

Letter 7

My children, 'Ye know the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich.' (2 Cor. 8:9.) Behold, His bondage had made us free, and His weakness has strengthened us, and His foolishness has made us wise. Again, by His death He brings to pass our resurrection, that we may be able to lift up our voice on high and say, 'Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him so no more, but in Christ each is a new creature.' (2 Cor. 5:16-17.) Truly, my beloved in the Lord, I tell you that as to the details of the word of liberty whereby we have been set free, I have still many other things to say to you, but there is not time now to tell you them. Now I greet you all, my dear children in the Lord, holy Israelite children in your intellectual substance. Truly it befitted you, who have drawn near to your Creator, to seek the salvation of your souls by the implanted law of the covenant. But by the abundance of wickedness and stirring up of evil and the cupidity of the passions, the implanted law of the covenant dried up, and the senses of our soul perished, and therefore we could not perceive the glorious intellectual substance, because of the death into which we had fallen. Therefore it is written in the divine Scriptures, 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' (1 Cor. 15:22.) Now therefore He is the life of every rational nature created by Him after the likeness of His own image; who Himself is the true Mind of the Father, and unaltered Image of the Father. (Heb. 1:3.) But the creatures made in His image are of changeable substance; for evil is come about in us, wherein we have all died, since it is alien to the nature of our intellectual substance. Therefore through all that is foreign to nature, we have made for ourselves a home dark and full of war. And this I testify to you, that we had lost all knowledge of virtue. Therefore our Father God saw our infirmity, that we were become incapable of clothing ourselves aright in the truth; therefore in His goodness He came to visit His creatures by the ministry of the saints.

I pray you all in the Lord, beloved, to understand what I write to you; for it is no bodily love that I have towards you, but a spiritual, religious love. Prepare yourselves therefore to go to your Creator, and 'rend your hearts and not your garments' (Joel 2:13); and ask yourselves what we can 'render unto the Lord for all the benefits that He has done unto us' (Ps. 116:11), who even in our dwelling here and our humiliation, remembered us in His great goodness and His infinite love, and 'hath not dealt with us after our sins' (Ps. 103:10); who even made the sun to minister to us in this our dark home, and appointed the moon and all the stars for our ministers, commanding them to be subject unto vanity that will pass away (cf. Rom. 8:30), for the strengthening of our bodies. And there are other powers also, hidden powers, which He made ministers unto us, powers which we see not with the bodily eye.

Now, therefore, what shall we answer Him in the day of judgment, or what good is lacking from Him to us, that He has not done for us? Did the patriarchs not suffer for us, or the priests not teach us, or judges and kings not fight for us? Did not the prophets die for us? Or were not the apostles persecuted for us? Or did not His beloved Son die for us all? And now we ought to prepare ourselves to go to our Creator in holiness. For the Creator saw that His creatures, even the saints, were not able to heal the great wound of their own members. Therefore, being the Father of the creatures, He knew the infirmity of all their minds, and showed mercy towards them according to His great love, and spared not His only-begotten Son for the salvation of us all, but delivered Him up for our sins. (Rom 8:32). And our iniquities humbled Him, and with His stripes we all are healed. (Isa. 53:5.) And He gathered us from all regions by the word of His power, till He should make the resurrection of our minds from the earth, teaching us that we are members one of another. (Eph. 4:25.)

Therefore it behooves us all, approaching our Creator, to exercise our minds and senses to understand the distinction between good and evil, and to know the whole dispensation of Jesus which He made in His advent; how He was made in all things like unto us, apart from sin only. (Heb. 4:15.) But by reason of our great wickedness and stirring up of evil, and the grievousness of our inconstancy, the advent of Jesus was to some foolishness, and to some a stumbling-block; but for others, gain; and for some, wisdom and power; and for

some, resurrection and life. (1 Cor. 1:23-24.) And let this be clear to you, that His advent is made a judgment for all the world. For it says, 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, and they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; and I will make my name heard unto the ends of the earth: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God; because that when they knew God they glorified Him not as their Creator' (Jer. 31:34; Rom. 3:19, 1:21), through their unintelligence, whereby they were unable to apprehend His wisdom, but each one of us sold himself to his own will for evil, and became slave to it.

Therefore, also, Jesus emptied himself of His glory, and took upon himself the form of a slave (Phil. 2:8), that His bondage might make us free. And we were become foolish, and in our foolishness committed every kind of evil; and again He took the form of foolishness, that by His foolishness we might be made wise. And we were become poor, and in our poverty lacked all virtue; therefore again He took the form of poverty, that by His poverty He might make us rich in all wisdom and understanding. (2 Cor. 8:9.) Not only this, but He even took upon himself the form of our weakness, that by His weakness He might make us strong. And He became obedient to the Father in everything unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8), that by His death He might work the resurrection of us all, that He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. (Heb. 2:14.) And if indeed we set ourselves free through His advent, we shall be found disciple of Jesus, and receive in Him the divine inheritance.

