

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Romans 5: 6-8

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank God, it's time to read the Bible again. Let's continue to read Romans Chapter 5. We will read verses 6-8 today.

Paul tells us that the path to glory involves passing through tribulation, which produces perseverance, then character, and finally hope. This hope is that God's glory can be manifested in us. Because hope is something that grows and is certain to be fulfilled, we will not fall into shame. Even in the process of experiencing tribulation, we will not feel ashamed, because the Holy Spirit dwelling within us pours God's love into our hearts. God's love brings divine comfort and support, helping us to continue moving forward on the path of life.

Next, Paul helps us see that this was God's plan arranged long ago to save humanity, and the motive behind it was love. In the discourse and examples of justification, Paul emphasizes God's righteousness, meaning every detail of this process must align with God's righteous standard for Him to freely justify people, because He sacrificed His only begotten Son. Paul brings us back to God's original motive, which is love, just as Jesus Christ Himself said in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." God gave His only begotten Son, motivated by His love for the world.

Verse 6: "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

For when we were still without strength. To be without strength means having no power, no ability, unable to fulfill God's original purpose for creating man or to carry out God's will. Because of the fall of our ancestor Adam, every descendant of

Adam became a slave to sin, lacking the ability to resist the temptation and trial of sin. In the condition where man was unable to save himself, Christ, in due time, died for the ungodly. Ephesians 1:4 tells us this was God's plan established before the foundation of the world. That is, before man was created, and certainly before man sinned, God had already ordained the plan of redemption.

In Galatians 4:4-5, "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." When the fullness of time came, meaning the day appointed by God arrived, God began to execute His plan, and the entire Old Testament describes the execution of this plan.

God chose the Israelites to produce from among them Abraham's heavenly descendants, as God pointed to the stars in the sky and told Abraham, "So shall your seed be," recorded in Genesis 15:5. Abraham believed God, and God accounted it to him for righteousness. The stars are many, but God used the singular for "seed."

Paul, reading Scripture closely, says in Galatians 3:16, "Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, 'and to seeds,' as of many, but as of one, 'and to your Seed,' who is Christ." God showed Abraham the stars and said his seed would be so, referring to Jesus Christ. Through Jesus Christ, many New Testament saints would be produced, becoming those countless stars. Thus, New Testament saints are Abraham's descendants through faith.

After Abraham, Moses was raised up to lead the Israelites out of Egypt; Joshua was raised up to lead them into the Promised Land; David was raised up to establish the kingdom of Israel. Later, when the kingdom of Israel fell, Zerubbabel was raised up to lead the people back to Jerusalem. All these significant events in the Old Testament served one purpose: that in God's appointed time, the virgin Mary could conceive by the Holy Spirit and give birth to Jesus Christ.

The name Jesus Christ means He will save people from their sins. God's method of salvation was to place the sins of the world on Jesus Christ, making Him the sacrificial lamb; Christ died for the ungodly in due time. The Chinese Union Version

translates “ungodly” as “sinners,” while the KJV and NIV use “ungodly,” meaning those who are not righteous, that is, sinners.

However, Paul avoids the term “sinners” and uses “ungodly,” referring to those who do not seek God or think of Him. Sinners at least know they have sinned and may seek salvation. The ungodly are those entirely unrelated to God, unaware they need salvation, indifferent to God; yet Christ died for them.

Jesus Christ’s salvation is for all people, even those unaware of their need for salvation, demonstrating the initiative of Christ’s redemption. Before people knew their need, God had already prepared and sent His children to preach the gospel everywhere, seeking those willing to repent.

Verse 7: “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.”

Jesus Christ’s redemption was God’s plan established before the foundation of the world, based on God’s eternal purpose. This redemption is for everyone, regardless of race, status, region, culture, or even their moral character. Paul first uses human reasoning to highlight the inclusivity of God’s redemption.

According to human reasoning, dying for a righteous man is rare. A righteous man seeks God, lives uprightly, acts according to principles, and is respected among people; dying for such a righteous man is rare. Everyone values their own life, and dying for another is extremely rare, though perhaps possible for someone you respect, but it is very uncommon.

