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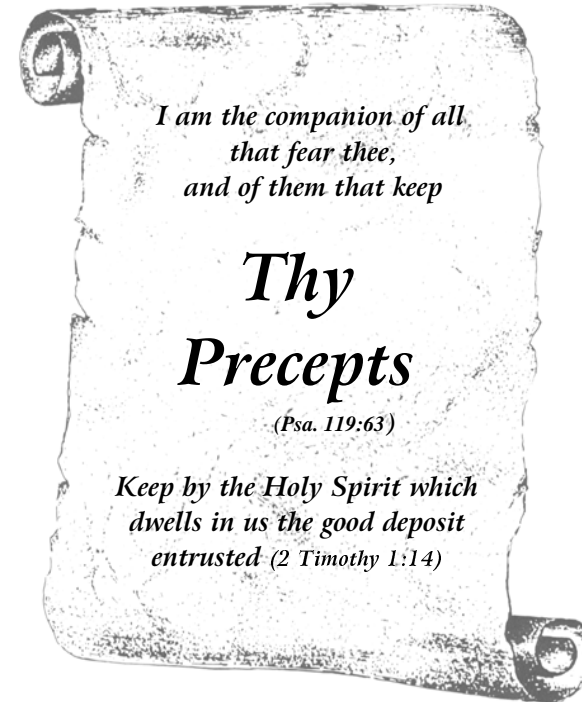
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Sept/Oct 2005

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The Mystery of Christ and the Church and The Covenants

Chapter 4.1

Adam in Innocency

Introduction

Genesis 1 - 3

Briefly stated, Genesis 1:1 - 2:24 speak of the original creation (Gen. 1:1, and a subsequent fall into a chaotic state (Gen. 1:2)), and to that a subsequent remaking of the earth and the heavens with a view to placing man on the earth -- for the purpose of the display of God's glory in Christ, to be manifested in two spheres, the heavenly glory and the earthly, under Christ's universal headship. The Scriptures which unfold these things are the product of one Mind, Elohim of Gen. 1, with this object in view.

Gen. 1:3- 2:3 presents this remaking in a chronological order, taking place in six literal days. In Gen. 2:4-24 we have, not another, contradictory account of creation as imagined by critics of Scripture, but a more specific account of certain physical matters along with the moral bearing of man's creation and his place in it. Gen. 2:4-24 is not arranged chronologically, but rather topically and morally.

Gen. 3 present us with the fall of man through an act of disobedience and ends with man being driven from paradise, according to God's governmental infliction upon man, though having provided a covering for the moral nakedness that man acquired in the fall. In the fall from the innocent state he acquired:

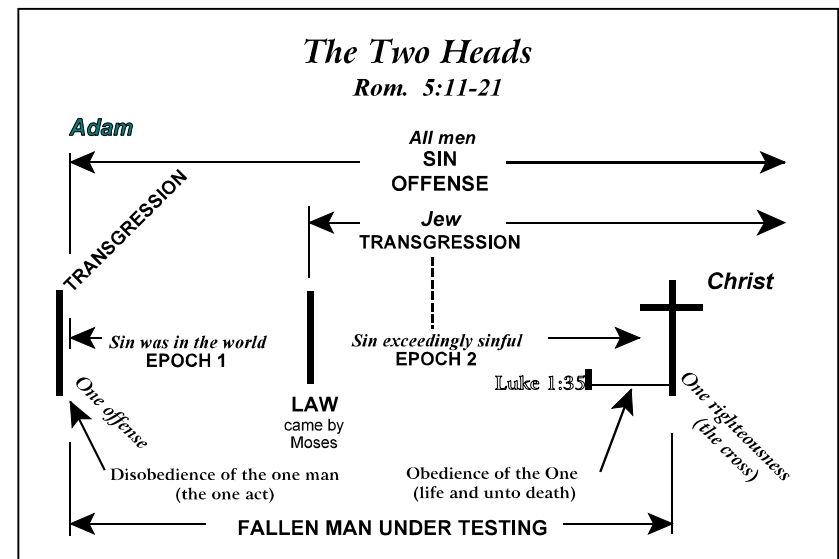
1. The knowledge of good and evil -- without having this knowledge as the Holy One does, Who repulses evil and does only good;
2. a bad conscience, evidenced by hiding from the voice of Jehovah Elohim;
3. what Rom. 8:3 calls "sin in the flesh," which we commonly call *the old nature* -- this old nature exercising dominion over man (Rom.

6);

4. irreversible banishment from the earthly paradise.

Gen. 4, 5, and 6 give us the history of man left to the knowledge of good and evil, and the conscience acquired in the fall. Let us be aware that God did not dispense the knowledge of good and evil, nor did he dispense conscience. These were acquirements of man through disobedience. There was no dispensation of the knowledge of good and evil and there was no dispensation of the accompanying conscience, which were the result of disobedience. Testing of *fallen man* began consequent upon the fall -- to demonstrate that he was not recoverable. The testing of fallen man to show that he was not recoverable ended at the cross with the rejection of the revelation of the Father in the Son. The testing of *fallen man* did not begun with *innocency*; the test of unfallen man in innocency was its own distinct thing. The chart below graphically illustrates the distinction.

Neither Adam in innocency, nor the age from Adam fallen until the flood, during which God left man to his conscience, are dispensations, or administrations. God did not dispense innocency. Adam was created innocent, by which is meant, ignorant of good and evil. God did not dispense conscience. Adam acquired a conscience when he acquired the knowledge of good and evil through his act of disobedience to God. God dispensed government through Noah, and with Noah the first administration began.



The Universe Was Created for the Purpose of the Six Days' Making

The chart above, explained in *Elements of Dispensational Truth*, sec. ed., ch. 3.4, somewhat indicates the place of Adam in the ways of God.

How God deals with His creatures ought to be of great interest to us. Through His ways with man we learn what we are and what He is in spite of what we are. It is an unspeakable blessing to have this in divine, inspired communications from Himself.

In Gen. 2:3 we read:

And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it, because on it he rested from all his work which God had created in making it.

To the words "in making it," J. N. Darby has a footnote:

Lit. 'Created to make.'

The six days work in Gen. 1:3-31 is characteristically a *making*, though creative activity is involved. Equating "make" and "create" is an error. The Word of God uses *create*, *make*, and *form* of Adam, and they do not mean the same thing, as may be seen in Isa. 43:7:

. . . everyone that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory; I have formed him, yea, I have made him.

It is in Gen. 1:1 that we have the creation of the heavens and the earth:

It is not said that God formed the heavens and the earth (v. 1) in a chaotic state; but we find here (v. 2) the earth so, "without form and void." It is not said how long elapsed. However, I do not at all believe the dates that are given, though we need not allude to this here.¹

The universe was created for the work of God in the earth. It was *created* with the *making* in view, namely, that work of the six days commencing after an original "fall," so to speak, and a subsequent reordering -- similarly as man was originally upright, but fell, upon which God commenced a work with fallen man. This work subsequent to the fall of man is foreshadowed by the six days work, which was subsequent to the chaotic state into which the earth had fallen.

1. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 19:55. See W. Kelly, *In the Beginning and the Adamic Earth*, available from Present Truth Publishers. G. V. Wigram, in his "Examination of the Hebrew Bible as to the Structure and Idiom of the Language," wrote:

Again, though it {Gen. 1:1} refers to the commencement of the globe on which we are, it was not the commencement of 'the earth as prepared for man.' That begins in v. 3; and between the paragraphs (vv. 1, 2) and that beginning at v. 3, there is a gap, which is blank and void (*Memorials of th Ministry of G. V. Wigram*, vol. 2:p. 160).

God had "created to make."

Whatever difficulty we may have in understanding some of the expressions in Gen. 1 and 2, it is clear that the universe exists for the purpose of having this earth as a platform for the display of God in Christ. It is created for Himself:

Thou art worthy, O our Lord and [our] God, to receive glory and honor and power; for *thou* hast created all things, and for thy will they were, and have been created (Rev. 4:11).

The instrument of the Godhead in the creating activity was the Son (John 1; Col. 1; Heb. 1). We do not know why God is three persons, distinct in Persons, yet one God, but such is revealed to us in Scripture. In John 1 we are told that it is He who is the *Word*, the only-begotten Son, Who created all things. As the *Word*, He is the communicator, the Expressor, of what God is, the expression of God. In accordance with this eternal name of His Person -- the *Word* -- He created this world for the purpose of Himself entering it in holy manhood to express what God is. He could say:

He that has seen me has seen the Father (John 14:9).

And as the trial of the first, fallen man to show that he was not recoverable was drawing to a close, He said:

. . . but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:24).

The trinity was involved in this. All that He did and said was by the Spirit. Indeed,

. . . in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).

The Typical Bearing of Genesis 2:4-25

God has before Him the manifestation of His glory in Christ, and this in two spheres, the earthly and the heavenly, which will be under His universal headship in the millennium (Eph. 1:10). For the revelation of the glory of God, in Christ, in the heavenly sphere, we must await the revelation of the mystery of Christ and the church in the NT. The OT prophets did not speak of it (Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 1:26; Eph 3:5, 9). There were some types related to this concerning some of the OT *brides* (no types of the *body* of Christ, as such). A type is not a prophecy, of course, and only understood as a type when the antitype is known. A shadow is not understood as a shadow when the "body" has not been made known.

Much that is typical in Gen. 2 has been summarized by J. C. Bayley:

Amongst the earliest of these emblematic objects is Adam, who is typical of the "last Adam"; mainly in that He is appointed God's vicegerent in His

image and likeness to rule in the earth. And of subordinate points of resemblance, the following seem chief. ²As Adam was head of the human family, so Christ is head of the whole race of the redeemed; as Adam was put to the test of temptation, so also Christ; as Adam's one act affected his whole posterity, so Christ's one act affects those of which He is head; as Adam receives a bride, bone of his bone, formed as the result of his having been cast into the deep sleep -- the semblance of death, and presented to him when he awaked -- the semblance of resurrection, so from the death of Christ results the formation of the spiritual bride, presented to Him, without spot or blemish, in His resurrection. ³ As with his bride he is brought into a relationship of unity in love, involving protection and devotion on his part, and submission and fidelity on hers; so the Bride is to be associated with Him in sorrow and dishonor as well as in dignity and happiness; and this unity is so complete that they are both included in one name,

He . . . called their name Adam; (Gen. 5:2)

and in 1 Cor. 12:12 the Head and the body, the church, are included in the one title Christ. That there should be points of divergence too is to be expected: the shadow is

not the very image {Heb. 10:1}.

There is no type nor symbol able to express fully even one aspect of the Lord Jesus Christ. At least they fail somewhere, for the simple reason that He immeasurably surpasses in every particular anything which the universe could afford to illustrate that aspect. So in regard to His second point -- a formal definite testing by temptation -- Adam falls, in a paradise and under the most favorable circumstances; whereas Christ withstands in a wilderness, and under the most unfavorable circumstances.

