

The Transformational Shift (vv. 13-15)

VERSE 13 When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of

your flesh (καὶ ὑμᾶς νεκροὺς ὄντας [ἐν] τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν, [*conj kai and + pro.acc.p. su + adj.accm.p. nekros dead + pres.act.part.acc.m.p. eimi* “were” + *prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.nt.p. paraptoma transgression + conj + d.a.w/noun loc.f.s. akrobustia uncircumcision + d.a.w/noun genf.s. sarx + pro.gen.m.p. su*]), **He made you alive**

together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions [*συνεζωοποίησεν ὑμᾶς σὺν αὐτῷ, χαρισάμενος ἡμῖν πάντα τὰ παραπτώματα* [*aor.act.ind.3s. suzoopoieo make alive together; Eph 2:5 + pro.acc.p. su + prep sun with + pro.instr.m.s. autos + aor.dep.part.nom.m.s. charizomai grant, deal graciously; forgive + pro.dat.p. ego “us” + adj.acc.nt.p. pas + d.a.w/noun acc.nt.p. paraptoma transgression*]),

VERSE 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees

against us (ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ’ ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν [*aor.act.part.nom.m.s. exaleipso cancel, wipe out + d.a.w/noun acc.nt.s cheirographon a record of debt + prep kata against + pro.gen.p. ego + d.a.w/noun loc.nt.p. dogma decree; “consisting of decree*]), **which**

was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross

[*ὃ ἦν ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν, καὶ αὐτὸ ἦρκεν ἐκ τοῦ μέσου προσηλώσας αὐτὸ τῷ σταυρῷ* [*pro.nom.nt.s. hos + impf.act.ind.3s. eimi + adj.nom.nt.s. hupenantios opposed to + pro.dat.p. ego + conj + pro.acc.nt.s. autos + perf.act.ind.3s. airo lift + prep ek + d.a.w/adj.abl.nt.s. meos middle; “out of the way” + aor.act.part.nom.m.s. proseloo nail to + pro.acc.nt.s. autos + d.a.w/noun loc.m.s. stauros cross*]).

VERSE 15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities (ἀπεκδυσάμενος τὰς

ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας [*perf.dep.part.nom.m.s. apekduomai disarm + d.a.w/noun acc.f.p. arche ruler + conj + d.a.w/noun acc.f.p. exousia*]),

He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him

[ἐδειγματίσεν ἐν παρρησίᾳ, θριαμβεύσας αὐτοὺς ἐν αὐτῷ [*aor.act.ind.3s. deigmatizo disgrace + prep en + noun loc.f.s. parresia make a public example of + aor.act.part.nom.m.s. thriambeuo lead as a prisoner in a victory procession; triumph over + pro.acc.m.p. autos + prep en + pro.dat.m.s. autos*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 13-15

1. Paul moves on from the believer's incorporation into the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ based on the baptism of the Holy Spirit resulting in union with Christ to the implications of this union.
2. Here he applies this directly to the believers in Colossae with the use of the personal pronoun "And you."
3. So here Paul provides more doctrinal information regarding what it means to be "raised up with Him" (v. 12).
4. The phenomenal transition is here highlighted by the conditions that characterized their pre-salvation status.
5. The present participle "were dead" (*eimi w/adj. "dead"*) is used here in a temporal sense.
6. The death in view is spiritual death the judgment associated with the imputation of Adam's original sin to all humans based on the fact that all possess a genetically engineered STA (sin nature).
7. This understanding is based on Rom. 5 verses 12, 15 & 16.
8. What Paul teaches here is also reflected in Eph. 2:1, 5.
9. The words "in your transgressions" refers to the sin nature activity that characterized these spiritually dead Gentiles.
10. Then comes the phrase "and the uncircumcision of your flesh" which refers to the rule of the ISTA over the soul.
11. Cf. Rom. 5:21 "so that, as sin (ISTA) reigned in death (spiritual), even so grace (saving) would reign through righteousness (+R imputed) to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (cp. Rom. 6:12).
12. In the pre-salvation state spiritual death and sin reign over mankind (Rom. 5:17, 21).
13. At the moment of salvation the reign of death and sin is interrupted.
14. Spiritual death is canceled and in its place is the imputation of eternal life whenever a person believes in Christ.
15. Spiritual death carries with it a condemnation sentence but this condemnation resulting in eternal damnation (2nd death) is cancelled for the believer (cf. Rom. 8:1 "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."; Rev. 2:11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.").
16. Circumcision is used to illustrate the removal or setting aside of the ISTA; and since believers continue to sin after salvation this separation of the flesh (foreskin) from the soul needs removal which happens when a believer applies 1Jn. 1:9.

