

“Commit Your Way to the Lord”

A Study of the Hebrew Word *Galal*

By Kyle Pope

Psalm thirty-seven verse five encourages the reader - **“Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring [it] to pass.”** (NKJV). The Holy Spirit uses an interesting expression here to communicate the idea that English Bibles translate “commit.” Two Hebrew words make up the expression. The first, the Hebrew word (גָּלַל) *galal* meaning literally to - “roll, roll away” (BDB) and the second, the preposition (עַל) ‘*al* meaning “upon” (BDB). The text literally reads “Roll your way upon the Lord.”

In most passages where the word *galal* is used it retains its primary meaning. In Genesis 29:3 it is applied to a stone that is “rolled” away from a well. In a gruesome account in II Samuel 20:12 Amasa is said to have “rolled” in his own blood. Isaiah draws the beautiful picture for us of the the final day when **“the heavens shall be rolled up [galal] like a scroll”** (Isaiah 34:4). We even use a form of the word, with this underlying meaning, whenever we refer to the city of Gilgal. Joshua tells us that after the younger Israelites, who came out of the wilderness were circumcised - **“Then the LORD said to Joshua, ‘This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.’ Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day.”** (Joshua 5:9). Gilgal means “a wheel, a rolling” (Strong).

In three passages *galal* has a much different application. It is used to communicate the idea of committing, or turning over something to God. As we noted above Psalm 37:5 encourages us to “roll” our way, that is how we conduct our lives and the concern we have for what happens in life, upon the Lord. We do not have the ability to determine within ourselves how we should conduct our lives. Neither do we have the ability to explain and understand every turn of events that life casts upon us. The child of God will

“roll” all of these uncertainties unto the Lord, knowing that if we do what He asks us to, He will carry us through the peaks and valleys of life.

Proverbs 16:3 uses *galal* in the same way urging us - **“Commit [galal] your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.”** (Proverbs 16:3). Here it is not the course of our life that is the focus, but the deeds that we do. We “roll” our works upon the Lord, when we strive diligently to do those things that please Him. We do this when we trust that He will be pleased with our efforts whether others appreciate them or not. When we do this the text tells us that then our “thoughts will be established.” That is, we can have peace of mind in knowing that God is pleased with our efforts.

The final passage prophetically refers to the suffering of Jesus. Psalm twenty-two, in a number of passages, is applied to both the Psalmist and the coming Messiah. In verse eight the words are used mockingly - **“He trusted [galal] in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!”** Matthew tells us that these words were hurled at Jesus, as He was crucified (Matthew 27:43). This is especially significant for us. Jesus Himself “rolled upon the Lord” His entire life. Jesus’ entire focus was to do the will of His Father. He committed to Him all of His works and the entire course of His life. While those who hurled these words at Jesus thought His trust had been in vain, they didn’t see the full picture. God the Father was faithful to receive what Jesus committed to Him, and so He will be faithful to receive what we “roll upon the Lord.”

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