Immediately that Christ (in type) treads the earth *rest* succeeds; and so the Sabbath directly follows (Gen. 2:2). Just so, when in redemption the Israelites get across to the wilderness, the manna appears (Christ on the earth) and the Sabbath is directly connected therewith. ⁴ There is this difference however, that Adam represents the Lord on earth ruling and therefore brings rest in the way of authority, something as it will be in the millennium; while the manna represents Christ in humiliation, in the character of the Gospels, yet giving rest; humbled and outcast, yet able to say,

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give

2. Rom. 5:14.

3. Though the doctrine of the church as bride of Christ be not developed till the New Testament, yet there are several types of it in the Old Testament, showing it to be no after-thought, such as Joseph's and Moses' receiving Gentile brides during rejection by their own people, the Book of Ruth, &c.

4. Ex. 16:15-23.

you rest {Matt. 11:28}.

In one form or another rest is always characteristic of Him; but probably the most beautiful of all phases is that whereof the type is now before us -- God resting in Him in divine satisfaction and complacency. ⁵ Of course those who read this paper will know that the antitype of the Sabbath is not the "Lord's day" {Rev. 1:10} of the present dispensation, but that it is still in the future (Heb. 4:9).

There remaineth therefore a keeping of Sabbath -- σαββατισμὸς -- to the people of God.

To keep Sabbath in that sense now would be to dissociate it from Christ, which is to miss its whole connection. Spiritually the same principle is true; it is only as Christ is apprehended that the soul has rest with God.

It is noteworthy too as being the seventh day. As a practical musician detects a distinct character in each note of the scale, from the solemn repose of the "first" to the piercing expectancy of the "seventh," so the scripture student recognizes a peculiar meaning in the numbers used, which meaning is often the key to unlock the signification of a whole passage. Besides its other well known characteristics, it is well to remark that 7 is composed of the union of the earthly number 4 and the heavenly number 3 (the sevens of scripture are nearly always thus divided); it is the union of heaven with earth. No longer now Elohim, but Jehovah Elohim: relationship is established.

This progress had now reached a final stage. The material creation steadily develops till its "diapason closes full in man." There is nothing more correct than development: nothing more incorrect than evolution . . . And as there was no physical object to be subsequently created (here) higher than Adam -- and indeed there does not seem to be a single species of plant or animals of any sort since his time -- so there never has been nor can be any spiritual development higher than the last Adam. God rests in Him.

Then we see a bridegroom and bride in a paradise, the subject of celestial benediction, the objects of divine complacency; the center of the organized system, -- "he for God only; she for God in him." This, and infinitely more, is true concerning the antitype. Concerning the type we may well say *O si sic omnia!* But it was the devil's province to bring evil into good; as God's is to bring good out of the evil. ⁶

5. Zeph. 3:17. "He will rest in His love."

6. *The Bible Treasury* 15:78, 79. J. C. Bayley's articles on "Scripture Imagery" are found in *Types and Symbols of Scripture*, available from Present Truth Publishers.

Genesis 2:4-7

(4) These are the histories of the heavens and the earth, when they were created, in the day that Jehovah Elohim made earth and heavens, (5) and every shrub of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for Jehovah Elohim had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground. (6) But a mist went up from the earth, and moistened the whole surface of the ground. (7) And Jehovah Elohim formed Man, dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and Man became a living soul.

The Special Formation of Man Creation, Fall, and Making

In Gen. 1 the name of God used is Elohim (plural of Eloah, the supreme). This is in keeping with the subject matter. In Gen. 2:4 the name of moral relationship, Jehovah, coupled with Elohim, is used, and this is also in keeping with the subject matter of relationship with his creature, man, who stands in moral relationship to the Creator.⁷

There are those who, exercising their unbelief in the inspiration of Scripture, think that Gen. 2:4 - 3:24 is another account of creation besides Gen. 1.⁸ They believe that a redactor(s) selected parts of accounts and put together what we have in this part of God's word. This procedure has been known as the JEPD hypothesis regarding the Pentateuch. Gen. 1 is regarded as coming from source P (Priestly) and our present section as coming from source J (Jehovistic, or Yahwistic), and the two sources redacted, i.e., edited and rearranged. These critics of God's Word regard the two sections as considerably contradictory,⁹ which need not detain us.¹⁰ Gen. 2 does include a few matters

7. See *The Bible Treasury* 19:1-3 concerning the use of divine names.

8. See "Two Accounts of Creation," *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 6:114-115.

9. James Montgomery Boice, in his *Genesis, An Expostional Commentary*, Grand rapids: Zondervan, pp. 91 and 93, vol. 1, wrote:

There is another problem with this critical theory, especially where the early chapters of Genesis are concerned. E. J. Young calls it "a psychological difficulty." He develops his thoughts in this way.

If it is correct that the Pentateuch does consist of a number of documents which were finally pieced together by a redactor [the person or persons who finally got the book into the shape in which we now find it], then it must be

(continued...)

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that are found in Gen. 1, but ch. 2 gives us that which is much broader: Elohim's relationship with man. Thus in Gen. 1 we read of *Elohim* doing this and that including the creation of man as set over the earthly order as the crown of it. Man's unique creation and position with his commensurate moral responsibility are before us in ch. 2, not in ch. 1. In keeping with the object of Gen. 2:4 - 3:24 compared to Gen. 1, *Jehovah Elohim* is used in this section¹¹ as indicating special relationship to, and dealing with, man. *Elohim is Jehovah.*¹² The two sections differ in their material, arrangement, and object. W. Kelly remarked:

The history is in Gen. 1 - 2:3: from v. 4 to the end of ch. 2 is not so much a history of creation as a statement of the relations of creation, and especially of man, its center and head. Ch. 2 assumes ch. 1, but adds moral elements of the utmost importance and interest.¹³

9. (...continued)

acknowledged that the Pentateuch is a very remarkable work. It is not the kind of writing that very many people could produce. Undoubtedly it is one of the greatest writings in existence, and whoever was responsible for it was an artist and a genius . . . But if [this] is so, then why did he make such a blunder at the very beginning as to put together two contradictory accounts of creation? If he was such a genius, would he not have realized that it was not very sensible to put two conflicting accounts of creation together? (*In the Beginning*, p. 59) . . .

Of course, some critical scholars have pointed to the order of things in Genesis 2 as being evidence that the two creation "accounts" are contradictory: the first gives one order for things, the second gives a different order. But this is surely nonsense. If you take Genesis 2 as teaching a chronological sequence, you have first the creation of man, then the planting of a garden, then God putting the man in the garden, then God causing trees to grow in the garden. After this there is a description of the rivers of the garden. Then man is put in the garden again. Problems like this should tell us that something is wrong with that approach. They tell us that chronology is not in view here at all. What matters in this chapter is man. Everything else is introduced for its relationship to him.

10. See W. Kelly in *The Bible Treasury* 19:1-3; also W. Kelly's, "The Pentateuch and Its Critics," *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 9:177, etc.; W. J. Hocking, "The Lord's Testimony to the Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch," *The Bible Treasury* 19:58, etc.; E. E. Whitfield, "The Vatican and the Criticism of the Pentateuch," *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 6:131; J. N. Darby, "Dr. Colenso and the Pentateuch," *Collected Writings* 23:82-114; and see *Collected Writings* 6:201-209, 267-269, 9:360-370; 29:65-66, 69-71.

11. It is used in this section (Gen. 2:4 - 3:24) and in Ex. 9:30 in the five books of Moses.

12. See W. Kelly's address on *The Creation. Gen. 1, 2, in loco*. Also, his book *In the Beginning and the Adamic Earth* is now available from Present Truth Publishers in an inexpensive pamphlet form.

13. *Lectures Introductory to . . . the Pentateuch*, p. 17.

Clearly, Gen. 2:4 is introductory to the section before us¹⁴ and is not an introduction or conclusion to Gen. 1:1 - 2:3. While Gen. 2:4 makes reference to Gen. 1:1 - 2:3 in a summary fashion, it stands as an introduction to God's unfolding of the relationship with man. Gen. 1:1 - 2:3 gives us the original creation, a fall into a chaotic state, and a reconstruction, with man as the crown of it. Gen. 2:4-24 shows us the relationship of man to the Creator in the place where he was put. Gen. 1:1 - 2:3 follows a chronological order whereas Gen. 2:4-24 is arranged topically.

W. Kelly remarked that "Many Jews make a full stop in the middle of v. 4, and begin, 'On the day Jehovah Elohim made.'" ¹⁵ That might be helpful in understanding Gen. 2:4. Note the reference to the *creation* of "the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 2:4a) and then the *making* of the "earth and the heavens" (Gen. 2:4b). The *creating* of the heavens and the earth refers to the original creation stated in Gen. 1:1 while *making* refers to the six days work concerning what had fallen into the chaotic state as seen in Gen. 1:2. Keep in mind that the lights in the heavens (day four) were not created on day four but brought into proper relationship to the earth for the purpose God had in view in the reordering. Is it not true that the work of day one producing "morning and evening" points to a rotation of the earth, as in the case of all six days? a rotation with respect to a light source? Is that not true? That light source was already in existence on day one, but the relationship of that light source was not yet properly readjusted with respect to the earth as it was on the fourth day. I refer to this because Gen. 2:4 called for this observation, as the changed order of referring to the heavens and the earth, and then to the earth and the heavens, along with, respectively, first the word *created* being used and then *making*, respectively.

While life was created during the six days, the overall work of the six days is a work of making, not the creation of the heavens and the earth:

. . . for in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth (Ex. 31:17).

Had the word "create" been used in this text, which the Spirit of God was quite capable of having caused to be written instead of "made," that would be offered as conclusive proof that the six days were the work of the original creation. But

14. In v. 4, the word "histories," or generations (*toledoth*) appears numerous times in Genesis, referring to what follows: 5:1; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 13, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2. Several scholars claim that rather than headings these are like colophons on clay tablets and that these indicate clay tablets on which the parts of Genesis were written and incorporated in the present form of Genesis. There are good reasons to disbelieve this, whatever else might be construed as virtual colophons. At any rate, the word appears 11 times in Genesis, commencing with Gen. 2:4. W. Kelly has commented on the word *toledoth* in *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 2:96-99.

15. *The Bible Treasury* 19:17, note.

the Spirit rather used "made" here; and so, not wanting a gap between Gen. 1:2 and Gen. 1:3, the plea used to circumvent the fact is that "made" here means "create" -- but it is not so.

Were a full stop used for Gen. 2:4a we would have:

These are the histories of the heavens and the earth, when they were created.

In the day¹⁶ that Jehovah Elohim made earth and heavens no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet grown . . .¹⁷

The word "histories" here refers not to the creation of the heavens and the earth as if this is another account of Gen. 1. Rather, as Gen. 2:4b shows, it points to that for which the heavens and the earth were created: namely, some special matters connected with the *making*, the reconstruction, centered upon the creation of man, giving in ch. 2:4-24 the special act of man's creation, details of his place, and circumstances in the garden of Eden, in the original order as set up by God. This points, then, to the relationship of the heavens and the earth to the ordering of the relationship to Jehovah Elohim that man has as set over the work He completed in the six days.