Truly, my beloved in the Lord, I am greatly troubled and vexed in my spirit: for we wear the habit and have the name of saints, and boast of this before unbelievers. And I fear lest the word Paul be fulfilled in us, which says, 'having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof'. (2 Tim. 3:5.) And out of the love which I have towards you, I pray to God for you, that you may consider your own life, and inherit things unseen. Truly, my children, though we should give ourselves with all our power to seek the Lord, what thanks do we deserve? For we are only seeking our own reward; we are only seeking what is natural to our substance. For every man who seeks God or services Him, does what is natural to our substance. For every man who seeks God or serves Him, does what is natural to his substance. But every sin of which we are guilty, is foreign and unnatural to our substance.

Truly, my dear children in the Lord, who have prepared to offer yourselves a sacrifice to God in holiness, we have hid from you nothing needful, but testify unto you that we have seen, that the enemies of virtue are always meditating evil against the truth. Of this also be advised, that he who is after the flesh always persecutes him who is after the spirit (Gal. 4:29), and all who will live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution. (2 Tim. 3:12.) Therefore Jesus, knowing all the tribulations and temptations were coming in the world upon the apostles, and that by their patience they would destroy all the power of the enemy, that is, idolatry, comforted them and said, 'In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.' (John 16:33.) And He taught them saying, 'Fear not the world: for all the evils of the world are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed. If they persecuted the prophets which were before you, they will also persecute you: if they hate me, they will hate you also. But fear not: for by your patience you will destroy all the power of the enemy.' (Rom. 8:18; Matt. 5:12; John 15:20; Luke 21:19.)

Of the details of the word of liberty wherewith we are west free, I have much to tell you. But vie occasion of wisdom to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser. (Prov. 9:9.) Yet we have need of mutual consolation in our paltry words. But if the mind has attained true perception, it needs no more the falsehood of bodily speech. But I rejoice in you all, beloved in the Lord, holy Israelite children in your intellectual substance. For first the rational man needs to know himself, and then to know the things of God, and all the bounties which His grace is ever showing towards him; and then to know that all sin and guilt is foreign to the nature of his intellectual substance. For at last our Creator seeing that by our own free choice we possess these unnatural things in which here we were dying, and being for this reason moved with compassion towards us, of His goodness wanted to

bring us back to that beginning without end, and visited His creatures, not sparing Himself for the salvation of us all. He gave Himself up for our sins (Gal. 1:4); and our iniquities humbled Him, but with His stripes we were healed. (Isa. 53:5.) And by the word of His power He gathered us out of all lands, from one end of the earth to the other end of the world, and taught us that we are members one of another. (Eph. 4:25.) Therefore, if indeed we have prepared to set ourselves free through His advent, let us examine ourselves to see what as rational men we can 'render unto the Lord for all the benefits that He hath done unto us.' (Ps. 116:11.) And so I also, the poor wretch who writes this letter, being roused from the sleep of death, have spent most of the time that I have been upon earth mourning and weeping, saying 'What can I render unto the Lord for all the benefits that He hath done unto me?' For nothing is lacking to us, which He has not done for us in our humiliation. He made His angels minister to us. He bade His prophets to prophesy, and His apostles to preach the Gospel to us. And as the greatest of all His ordinances, He made His Only-begotten Son to take upon Himself the form of a slave for us.

I beseech you therefore, my beloved in the Lord, you who are joint heirs with the saints, to rouse up your minds in the fear of God. For let this word be clear to you, that John the Forerunner of Jesus baptized unto remissions of sins for our sakes, but by the Spirit we were sanctified in Christ. Let us now prepare in all holiness to cleanse the senses of our mind, that we may be clean by the baptism of Jesus, so as to offer ourselves a sacrifice to God. And this Paraclete Spirit comforts us and brings us back to our beginning, to recover our inheritance and the dominion of that same comforting Spirit. Therefore, 'as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; there is neither male nor female, there is neither bond nor free.' (Gal. 3:27-28.) And every bodily tongue fails them, when they receive the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, at the time when they take up the holy inheritance, and worship the Father as is right, in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24.) And let this word be clear to you; and do not wait for a future judgment in that coming of Jesus. For already His advent is judgment to all of us.

Now therefore know that the saints and the righteous, clothed in the Spirit, pray for us always that we may be humbled before God, and put on again the garment that we had put off, in our intellectual substance. For often also has that voice come from God the Father to all who are clothed in the Spirit, saying to them, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord: priests, speak to the heart of Jerusalem.' (Isa. 40:1-2.) For God always visits His creatures, and bestows His goodness upon them.

Truly, my beloved, of the details of the word of liberty with which we are set free, there are very many other things to tell you. But it says, 'Give occasion of wisdom to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser.' (Prov. 9:9.) But may the God of peace give you grace and the spirit of discernment, to know that what I write to you is the commandment of the Lord. May the God of all grace keep you holy in the Lord to your last breath. I pray God always for the salvation of you all, my beloved in the Lord. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.