

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVII

Issue 30

*Published occasionally for Zion's mourners*

*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

---

## THE SAVOR OF CHRIST

*For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:  
II Corinthians 2:15*

When a woman becomes pregnant, she is increasingly uncomfortable as the day when her baby shall be delivered draws nearer. When the final pains of labor come upon her, she is determined to relieve herself of this burden which seemingly brings her to the point of death. Yet when once that child comes from the womb, joy overtakes her as this one which caused her such discomfort is placed in her arms and nestles to her breast. All of her distress is forgotten as tears of joy replace tears of sorrow. The love of that moment exceeds all other affection. *"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world."* (John 16:21)

Men are not privileged to experience this exact emotion and can only observe it taking place. Their only firsthand knowledge of a mother's love is if they are privileged to be on the receiving end of the love of a devoted and faithful mother. This explains the close bond that quite often develops between a man and his own mother. Though a man may grow up to have a great respect and admiration for his father, nothing can supplant that love nurtured in a mother's care.

The English word "savor" appears in the KJV New Testament, seven times. There are three Greek words which are translated as "savor" there. The first is spoken by our LORD, when HE said, *"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."* (Mat 5:13) The Greek word used here literally means "unflavorful, bland, or weak, even foolish". The LORD's meaning is quite clear and needs no explanation.

The next Greek word that is used is found in the verses preceding and following our text. *"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place."* (2Cor 2:14) *"To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"* (2Cor 2:16) This word literally means a "fragrance or odor". Some odors are pleasant, and some are not, which seems to fit quite well with the contrast which Paul is giving in describing the reaction of the reprobate, to the gospel, over against that of the elect. The gospel has a delightful "fragrance" to those who are appointed to hear and believe it. On the other hand, it is an offensive odor to those who are not. *"As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."* (Rom 9:33) *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."* (1Cor 1:18)

Then we see a different word used when Paul describes the "sweet fragrance" to the LORD, which is spread in the Earth by those HE has appointed to declare the unsearchable riches of CHRIST, *"For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ"*. For this "sweet perfume" of the gospel is delightful to HIM, as HE directs it forth to accomplish the exact purpose for which HE sends it.

*“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa 55:11)* Therefore, Paul says this declaration of HIS word is pleasing unto HIM, *“in them that are saved and in them that perish.”* HE is delighted by the exaltation of HIS NAME.

This Greek word which means “sweet fragrance” is used twice more in the scriptures. Once in Paul’s rejoicing in the gift that was brought to him from the Philippians by the hand of Epaphroditus; where he uses a combination of two of the words. *“But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor (i.e.; a fragrance) of a sweet smell (i.e.; a pleasant odor or savor), a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.” (Php 4:18)* While Paul was the direct beneficiary of this gift, yet he rejoiced, knowing that such gifts are a pleasant fragrance unto the LORD and a great benefit to the giver. *“Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.” (Php 4:17)* Such giving is the fruit of the SPIRIT and is a blessing to those enabled to give with a cheerful heart.

The other instance in which this term is used, is found as Paul exhorts the Ephesians, *“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.” (Eph 5:2)* Once again, Paul uses a combination of two of the Greek words even as he did in the passage from Philippians. In this verse he has reference to the sweet fragrance of the offering of CHRIST, both in the nostrils of GOD and in those privileged to hear and believe. *“We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” (Heb 10:10-14)*

The cross of CHRIST is that “sweet fragrance”, which is a delight to all of the awakened sons of GOD. Yet until such time as the LORD is pleased to open their ears, they are each one as deaf as those who never hear. What a glorious privilege is bestowed upon the children of GOD as HE brings them out of darkness. *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” (1Pet 2:9-10)*

Just as that mother rejoices as she holds her newborn babe, which was just moments before the cause of her greatest pain, so too are those who are made to see the glory of CHRIST caused to forget any heartache which was used, by HIM, to bring them to this glorious revelation. The sweet savor of CHRIST exceeds all else. In a moment, Job forgot his suffering, as the LORD was pleased to reveal HIMSELF in HIS glory.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want; All in all in thee I find;  
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint, Heal the sick, and lead the blind.  
Just and holy is thy name; I am all unrighteousness;

Vile and full of sin I am; Thou art full of truth and grace. (#303, Gadsby Hymnal by C.Wesley)

So, we see CHRIST as the SAVIOR of sinners, being a *“sweet smelling savor”* in the nostrils of those who have been given faith and the understanding of their own rebellious and unthankful hearts. How delightful it is to contemplate the riches of HIS grace, the depths of HIS mercy, and the wonder of HIS faithfulness. In what else can the sons of GOD take delight?

This blessing is visited upon those whom the LORD has ordained to receive it. *“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” (Isa 42:16)* The basis upon which this “savor” comes to their enjoyment finds its foundation in the fact that the work and person of JESUS CHRIST is a “sweet savor” unto HIM. Thus, HE testified, *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” (Mat 17:5)* That glorious fragrance is demonstrated in Peter’s declaration, *“And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” (John 6:69)*

mam