesians.

Now the literal translation of this fantastic verse in Ephesians is:

Ephesians 2:15 Literal translation according to usage

The enmity he took away in his flesh ending the curse of the law and its dogmatic commandments in order that he might create out of the two one new man having made a peace treaty.

See, Jesus Christ made a peace treaty between God and man. I gave you those words last week in the Aramaic. One was of just “peace” and the other was a “peace treaty.”

I have another translation that’s expanded of this verse that I did as follows:

Ephesians 2:15 Expanded translation

The emotional enmity between Israel and Gentiles as well as the legal separation, the wall of partition and between God and all Israel veil in the Temple torn top to bottom. Israel can go in. Gentiles can go in, nothing to stop anyone. Whosoever will may come to God for Jesus Christ took away by his death the curse of the law and its dogmatic commandments, in order that God might create out of the two, Israel and Gentiles, one new man, Jesus Christ having established a peace treaty with God.

I want to give you another translation.

Ephesians 2:15 Expanded translation

Jesus Christ having in his flesh meaning by his life, death, resurrection and ascension annulled the curse, the law, the enmity, ending the law of commandments and its commandments, in order that God might create out of the two, Israel and Gentiles, one new man because of the peace treaty established between God and man, and man and man, Jesus Christ himself being perfect man.

How few of us have really ever seen the in-depth greatness of the accomplishments of the Lord Jesus Christ for us or for man, and thus, we’ve allowed ourselves just to be enticed by the Adversary to live below par and to live in condemnation. See, Jesus Christ made a peace treaty that he established between God and man, and man and man, Judeans, Israel, by himself being that perfect man. He killed the emotional stuff, so to speak, or carried the emotional stuff, the enmity that was between Israel and Gentiles, he carried the legal separation which is the wall of partition, and he carried the law or the fulfillment of the veil in the Temple that was rent in twain where even Israel couldn’t go beyond a certain point, only the high priest and that once a year on the day of atonement. Jesus Christ did all that.

Then not only for Israel but after the veil was torn in twain from top to bottom, now the Gentiles could go too. There’s only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. That’s why you and I have direct...direct access by what Jesus Christ did to the Father. How few really believe this and fewer yet understand it. I believe, I don’t know. Verse 16, King James. (We turn the air conditioning on, girls are going to sleep {audience laughter}.) “That he might reconcile...,” King James. [Dr. Wierwille laughs.]

Ephesians 2:16

And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby [by the cross]:

Having slain the enmity. The word “reconcile” means to bring back together that which has been separated, and it is reconciling from something and that something is to be

reconciled from its enmity. That's why it emphasizes the peace between both Israel, the Gentiles, and God, not just between Israel and Gentiles or Israel and God, Gentiles and God, but between Israel, Gentiles, God, all the way through.

[Taps the desk] "...that he might reconcile"—and those words, Corps, take you back to the original unity of man as God formed, made and created Adam in Genesis, record. This reconciliation in verse 16 restores man to the original unity that man had with God. Man again is reinstated with God by being reconciled to God by the cross, by Jesus Christ. You see, the Adversary has really never allowed people to see this in the Word, because as long as he can keep people away from the integrity and truth of the Word, they will never really know that they've been reconciled. Oh, they'll talk about getting saved and once saved always saved, but they're just words. This is talking about reconciliation to the point of original reinstatement of where any born-again believer has the same right before the Father as any other believer and completely reconciled in unity.

This year, of course, our whole year we're emphasizing God's call of love. Next year we do God's call to unity. Of course, the basic scripture will come from Ephesians. But you can never have any unity without love, not true unity. That's why this year it had to be the call of love. We couldn't have had the call of unity this year and call it love next year. It would not have worked in my mind biblically or spiritually. So this year it's the call of love, next year the call to unity with one mind, one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one commitment, one service—unity. And you cannot have genuine unity without love, the love of God. Thieves can have unity to steal. They have to be unified to rob, to steal. But that is not true unity. That's counterfeit, because true unity has to love at the base of it...basis of it. Well, it isn't Rock of Ages time, but that's where we're headed. {Audience laughter.}

Reconcile, reconcile. The one body is the body of Christ. See? Reconcile. One body. Lordy Pete, if my physical body acted like most Christian bodies act, you know, my arm would be dragging some place, my leg would be over across the ocean, my head would be someplace else. Christian bodies are pulling in all directions. That's not...the one body [tapping]. The one body is the what? {one body}. That's right. You know. And the thumb can't say to the little finger I have no need of you. It's one body.