In the purpose of God, the original creation of Gen. 1:1 had in view the fall into the chaotic state of Gen. 1:2, to be followed by the work of reconstitution. Gen. 2:4 reflects this as do the words in Gen. 2:3 "created to make." Moreover, the history of man reflects this order of creation, fall, and a subsequent work of God. Man also fell from an original state, and consequently God began a work with man, the history of which is unfolded in the Scripture in accordance with His purpose to glorify himself in Christ in the heavenly and in the earthly spheres.

16. "Day" here is used in a general way to denote the period of the *making*, not meaning one period of the revolution of the earth ("evening and morning was") as also indicated by the ordinals preceding the designation of the seven days.

17. This combines a footnote in an article by W. Kelly in *The Bible Treasury* 19:17, note, and a footnote to J. N. Darby's translation to Gen. 2:4b.

H. C. Leupold translates Gen. 2:4a as a sentence with a full stop:

This is the story of the heavens and the earth at the time of their creation.

Then he translates Gen. 2:4b, 5 as:

At the time when Yahweh God made earth and heaven, then no shrub of the field was as yet in the earth and no plant of the field was as yet sprouting forth; for Yahweh God had not caused rain to descend upon the earth, nor did man exist to till the ground (*Exposition of Genesis*, Grand Rapids: Baker, pp. 109, 111, vol. 1, 1942).

The Condition Just Preceding the Creation of Man

W. Kelly has a footnote to the translation of vv. 5-7 that says:

Or, “**And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field was yet grown; for**” &c.

We continue with J. N. Darby’s translation:

. . . herb of the field before it grew; for Jehovah Elohim had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground. But a mist went up from the earth, and moistened the whole surface of the ground. And Jehovah Elohim formed man dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul (Gen. 2:5-7).

The change in the use of the divine name, from Elohim in ch.1 to Jehovah Elohim in chs. 2 and 3 signify the new subject matter. The arrangement of the material is also different according to the purpose in view.

It is clear that vv. 5 and 6 have v. 7 in view and are explanatory to Moses’ readers that a different condition of the earth just preceded the creation of man.

Since the rainbow was given as a sign to Noah it seems that there was no rain before the flood. Where would be the propriety of making something that had existed for some 1600 years a sign of God’s covenant not to bring on another flood to destroy all flesh (Gen. 9:12-16)?¹⁸ Moses writing long after the flood states that there was no rain at that time.

Three things required for dew to form are: (1) moist air, (2) a cool surface, and (3) a clear sky.

But, most importantly, there was no man to till the ground.

These things describe a condition early in the six day’s work. On the sixth day, the climax of the *making* the earth and the heavens, the reconstitution, for the unfolding of God’s purpose to glorify Himself in Christ, arrived. Details concerning man’s place for this purpose are now given. The crowning work of God’s reconstructing the earth into a place for man, from the chaotic state into which it had fallen (Gen. 1:2), took place on day six. Gen. 1:26-27 did not tell us of the special manner of creating man, as does Gen. 2:7. The breathing into man’s nostrils¹⁹ the breath of life was a unique, creatorial act of God and at

18. Regarding the idea that the flood was not worldwide, the rainbow is hardly a sign that God will not bring on a local flood to destroy all flesh. A local flood assumes all men were only in the locality of the local flood; indeed, what is really involved is that every animal in which was the breath of life was confined to the area of the local flood -- after over 1600 years of procreation.

19. It is a sorry thing that it even needs to be said that there was no such thing as “God’s breathing
(continued...) ”

once sets man apart from the animal kingdom. Gen. 1:24 speaks of the earth bringing forth “living souls” by the fiat of God. But man’s soul is of a different order, springing from the breath of *Jehovah Elohim* breathed into his nostrils.²⁰ Man being formed of dust of the ground connects him with the material creation but the inbreathing of the breath of God connects man with God in a unique way.

In Gen. 1:26 we learn that man was set over all: “over the whole earth.” Thus the entire world was placed under the headship of the first Adam.²¹ In Gen. 2:8, 9 we see that man was placed in a specific domain, of pleasant aspect, of full provision, where God intended to place man under one restraint, whereby man would acknowledge his true relationship to his Creator by obedience. There is such a thing as “moral government.” The Creator is to be obeyed by His intelligent creature into whom He breathed the breath of life, thus elevating him far above the “animal order.” The Christian ought not to accept the notion that man is part of the “animal kingdom” because he has bodily functions as do animals; any more than man is part of the angelic order because man possesses a spirit, for angels are spirits (Heb. 1:7). Man was made a little lower than the angels (Psa. 8:5); are animals made a little lower than the angels? Man is above them, and is characterized by speech, inductive logic, and deductive logic. God consulted with Himself, so to speak, concerning creating man (Gen. 1:26). Did He do that concerning animals? Do animals pray? Even lost man prays, amiss no doubt, but he does so.

The State of Adam in Innocency

ADAM’S CREATED STATE

Adam acquired the knowledge of good and evil in the fall, showing that he did not have that knowledge before the fall. The state in which Adam was created is therefore referred to as *innocency*, thus contrasting his created state from his state consequent upon the fall. As J. N. Darby clearly pointed out, Adam was not created in righteousness and holiness. To say so negatively affects much truth.

19. (...continued)

some of His own breath into him,” as if God breathes. When God says, “Come now, and let us reason together,” are we supposed to think that God reasons? God does not think! He knows all. Thinking implies limitation in knowledge, and liability to mistake. We are to weigh the words of the Scriptures and depend on the Spirit to teach us their intent.

20. There is an article, one of a series, on Gen. 2:5-7, by W. Kelly, in *The Bible Treasury* 19:17, 18.

21. This has in view Christ exercising this headship

It is often said that Adam was created in righteousness and holiness. This is all erroneous. He was created in innocence.²² It is the new man which is created in righteousness and true holiness, which we are called to put on: Christ, not Adam (Eph. 4:24). It is wholly new (καινόν), created. We are therein created again in Christ Jesus: at least so scripture says. So in Col. 3:10, We “put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.” The common statements on this subject confound Christ and Adam—the new creation and the old. Adam was innocent -- had not the knowledge of good and evil. As to this the testimony of scripture is positive, it is the essence of the history of the fall. Hence he could not have righteousness or holiness, which imply the knowledge of good and evil. If God declares “the man is become as one of us, knowing good and evil,” he did not know good and evil before. Hence what is commonly stated is equally erroneous, namely, that Adam was righteous and holy, made after the image of God in righteousness and holiness. By the fall, man acquired a knowledge of good and evil, which gives him, or rather is, a sense of right and wrong, suited to the state in which he is, the duties of various relationships in which he stands. These, in the main, the Mosaic law maintains, though not all in their details, according to God’s original institution. From Adam to Moses men were not placed under law, but they had the knowledge of good and evil -- were a law thus to themselves.

But we must not confound this with a revealed or given law; because in a law revealed or given of God there is the express authority of the Lawgiver; and the disobedient is guilty of express transgression of the Lawgiver’s authority. Yet sin was there from Adam to Moses, but not transgression; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Hence it is said (referring to Hos. {6:7}), where it is said of Israel, “They like men [Adam, in Hebrew] have transgressed the covenant”, “Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” Israel had broken the law as Adam had, and had not only sinned -- done what their conscience condemned -- but violated the authority of God exercised in imposing the law.²³

The writer did not mean by this last sentence that Adam had the law of 10 commandments; but, that as Israel had disobeyed, so Adam disobeyed.

22. {Elsewhere he wrote:

To be righteous or holy requires the knowledge of good and evil. And this Adam had not till he fell; and the difference is immense. We have only to speak of God as innocent, and the believer’s heart at once revolts from it -- is offended by it. Righteous and holy He surely is.

See also *The Bible Treasury* 19:33.}

23. *Collected Writings* 10:18, 19. See also 19:58.

IMAGE AND LIKENESS

The creation of Adam is not stated as it was of animals, i.e., by mere divine fiat:

And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living souls . . .

And God said, Let the earth bring forth living souls after their kind . . .

(Gen. 1:20, 24).

The Scripture account of man’s creation indicates the distinctive position of man as standing in unique relationship to his Creator:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . .

(Gen. 1:26).

And Jehovah Elohim formed Man, dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (Gen. 2:7).

Concerning “Let us” J. N. Darby remarked:

It is well to notice that God takes counsel: “let us,” etc. If you make the distinction of the persons of the Godhead, I am not aware that creation is personally attributed to any but Christ and the Spirit. Every operation is the direct work of the Spirit, not that He is an independent Spirit, but God. The three are united in scripture. The Son was working, and He says, “the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works,” and again, “if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils.” But you do not find stated in scripture that the Father created; it says God; and this is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It is so far important to see that we have the divine agency. The particular operation of miracles was by the Spirit. “If I by the Spirit cast out”; by “his Spirit garnished the heavens”; and when Christ was raised, He was “quickened by the Spirit.” I can allow nothing, therefore, that attempts to lower our thoughts of the Son and of the Spirit . . .

So God created man in His own image. Verse 27 {Gen. 1} states the fact, though they were created afterwards. The animals were there, and now God says, I am going to have something higher; and man stood there representing God in the earth, made with no evil in him. He still has that character {i.e., representing God}, though it is all in ruin. 1 Cor. 11:7 says he is the image and glory of God. James 3:9 speaks of men having been made after God’s likeness.²⁴

The creation of Adam was an act involving *creating, making, and forming* man; not, however, a sequence of several acts -- but rather at once -- and showing the derivation of man’s soul as unique from that of other forms of life on earth. In common with other life he was made of the dust of the ground but was different, distinct, and distinguished by the manner in which he was given

24. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 19:58.

life. That denotes special relationship to the Creator. This special relationship is also indicated by the words “image and likeness.” Man is tripartite, having a spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Cor. 2:11; Heb. 4:12; Prov. 20:27; etc.). Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus, knew this (Luke 1:47). See also Num. 16:22; Acts 17:29.

While the soul is the seat of self-consciousness, it is by the possession of a spirit that man has God-consciousness, something animals do not have, though they have self-consciousness. The human will and the “I,” *ego*, are in the soul, and man is held responsible to God as a living soul.

Neither “image” or “likeness” refer to corporeality as John 4:24 shows. The words image and likeness are not anthropomorphisms, as Acts 17:28 shows. Image refers to Adam being the *representative* of God. Obviously, it cannot mean that Adam looked like God. He was set as the head²⁵ of the earthly creation, as God’s representative as the head. Likeness refers to *resemblance*; and while *sinless*, Adam was in God’s likeness. The fall erased that likeness but not the image. Observe that Adam

begot [a son] in his likeness, after his image (Gen. 4:3).

Adam’s offspring were not in God’s likeness; they were in the likeness of Adam as fallen and sinful.²⁶ All but One bears that likeness. The last Adam is certainly never said to be in Adam’s likeness, but neither is it written that He is in God’s likeness, for He *is* God.²⁷

Adam in his unfallen state had free choice and will, while sinless; but he chose to disobey, which brought his will into bondage (see Rom. 6) to what was consequently within him -- what Rom. 8:3 calls “the law of sin” in our members. This controls the human will morally. It is what we mean by the “old nature.”