In Acts 10:22, the Bible calls Cornelius, the Italian centurion, a righteous man; though he did not yet know God, he feared God, and his conduct was praised. Paul specifically mentions the righteous man here, indirectly encouraging saints to be righteous people—those who seek God and live according to principles.

Dying for a good man, perhaps someone would dare to do. The term “good man” in the KJV and NIV is rendered as “good man.” A good man lives among people, often doing good to others, earning their favor and praises. For a good man, someone might dare to die. Perhaps someone who benefited from his kindness would be willing to die for him out of gratitude. Acts 11:24 says: “For he [Barnabas] was a good man,” skilled in relating to and helping others. Thus, when the Jerusalem church learned that Gentiles in Antioch had established a church, they sent Barnabas to assist them.

Paul specifically mentions the good man to encourage saints to be good people, living among others, frequently helping them. A spiritual person is not sufficient by merely reading the Bible and praying in private; they must live among people, have a good reputation, and be willing to help others. Paul first uses human reasoning, stating that dying for a righteous man is rare, and perhaps someone would dare to die for a good man, to highlight the extraordinary nature of Jesus Christ’s substitutionary death for us.

Verse 8: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

But Christ died for us while we were still sinners. We were neither righteous nor good but sinners, unable to stand before God. We had no merits or virtues worthy of Christ’s sacrifice; yet He died for us on the cross. This is a fact accomplished 2,000 years ago at Golgotha, and God’s love was thereby demonstrated to us. When speaking of Christ’s redemption, we often stand in our own position, from our own perspective, rejoicing that though unworthy, we can be saved.

Of course, Christ’s substitutionary death was so we could be saved, but Paul here urges us to think further, not just from our own standpoint, considering what benefits we gain. Paul wants us to appreciate the Father’s love, that God sent His only begotten Son to bear the punishment for our sins on the cross. We, too, have children, and when our children suffer illness, we often wish we could take their place. Is it not the same with the Father? He loves His only begotten Son, yet was

willing to sacrifice Him for us sinners. Even more, He had to personally judge, as the sins of all were placed on Jesus.

We may imagine the suffering Jesus Christ endured on the cross, but here, Paul leads us to appreciate the love of a parent, a supremely transcendent love. For us unworthy people, He was willing to give up His beloved Son. Thus, Paul says, God's love was demonstrated to us in this.

Today, as people fall into wars and famines due to their rebellion and sin, they often complain, "Where is God's love?" God has clearly demonstrated His great love by sacrificing His beloved Son to accomplish redemption for humanity. If people are willing to believe, they can receive salvation, and the problem of sin can be resolved. Yet people refuse to come and receive Jesus Christ's grace, so sin persists. In a world full of sin, how can there be peace? God's love has been demonstrated to humanity; people need only come by faith to receive it and obtain salvation.

Dear brothers and sisters, according to the revelation of Scripture, all have gone astray, and at the end of the age, there will be all kinds of corrupt death. God's mission for Christians is not to change the course of human history, for history is in God's hands. God has foretold that when human corruption reaches the limit of His righteousness, He will come to execute judgment. God's mission for Christians is to seek those who belong to Him in this process, preach the gospel, lead people to salvation, and live the church life together.

The church life is like Noah's ark, carrying God's people through judgment without perishing. Christ died for us while we were still sinners, and God's love was demonstrated to us in this. We not only savor God's lovingkindness ourselves but must also tell those around us of God's lovingkindness, so they, too, may receive salvation.

Let us pray together: Dear Father God, we praise Your great love! Thank You for establishing the plan of redemption before the foundation of the world, willing to sacrifice Your only begotten Son to save us, an unlovable people. We know that when Jesus Christ was hung on the cross, Your heart was in great pain, but for the sake of loving us, You not only ordained the plan of redemption but executed it in

the appointed time, so that everyone, through repentance and faith, could receive salvation. For this great love, we offer our thanks and worship once again. How blessed we are to live in Your love. Bless my daily life and help me bear witness to Your great, infinite love to my friends and family around me. I pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.