We have never been shown it; we've never dared to believe it because everything else has been taught just to the contrary. We've just been taught the opposite stuff. But this is the Word. [Taps several times.] This is the greatness of all the revelation God ever gave to mankind in the Book of Ephesians. And we really are what the Word of God says we are and we have what the Word of God says we have. We're reconciled. Why don't you act like it? Right. One body. One body means we all function together. Somebody has got to be a little finger. Somebody's got to be all thumbs. {Audience laughter.} It's the one body. So you never compare yourself to any other individual. You compare yourself to the calling of God.

Having slain the enmity here implies that enmity is a living thing because only a living thing can be slain. That's why it's a figure of speech here.

Well, this is how I translated it. "And that he might reconcile," verse 16, literal.

Ephesians 2:16 Literal translation according to usage

And that he might reconcile both Gentiles and Israel in one body the Church

by the cross having slain the enmity between God and Israel, Israel and Gentiles, thereby namely the cross.

Now this is the expanded translation.

Ephesians 2:16 Expanded translation

And that he, Jesus Christ, might reconcile from the enmity between God and Israel, and Israel and Gentiles, and restore man to the original spiritual unity God had with man, to both Gentiles and Israel in one body by means of the cross, having killed the enmity.

Verse 17 in King James reads.

Ephesians 2:17

And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

“...preached” is the word *euangelia*. Evangelize comes from it, good news, gospel.

This word “peace” is that Aramaic word that I told you was spelled *s-l-m*. It’s not peace treaty.

“...to them that were nigh” has to refer to Israel and Judeans.

The peace, Corps was...not “the Peace Corps” {audience laughter}. Corps...this peace being discussed here in God’s Word was not simply between Israel and Gentiles but also between each of them and God.

The translation I did of verse 17 is as follows:

Ephesians 2:17 Literal translation according to usage

And having come proclaimed the evangel of peace to you Gentiles who were afar off and peace and the evangel to them, Israel, who were nigh.

I believe the expanded one is really tremendous here in understanding for you.

Ephesians 2:17 Expanded translation

And having come to make peace available to and for Gentiles evangelizing those who were far from God and make peace available to and for Israel who were nigh.

Verse 18, King James says:

Ephesians 2:18

For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

The word “access” is the Greek word spelled p-r-o-s-a-g-long ō-g-long ē. It is used in Ephesians 5:2 where it states, “we have access by faith.” Here in Ephesians 2:18, “access by one Spirit.” And in Ephesians 3:12, “access with confidence by the faith of him.” My understanding of the word “access” and its usage in the dictionary as I looked it up and understood, at least, is not adequate to meet the greatness of the truth of this verse, because it leaves out the great truth that no one comes up on...or into this or unto this with his own strength, but he needs someone to introduce him, and the one who introduces us to God is Jesus Christ. We have access.

The word “for” in this verse, of course, introduces the reason for this announcement of peace through Christ.

“...we both”—Both Jew and Gentile, or Judean and Gentile—Israel; not just Israel, not just Judean, but both.

An introduction of access by one spirit. And of course, this is the verse the Trinitarians like so much. For the word “him,” the word “spirit,” and the word “father” of verse 18 they say is the trinity.

You have the three great truths here of God as the source of all life, He’s the source of His son, He’s the source of His gift, holy spirit. Through Jesus Christ, Corps, we have access by the spirit in us, the gift, the new birth, Christ in you the hope of glory, to the Father. And that is the word “Jehovah” in His relationship to His children. So all three are involved here, Jesus Christ, God’s—His gift of holy spirit and the Father, Jehovah.

I believe this translation will bless you.

Ephesians 2:18 Literal translation according to usage

For through him, Jesus Christ, both Gentiles and Israel have a personally escorted introduction because of the new birth to the Father.

I think that is...communicates and that makes sense with the great integrity and accuracy of the Word. This expanded one will bless you too.

Ephesians 2:18 Expanded translation

Because of what Jesus Christ did both Gentiles and Israel have the privilege of standing before God being ushered in by Jesus Christ because of the new birth directly to the Father.

Well, that’s verse 18 and that’s all I’m going to do tonight. So, let’s have a word of prayer and we’ll close it out for the night.

[Prayer] *Thank you, Father, for all your love and grace and your goodness. Thank you for your wonderful presence and power. And Father, how I thank you for the beauty of your Word and how we can just sit together and work that Word and share our hearts and our lives with each other. And then the Corps can continue to grow and explore and gain in their knowledge of the immense greatness of your Word. Thank you Father for making this a wonder night for all of us. In the wonderful name of our living lord and savior Jesus Christ. Thank you for ushering us into your presence tonight, amen.*