17. In Col. 2:11 the circumcision Paul refers to is spiritual in nature.
18. That believers need to be circumcised see Deut. 10:16 and Jer. 4:4 where Jewish believers are being addressed.
19. They are told to break the cycle of sin and reestablish fellowship with God.
20. At salvation the ISTA does not go away but continues to exert its influence over the soul.
21. What does to away permanently is the death Paul speaks of here.
22. The second part of v. 13 presents the new situation for believers with regard to the replacement of spiritual death with eternal life in Christ. (“He made you alive together with Him.”).
23. The verb “made alive together with” (aor.ind.3s. *suzopoieo*) also occurs in Eph. 2:5 in a parallel context dealing with the salvation adjustment (“even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved.”)).
24. The sin nature activity associated with being “uncircumcised” is forgiven at salvation (“having forgiven us all our transgressions.”).
25. The verb “forgiven” (aor.part. *charizomai*) which is not the usual term for forgiveness (*aphiemi*) as it occurs in 1Jn. 1:9 (cf. Mk. 11:25; 2Cor. 2:7, 10).
26. The nuance of this term for forgiveness is that of being ‘graced-out’ as this verb has as its cognate noun *charis*-grace.
27. Notice here how Paul includes himself in the discussion switching from the pronoun “you” to “us.”
28. In v. 14 Paul proceeds to show how all that has come to pass for believers in v. 13 is made possible (v. 14).
29. Paul uses a very dramatic participle “having cancelled out” (*ezpleipho*) to make the point of how absolute this forgiveness is.
30. The verb means to cause something to cease by obliterating any evidence of its existence.
31. A relevant parallel is Acts 3:19 “Repent therefore and return, so that your sins may be wiped away...”
32. It is also found in Rev. 3:5; 7:17 and 21:4 in the NT.
33. The language “the certificate of debt” is the noun *cheirigrographon* which literally means a handwritten note (only here).
34. It is technical for a record of one’s debts.
35. It is a commercial term that the readers would have understood as there is widespread use of this term in the papyri of the time.
36. The debt “against us” (*kath’ hemon*) obviously refers back to “transgressions.”
37. Following Paul’s commercial figure of speech of a handwritten posted for all to see is “decrees” (*dogma*) which refer to commandments prohibiting sin as laid down in the Law of Moses (cf. Eph. 2:15 “by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances (*dogma*), so that in Himself He might make the two (Jew and Gentile) into one new man, *thus* establishing peace.”).
38. The three other uses of this noun are in reference to human rulings (Lk. 2:1; Acts 16:3; 17:7).
39. “Which was hostile to us” (impf.ind. *eimi* w/d.a.w/adj.nom.nt.s. *hupenantios*) refers to the separation of man from the righteousness of the One demanding +R or else.
40. One time it is used of an adversary (status quo unsaved) in Heb. 10:27.

41. This legal document called here a “record of debt” that “was hostile/opposed to us” by testifying against us before God and by condemning us based on violations of this record is here wiped out as if it never existed.
42. The language “cancelled out” is restated as “taken it out of the way” (perf.act.ind. *airo* to lift up, take away; prep *ek* w/d.a.w/adj.abl.nt.s. *mesos* the midst) which is described here with yet another dramatic phrase “having nailed it to the cross.”
43. The sense is: “He took it up from among us.”
44. The reference to the cross of Christ points back to “the blood of His cross” in 1:20.
45. It was during Jesus’ time on the cross that the sin problem/debt was removed from humanity as Christ died for the sins of all humanity, even those who do not come to saving faith (cf. 1Jn. 2:2).
46. Using the metaphor of a public notice being nailed in a prominent place for all to observe, the figure is that on the cross where the Romans had nailed Him to He paid the debt of sin once and for all time.
47. He did this during the three hours of darkness when He became a sin offering suffering the wrath of God for all sins for all people for all time.
48. With Christ’s work of the cross toward sin, the old posted indictment of debt against humanity was replaced with a new a permanent posting (as it were).
49. The previous positing as is the new posting is to be found in the Word God (the Torah and Scripture).
50. He cancelled our debt and imputed to each one who believes eternal life and +R.
51. Jesus’ sufferings for sins accomplished something equally spectacular in its own right (v. 15).
52. It is expressed in parts one and two of v. 15.
53. The first part has the verb “When He disarmed” (aor.part. *apekduomai* disarm; also in 3:9) which is a rare term for “stripping off.”
54. Doctrinally it has to do with the hold or claim that Satan had over the human race; namely, that by birth we all were his children and he was our spiritual father bound to him by spiritual death and the rule of sin (cf. 1:13 “For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of this beloved Son,”).
55. Satan’s rightful rule over humanity attained at the Fall is broken and man can now break free from all that these “rulers and authorities” (cf. 1:20) over them, if individuals chose to.
56. The figure here is clearly militaristic of a defeated foe on the battlefield being stripped of their weapons of death.
57. Paul follows the Roman military practice of a victory parade in part two of v. 15.
58. “He made a public display of them” (aor.act.ind. *deigmatizo*; also at Matt. 1:19) views the defeated foe being forced to appear in chains and marched down the road into the city of Rome for all to see.
59. This was most humiliating for the conquered.
60. So the traditional Roman triumphal procession is clearly seen here in which captives are lead to death and enslavement for opposing Rome.
61. With Christ’s resurrection from the dead and final ascension to the right hand of God the spiritual entities aligned with Satan were first “disarmed” and apparently hauled into heaven to accentuate their humiliation.
62. Satan threw everything he could at Jesus only to be put on public notice that his power had been officially broken.

63. “Rulers and authorities” refers to fallen angels (cf. 1:20).
64. In this verse we have both God the Father and God the Son featured.
65. There are two aorist participles: “having disarmed” and “having triumphed” (aor.part. *thriambeuo*; also at 2Cor. 2:14) both of which have God the Father as the subject.
66. The second participle is technical for leading a victory parade and reinforces “He made a public display of them.”
67. “Through Him” (*en auto*) refers to God the Father’s agent, Jesus Christ.
68. God in most dramatic fashion brought the world of spiritual entities face to face with the glorified Savior and so served notice that they had failed and were awaiting their doom!