HUMANITY IN ADAM AND IN CHRIST

Adam had an immortal soul by the special act of God’s creation. See the

25. This includes headship of the woman also (1 Tim. 2:12, 13).

26. James 3:19 may be thought to affirm that man is still *in* the likeness of God. If so, that raises the question, how can men who are spiritually dead toward God (Eph. 2) be in God’s likeness? I suggest that “made *after* [the] likeness of God,” or, *according* to the likeness of God, is meant to remind the readers of James concerning man’s original condition (Adam), not his present condition, and that cursing men is wrong. Recall that Michael the archangel did not dare to bring a railing accusation against the devil, even though fallen and evil, but said “the Lord rebuke thee” (Jude 9). There is a remembrance of how this fallen one was once at the head of the angelic hosts.

27. The reader might like to read “Image and Likeness,” *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 13:232-235; and see 19:58; 26:255, 256 and *Collected Writings of F. G. Patterson*, p. 227, available from Present Truth Publishers.

contrast regarding the animals (Gen. 1:20, 24) and the creation of Adam (Gen. 1:26; 2:7), as well as Adam’s help-mate (Gen. 2:18-25). God alone has underived, intrinsic immortality (1 Tim. 6:16). Man’s is derivative and upheld by God. 1 Cor. 15:53, 54, refer to the body, not the soul of man.²⁸ The soul does not die. It is instructive that we see this not only in the case of the rich man in hades (Luke 16:23ff) but in the case of the Beast and the False Prophet who were cast alive into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20) just before the beginning of the 1000 years, and then we read of the devil, who had been bound for the 1000 years, then loosed and leading a revolt of the unregenerate born during the millennium:

And the devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where [are] both the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for the ages of ages (Rev. 20:10).

Horrible as hell is, and we can hardly imagine it, it is no kindness to anyone to tell him there is no eternal punishment. God will raise the dead and their bodies will be reunited with their immortal souls, in the resurrection of the unjust (Acts 24:15) to face the Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed Savior, and Deliverer from the wrath to come, to have their persons judged, and be cast into the lake of fire also (Rev. 20:11-15).

The sinner’s body is mortal, meaning subject to death. This was brought about by the fall. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Why, then, would anyone say that Adam would have eventually died even if he never sinned? Adam was capable of sinning -- and he did. Of course, God did not compel Adam to sin. God is not the author of sin.

But such was not the state of Christ’s humanity. His humanity was holy (Luke 1:35), as the gospel which presents Christ in the perfection of His humanity (i.e., Luke) tells us. Moreover, that holy humanity was taken into the Person of the Son. That holy humanity was united to deity, indissolubly so. He is not two persons, as if His humanity had had an independent existence apart from the incarnation. The Son did not unite with a Jewish person that was living in Israel. That would make Him two persons. Not so! Holy humanity, by the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit, entered into the Son’s Person. Son of God in eternity, He was Son of God in time. The state of His humanity was not like Adam’s -- innocent, and capable of falling -- rather, holy. His humanity was not mortal, i.e., subject to death, though it was capable of death. And we are assured from the Word that the act of His death was voluntary. It was the act of His holy will, giving His life in obedience to the Father. Listen:

28. The denial of the immortality of the soul undermines the atonement, See *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:77, 78.

On this account my Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it again. I have received this commandment of my Father (John 10:17, 18).

May our hearts bow in worship as we contemplate this. His death was an act of His own will in obedience to the Father.

Adam was peccable but Christ's humanity was impeccable. Christ held humanity in a *holy* state, not an *innocent* state. Even saying that He was "able not to sin" falls far short of Scripture teaching concerning the truth of His Person. It is a statement that can be quite compatible with viewing Christ's humanity as peccable, only He was able not to sin. The truth is that He was "not able to sin."²⁹ Deny this and you implicitly hold that He was two persons, one of which could have sinned and gone to hell, for surely you do not believe that the eternal Son of God could go to hell, do you? The notion of peccability in Christ is a fundamental evil that implicitly means He was two persons, denying the unity of the two natures in one Person!

But Christ is the second Man and last Adam. Christ's headship is not our subject here; but we must note that Adam had no offspring in innocency. He became the fallen head of a fallen race, the awful result of self-will.

Genesis 2:8, 9

And Jehovah Elohim planted a garden in Eden eastward, and there put Man whom he had formed. And out of the ground Jehovah Elohim made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; and the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:8, 9).

Man's Pleasant Surroundings

Eden means "delights" or "pleasure." Eden was an area, and within Eden God planted a garden in which He placed man. Everything good for man in innocency was there in that garden. Outside the garden there were no thorns and thistles -- anywhere. Such things were the result of the curse on the ground (Gen. 3:18).³⁰ We may be sure that in view of the testing of man in innocency,

29. This is taken up in detail in my *Could Christ Sin?*, available from Present Truth Publishers.

30. For a result of ameliorating much of the curse on the ground for the millennial reign of Christ (continued...)

man was placed in so favorable a situation that no excuse would be valid for failure to acknowledge the rights of the Creator over man. The garden that Adam was in where he was given one command to obey stands in marked contrast to the wilderness where Christ was, with wild beasts, and He was tested -- the same Enemy of God and man testing Him as came to the woman (Gen. 3:1). There is a great moral order of God's dealings with man that is repeatedly found in Scripture and it begins with Adam:

Thus also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam a quickening spirit. But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual (1 Cor. 15:45, 46).

The Lord Jesus Christ is the "*last* Adam; not, observe, called the 'second' Adam -- as if there might be a third one. There is no other such headship than that of the first Adam and then afterwards Christ's headship. So there are only two heads (concerning which more will be said later). They stand in contrast and also according to the moral order: first the natural, then the spiritual. Saul and David illustrate this order regarding kingship. Saul illustrates the man after the flesh, while David, even with his personal failures, is called a man after God's heart (Acts 13:22).

Not only do we see that Adam was placed in such favorable circumstances, but two trees are brought before us. We shall consider the two trees in detail when we come to vv. 15-17. Here we should take note of the mention of them as preceding the description of the river emanating from Eden and parting into four heads. We shall see how this river emanating from Eden and parting into four heads speaks of the Son of God coming from the Paradise of God above into this world and manifesting Himself (in holy manhood taken into His Person) in four ways, given us in the four gospels. And when we understand what the two special trees in Eden point to:

- (1) the tree of the knowledge of good and evil being the tree of *responsibility*; and,
- (2) that Adam partook of that tree of responsibility;

we see that the first Adam failed in responsibility and brought all under his headship into curse and ruin. Thus, before we come to the river emanating from Eden, pointing to God's grace manifested in Christ, in the power of the Spirit of God working in Christ, we have what foreshadows man's failure, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

30. (...continued)

see Isa. 51:3, Ezek. 36:36. In Ezek. 31:9, 16, 18, Eden is used figuratively for the nations placed by God in reference to Israel, which in God's view has the central place in the earth. Ezek. 28 has nothing to do with the earthly Eden.

Another order to which our attention is directed by the Word of God is the order of the mention of the two trees. The tree of life is mentioned first and it points to Christ Himself. God eternally had before Him Christ and His free, sovereign grace in Christ. But before the display of His grace by giving Christ on the tree of Calvary, where Christ took on Himself our responsibility and its consequences, man would eat of the tree of responsibility and fall into sin and ruin, dragging the world into this state and its consequences. The history from the fall to the cross is an epoch of the trial of the fallen, first man to show that he was not recoverable. The presentation of Christ was the final test which ended the testing of the first, fallen man. Our Lord said:

but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:24).

This ended the trial of the first man to show that he was not recoverable. Consequently, the mystery of Christ and the church was revealed.

Genesis 2:10-14

(10) And a river went out of Eden, to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four main streams. (11) The name of the one is Pison: that is it which surrounds the whole land of Havilah, where the gold is. (12) And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and the onyx stone are there. (13) And the name of the second river is Gihon: that is it which surrounds the whole land of Cush. (14) And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which flows forward toward Asshur. And the fourth river, that is Euphrates.

The River Emanating from Eden

For a discussion of theories regarding this river and the four rivers to which it gave rise, see *The Bible Treasury* 19:49-51. See also *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 6:106-108.

I would add to what is presented below, the observation that the river watered the garden.

The following notes are in keeping with the fact that in Gen. 2, God has before Him His glory in Christ.

The River of Paradise and Its Four Heads

by Adrian Roach (1968)

And a river went out of Eden to water *the garden*; and *from thence* it was parted, and became into four heads (or “four main streams” JND) (Gen. 2:10).

In Paradise (the Garden) there was only one stream but outside of the Garden we have four streams of refreshing. There was no varied display of God’s glory through Christ in Manhood in that place of bliss on high.³¹ It is here in a sinful world (outside Paradise) that God is manifested in and by the varied glories of Christ. Hence we have four Gospels conforming to the four rivers.

1. Pison

This connects with the Gospel of John -- the Gold -- the Deity of Christ, who is set forth as Son of God predominantly by this Gospel. The name Pison means “increase”.

He must increase, but I must decrease.

He that cometh from above is above all (John 3:31).

This river has *scope* rather than the action which characterizes Hiddekel, “which

31. {The writer is thinking of the Son above in the paradise of God (cp. Rev. 2:7), before incarnation, as the one stream, then coming into the world in manifestation according to the personal glories and offices or stations given in the four gospels, to which the four heads correspond. Harmonies of the Gospels would be like merging the four streams back into one. God has chosen to give the four presentations of Christ.

The order is from John to Matthew. It is from what is highest to what is lowest, to God, where all is yet so vastly high beyond our comprehension. The major offerings (Lev. 1-5) have this order also; for the four offerings have their counterpart in four major offerings, omitting the bloodless offering (the meal-offering) the character of which runs through the four gospels. Thus, the burnt-offering is represented in John, the peace-offering in Luke (cp. Luke 15), and the two gospels which alone give the cry of abandonment give us the sin-offering (Mark) and the trespass-offering (Matt.). The offerings begin with what is highest to God. A harmony of the offerings would spoil everything, as do harmonies of the Gospels.

The Gospels are in the order of how a saved one apprehends the truths prefigured in the offerings of Lev. 1-5.

The four cherubim (Ezek. 1) follow the order of the Gospels. Such is the case with the four living creatures of Rev. 4, where we see characteristics of the cherubim, the executors of God’s government (such as being stationed to block the way to Eden). The four living creatures are *symbols* of the judicial power of the throne invested in Christ, for the Father has committed all judgment to Him (John 5:22). The seraphic character is seen in the living creatures having six wings (cp. Isa. 6), whereas the cherubim have four wings. It has been pointed out that mercy is swifter (six wings) than judgment (four wings). Though that is the case, the order follows the order of the gospels. Matthew (the lion) who presents the King -- thus governmental power -- is first. The ox is the servant (Mark). The face of a man points to Luke who presents the personal glory and perfection of the Son as man. In the flying eagle, we see the eternal Son, the Word, come from heaven (John’s gospel). Such is our Beloved, our friend, our Lord, our Savior!}

goeth (flows) toward the east of Assyria” (v. 14) It “*compasseth* the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold” (v. 11). What a vast unlimited object is set before us in John 1:1-31. This is the pure gold of Godhead glory! “The gold of that land is good.” This is the voice of one in the enjoyment of it. Linked with this is the bdellium which means “White Pearl or White Gum.” In Numbers 11:7 it is the color of the Manna which speaks of Christ as Man here below. God and Man in one Person.

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven (John 3:13).

It shows forth His sinless purity -- “Which of you convinceth Me of sin” (John 8:46).

Next is the onyx stone which is connected with the priesthood. Ex. 28:9 gives us the two onyx stones with the names of God’s people engraved thereon and to be on the shoulders of the High Priest. Truly the strength of our High Priest on our behalf is shown in John 17.

I pray for them (v. 9);

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shoudest keep them from the evil (v. 15).

See also v. 20. His strength is for us, to carry us right on into the glory! (v. 24). Only in John do we get the seamless robe (John 19:23) which is associated with priesthood (Ex. 28:32 and 39:22-23). It sets forth the inscrutability of His Person. Truly, the “Gold of that land is good.”

2. Gihon

Gihon means “breaking forth.” It is the Gospel of Luke, the gospel of the Son of Man, in which God’s grace is shown breaking out from the bounds of Israel to the Gentiles. As Son of Man, Christ will rule over the universal kingdom (Psa. 8) not simply Israel (Psa. 2). This river has *scope*, also -- “the same *compasseth* the whole land of Ethiopia.”³² That is, it takes in the Gentile. The Gospel of Luke is addressed to a Gentile by “Luke, the beloved physician” who is seen separately from those of the “circumcision” in Col. 4:10-14, which indicated that he was a Gentile. He joined Paul at Troas according to Acts 16:8-10. Note the change there from the pronoun “they” to “we” and “us”.

Luke writing to a Gentile (Theophilus) is led to show a Godly remnant in Israel (Luke 2:25-38) so as to keep the Gentiles from being “wise in their own conceits” (Rom. 11:25). Simeon’s pronouncement by the Spirit is remarkable as

32. {Cush. In Scripture there was an Asiatic Cush (meant here) as well as an African Cush (Ethiopia).}

he declares that the Lord’s salvation is prepared “before the face of all peoples” (Luke 2:31, JND trans.). Furthermore, he states that Christ is a “light to lighten *the Gentiles*,” and “the glory of Thy People Israel” (Luke 2:32). He puts the present age when “God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name” (Acts 15:14) before that future day when “All Israel shall be saved” (Rom. 11:26).

In the third chapter John the Baptist’s quotations from Isa. 40 are given more fully to show the Gentile aspect of Luke -- “*Every valley*” -- *Every mountain*” -- “*All flesh shall see the salvation of God*” (Luke 3:4-6 compare with Matt 3:3). Truly this is a “breaking forth” river that encompasseth the whole land of Ethiopia {Cush}.

3 - Hiddekel (the Tigris)

Hiddekel means (1) “Rapid,” (2) “Riddle of the date palm.” This river has action and fruitfulness instead of scope. Here we have the Gospel of Mark. “Behold My Servant” (Isa. 52:13). The marvel of it all is that the Servant is “Jesus Christ, the *Son of God*” (Mark 1:1). Immediately He launches out into service (Mark 1:14) without genealogy tracing Him to Abraham and David (Matt.) or to Adam (Luke) -- He is Son of God but withal “My Servant.” How much service is put forth in a single day! (Mark 1:16-32). “The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth” (John 15:15). So only in Mark do we read

. . . of that day and that hour knoweth no man -- neither the Son, but the Father (Mark 13:32).

So perfectly did He become Jehovah’s Servant! His feelings in service are more fully and often expressed here.

When He had looked round about on them with anger . . . (Mark 3:5);

Jesus beholding him loved him (Mark 10:21);

and looking up to heaven He sighed (Mark 7:34);

He sighed deeply (Mark 8:12).

Nor is He correctly called Lord (see JND Trans.) until resurrection (Mark 16:19). At the supper they ask: - “Is it I” (Mark 14:19) whereas in Matt. 26:22 they ask: “*Lord* is it I?”

As to the fruitfulness of the “date Palm” we see an increasing scale of blessing here “Fruit that sprang up and increased, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred (Mark 4:8 -- contrast Matt. 13:23).

Even as the ascended one in glory He is still seen as the Servant: -- “The Lord working with them” (Mark 16:20).

4-Euphrates

Nothing is said about this river encompassing any land nor is its activity noted. The meanings of Euphrates are (1) Fructifying, and (2) abounding. That is ability to cause fruitfulness and to overflow. This indicates what the Lord will do for Israel as His people. They will say: -- "I am like a green fir tree." He will answer:-- "From Me is thy fruit found" (Hos. 12:8).

He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the world with fruit (Isa. 27:6).

They shall also abound, --

Enlarge the place of thy tent -- for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited (Isa. 54:3).

The Euphrates is marked out as the boundary of the land given to Abraham in Gen. 15:18 -- "From the river of Egypt to the *great river*, the river Euphrates."

It is a *great river* and connects in our thoughts with the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of the Great King of Israel. In Matthew He -- our Lord Jesus Christ -- is immediately introduced as "Son of David" and "Son of Abraham." That is, He is vested with royalty as the true Solomon, and He is the depository of the promises as the true Isaac. Notice two things here -- "Judah and his brethren" (v. 2) not "Reuben and his brethren" -- for Reuben was indeed the first born. Gen. 49:10 shows that royalty attaches to Judah who is seen as a lion in v. 9.

Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler (prince) (1 Chron. 5:2).

Next in Matt. 1:6 we have: -- "And Jesse begat David the king." This marks out the Jewish character of this Gospel. Here Christ is seen as "born King of the Jews" (Matt. 2:2). The events in it are therefore presented in keeping with this fact and meditation on it will be greatly rewarded. Here only we get the fullest quotation from Zech. 9:9 mentioning both animals bearing Israel's King (Matt. 21:4-5 -- cp. John 12:12-15).

The Gospel ends with Christ seen among the Godly remnant in Galilee and there is no ascension. From Israel as the center, He sends forth His message to the Gentiles (Isa 66:10 and 19). ❖³³

33. {In this article we have seen the river emanating from Eden as pointing to the Son come from above and manifested here as given in the four Gospels. In Scripture, water is used figuratively for the Word of God (Eph. 5:26) and running water as figurative of the Holy Spirit. Scripture shows us that every word, way, and work of Christ was at the Father's direction and in the power of the Spirit of God. The figurative use of a river pointing to Christ, then, signifies the working of the

(continued...)

The Christian's Heavenly Place and Calling Eviscerated by Messianic Judaism

Chapter 8

Wilderness Types and Canaan Types Marah

In the remaining chapters it is intended to consider Christian (spiritual) circumcision in Christ. Canaan as a type is different from the wilderness as a type and it might be well to consider Israel's experience in the wilderness at Marah first in order to appreciate the contrast between wilderness experiences and experiences in Canaan.

The starting point in Canaan was Gilgal. Typically, Canaan is for us the heavenlies of Ephesians.

The starting point in the wilderness experience took place at Marah (Ex. 15:22-26). Typically, the wilderness is to us our pilgrimage and strangership (1 Pet. 2:11) as we go through this world.

Of course, Israel experienced the wilderness and Canaan in a sequential manner; but the Christian is in the wilderness and in Canaan simultaneously. But each is its own sphere, has its own food for sustainment, and has its own characteristic experiences.

The experiences a Christian goes through are not necessarily cumulative *Christian experience*. A man seeking new employment said he had 25 years experience. The interviewer told him that he had one year experience repeated 25 times. We may have to repeat a lesson for our spiritual life over and over on account of not learning in the school of God. So, as a Christian we experience this over and over, but we cannot total up the number of times and say that we have had, say 25 Christian experiences -- because, it is one experience repeated 25 times. It appears that this is the case with many Christians; and though all are positionally in Canaan, i.e., seated together in the heavenlies in Christ (Eph. 2:6), there is no realization of it in the soul, no realization of what it means to be positionally circumcised in Christ, dead and risen with Christ, and seated together in the heavenlies in Christ. And, sorry to say, many do not want to be heavenly.

33. (...continued)
Spirit of God in Him.}

One other point before we proceed: we must keep in mind that it was God's *purpose* to bring Israel into the inheritance (Ex. 3, 6, 15), but it is part of His *ways* to have His people in the wilderness to learn what they are in themselves and what He is for them in wilderness circumstances.

So, since God has delivered us from the power of the taskmaster, having brought us across the Red Sea, typifying our redemption, we must come to Marah, to the bitter waters.

Does this make redemption uncertain? Not at all. Yet it is a dreadful thing to have no water; it was certain death in those countries. Had He then brought them through the Red Sea and unto Himself to kill them with thirst? When at length they did come to water, it was bitter. But this was to prove them, and bring out what was in their hearts. The bitter water did not show what was in God's heart (redemption had shown that); but in their hearts lay much that had to be manifested and corrected. They must drink into the power of death. Being redeemed for ever, they must learn that there is nothing for them in the wilderness. All supply must be from God Himself. This is the very effect of redemption, and there is so much in us to be brought out and corrected. But He makes the waters sweet.

We must all learn death (being redeemed we have life) and it cannot be learned in Egypt. They had no Marah in Egypt. It is wilderness experience. Redemption must be known first, and the effect will be death to sin, to selfishness, to one's own will; and all this is very trying. A person might be tempted to say, All this trial comes upon me because I have not redemption. Not so; it is just because you are redeemed. We may seek to avoid the bitter waters of Marah, but God will bring us to them. He must break down all that is of the old man, and then, in His own good time, He will put in that which sweetens all. But because God has brought me to Himself, He is putting His finger on everything (be it love of the world, setting up self, my own will, or whatever it may be) that hinders complete dependence on Him, or my soul's full enjoyment of Himself. But count it not strange, though it be a fiery trial which is to try you; for as surely as you are redeemed, so will He break down your own will. Yes, beloved, God will make you drink of the very thing (death) that redeemed you.³⁴

The redemption spoken of was typified by the Red Sea, Christ's death and resurrection for us. Marah (meaning bitterness) is the practical application of death to us. See 1 Pet. 4:1, 2. Christ died for that and for that; and I refuse it, not gratifying the flesh.

The following article is from *Christian Truth* 20:91-93.

34. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 19:167-168.

“Marah”

Scarcely had died away the rapturous notes of Israel's joy and exultation, because of their deliverance from all the power and malice of Egypt, before they were made to feel the barrenness and dearth of the wilderness. With what high and elated thoughts of God's goodness and power did they step out into the wilderness! Surely they were little prepared for this, their first march in it! To go three days and find no water, and when they reached some, to find it “bitter”! What a contrast to the high tone and brilliant expectations they had just celebrated in song! How differently had they expected of God! How natural it was for them, as knowing and rejoicing in the great work of deliverance which He had accomplished for them, to reckon on His providing a scene of unbroken happiness for them.

Thus is it often with believers now, after having in like manner, as it were, crossed the Red Sea. They have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and they rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. They have the exulting experience of Rom. 5:2, but can they say, “and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also”? Do they as a rule even expect tribulation here, much less glory in it? They are in all the exuberance of delight, because of peace with God, and hope of the glory of God. But what of this world, this wilderness? Have not many of us expected and even toiled to find all easy and agreeable here? Have we not sought to make ourselves happy here? Have we not been disappointed, depressed, almost inconsolable, when we have found no water here, and what there is, only bitter? We have entered the wilderness without understanding what it is. We have expected that the God who has blessed our souls with such peace and exultation over the enemy and over death, should preserve and screen us from sorrow.

In the spirit of our minds, we have not been one whit better than Israel. We have murmured and complained, toiled and fretted, to find easy and agreeable circumstances here. But it cannot be. The wilderness illustrates what the world is to the saint, and the first stage of the journey gives a character of the whole. It is all drought. There is nothing in it for Christ. He has been rejected out of it. There is nothing in it for God or for His people. The world has condemned itself in its inability to value Christ. If the best cannot be valued, how can anything inferior? If the world has nothing for God in it, if it has rejected the best thing God could send into it, how can I expect Him to make it easy and agreeable to me?

On the contrary, if true to Him, and estimating the world as He does, I glory in tribulation; for tribulation works endurance; endurance, experience; and experience, hope; and hope makes not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which He has given us. We ought to start in the wilderness expecting nothing but dearth; and in not doing so, is where many of us have failed. Our expectations have been like Israel's; and our disappointment and disheartenment at not finding them realized, like theirs also. We have, in fact, had to go back and begin anew -- start aright. Most of our failings in the wilderness march are attributed to our having started with a wrong idea of what the wilderness

is. Ease or rest we cannot find in it; and the more we expect it, the more we shall chafe under the disappointment. The first stage in our journey must proclaim to us, as to Israel, what the true nature of the journey is. It is Marah.

What then is to be done? The water is bitter. God can make it sweet. He shows Moses a tree which, when cast into the water, makes it sweet. This is Christ crucified. This is what the world rejected, and the only good thing which God has to give His people in passing through it. Nay, more; the bitterness of the circumstances which I am passing through, is only an opportunity for Christ to come in, and so make the bitter sweet. If you have no Marah here, you know not the power of Christ to convert it into sweetness. Paul in prison at Rome, and John at Patmos, were in very bitter circumstances; but would they have changed them for any other, seeing that those circumstances were the opportunity for the revelation of Christ?

God cannot let me find both sweetness here, and sweetness in Christ. If I will have the sweetness of circumstances, I shall not have the sweetness of Christ in the bitter circumstances, for it is He who brightens up the dark circumstances.

Let me once be brought to see that without the bitter circumstances I could not have such knowledge of Christ, and I shall murmur at them no more. I accept them; nay, I glory in tribulation. It is not only that I am quiet and resigned, braving my circumstances in the strength of natural character. No, I know they are bitter, but I do not occupy myself with the bitterness, because God has given me to know more of Christ in it -- so much so, that I should be sorry that they should be altered, lest I should lose what I have learned of Christ in them, making them sweet. I am thus prepared for tribulation, but I am also assured of finding in Christ a greater and fuller delight, so that the tribulation is hailed as another opportunity for disclosing to my heart as a sufferer here, the excellency and virtue of Christ. I am neither vexed nor disappointed; I am in the happiness of God. I joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation. Amen. ❖

* * * * *

After this {Marah} they come to Elim. Now they experience the natural consequence of being with God -- the full streams of refreshment -- as soon as they were really broken down. Had Elim come first, there would have been no sense of their dependence on the Lord for everything, and nature would have been unbroken. But trial produces dependence, and dependence, communion. It is only for this that He delays, for He delights in blessing His people. The numbers 12 and 70 are different figures of perfection: ³⁵ perfect refreshment, perfect shelter, and all this

35. {In the *Synopsis* 1:65, he wrote:

The Lord adopted this number {12 and 70} in His two closing missions of the disciples

(continued...)

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in the wilderness, and rest then.

They must be exercised at Marah, that they may fully know and enjoy Him at Elim. Redemption brought them indeed to God, but now it is joy in God. And so it is with us.

Although we are redeemed, we cannot have these springs from God Himself, flowing through our souls, with unbroken flesh. But whatever trial we are in, however deeply we may have to drink into death, there is resurrection as well as death: and when we see God's hand in it, when we see the cross of Christ in the bitter waters, we understand God's mind and purpose in them, and they become sweet to us. We cannot walk in the way of faith without faith, so we must be put to the test. Not that, for the present, tribulation seems joyous, but grievous; but afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits unto them that are exercised thereby.

Flesh is not faith. If I lose my trust in God for one minute, that very minute the flesh comes in, under some form or other. Whenever I feel perplexed or at a loss, the eye is not single: it shows I am out of communion, otherwise I should know what to do. If the eye were single, the whole body would be full of light. Or there is something yet to be detected in us, something we have not yet found out in our own hearts. It may not be wilful sin; but there is something He will exercise our hearts about, something as to which He will manifest Himself as Jehovah the Healer. Thus we learn to rejoice in tribulation also, and then to rejoice in God -- finding springs of joy, refreshings in the wilderness in that God who brought us there. Let us, then, not count trial a strange thing; for we know its purpose, even that we may joy in God Himself. ³⁶

The books of 1 and 2 Peter are books having to do with wilderness experience, as does Hebrews. Typically, Colossians and Ephesians are books having to do with entrance into Canaan and being seated there. These two books state two aspects of the mystery of Christ and the church. Colossians presents the fulness of the Head and brings before us Christ in you, the hope of glory. We are complete in Him (Col. 2:10). Ephesians presents the fulness of the body and brings before us that we are in Christ and have Christ's place before the Father (Eph. 1:6). We are seated together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6). In Eph. 6 we learn who the enemies are in the heavenlies. The three great postures of the Christian are sitting (Eph. 2), walking (Eph 4), and standing (Eph. 6). But we are going to consider truth in Colossians, which is typified by Israel's crossing over Jordan *with* the Ark, signifying our death and resurrection with Christ; and Israel's circumcision at Gilgal, with the attendant matters. This is the entry point into the land, and as Marah

35. (...continued)

to Israel.}

36. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 19:168-169.

gave character to God’s ways in the wilderness to show what we are, and what He is, Gilgal points to God’s basis for our victory over the enemy in the land. We will consider positional circumcision in Christ presented in Colossians and the practical application of it in our lives, keeping in mind that this excludes circumcision in the flesh now, for all believers, whether Jew or Gentile, even if a Jewish believer claims that he is under the Abrahamic Covenant and his children should be circumcised.

Christian Circumcision

The Abrahamic Covenant is to be understood as an unconditional covenant; meaning, that the promises of God given to Abraham will be unconditionally fulfilled. This stands in contrast to the Mosaic Covenant which is a conditional covenant; meaning, that the promises of God will not be fulfilled to those under the Mosaic Covenant if they do not keep the terms of the covenant required of them in order to obtain the promises. The fulfilling of the Mosaic Covenant depended upon two parties. There was only one party to the Abrahamic Covenant.

Therefore I refer to such covenants as the Abrahamic Covenant as *gracious covenants*, because *sovereign grace undertakes* to make good the promises. The three other such gracious covenants are the covenant with Phinehas, with David, and the New Covenant. The Mosaic Covenant is a works-based covenant. Its purpose was to show that Israel could not obtain the promises given in the Abrahamic covenant by works; i.e., the works of the first man under trial to show that he was not recoverable.

The Mosaic Covenant did not annul the promises to Abraham and thus the promises remains to be unconditionally fulfilled:

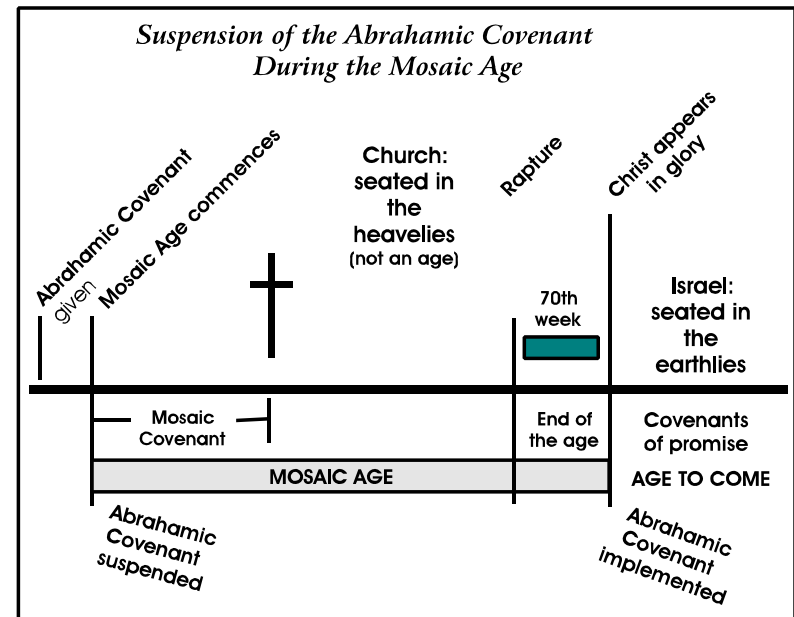
(15) Brethren, (I speak according to man,) even man’s confirmed covenant no one sets aside, or adds other dispositions to. (16) But to Abraham were the promises addressed, and to his seed: he does not say, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed; which is Christ. (17) Now I say this, A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which took place four hundred and thirty years after, does not annul, so as to make the promise of no effect. (18) For if the inheritance [be] on the principle of law, [it is] no longer on the principle of promise; but God gave it in grace to Abraham by promise. (19) Why then the law? It was added for the sake of transgressions, until the seed came to whom the promise was made, ordained through angels in [the] hand of a mediator. (20) But a mediator is not of one, but God is one. (21) [Is] then the law against the promises of God? Far be the thought. For if a law had been given able to quicken, then indeed righteousness were on the principle of law; (22) but the scripture has shut up all things under sin, that the promise, on the principle of faith of Jesus Christ, should be given to those that believe (Gal. 3:15-21).

In the ways of God, the Abrahamic Covenant was placed in temporary suspension by the introduction of the Mosaic age. The Mosaic age began with the Mosaic Covenant; and though the cross was the end of the Mosaic Covenant, the Mosaic age continues on. “The end {or completion} of the age” (Matt. 12:32; 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3; 28:20) refers to the completion of the Mosaic age (during which Daniel’s 70th week will occur), called “this age” (1 Cor. 2:8; Eph. 1:21; 1 Tim. 6:17; Heb. 6:5). The Abrahamic Covenant remains in suspension during the entire Mosaic age; and meanwhile, i.e., *now*, God is gathering a heavenly people seated together in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). This will be followed by the 70th week of Daniel and then the Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, the Seed of David, will come in power and glory to inaugurate “the age to come” (Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Eph. 1:21), the kingdom on earth -- a kingdom in which the covenants of promise will be made good to Israel.

The chart below is intended to illustrate the suspension of the Abrahamic Covenant during the Mosaic age, that age running from the establishment of the Mosaic Covenant until the Mosaic age is displaced by the age to come, i.e., the millennial reign of Christ, Who will make good all the gracious covenants.

To be continued, if the Lord will.

Ed.



Historical Note

The following article is scheduled to appear in *Additional Writings of J. N. Darby*, vol. 2. A valuable historical note appears below:

I had been confined something more than three months. . .

This from JND himself says that he had been laid aside for more than three months -- which refers to the accident he had in Dec. 1826. In my *John Nelson Darby, Precious Truths Revived and Defended, vol. 1, 1826-1845*, I conjectured that his confinement lasted more than two months, the severity of the injury accounting for why F. W. Newman saw him on crutches in, as I claimed, September of 1827. FWN seeing him on crutches has been used to suppose that though present in that area in Sept. 1827, F. W. Newman must have seen JND on crutches in 1828 and that JND's accident took place in Dec. 1827, not Dec. 1826. My chronological construction in the above book is firm enough, but this remark by JND adds more support for the thought that it is not at all unreasonable that in Sept. 1827 JND was still using crutches.

The article below may be placed into your copy of the above book. You have one, don't you? It is available from Present Truth Publishers.

I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED

{Notes to 2 Timothy 1:12 in Mr. Darby's Greek Testament, ed. Griesbach, vol. II, pt. 2, p. 412; and item 529 in the *Sibthorpe Collection*. DPR.}

Not supposing that much time remains to me, I refer to this {verse} as the guide of those who remain behind me as it now suggests itself to my mind. I add, I have found the Scriptures perfect, nor since a certain time (which I will mention) did I ever find an enquiry of another or of my own mind to which a full divine answer did not at once suggest itself from the Scripture. I leave this testimony (God is my present witness of its truth) for my brethren's sake. I have found statements made not found in the Scriptures but alleged to be drawn from them; these I found it my part to leave. They had all found no place in my own mind, while the light of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord in the person of Jesus Christ -- in a word the mystery of Godliness: God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, believed on in the world, received up into glory -- has shone forth to my soul with clearer light.

It is declared that in the last days perilous times shall come. Such these are and nothing could have been more perilous than those times, when all should receive the mark of the beast whose names were not written in the book of life. Man here {2 Tim. 3:2} signifies, I conceive, professing Christians. However, St.

Paul here gives what the security of the soul will be in perilous times. First, "Knowing from whom thou has learned them" {2 Tim. 3:14}; compare here Heb. 2:2, and note (I note in love for the work's sake this is the first religion, the faith once delivered) the warning: "Take heed lest we let them slip" {Heb. 2:1} and remark here the matter St. Paul is upon: the Divine Sonship of Christ and His real human nature, and these two truths rightly used will give the whole faith as against all deceivers, we understanding by faith the office in which they are exercised for sinners. The agency of the Holy Ghost is a promise, observe, to be received by faith perhaps more than a fact to be believed by it. Note also St. Jude: Contend for the faith once delivered. Observe too, the Scriptures exactly answer the passage in Hebrews; thus the salvation is to be found accordingly again. Take the salvation noticed by St. Paul in Ephesians: by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any should boast; for ye are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before appointed that we should walk in them. What does St. Paul present as the matter of religion, if I may so call it? By grace ye are saved through faith, and good works which God hath before appointed that we should walk in them.

The instruction we want then is the way of salvation and direction in the good works which are appointed. What do the Scriptures afford? They are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and they are profitable, etc. That the man of God (the soul brought into the power of salvation) may be perfect; thoroughly furnished unto all good works. What could more conclusively answer the one to the other than these two passages? Note further in these perilous times the state of the children of God are upon one hand and presumptuous deceivers on the other. All that are godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, and evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

I will now mention one thing about myself as an object of grace. I had once had my soul brought, I know not where, so deep as no tongue I suppose could tell (others may have felt it, I know not), hardly before I began to preach repentance (I had previously a good while given myself to God, having myself been brought to deep repentance and self sacrifice). After that I went on having the way of salvation on my mind, opening upon its reality with occasional trials of unbelief, some of them painful but none such as the one I mentioned. I think Scott's essays gave a strong determination to my thought at one time, while my mind was working upon it. I had always recognized the truths, but I am speaking of their power, for my mind had passed after its own repentance under the dark cloud of the popish system, i.e. to look for the powers of Christ's agency in the visible authority of the church. Though God was with me through it all, and I used to hold up Christ to my brother as availing against the claim of men on

these points, yet it prevailed so far as to prevent my mind from finding comfort in the truths I honestly urged on him which I had found in what poor reading of the Scriptures I had, and yet God was with me all the while. And I was in my secret affection framed on the doctrines of grace and abhorred the world and sought not conformity to it, but I had not Christ, though I loved Him, I have no doubt, sincerely and growingly since June or July 1820 or 1821, I forgot which. I had not certain peace, though I trusted Him for salvation, and since the deep trial I mentioned, had (first indeed in preaching I began with holiness but soon felt it was not the way) avowed salvation only by Christ and stated the truth of Scripture as I have no doubt was in it, and I believe not without profit to souls.

It was only latterly at Calary, I began generally to proclaim love. Then I was totally stopped in the work and suffered long confinement. After I had been confined something more than three months, I was tried with indeed very different support from what I had before, though the grace I had received and which will explain how I was led into this long statement. It issued in assurance in love, as I trust to be perfected ere long so as either by my life or death to glorify God. It took its occasion from a great trial of judgment on a matter in which while my weakness was very apparent, God's hand seemed very remarkably in. It brought my soul by much and various exercise by night and day to this point: could I rest the faith of my soul as a living man on the word of God? Grace determined me to do so; the trial passed away in various exercises of conscience, searching whether there was anything offensive in it towards God or towards man, with some intervals of thankfulness for evidences of love in circumstances brought before me, till it all began to give way before the apprehension of His love in Christ in a way I could not describe, settling into steadier and calmer assurance of love by a progress which I cannot state but of which I felt the work from day to day. But the Scriptures have coincidentally approved themselves to be the perfect manifestation of God in Christ, and though I used them in everything before, it is only since then that they have supplied themselves to me on every side as altogether Divine and all sufficient.

I would remark that humiliation was the method in which God wrought with my soul from the beginning to reveal His love, and I could not doubt, by the issue of peace, whose hand had been there and in my minute circumstances as man would judge providence showed itself indeed: the whole trial arose from a paper of directions being left out of a parcel by mistake; while the paper it referred to was sent to the printer and laid there, he not knowing what to do with it or whose it was, till I found it out afterwards. By the carelessness of a messenger to the post and a third time by his delay two letters were arrested on the subject and each of them had their part in the passages of the trial. I have been led to mention these things merely as showing God's hand. Another passage of the trial as I recollect was: would I endure all things for the elect's sake? In

this, grace also determined me. I had a further trial in which some persons related to me, who I had believed were under grace, but a cloud was over the exercise of it in them. Doubtless under God's gracious wisdom, {it} was proposed to me: suppose these were reprobates, would you give them up? --- and they were presented to my mind as such; in this I submitted to God. Since this, I preached the gospel I believe in its simple power for a short time at Calary, but that was not as I believe the work the Lord appointed me. I wait now only for His permission, trusting He is prospering me for it; that is, I preached not merely that there was no other salvation than Christ, but also that Christ was the power of Divine love unto salvation, and the difference was felt indeed. This made all instruction different. Before, it dealt more exclusively with principles, now more fully with souls, and though it had not been without to me most blessed testimony before, yet together with a great deal of practical weekly dealing with their souls, I thought the word was ploughing much deeper than heretofore. The day will declare it indeed; though the result of weakness in me, I am not sure that in Divine wisdom it was not suitable. I am quite sure that in all I am debtor to Divine grace and have perfect need of the Divine mercy. The previous account, though strictly accurate is very imperfect. I did not feel led to speak of more; it is possible I may elsewhere. I may rather speak nothing but of the Lord, as I trust in measure I have {done} for some time; for He is the rock --- His work is perfect.

The Present Testimony 2:29-39.

2 Corinthians 12

There is a remarkable contrast between the beginning and ending of this chapter; that is, between Paul, caught up into the third heaven, and the Christians at Corinth; between what a Christian should be and what a Christian may be.

A great privilege is here proposed to us, and it is well for us to consider it. Paul speaks of himself as a man in Christ (v. 2), and this is the true character of every Christian, and of the Church at large. It was not in the character of an apostle that Paul was caught up, but in that of "a man in Christ." Whosoever is in Christ is a new creature, and each of us has His share in this character. So that {by calling himself a man in Christ} Paul puts himself on a level with the rest of the Church. We have, through the Spirit, our participation in the same privilege, though the degree of participation is very different. *We are quickened together with Christ, raised up together with Christ, and seated together with Christ in heavenly places:* there is no place into which faith cannot enter.

Paul did not receive in the third heaven a revelation which he could communicate to others; on the contrary, the mysteries which he there saw

{“heard,” v. 4}, were such as could not be revealed. It was “the man in Christ” that went thither, and not the apostle as such.

When the eye of faith penetrates thus far, we get strength to walk before God in every circumstance; therein is communion of the soul with God -- a spring of strength, but not a revelation to tell of. It is not Christ’s glory at his return, but a communion with God, in which the body can have no part, or to which it becomes, at any rate, insensible, “*whether in the body I know not.*” The principle of this communion may be applied to the Church, although the measure will not be the same as in Paul, but we share with him the privilege of communion with God.

There are two very different prayers in the Epistle to the Ephesians (cp. 1:17, 18; and 3:16-19). The first calls for a knowledge of the glory of Christ, the grand hope of the Church: the second seeks for communion with God for our souls, and that we may be strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, that, being rooted and grounded in love, we may be filled with the knowledge of God even to all the fulness of God. If we grieve the Spirit by seeking things below, the inner man is immediately weakened.

Paul could glory in his infirmities, because he had felt that his strength was in God. Weak as he was, many were converted by him, for God was acting with him. He rejoices in persecutions and infirmities, and in all that is contrary to the flesh. As soon as ever he becomes again conscious of the presence of the flesh, the latter seeks to rise, and the thorn is sent.

The flesh seeks its own ease, and shrinks from struggles and difficulties, but God will not ease the flesh *at the soul’s expense*. One may earnestly seek relief from infirmities, or deliverance from painful circumstances; but God does not always grant the request. Our dependance upon God is thereby increased. Not only ought we to expect infirmities, but also desire to find pleasure in them, in order that we may see the strength of Christ manifested in us.

The thorn in the flesh was given to Paul that he might not be puffed up. It was some infirmity which rendered him despicable in preaching (Gal. 4:13, 14); it was a counterpoise to the glory he had tasted. It does not follow that we should necessarily have the same thorn, for God gives to each of us the very thorn which is suitable for us.

It is Satan whom God uses against the flesh; the flesh is seen in four different circumstances.

1. Before conversion, it is under Satan’s power, the conscience being hardened, as Judas, who loved money, and was a thief. When he had taken the sop, Satan entered into him to lead him on to unbridled iniquity, and to give him over to despair when he saw the result of his crime.
2. Before conversion, the flesh acts; and Satan presents the temptation.

3. After conversion, the flesh is still there; the Holy Ghost (who is the seal of redemption), has not yet fully accomplished His work in us; we are weak like Peter. Peter is contrasted with Christ in almost every circumstance, even the most amiable. Before the transfiguration, when Jesus tells of His approaching sufferings, Peter answers with love, but yet according to the flesh, and Jesus reproaches him thus, “Get thee behind me, Satan” (Matt. 16:20, 23). In the Apostle Peter, the flesh was still under the dominion of Satan.

4. Satan desires to sift us like wheat, by means of the flesh. Jesus warns his disciples of this, and prays especially for Peter, in whom the flesh was strong, for he put himself forward on all occasions. The flesh is, in *everything*, opposed to Christ; Jesus says to the disciples, “*Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation*”: He does not say sin. The Spirit leads Christ to prayer, and when temptation comes, it finds him perfectly calm; but the three disciples are heavy with grief, and when temptation comes they are taken by surprise.

All that could break the heart of Jesus was brought at once against Him; but even when Judas betrayed Him with a kiss, Jesus remained calm; He submitted, allowed Himself to be taken, and went through the depths of humiliation. While Jesus submitted Himself to everything, Peter drew his sword and did contrariwise. The flesh will urge a person on into temptation, but can sustain no one in the midst of it. It was the flesh which led Peter to the hall of the high priest -- there, Jesus witnessed a glorious confession of His own character as Son of God, but Peter, hurried on by Satan, denied him. The flesh is in everything opposed to Christ. Peter, however, truly loved Christ, yet we see him still acting according to the flesh, even after having received the Holy Ghost (Gal. 2:11).

Whenever a Christian acts in the flesh, all the weight of his piety goes to sanction and authorize his conduct before others: and therefore the effects of the working of the flesh in a believer are far worse than in an unconverted person. Peter, for instance, had carried away all the Jews, including Barnabas, in his dissimulation.

Being caught up to the third heaven does not change the flesh; and the flesh in Paul was ready to say, “You are the only man who has been in the third heaven.” But then the messenger of Satan was permitted to buffet him, and became thus the instrument of God’s goodness in correcting his child: God does not do it Himself, but Satan, who loves to torment God’s children, is used as an instrument to humble the flesh when it seeks to rise.

It is the circumstances that are painful to the flesh, which are those that are most profitable to our souls. What would be the use of a father giving his child as a punishment a thing which would not be one to the child? And thus it is with God and us. The power of God in us manifests itself, as well as our weakness,

in times of difficulty. When we see before us something painful, God says, “*My grace is sufficient for thee.*” He would bring us into His presence by means of a joy unmarred by the flesh: and everything which can make flesh a burden is especially profitable for us.

The Present Testimony 5:398-401.

A LETTER ON BOWING TO ASSEMBLY DECISIONS IN DISCIPLINE

{The *Sibthorpe Collection* contains a number of handwritten copies of letters by J. N. Darby (J.N.D.). These papers were committed by J.N.D. to W. M. Sibthorpe and eventually passed to Henry Sibthorpe – and are now in the Christian Brethren Archive of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, England. Permission has been granted to the publisher by Henry Sibthorpe for the use of these materials.

The following appears to be the source of *Letters* 1:418ff, which has, in comparison, some deletions of references to persons and circumstances. Minor differences may reflect copying errors and/or editorial corrections before formal publication. Spelling and punctuation have been modernized, underlining has been italicized, and abbreviations expanded for clarity. Sligo is a city and county in Ireland. The initials *L.S.* evidently refer to a woman, and *Mr. L. S.* to a man. D.P.R.}

Dear Miss H.,

Though my conviction is Satan raised the question the other day, to perplex souls which are enquiring, I am not sorry for it because it touches what I believe to be the danger of those engaged in the present movement. There is a French proverb: “Satan does a work which deceives himself,” which I believe to be true. The point I take to be fatally dangerous is *confounding private judgment and conscience*. We see the full-blown fruit of it in the present state of Protestantism, where private judgment is used to authorize the rejection of everything that the individual does not agree with.

Confusion as to this is found in L. S.’s letter. The difference is plain in the case put. A father’s authority is admitted. Now if it be a matter of conscience, and Christ’s authority or the confession of His Name, of course this cannot stand in the way. I am bound to love Christ more than father or mother. But suppose I reject my Father’s authority in the house for everything my private judgment differs in as to what is right, there is an end of all authority. There may be cases of anxious enquiry as to what my duty is, where spiritual discernment alone can

come to a right judgment. This is the case in the whole christian life. We must have our senses exercised to discern good and evil --- not be unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is, and such exercises are useful. But the confounding a judgment I form simply as to right with conscience is, in result, confounding *will* with *obedience to God*. True conscience is always obedience to God, but, if I take what I see as sufficient, confusion of a deadly character comes in, and this confusion, doubtless unconsciously, is in L. S.’s note. Does L. S. mean to say that she does not submit to a Father’s authority unless he can bring, even in an unimportant matter, a text of scripture for everything he desires? Is there no setting up of self and self-will in such a principle? But I go farther; and it is the case in question. Suppose in an assembly a person has been put out for evil. On their humbling themselves truly, all admit they should be gladly restored. The assembly thinks he is humbled truly; I am satisfied he is not. They receive him. Am I to break bread with the assembly or refuse subjection to their act, because I think them mistaken? Supposing (which is a more trying case to the heart) I believe he is humbled and they believe he is not, I may bow to a judgment I think erroneous and look to the Lord to set it right. There is such a thing as lowliness as to self, which does not set up its own opinion against others, though one may have no doubt of being right.

Now this was the case Mr. L. S. sought to identify, in the rejecting an assembly, on principle, because they deliberately received blasphemers against the Lord Jesus Christ. It is perfectly monstrous. Now there is another question connected with it -- one assembly’s act binding another {see Matt. 18:18; 1 Cor. 5}. On this point there is, in general, entire ignorance in those who discuss these points here. I do not admit, because *Scripture* does not admit, *independent assemblies*. There is the body of Christ, and all Christians are members of it; and the church of God in one place represents the whole and acts in its name. Hence, in 1 Cor., where the subject is treated of, *all Christians* are taken in with the assembly of Corinth as such {see 1 Cor. 1:2}; yet this last is treated as the body as such, and made locally responsible for maintaining the purity of the assembly; and the Lord Jesus Christ is looked at as there; and what was done was done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ {1 Cor. 5:4}. This is wholly ignored in the ground taken; it is wholly set aside in L. S.’s note. Mr. L. S. spoke of 6 or 7 clever, intelligent Christians and a number of ignorant ones. *The Lord* in the midst of an assembly never came into his mind; he did say, but the flesh often acts in an assembly. Why assume it does, and forget it may be in an individual? L. S. ignores it. She speaks of obeying the Lord first, then the church. But supposing the Lord is in the church {Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 5:4}? It is merely setting up private judgment against the judgment of an assembly meeting in Christ’s name with His promise (if they are not, I have nothing to say to them); {it is} simply saying, I count myself wiser than those who are. I reject entirely L. S.’s ground as unscriptural, in saying, “first Christ, then the Church.” If

Christ be not in the church, I do not own it at all {as a church; i.e., an assembly}. It is assuming that the church has not Christ, making them two distinct parties. I may reason with an assembly, because I am a member of Christ, and hence of *it* -- if it is one, help it. But I cannot if I own it an assembly of God, *assume*, as L. S. does, Christ is not there. {It is} simply denying it is an assembly of God. The thought of what an assembly of God is, is wanting. This is not surprising; but it necessarily falsifies judgment on the point. L. S. must remember her ground is not “if the word” -- but “if I *see* not His word for it.” It is simply trusting her own judgment as against others and the assembly of God.

I could not for a moment put a question of blasphemies against Christ on such a ground. It is really wickedness. The attempts to cover them by church questions, or pleas of individual conscience, I abhor with a perfect abhorrence.

Allow me to put a question on minor points in another shape. Suppose I am of an assembly, say Sligo, they judge something, I think in a mistaken way, am I to *impose* my individual way of thinking on *them*? If not, what am I to do? Leave the assembly of God if it be such (if it be not, I do not go there)? You cannot help yourself, L. S. calls it an enclosure. Be it so, but if she does not continue in an assembly, because it does not agree with her in everything, she can be of no assembly of God in the world. All this is simply a denial of the help and presence of God’s Spirit and the faithfulness of Christ to His own people. I cannot see godly lowliness in it. But if an assembly have judged as such in a case of discipline, admitting all brotherly communication and remonstrance, I distinctly say another assembly should, on the face of it, receive their act. If the wicked man is put out at Corinth, is Ephesus to receive him? ³⁷ Where then is unity? where the Lord in the midst of the Church? What led me out of the Establishment {i.e., the Church of England} was the unity of the Body: where it is not owned and acted upon, I should not go. And Independent churches I think quite as bad or worse of than of the Establishment, and if each assembly acts independently of another and receives independently of it, then it has rejected that unity -- they are independent churches. There is no practical unity of the body.

But I shall never be brought to such wickedness as to treat acceptance of blasphemies as an ecclesiastical question. If people like to walk with them or help

37. {The question is: if through the presence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ one is excommunicated (1 Cor. 5:4) at Corinth, and if the same Lord Jesus Christ is present in the midst at Ephesus, may Ephesus receive him? Oh, immediately you bring up the thought that an assembly may make a mistake. But that is not the question here, and that objection (which may be considered in its own place) is brought up to undermine the plain truth of what has been said. The action at Corinth was bound on earth and it was bound in heaven (Matt. 18:18-20); but do you say it was not bound in other assemblies professedly gathered together to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ?}

and support the bearing with them at the Lord’s table, they will not have me. I distinctly judge the principles defended, their want of lowliness as to self, and the setting aside of the very idea of the church of God. But I am not going to mix the two questions. I do not accept the setting aside my spiritual liberty: we are a flock, not an enclosure. But in questions of discipline, where no principle is denied, no truth of God set aside, I do not set up my judgment against that of the assembly of God in that which God has committed to its care. It is simply setting myself up as wiser, and neglecting God’s word which has assigned certain duties to an assembly and HE will honor it in its place.

Yours truly in the Lord,

J. N. D.

{*Sibthorpe Collection*, number 535.}

Truth and Peace

Mordecai, not at the divine center at Jerusalem, had it backwards when

He sent letters to all the Jews . . . words of peace and truth (Esther 9:30).

The prophet Zechariah, at the divine center, said:

These are the things that ye shall do: Speak truth everyone with his neighbor; execute truth and the judgment of peace in your gates (Zech. 8:16).

James wrote:

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceful . . . (James 3:17).

The Judge walking among the candlesticks said to Philadelphia:

These things saith the holy, the true . . . (Rev. 3:7).

Are you concerned that such Scriptures have a formative power on your walk?

Ed.